

THE TOMB HOUSE AND THE TOMB - STATUES OF THE GIA-RAI AND THE BA-NA (TRADITION AND DEVELOPMENT)

NGO VAN DOANH

There is a saying among the Ba-na: “Kheining nong, Pom baxát”. That says “In the vacation month, one builds tomb house.” That vacation month falls on the season of festivity, season of joyfulness, season in which people drink, and eat. They spear buffaloes, kill pigs for one month or even for one year. This season is common not only to the Ba-na, but also to Gia-rai, E-de and other ethnic groups in Vietnam’s Central Highlands. To build the tomb - house means to perform the ceremony of tomb - abandonment or phantom - abandonment. It is not accidental that the celebration of tomb abandonment has been the greatest, the most jovial, the most cultural and also the most communal festival in Vietnam’s Central Highlands (or The West - Highlands).

1. The tomb - abandoning festival

Every year, when the rainy season ends, after the harvest time is over and every rite to thank the gods (*yang*) for favour are performed, the Gia-rai and the Ba-na¹ undertake preparation work for the tomb - abandoning festival in honour of the dead. During the five months of the dry season (December to April the whole countryside in the Central Highlands is boisterous with sounds of gongs for the tomb - abandoning festival.

The first work to be done in that festival is to build the tomb - house (*baxát*)². A dozen days or even a month before, people in the village group together to go to the forest to fall trees, cut bamboos and thatch, and bring them back to the cemetery of the village. When everything is ready, they again group to make separate parts of the tomb - house, such as carving figures, whittling poles, serving... only men are permitted to share the construction of the tomb - house. Both Gia-rai and Ba-na have a common appellation for that festival, both³ having their

own word, Gia-rai, is eating and abandoning (*hoa lui*), and for the Ba-na, abandoning (*br*□).

However different it may be from one region to another, the tomb - is always carried out in three stages: rites for erecting the tomb - house, rites for abandoning it and rites for liberation. The day for building the tomb - house is called by the Gia-rai the first day (*broach*), and the entering day (*mot*) or the breilding day (*dong boxat*) by the Ba-na. On this occasion the hut over the tomb is taken off, and a new house is built. Everybody is working while dancing, playing gongs having a good time all day and through out the night. In some places the rites for building a new tomb - house lasts for two days. The day of abandoning the tomb - house is called the bursting day (*Pochanh*) by the Gia-rai, and abandoning day (*nar tuk*) by the Ba-na. The rites usually start in the evening. The head of family makes an offering of alcohol and meat in the tomb - house. It is somewhat different from one region to and another. The prayer words express basically the same idea that is cutting off all connections with the dead⁴. While the head of the family officiates, the relatives enter the tomb - house and mourn over the dead for the last farewell. After this function is performed, the procession starts moving in counter clockwise direction around the tomb - house. First come those carrying on their shoulders the miniature tomb - house along with wooden puppets of various sizes (*bram, brêm*) making them moving by strings. These puppets manifest various activities of human life, such as carrying water, pounding rice, weaving and even copulating. Next come dance - groups of women. And the closing procession is sets of gongs played by men. Everyone is moving slowly in a slight dance under (the deliberate and attached) rhythm of gongs. All these items are dedicated to phantom of the dead (*atâu* - in two dialects) - the

gong musis is called a Phantom music (*chieng atâu*), the dance - a phantom dance (*soang atâu*)⁵. All these express the function and peculiar character of the procession, that is seeing the dead's phantom off to his ancestors. It is safe to say the procession is the climax of the tomb abandoning ceremony. The major rites of the ceremony are considered accomplished when the procession comes to an end. From then on, everyone is permitted to enjoy free entertainment, dancing eating and drinking as much as he pleases. The last rite of the tomb - abandoning ceremony is the liberation for the widow (widower). The day this rite is performed is called the post - washing day (*xat go*) by both, Gia-rai and Ba-na. On that occasion, everyone enjoys food and a good time whether it is at host's house or at the communal house. The host officiates to call back the soul of living beings⁶. When this function is performed, everyone splashes water on the widow (widower), the dead's dear ones and on each other. In villages near a river or stream, the relatives accompany family - members of the dead to the water so as to bath them. From then on every tie, every connection of living men with the dead are cut off. The widow (widower) then is free to be married and have a good time like everyone else. By this rite, the tomb - abandoning ceremony comes to an end⁷.

