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ABSTRACT

Kauṇḍinya in Southeast Asia revisited

Karl-Heinz Golzio

This paper revises earlier interpretations of the history of the figure of Kauṇḍinya and his spouse Somā in South-east Asia. While it was assumed so far – also by the author of this contribution – that the Kauṇḍinya mentioned in the inscription C. 96 was a figure from mythical ages, in this contribution a different reading of the sources is proposed. It is argued, that the inscription relates the pair in question to Bhavapura, the capital of Bhavavarman I and that chronologically, they must have been contemporaries of Īśānavarman (the king who ruled between ca. 616 to ca. 637 in Northern Cambodia) as it was their son Candravarman who was married to the granddaughter of the latter. The occurrence of the name Kauṇḍinya in other historical contexts is also examined in detail, highlighting the need for a more critical reading of the sources.

KEYWORDS

South-east Asia, Fúnán dynasty, Kauṇḍinya, Cham, Campā

Kaunḍinya in Southeast Asia revisited

1 Some years ago I discussed with the problem of Kaunḍinya¹ and his spouse in South-east Asia² pointing to the connection between a legend of the South Indian Pallava dynasty and the alleged adoption of a modified form of that story in Cambodia or more precisely in an inscription of the neighbouring kingdom of Campā referring to Bhavapura, the capital founded by Bhavavarman I.

2 However, my approach to the history of the figure of Kaunḍinya starts with the analyses of previous studies referring to founding fathers of the political entity of Fúnán. The story of the first hero is recorded in three different Chinese annals and one encyclopedia: a) in the *Nán Qí shū* 南齊書 (“Annals of the Southern Qí” [479–502]), completed by Xiāo Zixiǎn 蕭子顯 (485–537) ca. 530; b) in the *Liáng shū* 梁書 (“Annals of the Liáng” [502–549]) of Yáo Chá 姚察 (533–606) and Yáo Silián 姚思廉 (died 637), completed in 636; c) in the *Jìn shū* 晉書 (“Annals of the Jìn” [265–420]), compiled under the guidance of Fáng Xuánlíng 房玄齡 (578–648);³ d) in the *Wúshí wàiguó chuán* 吳時外國傳 (“Records of foreign countries during the Wú Period” [229–280]) which was part of the *Tàipíng yùlǎn* 太平御覽 (“Encyclopaedia of the Tàipíng Era” [976–984]), compiled by the Sòng scholar Lǐ Fǎng 李昉 (925–996). All these records agree that a stranger from the South became the first king of Fúnán, a kingdom located in an area what is now Southern Cambodia and Southwestern Vietnam.⁴ However, the country of his origin is called Jī or Jiào 濠 (Malayan Peninsula or the southern archipelago?) according to the sources a) and b), resp. Mōfū 摸跌 according to d) (Fukami 2009: 189). The name of the hero was Hùntián 混填 according to a) and b), Hùnhuì 混渾 according to c) and Hùnshèn 混慎 according to d). Here one of the texts, that of the *Nán Qí shū*, is quoted: “In ancient times the country [Fúnán] was ruled by a female called Liǔyè 柳葉 (“Willow Leaf”). There was a man called Hùntián from the country of Jī, who dreamt that his personal genie had delivered a divine bow to him and had directed him to embark on a large merchant junk. In the morning, he proceeded to the temple, where he found a bow at the foot of the genie’s tree. He then boarded a ship, which the genie caused to

1 I am indebted and very thankful to William Southworth for his careful examination throughout the text.

2 “Kaunḍinya in Südostasien” in: *Pāsādikadānam*. Festschrift für Bhikkhu Pāsādika. Hrsg. von Martin Straube, Roland Steiner, Jayandra Soni, Michael Hahn und Mitsuyo Demoto. Marburg 2009 (Indica et Tibetica 52): 157–165; henceforth Golzio 2009.

3 For the French translation of the three sources see Pelliot 1903: a) *Nán Qí shū*, p. 256; b) *Liáng shū*, p. 265; c) *Jìn shū*, p. 254.

4 The *Liáng shū* describes Fúnán as situated more than 3000 Lǐ 里 west of Línyí 臨沂 (Pelliot 1903).

land in Fúnán. Liūyè wanted to pillage the ship and seize it, so Hùntián shot an arrow from his divine bow which pierced through Liūyè's ship. Frightened, she gave herself up, and Hùntián took her for his wife. But unhappy to see her naked, he folded a piece of material to make a garment through which he made her pass her head. Then he governed the country.” (Pelliot 1903: 256).⁵ It should be noted that in the *jīn shū* the names of the couple are Hùnhuì 混渾 and Yèliǔ 葉柳 (Pelliot 1903: 254).⁶

³ Vickery (Vickery 2004: 107–109) has pointed out rightly that the name Kauṇḍinya consisting of three syllables should have three syllables also in the Chinese rendering, and that only the syllable *kaun* has some resemblance to *hun*.⁷

⁴ Quite different is the story of the real Kauṇḍinya, in the past mainly discussed by considering some stanzas of the Cham inscription C. 96 and the similarities found in inscriptions of the South Indian Pallava Dynasty.

