

Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts

Royal Ballet

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This charitable support is a significant contribution to the committee in researching and documenting on Royal Ballet and the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts is able to compile documents related to arts and to publish them to the public. This publication will contribute to strengthening national identity increase and the knowledge of art for humanity.

Once again, the Committee for the research and documentation of Royal Ballet would like to express its warmest gratitude to the UNESCO. The Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts has absolute confidence that our two institutions will continue to cooperate on future research project.

Committee for research and documentation of Royal Ballet

FOREWORD

UNESCO is much honored to have contributed to the successful publication of this important book about one of the most characteristic forms of the oral and intangible cultural heritage in Cambodia, the Royal Ballet or Khmer Classical dance. The completion of this publication bears testimony to the continuous efforts of the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts to preserve and revitalize the precious cultural heritages of the country.

Royal Ballet or Khmer classical dance in particular performing arts in general constitutes a powerful instrument to bring together all social groups in Cambodia and assert the national cultural identity. Some of these traditional forms have been lost in previous years or are facing a risk of disappearance. For this reason, UNESCO is particularly grateful to the researchers and artists of the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts who have made it possible to document and to disseminate this unique Khmer classical dance in order to ensure the sustainable preservation of its authenticity.

UNESCO would also like to encourage the national institutions to take new measures aiming at the safeguarding of Khmer classical dance and other forms of the oral intangible cultural heritage, especially through the promotion of scientific research in the field. UNESCO is ready to continue to provide the Royal Government with its assistance for this endeavor for the benefit of next Cambodian generations.

I would like to express a special thank to the Japanese Government for the contribution which made this project successful.



Teruo Jinnai
UNESCO Representative in Cambodia

PREFACE

Based on the Rectangular Strategies of the Royal Government of Cambodia, headed by Samdech Hun Sen, and National Development Plan for 2006-2010, culture and fine arts have been a component of the government policy. In this concern, the high officials of the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts have been worried about the negative effects of globalization on the Cambodian classical dance or royal ballet that was a legacy left by Cambodian ancestors. To reduce the harmful effect of globalization, the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts invited experts and art masters to document and compile information about the Khmer classical dance to help Cambodian youth understand the authenticity of national culture.

To reflect this concern, the researchers of the Ministry have paid their more attention to the research and preservation of the soul and heritage left by Khmer ancestors. The Ministry realizes that the understanding of national culture and its history are necessary. In doing so, we can understand where we are standing at the present and where we should head in the future. That is, the past is a lesson for the present and the future. If people know clearly the past, they will be able to understand their strengths and weaknesses: a good experience for the present and the future.

The researchers of the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts in cooperation with UNESCO have studied and collected the data on Cambodian Classical Dance given by Cambodian ancestors for their young generation. Therefore, the duty of Cambodian young generation is to conserve and develop this legacy for the next generation.

The Cambodian people are now very proud of the legacy left by their ancestors. The greatness of Angkor civilization, thousands of ancient temples, stone inscriptions, and religious sculptures that exist throughout Cambodia are the evidences of the heritage left by Khmer ancestors. Besides these tangible cultural heritages, Khmer has magnificent traditional music that is expressed in different ways and under various circumstances from daily lives and religions. *Arak*, one kind of traditional music, can be a good example. It is dedicated to belief in animism which originated in Cambodian society long before the beginning of Christian era. We have traditional wedding music since the first century of Christian era. It is performed during the wedding of *Preah Thong* and *Neang Neak*. *Pin Peat* is played with sacred dances such as *Sbek Thom*, *Lkhon Khaul*, and Classical Dance or Cambodia Royal Ballet during the religious rituals. The *Mohori* music whose word was derived from “*Monohara* or *Monohari*” is another traditional music that is usually performed for gods at temples or sacred place during the Angkor period. *Kong* and *Tream Ming* or *Thmeung* are also traditional music of ethnic minority in Cambodia.

Besides the Angkor temples, the prestige and prosperity of Angkor civilization and one of the world cultural heritage sites, Cambodia has Classical Dance that is a thousand year old legacy left by the ancestors. It has been depicted more than one thousand times on the walls of the Angkor temples.

In 2003, UNESCO proclaimed the Cambodia's Classical Dance or Royal Ballet as one of the Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage for Humanity.

The publication compiled by the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts is one of the accumulated knowledge for Khmer younger generation to help them know more about the origin, history, and values of the magnificent heritage left by their ancestors. By understanding these aspects, they will be actively involved in the preservation of classical dance for the future generation. Moreover, the publication of this work will contribute to strengthening and developing the Khmer culture by responding to the needs of society regarding national identity and cultural diversity.

The celestial dancers and other forms of classical dances that were depicted on the walls of Angkor temples reflect the fine creativity of Khmer ancestors who lived in this country more than a thousand years ago. Therefore, it is essential for Cambodian citizens to know their past in that this knowledge can contribute to achieving a prosperous nation.

The researchers of the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts would like to apologize for any insufficient information in advance. We would also like to request your kind support for the Cambodian art and culture in order to preserve them for future generation. We strongly expect that experts and scholars of art and culture would kindly provide us with constructive and critical advice for the better publication.

CHAPTER 1

I. History of Cambodia's classical dance

1. Keywords

Robam or *Lkhon Kbach Boran Khmer*, and *Robam* or *Lkhon Preah Reach Troap* are usually used to refer to the Cambodia's Classical Dance. *Robam* or *Lkhon* sometimes expresses the different forms of arts, particularly during the performance. It is named Classical Dance or Royal Ballet when the dance is performed episode by episode. It is called *Lkhon Kbach Boran Khmer* or *Lkhon Preah Reach Troap* (Royal Ballet Theater) if the dance depicts some episodes from Ramayana, *Preah Jin Na Vong*, or *Preah Ketu Meala*. *Robam* (dance) uses mainly the gestures and movements of hands that play a important role in expressing emotion.

Arak or *Araksa* means the spirit that looks after human beings. There are different forms of *Araksa* or spirit including the *Araksa* of forest or the ghost of forest. The performance dedicated to *Araksa* is called *Leang Araksa* or *Araksa* possessed. *Robam Tanti* is a form of dance with high perfection and clear norm or grammatical order, including *Robam Tep Monorom*, *Robam Moni Mekhala*, *Robam Tep Apsara*, etc.

Tep Apsara whose real name is *Tep Apsar* is a form of dance and song dedicated to *Tep* (gods). A dancer is described as possessing unusual grace. Her eyes are as beautiful as lotuses. She is slim and has very attractive lips. Her lovely attitude, graceful gesture, and sweet voice make the audience happy and pleased, and she could reach the spirits of gods in the heaven.

Apsara emerged from the churning of ocean of milk when the gods and *Asura* (demons) work together to stir the ocean of milk to seek *Amrita* water (immortal water). She originated from water and that is why her attitude is like *Devi* of *Araksa* of the water. It is believed that *Apsara* is goddess in the *Indra* world and consort of *Gandharvas* who is the musician of *Deva*.

2. Prehistoric Period

2.1. Notion of Khmer Classical Dance

Based on the data of language family, linguists have agreed that *Mon-Khmer* is perhaps from the language family of Southeast Asian region. By examining the similarity in word

and grammar, linguists classified these languages into several groups such as *Poar*, *Samre*, *Kuoy*, *Tum Puon*, and *Prouav*, *Katobro*, *Khmor*, *Pana*, *Seang*, *Hmong*, *Palong*, *Aslean*, and languages in Northeast India into *Mon-Khmer* family. *Mon-Khmer* language spreaded widely and was spoken across mainland Southeast Asia during the first millennium B.C., especially in Cambodia, Myanmar, and central and Southern Thailand.

Besides these evidences, there is the data from ancient artifacts collected through excavations at prehistoric sites in Cambodia and other sites in Southeast Asia. For examples, archaeological sites were found at red soil plateau, *Ponhea Krek* and *Mimot* districts, *Kampong Cham* province.

The shape of the sites is circle and the sites are surrounded by elevated wall and moat. Local villagers call them *Banteay Kou* or *Kou*. Archaeological excavation of the circle sites has revealed archaeological materials including stone tools and other artifacts that lead archaeologists to conclude that *Banteay Kou* at the red soil plateau of Eastern *Mekong*, dated to the Metal Age (2,500 years ago). Artifacts discovered at these sites included the fragments of bronze drum of *Dongson* Period (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Fragment of Bronze Drum Discovered at Phum 1.8, Krek, Dated to 2,500 B.P. (Heng Sophady 2003:48)

Dongson is the period between Bronze and Iron Age. The *Dongson* civilization spreaded widely in mainland and islands of Southeast Asia. Bronze *Dongson* drum was decorated with geometrical patterns, birds, and daily life figures. The big *Dongson* drum was used during praying ceremony with *Araksa* as well as *Araksa* music (Figure 2 - 4).



Figure 2 - 3: Dongson Bronze Drum discovered between 4th century B.C., currently exhibited in the National Museum

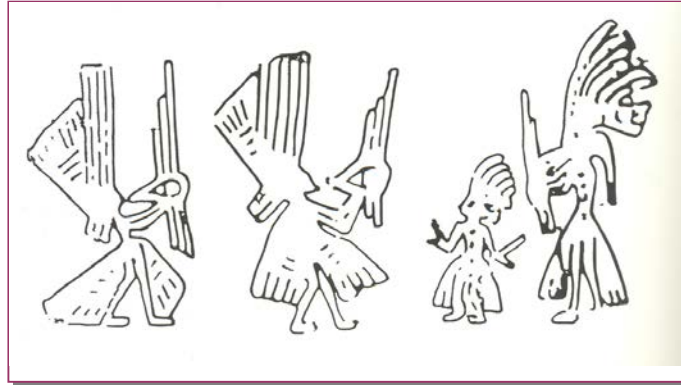


Figure 4: *Ken Dancers Depicted in Dongson Bronze Drum, Prehistoric Period (Keo Narom 2005: 174)*

Artifacts and stone tools such as polished axes and lithopone have remained since the prehistoric period between 3,000 and 2,500 years ago. Researchers have discovered *Kaong Nak* (sound tools) made of bamboo that is comparable to litho phone. *Kaong Nak* is currently used by ethnic minority in Rattanakiri, Cambodia (Figure 5-6).



Figure 5: *Polished Lithophone Discovered at Southern Vietnam*



Figure 6: *Kroeuung Ethnic – man playing Koang Naak Instrument 2001*

2.2. Khmer Beliefs and Religions

In the past, when human beings were not able to solve any difficult problems, they relied on supernatural beings. Before the introduction of Indian religions, Buddhism and Hinduism, during the early Christian era, the Khmer had practiced a system of belief as other Southeast Asian people. The Khmer was in favor of supernatural beings. They believed that nature had its own soul and it was powerful and invisible. This supernatural beings were called “*Neak ta*”. *Neak ta* is a being or soul of their ancestors or represents

the nature that exists to protect local people. It is believed that the worshiped *Neak ta* does not prosper because there is no norm or written text like other religions. Although it was not well progressed, the worship still exists in the Khmer mentality today.

Nowadays, the worship of *Neak ta* is called animism. Animism is still alive in Khmer society. The Khmer today worships Theravada Buddhism, but it still practices Hinduism and animism. As an evidence, we can see *Neak ta* shelter in every pagoda. In Khmer belief, *Neak ta* is an invisible human being who stays in small hut, represented by a small idol that can be possessed for communication with local people.

Dance and music are essential for Khmer life. Khmer people need art from the cradle until to the grave. There is a Khmer saying, "Life is art and art is life". There is music to accompany life for remedy (*Arak* or *Arak* possession), and for ritual performed when conveying and burying a dead body. The Khmer need dance for *Arak* and *Neak ta* to pray for happiness and luck when people move to a new place. Music can be used as an entertainment tool after a tiring day.

Researchers have noted that there are many forms of dances that have different characteristics including origins, forms, colors and roles in the society. Some forms of music were created originally during the prehistoric period as an evidence of *Arak* music. The expression of this music reflects social attitude and human morality. People highly worship and respect this phenomenon.

Human beings always express their emotion towards natural phenomena that they face during their everyday lives. To satisfy natural phenomena or to pay homage to the nature people always play *Arak* music. People performed *Arak* music when they were ill in order to ask the soul of ancestor the cause of illness.

During the music performance, there is a woman who happily or angrily dances. Sometimes, if there happens a drought or a epidemic disease to people or water buffalos, people always perform *Arak* music accompanied by dancers to beg the lord of the mountains to offer happiness and prosperity to human beings and animals (Figure 7). Based on the evidences mentioned above, it is recognized that the Khmer classical dance was created at the same time as the first Khmer people appeared in mainland Southeast Asia and developed as we have currently witnessed.



Figure 7: Khmer Cult before the Influence of Hinduism and Buddhism in Cambodia (Pech Tum Kravil 2003: 284)

On the other hand, the theory of art says that there are seven principle art forms including dance, music, painting, carving, architecture, literature, and picture (cinema, video, photo,

etc.). Among these art forms, the first six forms appeared almost at the same time. There is no document to prove which art form appeared first. Therefore, it is believed that dance and music were created at the same time as the evidence of tool found between 2500 and 3000 years ago.

3. Historic Period

3.1. Funan Period (first – sixth century A.D.)

The influence of Indian civilization had spreaded over broad regions of Southeast Asia since the early times. The evidence of foreign cultures is religious ruins that were erected to dedicate to the Hinduism and Buddhism. Besides this evidence, Indian traditions, practices, and custom penetrated into the Funan life during the first six centuries.

Indian civilization penetrated into the Cambodian society in the first century of Christianity. The influence of Indian civilization is related not only with language, religion, statue, architecture, and traditions, but also with performing arts. It is believed that the evidence is a female dancer and monkey, *Hanuman*, holding terra cotta stick discovered at Wat Koumnou, Angkor Borei district, Takeo province (Figure 8-9).



Figure 8-9: Female Dancer and Hanuman Made of Terra Cotta discovered at Angkor Borei, Takeo (Pech Tum Kravil 2001: 30 – 31)

These evidences make researchers believe that the Classical Dance or Royal Ballet was probably created when Cambodia was founded during the Funan Period. These figures reflect strong influence of Indian arts, especially in relation to the Hinduism that is believed to be brought into Cambodia with the Indian Brahman because Ramayana Khmer expresses similar characteristics to Indian epics.

Based on the artifacts from archaeological sites throughout the country, researchers have speculated that Cambodian Classical Dance form originated in the prehistoric times, long

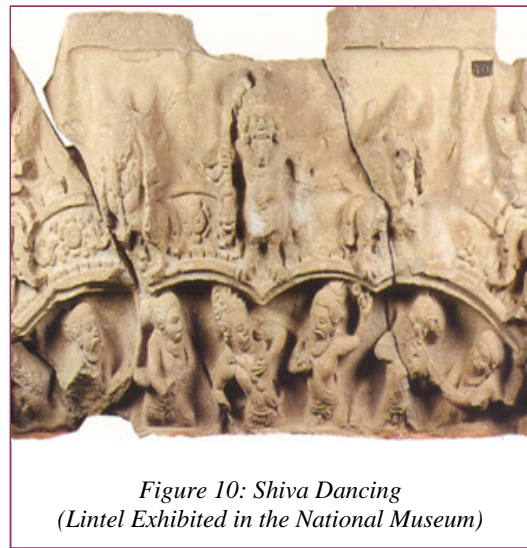
before the arrival of the Indian civilization. A thorough study on the discovered terra cotta female dancer has revealed that there are differences between this figure and the present Cambodian Classical Dance. For example, the female dancer stretches her two legs with her two ankles oriented externally. She raises her two hands over her head with her left fingers outwards. Her right fingers are oriented inwardly in parallel with her leg. The present Khmer Classical Dance usually expresses the gesture with curve lines.

Two *Terra cottas* (female dancer and Hanuman holding stick) clearly express the Indian civilization. These evidences show that Classical Dance or Royal Ballet has transformed its nature from the dance for *Arak*, *Neak ta*, and other supernatural beings to a diva dance for dedication to gods in Brahmanism of Indian tradition. This reflects syncretism between local and Indian civilization.

3.2. Chenla Period (7th – 8th century A.D.)

Sanskrit and ancient Khmer inscriptions, during the reign of Mahendravarman (600 – 616 A.D.) which are the essential sources for knowing the history, religion, tradition, arts, and culture have revealed that there were musicians, singers, and dancers. Angkor Borei inscription K.557 and K.600, dated A.D.611, mentioned that seven dancers, singers, and musicians were offered for Vrah Kamratang Anh who was a god.

In Khmer art history during the pre-Angkor period, especially during the reign of Isanavarman I (A.D. 615 – 635), the art expressed the Shiva dancing on the lintel of the Sambor Preikuk Style (Figure 10).



*Figure 10: Shiva Dancing
(Lintel Exhibited in the National Museum)*

Inscription K.137 was inscribed during the reign of the Jayavarman I and described the scene that singers, musical tools and dancers were offered for the gods. This epic probably showed that the king had sacrificed female dancers to god Shiva. The king Jayavarman I worshiped Hinduism, Isvara. Therefore, it is thought that he was offering dancers for the god during that period.

The legend related to the Chenla dynasty was written during the later period, especially the Angkor period on the inscription of Baksei Cham Krong (10th century A.D.) which

recorded that this dynasty was founded from Surya line or Sri Kampu with the annexation with Kambu Svayambhu and Mera. Therefore, Khmer was originated from Kambu and Apsara Mera.

Here, the question can be raised about whether Apsara Mera that was given by Shiva to Kambu is related with Cambodia Classical Dance or Royal Ballet. Many linguists have focused on the term “Kambuja” and “Khmer” from the relationship between Kambu and Apsara Mera. It is defined as followed:

Kambu + Mera or Kambu + Mera or Kam + Mera to Kame or Kmer and to Khmer

3.3. Angkor Period (9th – 14th century A.D.)

The Khmer has created prosperous civilization that is known widely in the world history, especially during the Angkor Empire from the 9th through 14th century. Moreover, the Khmer are a creative people who have constructed thousands of temples that are now scattered over the whole region of Indochina. Among these, Angkor Wat is considered as one of the World Wonders. Besides ancient temples, the Khmer have many stone inscriptions, songs, and music that play different roles in the society. The Khmer has many different forms of performing arts and theaters.. Since this period, Khmer ancestors discovered their own national identity and the Khmer was no longer strongly influenced by Indian civilization.

In fact, during the Angkor period which started from the king Jayavarman II (802 – 850), the king proclaimed independence from foreign colonization, Java. He consecrated Devaraja on the mound Mahendrapavarta (Phnom Kulen). He had constructed many temples on the mountains. Jayavarman II strongly worshiped the god, Shiva. After his death at the Harihalaya (Roluos), he received a posthumous name as Paramesvara.

Many of his successors also worshiped Shiva and the god, Vishnu. They developed the country and dug many canals and other water systems in the Angkor region. We believe that female dancers in Classical Dance or Royal Ballet of Cambodia was developed in parallel with the social development during the Angkor period as we can see on the relief on the wall of the temples, such as Banteay Srei dedicated to Isvara, constructed by Raja Guru Yajananavara in 967 A.D and on the wall of Angkor Wat temple which was built by the king Suryavarman II and dedicated to Vishnu. After his death, his posthumous name was Parama Vishnuloka. Angkor Wat has 1737 Apsara dancers on the wall (Figure 11-13).



Figure 11-12: Apsara Dancers from Angkor Wat and Chao Say Tevada in the Reign of Suryavarman II (1113 – 1152)



Figure 13: Apsara Dancers Accompanied by Moem Musical Instrument from Bayon Temple in the 13th Century (Keo Narom 205: 117)

All female dancers, carved on the wall of the four galleries, libraries, and tower of Angkor Wat temple, are the dancers in paradise. Female dance is a type of dance in paradise or a dance of diva or god. This kind of dance was predominant during the Angkor Period from the 9th to 14th century A.D. During the Angkor period, the bas-relief, high relief, and statuary are the kinds of artistic techniques and are also the evidences of creativity of Khmer artists.

From the first day til now in the history, the Khmer discovered their particular characteristics leading to national unity as shown through the construction of Angkor Wat temple. Indian archaeologist has revealed that Angkor Wat is the largest Hinduism temple in the world. The Cambodian Classical Dance or Royal Ballet has been affected by Indian Hinduism, but it is believed that the Khmer have transformed it from day to day into Khmer own dance.

Moreover, during the reign of the King Jayavarman VII, Mahayana Buddhism, Lokeshvara, was worshiped and became a national religion. Jayavarman VII was a powerful and famous king throughout the history of Cambodia due to his construction of hospitals, guesthouses, highways, and temples scattered all over the country. This particular aspect has made researchers clearly understand the development and evolution of Khmer classical dance or female theater forms. Although there was a change in religion from Brahmanism to Buddhism during the reign of Jayavarman VII, the dance kept prospering and was well preserved as the heritage of Khmer ancestors. On the other hand, Buddhism was also originated in India. Jayavarman VII worshiped Mahayana Buddhism, but he still maintained the well-being of Hinduism because Lokeshvara was still attached to Isvara.

During the reign of Jayavarman VII, the classical dance might have been transformed from the form of dancers for Hindi gods to that of servants for Buddhist sanctuaries in accordance with the doctrine of Buddhism.

a. Information from Inscriptions

Inscription is an important source for knowing the specific events of each reign in the history. For example, in the field of performing art in the 10th century, the two inscriptions of Prah Ko temple, K.313 b and 315 a, described the costume designers for singers who danced with female singers and musicians for the gods.

Based on the meaning of Ta Prohm inscription, there were many musicians, singers and dancers. They were in total 615 persons. Prah Khan temple inscribed with more than 1000 dancers who stayed at the temple to dance at the ceremony and worshiped at the temple. Moreover, Indradevi, the second wife of Jayavarman VII, was appointed to a rector of a university by the king. She led a dance troupe to perform Jataka and Buddhist epic.

b. Origin of Apsara

In ancient times, the world was in chaos. There was a war between Deva and Asura to rule the world. The sound of fighting never stopped, but there was no winner. Principle gods, such as Shiva, Vishnu, and Brahma, discussed the way to end the war. Finally, they tried to convince gods and Asura to stop the war by competing with each other through the churning of ocean of milk in order to seek immortal water and other precious things.



Figure 14: Mahabaratta Episode from Angkor Wat in the Reign of Suryavarman II (1113 – 1152).

Vishnu played a role as an arbiter and commander. Other gods were also involved in this activity. The Naga king, Vasuki, volunteered to be a string to surround the mound Mandara as a center for the gods and Asuras to stir. In order to churn the mound Mandara, Vishnu transformed himself into a tortoise, Kurma, to support the mound.

At the beginning, the Asuras stayed at the tail of the Naga and the gods at the head. The churning had taken place for a long time and created huge waves in the water. The first appearance from the churning of the ocean of milk was Laksmi, and then became the god Vishnu's consort. The water bubble formed Apsara dancers, immortal water, and other creations (Figure 14).

After the appearance of immortal water, one Asura named Rahu, who had never spent any energy on the churning of ocean of milk, sneaked to steal the immortal water. Vishnu threw out his weapon to kill Rahu. The upper part of his body is immortal until today. As a result of long and hard working, Vasuki could release intentionally poisons to kill many Asuras. The poison was dangerous for the whole world; so Shiva drank it all and his neck was in dark color.