After the tomb - abandoning festival, even right after the procession rite, the tomb - house is regarded as "departing" with the dead. The remaining material house is but a carcass without soul and left to be decayed by weather. The tomb - house, especially its woodcarvings and figure sculptures are for all those who are interested in culture original work of art.

2. The tomb - house

The tombs - house (though a house for the dead) roughly has the same architectural structure and shape of the welling house. However, it is difficult to find in Vietnam Central Highlands any other architecture that is comparable to that of the tombs - house in the field of sculpture and architectural art. Perhaps,

in Central Highland the tombs - house is the only architecture that combines many different branches of art: architecture, a sculpture, and drawing, plating, decorative art... Depending on the character and the shape of the tombs - house, the artistic character of the architecture, sculpture or decorations make it more or less evident. For instance, in the *boxát kút* (tombs - house with the kút column) or the

boxát char (tomb - house with drawing) of the Gia-rai, the impressive character of architecture is most prominent but in the *baxát tanhmat* (tomb - house with a plaited roof) decoration and sculpture are the main elements that give it its beautiful and magnificence. Generally speaking, any type of tomb - house, various kinds of arts combined with various musical instruments perform together to make up an orchestra to play wonderful music. The two or four flaps of the roof constitute the background for the patterns of plaited, carved, or drawn figures of variegated, or drawn figures of variegated brilliant colours, lovely and mysterious. The tomb - statues look thoughtful along the hedge. They embody a profound philosophy for the whole house. Inside the house, the decorative columns are very tall, and the decorative parts on the roof top give the impression that they are pulling the house to soar up. The hot colours are in contrast with the colours of the drawing details set the tomb - house a part in the cold green vastness of the surrounding forest and mountain. That is why, though nor large in size, the tomb - house in Central Highlands always appear to the eyes of admirers a celestial palace floating in all its religious and artistic significance.

Though different in shapes, the tomb - house of Central Highlands are composed of two principal parts: the house and the surrounding hedged alley. The house protects the tomb beneath and contains the things offered by the living to the dead. It serves also as frame or background for the sculptures, the carving, the drawings, the woven figures, brilliantly coloured, wonderful and lively decorative parts. The

hedged alley, prevents the encroachment of animals, as well as it contributes an important part to the artistic value of the tomb - house. The wooden columns of the hedge sometimes are tall and bear a carved figure or statue, that look thoughtful and impregnated with the living, philosophical and humanist features of the Central Highlands people. The two elements manual labour and art are combined perfectly in the tomb - house of Central Highlands.

In spite of them common almost identical, features and structure, the tomb - house of each ethnic group bears its own specific beauty. The collective tomb - house of the Gia-rai is large in size and varies in type. The tomb - house *kút* (*boxát or ronok kút*) of the Gia-rai Mthur in Krongpa district (Gia Lai province) is impressive with its point four - flap roof, its *kút* and *klaok* columns⁸ which are very tall, brilliantly coloured decorated and stand against the sky. The tomb - house with its drawings (*boxát char*) of the Gia-rai Hdrung in Chupah (Gia Lai province) its two large roofs converging into a rim or soaring edge, looks like a large boat floating on the green waves of the forest and mountain. The abandon tomb - house (*boxát thi or boxát lui*) of the Gia-rai Toboan in Chu Prong (Gia Lai province) and of the Gia-rai Chor in Ayunpa (Gia Lai province) is oblong and can cover ten or nearly hundred dead people's graves.

