

# CHAM DANCE ART IN THE RIJA CEREMONY

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In Cham folk rituals and festivals, music and dance play an important role in creating the soul of the ceremony. Currently, the Rija ceremony system of Cham ethnic group includes 4 rituals: Rija Nâgar ceremony (new year dance ceremony), Rija Harei ceremony (daytime dance ceremony), Rija Dayep ceremony (night dance ceremony), Rija Praong ceremony (big dance ceremony). This is a ritual system of folk beliefs that includes many rituals of dancing, singing, music and drama, organized by the Cham ethnic group to pray to ancestors and gods for good weather and wind, health and good harvest. In the Rija ceremony, music and dance play a leading role from the beginning to the end, which are ceremonial songs, ceremonial dances... From a unified content, music and dance have completely replaced the human voice to dialogue with ancestors, grandparents and gods. In this article, the content refers to the role of ceremonial dances in the Rija ritual; from there, state the current situation and preserve ceremonial dances in the current period.

**Keywords:** Cham; Dancing art; Rija; Ritual.

## 1. Introduction

In the traditional performing arts of the Cham ethnic group, music - dance is an important art form that reflects awareness, expresses emotions, aesthetic concepts... Cham traditional music with ritual songs, folk songs, lullabies, ariya chants... as well as dances in festivals have been deeply ingrained in the souls of every Cham person since childhood. That music has brought a strong vitality to the community activities of the Cham ethnic group.

“Rija” means ceremonial dance, which means it includes a festival part and a musical part. Currently, in the Cham community there exist 4 types of Rija ceremonies that are regularly held every year, which are: *Rija Nâgar*, *Rija Praong*, *Rija Dayep*, *Rija Harei*.

The Rija Festival is a unique cultural feature, because there is a harmonious combination of historical events with ceremonial festivals, music and dance arts. These elements are intertwined to create the Rija festival with a unique nuance. This is a type of artistic activity combined with cultural activities and spiritual life of the Cham ethnic group.

Within the scope of this article, we will mention the dances in the Rija ritual system and analyze the roles and characteristics of the dances. From there, we propose solutions to preserve and promote the value of traditional Cham dance art in the current period.

## 2. Research overview

In 1901, Antoine Cabaton published the book *Nouvelles recherches sur les Chams* (New research works on the Cham ethnic group). The research

introduces the festivals and religion of the Cham ethnic group in Vietnam. In the religion of the Cham ethnic group, the author mentions the *Katé* festival, *Cambur* festival, *Paralao Kasah* festival and *Thrua* festival. From pages 35-36, the author focuses on introducing the *Rija Dayep* ceremony in a general way, including the purpose of organizing the *Dayep* ceremony, time and space, offerings and the person presiding over the ceremony. The musical instruments used in the *Rija Dayep* ritual such as the *Ginang* drum, the *Baranâng* drum and the *Saranai* trumpet are described in detail by the author.

In the country, many authors have paid attention to Rija ceremonies. In the book *The Cham people in Thuan Hai* (Bien, 1989), in the presentation about festivals related to agriculture, the author introduces the *Rija Nâgar* festival in a general way. In addition to presenting the festival space and organization time, it also presents the main musical instruments and main dancer in the *Rija Nâgar* festival. The author quotes Mr. *Mâduen*'s instructions to the *salih* (lifelike figures made of rice flour) to convey the message of the ceremony to the gods. Finally, the author presents the connection between the Cham Awal and Cham Ahiér through the *Rija Nâgar* ceremony. Because, this festival is celebrated by both the Cham Awal and Ahiér communities.

With the article *Music and dance in the folk festivals of the Cham people in Thuan Hai* (Dop & Amunhan, 1989), the authors presented about the folk festivals of the Cham ethnic group related to weather and monsoon cycle. The authors mention the role of Cham musical instruments in the Rija

ritual, analyzing the origins of *Rija and Muk Rija*. According to the authors, in a band there are 5 musicians playing traditional instruments such as *Baranâng* drum, *Ginang* drum, *Saranai* trumpet and *Céng* under the control of *Mâduen* dignitaries. *Rija* types such as *Rija Nâgar*, *Rija Harei*, *Rija Dayep* and *Rija Praong* are introduced in a general way. In addition, the research also mentions Cham music and dance in the *Rija* ritual system. Among the music and dances in the *Rija* ritual, there are often *Biyén*, *Tiaong*, *Kamang*, *Marai* and *Patra* dances... The authors commented: “Cham music and dance have made people let go of all their worries and takes them to a poetic world of myths and fairy tales”.

