

TRADITIONAL DRESSES IN THE CLASSIC DANCE OF SIAM

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The Publication in the Fine Arts Journal (vol. IV, part 3, Oct. 1950—etseq) of charts depicting the traditional dresses of the classic dance is a welcome contribution to the interpretation and correct understanding of this branch of the national art. We are indebted to Mr. Dhani Yūpho, the head of the Entertainments Section of the Fine Arts Department, for the permission to reproduce these charts as well as for the loan of the original blocks used in the Fine Arts Journal.

Although the charts are accompanied by bilingual explanatory notes from the pen of Mr. Yūpho himself, it has been thought advisable, for the sake of readers unacquainted with the traditions of Siamese sartorial art, that we should provide complementary notes in which references to the original numerical annotations are given in brackets.

The charts represent four principal rôles of the classic dance, namely: the male regal attire for human parts, the same for the female, the male demoniac rôles and the male simian rôles.

Chart I Male regal attire for a human rôle.

This chart depicts full attire for a regal rôle, both in the *lchōn* and in the *lakon*. It consists of:

the drawers (2 in the chart), only the gold embossed extremities of which show beneath the knees to which the *panung* extends;

the *panung* (3), worn in the style known as the swan's tail or *hānghongs*;

the jacket (5), of which two varieties have been drawn, the sleeves indicating either variety. One type, invariably in use up to the time of the late King Rama VI, depicts a costume for going to battle. The arm is full-sleeved, denoting the presence of an under-jacket with long sleeves surmounted by an armour forming a bodice outside. Nowadays it is sewn as a combination but the sleeves are, or should be, of a different colour from the bodice. King Rama VI initiated a more civilian jacket without long sleeves and without the epaulette, as may be seen from the right arm of the figure in the chart. The sleeve here ends above the elbow, tipped with an ornament called the *bāhurat* (13);

the waist-band (6) to hold up the *panung*, the extremities of which hang down and are known under a separate name of *chirabāt* (4); a survival of this existed when royalty wore the *panung* at court, and this waist-band was called the *somrot*, worn hanging down as a mark of privilege;

the *hoi-nā* (8) does not seem to have had a *raison d'être*, and is looked upon merely as an ornament, although there has been a suggestion that it might be a survival of the knot securing the *panung*.

The other items are either ornamental or are worn as ornaments.

The male human rôles of non-regal ranks wear almost the same attire apart from differences in the headdresses, which in the latter cases are either less ornamental or non-existent depending on the station in life portrayed.

Chart II

Female regal attire for a human rôle.

The female regal attire consists, besides ornaments, of: a bodice (2), which is covered by the embroidered shawl and hardly shows itself; a nether garment worn skirt-fashioned (3), though instead of being sewn up, it is folded and kept in place by a belt (4); a large shawl put over the head through an opening in the shawl itself (6). It has been suggested that the shawl was originally a long one put over one shoulder and brought round the body to cover the other shoulder.

The non-regal rôles differ from this generalisation in that they wear less ornamented and less tapering headgears.

Chart III

Attire for a demoniac rôle.

Demons, or *yaksha*, appear in the *khôn* a great deal and are found also in the *lak-on* to a lesser extent. They use the same dress whether in the *khôn* or the *lak-on*. The costume consists of:

drawers (2) which, as in the case of the male human rôles, show

only the embroidered extremities beneath the knees to which the *panung* extends;

panung (3) worn in a special way like that of the regal human male, somewhat reminiscent of the Indian nether garment of a Brahman, called the swan's tail or *hānghongs*;

waist-band (4) to hold up the *panung* with extremities hanging down, which are known as the *chirabāt* as in chart I;

a front-cloth or *hoi-nā* (8) and a hind-cloth or *hoikon* (5), the true significance of which is still unexplained satisfactorily and may be a kind of mail-protection for the vital parts of the body;

the coat (6), explained in the chart as an 'upper garment or armour,' should in my opinion be 'an upper garment *and* armour'; it consists of two separate articles, as explained in chart I, since the bodice and the sleeves are usually differentiated in colour.

The headdress of a demon is coupled invariably with the mask and the two indicate the personality of the wearer by their colouring or complexion and by the form of the headdress which is most variegated in design.

