

STORY OF RAMAYANA ,R E A M K E R, IN CAMBODIA



DANCES OF CAMBODIA



Cambodia Ramayana

DANCES OF CAMBODIA – Introduction & Explanations (*Contd.*)

Cambodia Ramayana

- Cambodia's premier performing art form is Khmer classical dance, or Robam Preah Reach Trop, a highly stylized dance form originating from the royal courts.
- Performances feature elaborately costumed dancers performing slow and figurative gestures to the musical accompaniment of a pinpeat ensemble.
- The classical repertoire includes dances of tribute or invocation and the enactment of traditional stories and epic poems such as the Ramayana.

LIST OF DANCES

1. Reamker(Ramayana) Robam Phlet (Fan Dance)	8. Robam Makor
2. Robam Yike	9. Robam Ayai Chlay Chlong
3. Robam Buong Suong (Prayer Dance)	10. Robam Monosenchetna (Sentimental Dance)
4. Robam Preah Chenovong Neang Preah Kesor	11. Robam Apsara (Apsara Dance)
5. Robam Tep Monorom (Heavenly Bliss Dance)	12. Robam Preah Thong Neang Neak
6. Robam Chuon Por (Wishing Dance)	13. Robam Neang Sovannmaccha
7. Robam Moni Mekhala	14. Robam Khun Luong

DANCES OF CAMBODIA – Introduction & Performances (Contd.)

Folk dance

- Created in the 20th century are folk dances that emphasize that various cultural traditions and ethnic groups of Cambodia.
- Cambodian folk dances are usually more fast-paced than classical dances.
- The movements and gestures are not as stylized as classical dance.
- Folk dancers wear clothes of the people they are portraying such as Chams, hill tribes, farmers, and peasants.
- Some folk dances are about love or folktales.
- Most of the music of folk dances is played by a mahori orchestra.

LIST OF FOLK DANCES

1. Trot Dance (Dance of the Stag)	5. Sneang Tosoang Dance (Wild Oxen)
2. Robam Kom Araek (Dance of Bamboo)	6. Robam Neary Chea Chuor- a young women's dance)
3. Robam Kngaok Pailin (Pailin peacock dance)	7. Chhayam - an entertainment dance
4. Cambodian Coconut Dance	8. Cambodian Fishing Dance

Social dance

- commonly danced at social gatherings in Cambodia include:
 - *romvong*,
 - *rom kbach*,
 - *saravann*,
 - *chok krapeus* and
 - *lam leav*.
- Other social dances from around the world have influenced Cambodian social culture, including the cha-cha, the bolero, and the Madison. Such dances are often performed at Cambodian banquet parties.

VIDEO

Traditional Khmer Dancing in the Koulen Restaurant in Siem Reap
Cambodia 4K Travel Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e6y9KZzaP-c>

Suggested viewing time:

- (1) 04:30 to 05:08 minutes: coconut shell dance**
- (2) 14:55 to 16:00 minutes: basket dance**
- (3) 26:00 to 27:00 minutes: bamboo dance**

<https://youtu.be/BYGai-ReIrQ>

Suggested viewing time:

- (1) 00:00 to 01:30 minutes: fishing dance**

REAMKER IN OTHER PERFORMANCES

1. THE ROYAL BALLET



REAMKER IN OTHER PERFORMANCES (*Contd.*)

1. THE ROYAL BALLET: INTRODUCTION

- The Royal ballet in other words is Royal Opera or Classical Opera which this kind of performance was performed by all female performers.
- Origin of Royal Ballet was since Pre-Angkor period.
- These ballet dancers had evolved in Khmer society and religion which made other highly value them, especially in period of King Jayavarman the XII
- The Royal Ballet Dance has 4 main characters: female role, male role, giant role and monkey role, performed by all female dancers
- Body gestures to create communication language following a singer describing

about the meaning of the dialogue.

- Costume and jewellery are very stylized.
- Khmer Traditional music instrument called Pen Peat, which is originated from the combination of Harp Orchestra and Kong Peat Orchestra



REAMKER IN OTHER PERFORMANCES (Contd.)

1. THE ROYAL BALLET: CHARACTERS

Neang or Female Character: represents a woman and divided into 8 categories:

1. Neang Ek : the female lead, like Sita
2. Neang Pi-Leang : the female servants
3. Neang Komnan : the mistress(es), the extramarital affair(s)
4. Neang Mae : the mother
5. Neang Kinnorei : Sanskrit. the Kinnari; a half bird, half human mythological creature
6. Neang Neak : Sanskrit the Naga; a half serpent, half human mythological creature
7. Neang Yahkhenei : Sanskrit, the Rakshasi; mostly serve as villainesses (e.g. Surpanaka)
8. Neang Sovannmachha : Sanskrit, Suvannamaccha; the mermaid Princess



REAMKER IN OTHER PERFORMANCES (Contd.)