Vishnu thought that if the immortal water had been in the hand of Asura, the world would not have been safe. To avoid this disaster, Vishnu transformed himself into many beautiful girls to make Asura obsessed with their beauty and forget about the immortal water. Therefore, gods took all the immortal water. As for all the beautiful girls who were dancing during the churning of ocean of milk, the gods brought them all to the heaven. These beautiful dancers performed dances for gods in heaven everyday. They also performed dances to dedicate to gods or during the ceremony in heaven or religious rituals. Therefore, the origin of heaven dancers was from the water bubble during the churning of ocean of milk, which performed their dances on the surface of the ocean of milk. Laksmi is a representative of all the beautiful girls. The performance during the churning of ocean of milk is a symbol of eliminating bad events.

The relief of the churning of ocean of milk in Cambodian society still remains at many temples as motifs and decorations, especially on the lintels of temples which appeared from the 9th century A.D. to Bayon. The biggest episodes of the churning of ocean of milk are illustrated on the wall of Angkor Wat temple and the gateway into Bayon temple.

c. Story of god Shiva

Illustration of Shiva dancing was seen again in the Angkor period during the 10th – 11th century, and it was usually carved on the lintel, fronton, false door, and wall of many ancient Khmer temples or represented as single statuary. Shiva, one of the principle gods in Hinduism, is the god of creator and destroyer and likes to dance. Shiva has three eyes and is called the king of the dancers on Khmer inscriptions (figure 15 – 18).



Figure 15, 16 and 17 : Shiva Dancing



Figure 18: Shiva Dancing from Bayon (Roveda Victorio 2005: 61)

In India, there are 108 forms of Shiva dancing, but only seven forms exist in Cambodia, which are similar to the Indian forms. The Khmer have adopted Shiva mythology from India, but the expression is different; Khmer artists perform Shiva dancing more gently.

Inscriptions during the reign of Suryavarman I (1002 – 1050 A.D.) at Takeo temple called Shiva dancing “Natakesvara”. The rhythm of Shiva dancing was expressed in different forms, but it is generally called Tandava. The text of Shiva *Pratosh sdotra* described Shiva dancing in Kailasha and showed many gods playing musical instruments including goddess Svaravarti. Besides singers and musicians, there were other gods who stood or were seated there to listen to the concert. All representatives from the three worlds were there to see the Shiva dancing.

Sometimes, Shiva dancing was a manifestation of destroying the beauty of Karikalmeya, a beautiful widow in paradise. The last dance of Shiva was Tandava. Shiva was the king of dance who represented protection, destruction, manifestation, salvation, and liberation. The seven manifestations of Shiva are:

1. Shiva dancing was for the creation of a new world, Kalika Tandava. The dance was basic to congratulate the Brahma who created a new world.

2. Shiva dancing was to preserve all beings on earth, Gauri Tandava. He danced to protect all beings living in the darkness on earth. Shiva had three eyes with four arms holding a drum and a snake. The dance was usually accompanied by Nandin and his consort, goddess Gauri. This dance usually illustrated Shiva stepping on a short person that was a symbol of illiterate beings.

3. Shiva dancing served as a memorial of preservation being on earth, Sandhaya Tandava. This dance represented Shiva's tolerance of the being of harmony and happiness on earth.

4. The dance of death, Samhara Tandava, represented the dance of destruction: the end of the old world that was full of sins.

5. Shiva danced to kill water buffalo, Tripura Tandava. It was a dance to destroy three cities of Asura Taraka. The first city was made of gold in paradise; the second city was made of silver in the sky; and the third city was made of metal on earth. He destroyed the three cities by using only one weapon at the same time and Brahma led the horse cart.

6. Shiva danced for a tolerance and released the soul of Urdhava Tandava. It was a dance of tolerance and released the soul of being, especially individuals who worshiped Shiva.

7. Shiva dance, Ananda Tandava, is the shape of three eyes and four hands holding a drum. The gesture expressed no harm with the left hand holding a vase of fire and an elephant trunk. His left leg rose up and right leg stepped on Asura.

d. Other Mythologies

Besides Shiva dancing, there were some forms of Vishnu dancing in Khmer arts. As an evidence, Krisna, one of the manifestations of Vishnu, danced to kill a snake, Kaliya. During this destruction, Krisna sang a song to describe the beauty, admired the god Vishnu, and danced to step on the head of Naga Kaliya until this snake submitted himself to Krisna (Figure 19 – 20),

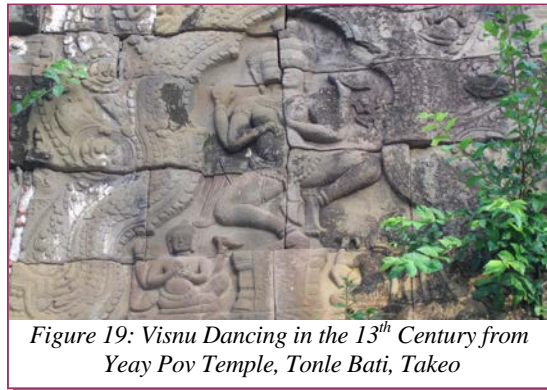


Figure 19: Vishnu Dancing in the 13th Century from Yeay Pov Temple, Tonle Bati, Takeo



Figure 20: Visnu Dancing from Phimai Temple (Roveda Victorio 2005: 81)



Figure 21: Visnu Dancing to Defeat Naga in the 11th Century (Giteau 1997: 76)

There is a legend of the King Fa Ngum who is the one of the most famous kings in the history of the kingdom of Lan Sang (*Leav*). He was abandoned when he was young. The King Fa Ngum was adopted and educated by one of the kings of Angkor. The king of Angkor was in favor of him and later let his daughter, Princess Keo Lot Fa, get married with him. He became a son-in-law of the king of Angkor. It was said that the king of Angkor had sent many troops to liberate Fa Ngum's kingdom, which was invaded by enemy. When returning back to his own kingdom, the king Fa Ngum brought tradition, art, and religion with him. Finally, Fa Ngum won the war and got the power of the kingdom at Luang Prabang at the same period of the fall of Angkor.

Based on studies, the three countries had been closely related with one another. The classical dance and music of Laos were similar to those of Cambodia. Until today, the classical dance of Laos is called Nang Keo or Neang Keo, derived from Neang Keo Lot Fa.

During the Angkor Period, 13th century A.D., Jayavarman VII (1181 – 1218), it is noted that the classical dance was employed at the acrobatic arts as well (Figure 22).

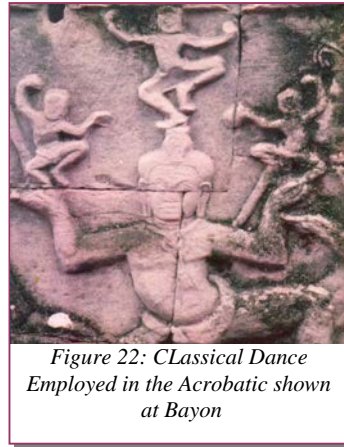


Figure 22: Classical Dance Employed in the Acrobatic shown at Bayon

e. Dancing Statuary

There are some dancing statuary. However, they are usually small and made of bronze. Today, these statuary are exhibited in the National Museum in Phnom Penh (Figure 23 – 26)



Figure 23 – 24: Female dancing made of Bronze in the 12th and 13th century A.D.



Figure 25 – 26: Hevajra dancing made of Bronze 12th and 13th century A.D. (Adapted from Giteau 1997: 120)

Hevajra is a Buddhisatva in Buddhism. The dance represented the manifestation of Buddha in eliminating the bad being, Mara, who made human beings to be obsessed with desire, greediness, and illiteracy. Buddha transformed himself into a person with 16 hands and eight faces. He stood on many children, which are the symbol of Mara.

f. The Condition of Classical Dance at the End of Angkor Period

At the beginning of the reign of the King Indravarman II (1218 – 1243), the Khmer Empire was invaded by neighboring enemies and suffered from internal conflicts. The weakened power was the good opportunity for Siam to subjugate Angkor in 1432 A.D. The chaotic period lasted for more than one century. Under this political circumstances, Cambodian culture including classical dance was also faced with difficulties. The Siam armies robbed Angkor of most of the valuable things, documents, norms, and took many scholars, dancers, and musicians to their country. As a result, there is the similarity between Thai dance and Cambodian classical dance.

3.4. Post-Angkor Period

Later, female dancers survived and practiced their dances near the King Ponhayat (1393 – 1463 A.D.). He changed the capital from Angkor to many places. It is assumed that there was a change in the name of female dancers to royal ballet theater or sometime it was *Lkhon Luang*. There is no information about the evolution of art during that period. Based on the chronicle, Mahaboros Khmer, it is known that female dancers or royal ballet were well developed during the reign of the King Ang Chan Raja or Ang Chan I (1516 – 1566 A.D.). He was one of the most powerful kings during the post –Angkor period. He built

his capital at Lovek. Ang Chan I paid more attention to the performing arts, dance, music, and male and female dancing form. From time to time, he organized art performance to celebrate high officials who served the country.

After the Lovek period, it is known that classical dance always existed in the royal palace. Dancers stopped playing a role as a servant for gods at the temple. During the reign of Prah Raj Samphea, the king himself was a famous poet (1629 – 1634 A.D.). When he moved his capital from Udong to Koh Khlok, many dancers were brought along with him. Today, there remains some art masters at Kien Svay.

From 1806 to 1840, Cambodia was weakened due to the invasion of neighboring enemies and domestic problems. During the reign of Ang Duong (1840 – 1859 A.D.), he saved the nation and proclaimed the independence of the country. During this period, Khmer art and culture were influenced by foreign civilization in terms of musical orchestra and other forms of music that they usually used foreign terms that had been previously borrowed from Khmer. This influence faded gradually in the sense that Khmer made an effort to identify its own national identity.

In 1906, the King Sisowath went on his first journey to France. He also brought 42 female dancers with him. Because of the classical dance, the royal journey was very successful. Many French people had compared Cambodian dancers to “human flowers” and French artists, including Rodin, painted Khmer female dancers.

Talented female dancers were usually offered a special title by the king and it was their pride. During the reign of the King Norodom Sihanouk (1941 – 1955 A.D.) and Sangkum Reas Niyum (1956 – 1970 A.D.), he introduced the Classical Dance to the United States of America in 1957 during the Kennedy administration. Therefore, the Classical Dance became well-known all over the world. Princess Norodom Bopha Devi was a young female dancer before and Prince Chakrapong also acted as a male dancer. They performed Sovann Maccha, one of the episodes in the Ramayana. The dance was led by Queen Kosamak Nearirath, mother of the King Sihanouk and was well performed in terms of technique,

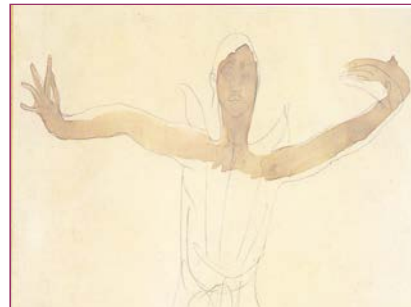


Figure 27: Huma Flowers by Rodin Adapted from Loviny 2004: 107



Figure 28: H.R.H Princess Norodom Bopha Devi adapted from Loviny 2003: 118

beauty, ornaments, and other materials used in the classical dance. Diadems for both male and female dancers were made of gold decorated with diamond.

She made her strong commitment and spent her own wealth to create many dance forms including Devata dance or Apsara that has been known throughout the world (Figure 28).

After that time, the Cambodia's Classical Dance very often appeared to the public over the world. In 1964, Tep Monorom was performed at Opera Theater in Paris (Figure 29). It was also known the second time during the Nixon administration. The Classical Dance or Royal Ballet is a performing art not only instigated romantic, heart, but also revealed a seed of construction and prestige with no limitation. It is a product of society through heart into the center of life. It changes life into acceptable morality of humanity.



Figure 29: Tep Monorom, performed as Opera in Paris 1964 Adapted from Loviny 2003: 124

It was unfortunate that the war broke out in Cambodia in 1970 that caused culture and art to be heavily deteriorated. During the Khmer Republic, under the leadership of Marshal Lon Nol between 1970 and 1975, the name of Royal Ballet was changed to Classical Dance, and the responsibility fell under the direction of university of fine arts even though the training place remained at the Royal Palace.

Khmer Rouge period was between 1975 and 1979. Classical Dance was considered as a heritage of feudalism, and it was eliminated during this period. Many artists were executed and jailed. After 1979, Khmer nation and everything were revitalized. The surviving art masters worked very hard to rehabilitate Cambodian culture and arts, especially the Classical Dance and Khmer classical dance theater.

The evolution of Classical Dance and other forms of arts have been faced with difficulties in the history of Cambodia. After 1993, Cambodia enjoyed its full peace. Under the second Royal Government of Cambodia, the Classical Dance was called theater or Khmer classical dance and theater or royal ballet.

3.5. Concept of Art in Royal Ballet Dance

The perfection in Classical Dance is represented through a diadem called Makuta and its top represents the paradise. The gesture of Apsara dancer is a symbol of dancer in paradise. This dance form has its foundation from the Ramayana (Figure 29 – 30).



Figure 30: H.R.H Princess Norodom Bopha Devi performed Apsara dance Adapted from Nagara Khmer 1967



Figure 31: Wishing Dance, Nagara Khmer 1967

Under the leadership of the Queen Sisowath Kossamak Nearirath in 1950, the monkey dance was performed by male dancers.

II. Performing Methodology

The Classical Dance is a sacred dance for gods, was originated from Brahmanism. It is magnificent and perfect. The dance is untouchable and unchangeable. Since the first appearance in the early Christian era, the Classical Dance has been performed only by female dancers; all the male and female characters were played by female dancers. As for the performing, the actresses never sang a song by themselves, and they never acted with the songs or words from the scene behind. Their gestures had special norm and grammatical expression which are the same as the wishing songs that were sung by female singers. The reason why the Classical Dance was performed only by women is that the Apsara dancing originated from the beautiful girls in paradise resulting from the churning of ocean of milk. The Sanskrit word “Sri” or “Serei” means happiness. In Khmer concept, Sri (female) is a symbol of purity, happiness, and prosperity. Other particular point is that Khmer people regard female as a head of family, Mae. It was

evident since the early first century of Christian era of Cambodia historic period. That is the reason why Khmer people considered females as superior in the society. Moreover, the Classical Dance or Royal Ballet is a sacred dance, wishing dance, and dance for gods. When they danced, they would bring prosperity and happiness.

In the reign of the King Norodom Sihanouk (1941 – 1955), as a result of favoring monkey dance, the Queen Sisowath Kossamak Nearirath, his mother, supervised classical dance troupes. She then let male dancers play as a main character in the scene. Since that, we have seen male and female dancers jointly perform a Classical Dance.

III. Dancing Stage

Religious monuments were constructed in order to be dedicated to gods according to the doctrine of Hinduism or Buddhism. It is noted that there is a dancing stage erected in front of the main tower of the temple. This stage was for dancers to dedicate dances to the gods. For example, the Angkor Wat was constructed by the King Suryavarman II (1113 – 1150). It was dedicated to the god Vishnu. The Khmer ancestors constructed a dancing stage decorated with lion and Naga balustrade in front of the main tower. As for Bayon dedicated to Mahayana Buddhism, the temple has a cruciform dancing stage on the eastern side and around the stage, there are two water reservoirs.

During the post-Angkor period, the classical dance stayed close to the King. The Classical Dance changed its role from dancing for gods to dancing for the King, and it became directly under the supervision of the King or Royal Family. The training center for the Classical Dance was located in the Royal Palace. For example, at the Royal Palace in Phnom Penh, there are the center for the Classical Dance named Prasat Chanchaya and a dancing stage for ceremony called Prasat Pochni. Sometimes, special ceremony was celebrated at the main terrace in front of the ancestor's statues.

At this modern time (the late twenties and early twenty-first century), besides religious rituals, the Classical Dance is usually performed for the public in order to promote national culture and identity, and it is performed at the national and international festivals.

IV. Stage Decoration

The stage decoration is various according to the scene and story. Sometimes, a tiny bed can represent everything according to the context of the story. For example, a tiny bed can represent a Palace, the Naga Kingdom, a Rock Mountain, and Kailasha. The stage decoration has been improved through the modern technology.

V. Sampeah Krou (Praying Ceremony)

In all Khmer traditional art forms, artists always celebrated Sampeah Krou or the praying ceremony. It is a memorial ceremony for previous dance trainers who had passed away. In doing so, dancers tried to remember the souls of their ancestors who previously had taught them dance and morality. Usually the praying ceremony is celebrated on Thursday; except Lkhon Kohl, monkey dance, is celebrated on Saturday (Figure 32).



*Figure 32: Praying Ceremony
(Pich Tum Kravil 2001: 60)*

VI. Costume and Ornamentation

The costume and ornamentation of actor and actress of Khmer Classical Dance reflect particular characteristics of Khmer civilization. The costume and ornamentation of Classical Dance are the same as those of Apsara dancers who are considered as the goddess descending from paradise by Khmer people. In Cambodia, it is believed that there are hundreds of goddesses from paradise as evidenced on the wall of Angkor Wat temple.

The costume and ornamentation were clearly shown through the carving on the wall of temple. Apsara at Angkor Wat expressed different characteristics in terms of costume, gesture, and hairstyle. It is believed that the Apsara figures at Angkor Wat reflected the ways they danced during the Angkor period. These gestures are the model and cradle of the present Classical Dance or Cambodian royal ballet.

1. Costume Dressing and Dresses of Classical Dance

According to Pich Tum Kravil, the dresses of Royal Ballet or Classical Dance are the basic models for creating a dress or decoration for Devata and other gods and goddesses.

According to Professor Minh Kossany, the dresses for gods and the king are different and they have no button. In the past, all ornaments were made of gold and diadem called Makuta was made of silver. Now, its ornaments are made of brass (Figure 34).



Figure 33: Neay Rong and Neang



Figure 34: Speech of Prof. Minh Kossany



Figure 35: Costume Presented by Prof. Minh Kossany

The dresses of the Classical Dance are different in style from other dance forms in Cambodia. Designers only employ a piece of fabric to wrap the body without any ornaments like sparkling beads to put on the dresses. This creativity was adopted from the decoration of Apsara dance carved on the wall of the temple.

As for *Sampot*, they use *Sampot Robab* in white for the main dancer and in red, blue and green for regular dancers. The pleat stays on the front side. In 1961 – 1962 under the leadership of the Queen Nearirath, the dresses for Apsara dance were similar to those of the wishing dance.



Figure 36: Professor Minh Kossany presenting the Costume of Khmer Classical Dance



Figure 38: Costume for Khmer Classical Dance, Neay Rong, Neang, Yeaksa, and Hanuman

There are various forms of costume and ornamentation of the Cambodia Classical Dance:

a. Neay Rong (Male Role)

The dancer for this role has to dress in a following way:

- Wearing *Makuta* without diadem
- Wearing *Robeang Mokh* with flower garland

- Wearing *Robeang* on the side with flower garland
- Wearing the long sleeves with sparking bead
- Wearing rainbow on her both shoulders
- Wearing *Samrong Kar* around his neck
- Wearing *Sangva* with *Buddhi* leaf pendant on her chest
- Wearing *Kbin Roban* on the short pants
- Wearing short to her thigh
- Wearing fabric decorated with bead on her waist
- Wearing *Koeum Khat* belt
- Wearing belt on her waist
- Wearing *Kbaing Mokh*
- Wearing *Kbaing* on the side
- Wearing *Kantuy Pra* or *Kantuy Kbin*

Neay Rong wears Koang Kaon, Long Koang Rak, Kan Trum, and Koang Nhor or earrings. Her legs wear Koang Nhor, Kravil Cheung and Koang Trabak Chhuk on the top (Figure 38 – 39).



Figure 39 – 40: Neay Rong in costume of Cambodia Classical Dance

b. Neang (Female Dancer)

The costume and ornaments of Neang:

- Wearing short sleeves

- Wearing a scarf on her shoulder
- Wearing *Samrong Kar* around her neck
- Wearing a strap on her left shoulder
- Wearing *Sam Loy Chor Robab*
- Wearing *Khim Khat* belt
- Wearing *Snab Dei* on her hand, *Koang Koan* on her wrist, *Koang Nhor*, *Kan Trum* and *Sloeuk Tes*. According to Professor Minh Kossany, *Sleuk Tes* was used for all dancers, but today it seems to disappear.

Neang has *Koang Nhor* from below or earrings and *Koang Toang Chhuk* on the top and she wears a diadem.



Figure 41 – 42: Neang with Costume and Ornaments

Besides these roles, the Khmer Royal Ballet or Classical Dance has many other roles such as *Yeak*, demon and monkey which were depicted from Indian mythology Ramayana or the churning of ocean of milk. They wear the following costume and ornaments:

c. Demon, Ravana

- Long sleeves decorated with beads
- Wearing rainbow and *Tun Torm* on both shoulders
- Wearing cruciform *Sangva* on the chest with *Buddhi* leaf pendant
- Wearing pants *Snab Phlov Pak Chheung*
- Wearing *Kbin Chora Bab* on the top of the pants
- Wearing a fabric to wrap on the waist
- Wearing *Khim Khat* belt

- Wearing Kbaing *Kokh Sam Yong*
- Wearing *Robaing Cham Heang Samyong*

The hands of the demon have *Koang Reak*, *Koang Kon*, *Kantrum*, and *Koang Nhor*. The legs of the demon have *Koang Nhor* below and *Koang Chhuk* on the top. As for the head, the demon wears *Makuta* with ten faces, *Krong Reap*, the king of Lanka.

According to Professor Minh Kossany, the ten faces of the demon represent *Krong Reap*. They are made of lacquer. In the past, they were made of pure gold, but today they are gilded. There are two or three *Khsei Chheang* (straps) on the side in accordance with particular dancer and sometimes there is no bead on the dress. In particular, *Chora Bab* has regular norm, which was sewn in the human form and folded according to dancers.



Figure 43 – 44: Yeaksa, demon, with costume in the Classical Dance

d. Hanuman Dancers

Hanuman dancers wear the following costume and ornaments:

- White long sleeves with *Pak Kra Yao Sva*
- Wearing *Samrong Kar*
- Wearing *Sangva* with *Buddhi* leaf pendant
- Wearing a white short pants
- Wearing a fabric on the waist
- Wearing *Khim Khat* belt

Wearing *Koang Reak*, *Koang Kan*, *Kantrum*, and *Koang Nhor* on the dancer's hands, and wearing *Koang Nhor* from below and *Koang Toang Chhuk* on the top of the dancer's legs. On the Hanuman's head, the dancer wears a white monkey mask.

According to Professor Minh Kossany, Hanuman does not wear *Khsei Chheang* (Strap) on the side, and the dress of Hanuman is decorated with *Kra Yao*. The face decoration is based on the particular characteristic of each monkey in different scene and story. Hanuman appears in different forms such Kinnara, Kinnari, Garuda, Breus and other animals (Figure 45 – 46).



Figure 45 – 46: Hanuman in Costume and ornaments of Classical Dance

2. Ornamentation of Khmer Classical Dance

In 1961 – 1962, under the supervision of the Queen Sisowath Kossamak Nearirath, the ornamentation of minor dancers of Classical Dance, Apsara, was adopted from the wishing dance which is similar to that of the present Apsara dancer. There are many types of ornaments of classical dancers:

- **Flowers used in Khmer Classical Dance:** *Champey* flower is put on the right side of the Apsara head. It is believed that it helps to raise the beauty of the dancer.

- **Kra Ya or Tum Hou (earrings) of Khmer Classical Dancers:** *Kra Ya* is so long that it almost reach the shoulders. These earrings are adopted from *Kra Saing* flower or *Mtes* (chilli) flower. However, it is believed that the best form of earrings is adopted from the *Kra Saing* flower because it forms a *Kanh Chum* that is more beautiful than *Mtes* flower. Usually, Apsara wears so heavy earrings that the ears of Apsara dancers are longer than those of normal people.