The non-regal rôles as a rule do not wear crowns, though some of the generals do. The high conical crowns, however, as worn by such characters as Rāma and his brothers or by Thosakanth and his heir, Indrajit, are strictly reserved for the regal rôles. The crown worn in our illustration of Thosakanth (Rāvana) consists of a regal crown on top of the human face, while underneath are found his other heads which are not parts of the crown.

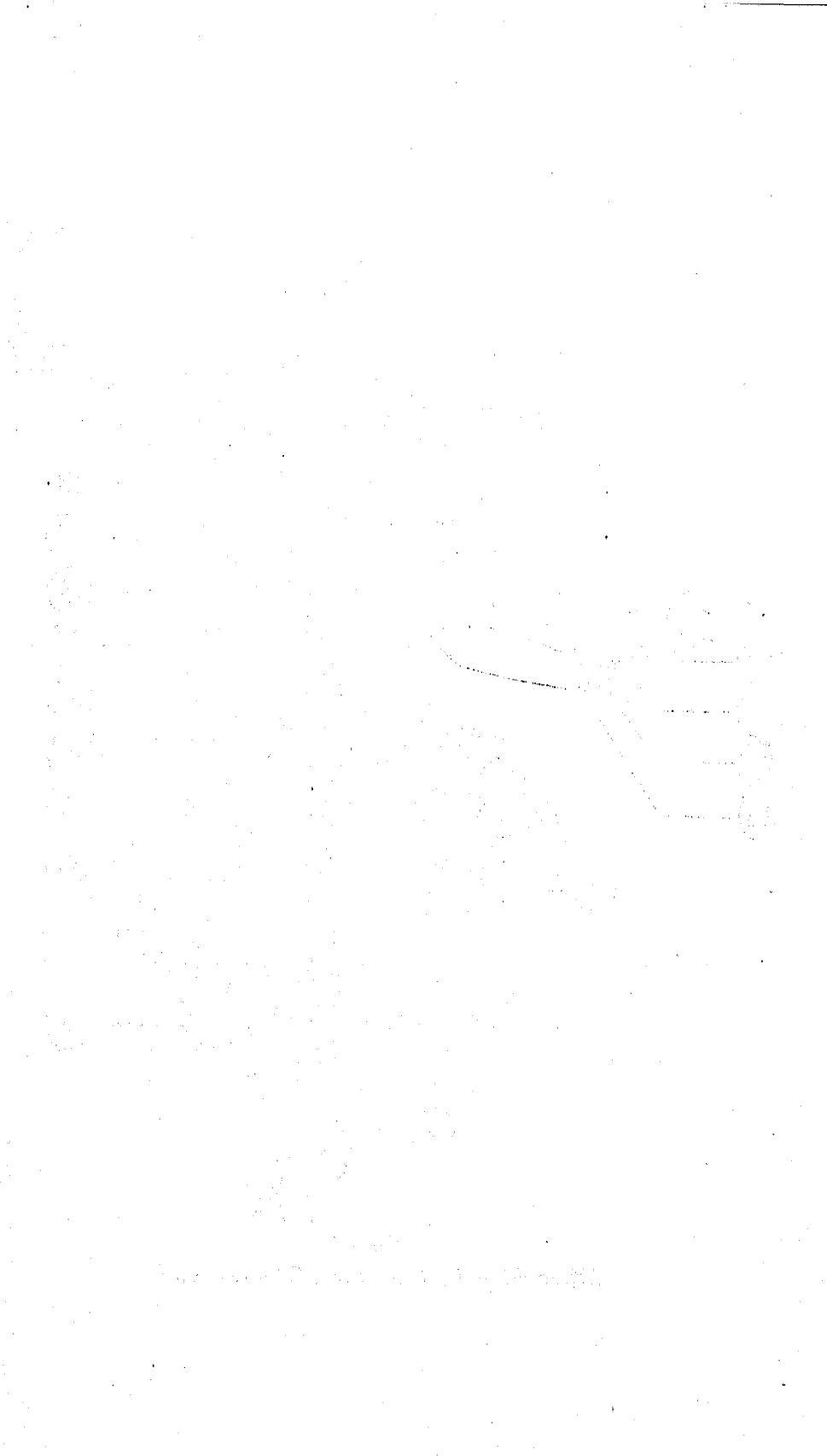
Chart IV

Attire for a simian rôle.