⁵ While in the Pallava inscriptions it was Aśvatthāman, the son of Droṇa, who, with a Nāga princess, engendered the ancestor of that dynasty⁸, referring to the following genealogy: 1. Ambujanātha (Viṣṇu) or Brahmā; 2. Aṅgiras; 3. Gīravāteśa (Bṛhaspati); 4. Śaṃyu; 5. Bhāradvāja; 6. Droṇa, 7. Aśvatthāman; 8. Pallava. This descendancy can be found in the Paḷlaṅkōvil inscription of king Siṃhavarman III (ca. 540–550 CE),⁹ the Kūram inscription of king Parameśvaravarman I (ca. 669–690)¹⁰ and in two inscriptions of the latter's successor Narasiṃhavarman II (ca. 690–728). Furthermore, it is recorded in the Panamalai inscription (EI XIX: 109–115) and the stele inscription at Vāyalūr which bears an elaborated genealogy (EI XVIII: 145–152). A later inscription of a local ruler named Skandaśiṣya at Rāyakoṭa (12°31' N, 78°02' E), dated 8th or 9th century (EI V: 49–53) imitated that genealogy, but replaced Pallava by Skandaśiṣya (having the same name as the author of the inscription) who engendered with a Nāga girl the ancestor of the dynasty, a remarkable parallel with the Kauṇḍinya story of Cambodia. The same is reported of Vīrakūrca who is also reputed as founder of the Pallava dynasty: he was “invested with the insignia of full sovereignty by his marriage with the Nāga princess, daughter of the nāga emperor (*phanīndrasutā*)” (Jayaswal 1933: 179; Gaudes 1993: 348). But it should be heard in mind that in none of these inscriptions the name of this Nāga princess is mentioned.

⁵ The text of the *Liáng shū* is slightly different: “The people of the Fúnán kingdom originally had the custom of going naked, tattooing their bodies, and letting their hair hang down. Their ruler was a woman named Liūyè. She was young and muscular, like a man. In the south there was the kingdom of Ji, where there was a priest of spirits and gods named Hùntián. He dreamt that a god gave him a bow, and that he sailed to sea in a merchant ship. In the morning he got up and went to the temple and found the bow under a sacred tree. He thus followed the dream and sailed to sea on a ship, reaching the outer areas of Funan. Liuyè and her followers saw the ship approaching and wanted to capture it. Hùntián then drew his bow and shot Liūyè's ship, piercing its side and hitting one of the servants. Liūyè was terrified and surrendered to Hùntián with all her people. Hùntián taught Liūyè to make a hole in a piece of cloth and put her head through it, using it as clothing to cover her body. He then ruled over the kingdom and took Liūyè as his wife. They had seven sons who were each made king of a region. Later, the king Hùnpánhuáng 混盤況 used cunning to cause dissension between the regions, making them suspect and obstruct each other. He then used his army to attack and conquer them all and sent his own children and grandchildren to rule the various regions, with the title of Lesser King. ...”

⁶ “Moreover, the Funanese themselves did not recognize Huntien as the bearer of Indian culture, and ... they had been quite ignorant of India” (Vickery 2004:109). And addition ally, neither was Hùntián / Hùnhuì a brahmin (except in the 10th century source *Tàipíng yùlǎn*) nor Liūyè / Yèliǔ a serpent princess. Therefore, it is completely out of place to connect that couple with the later one, first mentioned in inscriptions of the 7th century.

⁷ According to Pulleyblank (Pulleyblank 1991: 135, and 306) the reconstructed pronunciation of Hùntián is Hùntián is *ywānden*. (For this hint I am indebted to Dr. Mitsuyo Demoto, Marburg).

⁸ The same story is reported of Vīrakūrca who is also reputed to be a founder of (the Pallava dynasty: he was “invested with the insignia of full sovereignty by his marriage with the Nāga princess, daughter of the nāga emperor (*phanīndrasutā*)” (Jayaswal 1933: 179; Gaudes 1993: 348).

⁹ See Mahalingam 1988: 89–93.

¹⁰ SII, I, pp. 144–155; Mahalingam 1988: 152–161.



6 However, the Campā inscription C. 96 from Mý Sôn (Fig. 1), dated Sunday, 18th February 658, communicates the information (stanzas XVI–XVIII) that Kauṇḍinya, the foremost of the brahmins, obtained the spear of Droṇa’s son Aśvatthāman, the best of the brahmins, and planted it into a town called Bhava [Bhavapura in Cambodia]¹¹; this Kauṇḍinya was married afterwards to Somā the daughter of a king of the serpents (*bhujagendra*)¹². Neither of these legends is recorded in the ancient Indian epic *Mahābhārata*, but Droṇa and Aśvatthāman – well-known as ancestors of the Pallavas – are at least two main figures in that epic whereas Kauṇḍinya is merely a name mentioned in it – this was the main point of my arguments (Golzio 2009: 160–161).

7 Not being aware at that time of the inscription K. 1142 (see below) I concluded in my article of 2009 that the Kauṇḍinya of C. 96 was a mythical figure belonging – according to the classical traditions of ancient India – to an age more than three thousand years ago.¹³ I was astonished to see the completely insignificant Kauṇḍinya of the epic being reassessed in such a way. Leaving that delusive light, I pointed to the story of Kauṇḍinya described in Chinese sources. The *Liáng shū* 梁書 (“Annals of the Liáng” [502–

Fig. 1: Mý Sôn (temple group B–D) in central Vietnam with remains of more than 70 Cham temples of the 7th–14th century.

11 Finot 1904: 918–925; stanza XVI:
(tat)ra sthāpitavān chūlaṃ kauṇḍīnyas taddvijarṣabhaḥ
aśvatthāmano dvijaśreṣṭhād droṇaputrād avāpya tam.

12 Stanza XVIII:
kauṇḍīnyanāmnā dvijapuṅgavena kāryārthapatnītvam anāyī yāpi
bhaviṣyato rthasya nimittabhāve vidher acintyaṃ khalu ceṣṭitaṃ hi.