1. THE ROYAL BALLET: CHARACTERS - Neay Rong character represents a man who is divided into eleven categories:

1. Neang Ek : the male lead, e.g, Rama
2. Neay Rong Bav Preav : the male servants
3. Neay Rong Sena Ek : the battalion commander or general
4. Neay Rong Pol Sena : the soldiers, imperial guards
5. Neay Rong Chao Ngoh : the character with memory problems and an undesirable appearance serve as a farce
6. Neay Rong Ovpuok : the father
7. Neay Rong : the wise sage/hermit, usually the male main character's master (teacher)
8. Neay Rong Krot : the Garuda; an avian mythological creature (e.g. Jatayu)
9. Neay Rong Yahk : the Rakshasa; mostly serve as villains (e.g. Ravana)
10. Neay Rong Sva : the human-like ape mythological creatures (e.g. Hanuman)
11. Neay Rong Animal : the divine animals such as horses, deer, etc



REAMKER IN OTHER PERFORMANCES (*Contd.*)

1. THE ROYAL BALLET

VIDEO

The Royal Ballet of Cambodia by UNESCO

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t-VrmGhheok>

Suggested viewing time: entire video

REAMKER IN OTHER PERFORMANCES (*Contd.*)

2. THE APSARA DANCE OF CAMBODIA

Cambodia Ramayana



REAMKER IN OTHER PERFORMANCES (*Contd.*)

2. THE APSARA DANCE OF CAMBODIA

KHMER ROBAM APSARA: A REPERTOIRE OF ROYAL BALLET



- Partie inférieure de fronton. Cambodge, Bayon (Angkor Thom), province de Siemreap, style du Bayon, fin 12ème - début du 13ème siècle, grès. Musée Guimet, Paris.
- Apsara represent an important motif in the stone bas-reliefs of the Angkorian temples in Cambodia (8th–13th centuries AD)
- Khmer female figures that are dancing or are poised to dance are considered apsara
- Female figures, depicted individually or in groups, who are standing still and facing forward in the manner of temple guardians or custodians are called devatas

REAMKER IN OTHER PERFORMANCES (*Contd.*)

2. THE APSARA DANCE OF CAMBODIA

KHMER ROBAM APSARA: A REPERTOIRE OF ROYAL BALLET

The costumes

- The apsara role is based on the devatas as depicted on bas-relief of Angkor Wat.
- They wear a samposarabap, a type of silk brocade that is intricately pleated in the front.

Headdress

- The headdress of the lead apsara has three points or tips, with two rows of spherical decorations like the apsara pictured at Angkor Wat.
- subordinate dancers commonly have three points and only one row of sphere decoration.
- These crowns often include garlands of artificial hair with ornate adornments.
- The golden flower is considered a body-decorating element, either worn on the waist or carried during the performance.

REAMKER IN OTHER PERFORMANCES (*Contd.*)

2. THE APSARA DANCE OF CAMBODIA

KHMER ROBAM APSARA: A REPERTOIRE OF ROYAL BALLET

Accessories

- Round decorative collar (red colored) just below the neck with detailed gold-colored copper ornaments and beaded designs.
- Dangling earrings, which are bound in bunches, design of the 'krorsang' flower (a large spiny tree with sour fruit) traditionally stretch almost to the shoulder.
- Total of four types of wrist jewelry: kong rak, patrum, kong ngor, and sanlek.
- Apsara dancer may be found wearing a garland of jasmine.
- Two types of gold ankle jewelry are usually worn by the Apsara dancer, the first being kong tong chhuk the second kong ngor (or kong kravel).
- The sangvar is a loosely decorated band of beads worn crosswise
- The golden flower is considered a body-decorating element, either worn on the waist or carried during the performance.

REAMKER IN OTHER PERFORMANCES (*Contd.*)

2. THE APSARA DANCE OF CAMBODIA

KHMER ROBAM APSARA: A REPERTOIRE OF ROYAL BALLET

VIDEO

APSARA - TRADITIONAL KHMER DANCE | TOP THINGS TO DO IN SIEM REAP

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SkIURruND9w>

Suggested viewing time: entire video

No visit to the mysterious kingdom of Cambodia is complete without watching the renowned magic Apsara dance, the traditional dance of Khmer people. The Apsara dance is famous because of not only its beauty but also its invisible enchant and magical appeal.