The costume of a simian rôle is almost the same as that prescribed for the demon with the exception of the tail and the coat. Monkeys are not supposed to be wearing coats at all and the coat worn merely indicates the fur of the body to which are added armour and ornaments. Hence the absence of epaulettes.

Simian kings and princes, also wear crowns, Sugriva the King of Khītkhin Kingdom even wearing the regular regal one worn by Rāma and Rāvana. The monkey generals however wear no crowns but merely abbreviated coronets; while the rank and file of the simian army are supposedly dressed almost *au naturel*, with the addition, in pictorial art, of a loin-cloth, although they wear long trousers on the stage.

Simian rôles are practically limited to the *khōn*.



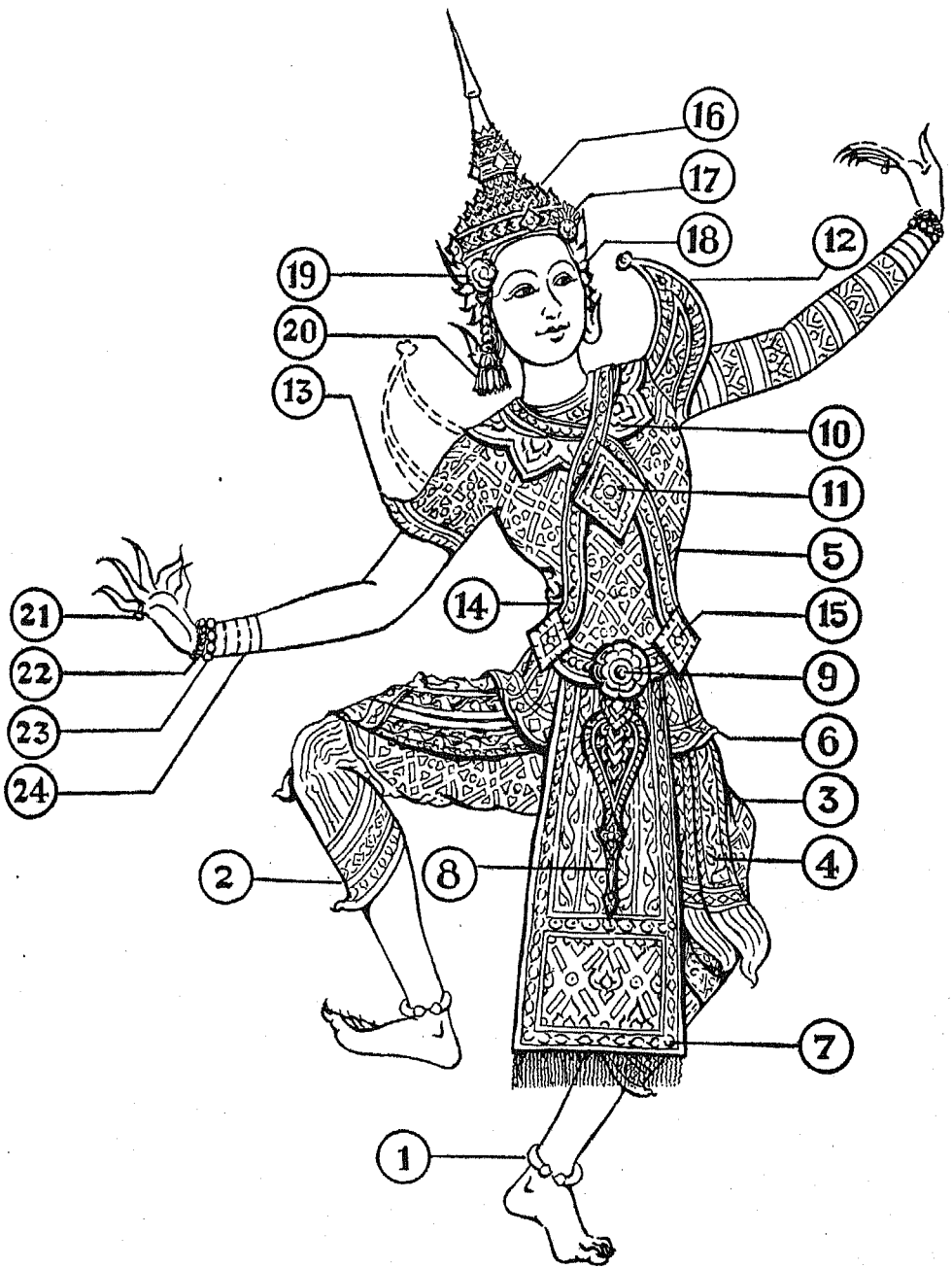


Chart I
Male Royal Attire for a Human Role

**THE DRESS AND ORNAMENTS
WORN BY THE PERSON ACTING THE PART OF THE HERO
IN SIAMESE CLASSICAL DRAMA**

1. KAM-LAI-THĀO. Anklet.
2. SA-NAP-PHLĀO. Tight-fitting drawers.
3. PHĀ-NUNG. Nether garment.
4. HOI-KHĀNG or Embroidered cloth used like a belt, but with its ends
CHIA-RA-BĀT. hanging down to the knees, one at the front of each leg.
5. SŪA or CHA-LAWNG-ŌNG. Upper garment.