Though not tall nor simple, a number of abandon tomb - house (*boxát thi*) of the Gia-rai Toboan in Chuse, Chu Prong (Gia Lai province), the *Kút* altars (*pnang Kút*) or peacock - shaped altars (*pnang m'na'*) in the east of the tomb - house seem to turn the whole burying ground into a great flame in the midst of the grandiose scenery of forest and mountains. The two large roofs of the tomb - house (*boxát*) made by the Gia-rai Arap in Chupah and the Gia-rai Cheoreo in Ayunpa - (Gia Lai province) are wide opened like the wings of a hen protecting its chicken. The outside surface and edge of the roof are decorated with brilliantly colored plaited figures and the multicoloured *kalao* columns at the ends

of the roof. The "male" tomb - house (*boxát tolo*) of the Gia-rai Hdrung around the town of pleiku (centre of Gia Lai province) has a four - flap roof like the *boxát kút*, but the two strata of the roof are finely carved and decorated with brightly coloured figures. They support the boat - shaped edge of the roof on the top.

In spite of the difference in shape the artistically point of view, the Gia-rai tomb - houses are solidly built and look strong in their shapes and outlines. Since the Ba-na do not bury their dead in the same place, their tomb - house is owned by each family, small and not as large and impressive as that of the Gia-rai. Though small, each tomb - house of the Ba-na is an artistic architectural creation and very imposing. The beauty of the tomb - house of the Gia-rai consists in its strength; on the contrary, the beauty of the tomb - house of the Ba-na comes from its delicacy and modesty, it's the exquisite and harmonious combination of the artistic elements. That is why the tomb - house of the Ba-na gives contradictory impressions to the visitor: the real and the unreal, the small and the great, separation and concentration, monotony and diversification.

As compared with the tomb - house of the Gia-rai, those of the Ba-na are more modest in size and more monotonous in types. They are built according to only one model - that of a house with a two - flap roof. Yet, each group of the Ba-na people give their tomb - house their specific beauty and colour. The Ba-na Tobo made a plaited roof for their tomb - house (*boxát tanh măt*) which is very elegant but also very colourful. Both flaps of the thatch roof of the tomb - house are covered by plaited bamboo with decorative patterns of geometric figures in black or red colour representing eight - petal flowers or the sun that Ba-na call *br-ng*. The top edge of the roof is covered by a long wooden upset gutter, which is also coloured and carved with various kinds of flowers, human beings and animals. The flaps of the roof are shaped like a leaf of the vegetable of *ktounh* or the head of a pigeon crowned with radiant sunrays. The

outside of the tomb frame is made of wood it is tall and fielded with drawings in black, white, or red colours. Circles and radiating sun rays that people call the shield (*khêl*). The circles are joined continuously to give the impression of endless turning of the sun around the tomb. At the ends of the roof of the tomb - house, two *kolao* columns are also bright with sunrays. We can say that the plaited tomb - house of the Ba-na Tolo shows in all its parts representations of the sun, and the whole tomb seems to bath and enlightened in the sunlight. Another particular and symbolical characteristic of the tomb - house of the Ba-na Talo is its boat - shaped roof - the sun boat carrying souls.

The tomb - house of the Ba-na Konkodeh is not much different from that of the Ba-na Tolo, but it has its own beauty and characteristics. The "sun house" of the Ba-na Tolo is long and wide, firmly sticking to the ground for the "sun boat" to transport souls and to drift forward. The tomb - house in brilliant sunshine of the Ba-na Konkodeh seems to lift itself off the ground and to shed light in the immense sky. It seems that every architectural element, every decorative detail...are combined to make the tomb - house appear to float in the celestial environment.

The columns and walls of the house, tall and inclined outwards, look like arms lifting up the whole plaited roof and to make it soar up. The four rafters at the ends of the roof generally called "sun rays rafters" of the roof (*sdrang mbung*) point different directions and move with the wind. The sun ray heads of the pigeons stretch their necks to the end of the roof and blend their light to the innumerable sun rays coming from the plaited suns on the roof flaps, edge and on the column hung alcohol vases. The difference of the tomb - house of the Ba-na Tolo, and those' of the Ba-na Konkodeh, is that the edge of the roof is a long wooden gutter shaped like a curved boat, carved and decorated, with drawn or plaited figures forming a beautiful and variegated curved line. The Ba-na Konkodeh call the edge of the roof of the tomb - house the "rainbow". It is evident that the tomb - house is

part of the sky, being highly illuminated and marvellous with the sun light and seven colours of the rain bow⁷...