In the research *Cham Culture* (Bien, An & Dop, 1991), from pages 336-350, the authors introduce Cham music and dance. In particular, analysis of traditional musical instruments and dances of the Cham ethnic group. In the ceremonial music and some ceremonial dances of the Cham ethnic group, the authors analyze the musical and dance elements in the *Rija Nâgar* ritual. Research identifies that *Rija* in Cham language means “dance ceremony”, because *Rija* ceremonies always have dance rituals. There are many types of *Rija* rituals, although their meaningful content is quite similar, but the scope of performance is different. The *Rija Nâgar* ceremony is a ceremony for the entire *Palei* (village) community and the *Rija Harei*, *Rija Dayep*, *Rija Praong* ceremonies are family ceremonies. The *Rija* ceremony band generally consists of 5 musicians with the following number of instruments: one *Baranâng* drum, two *Ginang* drums, one *Saranai* trumpet, one *Céng* (gong) under the control of teacher *Mâduen* (p.344). The *Rija Praong* ritual is also briefly introduced. The authors emphasize the important position of Ms. *Muk Rija*, also known as *Muk Ja Nyang*, meaning the main dancer in the ceremony.

The article *The Rija ceremony system of the Cham people - Things to discuss* (Hai, 1997, p.38-44), focusing on in-depth analysis of the *Rija Praong* ritual. The author states that the *Rija* festival of the Cham ethnic group has elements of folk beliefs, elements of *Brahmanism* and elements of *Islam*. Finally, the author concludes that the *Rija Praong* ceremony of the Cham ethnic group has a relationship with *Malaysia*.

Article *The Rija ceremony system of the Cham ethnic, some issues that need to be clarified* (Mon & Sakaya, 1997). The content of this article mainly criticizes the article by author To Dong Hai mentioned above. The authors clarify some terms and spelling that author To Dong Hai used and commented incorrectly. Thereby, the research adds some awareness related to *Rija Praong* such as music, *Rija* ritual system and dignitaries who take on the main role in the ritual.

In the *Journal of Southeast Asian Research* from 1999 to 2002, a series of research articles on the *Rija*

*Nâgar* festival by author Ngo Van Doanh published including: *Rica Nugar - Changing seasons festival of the Cham ethnic group (from the origin of the agricultural calendar)* (Doanh, no. 4/1999), *Fire dance in the Rica Nugar festival of the Cham ethnic group* (Doanh, no. 5/1999), *Dancing ceremony in Rica Nugar of the Cham ethnic group* (Doanh, no. 3/2000), *Toh Mutôn in Rica Nugar of the Cham ethnic group - Historical imprints* (Doanh, no. 4/2000) *Worshiping ceremony in Rija Nugar of Cham ethnic group - Cultural layers* (Doanh, No. 3/2001) *Rija Nugar Festival and Cham temple* (Doanh, no. 1/2002), *To have a sacred dance in the Rija Nugar festival of the Cham ethnic group* (Doanh, no. 2/2002). Generally, the author has presented an overview of the *Rija* festival system of the Cham ethnic group through fieldwork in Cham villages in Ninh Thuan and Binh Thuan provinces. In addition, the author collected and translated into Vietnamese some *Rija* songs performed by *Mâduen* dignitaries. Based on the folk festivals of the Cham ethnic group, the author makes comments about the *Rija* festival of the Cham ethnic group in relation to a number of rituals of countries in Southeast Asia.

Researching *Cham culture research and criticism* (Sakaya, volume 1, 2010), the research includes 630 pages, divided into many topics such as *Monuments-history, Culture-society, Religion, Festivals, Literature, Languages and Performing Arts*. In the festival section, the author has two scholarly reviews: “*Contributing to understanding the Rija Nugar ceremony of the Cham ethnic group in Ninh Thuan province by Thap Lien Truong*” and “*Festival works of the Cham ethnic group by Ngo Van Doanh*” (p.356-406). The author’s criticism focuses on comments about gods, festivals and errors in spelling, Cham vocabulary derived from Malaysia and Arabic. Thereby, the author clarifies more details about the *Rija Nâgar* festival of the Cham ethnic group.

Research *Life rituals of the Cham people* (Ngoc, 2011), pages 123 to 130, presents the *Rija Nâgar* festival. The research explained the meaning, purpose of the festival, time of organization and offerings used in the *Rija Nâgar* ceremony. The author also made a list of 17 deities that Mr. *Mâduen* prayed to invite to enjoy the offerings. The research *Rituals of life of the Cham ethnic group* also recorded ritual songs and translated them into Vietnamese.