6. RAT-SA-EW. Waist-band.
7. HOI-NĀ. Cloth hanging down from the waist between the ends of No. 4.
8. SU-WAN-KRA-THOP. Gold plate, with traceries in openwork, hung from the
waist so that it partly covers No. 7.
9. KHEM-KHAT. Belt.
10. KHRONG-SAW or Ornament worn around the body on a level with the
NUAM-KHAW. shoulders.
11. THAP-SUANG. Pendant.
12. IN-THA-NŪ. Epaulette. This is worn only with the upper garment
which has long sleeves.
13. PHĀ-HU-RAT. Armlet.
14. SANG-WĀN. Golden chain worn from the shoulder to the hip opposite to it.
15. TĀB-THIT. Plate attached to No. 14 where the latter touches the hip.
16. CHA-DĀ. Crown.
17. DAWK-MAI-PHET. "Diamond flower".
18. KAN-CHIĀK or Ornamental piece extending down, behind the ear, from the
CHORN-HŪ. lower part of the crown.
19. DAWK-MAI-THAT. Flower worn above the right ear.
20. U-BA String of flowers hanging down, from the lower part of the
crown, in front of the right ear.
21. THAM-MA-RŌNG. Finger-ring.
22. WAEN-RAWP. Bracelet which is a coil spring bent into a circle.
23. PA-WA-LAM. Bracelet of beads.
24. THONG-KORN. Ornament for the forearm which looks like a row of bangles
fused together.

Note:— Sometimes some of the ornaments are not worn—*Dhavit*.