- **Samrong Kar (ornaments on neck) of Khmer Classical Dancers:** *Samrong Kar* is usually a little bigger than the neck. The designer does not want to cover the whole neck. It tends to expose the back part of the neck. It is decorated with brass ornaments in line and many leaves of a tree. There is a big leaf to replace pendant, which is attached to the flower in the middle. Sometimes, dancer wears necklace made of golden pearl.

- **Belt for Khmer Classical Dancers:** The belt for Apsara dancers is similar to *Samrong Kar*, but the difference is that while *Samrong Kar* is sewn on the curved fabric, the belt is sewn on the straight fabric.

- **Snab Dei of Khmer classical dancer** is a flat motif. Apsara wears *Snab Dei* on both hands.

- **Hand Ornaments of Khmer Classical Dancers:** The hands of Apsara dancers are decorated with *Koang Rak*, *Kantrum*, *Koang Nhor* or earrings and wearing *Sanleuk* (leaf). Dancers also wear garland of *Mlis* (jasmine) to help raise the beauty.

- **Bra Dab Chheung of Khmer Classical Dancers:** Ornaments for Khmer classical dancer's legs are *Koang Toang Chhuk* and *Koang Nhor* or *Kravil* (earring).

- **Sangva Poan of Khmer Classical Dancers:** the body of Khmer Classical Dancer has *Sangva poan* decorated with the beads arranged in a line.

- **Gold Flower (Phka Meas):** *Phka Meas* is one of the body ornamentations of Khmer Classical Dancer because sometimes dancers wear it on their waists or hold it during dancing. *Phka Meas* is made of thin brass.

- **Face and body decoration:** the decoration of face and body of Apsara dancer is influenced by the modern style. Usually, dancers make their eyebrows thick and straight. They use aromatic powder or oil to mix with natural flowers picked from the royal palace to put on their bodies. They also utilize sandalwood oil to apply to their hands and legs.

- **Combing:** Although they have to wear *Makuta*, they usually comb their hairs first. They hang *Phka Champei* on their hairs to make them more beautiful. They have to kink their long hairs and make a chignon with white *Champe*, yellow and garland of *Mlis*.

- **Makuta:** *Makuta* has two different parts. It is decorated differently from other dances, but it depicted the motifs from Angkor and other Khmer temples. During the *Sangkum Reas Niyum*, *Makuta* was made of gold with precious stone or diamond, especially for main dancers. *Makuta* for the main dancers has five tiaras and two levels. As for minor dancers, *Makuta* has only one level and three tiaras. Most *Makuta* have been decorated with a bunch of kinked hairs. Dancers wear *Makuta* on the last stage of their facial and body decoration. Dance masters put the *Makuta* on the dancer's head. The dancers have to bend their knees in order to wear this *Makuta*. The top tiara of the *Makuta* represents the paradise, a place for Indra which is located at the top of Mound Meru. According to Professor Sum Samai, the first *Makuta* decoration was taught by Professor Tieng Nov.

- **Lbak Phka Sam Yong:** *Lbak Phka Sam Yong* is utilized to attach to *Makuta*, hang on the right side for *Neay Rong*, and hang on the left for *Neang*. It has *Toang Phka*

Sam Yong and *Kanh Chum Phka* at the end. To kink *Toang Phka Sam Yong*, designers use cotton string which is ten centimeters long and sew with the flowers. Designers use different flowers such as papaya flowers or *Phka Rak*. They also use three or four cotton strings which are five centimeters long to sew the flowers. *Phka Kanh Chum* at the end is attached to *Phka Champei*. When the *Phka Champei* blossoms, it has sparkling red color (Figure 47 – 55).



Figure 47: Costume of Classical Dance



Figure 48: Robaing for Classical Dance



Figure 49 – 50: Decoration of Makuta of Khmer Classical Dance



Earrings (*Pkar Mtes*)

Samrong Kar (Surrounding her neck)

Figure 51 – 52 : *Surong Kar* of Khmer Classical Dance

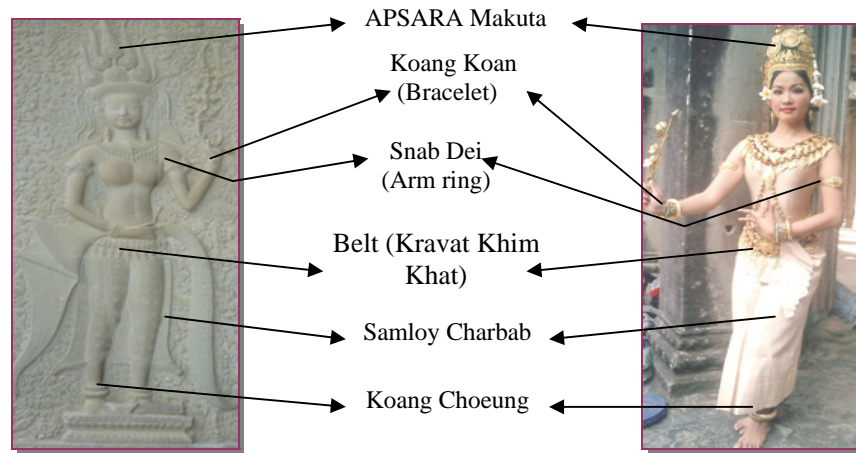


Figure 53: Apsara figure on the wall of Angkor Wat temple

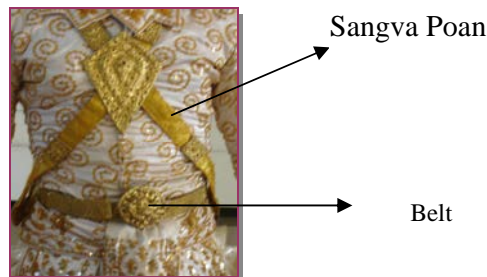


Figure 54 : Hanuman Decoration



Figure 55: Wrist with Chinh Chien Kroang (Ring)

The studies of Khmer Classical Dance have revealed that costume and decoration of Khmer Classical Dance have identical style and norm, which were adopted from the motifs on the walls of ancient Khmer temples. The costume of Khmer Classical Dance is for the goddess in paradise in relation to the Naga princess of Khmer concept. It means that Khmer lives have been full of creativity. The imagination of Khmer concept could be realized and put into practice on their land.

By looking into the costume and ornaments of Khmer Classical Dance, it is noted that Khmer people have used this decoration style in the carving of goddess and other painting that represent happiness or during the national ceremony including the new year's ceremony. Usually, Khmer people employ the costume and ornaments of Neay Rong, representing gods, and Neang representing goddesses. Based on the recent research, costume and ornaments of Classical Dance have been evolved through the times, and it is noted that the present dressing and ornaments are always better than those in the past. Because of the concept and creativity of the Khmer ancestors from pre-Angkor to Angkor

period, Khmer people have designed many forms of costume and ornaments for Classical Dance. Motifs, carvings, and costume of Classical Dance reflect superior concept and intelligence of Khmer ancestors.

VII. Picture and Meaning of Khmer Classical Dance

The creation of every being is realized by factor and contribution. When there is a good reason and contribution, the result appears. This is the law of nature and reasonable formula that exist since the beginning of times. In particular, Khmer people fell under this natural law as well. Khmer people have their own characteristics, in terms of color, attitude and tradition and those things constitute the cultural identity or national identity.

The existence of a human society has to rely on the law of nature and the transmission of knowledge from one generation to another generation and to face their surrounding nature and atmosphere. The life always changes and develops from one stage to another. Therefore, the struggling for existence is needed for all forms of lives.

As for Khmer lives from birth to death, they have to be very creative in music and dance, for example when singing a song for children and other popular songs. The whole life of Khmer is accompanied by music and dance. Because of this creativity, Khmer life is full of happiness and brightness. Dance and music cannot be detached from the Khmer life. This is the reality. The Khmer people have the reason why it is important for them to create such music and dance. Picture and meaning are always attached to each other, for example, in Khmer classical dance. The classical dance is a heritage left by Khmer ancestors. This is a perfect creativity. The Classical Dance has its own language and 4500 gestures, which are accompanied by songs and music. The Khmer musical instruments were created thousands of years ago as evidenced on the walls of Angkor temples (Figure 56 – 58).



Figure: 56: Moni Mekhala Dance



Figure 57: *Classical Dance or Royal Ballet* Figure 58: *Lkhoan Koal or Khmer Classical Dance*

The Classical Dance started from the ancient times and that is why all its performances and contents should show ancient images related to ancient stories. The Classical Dance connects the earth with paradise and wish prosperity towards gods. The dancers are messengers between the earth and paradise. They are considered as half human beings and half gods. As evidence, the carving of Apsara dance is always at the best and highest location among other figures. The Classical Dance can be performed in two ways. First, the short performance includes *Moni Mekhala*, *Makara* dance, *Tep Monorom*, wishing dance (*Choun Por*), called Khmer Classical Dance or Royal Ballet. Second, if the dance is performed or depicted a long scene or episodes of mythology, such as *Preah Thong Neang Neak*, *Inav Bussaba*, *Ramayana*, it is then called *Lkhaon Kbach Boran Khmer* or *Lkhaon Preah Reach Troap*.

Khmer Classical Dance or Royal Ballet is a perfect and unique dance that has a wide and deep meaning related to Khmer identity. Its characteristics are different from European ballet and Indian dance. Khmer Royal Ballet is a soft dance that represents Khmer tradition. The dancers express their attitudes as if they were in the sky. The movement of the dance is accompanied by music and songs. As George Groslier mentioned in his book “whenever we behold the dance, we always admire the dance and its gestures”. The Royal Ballet has its special value related to education, quality, and perfection of the world. This is the characteristics of the Khmer Classical Dance. The classical dance was previously supervised by royal palace, especially under the leadership of Queen Nearirath, and it was performed for high official visits.

Under the Khmer Rouge, the Classical Dance was totally eliminated, and it was replaced by black outfits including sandals made of vehicle tires and revolutionary songs. That was the period of the fall of Khmer Classical Dance. After the fall of Khmer Rouge, January 7, 1979, the Classical Dance has been promoted not only for the foreign official visits but also for common people of all ages from urban and rural areas. Each movement of dance has its own meaning and reflects national identity. The meaning of dance is based on the principle of humanism. The goal was to use human beings for educating themselves. Sometimes, human being appears as a symbol. There are two concrete values

of Khmer culture: material and spiritual. These values are expressed in one uniform thing and they can be separated as quoted from Professor Chheng Phon.

For example, *Moni Mekhala* is a dance related to rain and storm or a dance related to the creation of the world. There are two forms of nature, nature in the atmosphere and nature in the human mind. These natures are composed of four basic elements: water, earth, fire, and wind. Wind plays an important role in balancing these four elements and brings happiness to the world. Mekhala holds Keo Moni which represents water. Ramasura holds an axe which represents fire. Krou (Guru) represents the law of nature that made these two beings with different capacity and ability to control the world. The happiness of the world depends on Mekhala and Ramasura to cooperate with each other in accordance with the law of nature. When Keo Moni and an axe hit each other, it makes light and rain to maintain the world. This is the true meaning of Moni Mekhala dance that Khmer people like to watch and is the basic concept. This saying reveals the relationship between the concept of art and the real life of Khmer people: “life is art and art is life”. On the other hand, the Khmer life is not different from the meaning of Khmer classical dance.

The Khmer civilization is the unity between male and female, and water and earth. These two elements are the symbols of life and creativity, and are reproduced as an evidence in sculpture of Shivaling and Yoni, sacred materials at temples. Life cannot be separated from the law of nature. Nature always contains half water and half land, and rainy season and dry season. This concept has been integrated into the classical dance by Khmer ancestors, which was incorporated into the symbol of male and female. However, language and norm remain the same. This is the law of unity, which has opposite elements leading to development. Water, earth, fire, wind, female, and male are in pairs. Sometimes, they are attached to each other, and sometimes, they are separated from each other. This concept was adopted in the Classical Dance for education, respect, and happiness of the society (Figure 59 – 63).



Figure 59: Position and Formula of Apsara Dance



Figure 60: Ta Yae Dance



Figure 61: Tep Monorom Dance



Figure 62: Makara Dance



Figure 63: Preah Me Devi

To perform the Khmer classical dance does not solely relied on the technique, that is, the dance has to incorporate body and mind of dancer. Mind and emotion are invisible, but the dancers have to learn to express them to the audience until these two beings are visible and touchable through the language of dance created and left by Khmer ancestors.

Makara is a diva dance, dance of god, played by Mekhala, Ramasura, and Voarachun. This dance is composed of four basic elements; water, earth, fire, and wind. *Makara* is a type of animal living in the water and is expressed by the position of dancers and the fan used as a symbol of the wind. The movement of these four elements is in the natural world, Chakravala, or external nature and in the internal nature or in every human being. When there is a balance and cooperation between the two beings, the world is in peace, happiness, and prosperity. This is the harmony of life. Khmer art is always influenced by the nature. The harmony between water and wind is the tranquility of the wind and water. This will result in the happiness of life in the water and peace in human life, and this is the concept of Khmer life.

Khmer Classical Dance is a type of worship dance that originated thousands years ago. As mentioned by Atitep Krong Angkor, there were 1622 dancers and 3000 Apsara figures on the wall of Angkor Wat and other temples. Today, some of those figures have been missing.

As an evidence at the Prah Khan temple, there are two dancing stages; one near the principle tower which is for the entertainment dance, and the other near Prasat Kroab Leak, the place for gods, which the Ta Yae dance uses. The concept of Khmer in paradise, earth and hell is close to each other. There is an agent to connect one world to another. In particular, Apsara plays role as a messenger to bring news from the earth to paradise, and bring the happiness to the earth.

Ta Yae dance is for gods and shows meaning and picture of purity. The picture and meaning of this dance is a message sent from earth to paradise to wish peace and happiness for all beings on earth. The dance is played for danders' own purity, and then convey this purity to paradise and disperse the purity to the audience. The ability to express perfection and purity depends on the perfection of pure mind.

To perform Khmer Classical Dance mainly rely mainly on the combination of technique, mind, and body as affirmed Professor Chheng Phon. This is a universal value of Khmer Classical Dance (Figure 64 – 67).



Figure 64 – 65: Dancing Stage at Prasat Prah Khan



Figure 66: Dance Performance for Public at Cultural Center

1. To promote the performance and express perfect gesture, the dancers have to spend a long time at the training school. They learn to combine body and mind in order to express sentiment and heart through their fingertips.

2. The cleverness of Khmer ancestors is that they did not use the charming face to attract visitors because the beauty on visage is only temporary. That is why they expressed the dance through the gesture and technique in combination with music and songs. This model is expressed by using *Kbaing Mokh* (mask) or white powder to cover the dancer's face. The reason is that they wanted to hide their faces. While dancing, dancers have to know how to combine technique and life breathing in order to make the dance vivid. The basic foundation of Khmer Classical Dance is to know how to combine their breathing and gesture together. For example, when wearing *Makuta*, the dancer has to balance their movement and keep their heads still by moving only their shoulders, but the audience would think the dancers shake their heads. This is the secret of Khmer Classical Dance that is one of intangible heritages for humanity left by Khmer ancestors. The classical dance has been evolved in history by adapting the costume, ornaments, facial beauty and gesture. In order to preserve the Classical Dance, dancers have to pay attention to as following:

- Technique: Dancers have to respect the form and model of Classical Dance. The decoration of face, stage, costume, and gesture has to fit into the movement of dance.
- Theory: Dancers have to study meaning, picture, and theory of classical dance in order to create a new concept and theory of the dance.
- Sentiment: It is a value and beauty of dancers. Dancers have experiences in performing in order to preserve and diffuse the Classical Dance in the future. The ultimate goal is that the dancer learns to combine their mind and technique (Figure 68 – 70).

Based on evidences mentioned earlier, a question can be raised: how can we develop the Khmer Classical Dance? This is the question that has been asked by dancers and dancers' associations in Cambodia. Especially, during the era of globalization, the Classical Dance is faced with many difficulties. How can we preserve the Classical Dance or do we have to develop the Classical dance by preserving its identity?



Figure 68 – 69: Classical Dance and the Training



Figure 70: Performing of Classical Dance

The evidences mentioned earlier are in accordance with the law of rationalism, and it is believed that thing has been changed and constantly developed. The status of static is only temporary. What aspects of the Classical Dance have been changed through times? Even though we cannot neglect phenomena, we noted that many forms of the dance have been preserved. We have a beautiful form of dance, but it needs a soul. Therefore, the goal of developing the Classical Dance is to define the meaning of the dance and look into the past in order to figure out what we have missed since the past. When we discover the meaning and true value, the Classical Dance will be eternal and stay along with the human life.

Therefore, it is essential to understand the meaning and true value of the Classical Dance before we develop it into a new stage. We have to base our development on the past experience and develop it gradually. This is the ultimate stage of perfection of mind and body of the Classical Dance. The Classical Dance and Pin Peat music has existed in the Cambodian society for more than 1500 years and have been evolved for a long time. Sometimes, it was prosperous, neglected, or eliminated. Finally, the Classical Dance form was inscribed on the Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage for Humanity by UNESCO on November 7, 2003 in Paris, France.

Nowadays, the Classical Dance is known not only by Cambodian people but also by international community in the era of globalization. From now on, the Khmer Classical Dance or Royal Ballet is the Khmer's property and the heritage of the whole world. Khmer Classical Dance is the product of 1500 years ago, and today it is a heritage of the Khmer people even in the 21st century. It is considered as one of the eternal values of Khmer ancestors.

VIII. Meaning of Khmer Classical Dance

In Cambodia, all forms of performing arts that were left by their ancestors until today, were the products of high creativity through times and have been preserved in the hands of Khmer younger generation. Royal ballet or the Classical Dance is a form of dance that is dedicated to gods and the dance for worship, and exists in Cambodia for a long time. It is a priceless heritage left by the ancestors. It also expresses the value of combination of mind and beauty in performing arts of Cambodia. Every cultural product of Cambodian ancestors contains norm and models. The Classical Dance expresses national soul and identity.

1. Meaning of Royal Ballet or Khmer Classical Dance

Cambodia has its own national language, literature, and the Classical Dance with perfect language grammar and gesture. The hard working of Khmer ancestors is in combination with natural talent of many generations of the ancestors. The Khmer today have a fine performing art.

Every problem was resolved by our ancestors. The Khmer people have created many perfect art forms and language of the dance, including the Classical Dance or Royal Ballet. The dance employs limbs, body and movements as important vehicles. Dance is a form of art that expresses its beauty through limbs and body. The movement of limbs and body is the important elements for the gesture of the dance and movement of life. The combination of head, shoulder, hands, wrists, waist, body, neck, and legs makes a perfect dance. Dance is different from other forms of art because dance relies mainly on body movements. Dancers of Royal Ballet or the Classical Dance in particular do not sing or talk. The gesture of the dance has to combine with other elements and would create another kind of language. This requires a proper training of gesture and movement. The movement of gesture can create a perfect word that can make the audience understand the meaning and symbols of the dance.

The techniques that contribute to body and knowledge of sentiment stay closely together. Therefore, dancers of the Classical Dance or Royal Ballet have the ability to incorporate their own lives with the roles they act as with sentiment through the expression of gesture and face that describe the meaning of dance. The movement of gesture has to be natural and rational when they dance.

2. Characteristics of Meaning of Dance Language

There are many types of dance language:

2.1. Symbol Characteristics

A type of dance that expresses beauty and meaning of dance language can be understood through words of songs performed by a team of singers and Pin Peat music.

2.2. Reality of the Dance

The reality of the dance was decorated and created by beauty and ornament, and that is a type of dance describing everyday life which is easily understood by gesture and sentiment expressed by dancers.

2.3. Pure Dancing or *Kbach Loak*

The gesture of the dance has no meaning because the movement is in accordance with the rhythm of music and was created to accompany the gesture of the Royal Ballet or the Classical Dance.

2.4. Transitional Gesture or Interval Gesture

It was created to link from one gesture to another.



1.Kbach Lea, Sleuk (leaf) 2. Kbach Chip, Phka (Flower) 3.Kbach Khuong, Phlae (Fruit) 4.Kbach Choang Ol (Pointing)

Figure 71: Kbach Pra Oab Dai, Hand and Wris



Figure 72 – 73: Training of Hands and Legs



Blush



Cry



Recite



Shoot



Fly (Neang and Neay Rong)



Fly (Monkey)

Figure 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79: Movement of Gesture

3. Demonstrating the Meaning of Khmer Classical Dance

On June 25, 2007, Professor Proeurng Chhieng, Vice-Director of the Royal University of Fine Arts and four other artists who played the role of Neang, Demon, Rang, and Monkey, demonstrated the meaning and symbols of Khmer Classical Dance (Figure 78 – 79).



Figure 80

H.E. Him Chhem, Acting Minister of Culture and Fine Arts made a speech on the occasion of Demonstrating Ceremony on the Meaning of Khmer Classical Dance



Figure 81

Mr. Blaise Kilian, on behalf of the UNESCO Representative in Cambodia made a speech on the occasion of closing ceremony

The followings are the language and meaning of Khmer Classical Dance or Royal Ballet of Cambodia (Figure 82 – 83).

1. Kbach Seuch (smile) ; 2. Kbach Yum (Cry) ; 3. Kbach Bang Hanh Khluon (Show body) ; 4. Kbach Meul (watch) ; 5. Kbach Kheunh (seeing) ; 6. Kbach Sra Lanh (love) ; 7. Kbach Kheung (angry) ; 8. Kbach Hao moak (to call) ; 9. Kbach Tov Choh (to let go) ; 10. Kbach Phay Khlach (afraid) ; 11. Kbach Kou Snae Phsam PhKoum (Lovers meet) ; 12. Kbach Chong Ol Ti Neh (pointing direction) ; 13. Kbach Chong Ol Ti noh (pointing direction) ; 14. Kbach Chong Ol Ti Chngay (giving direction far away) ; 15. Kbach Cong Ol Kheung (Pointing angrily) ; 16. Kbach Muoy Thngai Eko (lonely) ; 17. Kbach Phlae Chheu (fruit) ; 18. Kbach Theub Phka (to sense flower) ; 19. Kbach choang dai (to tie hand) ; 20. Kbach Puon (to hide) ; 21. Kbach vek meul (to look for) ; 22. Kbach thoak doch bat cheung ; 23. Kbach Reab sa (gentle) ; 24. Kbach kroang Phka (to kink flower) ; 25. Kbach Phka Ni met (flower transformed) ; 26. Kbach das Leung (to wake up) ; 27. Kbach Pra loam Chae choang (courtship) ; 28. Kbach ean boran srei (shy) ; 29. Kbach Phlaeng Soa (shot arrow) ; 30. Kbach sum (to beg) ; 31. Kbach te men oy (refuse) ; 32. Kbach oas ro ling (empty) ; 33. Kbach hael teuk dohs kaael (swimming) ; 34. Kbach soa se (writing) ; 35. Kbach leur Samleng A vey (hearing) ; 36. Kbach Chheu Kbal (headache) ; 37. Kbach Kreut choang chab (want to catch) ; 38. Kbach huos chet ; 39. Kbach a net chheu phsa (compassion) ; 40. Kbach peak chinh chien doh chnh chien (wearing finger ring) ; 41. Kbach chab boh bach (to throw) ; 42. Kbach chout teuk phnaek thnarm (wiping tear) ; 43. Kbach rik sohs say (blossom) ; 44. Kbach ban deu Knea (walk together) ; 45. Kbach doat phka (to put flower) ; 46. Kbach rorb thngai (count the sun) ; 47. Kbach sraek banh chenh sam leng ; 48. Kbach hohs ; 49. Kbach prae Kra la (transformed) ; 50. Kbach Sam peahs neak thum (respect or greet higher officials) ; 51. Kbach sthet nov (stay) ; 52. Kbach brab aeng oy deung (to tell) ; 53. Kbach pra ha (to kill) ; 54. Kbach kra peu (crocodile) ; 55. Kbach Ancha li sampeahs roa beab silpak (greeting in art) ; 56. Kbach siet phka (to put flower).