In *Handbook of Cham traditional rituals in Ninh Thuan* (Dai, 2016), the ritual systems of the Cham ethnic group in Ninh Thuan are introduced. The author lists the offerings, organization time and the main hosts of the ceremonies. In chapter II, from pages 146-183, the author presents a number of rituals presided over by *Mâduen* dignitaries such as: *Rija Nâgar*, *Rija Harei*, *Rija Dayep*, *Rija Praong*. For each *Rija* ritual, the author presents the ritual name, purpose, meaning, execution time, ceremony master, festival costumes, musical instruments and

main offerings used in *Rija* rituals. .

In particular, notable researchs related to rituals and festivals of the Cham ethnic group include the research *Festivals of the Cham ethnic group* (Sakaya, 2003), in this research the author has described in quite detail and elaborate the meaning and purpose of rituals and festivals of the Cham ethnic group. In addition, the research *The relationship between Cham culture and Malaysian culture through the Raja Praong and Mak Yong ceremonies* (Sakaya, 2012). In this research, the author presents the similarities between Cham and Malaysian culture through aspects of material culture and spiritual culture, specifically through *the Rija Praong and Mak Yong ceremonies*. In the research, the author also mentioned the origin of musical instruments used in rituals and the influence of Malaysia on musical instruments of Cham ethnic group. This is the premise for the article to better understand the origin and role of dance art in the *Rija* ritual in a more systematic way.

### 3. Research method

In this article, the author uses a number of specific methods such as: Observation-participation method to collect primary and secondary documents; Analytical and synthetic methods to learn about the role and characteristics of dances in *the Rija* ritual system of the Cham ethnic group. From there, the article propose some solutions to preserve and promote the values of Cham folk dance art in the current period.

### 4. Research result

#### 4.1. *Rija* Overview of the *Rija* ritual system

##### 4.1.1. Concept about “*Rija*”

According to the Cham - Vietnamese - French dictionary edited by Moussay, the word “*Rija*” is translated as dance ceremony (cerémonie avec danses sacrees) (Moussay, 1971, p.385).

There is also an opinion that “*Rija*” or “*Raja*” means king. In the past, this ceremony was often held in the royal court, so people often called it *Rija*, meaning the ceremony serving the royal class. Later, when the Champa kingdom no longer existed, the *Rija* ritual was passed down among the people as an indispensable traditional ritual in the cultural activities of the Cham ethnic group today (Dai, 2016).

According to researcher Truong Van Mon, the word “*Rija*” is derived from *Rajas* in the Malaysian Mak Yong, meaning magic talisman.

In our opinion, the word “*Rija*” refers to dance ceremonies, such as: *Rija Nâgar* ceremony (new year dance ceremony), *Rija Harei* ceremony (day dance ceremony), *Rija Dayep* ceremony (night dance ceremony), *Rija Praong* ceremony (big dance ceremony). This is a ritual system of folk beliefs that includes many rituals such as singing, dancing, music, theater and shadow casting performances,

organized by the Cham people to pray to ancestors and gods for good weather, good health and good harvests. This ritual is also the product of the combination of influences from Hinduism, Islam and indigenous Cham beliefs and especially the relationship between Cham culture and Malaysian culture from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the *Rija* ceremony, music and dance play a leading role from the beginning to the end, which are ceremonial songs, ceremonial dances, drum songs, ceremonial trumpet songs... From a unified content, music and dance have completely replaced the human voice to dialogue with ancestors, grandparents and gods.

Currently in the Cham ethnic community there are four *Rija* rituals: *Rija Nâgar* (new year’s farewell ritual), *Rija Harei* (daytime dance ceremony), *Rija Dayep* (nighttime dance ceremony) and *Rija Praong* (big dance ceremony). Of these four rituals, only the *Rija Nâgar* ritual is a ritual of the village community (*palei*), while the remaining three rituals are dance ceremonies within the clan and family.

##### 4.1.2. *Rija Nâgar* ceremony (new year’s farewell dance ceremony)

This is a ceremony to change seasons, welcome the new year and celebrate the beginning of the year (January according to the Cham calendar). This ceremony is organized by the community on Thursday and Friday. If this ceremony is organized by Cham *Ahier* village, a ceremony house will be built in the village. The dignitaries presiding and celebrating the ceremony were *Ong Mâduen* and *Ong Ka-ing*. When Cham *Awal* village celebrates this ceremony, people set up two ceremony theaters. A theater hosted by *Ong Acar Imâm* and *Ong Katip*. The other ceremony was performed by *Ong Mâduen* and *Ong Ka-ing* of *Awal* village. This ritual aims to get rid of bad things in the old year and pray for good things and luck in the new year.