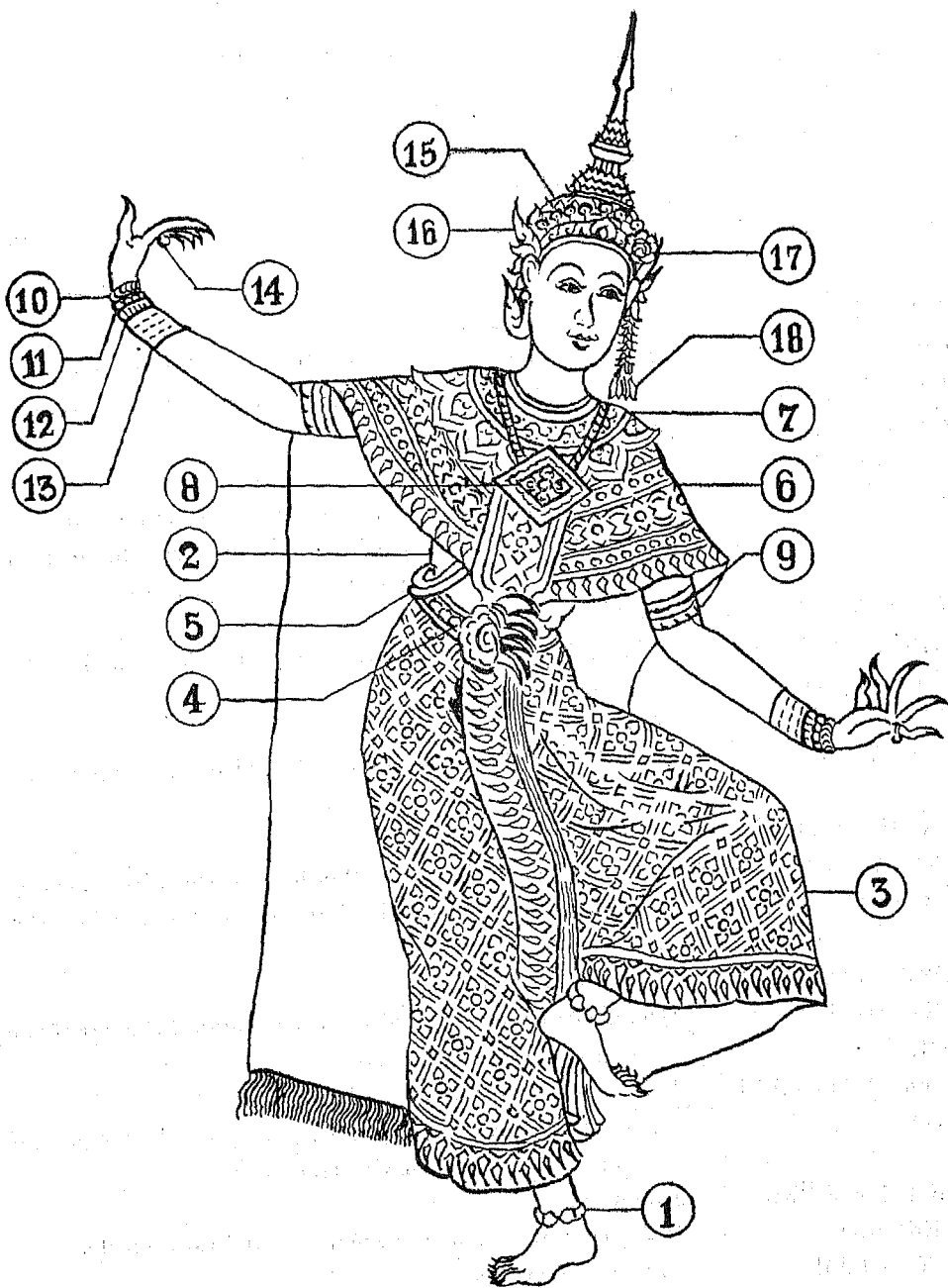


Chart II
Female Royal Attire for a Human Role

**THE DRESS AND ORNAMENTS
WORN BY THE PERSON ACTING THE PART OF THE HEROINE
IN SIAMESE CLASSICAL DRAMA**

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. KAM-LAI-MHĀO. | Anklet. |
| 2. SŪA-NAI-NĀNG. | Bodice. |
| 3. PHĀ-NUNG-NANG. | Nether garment. |
| 4. KHEM-KHAT. | Belt or girdle. |
| 5. SA-ING. | Set of chains worn from the left shoulder to the hip opposite to it. |
| 6. PHĀ-HŌM-NĀNG. | Upper garment. |
| 7. NUAM-NĀNG. | Ornament worn around the body on a level with the shoulders. |
| 8. CHĪ-NĀNG. | Pendant. |
| 9. PHĀ-HU-RAT. | Armlet. |
| 10. WAEN-RAWP. | Bracelet which is a coil spring bent into a circle. |
| 11. PA-WA-LAM. | Bracelet of beads. |
| 12. KAM-LAI-TA-KHĀP. | Bracelet shaped like a centipede. |
| 13. KAM-LAI-SUAM. | Bracelet. |
| 14. THAM-MA-RŌNG. | Finger-ring. |
| 15. MŌNG-KUT. | Crown. |
| 16. KAN-CHIAK or
CHORN-HŪ. | Ornamental piece extending down, behind the ear, from the lower part of the crown. |
| 17. DAWK-MAI-THAT | Flower worn above the left ear. |
| 18. U-BA or
PHUANG-DWK-MAI. | String of flowers hanging down, from the lower part of the crown, in front of the left ear. |

Note :- Sometimes some of the ornaments are not worn—*Dhanit*.