Figure 82: Professor Proeurng Chhieng demonstrating the Meaning of Khmer Classical Dance



Figure 83 : High Officials Participating in the Demonstrating of the Meaning of Khmer Classical Dance

Notice:

- Each role contains 56 *Kbach* (gestures) and four roles contain 224 *Kbach* (gestures)
- Each dance theater has many roles. Therefore, it is believed that the total amount of *kbach* would be 4500 *kbach* (gestures).

IX. Music and Song Accompanied by the Khmer Classical Dance

- Pin Peat of Khmer Classical Dance

Professor Hun Sarin, a former dean of the faculty of music and current director of the department of books and readings, provided a lecture on Pin Peat instruments. He explained that Pin Peat could be performed by five, ten and sixteen musicians.

- Origins of Pin Peat :

The Pin Peat music originated from the Nokor Phnom period that was from *Pin* and *Koang Peat* instruments (Figure 84 – 86).



Figures 84-85: Professor Hun Sarin Giving a Lecture on Pin Peat Musical Instruments



Figure 86: Professor Hun Sarin and his Pin Peat Team

After Pin had no influence and was not able to be performed by itself, there was a combination between Pin instrument and Koang Peat, called Phleng Pin Peat. This form has been preserved until today.

Professor Hun Sarin has stressed that Pin Peat had 256 forms. Among these, 33 were performed to worship the soul of *Krou Thom*, teachers (guru) and 16 were for *Krou Tauch*, younger teachers. Professor Hun Sarin and his team have performed four forms, *Sathuka*, *Krev Nai*, *Yani*, and *Cheut Cheun*, for national officials and UNESCO.



Figure 87: Performing Pin Peat Music

According to Professor Hun Sarin, Pin Peat is a wealth (core) of music. That is why the music has been eternal throughout the past, present, and future. Pin Peat has a strong influence on other forms of music. It makes people think of good deed and create a strong energy. Pin Peat has been developed in the history of Khmer society.

Pin Peat music is a language of soul and center of sentiment. Feeling of performers in expressing sound of life and soul is creator to link center of concept and phenomena. Pin Peat is a mediator between soul and romantic of life. It is also a mediator between reason

and emotion. It is a symbol of human language that does not need an interpreter because the music touches the soul.

The evolution of Pin Peat is closely attached to the evolution of the society. The evolution of society is closely related to the evolution of human mind. The evolution of human mind is closely concerned with times. New times in old times would result in new arts. The combination of new and old arts has deep meaning. It is difficult to understand the meaning of Pin Peat music because the music has secrets in rhythm, language, color in soul, reality, merit, beauty, mind music, atmosphere, sentiment and concept and in mind and music. The rhythm of music can be heard by everyone, but the meaning cannot always be understood by everyone.

Pin Peat is a result of the combination of mind, thinking and hard working of Khmer ancestors, whose goal was to express sentiment and sound of nature. The Pin Peat music is the principle and rule of life that strongly influence on the society in terms of morality, mentality, and sentiment that promote attitude and activity of each individual. Pin Peat is the art that is essential for everyday life from times to times. It is not only a fine rhythm and entertainment, but it is also a core of culture, real life and reflects social life, thinking, mentality, and religious education.

Moreover, Pin Peat is worship music and sacred dharma that people should respect. In history, Pin Peat expresses high morality and brings hope, purity, and peace in mind that means a tranquil mind. Pin Peat is a sound of dharma that makes people realize their wishes, brings happiness, relieves worries, and harmonizes the elements of water, earth, fire and wind in human life. Pin Peat plays an important role in finding the tranquility of mind and controlling the growth of social activity. The main work of Pin Peat is to achieve the perfection of mind and soul. The listeners of Pin Peat will carry out good deed and follow the morals. Therefore, Pin Peat's position is to stand life in life, and if life has to go forward, then everything has to follow the tracks.

Pin Peat was created by the scholars who had served kings in religious atmosphere. It is also the product of the fusion of Indian and local cultures during the prehistoric times in the Suvanna Phum Peninsula. It was previously called the music of religion, music of scholar or music of worship.

On its first stage, the music was called Pin Peat. It was previously called Pin orchestra. The Pin orchestra appeared during the Nokor Phnom period for the first time. The Pin orchestra was led by Pin instrument. Pin instrument was influenced by Indian Brahmanism. Pin orchestra was composed of different elements of both India and Cambodia such as *Ksae Deav*, flute, drum, and *Chhing*. Pin Peat orchestra is led for worship ceremonies, dance and song performances, and art performances of ancient mythology.

In the Middle Ages, there was a traditional orchestra called Koang Skoa, Troa Ming. This form of orchestra was led for two important purposes:

1. For drawing attention of soldiers in the Middle Ages;
2. For funeral ceremony in the times; Koang Skoa orchestra is composed of different instruments. The number of instruments is various as evidenced on bas-reliefs at the temples such as Bayon, Angkor Wat, Ba Phuon, Ban Teay Chmar, and Ta Prohm Tonle Bati. The instrument composition of the orchestra is not always same; it consists either of Koang Peat (Phlae Samneang pram Bei), Saing, flute, big drum (Skoa Chei), Skoa Sampho, and Chhing, or Koang Peat (Phlae Samneang bram buon), Khsae Deav, Sra Lai, Skoa thom, Skoa chei, skoa (drum), and Sampho. Koang Peat is a leading instrument of the orchestra.

Khmer people call this music “Pin Peat” because this orchestra combines Pin and Peat (Koang Peat) instruments that are essential. The original Pin Peat contains Pin instrument, Koang Peat, Khsae deav, Coinch, flute, Sra La, Chhing, Skoa Thom, and Skoa Sampho (shown on the bas-relief of Angkor Wat). However, Koang Peat instrument has disappeared in the real life of the society. We can witness it only from the walls of ancient temples, and this instrument has been replaced by Koang vong instrument (phlae samneang 16). Pin instrument has also been disappeared in the present society and its name and pictures remain only on the walls of ancient temples. The change from original Pin Peat (Pin and Peat orchestra) to Pin Peat orchestra happened after the Angkor Period. The development from Koang Phlae Samneang 8 or 9 to 16 was during the Post-Angkorian period.

The change in Pin Peat orchestra was in accordance with time and space that we are not able to identify its phenomena:

- Orchestra with four instruments: 1 flute, 1 Pin, 1 Sampho, and 2 Chhing.
- Orchestra with five instruments: 1 Roneath Ek, 1 Koang vong Thom, 1 Sralai, 1 Sampho, and 2 Skor thom.
- Orchestra with 8 instruments: 1 Roneath Ek, 1 Roneath Thung, 1 Koang vong Touch, 1 Koang vong Thom, 1 Sralai Thom, 1 Sampho, 2 Skor Thom, and 2 Chhing.
- Orchestra with 10 instruments: 1 Roneath Ek, 1 Roneath Thung, 1 Roneath Thoang, 1 Sralai Touch, 1 Sralai Thom, 1 Koang vong Touch, 1 Koang vong Thom, 1 Sampho, 2 Skor Thom, 1 Tror Khmer, and 2 Chhing.
- Orchestra with 16 instruments: 1 Roneath Ek, 1 Roneath Thung, 1 Koang vong Touch, 1 Koang vong Thom, 1 Tror Khmer, 1 Chapei, 1 Tror Ou, 1 Tror Che, 1 Flute with 8 holes, 1 Takhe Ek, 1 Takhe Thom, 1 Skor Arak, 1 Skor Thone, 1 Skor Romnea, and 1 Krab Chhing.

Pin Peat orchestra appeared before the 3rd century A.D. During the 3rd century A.D. (A.D. 240 – 243), the King Fan Siyon had Khmer dance and orchestra. He sent his performing team to the Kingdom of Kra Vo under the reign of the King Sun Chorn in Southern China. The orchestra was Pin Peat and performed the music with singing and dancing for entertainment. During that time, Pin Peat played a very important role in entertainment.

The evidence is bas-reliefs of Apsara dance and musical instruments, especially Pin instrument. The carving of dancers and music instruments shows that the existence of these arts preceded the building of the temple.

The dances for the gods and the Pin Peat music have been related with each other and were in their highest peak since the ancient times. Between the first and thirteen century A.D., Hinduism had a strong influence on the Khmer civilization that made us accept the fact that Khmer art was adapted from Hinduism. In order to dedicate to gods, Khmer people had dancers, singers, and musicians at temples.

On the other hand, Mahayana Buddhism also had a strong influence on the Khmer culture, especially the ways of construction and life. Unlike Hinduism, Buddhism made people live simple lives. The Pin Peat of Hinduism, which was used to serve gods, became to serve people because of the influence of Buddhism.

Pin Peat is worship music for cult and religion. The orchestra has two roles: to serve for the Hindu religion and to serve for the Buddhist religion. At first, the orchestra was not used for Buddhism, but due to weakened Hinduism, the Pin Peat orchestra began to be used for the Buddhism ceremony. Although Hinduism is not the main national religion, the Khmer people still worship it as much as they worship Buddhism. Pin Peat is also used for praying and funeral ceremonies.

Compared to other music, Pin Peat is influential music. The orchestra makes a strong sound because most of the instruments are heavy. It dedicates to Hindu gods, Shiva and Vishnu. Some rhythms are performed by Pin Peat such as sending soldier, flying, fighting, manifestation, transformation, and shooting arrow. Pin Peat usually performs a long version and describes a story or particular episodes. For examples, *Cheut Cheun*, *Ba Raing Veng*, *Phou Mea Veng*, and *Khae Nup Ri Bei Chorn*. It takes each type more than 30 minutes to be performed.

In relation to religious ceremony, Pin Peat has a vital role in dedication, praying Krou (Sampeahs Krou), Krong Peali, Seima, construction of temple, vihara or building house. It is also used for singing and dancing in the Ramayana, Mahabharata, and Lkhaon Kaol.

Concerning other ceremonies in Buddhism, Pin Peat is performed at the *Ka Thin*, *Bon Phka*, *Buos Neak*, *Phjum Ben*, and *Pachai Buon*. It is also performed in the Jataka, and Sovanna Sam. On the other hand, Pin Peat is played for funeral ceremony.

Pin Peat is used for characterizing and reflecting strong individual and thinking. It identifies strong development and energy of Khmer society, especially in the Angkor period. It reflects the strength in politic, religion, society, and culture.

The Khmer people regularly worship Buddhism. They always think that Pin Peat is the music for pagodas and is calm. Listeners become to have tranquil mind, body, and life. Nowadays, Pin Peat also reaches its highest peak. In the past, Pin instrument began first and led other instruments. At the end of each song, Pin gave a signal to other instruments.

During the last period, the Khmer people replaced Pin instrument with Sra lai as a leading instrument. One who plays *roneath thung* or *koang vong thom* would know how to use other instruments. At present, *Roneath Ek* is the leading instrument, but *skoa sampho* is the leading instrument at the big orchestra.

Each performance, *Sra lai* starts with a nostalgic sound, and *roneath ek* and *roneath thoang* make a long sound. *Koang vong tauch* starts with a gentle sound. *Roneath thung* and *koang vong thom* start with *sach phdoak*. *Skoa sampho* has three sounds: the first sound is called *cheung skoa muoy chorn*; the second sound is called *cheung skoa pi chorn*; and the third sound is called *cheung skoa bi chorn*. Each *cheung skoa* must follow the rule of each song. It means that if *sach phleng muoy chorn* must follow *cheung skoa muoy chorn*, *sach phleng pi chorn* must follow *cheung skoa pi chorn*, and *sach phleng bi chorn* must follow *cheung skoa bi chorn*. *Skoa thom* is only used when it is necessary. Pin Peat music usually has four rhythms, but *chhing* has only two rhythms: *chub* and *ching*. The sounds of *ching* are the same for all songs.

Sra Lai: It is assumed that Sra lai is a type of instrument that appeared before the 9th century based on the bas-relief on the wall of temple. Sra lai is illustrated on it with other musical instruments. According to Buddhist Patriarch Chuon Nath in the late 1960s, the Khmer people created Sra lai by adapting an Indian instrument which is called Sahnai or Naga Svaram from early Christian era to the 6th century A.D. when Indian came to do business in Funan. Previously, the Khmer had followed the Indian phonetic by calling Sahnai but later it was called Sra lai.

At its first stage, The form of Khmer Sra lai is similar to that of Indian Sahnai which is Sra lai *kloang chnahs* today. Later, the Khmer people have transformed the shape of Sra lai into the current *Sra lai tauch* and *Sra lai thom*.

Sra lai is an instrument that is used to blow like *Pi oar*. Khmer musician makes a long blow because they do not want other instruments to overlap the sound of Sra lai. Therefore, Khmer musician makes a long blow to overlap the sound of other instruments. Sra lai is used to describe a story and to express sentiment, happiness and nostalgia. The sound of Sra lai is as loud as that of other beating instruments. Sra lai has two different forms, *Sra lai tauch* and *Sra lai thom*. These two forms of Sra lai were made from the same raw materials and styles.

Sra lai tauch and *Sra lai thom* have 6 holes. Each hole is able to express two or three different sounds depending on the technique of musicians. Musician always uses the tongue to blow the wind to make the favorable sound.

Roneath Ek: This instrument can be played at both Pin Peat and *Mohori* music. Traditionally, *Roneath Ek* was used in the particular orchestra. *Roneath Ek* used in the Pin Peat has a low sound, and the one used in the *Mohori* has a higher sound. it used the sound from the point of Phlae muoy is the characteristic. Some researchers believe that Roneath derived from the Sanskrit word *Raghuna tha vinaa* in the early Khmer history.

According to Sou In and Meas Di, two team leaders of Pin Peat orchestra, Khmer ancestors called Roneath Ek because this instrument is small and has higher tone than other Roneath, Roneath Thung. Roneath was derived from the word *roak neath* (neath), a Sanskrit and Pali meant searching for leader. It was first called *Roak neath* referring to Roneath instrument. It is a supreme instrument and a leader of other instruments because other instruments have to follow the sound of Roneath Ek. Roneath Ek is a leading instrument and was adopted since the early times. Moreover, one who plays Roneath is always respected, and is regarded as knowledgeable and successful.

Some think that the form of Roneath Ek was adopted from the shape of a boat. Others think its form was from a peacock because some parts of Roneath look like the tail of a peacock. Traditionally, Khmer people thought the form of Roneath was the copy of the shape of Naga because the body and tail parts of the Roneath look like the Naga's tail, head, and scale.

According to Oknha Mohathibdi Meas Di, Roneath originated locally and was not influenced internationally. At first, the Khmer people used bamboo sticks to place on their two thighs and hit for fun, and later, they used strings to tie the sticks together and placed them on the wooden Naga figure. That is why today the Khmer people still have Roneath Ek in the form Naga. The Khmer people are favor of Naga figure because Naga was an honest animal. Khmer wanted to express the honest Khmer society. In Cambodia, Roneath Ek has been played with Pin instrument since the beginning of times.

Based on ancient Khmer concept, Roneath Thung had the same value as Roneath Ek. Roneath Ek is a symbol of *Roneath Nhi* (female Naga) and Roneath Thung is a symbol of *Chhmol* (male Naga). Both Nagas have to stay together. Roneath Thung has its sound irregularly and repeatedly in order to make its sound overlap other instruments.

Roneath Thoang: Roneath thoang or Roneath Dek has *Phlae Samneang* 21 (sound). Each *phlae samneang* makes a different sound. It was called Roneath Thoang because its *phlae samneang* was made of bronze in red like gold. Roneath Dek has its *phlae samneang* made of *dek* (pure iron) in black. It is known that in the past only Roneath thoang was used in various music orchestras. Later on, because it was difficult to make *Phlae Roneath*, musician started to make *Phlae roneath* with iron. Iron was easier to make into *Phlae roneath*. Both Roneath could be used to replace each other, but musician never mixed these two together. Frequently, it is noted that Roneath thoang was used in music orchestra in the royal palace whereas Roneath Dek (iron) was used in the Pin Peat orchestra outside of royal palace or in pagoda.

Roneath thoang does not have a curve body like Roneath Ek. All the 21 *Phlae samneang* have no adjusting key for sound. Each *Phlae Samneang* was forged into panel. There is no hole for string. *Phlae samneang* was arranged according to its sound and attached to the body of the Roneath thoang. After playing the instrument, a musician separated *Phlae samneang* from the body. Roneath thoang has a strong sound similar to *Phlae samneang* of Koang vong.

A musician used a stick made of the hide of water buffalo or elephant to hit the instrument. The way which a musician used a stick in order to hit on the Roneath thoang is similar to the way which they used on Roneath Ek. Roneath thoang or Roneath Dek has similar rhythm to Roneath Ek. One who is good at Roneath Ek is also good at Roneath thoang or Roneath Dek.

Roneath thoang has existed in Cambodian society for a long time. In 1965, Professor Khun Meas Di revealed that his grandfather told him that Roneath thoang was influenced by Gender of Indonesia (Java) under the reign Jayavarman II (late 8th century A.D.) when he was exiled to Java and returned to Cambodia with Indonesian culture. There is an evidence of musical parades on the wall Angkor Wat. Khmer people had transformed the form Gender into Khmer Roneath thoang.

Koang Vong: Koang vong has two forms, touch (small) and thom (big). These two forms of Koang vong are used in current Pin Peat orchestra. Koang tauch and Koang thom have many similar characteristics in terms of form, product, 16 Phlae Samneang, and stick for beating Phlae Samneang, but the difference is in the size of body and Phlae Samneang. The sounds of these two Koang are different in rhythm. Koang tauch has a smooth sound whereas Koang thom expresses double sounds that can overlap other musical instruments.

These two Koang existed in Cambodian society many centuries ago. Moreover, they have been essential instruments in Pin Peat in Hinduism since the early times. In 1965, Cambodian Buddhist patriarch explained that Koang vong tauch and thom were evolved from Phlae samneang 8 and 9. Koang vong thom came first and later Koang vong tauch in between the 9th and 12th century whereas *Koang peak kandal vong* originated during Angkorian period.

Skoa Sampho (Drum): Skoa Sampho is a skoa that has two faces and a musician beats the drum by using his hands. It is used only in the Pin Peat orchestra. The beating of this drum is divided into three types: 1) cheung skoa muoy chorn (1 level); 2) cheung skoa pi chorn (2 level); 3) cheung skoa bi chorn (3 level). This drum is essential among musical instruments in the Pin Peat orchestra. During every big ceremony, skoa sampho has to start before other musical instruments. There is a worship ceremony before the drum is played. It is a representative of Pin Peat orchestra.

Khmer skoa sampho has a thousand year history as evidenced on the wall of temples during the 9th century A.D in Cambodia. According to Savros Pou (1994), Khmer people have known how to produce musical instruments since the 6th century A.D. Among these are Pin, cha pi and all kinds of skoa.

Bay Sampho was made of bay (rice) powder and ashes in order to stick the instruments. According to Alain Danielou, Skoa Sampho is similar to Indian Skoa Maddalam. David Morton has concluded that Saphon or Taphon (Sampho) has its body which is similar to Muthing Marithang Bju Mattala of India based on the quote from Dhanit Yupho. It is believed that Skoa sampho was originated before the 6th century A.D. It is one of the

instruments in the Pin Peat orchestra, dedicated to Hinduism that arrived in Cambodia since the first century of Christian era.

Skor Thom (big drum): Skor thom has two forms for Pin Peat orchestra. These two drums have different sounds, *ting ting* and *toung toung*. Each *Skoa thom* has two faces made of animal hide. The size of each face is the same but possesses different sounds. This drum is usually presented in Pin Peat orchestra but it is not played for every song. Some songs need *Skor thom* from the beginning to the end. These drums have deep and strong sounds in Pin Peat instruments. It is believed that *Skor thom* existed in Cambodia for thousands years and as old as Skor sampho. Skor thom originated at the beginning of the appearance of Pin Peat in Cambodia. Skor Dei is a pair with Skor Sampho, which makes a romantic rhythm, and they smoothly respond to each other. Skor thom was also carved on the wall of Angkor Wat temple.

Chhing: Chhing is an instrument that exists in Khmer society for thousands years. It was originated before the Angkor period. Khmer ancestors carved the Chhing instrument on the wall of Angkor Wat since the 12th century A.D. This instrument has two sounds, *chob* and *cheung*. Chhing plays an important role in many traditional orchestras. It is used to express the rhythm of the song. In Khmer traditional orchestra, *chob* is the first rhythm whereas *chhing* is the second rhythm. However, if we compare these two with four of European rhythms, *chob* is the first rhythm and *chhing* is the third rhythm because Khmer people have reduced the four rhythms to *chob* sound which was created by combining the two sides of *chhing* whereas *chhing* is the opening of the two sides of *chhing*. Chhing has the shape of woman's breast. It is made of bronze with 8 cm in diameter. In the middle of each Chhing, there is a hole for string to hold and keep Chhing in pair. Chhing is called Seng by Kola, Pailin region. The difference is that Seng is flat in shape.

1. Sathuka Song: Sathuka is a rhythm of Pin Peat. Sathuka derived from Sathu (Sanskrit and Pali) that mean "magnificent and beneficial". It is a song that has to be performed first in Sampeahs Krou thom (dedication to the soul of main art teacher). It makes musicians become tranquil in mind and invite all the sacred souls to performance.

- Worship Ceremony by Musicians: Traditionally, there has usually been a worship ceremony before the officially performed traditional orchestra. A worship ceremony contained different stages such as Pisnu Ka, burning incense and candle in association with music. The goal for a worship ceremony is to: 1) dedicate to Khmer ancestors who made their efforts to create the music, song and rhythm for present generation; 2) Remember teachers who taught musicians to play the instruments; 3) Invite all the sacred souls to join in playing the music in order to make performance successful; 4) Prior to performing the music, all musicians have to meditate in order to stay in tranquil mind and feeling; 5) Light up the candle and burn incense is a symbol of cleverness because light of the candle can make them emerge from darkness and think of the bright future. As for smoke of the incense is a symbol of blood vessel that makes the musicians carry out their duties smoothly; 6) Pin Peat has three main concepts: 1) everything is resolved by violence; 2) in Buddhism, everything is resolved by non-violence; 3) Khmerism, everything is resolved by realism.

2. Krev Nay (Krao Nay)

Kreve Nay is a combination of Khmer and Thai words that meant Santheuk Ho Knung (sound from inside). Krev is the sound of yelling ; Nay meant inside; Noak meant outside. This rhythm was performed to send soldier to attack enemy or to the forest. It is a music for violent in the Hinduism.

3. Yani

This music is played for tranquil mind and diminished desire. It is the music that reflects Buddhism with non-violence.

4. Cheut Cheun (long music)

This music is similar to *Lkhon* (theater) in music. This music is described the walk of Chinese. *Cheut* meant walk and *cheun* meant Chinese. It reflects Khmerism that meant that everything is resolved by realism.