The tomb - house of other groups of Ba-na, such as the Ba-na Roh (in Mangyang district of Gia Lai province), the Ba-na Krem and the Bahanr Bonum (in Kbang district of Gia Lai province) have also their own characteristics. They all are similar to those or the Vahnar Tolo and the Ba-na Konkodeh. Though having borne the brilliant "sun boat" on the edge of the roof as same as the tomb - house Tolo and the Ba-na Konkodeh, the tomb - house of the Ba-na Roh seems to hide itself behind the surrounding hedged alley. Sometime, the Ba-na Roh people make high and proud tomb - house with a plaited roof that look like the shape of their communal house (*rong*). This type of tomb - house in called by the Ba-na Roh a communal house (*boxát rong*). The tomb - house of the Ba-na krem and the Ba-na Bonum are very similar to the rainbow - shaped tomb - house of the Ba-na Konkadeh⁹.

3. Tomb - statue

The ideas of the West - Highlanders, to die, means to start a new life in another world, the world beyond, the phantom world. So, when the dead pass away, they go to enjoy another life forever.¹⁰ The tomb statues are made for the benefit of celebrating the tomb abandonment or the farewell, the last festival between the living and the dead. In order to allow the dead to go away peacefully, the living not only performs the ceremony of birth of the dead, but gives part off the properties to the dead who will carry them away. Just like anywhere else in the world, the ceremony of birth for the dead had been conceived and performed through sexual intercourse. Today this ceremony disappears; but in the past, following a story told by older person, during' the night of tomb abandonment, boys and girls could freely have sexual intercourse with one another. The picture and concept of birth had been realized concretely and boldly through tomb - house statues.

When going to a tomb - house located in West - Highland, it is likely for us to be lost in a labyrinth of wooden statue forest with a multitude of different images and their different performances. Moving a round a little, we shall identify constant figured groups of statues, a picture representing the birth. On both sides of the tomb - house door are marked by couple of boy and girl statues who either exhibit their genital organ or have sexual intercourse with each other. A pregnant woman statue is found standing beside these couple of boy and girl statues. Infant statues in sitting posture are at every corner of the fence surrounding the tomb - house.

The ethnic people, when being asked, answer that they made tomb - house statues only for joyful or beautiful purpose. It is suggested the due to the currency of the said types of statue, the first group of statues would convey the concept of birth. We call this group of statues the first one, because in many a tomb - house locality, particularly in remote places, we could find only these three pictures which represent sexual intercourse, pregnant woman and infants. In order to recognize image or a concept, the persons represented through the ancient tomb statues may not be particular persons, but "common person", "general person", or "universal person", while the sculptural language might be an evocative but not a descriptive one. It is rather special and remarkable that this first group of statues have their lay - out appearing while displaying their ideas - three pictures or three acts taking place in three successive periods: sexual intercourse, pregnancy and infant pictures realized at the same moment on a plane formed by the fence surrounding the tomb - house . We call the first style of tomb - house statues in West - Highland as symbolic, evocative and descriptive one - just appearing while displaying ideas. It is not accidental for the West - highlanders to call the tomb statues belonging to this ancient group "pictures" and not "statues" (*Rup* in a Gia-rai *Méu* in Ba-na). If listing statistically all names, we would be astonished by the abundance and diversification

of the contents_of the tomb - house statues in West - Highland, because nearly the whole human life has been reflected by the folk - artists in their works or art. The whole picture of that vivid life has to target at serving the dead. The West - Highlanders sculpture, the tomb statue in the tomb - house are so that these people will escort the dead to the world beyond. The contents and meaning of these images are very rich, our ethnic compatriots in West - Highland tend to evoke gathering all statues belonging to this type in one group - which comprises servants (*hlun* in Gia-rai, *đich* in Ba-na). It is strongly possible that, like in many places in the world, in old times in West - Highland, servants or war prisoners were buried together with the great tribal chiefs. The marks of the immemorial "tribal wars", recorded usually in the ancient stories and epics of West - Highland, had been printed over tomb - house. Now the West - Highlanders sculpture, over the tomb - house statues are lots of people or animal, and they wish that those people or animal would escort the dead to the world beyond. People or animals found in this second group of tomb - house statues, though concrete, still remain person or animal in general: drummers, women pounding rice, blacksmiths, French soldiers, photographers, young boys, young girls, footballers, elephants, birds, owls... All these images roll to and fro around the tomb - house, making a vivid painting which depicts the life brought away by the dead after festival of tomb abandonment. The contents of the second group of statues shall occupy, little by little in the course of time, and dominate completely those of the previous group. At many tomb - house, the statues that would have borne the conception of birth, had to "turn themselves" into the images of escort for the dead; the girl and boy couple intercourse with one another turn into simple young girls and boys or into women and men; the images of infants into sad persons or sobbing ones, etc...