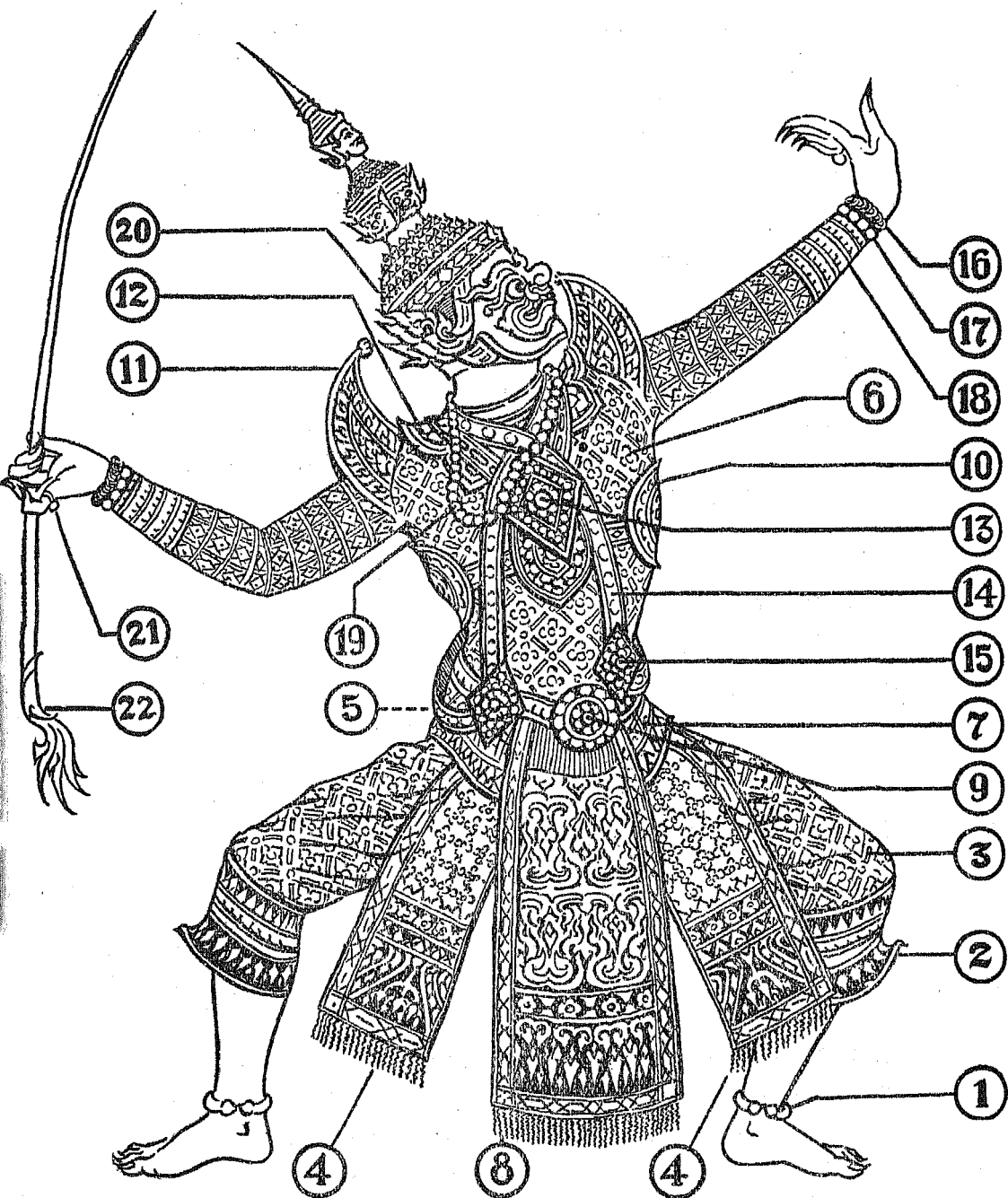


Chart III
 Attire for a Demoniac Rôle

**PICTURES SHOWING THE DRESS
AND ORNAMENTS
OF
THOSAKAN
THE MOST IMPORTANT DEMON CHARACTER
IN THE MASKED PLAY**

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. KAM-LAI-THĀO. | Anklet. |
| 2. SA-NAP-PHLĀO. | Tight-fitting drawere. |
| 3. PHĀ-NUNG. | Nether garment. |
| 4. HOI-KHĀNG or
CHIA-RA-BĀT. | Embroidered cloth used like a belt, but with its ends
hanging down to the knees, one at the front of each leg. |
| 5. PHĀ-PIT-KŌN or HOI-KŌN. | Loin cloth. (see in fig. 3) |
| 6. SŪA or KROH. | Upper garment or armour. |
| 7. RAT-SA-EW. | Waist-band. |
| 8. HOI-NĀ. | Cloth hanging down from the waist between the ends of No 4. |
| 9. KHEM-KHAT. | Belt. |
| 10. RAT-OK. | Chest-band. |
| 11. IN-THA-NŪ. | Epaulette. |
| 12. KHRONG-SAW or
NUAM-KHAW. | Ornament worn around the body on a level with the
shoulders. |
| 13. THAP-SUANG. | Pendant. |
| 14. SANG-WĀN. | Golden chain worn from the shoulder to the hip opposite to it. |
| 15. TĀP-THIT. | Plate attached to No. 14 where the letter touches the hip. |
| 16. WAEN-RAWP. | Bracelet which is a coil spring bent into a circle. |
| 17. PA-WA-LAM. | Bracelet of beads. |
| 18. SHONG-KORN. | Ornament for the forearm which looks like a row of
bangles fused together. |
| 19. PHUANG-PRA-KAM. | Necklace of beads. |
| 20. HUA-KHON. | Mask of Thosakan. |
| 21. THAM-MA-RONG | Finger-ring. |
| 22. SAWN or KHAN-SAWN. | Bow. |

Note:— *The important demon characters in the masked play dress in the same way and differ from one another only by the colour and shape of the masks of which there are one hundred kinds. But on some occasions the less important characters need not dress like this in every particular — Dhanit.*