Music and songs Accompanying Lkhon Boran (Classical Dance)

1	Trak thom	56	Soay sun
2	Phleng Plet	57	Chong ka bork
3	Po Nhea Deu (Pyea Deun)	58	Phleng oat tauch
4	Phleng Hoak	59	Phleng oat thom
5	Khlum	60	Khmer tam banh
6	Roa Phup Phat	61	Oa Pi leab
7	Dam boang Kann	62	Ta loang poang
8	Kamoann	63	Khmer leung preah pon lea
9	Moha rith (Rithi)	64	Nuon srei
10	Roa Samlea (roa oahs montil)	65	Phka kroang
11	Smil Khann Samuth	66	Khloang yol
12	Cheut chaan	67	Sa loa ma
13	San leuk knung (krao nay)	68	Oa kruon
14	Prah ba sakkani	69	Cheut chhing
15	Roa Phi rab roang	70	Choen peat maanh
16	Khek voa chaet (khaet boa khet)	71	Choen kvann orn
17	Cheut	72	Sa lab dork
18	Cheut Chhing	73	Choen pang laang
19	Ba thom	74	Dam Neu Khmer
20	Roak Run	75	Hem laa
21	Cheut broa chab (sra lai)	76	Moan chohs touk (chin roeur)
22	Moha Chei	77	Seang pak kuoy
23	Sathuka	78	Chin pak kuoy
24	Phae Reu (oum Touk)	79	Det rith
25	boat Loa	80	Troa yor yuon
26	Phluk Tun May	81	Chin cha
27	Pream Keb Vaen (pream peak chin jean)	82	Chin ta yor
28	Phleng sroang (long sung)	83	Chin lum phat
29	Sen Lav (sen pren)	84	A le
30	Bray Leap (Khao toak)	85	Loa
31	Neang Neak (Vien Thien)	86	Khum Vien
32	Cheut Choun Krou (Cheut Sunga)	87	Me loem
33	Krao Rorm (Phleng Chhoab)	88	Bav lut
34	Trak tauch	89	SArak bo rung
35	Smeur	90	Phleng chaa
36	Cham Naan	91	Banh chohs
37	Dam Neu Krao	92	Lea
38	Mon Yon dab	93	Soay Sun
39	Khaek mon	94	Bupha loak kei
40	Singha meas	95	Choam sa laat
41	Tuk tak	96	Ya korn
42	Ba Raing Khloang	97	Phleng loa
43	Sarika	98	Ling loat
44	Khneuk Khnoak	99	Soengh to
45	Oa Cha Kri	100	Si nuon
46	Oat	101	Chong khoem
47	Chong Khim	102	Doem Chhoeng
48	Sa mai	103	Chao doak
49	Neang Naay	104	Neari loang vaek
50	Sek Sarika	105	Moan tak
51	Chin Pak Kuoy	106	Khyorl boak cheung Phnom
52	Tauch yum	107	Phka kroang
53	Oa Yani	108	Ba loem soay
54	Kvann Orn	109	Olav
55	Dam rei leng phluk		

The followings are music and songs in original version (Khmer version) for Royal Ballet or Khmer Classical Dance:

បទប្រៀបស៊ីន្ទ

I- យើងសូម អើងអើយ រូបរូម អើងអើយសាមគ្គី ទាំងអស់ អើងអើយជាទី អីអីអី ប្រយោជន៍ ជាតិចម្រើនរុងរឿង អើងអើយជាក្រុមព្យាបាល សាកលព្រោងព្រាត អីអីអី ដោយពន្លឺ ។

ភ្លេង ១

II- របាំអើងអើយបាចផ្កា អីអី អើងអើយ ជូនសិរី សួស្តី អើងអើយដល់លោក អីអើយគ្រប់អង្គា សូមបានផលមង្គល អីអីសមសោភា សព្វទិនទិវា អើងអើយ ឥតឃ្នាតអើយ ។

ភ្លេង ១

III- របាំអើងអើយបាចផ្កា អីអី អើងអើយ ជូនសិរី សួស្តី អើងអើយដល់លោក អីអើយគ្រប់អង្គា សូមបានផលមង្គល អីអីសមសោភា សព្វទិនទិវា អើងអើយ ឥតឃ្នាត អើយ ។

ဗုဒ္ဓဃိဗ

♩ = 100

1. 2.

4 X

ចមថៃម

$\text{♩} = 140$

The musical score consists of ten staves of music. The first staff is in common time (C) and begins with a tempo marking of quarter note = 140. The second staff continues in common time. The third and fourth staves feature a change in time signature to 3/4. The fifth staff returns to common time. The sixth staff is in common time. The seventh staff is in common time. The eighth staff is in 4/4 time and includes a first ending bracket labeled '1.'. The ninth staff is in 4/4 time and includes a second ending bracket labeled '2.'. The tenth staff is in 4/4 time and concludes with a double bar line.

မာဗုကာ

The musical score for 'မာဗုကာ' is written in treble clef with a common time signature (C). The piece begins with a 3-measure triplet of eighth notes, followed by a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The score consists of ten staves of music. The eighth staff contains a repeat sign with first and second endings. The first ending is marked with a '2' and the second ending with a '4'. The piece concludes with a final melodic phrase on the tenth staff.

CHAPTER 2

STATISTICS OF DANCES AND KHMER CLASSICAL DANCE

I. List of Dances and Khmer Lkhon Classical Dance

Khmer Classical Dance has existed with the lives, tradition, and civilization of Khmer people. It has basic and sacred grammatical gestures. The understanding of Khmer Classical Dance has to start with compiling the names of dances because Khmer people have related themselves to the world, mind and happiness of society that is attached closely to feeling, sentiment and meaning differed from other dances.

1. Understanding of Khmer Classical Dance

Khmer Classical Dance has 4500 particular gestures. All of these gestures were divided into many forms or were incorporated into a stronger form. The combination of basic grammatical gestures and fingers will express beauty and balance of life. Life has to have beauty. Grace is hope and balance between nature, individual and society in association with body and mind.

On the other hand, the concept of Khmer Classical Dance is the natural law that means the life circle of life, birth, aging, illness, and death. Before dying, human being has to follow the law of nature that is passed to another generation (seed). Therefore, Khmer Classical Dance has hand gestures in principle based on the circle of life of leaf, bulb, flower, and fruit. When the fruit is ripe, it has seeds that can be replanted for next generation (Figure 88).



Figure 88: Hand Gesture in Khmer Classical Dance

2. Definition

a. Devata (goddess)

On the wall of Angkor Wat temple, there are many young beautiful women wearing Sampot and ornament in different styles. There is no clear role of these beautiful women. Some researchers suggested that they were dancers because their costume and ornament were similar to female servants in temple, and other suggested that they were women in paradise. In her book, "*Costumes et Parures Khmers d'après les Devatas d'Angkor Wat*", Sapho Marchal used the word "Devata" to refer to these young beautiful women.

b. Tep Apsara (Apsara)

In his Khmer Dictionary, Buddhist patriarch Chuon Nath explained that Apsara is a noun that means a whitish bright and beautiful women in paradise, and they can be called Srey Apsara, Srey Tep Apsara, or Neang Apsara. According to Hindu texts, women in paradise, Srey Apsara, referred to Apsara appearing from the churning of ocean of milk for immortal water. Definition of Tep Apsara or Apsara is various. In Sanskrit, Apsara is defined as Devata Srey (female devata) or is called Nymph. Apsara lived in paradise, and sometimes they visited the earth. They could transform their bodies into any forms they wanted. They were wives of Gandhava, musicians in paradise. The word "Nymph" meant a preserver of natural pond, river and mountain. Nymph had beautiful body and face.

c. Literature

Some documents suggested that these Apsara emerged from the churning of ocean of milk to search for immortal water. The churning of ocean of milk was the cooperation between gods and Asura that took thousands years. Once upon a time, gods and Asura (demon) agreed to use Naga Vasuki as a strap to tie mount Mundhara, center of the ocean. Based on many bas-reliefs on the wall of Angkor Wat, Asura was at the head and gods are at the tail of Naga Vasuki. On the top of both gods and Asura, there were hundreds of Apsaras emerging and flying in the sky. According to this episode, many researchers believed that Apsara emerged from the churning of ocean of milk.

Cult and religion have a strong influence on the Khmer society because these two components had their deep roots in Khmer culture, civilization, and arts. Most of the Khmer art forms are related to mythology of Hindu, Buddhist, and supernatural beings that Khmer practiced. Angkor Wat was built by the King Suryavarman II, and dedicated to Vishnu. There are many scenes which depicted the activities of gods, Vishnu, Krishna, and Rama. On the third gallery, a relief of Krishna, the incarnation of Vishnu, who had 16,000 wives. There might be those Apsaras mentioned by Sapho Marchal. They were not normal women. Their clothes and Sampot were fine, thin, and beautiful. Those things must be so expensive that people in high class use them. Their faces expressed grace and hairstyles were always different one from another. Some of them wore chignon, tiara, and diadem. Makuta was decorated with beautiful ornament and flowers in different styles. Each Apsara expresses different forms, styles, and decorations. There is no repetition.

d. Inscriptions

Bayon and other temples were built under the reign of Jayavarman VII, dedicated to Buddhism, and illustrated female dancer figures. There are various theories to explain these female figures. Some researchers suggested that they were servants or goddesses. Preah Khan inscriptions revealed that there were 4,606 males as servants, cooks, etc. and 2,298 female servants including 1,000 dancers.

According to Ta Prohm inscription, there were 18 high Buddhist monks, 2,740 servants who manage ceremonies, 2,232 assistants including 615 female dancers, and 66,625 persons who served the temple during ceremonies. According to studies, Apsara dancers were adapted from the bas-relief on the wall of Khmer monuments, especially from Angkor Wat temple. Pich Tum Kravil, a former senior official of the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, suggested that Apsara dancing we see today was a copy of the bas-relief of Angkor Wat. Queen Sisowath Nearirath, the mother of the King Sihanouk, was the creator of the Apsara dance that made the bas-relief more beneficial to present and future society.

Professor Keo Narum and Prum Sisaphanthea have also compiled the collection of Apsara dances, which was published in August 2003. Apsara is a dance of paradise. These Apsara dancers had the vital roles in preserving and bringing happiness and prosperity to the world. In Khmer tradition, matrilineal is a principle for the society that means women are leaders of the society who can bring happiness and prosperity. Apsaras are the symbol of purity and represent paradise. They can bring development, happiness and prosperity to people and a nation.

3. Names of Dances and Lkhon Kbach Boran (Classical Dance)

The previous chapter has briefly described the history and origin of Khmer Classical Dance or Royal Ballet in terms of meaning and essentiality in the society. It is a form of worship dance dedicated to gods, which originated thousands years ago in Cambodia. It has high technique and value among the performing arts of Cambodia.

On the other hand, title of the dance form has illustrated meanings of dance or Lkhon Kbach Boran in the form of figure and symbol of each dance form. The public audience will be impressed when seeing the performance. The symbol and sentiment expressed by Apsara dancers make the audience happy and tranquil in mind. Because Apsara or Classical Dance is related to mythology, history of literature has a strong influence on the meaning of performance, and usually takes some titles of the mythology.



Figure 89: The sculpture of Tep Apsar on the Base-Relief of the Khmer Temples

4. List of Revival of Classical Dance or Royal Ballet

a. Names of Dances

No.	Name of Dance	Performing Date	Revival Date	Creator
1	Kinnara Dance			
2	Kansaeng dance (scarf)			
3	Kbachbaatyek(demon)			
4	Kbac baat sva (pa thom)			
5	Kailasha			Sisowath Kossama Nearirath Ma doak peay Bopha Devi
6	Kamroang Phka	1986		Professor Proeurg Chhieng Professor Mme Suth Sam Un Professor Ly Yuth Loeng
7	Khlum (Ngohs)			
8	Kaen			Mam Khat
9	Garuda			
10	Garuda Choh Sroang			Professor Mme Mlis Kroang
11	Champa meas tes or Apsara			Samdech Kannitha Reaksmi Sophoan Khun Uhsa Mam Em Doak Peay Professor Chea Samee Professor Em They
12	Chaab Banchoh, Neang, Neay Roang			

13	Chmar			Neak Krou doak poa
14	Choun Poa			Mam Em Doak Peay
15	Choun Poa Tea Hean Chas			
16	Chhoy Chay Chmar	1941		
17	Chhoy Chay Buong Suong	1949		
18	Chhoy Chay Yeak			Khun Mith
19	Chhoy Chay Chum Tung			
20	Ro Bam Dav	1957		
21	Ta Yae			Mam Krou Chavri Mam EmDoak Peay
22	Ta Khoeung (Ro Bam Krama)			
23	Truot Pol			
24	Thvay Preah Poa	1999		Norodom Bopha Devi Professor Proeung Chhieng Professor Suth Sam Un Professor Ros Kung Professor Pen Sokhuon Professor Em Theay Professor Suth Somali Professor Chea Samee Professor Chea Samee
25	Ti vea Pra Pei			
26	Te Veit	1941		
27	Tev vak Kannha			
28	Tep Kannha Ka			
29	Tep Nikara			
30	Tep Monorom			Queen Sisowath Nearirath Mam Yin Yaan
31	Tea Hean Chas (Dav)	1958		Mam Yin Yaan
32	Neari Chea Chuo			
33	Neari Khmer Taeng Khluon			Samdech Preah Kannitha Reaksmi Sophoan Mam Doak Peay
34	Neang Phlaeng			
35	Ro bam Bach Phak			
36	Buong Suong Thom			
37	Buong Suong Pream			
38	Bao Loem	1931		
39	Bao Lut	1931		
40	Bopha Loak kei			Samdech Kannitha Reaksmey Sophoan Professor Chea Khann Professor Chea Samee Professor Em Theay
41	Phka Meas Phka Prak	1931	1979 2002	
42	Phloet (fan)	1938		Professor Chhaem Mam Em Doak Peay
43	Preap Santi Pheap			Professor Chea Samee Professor Suth Sam Un Professor Ros Kung

44	Preap Sar		
45	Preah Thoang	1931	
46	Pream	1943	
47	Pream To		
48	Preah Nea Reay Baeng Pheak		
49	Pou Thao (Phou Mea)		Professor Bun Rung
50	Ro Bam Preah Tras		
51	Phuong Neri	1950	Mam Yoem Yaan
52	Moni Mekhala and Ream So		
53	Moni Mekhala Reaksa Sak mut		
54	Mon Sanh Chet ta na		
55	Met ta pheap		
56	Ro bam Morn	1956	
57	Makara	1933	Krou Chhaem Khun Met
58	Me Am Bao or Puos		
59	Mono sanh chet ta na		
60	Ya Korn		
61	Lea		
62	Leav		
63	Voa Chun and Moni Mekhala	1933	
64	Vea yor Pheay Phat (O Lorm Phum Phat)		
65	Sek Sa ri ka		Neak Krou Doak Poar
66	SArak ba rung	1931	
67	Sovann Maccha	1932	
68	Sva pra chab	1939	
69	Hanuman and Sovann Maccha		Neak Krou Doak Poar
70			
71	Apsara	1962	Queen Nearirath Mam Chavri Mam Em Doak Peay Norodom Bopha Devi Mr. Hang Thun Hak
72	Ek Ka reaj Jeanh Jay or Phka		Queen Nearirath Mam Soay Sangvan Neak Krou Chea Khann

b. List of Lost Khmer Classical Dance or Royal Ballet

73	Kanichaa		
74	Kra maa	1943	
75	Ro bam Ksaat	1950	
76	Ro bam Kngork		
77	Kam Nap buong and robam		
78	Chab robam		
79	Chao ying da da	1939	
80	Chorm Kala Busba		
81	Chay nis do		
82	Chvea		

83	Dam neu kbuon neak robam	
84	Robam neak	
85	Bun Loy (roam ro beab tlok)	1938
86	Ba le lav	1942
87	Ba le Kampuchea	
88	Buong Suong thvay tevada	1946
89	ro bam phka	1951
90	Mchas ksatri botum	
91	Mit ta pheap Khmer Americ	1959
92	Mit ta pheap Khmer chin	1960
93	Ro bam yeak	
94	Ro bam rom leuk thvay vi nhean khan preah moha ksat monivong	1941
95	ro bam vi lann da	1948
96	ro bam sa la ma (sa lo ma)	
97	ro bam sinuon	
98	ro bam sva kum	1941
99	ro bam final	
100	hok kra sat	1947
101	ro bam hang sar	1956
102	A pe sas (India choh sampov)	

c. List Revival Lkhon Kbach Boran or Khmer Royal Ballet

No.	Names of Dance	Performing Date	Revival Date	Creator
1	Ka Keiy			
2	Krey	1933		
3	Preah Chan Koroap	1945		
4	Preah Chin na vong			
5	Chhut Anu Rut Denh Kinnara			
6	Chhut Sopeak leak (Anu rut)			
7	Preah thoang Neang neak	1965		Queen Nearirath Khun meay Mam Em doak peay Neak krou mlis kroang Neak krou proang Neak mneang reth Lok Krou Kmao Lok Krou Hang Thun Hak
8	Tep Sangva			
9	Ream ke			
10	Chhut Cham Baing Krong Reap			
11	Chhut denh breus meas			
12	Chhut preah ream truot pol			
13	Chhut Krong Reap Choak Neang Sita			
14	Chhut Sovann Maccha			

15	Chhut Sita Luy Phleung	1995	Norodom Bopha Devi Professor Proeurng Chhieng Neak krou Em Theay Neak Krou Sut Sam Un Neak Krou Sut Somali Neak Krou Pen Sok Huon
16	Chhut Choang Spean	1996	Norodom Bopha Devi Professor Proeurng Chhieng Neak krou Em Theay Neak krou Sut Sam Un
17	Chhut Sita doing teuk knung prey	1997	Neak krou Em Theay Professor Minh Kossany Professor Proeurng Chhieng
18	Chhut ream leak chup leak		Mam Yim Yan
19	Chhut Preah ream chol koart		
20	Preah Vessantara	1957	
21	Preah Saingkha	1941	
22	Preah Samuth	1936	
23	Suryavong		
24	Preah Anu rut	1939	
25	Eisey dach chhean	1963	Queen Nearirath Khun Meay Mam Doak Peay Lok Moat Neak krou Mlis Kroang
26	Ee nav	1958	

d. List of Lost Lkhon Boran or Khmer Royal Ballet

27	Ken Vila ra	1948
28	Kai las	
29	Chakra vong	
30	Preah Chao Damrey Sar	1947
31	Chao Suri sak	
32	Chay Toart	1950
33	Preah Chay Sen	1956
34	Preah Bat Chay Chet	1944
35	Dev Kannha (Dev Kanika)	1958
36	Preah Bortama Sann pa thi	1952
37	Phchanh mea	
38	Preah Keto mealea	
39	Preah Kho but	
40	Neang Champa Thoang	
41	Preah Neareay Baeng Pheak	
42	Preah bat tharme sama poa thi	
43	Preah Botum Sorya	
44	Preah loen thoang	
45	Preah saing hun	
46	Preah suthi nachak rithi	

47	Preah sut thi vong	
48	Mak Thoeung	
49	Pung Sovann Chann Sareth	
50	Vong Sovann	1941
51	Sothin Chak	1933
52	Sovanna pong	
53	Sovanna Hang	
54	Sovann Hong	1939
55	Preah Sothun	1946
56	Preah Sithun Keo Monorea	

5. Brief Description of Khmer Classical Dance

Royal Ballet or the Classical Dance is a symbol of Khmer civilization and is invaluable for the Khmer younger generation.

Kinnara Dance

Kinnara is the name of a bird that looks like human being, but it has wings that make the bird fly. Kinnara only exists in the Khmer legend. Kinnara dance is an identical dance because the movement of gesture is similar to the flying of bird. It is one of the important Kbach (gesture) in the Khmer classical dance (Figure 90).

Kam Roang Phka Dance

Kamroang Phka dance is a welcoming or greeting dance. During performance, female dancers hold the garlands of flowers that are the symbol of friendship. This is performed during big inauguration or consecration of great achievements.



Figure 90: Kinnara Dance

Ksat Dance

It is seen only in the text of Khmer Classical Dance. Ksat is one of the Classical Dances that is not performed at the present. This dance expresses the grace and beauty of kings who wore bright and beautiful ornaments (Figure 91).



Figure 91: KsatDance

As mentioned in the traditional songs in the following sections in Khmer:

គ្រប់អង្គទ្រង់ស្រង់	ជម្រះប្រាណ
សុគន្ធារសាយលាប	កាយផ្លូវផង ។
ស្នាប់ខ្យសង្ហា	ភូសាទ្រង់
ឆ្លងអង្គលម្អ	ស្រស់រឿតនាយ ។
កងកាន់សុវណ្ណ	លេចរស្មី
ទម្រង់ពេជ្រព្រាយ	ឆ្កុះនេត្រា ។
ទ្រង់ម្តុដសៀតក្រឹស	ឬទ្ធិក្លា
យាត្រាចូលគាត់	ព្រះជេរ្សដឹង ។

Champa Meas Tes Dance

According to documents, Champa meas tes dance was created long before the creation of Apsara dance. It was first performed by Princess Norodom Socheat. Later, it was performed by Princess Norodom Vichara. Champa meas tes which is performed today, was created by Neak krou Em Theay. She remembers all the meanings and Kbach and gestures of the dance.

Chhaab Bach Choh

Students of dance have learned this dance since they were 5 – 6 years old. Everyday, they are trained to know how to move their hands, legs, and body that is the core of the Classical Dance. Chhaab Bach Choh is incorporated with other principle gestures before students learn to dance (Figure 92).



Figure 92: Kbach Chhab Bach Choh Dance

Chmar Dance (Cat Dance)

Chmar dance is a dance for young children who perform to wish and admire the prestige of the kings.

Wishing Dance

Wishing dance is a type of worship dance that is performed for dedication to gods and sacred beings, and for wishing the kings and a nation happiness (Figure 93).



Figure 93: Wishing Dance Performed by Children

Chhuoy Chaay Dance

Chhuoy Chaay dance was created by Samdech Sothearos. The dance described grace and beauty and perfect voices of a Princess. It is noted that Chhuoy Chaay dance has described many forms including Chhuoy Chaay Chum Tung, Chhuoy Chaay Chmar, and Chhuoy Chaay Angkor.

Ta Yae Dance

Ta Yae dance is a form of dance that is dedicated to gods. The meaning of the dance is highly purified. Dancers expressed calmness and purity. It is believed that the performance can bring the world with peace, prosperity and happiness.

Dao Dance (sword dance)

Dao, sword, is an important tool in the dance. This dance is usually performed for the soldier, especially ranking promotion. The meaning of the song describes the offering and wishing leaders who strongly commit to protect a nation (Figure 94).



Figure 94: Dao Dance (Sword Dance)

Ti Vea Pra Peiy Dance

Ti vea pra peiy was created by Neak krou Chea Samee for children on the Children's Day in 1979. Besides performance quality, this dance embraces a value of friendship education, sincerity, and patriotism.

Tep Kanhaka Dance

Tep Kanhaka was created in 1992 by dancers and musicians under the supervision of Sam Chan Moli during the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival in the United States of America. The meaning of this dance is to describe the ancient Khmer monuments whereas the gesture of the dance expresses the bas-reliefs on the wall Angkor Wat (Figure 95).



Figure 95: Tep Kanhaka Dance

Tep Monorom Dance

Tep Monorom is a perfect dance that carries a traditional norm. It was modified by Queen Nearirath. Dancers represent gods and goddesses who dance to wish people and a nation happiness and prosperity.

Te Veit Dance

Te Veit is a type of Khmer Classical Dance. In 1946, it was called Robam Tevak Tea sei (god's servant dance) for an individual dancer. Later on, Queen Sisowath Nearirath modified it into group dancers. It has particular characteristics and beauty in accordance with songs and music.

Nea Ri Chea Chuor Dance

Neari Chea Chuor was created for children. It illustrates the meaning and beauty of Khmer dance. Another meaning of *Neari Chea chuor* dance is to express the gratitude to ancestors.