Due to the contents becoming richer, more vivid, and closer to the life, the plastic language of the second group of statues become less

abstract as though reaching the descriptive language. The more abstract and the more general the first group of statues, the more realistic and the more vivid.

The new statues. The tomb statues of the first group, symbolism is essential, while for those of second one, realism is. The realism of the tomb statues of the second group, has been incarnated mainly through the traits or blocks which convey evocative and general, character without describing anything in detail in language. It is generality and evocation of the plastic language and the imagery as well that have created the monumental traits of the tomb house statues in West - Highland. The tomb house statues, though not big, because they might be largely conformed to tree trunks, seem to swell out - wards and to erect upwards in the space.

Based on the specifics of the imagery contents and plastic language, we may call temporarily the second style of tomb house statues in West - Highland as realistic narrative one, that is closely connected with epics style.

In recent decades, changes of life and activity and new expansive contact have exercised so many effects on the tomb statues in West - Highland. The folk statues sculptors in the West - Highland today make their statues more realistic, more precious and more specific. The tomb house statues have lost their proper meditative generality and monumentality. The contents of the statues become more and more abundant while the artistic character becomes less and less¹¹

4. Tomb statues decorative plans

As we already said, the tomb statues, which was built before the tomb - abandoning festival with considerable effort, is now "abandoned" immediately after the rite is practiced. Its maintenance is neglected by the deceased's relatives: Collapsing roof, awry fence, broken column, blurred decorative designs... until the entire structure ceases to exist. A phenomenon that seems to be full of the contradictions. To discuss briefly again those two contradictions,

after throwing a glance at the decorative plans on the "tomb - house". These have been many times in Central Highland, during these field - works, one could see every day a lot of things, but not much information about the decorative plans of tomb - house has been obtained.. It is quite insufficient to seize the meaning of the decorative designs. I can voice emotion and thinking that affected me on the spot. I can also attempt a lot of the different decorative plans. As for meaning above all religious meaning, oh... I have to study more and more in the future. Latching it, how can I understand the "tomb - house" in the frame work of the funerals? I say so to beg the reader to understand that what I am to write is only a preliminary feeling.

The place where decorative designs concentrate most on the "tomb - house", with both the Ba-na and tomb - house Gia-rai, is the ridge of the roof.

In the case of Ba-na "tomb - house", there often appears geographic plan in the middle of the ridge. This plan can be seen in various places, especially at the two extremities of the ridge: It is a circle surrounded by the little beams. It is not hard to determine even at a glance that it is an image of the sun. In fact the Ba-na give this plan the appellation space of sun (*măt anar*). In a few cases, the sun is accompanied by various crescents which are called by locals "moon" (*măt kheï*)¹²

Also connected with the ridge, the sun wears another aspect. Extending from the extremities of the ridge are pieces of wood that curve upward and nearly upright. They are called "sun beams" (*sdrăng măt anar*), because each of these pieces of wood ends with a raying circle. Yet, these rays are not only found around the circle, but also connected to the sides of the pieces of wood¹³, so that one seems to stand in front of a big reptile. In fact, the appellation of "sun beams" is sometimes replaced by another compound noun: "dragon toise" (*tiếng prao*).

Apart from the "sun" and maybe the "moon", the ridge of the "tomb -house" shows further

geometric designs which I think to be “sun”, although they acquire another name. Among them stand out - since they stand nearest to the sun - three following plants: “Shield” (*khê 1*)¹⁴; “foofah flower” (*phao điên*); “big” or “main” (*brông*).