*Rija Nâgar* is an important ritual, the opening ceremony for all ceremonies, because after completing this ritual, clan rituals as well as folk rituals are allowed to be performed. The *Rija Nâgar* ceremony is held on different days depending on the village, but all take place in the first month of the Cham calendar (around April of the solar calendar). Because the ceremony is held on Thursday and Friday, the Cham ethnic group call it “*tamâ di Jip tabiak di Suk*”. Meaning: “on Thursday, out on Friday”.

##### 4.1.3. *Rija Harei* Ceremony (daytime dance ceremony)

After the *Rija Nâgar* ceremony that opens the community festival ends, families and clans begin to celebrate *Rija Harei*. This is a ritual of a clan or family to pray to gods and ancestors to bless clan members with health and peace in the new year. This is also a ceremony to present to the ancestors, asking for permission to carry out a task, an important event that the clan is about to organize such as buffalo sacrifice ceremony, *Kut* entry ceremony...

*Rija Harei* ritual means daytime ritual, held on the odd day of the first moon of the first month according to the Cham calendar. The *Rija Harei* ceremony usually takes place in an open field or in the yard of the family or clan's house. *Rija Harei* is held in a ceremony house (*kajang*), without a roof, only horizontally surrounding the arc (or half circle) with bamboo and leaving an entrance and exit space to the west. The masters of the *Rija Harei* ceremony are *Ong Mâduen* and *Ong Ka-ing* (dance).

Although *Rija Harei* takes place for a short time, it is a sacred moment for the clan and family. This is also the time to gather families, clans and give thanks to ancestors and gods, review the heroic achievements of national heroes, and the types of folk arts passed down to future generations. This is also an opportunity for family members and clans to pray for good health and a good harvest.

#### 4.1.4. *Rija Dayep Ritual (night dance ceremony)*

*Rija Dayep* ritual, meaning the night dance ceremony to distinguish it from the daytime dance ceremony (*Rija Harei*). The *Rija Dayep* ceremony is held within a family or clan to ask ancestors and gods for blessings and help overcome difficulties and disasters; or when the clan is about to hold an important worship ceremony such as a buffalo sacrifice ceremony, a funeral, or a *Kut* entry ceremony (the clan cemetery). Or if in a clan suddenly has many members suffering from an unusual illness, that clan holds the *Rija Dayep* ceremony to pray to the ancestors and gods for the accident to be cured.

The name of the ritual is associated with the time the ritual is held, which takes place at night. The ceremony usually takes place in February or March according to the Cham calendar, held in both the Cham *Ahiér* community (Cham community influenced by Brahmanism) and Cham *Awal* (Cham community influenced by Islam). The ceremony house is built in the family compound chosen by the family. The ceremony was attended by *Ong Mâduen* and *Muk Rija* (the family or clan's master), including the monk *Acar* of *Awal* who came to recite the witness prayer.

#### 4.1.5. *Rija Praong Ceremony (big dance ceremony)*

This is the biggest and also the most important ceremony among the *Rija* clan ceremonies. There are two types of *Rija Praong* ceremony: *Rija Praong Atuw Cek* (Mountain stream *Rija* ceremony) and *Rija Praong Atuw Tasik* (Sea stream *Rija* ceremony).

The Mountain Stream *Rija* Ceremony aims to commemorate and worship the Malaysian generals who came to Champa via the Cambodian road. The Sea *Rija Rija* (*Atuw Tasik*) ceremony aims to commemorate and worship the Malaysian generals who came to Champa by sea road but unfortunately died. Of these two forms of rituals, *Rija Praong* of

the Sea stream has richer content, because in the rituals of the Sea stream there are also rituals for the Mountain stream.

The *Rija Praong* ceremony is held to honor the *Muk Rija* position to look after *Ciét Atuw* (ancestral soul) and offer offerings to the clan. Besides, this ceremony also serves to repay the gods that the clan and family previously prayed for recovery from disasters. The ritual is also held when someone in the clan is sick or has encountered a disaster, despite being treated with many methods but cannot survive. In addition, *Rija Praong* is also held when *Mâduen* teachers and artisans playing the *Ginang* drum and *Saranai* trumpet initiate or ordain. The *Rija Praong* ceremony lasts for 4 days and 4 nights, with some

#### 4.2. *Characteristics of ceremonial dances in the Rija ritual*

Along with the ritual singing of *Ong Mâduen*, in *Rija* rituals there are also ritual dances performed mainly by *Ong Ka-ing*, *Muk Pajuw* and *Muk Rija*. During the ceremony, for each god invited to attend the ceremony, there will be a corresponding dance to offer to that god. Cham dance in rituals has unique content and diverse genres, often inspired by images of gods and animals in myths and legends with a harmonious and flexible combination of hand and feet movements along with props such as towels, fans, whips, sugar canes, oars, offering trays (*Thong hala*)... Dances in the *Rija* ritual can be divided into 2 groups:

- *Ong Ka-ing's* ceremonial dances in *Rija Nâgar* and *Rija Harei* include: fan dance (*tamia tadik*), scarf dance (*tamia tanjrak*), rowing dance (*tamia hua gaiy or wah gaiy*), whip dance (*tamia hawei*), fire dancing (*tamia juak apuei*)...