Apsara Traditional dance was soon to be realized as a hidden treasure of Cambodia when it was recognized as World's Intangible culture heritage in 2003 by UNESCO.

REAMKER IN OTHER PERFORMANCES (*Contd.*)

3. KHMER ROBAM NEANG SUVANNAMACCHA: A REPERTOIRE OF ROYAL BALLET



REAMKER IN OTHER PERFORMANCES (*Contd.*)

3. KHMER ROBAM NEANG SUVANNAMACCHA: A REPERTOIRE OF ROYAL BALLET

STORY:

- The dance narrates a scene of *Reamker*. Preah Ream (Rama) orders Hanuman to construct a causeway.
- He directed monkey troops to collect rocks and drop them into the sea. But these rocks kept disappearing.
- Hanuman dove into the sea to discover that the golden mermaid—Sovann Maccha—was responsible for the disruption.
- While trying to overcome Sovann Maccha, they fall in love, then give birth to a monkey with a fish tail known as Macchanub.
- Hanuman explains to the golden mermaid why he needed the rocks.
- Sovann Maccha agrees to allow the causeway to be built and returns the stolen rocks.
- She then assists Hanuman to build the causeway.

REAMKER IN OTHER PERFORMANCES (*Contd.*)

3. KHMER ROBAM NEANG SUVANNAMACCHA: A REPERTOIRE OF ROYAL BALLET

Character and costumes

- The characters performs in Robam Sovann Maccha consists of Sovan Machha- the golden mermaid who leads a shoal of fish disrupting the construction of the causeway to Lanka and Hanuman: the monkey general who leads a troop of monkeys.
- The ears are adorned with flower and lbak pkar the earrings, and chor trajeak jewellery. And various types of ankle and wrists bracelets and bangles with many styles.

Sovann Maccha

- Sovann Maccha dancing in gold costume.
- During 1990s Sovann Maccha worn mokot ksatrei, a single-spire crown as seen in the Reamker mural painting at Silver Pagoda in Phnom Penh.
- Today dancer wears mokot kantuy hong (hamsa's tailed crown).
- Does not wear sbai (a shawl-like garment worn in Cambodia) and only wears a gold long sleeved silk shirt.
- She wears a gold sampot sarabap. The sampot is wrapped around the lower body and then pleated into a band in the front and secured with a gold or brass belt.
- Wears decorative embroidered cloth with fish scale patten in the shape of a tail of fish (caudal fin)

REAMKER IN OTHER PERFORMANCES (*Contd.*)

4. LAKHON KHOL: HISTORY, CHARACTERS AND PERFORMANCE

- Mask Dance is another worship dancing performing only Reamker story.
- Mask Theater is all male performers, even when performing female character
- All performers wear mask, excluded Female character who needs to wear a heavy makeup similar to wearing mask.
- Bhanni performance consists all male performers, even musical performers.
- The term Bhanni means the story narration, story tale or story reading,
- Mask Theater types: created & managed by Royal Palace and of countryside
- Both perform Reamker story.



REAMKER IN OTHER PERFORMANCES (Contd.)

4. LAKHON KHOL: THE MASK DANCE OF KHMER

VIDEO: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=elSxA_KpQfA

The piece shows an extract from the Reamker. A Cambodian version of Indian Ramayana epic poem.

It shows a creative combination between Sbaek Thom (large shadow puppet) and Lakhom Khaol (Classical male masked dance).

The first scene shows Hanuman leading the monkey soldiers into war with the giant soldiers.

In the second scene. Pinunjit. Commander of the giant soldiers. Leads his men into battle before being killed by Hanuman.

Hindi Mythology Videos : After Lord Ram became the King, once, when the court was adjourned, Narada – known for creating disharmony between Ram and Hanuman – asked Hanuman to greet all the sages except Vishwamitra, since he was a King once. Hanuman did so, but it did not affect Vishwamitra. Narada went on and instigated Vishwamitra, which angered him so much that he went to Ram and asked him to punish Hanuman to death. Ram could not ignore Vishwamitra command and punished Hanuman to death by arrows. The statement was to be executed, but all arrows failed to do any harm to Hanuman as he kept chanting Ram!

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REAMKER IN OTHER PERFORMANCES (*Contd.*)

Lkhon Khol Wat Svay Andet

VIDEO

Lkhon Khol Wat Svay Andet

UNESCO: List of Intangible Cultural Heritage

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=elSxA_KpQfA

Suggested viewing time: 00:00 to 01:48 minutes

Lkhon Khol Wat Svay Andet is performed in one community surrounding a Buddhist monastery, Wat Svay Andet, by men wearing masks, to the accompaniment of music and melodious recitation. The aim is to propitiate the Neak Ta (a guardian spirit of the place and its people), thereby protecting and bringing prosperity to the community. After generations of transmission, however, several factors now threaten the viability of the element, notably the after-effects of the war and the Khmer Rouge regime, environmental factors, economic migration and a lack of resources.