The Gia-rai “tomb - house” (*sang atâu*) may be more multiform than the Ba-na one. It is old but more multiform as many dead are interred in the same tomb. Regarding decorative patterns on the ridge, we can see on Gia-rai “tomb - house” frequent scenes of every day life, especially the scenes of “*ruou can*”¹⁵ drinking, while these scenes are rarely found on the Ba-na one. However, the difference between the two people chiefly is Ba-na lay stress on the “sun”, the Gia-rai partially to the “moon” (that is called mean by them). That is not to say that the sun (*hroi*) is not described in Gia-rai decorative patterns. A number of similar cases are reported in areas where two ethnicities are in contact, the Ba-na “sun beam” is also found on structures of Gia-rai tomb - house, in spite of its different name: “*gionep*” vegetable (*ktoanh*) it juts out from the two extremities of the ridge of the roof; “*tngan yang*” (divinity’s arm) appearing on the upper part of a ceremonial post.

The Gia-rai stress is on the “moon” rather than on the “sun”. The “moon” exhibits two aspects. “Waning moon” (*mlan bang*) and “moon” (*mian t’mi*) that appear three places on the ridge of the tomb - house. The main ceremonial post (*kut*) which rises from the middle of the ridge; the “moon” may be seen on auxiliary columns (*klao*) corresponding to the four corners and four sides of the house¹⁶

A common design of both the Ba-na and Gia-rai “tomb - house” is on the ridge or roof appearing may be two or three times it is rather a simple peculiar image somewhat like a wide undulating line. This plan is called by both the Ba-na and the Gia-rai “Python body” (Ba-na: *kăn tung*; Gia-rai: *Khăn đông*).

The sun or the moon represents the upper part of the cosmos while the python, a reptile, the

lower one. The persistent presence of the “sun”, the “moon” and the “python body” on structures in the tomb - house of the Ba-na and the Gia-rai makes us think that decorative plans seen to refer to a traditional cosmogony whence we may distinguish a few similar points in conceptions of the two Ethnicities. Especially on the Gia-rai high roof “tomb - house” a sketch of a tall tree often appears that is not easily classifiable but may be called the cosmic tree¹⁷

Notes

1. These are the two important ethnic groups living in Vietnam Central Highlands. The Gia-rai speak an Austronesian language, and their extended families live in long - houses while the Ba-na speak an Austro - Asiatic language and nuclear families occupy short houses. Like other minority groups living on the Indonechiese Cordillera and the Central Highlands, the Ba-na and the Gia-rai have lived mainly on slash - and burn agriculture. Their basic social organization is the village.
2. “Tomb - house” is an appellation give by the Viet living on the Central Highland to the tomb of local deceased, with a roof, ceremonial posts, statues..., showing many decorative plans.
3. The ceremony of Both was analysed in the following book and articles:
 - a. The tomb - house and the tomb - statues: institute for Southeast - Asian Studies, Hanoi, 1993, 233p.;
 - b. The tomb - abandoning festival; National culture publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, 250p; Notes ceremonies fune’raires de Gia-rai et des Ba-na (Central Vietnam); “Archipe 42”, Paris, 1991, pp.39- 45.
4. For instance, the prayer text of the Gia-rai in Ajunpa district (Gia Lai province) reads “We are today eating and living the phantom. It’s the end from now then, you phantom! Do not come close to us from now then”. Whereas the prayer words of the Ba-na at An Khe district (Gia Lai province) are quite concrete “oh Phanatom, I pray and inform you, Phantom, the family is delivering to you house, pots, jars, gongs... so as to be brought along with you. You would take them all for ensuring the living, and should claim no more. Oh Phantom, all the family is the now delivering to you house, pots, jars, gongs... So as to be brought along with you. You would take them all for ensuring the living, and should claim no more. Oh phantom, all the family is now delivering to you everything, including pork,