- *Muk Rija's* ceremonial dances during *Rija Dayep* and *Rija Praong* include: fan dance (*tamia tadik*), scarf dance (*tamia tanyrak*), typical dances based on the images of birds such as: *Biyén*, *Tiaong*, *Kamang*, *Mrai*, *Patra*...

Like the hymn singing of *Ong Mâduen*, the dances in the *Rija* ritual also want to convey or simulate the divine through physical symbols. For example, when *Ong Ka-ing* danced rowing a boat, he wore a cloth bag and a wine bottle and held a paddle or sugar cane to perform the rowing motion, recreating the image of *Po Teng Ahaok* - the god recorded in legend as a character often floats at sea with a bag of betel and a jar of wine to drink. When it comes to the dance about the god *Po Haniim Per*, *Ong Ka-ing* holds a whip and dances to trample on fire, recreating the powerful image of the god riding his horse back after victory, extinguishing the fire, at the same time, it drives away bad things and drought during the New Year's dance ceremony. In the *Rija Praong* and *Rija Dayep* rituals, *Muk Rija* (Mrs. *Rija*) often dances dances such as: *Biyén*, *Tiaong*, *Kamang*, *Mrai* to recreate the images of mascots (Peacock, Pheasant, Bird and Pheasant

breeds) was ridden down to earth by the gods to participate in royal balls. Thus, through dances, ritual dancers want to recreate the images and stories of the gods invited to attend the ceremony. Furthermore, through simulating and imitating the gods, the ritual dancer wants to achieve connection with the gods according to the similar laws of mimetic magic or sympathetic magic, of which the highest realm is the state of go to the medium, enter the medium.

*Firstly, fan dance (Tamia tadik)*

Based on the gestures and movements of the Peacock, the Cham ethnic group has simulated and created a very beautiful dance. It is a fan dance. This dance is present in many Cham festivals in many different forms. The fan dance is mainly reserved for women, but men still perform this dance in some ceremonies. The fan of Cham ethnic group is usually a fan made of blue or pink paper or fabric. The image of a fan used in Cham dance rituals is the spreading wings of a peacock (*Biyén*), sometimes the gently flying wings of a goose (*Tiaong*). This fan also symbolizes nobility (*Cahya*) and represents wealth (*Patra*). For the Cham ethnic group, fans are considered an important dance prop in expressing emotions. During rituals, fans are placed on the god's altar. The image of *Muk Rija* holding a fan, sometimes spreading, sometimes rolling, sometimes jumping, folding, sometimes flying... makes people think of a Peacock flying beautifully. The Cham fan dances were born based on the names of each type of "upper harp" that *Muk Rija* and Cham artisans named each type of fan dance. *Biyén* dance is a favorite dance of the Cham ethnic group, so it is not only used in festivals but is also developed among the people and often performed in festivals and performances...

After the offering ceremony of *Ong Mâduen*, *Muk Rija* stood up and danced to the rhythm of the *Ginang* and *Baranâng* drums, the sound of the *Saranai* trumpet. *Muk Rija* seemed to be possessed, singing and dancing very passionately. The opening is an informal dance with slow movements. Next is the *Patra* dance. Then the *Biyén* dance moves faster. Depending on the music and dance, *Muk Rija* controls hands; when turning on the wrist, when bending the wrist; the feet always bounce in a way that touches the toes to the ground and lifts the heels about 5-10cm. Combined with fanning movements; when folding the fan, when opening it, when rolling the fan, when launching the fan, when the end of the head tilts forward, when leans back about 45°... All movements are performed in a closed cycle, rhythmically and gracefully, making the dance more smooth and attractive.