13 The great war depicted in the *Mahābhārata* ended – according to ideas developed at the latest in the 6th century CE by the astronomer Āryabhaṭa who in the year 499 CE calculated the beginning of the present age on the 18th February 3102 BCE (allegedly a conjunction of the seven known planets occurred at this date, but see Van der Waerden 1980: 117–131, who has shown that no conjunction took place in 3102 BCE, contrary to what was believed by Indian astronomers). It coincides also with the death of the hero Kṛṣṇa. The earliest epigraphical record of this dating can be found in the Aihole inscription of the Cālukya king Pulakeśin II (EI VI: 1–12, stanzas 33–34: *trīṃśatsu trisahasreṣu Bhāratād āhavād itaḥ | sapṭābdaśatayukteṣu śa(ga)teśv abdeṣu pañcasu | pañcaśatasu kalau kāle śatasu pañcaśatasu ca | samāsu samatītāsu śakānām api bhūbhujām* (when thirty [and] three thousand and five years besides, joined with seven hundred years, have passed since the Bhārata war; and when fifty [and] six and five hundred years of the Śaka kings also have gone by in the Kali age): it means that 3735 years of the Kali age had elapsed and 556 years of the Śaka era (634/35 CE).



Fig. 2: Remains of a temple of the late Funan period, excavated in 1984 in Gò Tháp, Đồng Tháp province in southern Vietnam.

549]¹⁴) as well as the *Jìn shū* 晉書 (“Annals of the Jin” [265–420]¹⁵) refer to a Fúnánese king called Tiānzhú Zhāntán 天竺旃檀 or Zhú Zhāntán¹⁶, who offered in the year 357 tamed elephants to the Chinese emperor Sīmǎ Dān 司馬聃 (reigned 344–361; Memorial name: Mùdì 穆帝)¹⁷. A sequence in the *Liáng shu* then gives the following information: “One of his [sc. Zhú Zhāntán] successors, Qiáochénrú 僑陳如, was originally a brahmin from India. He heard a supernatural voice telling him: ‘you will be the king of Fúnán’; he was pleased in his heart. When he reached Pánpán 盤盤 in the south, the people of Fúnán heard of it; the whole kingdom received him full of joy and chose him as king. He changed all the rules according to the ways of India ...” (Pelliot 1903: 269).

8 The name Kodañña (Pāli) or Kauṇḍinya (Sanskrit) is well-known in a Buddhist context, and its Chinese rendering is without any doubt Qiáochénrú 僑陳如¹⁸. Kauṇḍinya is the name of a clan (gotta, gotra), widely spread among brahmins and kṣatriyas, but also the name of a Buddha¹⁹. Besides the literary references there are many epigraphical proofs of that name, mainly from southern India.²⁰ Here I contradict the affirmative certainty of Vickery (Vickery 2004: 114), “that no real ‘Kauṇḍinya’ ever went from India, or from anywhere else, to Fúnán at any time, ...”, simply raising the question for what reason the Chinese sources would have invented that story.

9 As it is recorded that the ‘brahmin’ Qiáochénrú / Kauṇḍinya introduced Indian institutions to Fúnán sometime after the year 357 it seems impossible to equate him with the seer of the *Mahābhārata*.

14 Compiled by Yáo Chá 姚察 (533–606) and Yáo Silián 姚思廉 (died 637), completed in 636.

15 Compiled under the guidance of Fáng Xuánlíng 房玄齡 (578–648).

16 The King Candana from India (Tiānzhú).

17 Pelliot 1903: 252, 255, 269.

18 See Hackmann 1952: 80, naming there the different bearers of that name.

19 See Malalasekera 1937: I, 683.

20 Vickery (Vickery 2004: 114) considered only for phonetical reasons the possibility of an equation of Qiáochénrú and Kauṇḍinya, but this is certain due to the Buddhist references. The reconstructed pronunciation is according to Pulleyblank 1991 *giaw-drin-nia*. (For this hint I am indebted to Dr. Mitsuyo Demoto, Marburg).



10 Consequently, I have now totally changed my former considerations, maintaining that the inscription C. 96 refers to the time of the inscription or two generations before and not to mythical ages, inasmuch as it is related to Bhavapura, the capital of Bhavavarman I. Moreover, the Kauṇḍinya introduced here cannot be identical with the cultural hero of the Chinese annals, although he bears the same name, which means that in this case he is without any doubt an offspring of the same clan.

11 The *Nán Qí shū* 南齊書 (“Annals of the Southern Qí” [479–502]), completed ca. 530 AD by Xiāo Zīxiǎn 蕭子顯 (485–537) gives further reference to the rule of the Kauṇḍinya clan in Fúnán. It records that the Fúnán king Qiáochénrú Shéyébámó 僑陳如闍耶跋摩 (Kauṇḍinya Jayavarman) sent in the year 484 the Buddhist Monk Nàjiāxiān 那伽仙 (Nāgasena) – who had reached Fúnán by an overland route from India to China offering presents – among them two ivory stūpas. The Fúnán king requested the Chinese emperor at the same time for help in conquering Línyí 臨沂 (north of Campā), but the emperor sent no troops (Pelliot 1903: 259–60) (Fig. 2). In one of the first Cambodian inscriptions (Cœdès 1931: 2–8), No. K. 5 from Pràsàt Prām Lovên in the “Plain of Reeds” (Fig. 3, Fig. 4) (*Tháp Mười*) in southern Vietnam (6th century) a Guṇavarman, younger son (*nṛpasunu--bālo pi*) of king Ja[yavarman]--²¹ referred to in stanza VII as *kaunḍi[n]ya[vañ]śaśaśinā* (“Moon of the lineage of Kauṇḍinya”). This short communication is a further proof for the existence of the Kauṇḍinya clan as ruling family of Fúnán without being linked or identified with the mythical Kauṇḍinya of the *Mahābhārata* at that time.²²