- chicken, beef, buffalo... we are so doing everything for you”
5. *Atâu* is a common word to both the Ba-na and the Gia-rai, denoting the deceased's phantom. In Indonesia or Southeast Asian isles, the word *Tau* also denoting the phantom, is used by a few ethnic groups speaking Austronesian. Since the Gia-rai speak an Austronesian language whereas the Ba-na uat-ro - Asiatic, we may suppose that the Ba-na borrow the word *atâu* as well as the word *bothi* from the Gia-rai.
 6. The prayer text of the Ba-na reads: “Oh! souls of pigs, chickens, buffaloes, oxen and even souls of living men, come back home don't follow the phantom. Everything is given to the phantom so as to be brought along with him”.
 7. As a matter of fact, the ceremony of *Bothi* is a second funeral - the last rite that the living must do for their deceased. So depending upon permitted condition, every family will give their best to accomplish this last task to the deceased.
 8. The Gia-rai “house of phantom” has two kinds of Ceremonial posts: the main and central post acquiring appellation of *kut*, and *mang* similar lower ones called *klao* by local population.
 9. The tomb - house of the Gia-rai and the Ba-na was analysed in the following book: “The tomb - house and the tomb - staves; Institute for Southeast - Asian studies, Ha Noi, 1993, 233p, and in the article ‘The Funeral House and the Culture of North Central Highlands (published in English and French), Vietnamese studies, 4 (114), 1994, P.56 - 74.
 10. The phantom - world is called by the Ba-na the dark zone (*mang lung*) or dark forest (*bri*). It may be situated in a certain cave, or in a forest away from direction of the sunset (*nar müt*) or in the far off sea (*dak to sit*). Ruling over the phantoms is a woman called *Bia Brou*. The world of ancestor - Phantoms of the Gia-rai is governed by a woman named *Jung*. That world is situated to the west, not under the earth but on it.
 11. The tomb - house of the Gia-rai and the Ba-na was analysed in the following books and articles.
 - a) Tomb - figures in Vietnam Central Highlands (the meaning and styles); Vietnam Social Sciences (published in English), 4 (38), 1933, pp. 78 - 85.
 - b) Funeral house and culture of Vietnam Central Highlands; Vietnamese Central Highlands; Vietnamese Studies (published in English and French), 4 (114), 1994, pp. 56 - 74.
 - c) Wood folk - sculpture of the Gia-rai and the Ba-na (published in Vietnamese and English); National culture publishing house, Hanoi, 1995.
 12. Beside a crescent which stands alone, without an accompanying sun, may be seen a full moon, represented in the art by a simple circle without rays. In this case, the Ba-na tell the “waning moon” (*khei thang*) from the “full moon” (*khei bo nil*)
 13. On the upper part of the main ceremonial post of the tomb can be seen similar pieces of wood standing symmetrically in pairs. This post is called “post of Sun beams” (*Joräng sdräng mät anar*).
 14. The shield, an arm for self - defense, is a round or elongated piece of hard material with which the warrior covers himself in fighting.
 15. “*Ruou can*” is a name given by the Viet to a kind of alcohol that is popular with every ethnicity living there. (the Ba-na call this kind of alcohol a *Sidro* and the Gia-rai call it a *pai*). Rice or flour ferments in a big covered jug. Water is poured in to the jug many people sitting on the earth around the jug sucks the alcohol from a long tube. Not very intoxicating, ‘*ruou can*’ usually attracts a lot of people at festivals as well as in other day festivities.
 16. Earth Ba-na “tomb - house” has a main ceremonial post an auxiliary one. The main post is called “post of sun beams”. The auxiliary one “Sun beams”, is lower than the main one, and it is where the alcohol is placed for ritual purposes, so it is called “alcohol post of sun beams” (*Jräng Sik Sdräng mät anar*).
 17. The myth of the genesis of the world and mankind, that is common to every ethnic group, consists of two parts. Cosmogonic myth and cultural myth. The first parts tell that a tall tree appears when the world is being called to existence. The tree top is an image of the upper world intended for spirits while the tree foot constitutes the lowest world meant for entities connected to earth and water. Mythologists used to call it cosmic tree. In cultural observances of some ethnic groups, offerings are presented to spirits where very tall ceremonial post are planted. It is also a kind of cosmic tree called cosmic posts by many ethnologists. The post for “hilling the buffalo”, with a sun image on top, and called *gang* by the Ba-na, may be classified as a cosmic tree.