

Earth in Flower

The Divine Mystery of the
Cambodian Dance Drama

By Paul Cravath

Release: May 2008
ISBN: 978-1-934431-28-3
BISAC: DRA005000 DRAMA/Asian
PER003000 PERFORMING ARTS/Dance
HIS048000 HISTORY/Asia/Southeast Asia
SOC028000 SOCIAL SCIENCE/Women's Studies

Edition: First Edition
Size: 7 x 10 inches - 544 pages
Includes bibliography and index.
(See back of this sheet for Table of Contents)

Text: 70# acid-free matt coated stock
Illustrations: 188 B&W photos, paintings and engravings + 7 color photos
Binding: Case bound, Smyth sewn
Price: \$128
Distributors: Baker & Taylor, et al.
Direct order: www.EarthInFlower.com
On-line academic discount available

The Cambodian **dance** drama

Since the dawn of recorded history, Khmer royal families nurtured a dance style unique to their Asian kingdom. Spiritually, these graceful dancers embody the essence of the Khmer race, ritualistically effecting the mystical regeneration of their land. For more than a thousand years they ensured fertility, life and growth; the dancers truly were and always will be the realization of Cambodia's earth in flower.

A political **twist** of fate


In 1970, a military coup deposed King Sihanouk; the state seized full responsibility for the ancient royal dance tradition. Even surrounded by war, and in the midst of a civil war, the newly formed Khmer Republic desperately sought to preserve this cultural treasure. In 1974, their Ministry of Culture engaged University of Hawaii researcher Paul Cravath to document the esoteric history of the Royal Cambodian Ballet.

Extraordinary access

Cravath arrived in Phnom Penh as an ever-tightening circle of war gripped the capital city. He became one of the only Westerners in history to gain access to the royal dance archives, teachers and to the dancers themselves. In earlier times, this privilege was unthinkable; the dancers were the king's personal property. Contact by any men outside the royal household was forbidden, under penalty of death.

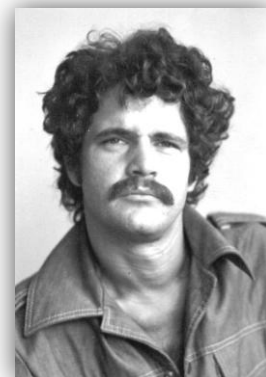
Lost history revealed

In April 1975 Phnom Penh fell to the Khmer Rouge, initiating one of the worst genocides in human history. Cravath, one of the last Westerners to leave, escaped with his research intact. After 10 years of preparation, he submitted the study as his doctoral thesis in 1985. Only a handful of scholars saw the document. More than two decades later, at the dawn of the Khmer Renaissance, this historic knowledge is available to the public for the first time as *Earth in Flower*.

Publisher:  **DatASIA, Inc.**
PO Box 1157, Holmes Beach, FL 34218
www.DatASIA.us

Contact: Kent Davis - Editor
kdavis@datasia.us
Direct Line: 941-778-3086

Author - Dr. Paul Cravath is a scholar, teacher, actor and theatre director with extensive Asian research experience. He based his book, *Earth in Flower*, on primary research conducted in Cambodia and Thailand, followed by ten years of archival research in the US. Since 1986, Cravath has worked as Professor of Theatre at the University of Hawaii-LCC.





Earth in Flower

The Divine Mystery of the
Cambodian Dance Drama

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES & ILLUSTRATIONS

PUBLISHER'S INTRODUCTION

NOTES ON TRANSLITERATION

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE FOOTNOTES

AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

AUTHOR'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PREFACE

CHAPTER I

SOURCES OF THE STUDY

Historical Perspective of the Present Study
Structure of the Present Study

CHAPTER II

THE CULTURAL CONTEXT OF PRE-ANGKOREAN DANCE

Earliest Evidence of Dance in Southeast Asia
Cultural Similarities throughout Southeast Asia
Dance in Funeral Rites and Megalithic Cultures
Royal Genealogy Derived from *Apsaras*
The *Devarāja*, Source of the King's Power
Pre-Angkorean Temple Dance
Sculptural Evidence
Jayavarman II and Javanese Influence

CHAPTER III

ANGKOREAN DANCE: 802-1431

Angkorean Cosmology
Religious Syncretism
The Myth of the Origin of Dance
Temple Dance
Court Dance
The *Devatā*
The *Apsaras* Prior to Angkor Wat
The *Apsaras* of Angkor Wat
Twelfth Century Dance
Dance in the Reign of Jayavarman VII
The Dancer in Late Angkorean Bronze
Post-Bayon Period Dance
The Fate of Angkorean Dance