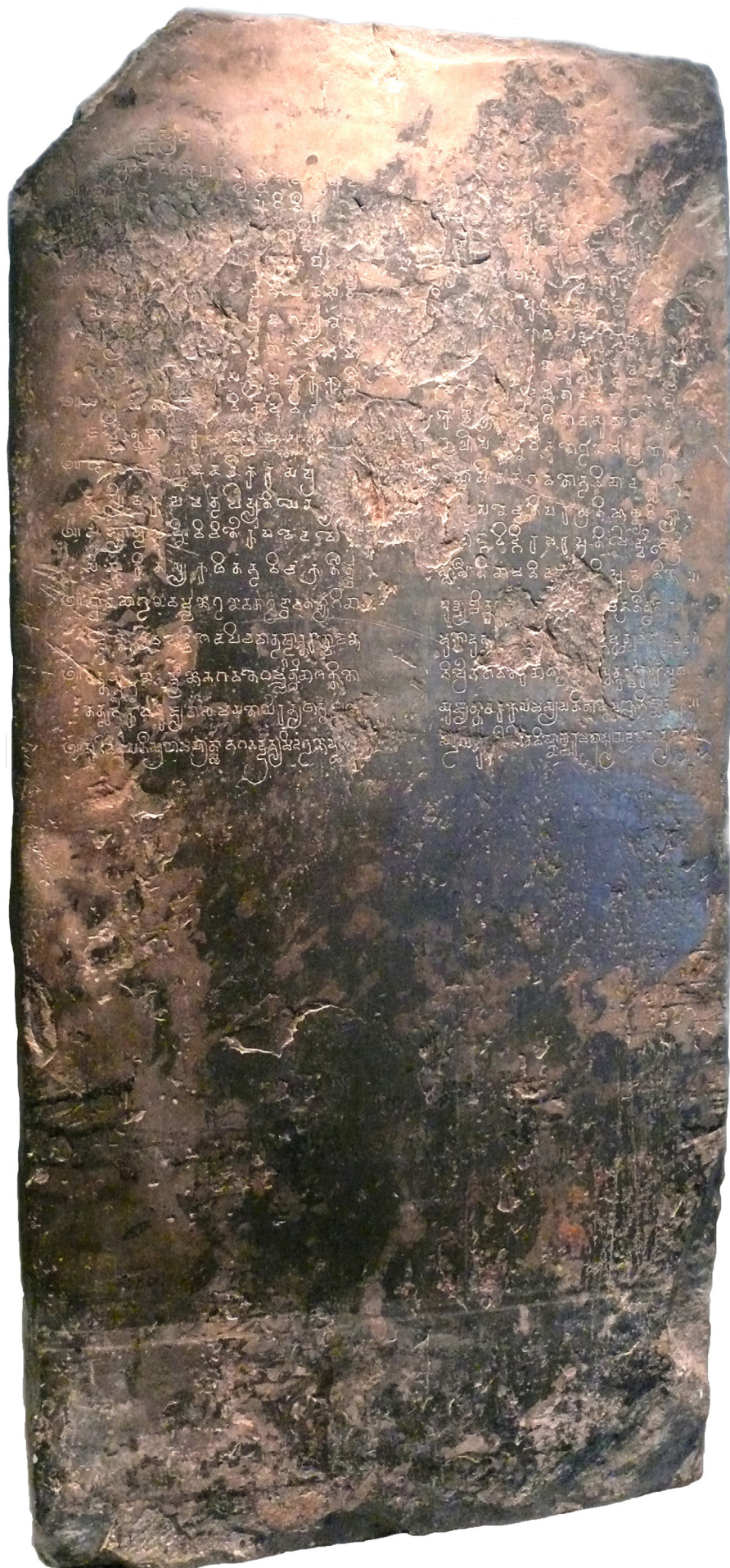
12 It is also remarkable that the name Somā does not appear in any of the South Indian inscriptions, but, however, is introduced in a Sanskrit inscription of unknown origin bearing the No. K. 1142 (Jacques 2007: 41–53). This inscription helps us to clarify the problems dealt with here, as it refers to a certain Candravarman, who was a son of Kauṇḍinya and his spouse Somā – here the daughter of a certain Soma and not of a

Fig. 3: “Plain of Reeds” in the present Đồng Tháp province, Southern Vietnam. In this vast flat and regularly flooded plain, Gò Tháp (formerly: Pràsàt Prām Lovên) is the most important archaeological site. It may have been the religious center in the southeastern part of the Funan Empire.

21 Only *nṛpatir jja* 𑀧𑀸𑀓𑀾𑀢𑀺𑀓 is preserved at the end of the line, but the name of the king can for metrical reasons be no other than Jayavarman.

22 Note that the Kauṇḍinya clan was also spread in other places of Southeast Asia. In the book 54 of the *Liáng shū* is a reference to the land of Póli 婆利 (Northern Sumatra or Borneo) whose king was called Qiáochénrú (Kauṇḍinya); his origin is unknown, but the wife of the Bái jìng Wáng 白淨王 hails from the same country. Groeneveldt 1876: 81, identified the Bái jìng Wáng with the father of the historical Buddha, Śuddhodana, which is not certain.

Fig. 4: Cambodian inscription K. 5 discovered at Pràsàt Prām Lovêh in the "Plain of Reeds" (Tháp Mười) in southern Vietnam - at present exhibited in the Museum of History in Ho Chi Minh City.



serpent king. It is not clear whether Soma here means the moon god (as suggested by Jacques 2007: 53, footnote 1) or simply a high-ranking official.