Robam Bach Phka (Throwing Flower Dance)

Robam bach phka is a worship dance. It is performed to dedicate to gods and sacred being to ask for happiness to kings, people, and Khmer nation.

Robam Bopha Lok Keiy

Robam Bopha Lok Keiy was created for children who danced after the son and Pin Peat music in accordance with sounds. This dance expresses gratitude to Khmer ancestors who have left invaluable heritages.

Robam Buong Suong Pream

According to Khmer tradition, this dance was performed for wishing people and a nation happiness and prosperity (Figure 96).



Figure 85: Robam Buong Suong (Wishing Dance)

Robam Phloet (Fan Dance)

Fan is an important tool in this dance. Robam Phloet was performed for peace and happiness of kings, dignitaries, and people (Figure 97).



Figure 97: Robam Phloet (Fan Dance)

Pou Thao Dance (Axe Dance)

This dance is called *Pou Thao* (axe) because *Pou Thao* is an important attribute in the dance. The dance is accompanied by Pin Peat orchestra and reminds Khmer younger generation to be proud of, love and conserve cultural heritages.

Preap Sar Dance (White Pigeon Dance)

Preap Sar dance is a symbol of peace. It is a symbolic dance that brings peace and tranquility to people of the world (Figure 98).



Figure 98: Preap Sar Dance (White Pigeon Dance)

Phuong Neri Dance

Phuong Neri is usually performed at important ceremonies and receptions of special guests. Songs and gesture in Phuong Neri express softness of Khmer women with beauty of nature and flower.

Mono Sanh Chet Ta Na Dance (Sentiment Dance)

This dance was created in the 1980s by writers and dancers of University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh for the purpose of yielding ways and experience for young students who were trained to express their sentiments in front of public audiences. After they got used to the basic gestures, students would be trained to move their bodies and expressed sentiments in descriptive dance as other normal dance.

Mit Ta Pheap Dance (Friendship Dance)

This dance is performed to strengthen the friendship between one nation and another. National flag is used in this dance. Dancers wave the flag that symbolizes the friendly relationship, peace, and happiness of people in the world (Figure 99).



Figure 99: Mit Ta Pheap Dance (Friendship Dance)

Mei Am Bao Dance (Butterfly Dance)

This dance was created by Queen Nearirath under the reign of King Norodom Soramarith. This dance can be performed as butterfly or Naga. However, the meaning of the song is concerned with Naga.

Makara Dance

This dance is concerned with spiritual beings who preserved the world and is a symbol of Lok Theat, components of the world, water, earth, fire and wind. Dancers used Phloet, fans, to represent the movement of wind that caused water, and rain caused the movement of earth and fire. All of these are movement in Chakravala in nature and in each individual. When the movement is in balance, the happiness in each individual exists in society and humanity (Figure 100).



Figure 100: Makara Dance

Voar Chhun Dance

Voar Chhun is a form of Khmer Classical Dance. When Voar Chhun went to study magic, he met with other students. After the meeting, they got together to dance for entertainment. Everyone had to join the dance, even Moni Mekhala, a preserver of the ocean

Sek Sarika Dance

This dance was created and designed for children and young people who had already been trained and had experienced the dance. The gestures of this dance were the imitation of the movements of human being and bird.

Hanuman Pra Chaab

In the Ream Ke (Ramayana), there are four main roles, Neang, Neay, Roang, Yeak (demon), and sva (monkey). The scene, “sva pra chaab” illustrates the fighting between sva sar (white monkey) and black monkey. In Khmer concept, white and black monkeys are the symbols of the good and the evil. Usually, a white monkey is the winner (Figure 101).



Figure 101: Hanuman Pra Chaab (Monkey Dance)

Apsara Dance

Apsaras are the goddesses who live in paradise. They originated from the churning of ocean of milk between gods and demons in order to seek immortal water (Figure 102).



Figure 102: Apsara Dance

Eka Reaj Jeanh Chay (Victory and Independence Dance)

This dance was created by Princess Kannitha Reaksmeay Sophoan. This dance was performed to remind and congratulate the Independence Day on which Khmer declared its independence from France in 1953 under the leadership of the King Norodom Sihanouk, the father of Cambodian and independence (Figure 103).



Figure 102: Eka Reaj Jeanh Chay (Victory and Independence Dance)

6. Lkhon Kbach Boran Khmer (Khmer Classical Dance)

Roeurng Kakeiy

Kakeiy was written by the King Ang Duong in 1815 when he was 19 years old. This story tells the attitude of a woman, named Kakeiy. The story was included on the middle school curriculum in order to educate Khmer women to be honest with family and husband.

Roeurng Kailash

Kailash was an episode depicted from Preah Sothun Neang Keo Monorea that illustrates five goddesses who came from Kailash. On arriving at Srah Boakha rak Ney (pond) they took off their clothes and magic scarfs that could make them fly. At that time, there was a prince who loved the youngest goddess and wanted to get married with her. He stole her magic scarf from her to prevent her from flying back to Kailash.

After hearing their father asking them to return home, each goddess hurried to dress up and flew back to Kailash, except the youngest goddess who was not able to fly without the magic scarf. She was shocked and fainted. After seeing this situation, the prince came out and helped her, but she was upset toward the prince's attitude. The prince promised that if she loved him he would grant her the magic scarf. She got back the magic scarf back without answering, but she also fell in love with him.

Kreiy Thoang

Kreiy Thoang is a traditional Khmer legend. It describes two daughters, Neang Sampov Keo and Neang Sampov Meas, of a wealthy family who asked their father to take a bath in a river. Their servants asked them not to go too far from the riverbank, but they did not follow their servants' suggestion, and then suddenly, Neang Sampov Meas was taken by a crocodile named Charavann. Her father asked all heroes in the village to help Neang Sampov Meas, and promised that one who could save her would get married with her.

The information was heard by Kreiy Thoang who was good at walking on the water and going under the water. Kreiy Thoang promised the father that he would bring her back within three days. At the time, Charavann had brought Neang Sampov Meas to his cave, transformed himself into human being and then flirted with her. When Kreiy Thoang arrived at his cave, Charavann hid her and transformed himself into a crocodile again to fight against Kreiy Thoang. Finally, Kreiy Thoang successfully killed Charavann. Kreiy Thoang met Neang Sampov Meas and told her about her father's promise. After listening to Kreiy Thoang, Neang Sampov Meas agreed to love him, and they got married upon their returning home.

Roeurng Tep Sangva

After learning all the magic from Eiseiy, Preah Phirun returned to his hometown. At the same time, a king of demon, Pinurath, wanted Neang Tep Sangva from Princess Preah Phaiy Someali to get married with his son, Veiy Rath. After knowing that Preah Phaiy Somali did not agree to let her daughter get married with his son, the king of demon, Pinurath, declared a war against Preah Phaiy Somali. Preah Phaiy Somali asked Naga king his help. Naga king promised to help by transforming Neang Tep Sangva into a commander of the soldiers. During the fighting between Phinurath and Tep Sangva, Preah Phirun arrived and helped Neang Tep Sangva to win over Phnurath. Finally, Preah Phirun and Neang Tep Sangva fell in love.

Roeurng Preah Chan Koroap

After learning all the magic, Preah Chan Koroap left his master, Moha Eiseiy, to return to his kingdom. His master gave him a small box made of Keo Moara (diamond), but prohibited him from opening the box during the trip. However, he could not wait to get to the kingdom and finally opened it. Suddenly, a beautiful woman appeared from the box. Her name is Neang Moara and later became his wife.

Roeurng Preah Jinavong

After learning all the magic, Preah Jinavong left his master, Moha Eiseiy, to return to his kingdom. Before leaving, his master gave him a sword. On the way, Preah Jinavong was so tired and fell asleep under a big tree. While sleeping, a white monkey stole his sword from him. Later on, a king of demon, Preah Bat Chitra, killed the white monkey and brought the sword to his kingdom. After waking up, he found out that he lost his sword and saw the dead white monkey. He then put the white monkey back to life, and asked him what happened. After knowing the reason, they went to find the sword together.

They finally arrived at the palace of Preah Bat Chitra. They saw Neang Anjun Chit playing in the garden. Preah Jinavong transformed a white monkey into a small monkey and ran toward Ajun Chit. She asked her servants to follow the monkey. They all got lost in the garden, but only Snoam Ek, Neang Marateiy, the most beautiful woman in palace, reached Preah Jinavong. After that, they fell in love with each other. Preah Jinavong asked her to bring back the sword. Preah Jinavong agreed to let the small monkey go with her. Neang Marateiry gave a small monkey to Princess Ajun Chit. After having the small monkey, she asked her father the permission to keep it with her. Finally, the small monkey returned to Preah Jinavong with the magic sword and later they were able to return to their kingdom.

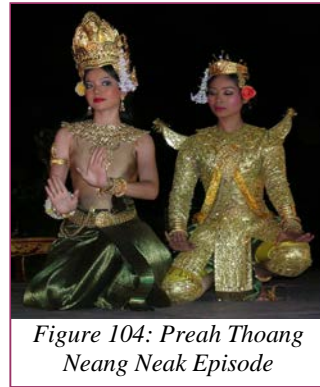
Roeurng Preah Thoang

Preah Thoang is the husband of Neang Neak (Naga), who is a princess of the king of Naga kingdom. Once upon a time, the King Preah Bat Atityavong was told that his son, Preah Thoang, was going to usurp the throne. After hearing the

news, he exiled his son. Preah Thoang told his sister that he would leave the kingdom. He left the kingdom with his retinues by a boat across the ocean. Finally, he safely arrived at an island, began to build his palace, and started a new life there.

The King Asucheiy, who ruled the island for a some time, had heard about the arrival of Preah Thoang. He sent four Malaysian agents in order to collect information. Preah Thoang had told his four officials about his situation and told them that he would not want to subjugate the island.

Preah Thoang only wanted peace. Later on, the prestige of Preah Thoang was known to many people in the island. Most of them supported Preah Thoang. That made the King Asucheiy jealous of Preah Thoang. The King Asucheiy ordered his soldiers to chase Preah Thoang from the island. Preah Thoang resisted and fought with Asucheiy, and finally won the war. He exiled Asucheiy from the island. Since that time, Preah Thoang continued to rule Cambodia until today (Figure 104).



*Figure 104: Preah Thoang
Neang Neak Episode*

Roerng Preah Veisantara

This story depicts the last life form of Buddha before reaching enlightenment. It is a story that has a strong influence on Khmer everyday life. This story illustrates the mission of Veisantara and his gift. Later, he contributed to a white elephant that was his state's property. Because of this action, he was exiled with his wife and children to Phnom Kiri Mungkut. He also gifted his wife and children to Ta Chor Chuok.

Roerng Preah Saingha

This story describes Preah Bat Samal reaj (king) who ordered his dignitaries to invite heroes to royal palace for his seven daughters' marriage. Six of his daughters found their husbands except the youngest one who did not want to get married. The king was very angry, and asked his bodyguards if there were any more heroes. Bodyguards told him that only one dump is left. He then ordered his bodyguards to bring the dump person to his youngest daughter, Rachana. After seeing the dump person, she made a wish that if he was her husband, the garland would be fallen into his neck. After wishing, she found out that the dump person became a handsome man, and finally they got married.

Roeurng Sothun Neang Keo Monorea

In the story, Thmeur Preiy Punnaroek brought Preah Sothun to watch seven goddesses who took a bath in Boakharaneiy pond. Preah Sothun stole a magic scarf from Neang Keo Monorea. Suddenly, there was a sound of bell to let all the goddesses know that it was time for them to return to Kailash. All the seven rushed to dress and hurried to fly back to Kailash, except Neang Keo Monorea and she cried until fainted due to her lost magic scarf. Preah Sothun took the opportunity to help her and flirt with her. Later, they fell in love, and she decided to live in the palace with Preah Sothun forever.

Once upon a time, the kingdom of Udor Banh Jeal was attacked by its enemies. Preah Bat Vongsa Anechak ordered his son, Preah Sothun, to lead soldiers to protect and save the kingdom from the invasion. At the same time, his mother, Chantea Devi, dreamed of unhappiness. Fortuneteller told her that she had to kill Neang Keo Monorea in order to make Preah Sothun and the kingdom safe. The king kindly tolerated her by exiling her from the kingdom. On the way, she met Moha Eiseiy and left her finger ring with him, in case Preah Sothun wanted to find her.

After winning the war, Preah Sothun returned to the kingdom. Many high dignitaries and people welcomed his return with victory. Upon knowing that his wife left, he asked his father the permission to go to find her.

On the way, he met Moha Eiseiy and received a ring left by Neang Monorea. He faced many obstacles on the way, but finally reached Kailash. He stayed near a guesthouse around a pond for many days. He also saw many female servants who came to the pond to get the water. He used magic to make one of the water pots too heavy for one of the servants to carry. The rest of the servants had left her behind. Preah Sothun appeared to help her carry the water pot, asked her about Neang Keo Monorea, and then secretly put the ring in the water pot.

When the servants poured the water on Neang Keo Monorea during a bath, the ring fell into her finger. After knowing all the news, Neang Keo Monorea rushed to look for Preah Sothun near the pond. While Preah Sothun meeting with Neang Keo Monorea, Preah Bat Tum Poar and his wife came to the pond and saw them. They finally agreed to let their daughter get married with Preah Sothun.

Roeurng Moni Meiy (Episode of Moni Mekhala Raksa Sak Mut)

The scene of Moni Mekhala Raksa Sak Mut reveals an episode that Moni Mekhala rode Preah Sovann, a place where Moni Mekhala played a role in looking after the ocean. It was her happiness to prepare herself with previous ornaments to see Voar Chun, the king of the ocean. Because of the energy of Keo Monorea, Moni Mekhala was able to fly out of her place to see Voar Chu.

Roerung Moni Mekhala (Episode Ream Eiso)

Moni Mekhala is a scene of Khmer Classical Dance that expresses greed and deed. It describes a bad person who did bad thing to his friend, and finally was eliminated. Ream Eiso was a friend of Moni Mekhala and learned from the same teacher. Because of jealousy, Ream Eiso wanted to take away Keo Moni from Moni Mekhala. Finally, Ream Eiso was defeated by Moni Mekhala. According to Khmer legend and tradition, the thunder and lightening are the symbols of the fighting between Moni Mekhala and Rea Eiso.

Ream Ke (Ramayana)

Ream Ke was translated from Ramayana that was written in poetry by Valmiki in ancient India. This poem was written in 207 A.D. Based on the bas-reliefs at Angkor Wat in Cambodia and Banataran in Java, it is known that until 1157 Ramayana spreaded everywhere in Asia, but the context was sometimes incorporated with local words, for example Ream Ke.

In Ream Ke Khmer, Kaak Nea Sor of Valmiki transformed into a crow and stole a ball of rice. Barasurama, Sanskrit, and Khmer considered as demon. Pachkay did not mention in Sanskrit verse (Ream Ke 1964, Part I: D). According to researchers from India and Europe, Ramayana poem was translated into the local languages in Bengal, Southern India, Java, Malaysia, Cambodia, and to Siam. Ream Ke means *Ke Chmoh Preah Ream* (prestige of Rama) described the war between Rama and Krung Reap. In Khmer Classical Dance, Ream Ke depicted episode by episode:

- Preah Ream Deur Tes
- Denh Breus Meas
- Reap Chork Neang Sita
- Sovann Maccha
- Cham Baing Krung Reap (Chambaing Langka)
- Preah Ream Truot Pol
- Ream Leak Chup Leak
- Sita Luy Phleung
- Preah Ream Chol Koat Banh Chort Neang Sita

Roerung Saing Seul Cheiy

Roerung Saing Sil Cheiy is an ancient story. It is considered as famous and valuable in Khmer literature. This story describes the fighting between scholars and darkness. Once upon a time, in the kingdom of Banhcha Buri, there was chaos created by a demon who ate people everyday. The king of Banhcha Bori had many wives and many children.

One day, Kumphak Nanda (demon) took Neang Keo Somantea, a sister of the king, to make his wife.

The king of Krung
Panhcha Bori was really

upset because he was separated from his sister. Because of jealousy, his wives were happy about kidnapped Neang Keo Somantea. Furthermore, the bad wives asked the king to exile other wives who gave birth to two babies, Kuch Seiy and Khyorng Saing on the pretext of her bringing bad luck as evidenced by demon's murder.

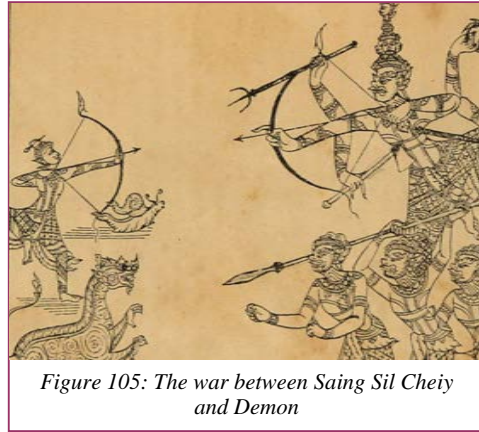


Figure 105: The war between Saing Sil Cheiy and Demon

Moreover, the king had four bad sons. They visited the king and promised that they would bring Neang Keo Somantea back to the kingdom. However, they used a fake letter that the king wanted Kuchseiy and Khyorng Saing Sil Chey to save Neang Keo Somantea for arresting them.

On the way to the ocean, they asked Kuch Seiy to stay and protect them. Whereas Saing Sil Chey rode Khyorng Saing to cross the ocean searching for Neang Keo Somantea in the kingdom of Kumphanda. At that time, Princess Sopor Tevi of the kingdom of Kumphanda was ready to be sent to the kingdom of Naga in order to strengthen the friendship between the two kingdoms. While Kumphanda was about to send Neang Sopo Tevi to the kingdom of Naga, Saing Sil Cheiy and Khyorng Saing arrived and met Neang Keo Somantea (Figure 105).

Roerung Sopheak Leak

Physically, Sopheak Leak had half human body and half female demon. She was a magician and bodyguard of her cousin, Neang Ussa. One day, Devata (gods) brought Anuruth to Neang Ussa and performed magic tricks to stop them telling a story to Ussa's father. After staying the whole night, gods brought Anuruth back. On waking up alone, Neang Ussa was very upset. She asked Sophea Leak to take a scarf and a ring to find Anuruth if anyone knew him. In this episode, Sophea Leak was hiding in Anuruth's room, and then she waved the scarf to release the smell to Anuruth. After waking up, Sophea Leak showed Anuruth's scarf and ring and asked him to go back to Neang Ussa. He finally agreed to meet with Ussa.

Roerung Inav

Inav or Inav Bussa Ba was one of the episodes that were favored by the kings of Cambodia between 1900 and 1940. Today, there is no play depicting Inav Bussa Ba. The following is a brief description of Ya Ran chasing Peacock of Inav Bussaba.

One day, in the forest, Siyakra, a prince of Preah Bat Daha, saw a peacock that was sent down by Devata (gods). It was an indication that he would meet with his family that he was separated from for a long time. He and his retinues chased the peacock until they reached the border of Kalaing territory. He transformed himself into Ya Ran, and then met with General Pan Yi and his brother Sangkha Mota. They helped him to serve the king and he received a high title.

II. Music Accompany Lkhon Boran (Classical Theater)

No.	Name of the Music	No.	Name of the Music
1	Trak Thom	56	Soay Sun
2	Phleng Ploet	57	Chong Ka bork
3	Po Nhea Deur (Pyea Deun)	58	Phleng Oat tauch
4	Phleng Hoak	59	Phleng oat thom
5	Khlum	60	Khmer tam banh
6	Roa Phop Phat	61	O pi leap
7	Dam Boang Kann	62	Ta long pong
8	Kammoan	63	Khmer leung preah ponlea
9	Moha Rith (Rithi)	64	Nuon sreiy
10	Roa Sam Lea (Roa Ohs Montorl)	65	Phka kroang
11	Smoel Khan Samut	66	Khloang yol
12	Cheut Chaan	67	Saloma
13	Sanleuk Knung (Krao Neiy)	68	O Kruon
14	Preah Ba Sak Ka Ni	69	Cheut choeng
15	Roa Phi Rab Roang	70	Joen Peut maanh
16	Khaek VoArak Chet (Khek Boara Khet)	71	Joen Kvann Orn
17	Cheut	72	Salaab doak
18	Cheut Choeng	73	Joen pang laang
19	Ba Thom	74	Damneu Khmer
20	Ruk Run	75	Hem la
21	Cheut Pra Chab (Sra lai)	76	Moan choh touk
22	Moha Cheiy	77	Seang Pak Kuoy
23	Sathuka	78	Det rith
24	Phae Rieur (Um Touk)	79	Troa yor yuon
25	Loa	80	Jin Cha
26	Phluk Ton Maay	81	Jin Ta yor
27	Pream Keb Vaen (Pream Peak Chinh Jean)	82	Jin lom phat
28	Phleng srang (long song)	83	A le
29	Saen Lav (saen pren)	84	Loa
30	Praay Leach (proy Kao tork)	85	Khum vien
31	Neang Neak (vien thien)	86	Me loem
32	Cheut Choun Krou (Cheut Song)	87	Bav lut
33	Krao Roam (Phleng Chhob)	88	SArak borung
34	Trak Tauch	89	Phleng chaa
35	Smeu	90	Banh choh
36	Cham naan	91	Lea
37	Damneu Krao	92	Soay sun
38	Moan yon dab	93	Bopha lok keiy
39	Khaek Moan	94	Chorm Salat
40	Soeng meas	95	Ya korn
41	tok tak	96	Phleng loa
42	Ba raing Khloang	97	Ling loat
43	Sarika	98	Singh To
44	Khmek Khmork	99	Si nuon
45	O cha treiy	100	Chong Khoem

46	Oat	101	Deum Choeng
47	Chong Khoem	102	Chao Dork
48	Nang Naay	103	Neari longvaek
49	Sa maiy	104	Moan tak
50	Sek sarika	105	Khyorl bork cheung Phnom
51	Jin Pak Kuoy	106	Phka kroang
52	Tauch Yum	107	Troa yor yuon
53	O Ya Ni	108	Ba loem soay
54	Kvann Oan	109	Olav
55	Dam Reiy Leng Phluk		

III. Some Episodes in Inav Bussa Ba

To document Inav Bussa Ba, the researchers of the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts have interviewed some of the experienced professors such as Em Theay, Sut Sam Un, and Saroeurn. According to the interviews, it is discovered that Khmer Classical Dance only has depicted particular episodes of Inav Bussa Ba. Therefore, it is impossible to find out the whole story of this legend. The professors interviewed by the research team only remembered some episodes, for example, Ya Ran chasing a peacock.

Artists in Lkhon Bassak remembered more episodes, but are not able to remember everything about the story. The brief story of Inav Bussa Ba mentioned later is the part of the beginning and the end of the story. Therefore, more researches are needed to find out the whole story. It is known that only Kampong Cham province, where the story is well-preserved, is the hope that the research team will be able to complete the whole story of Inav Bussa Ba someday.