CHAPTER IV

KHMER DANCE: 1431-1981

The Fifteenth Century
The Sixteenth Through Eighteenth Centuries
 The 1688 Account of La Loubere
Dance in the Early Nineteenth Century
Dance in the Reign of Ang Duong (1841-1859)
Dance in the Reign of Norodom (1860-1904)
 Thai Dancers at Norodom's Court
 Early European Accounts of Dance
Dance in the Reign of Sisowath (1904-1927)
 The Khmer Dancers in France
 Condition and Finances of the Lakhon
 Politics and Chanchhaya Pavilion
 Dance Personnel and Activities
 Non-Royal Dance
 French Attitudes Toward the Dance

Dance in the Reign of Monivong (1928-1941)

 The Contribution of Princess Say Sangvann
 The Contribution of Khun Meak
 The Water Festival
 Monivong's Dancers
 The Thai Perspective

Dance in the Sihanouk Era (1941-1970)

 Relations with the French Government
 The Contribution of Princess Kossamak
 Occasions of Performance
 Performance Locations
 The "Friendship" Dance
 Dance Personnel

Dance in the Republic (1970-1975) and After

 The American Tour
 Dance During the Siege
 The Contribution of Chheng Phon
 The End of the Republic
 The Contribution of Mom Kamel
 The Contribution of Phan Phuong

Classical Dance in Kampuchea

 The School of Fine Arts

CHAPTER V

THE MYTHOLOGICAL FOUNDATION OF KHMER DANCE

The Myth of Liu Ye
The Myth of *Nāgī-Somā*
The Myths of the *Apsaras* Mera and the *Nāgī*
 Earth Spirit
The Legend of Neang Neak and Preah Thong
The Primordial Maiden as Serpent
The Primordial Maiden as Tree Spirit
The Primordial Maiden and the Moon
The Primordial Maiden as Earth Spirit
The Unity of the Primordial Maiden
Complementary Dualism in the Dance Drama
The Dancer in Female Roles
The Dancer in Male Roles
The Dancer in Yakkha and Monkey Roles
The Archetype of the Androgyne

CHAPTER VI

THE MODERN REPERTOIRE OF THE DANCE DRAMA

The Dramatic Repertoire: Roeung
Dramatic Themes
The Dance Repertoire: Robam

CHAPTER VII

MUSIC, CHOREOGRAPHY & STAGING

MUSIC AND CHANT IN THE DANCE DRAMA

Music History
The *Sralay*
The *Sampho*
The *Skor Tom*
The *Roneat*
The *Kong*
The *Chhing* and *Khrab*
Rehearsal Melodies
Musical Structure of Entrances and Exits
Dramatic Structure of Entrances and Exits
Pinpeat Melodies
The Chanters

CHOREOGRAPHY IN THE DANCE DRAMA

Khmer Choreography

The *Kbach*

The Hand Gestures

The Emotions

Floor Patterns

Style of Choreography

STAGING THE DANCE DRAMA

Staging Techniques

The *Kré*

Floor Plan

Representational Elements

Lighting and Curtains

Back Drops and Set Pieces

Scene Changes

Stage Attendants

CHAPTER VIII

THE ROYAL DANCER: TRAINING & COSTUMES

DANCER TRAINING

Entrance to Training

Group Training

Role Training

Teaching Method

Mental Qualities of the Dancer

The Annual Awards Ceremony

Life Style of the Palace Dancers

DANCER COSTUMES

The Costume Room

The Costumes: Some General Distinctions

Masculine Role Costumes

Feminine Role Costumes

Headgear and Flowers

Masks

Hand Props and Fingernails

CHAPTER IX

THE RITUAL FUNCTION OF KHMER DANCE

Dance as a Traditional Offering

The Ceremony of *Buong Suong*

The Dancer and Spirit Mediumship

The *Sampho* Drum and the Spirit World

Face Makeup and the Spirit World

The *Tway Kru* Ceremony and *Bai Sei* Offerings

The *Sampeah Kru* Ceremony

Lakhon Khol and the Spirit World

Analogous Mask Empowerments

The Ritual's End

CHAPTER X

CONCLUSION

APPENDICES

I. The Royal Palace Theatre, ca. 1910

II. Royal Palace Performance Programs

 King Monivong Reign

 1941-1961

III. The Structure of Chorus, Orchestra and

 Dance Components

IV. Repertoire of the Pinpeat Orchestra

About the Author

Publisher's Notes

 The story behind *Earth in Flower*

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

INDEX