13 Therefore, it is necessary to ask why the pair Kauṇḍinya and Somā played such an important role in both inscriptions, – C. 96 and K. 1142. Beginning with C. 96, its purpose is the record of a donation made by the Campā king Prakāśadharmā Vikrāntavarman (ruled 653–after 687) to the gods Īśāneśvara, Śambhu Bhadreśvara and Prabhāśeśvara. This was also the opportunity to give a detailed genealogy of that king, firstly (until stanza XIV) up to Bhadreśvaravarman (ruled 645–646), shifting then (stanza XV) to a certain Jagaddharman (seemingly a Cham) who went to Bhavapura, the capital of the Khmer founded by the Khmer king Bhavavarman I (end of the 6th century).²³ Then follows the already well-known record of the Kauṇḍinya-Somā story which suggests that they lived during the time of Bhavavarman I or a little bit later. In stanzas XIX to XXII the genealogical order of the Khmer kings Bhavavarman I, Mahendrarvarman and Īśānavarman are given. The latter had a daughter named Śarvāṇī who was married to Jagaddharman, as mentioned in stanza XV. It is also said that she was born in the family of Somā (*somānvayaprasūti*).²⁴ The son of that couple was Prakāśadharmā who ordered the text of that inscription. It also explains that Bhadreśvaravarman was not succeeded by his son or grandson.

14 The act of succession in the Khmer kingdom occurred in a similar way. As Candrarvarman, according to inscription K. 1142 was married to an unnamed granddaughter of Īśānavarman (the king who ruled between ca. 616 to ca. 637 in Northern Cambodia), engendering with her the later king Jayavarman I (654–ca. 681) who ruled after the year 657 nearly all of what is now modern Cambodia. If the genealogy is true it refers to a marriage alliance between Fúnán and Zhēnlà using Kauṇḍinya here not as an individual name but as a representative of the clan. Moreover, it seems, that the name of Somā – introduced in inscription K. 1142 was probably known earlier in C. 96. Nevertheless, the story of the above-cited Campā inscription is also an amalgamation of the Pallava origin myth, from where the serpent girl and the heroes Droṇa and Aśvatthāman –, are borrowed. In the genealogy of K. 1142, the crown prince (*yuvarāja*) of Īśānavarman, who is mentioned as the father of the unnamed wife of Candrarvarman, is certainly not identical with Bhavavarman II, whose period of reign is determined by the inscriptions K. 79 from Tà Kev (IC II: 69–72) dated 5th January 644 CE and K. 21 from Poña Hòr south of Tà Kev (IC V: 5–6) dated Wednesday 24th March 655.²⁵ In the badly damaged inscription K. 483 of Bhavavarman II from Phnom Bàyàñ (IC I: 251–255) we find – so it seems – a hint to the marriage alliance between „Fúnán“ and „Zhēnlà“, because stanza I refers to a „*śrikauṇḍi[n]yas]ya mahiṣī*“ (Chief queen of Kauṇḍinya). Nevertheless, it seems that Bhavavarman II had some relation to Īśānavarman²⁶ but plays no role in inscription K. 1142, where the daughter of the crown prince, who probably never came to power, gave birth to Jayavarman I. His own daughter was married with a Chandoga brahmin,²⁷ becoming by him the mother of the author of that inscription. It seems that

23 That place is according to Lévy 1970, 113–129, probably situated near the present Thala Bōrivāt (13°33' N, 105°57' E). Recent archaeological research came to the same conclusion: see Heng 2016, especially p. 491.

24 Stanza XXIII (Meter: Āryā)
tasyāṃ śrī śarvvānyāṃ satyāṃ somānvayaprasūtyāṃ
varavikramaṇī priyasutaṃ yam ajanayac cchrījagaddharmaḥ.

25 Although the year of the inscription is lost by damage the remaining elements of the date “Nakṣatra Uttaraphalgunī, Wednesday, 12th bright Caitra” (*uttaraphalgunī nakṣatra vudhavāra ta gui dvādaśī ket caitra*) in combination with the name of the ruling king (Bhavavarman II) enables to the calculation: see Golzio 2012: 219.

26 Heng (Heng 2016: 488) refers to a certain *poñ* (chief) called Śivadatta who according to the inscription K. 1150 was the son of Īśānavarman and brother of Bhavavarman II (see Jacques 1986: 87). Śivadatta had already known from inscription K. 54 from Kdēi Añ (IC III; 157–163, line 8), dated 12th April 628. It is not unlikely that Śivadatta and Bhavavarman (II) had different mothers.

27 The Chandoga brahmins belong to the Vedic school of the Sāmaveda: see the explanation in Jacques (Jacques 2007: 53).

there was no direct connection between the lines of Jayavarman I and Bhavavarman II, although both are mentioned in the undated Vat Phu inscription K. 1059. For a short period, they must have ruled at the same time, but in different areas as the inscription K. 1201 from Pràsàt Huei Kadian (Southern Laos) of Jayavarman I bears the date 18th May 654 (Santoni – Hawixbrock 1999: 396). Moreover, his undated inscriptions K. 367 from Vat Phu (Barth 1902: 235–240), K. 1197 from Phon Sao-è (NIC IV: 65–69) and K. 1224 from Nong Sombat Nyai are situated in the same region, i.e. Champassak (Lorrillard 2014: 207). Thus, his sphere of influence was limited – to the areas of the Middle Mekong from where the power of the “Zhēnlà” kings originated. This is corroborated by C. 96, but the author of that inscription also tries to construct a link with the Pallava origin legend by adapting elements of their genealogy into the descent of one of the most powerful kings of Campā. Therefore, it is not surprising that Jayavarman I, after the demise of Bhavavarman II was able to place inscriptions in such widely dispersed places as Bāsét, in the province of Battambang (K. 447: IC II: 193–195) and Tùol Kòk Práḥ, in the province of PreiVēng (K. 493: IC II: 149–152), – both dated 14th June 657 CE.