For the Cham ethnic group, *Biyén* fan dance is also a good mark for the kings and gods, who have contributed to the Cham ethnic group. Legend told that: the Cham ethnic group went through a period of hunger and chaos; all kinds of demons appeared to harass the villagers. From heaven, *Po Kuk* felt

compassion and sent his daughter *Po Inâ Nâgar* and six other angels down to earth to relieve trouble and help the villagers. Since then, people's lives have been stable and happy. Seeing that the world was peaceful and prosperous, Saint *Bargina* later went to heaven to report on the matter. When *Po Kuk* heard that, he was happy, and he ordered Saint *Ratho Lak* and other gods to pick up four stars on the Ngan Ha River (*Kraong Khao Phan*) and hatch four birds: *Biyén* (Peacock), *Tiaong* (Pheasant), *Kamang* (bird Cam) and *Mârai* (Leisure chicken) then rode down to earth to gather kings and lords to hold a party.

The image of *Muk Rija* holding a fan, sometimes spreading, sometimes rolling, sometimes jumping, sometimes flying... reminds people of a peacock flying beautifully. From then on, Cham fan dances were born and based on the name of each type of "upper harp", *Muk Rija* and Cham artisans named each type of fan dance... *Biyén* dance is a favorite dance of the Cham ethnic group, so it is not only used in festivals but is also developed among the people, often performed in festivals and performances...

*Secondly, the scarf dance (Tamia tanjrak)*

Towel dance is a long-standing folk dance of the Cham ethnic group. The scarf is an indispensable item of clothing for Cham ethnic women. The scarf not only beautifies Cham ethnic women, but also symbolizes their fidelity and purity (married Cham ethnic women must cover most of their heads with a scarf when leaving the house). In ceremonial dances, the scarf is always white, the main color of the Cham ethnic group for a long time. Towel dance is a dance present in many folk religious rituals.

*Thirdly, rowing boat dance (Tamia hua gaiy or wah gaiy)*

The Boating Dance is a ritual to send off the dry and hot season of the old year, just as the fire dance is to dispel the heat. But in fact, this is not only meant to dispel the heat and harshness of the dry season of the old year, but also to honor the mighty gods *Po Haniim Per* and *Po Teng Ahaok* in folk legends.

*Fourthly, the fire dance (Tamia juak apuei)*

Coming to the fire dance, *Ong Ka-ing* not only dances in the theater but also outside the theater. While *Ong Mâduen* sang to invite the gods, at the stage of inviting the god *Po Haniim Per*, *Ong Ka-ing* stood up, held a sword (or horsewhip) and went straight into the burning fire in front of the ceremony theater. He walked around the fire a few times with a quick gliding movement, holding his sword (or whip) high in his hand, then swinging the sword and dancing, with his other hand in front of his chest. The basic movement is slashing fire. His hand holds a sword to slash fire, symbolizing the power and strength of the gods. Finally, he suddenly shouted and jumped straight into the fire with the cheers of everyone around him along with the pounding of drums and trumpets. *Ong*

*Ka-ing's* jump then became faster and stronger and he stamped out the fire in a state of extreme excitement. Regarding dance posture, the body is always in a straight position, the hand holding the sword stretches out to cut fire and the feet step on fire, which is the main motif of the dance.

Fire dancing is also known as fire dancing. This is the main and important dance in the *Rija Nagar* festival. The villagers believe that every year *Ong Ka-ing* goes to the field and extinguishes the fire, that year will have good weather and rain.

Because this is a folk dance, so it is unique. In addition to holding a whip, *Ong Ka-ing* also holds a red sugar cane, an oar, a carit sword. Fire dancing is a dance with difficult, complex, technical movements and also requires the expression of the dancer's will and emotions, carrying humanistic and social meaning. Fire dancing has the characteristics of dance art, that is stylization, symbolism and generalization. However, this is a sacred dance, only for men and a solo dance, so it is arbitrary depending on the spirit of *Ong Ka-ing* and their creative talent, physical strength, and aesthetic concept when performing dance. Therefore, in each place, the dance details of each teacher (*Ka-ing*) may not be exactly the same, but still ensure the basic structure of the dance.

#### *Fifthly, traditional dance (Tamia klai kluk)*

Traditional dance (also known as *Tamia kaya siam likei*) is performed by a couple of men and women immediately after the *Pasa* song and response. The man wears a sarong, bares his body, holds 3 energy-generating trees in both hands and places them in the lower abdomen, making movements of harmony between heaven and earth, harmonizing yin and yang by dancing and bouncing 3 wooden logs in 4 directions at 4 corners of the yard and then dot it on the ground. Collaborating with her dancing partner, the woman performs movements that symbolize connection.

*Kayuw siam likei* dance during the *Rija Nagar* ceremony is a common fertility belief of agricultural residents. The man in charge of dancing was selected by the villagers as an elderly man with a muscular body and a warm family, representing strength and prosperity. Through that, people pray for good harmony, fertility, prosperity, wealth, prosperity... With a pair of men and women dancing and performing symbolic fertility movements, this ritual represents the harmony between Yin - Yang, Heaven - Earth, to be two opposing sides in a unity according to the dualistic perspective of structuralism theory.