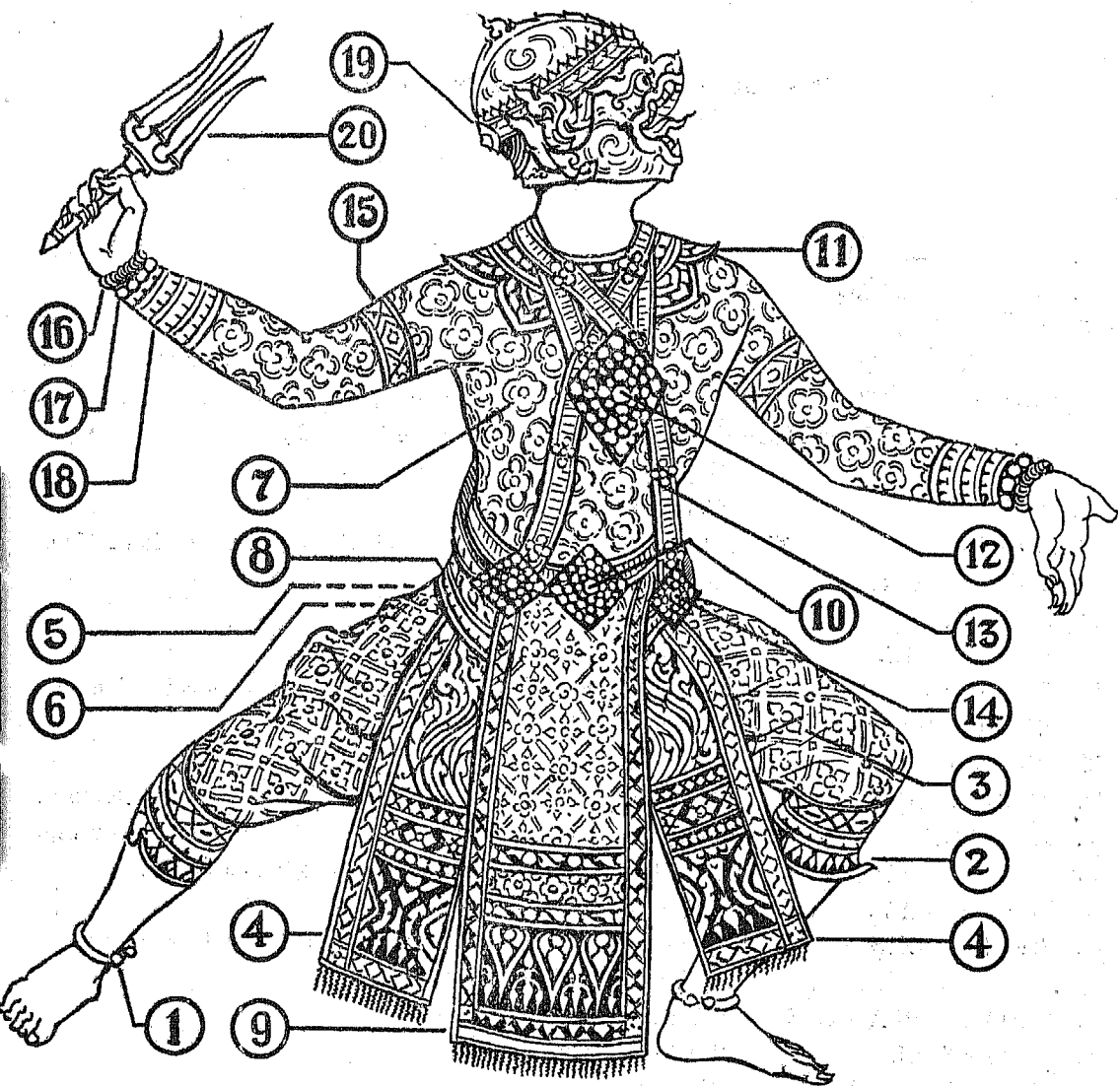


Chart I V
Attire for a Simian Rôle

PICTURES SHOWING THE DRESS
AND ORNAMENTS
OF
HANUMĀN
AN IMPORTANT MONKEY CHARACTER
IN THE MASKED PLAY

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1. KAM-LAI-THĀO. | Anklet. |
| 2. SA-NAP-PHLĀO. | Tight-fitting drawers. |
| 3. PHĀ-NUNG. | Nether garment. |
| 4. HOI-KHANG or
CHIA-RA-BĀT. | Embroidered cloth used like a belt, but with its ends hanging down to the knees, one at the front of each leg. |
| 5. HĀNG-LING. | Monkey's tail. (see in fig. 2) |
| 6. PHĀ-PIT-KŌN or HOI-KŌN. | Loin cloth. (see in fig. 3) |
| 7. SŪA. | Upper garment representing the fur of the monkey. |
| 8. RAT-SA-EW. | Waist-band. |
| 9. HOI-NĀ. | Cloth hanging down from the waist between the ends of No. 4. |
| 10. KHEM-KHAT. | Belt. |
| 11. KHRONG-KHAW or
NUAM-KHAW. | Ornament worn around the body on a level with the shoulders. |
| 12. THAP-SUANG. | Pendant. |
| 13. SANG-WĀN. | Golden chain worn from the shoulder to the hip opposite to it. |
| 14. TAP-THIT. | Plate attached to No. 13 where the latter touches the hip. |
| 15. PHĀ-HU-RAT. | Arm-band. Usually fixed on the arm of the upper garment by stitching. The upper garment represents the fur of the monkey. |
| 16. WAEN-RAWP. | Bracelet which is a coil spring into a circle. |
| 17. PA-WA-LAM. | Gracelet of beads. |
| 18. KAM-LAI-PHAENG or
THONG-KORN. | Ornament for the forearm which looks like a row of bangles fused together. |
| 19. HNA-KHON. | Mask, in this picture that of Hanumān. |
| 20. TRĪ. | Trident. |

Note:— *The important monkey characters in the masked-play dress in the same way and differ from one another only by the colour and shape of the masks of which there are about forty kinds. But some characters need not dress like this on every occasion — Dhanit.*