15 The main mistake of nearly all scholars who have dealt with this problem was to consider this Kaunḍinya as identical to the founding father of the clan (mentioned in the Chinese annals) not having understood that the inscription refers to relatively recent events. Here and in inscription K. 1142 we find an explanation as to why the kings of central or northern Cambodia did consider Kaunḍinya as their ancestor although the clan of that name ruled Fúnán in southern Cambodia. It seems wise to look again into Chinese records referring to the end of Fúnán and the rise of a northern Khmer kingdom, a time which was probably transitory. The *Liáng shū* informs us that the second embassy of the Fúnán king Qiáochénrú Shéyébámó 僑陳如闍耶跋摩 (Kaunḍinya Jayavarman, see above) reached China on the 1st October 514 (Pelliot 1903: 262). In another passage of the same work, it is said that Jayavarman died in the same year. Subsequently the legitimate heir was deprived of the throne and assassinated by his elder brother, Liútuóbámó 留陀跋摩 (Rudravarman), the offspring of a concubine (Pelliot 1903: 270). Both Rudravarman and his father Jayavarman are mentioned in an undated inscription (K. 40) at Văt Bătì in southern Cambodia which palaeographically belongs to the 6th century. Rudravarman was the last king of Fúnán known by name,²⁸ but in the *Chén shū* 陳書 (“Annals of the Chén” [557–589]) completed in 636 by Yáo Chá and Yáo Sīlián further embassies of Fúnán in the years 572 and 588 are recorded (Pelliot 1904: 389). According to the *Xīn Táng shū* 新唐書 (“New Táng Annals”) completed in 1060 by Ōuyáng Xiū 歐陽修 (1007–1072) and Sòng Qí 宋祁 (998–1061) Fúnán still existed during the first half of the 7th century, but was then subdued by Zhēnlà 真蠟, a collective name first for northern, then for all Cambodia which so far remains unexplained: “The king had his capital in the city Tèmù 特牧. Suddenly his city was subjugated by Zhēnlà, and he had to migrate south to the city of Nàfúnà 那弗那. At the time of the reign periods wǔdé 武德 [618–627] and zhēn’guān 貞觀 [627–650] they [the people of Fúnán] came anew to the [Chinese] court“. However, the *Suí shū* 隋書 (“Annals of the Suí”), completed in 636 by Wèi Zhēng 魏徵 (580–643), is the oldest text that mentions Zhēnlà: “The kingdom of Zhēnlà is southwest of Línyí. It was originally a vassal kingdom of Fúnán ... The family name of the king was Chàlì 刹利 (Kṣatriya); his personal name was Zhìduōsīnà 質多斯那 (Citrasena); his ancestors had gradually increased the power of the country. Citrasena seized Fúnán and subdued it” (Pelliot 1903: 272). The same fact was referred to by a much younger source, the *Wénxiàn tōngkǎo* 文獻通考 (“Comprehensive Examination of Literature”) of

28 The inscription K. 44 of Jayavarman I from Práḥ Kūha Lùoñ in the southernmost Province of Kāmpot, dated Tuesday, 10th October 674 (IC II: 10–13), refers to a foundation during the time (*kāla*) of king Raudravarman. Vickery (Vickery 2004: 135) commented that if Zhēnlà had conquered Fúnán, it seems unusual that the Zhēnlà king Jayavarman would show respect to an old king of Fúnán.

Mǎ Duānlín 馬端臨 (ca. 1250–1320).²⁹ According to the *Xīn Táng shū* it was king Yishēnà 伊奢那 (Īśāna), a kṣatriya who subdued Fúnán and seized its territory at the beginning of the reign period zhēn’guān, i.e.ca. 627 (Pelliot 1903: 275). Yishēnà / Īśānavarman is well-known from the *Suí shū* and his own inscriptions from northern Cambodia, but he is also testified by a recently studied inscription from Bāsēt in the southern province of Kompoñ Spu’, dated 17th March 633,³⁰ revealing that his power had extended far to the south.

16 Some epigraphical records, among them K. 53 (see ISCC: 64–72) from Kdēi Añ in the southern province of Prei Vēñ, dated 9th April 667, span the “break” between Fúnán and Zhēnlà. These inscriptions record that a family belonging to the city of Āḍhyapura served five kings, namely Rudravarman of Fúnán, Bhavavarman (I), Mahendravarman (= Citrasena), Īśānavarman and Jayavarman (I)³¹; thus “it seems difficult to conclude that there had been any serious political break at all, particularly when other inscriptions suggest traditions of continuity from Rudravarman into the 7th century” (Vickery 1998: 376–377).³² Probably the rulers of “Zhēnlà” considered themselves rather as heirs than as conquerors of “Fúnán”, and they were, therefore, proud of their descent from Kauṇḍinya, as apparently supported by inscription K. 1142.