#### *Sixthly, the Vai chai dance*

The Vai chai Dance takes place on the closing night of the *Rija Praong* festival. This dance is intended to commemorate those who have contributed to the nation and died at sea. The dance story is reenacted as follows: *Muk Rija* wears a

piece of white shirt on his shoulders (in some places he wears a piece of net) symbolizing the net and sails gliding in the wind. *Ong Mâduen* holds a fan, carries a basket, sings and walks around the music tray. The melody of the song is sometimes low and sometimes high, touching people's hearts. As he walked around, he bent down to pick up wood chips and explosive beads (on the ceremony tray) and put them in the basket. *Muk Rija* followed while dancing *halang halep* (open skirt); the movement is sometimes leaning forward, sometimes leaning back, sometimes sitting, sometimes standing, sometimes kneeling. The movements are consistent with the lyrics and music. The martial artist sometimes holds the oar in his hand, sometimes puts it down, his rowing movements are sometimes fast and sometimes slow depending on the drum music and *Ong Mâduen's* lyrics.

This is a mandatory dance in the symbolic *Rija Praong* ceremony, to recreate the scene of boats going out to sea to retrieve bones, corpses, and seafarers in distress due to shipwrecks, to commemorate those who have crossed the sea and overcome the waves. The wind searched for a homeland for the Cham ethnic group at the dawn of the nation.

Maybe, dances in *Rija* rituals can be divided into two groups as follows:

- Ceremonial dances of *Ong Ka-ing* in *Rija Nagar* and *Rija Harei* such as fan dance (*tamia Tadiik*), scarf dance (*tamia Tanyrak*), rowing dance (*tamia hua gaiy or wah gaiy*), whip dance (*tamia hawei*), pedal fire dance (*tamia juak apuei*)...

- *Muk Rija's* ceremonial dances in *Rija Dayep* and *Rija Praong* such as fan dance (*tamia Tadiik*), scarf dance (*tamia Tanyrak*), dances based on labor movements in life and typical dances based on shapes statues of birds such as: *Biyén, Tiaong, Kamang, Mrai, Patra*...

Along with the ritual singing of *Ong Mâduen*, in *Rija* rituals there is also a ritual dance. During the ceremony corresponding to a deity invited to attend the ceremony, there is a dance offered to that deity, in the process of daily labor with a harmonious and flexible combination of hand and foot movements with props such as towels, fans, whips, sugar canes, oars, offering trays, and floating trays (*thon hala*)...

Through dances, ritual dancers want to recreate the images and stories of the gods invited to attend the ceremony, through simulating and imitating the gods, ritual dancers want to achieve a connection with the gods according to the similar rules of mimetic magic or sympathetic magic, the highest level is the state of trance.

## 5. Discussion

One special thing is that Cham dance art as well as Cham folk arts in general are mainly practiced in rituals and festivals. This segment can be said to be much "more dense" than the folk arts part

of entertainment activities. Music and dance are both intended to offer to the gods, so Cham music and dance are sacred. From there, we are given a perspective on possible ways to preserve and promote the value of folk art forms in the traditional rituals of the Cham ethnic group, including the art of dance, which is a highlight of the unique and very unique appearance of the Cham ethnic group.

It can be affirmed that Cham folk rituals and festivals are the cradle containing a significant treasure of folk culture. The aesthetic and humane spiritual values in Cham folk festivals are basic values that need to be preserved and promoted. On the other hand, the Cham festival itself has contributed significantly to creating the cultural identity of the Cham ethnic group. However, currently the preservation of national cultural heritage is in an extremely difficult situation. Specifically, there are fewer and fewer dancers in *Rija* rituals in particular and in Cham rituals and festivals in general, but the successor team is not very interested.

In terms of dancers: to become a dancer in rituals and festivals of the Cham ethnic group, in addition to ethical standards and having a happy family, the learner must truly love the profession and be virtuous. To become *Ong Ka-ing*, *Muk Rija*, learners must be talented in the art of dance and knowledgeable about customs and traditions.

Regarding the concept of conservation: Cham traditional dance art is a type of art in the field of intangible culture. Therefore, we need to develop conservation plans and methods and promote specific characteristics. Solutions to preserve traditional Cham dance art must be built on the basis of targeting the Cham ethnic community, must meet the needs and aspirations of the community.