CAMBODIA : THE MUSIC AND ORCHESTRA

Cambodia Ramayana



CAMBODIA : THE MUSIC AND ORCHESTRA (*Contd.*)

THE ROYAL BALLET: PIN PEAT MUSICIAN

- Vong Phleng Pin Peat or Pin Peat Musician has 34 Tracks in the Royal Ballet, which are divided into two types.
- The first is the Mohoari Orchestra (Small drum style)
- The second is the Royal Theatre (Big drum style)
- The music used for Khmer classical dance is played by a pin peat ensemble.
- This type of orchestra consists of several types of xylophones, drums, oboes, gongs, and other musical instruments.
- The chorus consists of several singers who mainly sing in the absence of music.
- The lyrics are in poetry form and are sung interspersed with the grammatical particles EU [ə:], Eung [ə:ŋ], and Ery [ə:j] in various patterns.

CAMBODIA : THE MUSIC AND ORCHESTRA (*Contd.*)

Cambodia Ramayana

THE ROYAL BALLET: MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Plate-1
Roneat ek
: The lead
xylophone
with
bamboo or
teak wood
keys



Plate-3
Roneat dek : A
metaloph-
one of
brass keys



Plate-2
Kong thom : A
set of 16
gongs
arranged
in a circle



Plate-4
Roneat thung : A
xylophone
with
bamboo or
teak wood
keys; low



CAMBODIA : THE MUSIC AND ORCHESTRA (*Contd.*)

Cambodia Ramayana

THE ROYAL BALLET: MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS



Plate-1

Krap : A pair of wood clappers (now rarely used)

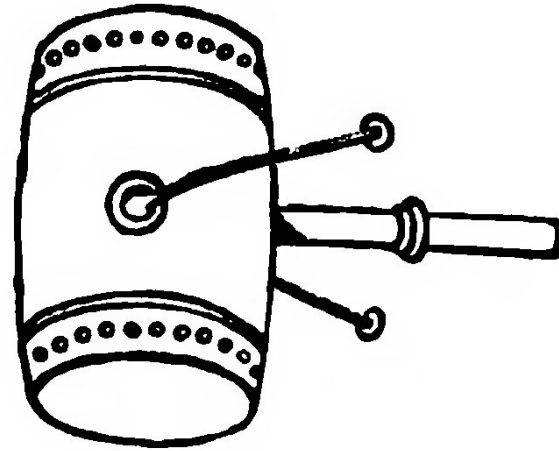


Plate-2

Skor thom : A pair of drums played with a percussion mallet



Plate-3

Chhing : A pair of finger cymbals

CAMBODIA : THE MUSIC AND ORCHESTRA (*Contd.*)

THE ROYAL BALLET: MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS



Plate-1

A type of **flute** made from bamboo (now rarely used)

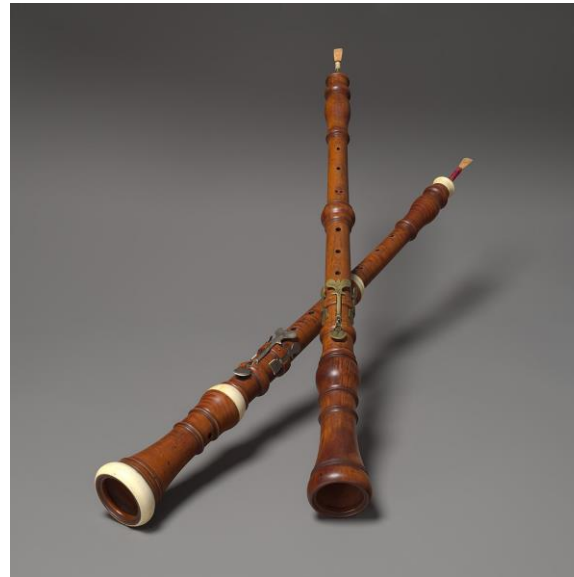


Plate-2

Sralai : A type of shawm; there are two sizes



Plate-3

Roneat thong : A metallophone (now rarely used)

CAMBODIA : THE MUSIC AND ORCHESTRA (*Contd.*)

Cambodia Ramayana

VIDEO

Cambodian Pin Peat Ensemble

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SvNrFPXdDM8>

Suggested viewing time: entire video