17 Surprisingly, it is not before the 10th century that we hear again of the couple Kauṇḍinya and Somā, where Somā – and this should be clearly emphasized – is the daughter of Soma and not of a serpent king. The latter error has been suggested by many scholars, among them George Cœdès, who in the index volume of his *Inscriptions du Cambodge* (VIII): 69, *sub verbo* Somā the word nāgī is mistakenly added in brackets, although in none of the marked inscriptions is there any reference to a serpent girl. The couple first appears in the inscriptions of Rājendravarman II (944–968), the founding father of a new dynasty. In contrast to this, one of his predecessors, Yaśovarman I (889–910), and probably, – his whole dynasty, claimed rather to be descendants of the famous Indian seer Agastya.³³ Rājendravarman II claimed to be a descendant of (the Fúnán king) Rudravarman, whose parents he denoted as Kauṇḍinya and Somā. That lineage is first described in stanza XVI of the inscription K. 286 of the temple of Bāksēi Čamkroñ, dated 23rd February 948, clearly speaking of Kauṇḍinya and the daughter of Soma (IC IV: 90: *śrīrudravarrnmanṛpatipramukhās tataś śrīkauṇḍinyasomaduhitṛprabhavāḥ kṣitīndrāḥ...*). Comparing this genealogy with that of the Chinese annals (see above) we find in the *Nán Qí shū* both kings referred as Qiáochénrú Shéyébámó (Kauṇḍinya Jayavarman) and Liútuóbámó 留陁跋摩 (Rudravarman). The record of K. 286 is in some respect different from that of K. 1142, as in the latter the couple had a certain Candravarman as son, who became father of the famous Jayavarman I. Be it as it is: in both cases Somā was not a serpent princess. It seems that here two different lineages of kings are meant – one of Funán and one of the northern Cambodians (“Zhēnlà”). Moreover, the same inscription (see stanzas XI–XIV) refers to a mythical couple, the hermit Kambu and the celestial

29 Mǎ Duānlín II: 477.

30 A rubbing of it was made by Vong Sotheara and the tentative reading is from Sotheara. Hun Chhunteg and Kunthea Chhom, preparing to edit and publish the inscription.

31 Brahmadatta and Śivadatta served the Fúnán ruler Rudravarman, while their nephews Dharmadeva and Siṃhadeva were ministers (*mantrin*) of the kings Bhavavarman I and Mahendravarman (ca. 600).

32 In his article published in Vickery 2004 additionally commented: “Moreover, since Funan, in its relation with China, lasted until the 630s, Rudravarman who was a mature ruler in 539, cannot have been the ‘last king’, and the last kings certainly did not flee to Java with the appearance of Chenla. It may not be excluded that Īśānavarman who according to K. 53... represented dynastic continuity to send envoys which were recognized in China as ‘Funanese’” (Vickery 2004: 134).

33 Yaśovarman I claimed to be a maternal descent from Agastya in the inscription K. 95 from Phnom Práh Bāt, dated 889 CE, stanzas V–VIII (ISCC: 364 [text] and 369–370 [translation]), which was repeated in the Lolei inscription K. 323, dated 8th July 893, stanzas VI–IX (ISCC: 394–395). To Agastya (as “kumbhayoni”) was already alluded to in the so-called Śivasoma inscription from Prāsāt Kandol Dòm (K. 809), dated between 878 and 887 CE, stanza XXXII (IC I: 45).

nymph Merā, ancestors of a certain Śrutavarman (IC IV: 90 and 95–96). Śrutavarman was here explicitly not called “king” or “ancestor of kings” but the founder of a new dynasty probably felt it necessary to integrate Kambu as an important sage. It is not unlikely that this reference was made as a concession to the predecessor dynasty ruling at Chok Gargyar (Kôh Ker / Liṅgapura) what can be seen in the inscription K. 958 from Prāsāt Kôk Čak (IC VII: 141–147), where Kambu was called father of Śrutavarman, the first of all Cambodian kings (stanza II). To this lineage belonged Indravarman, Yaśovarman, Jayavarman (IV), Harṣavarman (II) and others (stanza III).³⁴ And the partly damaged stanza IV declares that there was a moon on the heaven of this family named Rājendravarman. As the latter one doubtless was a figure of the past he could not be identical with Rājendravarman II, the above-mentioned founder of the new Angkorian dynasty who assumed power in 944 CE. The king bearing the same name should be considered as Rājendravarman I, grandfather of Indradevī, the wife of Indravarman. (877–889). The Śaka year 869 (947/48 CE) of the Prāsāt Kôk Čak inscription (a place very close to Angkor) is the same as that of the inscription of Bāksēi Čamkroñ. Therefore, it contradicts the established chronology conceding Harṣavarman II only the years between 941 and 944 CE as time of his rule, but he was probably mightier than we know. Later on, consequently, the interest in Kambu within the dynasty of Rājendravarman II was diminished as Kambu was mentioned only incidentally, e. g. in the inscription K. 832 from Bantāy Srēi, dated Friday, 5th June 968 CE (stanza III: IC I: 149 and 152). Coming back now to Kauṇḍinya and Somā one has to recognize that Rājendravarman II changed his ancestry in later inscriptions: In the inscriptions of the Eastern Mèbon (K. 528), dated 28th January 953 (Finot 1925, stanza VIII: 312), and of the Prè Rup (K. 806), dated 961/62, stanza VI (IC I: 78), the king derives his lineage from an ancestress who was the wife of a legendary, historically unknown king Bālāditya, a descendant of the pair Kauṇḍinya and Somā; but here again the latter is not a serpent princess. Rājendravarman’s successor Jayavarman V repeated the Kauṇḍinya / Somā – Bālāditya lineage in the inscriptions of Prāsāt Komphu’s (K. 669: IC I: 159–186, stanza VI, on p. 165), dated 20th February 973, and Prāh Ēinkôsēi (K. 263: IC IV: 118–139, stanza V on p. 121), dated 10th March 984. Jayavīravarman’s inscription of Prāsāt Trapan Rū’n (K. 598)³⁵, dated 3rd May 1006, refers only to Somā without any specific link to a lineage. Coming now to a conclusion: The whole story of a liaison between Kauṇḍinya and a serpent princess can be found nowhere in South-east Asian epigraphy except in the Cham inscription C. 96, but it seems that this idea has fascinated generations of scholars. Striking examples can be found in the books *Lost Goddesses* by Trudy Jacobsen and the Ph.D. thesis of Elizabeth Guthrie entitled *A Study of the History and Cult of the Buddhist Earth Deity in Mainland Southeast Asia*. Jacobsen quoted the well-known story of C. 96 but maintained that it was from the Vō Cạnh stele (from central Vietnam, 13°46’ N 109°10’ E) with the number C. 40. In fact, this text refers to a king called Śrī Māra who consecrated all his property to those who are dear and near to him and has nothing to do with Kauṇḍinya and Somā. As this inscription belongs to the 3rd or 4th century and not to the 7th century³⁶ Jacobsen concluded that Somā like Liūyè 柳葉 was an independent female figure, making her a ruling queen (p. 47), although this is nowhere supported by the inscriptions K. 1142, C. 96 or the later ones of the 10th century.³⁷