The strategy to preserve the value of traditional Cham dance art must meet two central goals: *Firstly*, consolidate and develop folk dance forms in the Cham ethnic community; *Secondly*, promoting and introducing Cham dance art to domestic and foreign audiences. Only when these two central goals are met, the strategy to preserve the value of traditional Cham dance art will promote the highest results and achieve sustainability.

There should be appropriate remuneration for artisans, from which they will stimulate, nurture and practice folk rituals in particular to become artisans continuing the previous generation.

*Firstly*, because the traditional dance art of the Cham ethnic group is sacred and only serves in rituals, bringing this form to the performance stage to promote culture requires careful research and safe measures, avoiding losing its origin and sacredness. Such as the dances of *Muk Rija*, *Ong Ka-ing* in the *Rija* ceremony.

*Secondly*, the cultural sector needs to pay attention and support the organization of competitions to

find young talents in the Cham ethnic community and encourage training and create favorable conditions for the young generation to participate in competitions related to traditional ethnic dance arts at district and provincial levels. From there, discover and train those talents to improve their skills and learn to become true artisans in the future.

*Thirdly*, create an environment for artisans to interact so that they have the opportunity to discuss with each other about the good points, limitations, what is good, what is not good. Through this exchange environment, it will help improve professional abilities.

*Fourthly*, organize classes to teach traditional Cham dance art to the younger generation, from which there will be a team of successors.

## 6. Conclusion

For the Cham people, music and dance become an element of the ceremony, the ritual of the ceremony and children are the soul of the ceremony. Almost in all rituals and festivals of the Cham ethnic group, there are ceremonial bands and dancers performing music and dances suitable to the nature of the ritual. Dancers are also priests, such as *Ong Mâduen*, *Ong Ka-ing*, *Ong Kadhar*, *Muk Rija*, *Muk Pajuw...*

The *Rija* ritual is a unique culture, because there is a harmonious combination of historical events with rituals, music and dance art. These elements are intertwined to create the *Rija* ceremony with a unique nuance. This is a type of artistic activity combined with cultural activities and spiritual life of the Cham ethnic group. Cham dance art promotes belief, expressing the sublimation of people with nature, people with labor and with the gods that the Cham ancestors and the Cham ethnic group themselves worship. Cham dance is the quintessence of the ethnic dance art treasure.

For Cham dance art to exist in the true sense of ethnic culture, the desire must first start from the Cham people themselves. It is the Cham people who are the subjects of Cham dance, the area where Cham people live to be the space for Cham dance to form and develop and it is the Cham people who create and nurture Cham dance. The Cham people themselves are both the creators of Cham dance and the ones who have the right to inherit the values from Cham dance and at the same time have the responsibility to preserve the quintessence of Cham dance in the face of all challenges. Therefore, we can fully cooperate with competent agencies in collecting, preserving and promoting Cham dance identity according to the cultural meaning that Cham people desire.

Cham dance art does not just stop at preservation, Cham dance also needs to be promoted and introduced to honor ethnic culture, at the same time, in life, Cham people also need to continue to create new dance art to enrich Cham dance art and culture.

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## NGHỆ THUẬT MÚA TRUYỀN THỐNG CHĂM TRONG NGHI LỄ RIJA

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Trong các nghi lễ, lễ hội dân gian của Chăm, âm nhạc và múa đóng vai trò quan trọng tạo nên phần hồn của buổi lễ. Hiện nay, hệ thống lễ Rija của người Chăm gồm có 4 nghi lễ: lễ Rija Năgar (lễ mùa đầu năm), lễ Rija Harei (lễ mùa ban ngày), lễ Rija Dayep (lễ mùa ban đêm), lễ Rija Praong (lễ mùa lớn). Đây là hệ thống nghi lễ thuộc tín ngưỡng dân gian bao gồm nhiều nghi thức trình diễn múa, hát, âm nhạc và kịch nghệ, được người Chăm tổ chức nhằm để cầu cúng tổ tiên, các vị thần linh ban cho mưa thuận gió hòa, sức khỏe và mùa màng bội thu. Trong nghi lễ Rija, âm nhạc và múa đóng vai trò quán xuyên từ lúc bắt đầu cho đến kết thúc, đó là những bài hát lễ, các điệu múa lễ... Từ nội dung thống nhất, âm nhạc và múa đã thay thế hoàn toàn cho tiếng nói của con người để đối thoại với tổ tiên, ông bà và thần thánh. Trong bài viết này, nội dung đề cập đến vai trò của các điệu múa lễ trong nghi lễ Rija; từ đó nêu thực trạng và bảo tồn các điệu múa lễ trong giai đoạn hiện nay.

**Từ khóa:** Chăm; Nghệ thuật múa: Rija; Nghi lễ.