1. Source of Inav Bussa Ba

Inav Bussa Ba was a legend that people used to transmit from one generation to the next. It also appeared in the movie in which Kong Sam Oeurn and Som Vann Sodany played the parts. It was different from other stories, such as Jataka and Tos Cheat Doak, could be found in the publication of Buddhist Institute, Newspaper or Bulletin that make the public audiences remember the stories.

a. Names of the Roles

It is noted that the people's names in the Inav Bussa Ba were different from those of other Khmer legends such as:

- Pann Yi was a name of thief leader who was transformed by Inav, and other five younger siblings such as Sangkha, Marina, Santa, Paranukong, and Veiyaada.
- Inav's uncle was the father of Bussa Ba, named Man Ya; A thief leader was named Mork Linga; A daughter of the King Man Ya was named Jin Na ra; Siya tra was a

younger sibling of Neang Bussa Ba; King Karei Pann was father Inav; Grandfather Kala was the protector of the Inav family. The original name of Bussa Ba was Ken Long.

b. Tradition and Custom

In the story, it is known that Inav and Bussa Ba were an arranged couple since they were young even though they did not know each other. This story expresses a similar situation to other Khmer stories, such as Chao Sra Toap Chek whose parents arranged the marriage since they were young. However, in Sovanna Sam, Nu Koal and Barika were arranged by their parents before their birth. It is noted that the tradition of hunting doves was related to the songs in the 1960s about two Burmeses who went hunting doves.

c. Religion

It is suggested that the religion in Inav Bussa Ba was Islam based on the story. It mentions that if Inav wins Bussa Ba, he will kidnap her in the mosque when the candlelight is put off. For this reason, it is assumed that the story depicted Islam.

d. Name of the Kingdom

Daha was one of the cities in the Arab region. It was probably the city of current Iraq, Kandaha. Because of the name of the city, it is assumed that Inav Bussa Ba was similar to other stories such as Abul Kasem or Aladin Choang Kieng Tep that were extracted from the stories of 1001 nights. The following considerations are from the story of Inav Bussa Ba.

- Innav Bussa Ba is one of the Lkhon Classical Dance Khmer that has disappeared
- It is one of the stories that represents other Lkhon Classical Dance, and is called the representative of other stories because of the following points:

d.1. Kbach (Gesture)

It is known that this play was directly conducted by Queen Sisowath Nearirath. Among 4500 Kbach (gestures), she selected the most important ones for dancers.

d.2. Songs

It is known that dance theater or Lkhon Preah Reaj Troap, Classical Dance is a combination of dancing and singing. Only Ya Ran Chasing a Peacock contains more than 20 songs and music including Cheut Roa Tee.

d.3. Sentiments

According to Professor Cheng Phon, a former Minister of Culture and Fine Arts in the 1980s, Inav was the most prepared production for all the gestures, music and songs were

perfect. Especially, the sentiment developed by perfect gestures, music, and songs makes the performance attractive.

In Khmer Classical Dance, dancers do not use facial expressions, but it relies on language of gestures. Therefore, dancers have to play a critical role in make the public understand Royal Ballet though perfect gestures, songs, and music even though they do not know Khmer language. In conclusion, Inav Bussa Ba is a perfect dance because all the gestures, songs, and music were very carefully selected for the dancers.

2. Brief History of Inav Bussa Ba

According to Prof. Em Theay and Prof. Sut Sam Un, the performing of Inav Bussa Ba was created by Queen Sisowath Nearirath, mother of a former King Sihanouk and grandmother of the present king. In 1940, she ordered art masters to gather such as:

- Mam Yoem Yan, a trainer for Neay Roang;
- Mam Em Doak Peay, a trainer for Neang;
- Lok Krou Mot called Khmot, a poet in the royal palace.

They had a meeting to discuss and select good episodes and gestures to perform the dance. Lok Krou Moat played a role in combining all words told by Queen Sisowath Nearirath in order to make perfect songs for performance. The important actors and actresses during that time were:

- Neak krou Keo Yut Tho who played Ya Ran;
- Neak krou Sok Sokhorn who played Inav (Pan Yi);
- Neak krou Kem Bun Naak who played Bussa Ba (Ken Long).

Later on Neak krou Some Montha replaced Neak krou Keo Yut Tho as playing the role of Ya Ran (Figure 107).

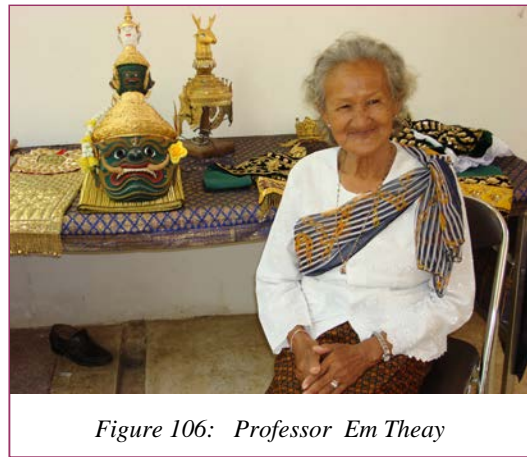


Figure 106: Professor Em Theay



*Figure 107
Professor Some Mantha*

Notice: Inav Bussa Ba was performed as regular as other stories. It was ordered to perform either for important occasions such as receptions for important guests, or for the episodes depicted Ya Ran chasing a peacock, transformed into thief to burn wedding hall, and kidnap Bussa Ba. Although Inav Bussa Ba was performed only for particular episodes, gestures, songs, and music are best among other stories of Khmer Classical Dance.

a. Brief Summary of Ya Ran Chasing a Peacock

One day, Ya Ran visited the forest with his retinues and saw a magic peacock created by Indra. This peacock was trying to escape from Ya Ran before reaching Buassa Ba's kingdom. At the same time, Bussa Ba visited garden with her servants, and that was the first time they got a chance to meet each other.

In the palace, there was a meeting of all the royal families, resided over by the king Ka Laing. At the first meeting, Inav and Bussa Ba did not know they were cousins. They fought against each other until the king came to see and stop them. After asking reasons, Ya Ran showed the King Ka Laing Kroeus. After seeing Kroeus, they knew Ya Ran was his nephew and cousin of Bussa Ba.

b. Brief Summary of Inav Bussa Ba (Part I)

Prince Inav is a son of Preah Bat Kareiy Pan. Kareiy Pan had five siblings Sangha, Marina, Santa, Paranukong, and Veiy Ya Da. Inav was arranged by their parents to get married with Bussa Ba who is his cousin and a daughter of king Man Ya. They did not see each other before.

One day, Inav, his three younger siblings, and servants went hunting doves. They met robbers who were fighting with the soldiers of Da Ha kingdom. Seeing that, Inav ordered his troops to help Da Ha's soldiers. The king of Da Ha was happy to hear that. Therefore, he invited Inav to the palace to have a big reception for Inav who was his nephew. Preah Neang Jin na ra was a beautiful daughter of the King Da Ha and fell in love with Prince Inav. However, he refused that because he already had a fiancée.

Neang Jin Nara tried many different ways to convince Inav to change his mind and also told him that Bussa Ba looked ugly. Finally, Inav was fallen in love with Princess Jin Nara. At the same time, the King Ka Reiy Pan had waited for Inav for a long time and then sent a letter to the King Da Ha, his brother. The letter was for urging his son to return to the kingdom and to meet the King Man Ya regarding the marriage with Princess Bussa Ba. After seeing the letter, Princess Jin Nara tried many tricks to prevent Prince Inav from getting married and he also sent the King Man Ya a letter that he asked the king to stop the process of marriage because he did not want to live with an ugly woman.

After seeing the letter, Princess Bussa Ba was very angry and asked famous painters to draw her. She sent the drawing to many kingdoms and asked if any princes wanted to

marry her. However, the messengers who carried it were so tired that they fell asleep under a tree. Lok Ta Kala, a protector of Inav, and Bussa Ba's family were very angry with Inav. He accused Inav of looking down his royal families. Kala then made a magic wish to send the painting to the palace of Pitou Chora Kar of the King Ka rey Pan (a black stout stomach ethnic called Arey Rey). After seeing Bussa Ba's picture, Pitou Chora Kar asked his father to tell her that he wanted to marry her.

c. Brief Summary of Inav Bussaba (Part II) in the Research

After the reception, all his families returned to their kingdoms, but Prince Inav did want to. Bussa Ba's mother knew how Inav felt and asked him to return to his kingdom. However, he wanted to stay until the next reception and she finally agreed with him.

While staying in the palace, Inav told Bussa Ba's brother to steal her blanket. When the reception began, everyone arrived including Pitou Chora Kar, Si Yat, and other royal family members. Inav took this opportunity to flirt with Bussa Ba, but she refused by saying that she already had a fiancé. After knowing that he was not able to convince her, Inav told Si Yat, his brother, that when she was at the mosque to pray in darkness, he would kidnap her. Unfortunately, the plan was known by Bussa Ba's mother and she was very angry with Inav. She told Pitou Chora Kar to be ready for marriage a day after.

As hearing about that, Inav made another plan with Si Yat by and told people that he would go hunting for the marriage. However, the actual purpose is the kidnap of her. In the forest, they changed themselves into thief leaders, Pan Yi, and returned to kidnap Bussa Ba who was marrying in the palace. While being kidnapped, Bussa Ba called Inav to save her. Another group of soldiers pretended to fight with the thief to help her. Inav changed his dress and came to help Bussa Ba. She thought that Inav was really the one who saved her. She thanked him. Later on when Pitou Chora Kar arrived she refused to marry him because she said when she was in danger Pitou Chora Kar was not there. Pitou Chora Kar was crying and asking her to marry him, but Bussa Ba still did not agree. She finally decided to marry prince Inav.

4. The Text of Inav Bussa Ba

Episode: Ya Ran Chasing Peacock

- Music: Smeun Yon Dab (1 song; 1 music)
- + That time: Ya Ran Sorivong Troang Sakda stayed in Ti Taen Keo Rachna and his soldiers
- Music: Trav noeng reay min tuon
- + That time: Ya Ran dor Troang Reaksmi sdech kong santhub tras Achea ney to send soldiers
- Music: Cheut Ya Ran chasing peacock
- Music: Cheut Ya Ran chasing peacock
- Music: Phas Ma He (1 song; 1 music)
- + Prince saw Myuri with lovely grace

- + Soay: Puok euy ohs pol sena sen somnea noeng baksa euy
- + Preah teiy chornng ban sat baksa troang chor yeatra denh tam chab
- + Soay: puok euy ohs pol sena loam chab baksa boeng ksatra euy
- Music: Cheut Chaan (denh chab Peacock)
- Music: Cheut chol knung chaak venh

Episode at Ka Laing Kingdom

- + Sdech Ka Laing cheut chenh
- Music: That time, Preah bat Ka Laing mohaksat
- + Chaak Pi Thoat reay: chenh chor toa tuol Ya Ran Troang sak ka doay somnors ka penh preah teiy
- Music: leung Ponlea (1 song; 1 music)
- + That time: Ya Ran Tvay Khluon Korb bam reu nov krorm boramey ksat bra seu toh beu mean ka avey som asaa
- Music: reay moen thuo
- troang pratean sak khpuos udom sam troang pratean tov pan yi oy nov ruom knea proem taing pi truot pol yothi chea pra kra deiy
- pan yi to tuol preah angka prorm thae raksa ya ran thvay
- Thuo: ka pea satrov phornng taing laid tohs bi chet chngay tam banh chea
- Music: Smi sdech ka laing chol
- Music: cheut ya ran noeng pan yi chol
- Chaak nov mokh dam naak preah neang Bussa Ba (Ken Long)
- Chhut chenh Kra saal suon
- Music: Smeu sak moen thoang (2 songs; 2 musics)
- Preah neang sdech trech troang troang pra peat rukshcheat doch chor laoar sophea phi kun rik reay doy posuthea kam nann knung norm knea reus taeng ang
- savyut pothchaat noeng tra yornng dohs snit chet traong chea chur kuor tors sak na Ken long Bussa Ba troang bes phka champa pra tean oar sa seat ke sa
- Music: Chhoeng lea
- Music: morn choh touk (2 songs; 1 music)
- + That time: Ya ran teus troang poang sakda sdech li soo seang leng khnheav khnha
- prab sangkha morn tam meul srey
- Music: cheut choeng
- Music: Chum choam
- + `kun preah ohs saen sarm hak nho nhoem pr proem sorm noeng preah nea sa laor dak kaya phtum sorm kreiy
- Music: Ev pang (seav pak kuoy)
- + kun a veiy kor kheunh laoar taing ohs sang ket nas tae pros kuo phi sak maiy troang kun moen chaaet kbung preah taiy stohs veiy troa prang phneang phirom
- Music: reay moen thuo
- + Kaal noh: ken long (Bussa Ba) troang choam kannitha
- Thuo: troang phnheak stoh kroak doy mni mnea troang tras sour tha noa na neh
- Music: Chaa Kri
- + kaal noh ya ran troang som corm ma raksi

- Music: jin choh touk (1 song; 1 music)
 Bussa Ba: noar na hean mork dorl taen ti
 Ya Ran: meas sne chi vit keur khluon borng
 Chrieng (song) 2: pel dek borng dek pel toek phbek troung toeng steu beak sang
 vek kreiy sou bdo chivit eurt a laiyo cho thlaiy neang smaak doyo pra naiy
 - Music: chaa kroang (1 song; 1 music)
 + kaal noh (that time): ken long troang leak aak ki neari preah tauy am pol khvorl
 sen tve troang kanseng sork pileap pek kreiy
 - Music: jin cho touk (1 song; 1 music)
 + tras tha a threat reatri chrov pann yi moen nov tov na ban doyo oy chor chit moha
 lorl luoch kan lya taing am nach
 + chuor cheat mea yeat thork ab priy sam a veiy cheat ksat moen kort khlach pann
 yi chetha rithi anng ach troang am nacho y ksin ksay
 - Music: cheut chor ra
 - Music: voar richet (1 song; 1 music)
 + veuy ya ran ak haing ka teap thork saman an ach kreiy roeng roent tae khoeng
 knung preah taiy stoh vaiy to tut doyo kla han hat sdam chab treuy heuy kan
 choang hat chveng kansang chout phak tra
 - Boat cheung: Kalaing
 - Ka laing khort Neak taing pi kum dveu voavi chbaing knea thvi roub ruom chea
 mit snit metrey samki pheakdei chea knea tov
 + chor cha: ka laing sour Inav chol thvay kreus ka laing sdeiy bantohs ya ran (bat
 khek lak)
 + ya ran ban leur sab veacha kdao kbung or rap on pek kreiy leuk kreus thvay tov
 preah phov neiy ksat thleiy troang chreap sorb kichka heuy toul tha ksat taing pin
 ban chea shean smeak doyo sne ha
 - Music: chor ra (pyea deun chol or Ponhea Doeur Chol)

CHAPTER 3

PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF KHMER CLASSICAL DANCE

Royal Ballet or Khmer Classical Dance is one of art and music that emerged from religion and had a long history since the birth of Angkor period. Art masters pride themselves on being able to spend their lives in preserving and revitalizing the Khmer Classical Dance; the prestige of Khmer Classical Dance is the same as the of Angkor.

1. Eternal Values

The eternal values of the Khmer Classical Dance rest on the beauty of performing technique and meaning in educating mind of the dance. According to the documents published in the 1960s, the Khmer Classical Dance has 4500 gestures that were perfectly created. People believe that the gestures represent the norm of Khmer art and dance that originated from the dance book. This dance book contains 108 gestures of Eisor (Shiva). It was a prestigious dance created for purifying mind and body in accordance with the concept of the religion. All these gestures emerged from the purification of mind of gods. This was the value of purifying mind and body of Khmer classical dance.(should be omitted?)

2. Concept of Life Cosmology

In fact, the language of gestures in Khmer Classical Dance is a symbol of life cosmology. According to world philosophy, the language of gestures in Khmer Classical Dance describes the law of nature about birth, evolution, development, and death as mentioned by Buddhist philosophy.

The gestures of the Khmer Classical Dance have four basic meanings: 1) gesture of pointing finger is a symbol of *truoy* (birth); 2) gesture of *bat deiy* (palm of hand) is a symbol of *sleuk* (evolution); 3) gesture of *kbach jib, phlae*, development; 4) *Kbach phtort* is a symbol of *chroh* (drop) or death. After the death, the ripe seed will re-grow in accordance with the law of nature. That is the circle of life. This is the meaning of gestures of Khmer Classical Dance based on the philosophy.

3. Godship

The softness and sentiment of the Khmer Classical Dance through performance in association with concept of education in philosophy had made in unique value which is godship. According to Professor Cheng Phon, during the Angkor Period, a female dancer in Khmer Classical Dance was called Apsara and was considered as a god servant. All the god servants are goddesses of purity. Gods do not have a direct relationship with general human beings, but they have a direct contact with god servants because human beings are not pure-minded. Only purified persons are able to talk with the gods. Therefore, Apsara dancers played a role in conveying a message from human beings to the gods through dancing.

Godship in Khmer Classical Dance was disseminated through many performances abroad. In the 1960s, Khmer Classical Dance was performed for the U.S. President. According to Professor Cheng Phon, he was delegated to perform the dance in the U.S. as the head during President Nixon administration. After watching the performance, the President Nixon said that Khmer Classical Dance had made him forget about the war in Vietnam for two hours. That is, the tranquil atmosphere of Khmer Classical Dance allowed him to feel totally peaceful.

4. Intangible Cultural Heritage

The Khmer Classical Dance was registered by UNESCO as one of the Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage for Humanity on November 7, 2003. There are the several reasons why UNESCO decided to register Khmer Classical Dance as one of the masterpieces for humanity as follows: 1) Khmer Classical Dance is one of the most creative art for humanity; 2) Khmer Classical Dance has its origin in tradition, culture, and history of Khmer society; 3) Khmer Classical Dance plays an important role in expressing Khmer identity and the way to harmonize with each other; 4) Khmer Classical Dance has its prestige in expressing the creative technique and quality; 5) Khmer Classical Dance is a unique symbol and evidence of Khmer traditional culture; 6) Khmer Classical Dance is in danger of disappearing under the trends toward globalization due to the lack of resources for conserving it. This is the evaluation of UNESCO prior to registration of Khmer Classical Dance as one of the masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage for Humanity.

Until now, UNESCO has registered 90 masterpieces for humanity of 71 countries over the world. UNESCO has registered two of the Khmer dance forms, Classical Dance and Sbek Thom, Shadow Puppet in 2005. It is the pride of Cambodian people and at the same time, a duty to conserve these art forms.

UNESCO decided to inscribe these dance forms on the list because the organization wanted to offer the incentive to encourage the government and Cambodian people to preserve and promote the prestige and quality of the Khmer Classical Dance for the next

generation. Most of the preservation and conservation works for the Khmer Classical Dance were helped by UNESCO. This is the contribution of UNESCO to preservation of the world intangible heritage of humanity for the future generation.

5. Vision in Conservation and Development of Khmer Classical Dance

In fact, the conservation and development of Khmer Classical Dance has to follow the policy of royal government towards the art and culture. The policy of the government is a campus for conservation and development. For the third mandate of national assembly (2003 – 2008), the policy of royal government of Cambodia focuses on the following points:

- To promote cultural diversity through protecting and strengthening national identity and recognizing the existence of cultural diversity in Cambodian society.
- To promote cultural and economic development and make Cambodia a center for cultural diffusion by providing enough budget and resource
- To raise awareness and fulfill duties to preserve Khmer ancient monument and artifact, to transform cultural heritage of Khmer civilization and ethnic minority into the resources for sustainable development and to give incentives to increase the national and local cultural production and decrease the inflow of bad cultural products.
- To strengthen the diffusion of culture and carry out law enforcement concerning the protection of cultural heritage and to stop the activity of vandalism. In the monumensurrounded areas, any industrial and commercial activities that can have harmful influence on the cultural heritage and the surrounding environments are not allowed;
- To continue to promote the worship of religion to ensure the harmonization of a society by educating morality and culture of peace.

This is the policy of the royal government of Cambodia in protecting, promoting, and developing of Khmer art and culture. The national policy is the guideline on such tasks. The following section is a principle place for conservation and development of Khmer Classical Dance:

6. Conservation

Every protection task has to avoid weakening the original value of the Khmer Classical Dance. The preservation should concern not only the external form but also the context and meaning of the Khmer Classical Dance. The most important thing is the meaning or soul of Khmer Classical Dance. UNESCO has decided to inscribe Khmer Classical Dance on the list of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage for Humanity based on the following criteria:

- Authenticity of professional expertise
- Value of Mentality
- Authenticity of diverse beauties

6.1. Conservation of Authenticity in Professional Expertise

The value of technique is on the beauty of 4500 perfect gestures of Khmer Classical Dance in combination with the Pin Peat orchestra and songs of gods. The style of costume for gods and way of performing are perfect and scientific. Traditionally, the preservation of Khmer Classical Dance was accomplished by the training between one instructor and one successor or many students. This is the way of training in particular and collective hall. In fact, the rule or norm of Khmer Classical Dance has not been documented and sometimes the instructors cannot memorize all gestures. Certain research also tell us many of 4500 gestures have been lost. The transmission of the knowledge between generations has not been perfectly functioned. Therefore, the specific strategies to conserve the Khmer Classical Dance are highly required.:

a. Inventory

The inventory can ensure the eternal existence of the dance. It is urgent to document the gestures, songs, music, stories, costume, stage decoration and other ways of performing forms of Khmer Classical Dance. It can help to avoid losing those things and to collect the basic data for the preservation and development of the dance for the future generation.

b. Popularization of Khmer Classical Dance

Everything created by people stayed with people, and served people will stay with people forever. In opposite, if everything does not belong to people and they do not contribute their efforts to preserve, it will not be able to exist in the society. It is similar in art and culture, especially Khmer classical dance would be fallen in the same track. The preservation of Khmer Classical Dance rests not only on people at the top but also on people from the bottom. The popularization of Khmer Classical Dance is the best way to guarantee the eternal existence of it.

c. Promoting the Knowledge of People

Raising awareness of Khmer Classical Dance is an urgent task especially for the young generation which is a potential resource for the protection of art and culture. The existence of Khmer Classical Dance mainly depends on the participation of the young generation in the era of globalization. If young people understand the value of Khmer Classical Dance, they will be actively involved in supporting and preserving art and culture of the nation.

d. Transferring Knowledge of Khmer Classical Dance to the Next Generation

Transmitting the knowledge of Khmer Classical Dance to the next generation is an urgent task. The transferring of knowledge can prevent the deterioration of the dance form. It can be done through the trainings inside and outside the established system. The

established system includes the formal education, especially the faculty of choreography of the University of Fine Arts. The training outside the system focuses on the public education through short-term courses. These two training environments can contribute to the protection of the Khmer Classical Dance for the future generation. It is urgent for the concerned institutions to pay more attention on the transfer of the knowledge mentioned above.

e. Raising Funds for Conservation of Khmer Classical Dance

In fact, the lack of financial support is a serious problem for conservation of Khmer Classical Dance. If there is no budget, all the preservation and conservation activities such as research, training, and diffusion will end. All the expenses for research and training depend on the government support, but its budget is not sufficient. Therefore, the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, the concerned institutions and other stakeholders need to raise funds in addition to the budget given by the government. The raising of funds will certainly help to preserve and support the Khmer Classical Dance.

6.2. Development of the True Value in Mentality

The true value in mentality is educating the field of mind through Khmer classical dance. As described above, the Khmer Classical Dance is for gods. The dance for gods is a form of dance that has its core in educating the mind in its priority. Most of the Khmer Classical Dance forms have their main mission in training and purifying people's mind such as Ta Yae, Apsara, Moni Mekhala, Makara, Tep Monorom, etc.

The true value of mind training was arriving from the training of morality and merit of mind inside the female dancers. Apsara dance derived from the churning of ocean of milk. Apsara was created by water bubbles which emerged from the churning of ocean of milk. Apsara dancer was a symbol of immortal water that could make an immortal life that means purity. Purity and honesty last for ever. Educating and training of mind by Khmer Classical Dance would bring a tranquil body and sentiment. Therefore, in order to preserve the value of Khmer Classical Dance, training the mind of dancers is required and Khmer Classical Dancers have to meditate to reach a state of calmness. Along with the preservation of technical value, the mental values should be preserved.