34 Kambu was already known from the inscription K. 675 situated at Prāsāt Andôn in the Kôh Ker region where he appeared as creator of kings (Stanzas VIII–IX: IC I: 61), and also as ancestor of a people called Kambuja, i.e. the Khmers.

35 Finot 1928: 58–80; Pou 2001: 230–239.

36 Nevertheless, her citation referring to Louis Finot, “Les inscriptions de Mi-So’n IIIer, BEFEO IV (Finot 1904), 918–925, is correct for C. 96. The Vō Cạnh inscription of king Śrī Māra was published in ISCC, Nr. XX: 191–198. See also Sircar (Sircar 1941) and Jacques (Jacques 1969).

37 She has also arbitrarily changed the text of the story of Hùntián 混填 and Liūyè 柳葉, saying that he came from India. Moreover, it seems that Jacobsen follows a certain strategy to allow fictitious fabrications to be

18 Guthrie shows a similar cavalier approach to the theme. In later times when Theravāda Buddhism prevailed in Cambodia, a story of a hero and a serpent princess became very popular, but here Prāḥ Thòñ, the male protagonist (see Porée-Maspéro 1950: 240–246), does not appear in the same heroic manner as the Kauṇḍinya of the above quoted Cham inscription (C. 96), and actually, there is no trace of Kauṇḍinya-Somā in the later folk-tales of Cambodia. Gaudes had already warned in his prologue (Gaudes 1993: 333) that historical persons such as Hùntián 混填 and Liǔyè 柳葉 or Kauṇḍinya and perhaps Somā must be carefully distinguished from personifications or symbols that cannot be historically identified such as Prāḥ Thòñ and the *nāga* princess who had inflamed the imagination of generations of scholars. But Elizabeth Guthrie (Guthrie 2004: 148) again uncritically maintains – without any look into the primary sources – that the story of Prāḥ Thòñ and the *nāgī* had appeared in Chinese accounts of the 4th century and in “Cambodia’s earliest inscriptions dating from the 5th century”. Then follows her statement that “Khmer kings carefully traced their lineage back to Cambodia’s founding couple”, without having carefully read that the female part of that couple was not a serpent girl, but the daughter of Soma, and that only kings of a certain dynasty claimed their descent from them. This kind of reliance on the “ancients” without any examination or verification of their statements was harshly criticized by Vickery in the same year (Vickery 2004).³⁸

19 It is therefore necessary to distinguish Kauṇḍinya and Somā from the founding father of the Chinese annals (whose wife was never mentioned). As we have seen, some other Kauṇḍinyas appeared in early inscriptions and records, doubtless all members of the same clan. Chronologically, the pair in question must have been contemporaries of Īśānavarman as it was their son Candravarman who was married to the granddaughter of the latter. Vickery omitted the pair in all his genealogical considerations about this marriage alliance, classifying it as mythological, although it was embedded in an historical context. C. 96 had even located them to Bhavapura (the foundation of Bhavavarman I) where Kauṇḍinya had received the spear of the ancient Indian hero Aśvatthāman and planted it into the soil of that city – obviously an act of assuming power. Was he then a descendant of the former ruling family of Fúnán who was living there in exile? We can only speculate as to who he actually was, but through his grandson Jayavarman I his clan once again came to power.

proved by a text: On p. 46 she quoted a stanza (XII) of the inscription K. 286 of the temple of Bāksēi Čamkrōñ (see above) where “Mera was described as ‘most renowned of beautiful deities’”. The marriage of Merā with Kambu is indeed recorded in the inscription, but not the invitation of Kambu by a Nāga king who had received Merā “as a daughter” from Śiva (Jacobsen 2008: 47). There is no footnote as proof, but the reader is given the impression that all of this information is derived from the stanzas quoted.

38 Entirely inadmissible is Guthrie’s Intermingling of this story with that of the serpent goddess residing at the top chamber of the king’s palace where the king must spend the first part of the night with her, as referred by the Chinese diplomat Zhōu Dáguān 周達觀 during his visit in 1296/97; see pp. 21–22 of the German translation.

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NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

Since Karl-Heinz Golzio passed away during the review process, the now published version of the article could not finally be discussed with the author. Nonetheless, it was important to the editors not to withhold the article from the academic community. Small changes were made to the text in response to the reviewers' comments. The illustrations for the article were kindly provided by Andreas Reinecke.

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