6.3. Development of True Value of Diverse Beauties

The value of diverse beauties is the relation between the beauty of technique and the beauty of mentality. Cheng Phon, a former Minister of Culture and Fine Arts, has stated that the preservation of this value is essential. In order to become god servants, dancers have to train themselves in the following stages: 1) a ten-year training for technique; 2) a ten-year training for expressing sentiment; 3) a ten-year training for combining technique, sentiment, and mind. Therefore, the total duration for becoming true god servants takes 30 years.

The value of diverse beauties, or value of immortal or classical value, needs to be preserved in order to make Khmer Classical Dance known and revitalized nationally and internationally. Diverse beauties between the value of technique and the value of mentality of Khmer Classical Dance created the harmony and perfectly fitted between technique and sentiment in order to make a tranquil dance.

Heart and gesture need to be combined into a single movement that expresses a true soul. During the Angkor period, as shown in Preah Khan temple, there is a dancing stage for the queen to watch the dance for gods, a single dancer or a place for Devaraja. There is a small stage of worship for one dancer and one beholder. This stage reflects the peak of Deva (gods) that expressed the diverse beauties of the Khmer Classical Dance.

In sum, it is urgent to preserve the three values of Khmer Classical Dance. If not, there will be a big loss of the cultural heritage.

7. Development

After researchers have interviewed art masters, cultural and traditional scholars, professors of the Royal University of Fine Arts, and senior officials about the development of Khmer Classical Dance, it is discovered that:

a. Khmer Classical Dance has reached its higher state of perfection. All the techniques for performance, meaning, decoration, and gesture are perfectly developed. There is no weak point that we should correct or modify. Therefore, this art form needs no modification.

b. Some scholars believed that there is no static art. Everything changes everyday. Only the fact that everything changes everyday does not change. This law of nature also applies to art. Art and dance can evolve through time and space. However, the evolution and change need to respect the law, norm, and meaning of the art form. The evolution needs to follow and depend on its root.

c. The Khmer Classical Dance was inscribed on the list of the Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible of Cultural Heritage of Humanity, so there should be no further development. Our duty is to preserve the art form for future generation. There should be more researches on disappearing meaning and picture of the dance. If there is a development plan for the Classical Dance, it should be on the scale experimentation.

d. Development based on Norm and Law of the Art Form: in order to develop the Khmer Classical Dance, the study of the picture, meaning or true value of it is required. If there is no understanding of these components, the experiment cannot guarantee good results and rather will destroy the art form.

e. Development of Art Form Based on Its Root: the new picture and meaning of Khmer Classical Dance must be based on the original form. The original form of picture and meaning will provide the guideline on the ways of performing, language of gesture, music, song, decoration of stage and costume that are unique. There should be the

creation of a new picture and meaning without ignoring the original form. Every plan to create a new dance without respecting the original form is the attempt to destroy the authenticity of the original dance and to result in losing the identity and soul of Khmer Classical Dance.

f. Development within Timeframe: in the 1960s, the Ministry of Cultural Diffusion and Information created a three-stage plan of preservation and revitalization of art and Khmer ancient culture: 1) a ten-year preservation stage including the activities of research, training and revitalizing; 2) a ten-year experiment stage of the creation based on original art form; 3) a ten-year creation stage of new art form. These three stages were carefully carried out in the field of culture. The long-term experiment would take enough time to survey people's awareness and to carefully consider the new development of art form.

If there was no support from the public, the plan would be paused or modified or find a new consideration. There was a survey on the views of the public concerning the new development, and the implementation was very careful, especially to avoid the lost authentic value of the Khmer art form. Therefore, it is suggested that the development of Khmer Classical Dance should follow a certain timeframe.

In conclusion, the development of Khmer Classical Dance is not necessary, but it is urgent to conserve the dance form for the future generation. The conservation has been the top priority of action for the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts since the Khmer Classical Dance was inscribed on the list of the Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible of Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO. A minor development of Khmer Classical Dance can be done but needs to be based on the original form, and there should be a clear plan for preservation of the authentic value of the dance.

It is believed that even though everything of Khmer Classical Dance would change, the change should respect the norm and law of the original form of it. If not, the change would cause the loss of cultural identity and national soul that Khmer must preserve for the next generation. This is the collection of concepts towards the conservation and development of Khmer Classical Dance. I hope this would be respected by all art creators.

CONCLUSION

Even if the Khmer Classical Dance is for the worship of gods and a symbol of paradise, it is also thought that the basic gestures of the dance were depicted from the nature including leaf, flower, and fruit, and the circle of life: aging, ripening, falling, and re-growing as leaf, flower, and fruit again. Through the hard training of body with wonderful decoration of costume, in the form of Naga scale, Khmer ancestors had brought the paradise (in imagination) into the real world.

Although Khmer Classical Dance was influenced by India, it did not copy the whole versions of Indian art. In fact, the Indian culture went through mill or screen to sieve only the core was adapted to mix with local Khmer culture in order to create a new cultural identity. The art form has emerged from the higher creativity of the Khmer ancestors and became the Khmer Classical Dance with Khmer color and means. Generally, Khmer art is not decorated in the same way as the Indian, and it does not use the gesture of hands, eyes, and neck as the Indian does. On the contrary, Khmer Classical Dance uses the whole body including fingers, legs, head waist, and neck as a basic balance of the dance.

Khmer ancestors use the abundant gestures to create the grammar and language of dance, and express sentiment such as happiness, love, sadness, and anger. The gestures are different depending on particular roles including human being, demon, monkey, or other animals. Khmer life is attached to art, as saying, "life is art and art is life". Khmer dance has approximately 4500 gestures. All the gestures can be developed and incorporated in the basic of beauty and balance because life needs beauty. Beauty is a balance between nature and society.

Khmer Classical Dance has a regular rule in the performance, balance, softness, and solidness. Every movement of Khmer Classical Dance has a clear principle including body, mind, feeling in combination with rhythm of the music made the Khmer classical dance more powerful that could attract the feeling of public audiences to be in love with past. The bas-reliefs and paintings of the Classical Dance are full of souls that exist vividly and eternally inside intangible art.

People who watch the Khmer Classical Dance feel like they may be flying in the world of gods. This sacred art has not lost its form in the chaos of the Post- Angkor period and Khmer Rouge regime and rather the art of worship has always been in the heart of Khmer people from generation to generation as Khmer national identity.

As mentioned earlier, Royal Ballet or Khmer Classical Dance originated from religion during the prehistoric period (the 4th – 1st century B.C.), and has been transmitted between generations by Khmer ancestors. The Khmer art has evolved through times and played both roles in worshiping the gods and respecting royal family. At present, the dance is performed for national and international guests.

Khmer Classical Dance became a dance for gods or a dance in paradise because it is a delicate form and powerful meaning that has been attached to every Khmer and known internationally to the world.

For this reason, the Royal Government of Cambodia, headed by Prime Minister Hun Sen, permitted the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts to prepare a document to inscribe the Khmer Classical Dance on the list of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible of Cultural Heritage of Humanity. By considering this request and all the criteria, UNESCO and the member countries have decided to inscribe it on the list on November 7, 2003. The Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts is currently preparing other dance forms to be registered in the UNESCO's list of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible of Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

The committee strongly hopes that this book is a critical document of knowledge for researchers and a society for conserving the Khmer Classical Dance for the future generation.

APPENDIX

I. List of Khmer Classical Art Masters

History clearly indicates that Khmer is one of the oldest ethnic groups in Southeast Asia. At the same time, Khmer had created the deep root of civilization in that norm and concept show that Khmer is diligent and has a tendency towards the preservation of its own cultural heritages.

However, for the last several decades, Khmer was faced with many difficulties that destroyed Khmer families, norm and documents that were important legacies from their ancestors. Khmer has the saying, “if culture dies, the nation dies, and if culture prospers, the nation develops.” It is essential to educate young generation about cultural and national identity in order to encourage them to preserve and love the Khmer legacy. The purpose of this publication is to make Khmer younger generation understand the values of cultural heritage. It is believed that

when they understand the value, they can love and help to protect the cultural legacy.



As mentioned by La Martin “when we lost everything we loved, it seemed that world is empty and life is meaningless”. In this regard, I compiled new and old documents in combination with my professional expertise and love for art and culture to a collection of list of Khmer classical art master.

1. The Reign of the King Ang Duong (1840 – 1859)

The King Ang Duong was a son of the King Ang Eng (1779 – 1796). He reigned in Udong. He had created many important things for the nation including the Classical Dance. He was a famous poet both in the social and religious life. Some art masters used to stay close to the royal palace that is why Khmer can maintain their dance heritage and other traditions. The King Ang Duong created many forms of costumes and designed new style of dressing including scarf, diadem, and ornaments for male and female dancers of all ranks.



Female Dancer during the period of the Majesty King Ang Duong



Female Dancer during the Period of the Majesty King Ang Duong



Female Musician during the King Ang Duong



Traditional Khmer Orchestra during the King Ang Duong



Female musicians during the Period of Majesty King Ang Duong

2. The Reign of King Norodom

During the reign of King Norodom (1859 – 1904), the Classical Dance had developed and prospered greatly. During that period, only the children of high officials or dignitaries had a chance to be trained as dancers at the royal palace. The king paid great attention on training the Classical Dance, and only the children of high dignitaries were able to receive a special rank from the king. The king also ordered to select prominent art masters from all over the country to train young dancers. Most of the

prominent art masters had received titles such as Khun, Mam, and Neak Mneang. Those classical dancers were obliged to perform for the king or during special ceremony.



*His Majesty King Norodom
1859 -1904*



King Norodom Sent Khmer Classical Orchestra to Perform in Hong Kong, Philippines, and Singapore in 1872



Female dancer during the Reign of the Majesty king Norodom



Names of Female Classical Dancers in the Reign of the King Norodom

Trainers for Female Dancers

- Chhun Than
- Mam Krou Yin Yan
- Chhun Prah Nheat
- Chhun Usa
- Mam Krou Chavri

Trainers for Demon Dancers

- Mam Krou Samrith
- Mam Krou Pich

Trainers for Male Dancers

- Mam Krou Suon
- Mam Krou Phu
- Mam Krou Neb

Trainers for Ngoh

- Mam Krou
- Mam Krou Loeuk
- Mam Krou Chhrim

3. The Reign of the Majesty King Sisowath

During the reign of the King Sisowath, he did not like the chaos of the Classical Dance. He ordered to re-organize it and make it more perfect. The Classical Dance of his reign was as prosperous as that of the reign of the King Ang Duong. The king invited the mother of the King Sothearos, Khun Than to lead the Classical Dance. She played formally a key role in the history of Khmer Classical Dance. She was entitled « Khun Bossaba ». She was a good stage actress, and later decided to stay at pagoda to pray for gods.



*The king Sosowath
(1904 – 1927)*



The Six Main Dancers during the Reign of the King Sisowath

List of Female Dancers of Classical Dance during the Reign of the King Sisowath :

Trainers for female dancers

- Neak Mneang Pho
- Mam Krou Phou
- Chhun Kanari Kanarea
- Neak Mneang Nou Nam
- Neak Chhum
- Neak Rumduol
- Neak Phea Sem
- Neak Van
- Neak Suon
- Neak Mneang Nou Chheourn

Trainers for Male Dancers

- Neak Mneang Preum
- Khun Krou Leak
- Mam Krou Liem
- Neak Mnenag Chhem

Trainers for Monkey dancers

- Neak Krou Nin
- Neak Krou Phchat
- Neak Krou Phuong

Trainers for Demon Dancers

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| - Chhun Krou Samrith | - Neak Mi |
| - Chhun Krou Mith | - Neak Uy |
| - Chhun Krou Krim | - Neak Krameang |
| - Khun Krou Pich | - Neak Chroay |

- Khun Krou Krem
- Neak Sab
- Neak Lvey
- Neak Chem.
- Neak Karin

- Neak Kum
- Neak Dakdin
- Neak Am Cha Va
- Neak Pump

4. The Reign of the King Monivong

The Majesty King Sisowath Monivong reigned from 1927. The royal palace and France agreed to allow classical dancers to be trained at the university of fine arts. This agreement saved the endangered Classical Dance and contributed to the development and prosperity of it. The most successful event was the exhibition held in Saigon in 1928.



His Majesty King Sisowath Monivong 1927 – 1941



Classical Dance in the Reign of the King Sisowath Monivong



Kr. Khun Meek



Neak Mneang Chea Sâmi



Neak Krou Un Bo

Names of Female Dancers of Classical Dance in the Reign of the King Sisowath Monivong

Trainers for Female Dancers

- Mam Krou Chavri
- Mam Krou Dark Peay
- Mam Krou Dark Por
- Neak Mneang Chea Sámi
- Neak Krou Un Bo
- Mam Krou Pong
- Neak Mneang Soy Sangvat

Trainers for Male Dancers

- Mr. Chhun Meek
- Mam Krou Yim Yan
- Prince Sisowath Sized
- Neak Mneang Ret
- Neak Krou Mlis Rang
- Neak Krou Khim Men

Trainers for Demon Dancers

- Mr. Khun Mit
- Neak Krou Chhem
- Neak Krou Prang

Trainers for Monkey Dancers

- Lok Krou Chap

5. The Reign of Prah Bat Norodom Soramarith and the Queen Kosamak Nearirath Sereivadhana



The Majesty King Norodom Soramarith



Queen Sisowath Nearirath Sereivadhana

When the Second World War broke out, Cambodia was invaded by Siam in 1940. Some parts of the provinces of Battambang, Siem Reap and Kampong Thom were subjugated by Siam army. Because of this invasion, the King Sisowath Monivong passed away in 1941. At that time, even if the King Sihanouk was only 9 years old, he claimed territory from Thailand to Cambodia. For the Classical Dance, his mother, the Queen Nearirath, paid much attention to training and offering the costume and salaries for dancers. She help private dancers to get the 600-riel salaries from the royal government, but later on she spent her own wealth in supporting the classical dancers. Those dancers were capable of performing dance and stage acting.

**Names of Female Dancers in the Reign
of the Majesty King Norodom Soramarith**

Trainers for Female Dancers

- Mam Krou Chavri
- Mam Krou Dak Peay
- Mam Krou Dak Por
- Mam Krou Pong
- Neak Mneang Chea Sami
- Neak Krou Un Bo

Trainers for Singers

- Neak Krou Bo Rum
- Neak Krou Khum
- Neak Krou Khat
- Neak Krou Me Moeun
- Neak Ol
- Neak Krou Dien
-

Trainers for Male Dancers

- Mr. Chhun Meak
- Mam Krou Yim Yan
- Prince Sisowath Sisoda

- Neak Mneang Ret
- Neak Krou Mlis Krang
- Neak Krou Khim Nem

Trainers for Musicians

- Lok Krou Chhun Di
- Lok Krou Lort
- Lok Krou Pov
- Lok Krou Ouch

Trainers for Demon Dancers

- Lok Krou Yit Sarin
- Mr. Chhun Mit
- Neak Krou Prang

Trainers for Monkey Dancers

- Lok Krou Chap Sieng
- Lok Krou Meas
- Lok Krou But
- Lok Krou Kaat



*Classical Dance during the Reign
of Majesty King Norodom Soramarith*



*Classical Dance during the Reign
of the Majesty King Norodom Soramarith*



*Traditional Orchestra during the Reign
of the Majesty King Norodom Soramarith*

6. The Reign of His Majesty Preah Bat Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk

In 1953, under the leadership of the King Norodom Sihanouk, Cambodia declared its independence from France. The Classical Dance prospered under the supervision of the King Norodom Sihanouk with the help from his mother, the Queen Nearirath. The world knew Cambodia through classical dance or royal ballet. It was full of success every time Cambodia performed its classical dance. In 1957 and 1961, Khmer Classical Dance was performed in China and Arab United and later on in Singapore, Malaysia, India, other Asian countries and Europe until 1969. The coup d'état broke out in Cambodia in 1970, Lon Nol was the head of the country. Cambodian Royal Ballet was called Khmer Classical Dance, and it has been trained at the university of fine arts since that.



*His Majeaty Preah Bat Samdech
Preah Norodom Sihanouk*

**Names of Female Classical Dancers during the Reign
of the King Norodom Sihanouk**

Trainers for Female Dancers

- Neak Mneang Chea Sami
- Mme Kem Ponnak
- Mme Ros Kong
- Neak Krou Un Bo
- Lok Krou Roy Moeurn
- Neak Krou Chanthan
- Neak Rin Savae
- Neak Krou Sar Savoeurn
- Lok Srei Yit Tho
- Neak Krou Minh Kossany
- Lok Srei Sim Montha

Trainers for Male Dancers

- Lok Srei Sam Sakhan
- Neak Krou Mam Sovanna No
- Neak Krou Khim Neb
- Neak Krou Kim Sophan
- Neak Krou Chum Oeurn
- Neak Krou Chea Khan
- Neak Krou Na Ton

Trainers for Demon Dancers

- Neak Krou Sut Sam Un
- Neak Krou Sin Samadoeuko
- Neak Krou Em Theay
- Neak Krou Penh Yum

Trainers for Monkey Dancers

- Lok Krou Chap Sieng
- Lok Krou Kaat
- Lok Krou Yit Sarin
- Lok Krou Meas
- Lok Krou Proeurng Chhieng
- Lok Krou Nhim Sorn
- Lok Krou But
- Lok Krou Pum Bun Chan Rath
- Lok Krou Paok Sokhoan



*Training of Classical Dance under the Reign of Her Majesty Queen Sisowath Kossamak
Nearirath Sereivadhana*



*Neak Krou Seng Srei Mum, Lok Krou Proeurng Chhieng,
and Lok Krou Bun Pum Chanrath*

7. People Republic of Cambodia ...

After 1979, People Republic of Kampuchea chased Khmer Rouge out of the country. The Classical Dance was revived after 1979 and was performed in many countries such as Vietnam, Laos, and other countries. In 1980, the Cambodian People Party re-opened the university of fine arts.

Names of Remaining Art Masters

Trainers for Demon Dancers

- Neak Krou Sut Sam Un
- Neak Krou Em Theay
- Neak Krou Sun Samadeuko

Trainers for Singers

- Neak Krou Phon Thouren
- Lok Krou Chhum Kong

Trainers for Female Dancers

- Princess Norodom Bopha Devi
- Lok Chhum Teav Minh Kossany
- Neak Krou Rin Savei
- Neak Sa Savoeurn

Trainers for Musicians

- Mr. Proeurng Proone
- Lok Krou Ek Son
- Lok Krou Hem Sok

Krou Neay Rong

- Neak Krou Sim Montha
- Neak Krou Na Ton
- Neak Krou Pen Sok Huon
- Neak Krou Poak Sok
- Lok Krou Yit Sarin
- Neak Krou Kim Sophan

Main Actress (Neang)



H.R.H Princess Norodom Boppha Devi



Prof. Sar Saroeurn



Prof. Minh Kossany



Prof. Ros Kong



Neak Krou Tun Savang



Neak Krou Om Yuvanna

Main Actress (Neay Rong)



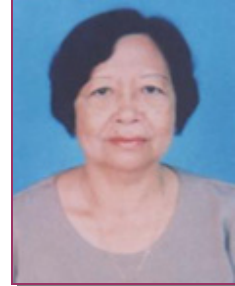
Prof. Sim Montha



Neak Krou Kim Sophan



Prof. Pen Sok Huon



Neak Krou Na Ton

Singers



Neak Krou Phan Thouren

Monkey Dancers



Prof. Yit Sarin



Lok Krou Bun Pumchanrath



Prof. Nhim Sorn



Prof. Proeurng Chhieng

Demon Dancers



Prof. Em Theay



Prof. Sut Sam Un



Prof. Chea Khan



Neak Krou Sun Samadeuko



Neak Krou Penh Yum

Main Musicians



Prof. Proeurng Proone



Lok Krou Sem Sok



Lok Krou Chhum Kong



Lok Krou Sieng Nguon Li

II. Names of Traditional Musicians

No.	Names of Masters of Music	Musical Tools
1	Lok Krou Huat Lay	Samphor
2	Lok Krou Touch	Sra Lay
3	Lok Krou Ya Long	Koang Thom
4	Lok Krou You Prim	Koang Thom
5	Lok Krou Preung Proone	Roneath Ek
6	Lok Krou Yem Sim	Koang Touch
7	Lok Krou Yem Daung	Big Drum
8	Lok Krou Eb Chea	Roneath Ek
9	Lok Krou Hav Thouch	Roneath Thung
10	Lok Krou Chum Kong	Roneath Thung
11	Lok Krou Nol Mech	Sra Lay
12	Lok Keo Snguon	Roneath Dek
13	Lok Krou Mao Phoeurng	Koang Touch
14	Lok Krou Kreuk	Koang Touch
15	Lok Krou Nav	Roneath Thung



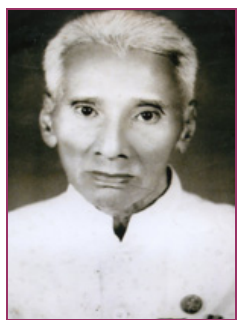
Prof. Yem Doung
Musical Tool, Samphor



Prof. Yem Sim
Musical Tool, Koang Thom



Prof. Im Chea
Musical Tool, Roneath Ek



Prof. Hov Thuch
Professor of Pen Peat Music



Prof. Chum Kung
Skor Thom (Drum)



Prof. Mao Phoeung
Professor of Pin Peat Music



*Prof. Nol Mich
Musical Tool, Sra Lay*



*Prof. Keo Snguon
Musical Instrument, Roneath Dek*



*Prof. Kreuk
Musical Instrument, Koang Thom*



*Prof. Nao
Musical Instrument, Roneath Thom*



Musician Group



*Prof. Thai Phat
Roneath Ek*



*Prof. Huot Lay
Professor of Pin Peat Music*



*Prof. Touch
Musical Instrument, Sra Lay*



*Prof. Ya Long
Musical Instrument, Koang Thom*



*Prof. Proeung Pruon
Musical Instrument, Roneath Thom*

III. Activities of Researcher Team

1. Data Collection during the Seminar on Khmer Classical Dance



Activities of Senior Officials in the Training Seminar of Classical Dance

2. Activities of Research Teams at the Provinces

Mr. Prak Sonnara, Mr. Duong Samuth, and Mr. Sam Chantha had undertaken field research to collect the data on the Classical Dance throughout Cambodia. They noted that:

- Most of the artists in the provinces do not know much about the Khmer Classical Dance because it was formally performed only at the royal palace.
- The dance form was not performed for the general public. Therefore, they only know a bit about the Khmer Classical Dance. The followings are the photos of artists whom the team has interviewed in provinces throughout Cambodia.





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- អ្នកគ្រូ កែវ ណារ៉ុំ, អ្នកគ្រូ ព្រំ សីសាផាណា, របាំអប្សរា (Apsara Dance) ខែ សីហា ២០០៣
- តន្ត្រី និងជីវិតខ្មែរអ្នកគ្រូ កែវ ណារ៉ុំ ១៩៩៥
- ពេជ្រ ទុំក្រវិល, របាំខ្មែរ, ឆ្នាំ ២០០១
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សាកលវិទ្យាល័យសិក្សាអំពីបុព្វហេតុដែលនាំឱ្យអរិយធម៌អង្គររីឯងចំរើនដល់
កំពូល ប្រឆ្នាក់ដុនដាបចុះមកវិញ ។
- កម្ពុជសុរិយា ឆ្នាំ ទី ៣១ លេខ ៣ ខែ មិនា ត្រីមាសករាជ ១៩៥៩
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