

Note on Names of Queen in Ancient Cambodia

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Among the countries in Southeast Asia which received Indian culture, Cambodia shows very strong Indian influence in diverse manner. The unique aspect of this influence is the Sanskrit names. Even the name of the country, Cambodia or Kampuchea in Khmer pronunciation is from the Sanskrit words *Kambu+jā* equal to *Kambujā*. It means the land of people who were born from the sage Kambu. We know from K.286, *Paksey Camkrong* Inscription that the Cambodian held the sage *Kambu Svayambhu* and the angle *Merā* as their ancestors.

Sanskrit names played an important role in history of this country from the beginning of civilization. The epigraphy of Ancient Cambodia shows that Kings and principle persons have Sanskrit names. But slaves or low-class people use Khmer names. All Ancient Khmer kings have the surname 'varman' at the end, but not everyone whose names end with 'varman' are kings. The word 'varman' is a noun which means envelope, defensive armour, a coat of mail, a bulwark, shelter, defence, protection (William 1872:926). This word generally uses to signify the Kṣatriya family as the Viṣṇu Purāṇa mentioned "(The termination) śarman is prescribed for a brāhmaṇa; varman belongs to a kṣatriya; (and) a name characterised by gupta and dāsa is approved of in the case of (respectively) a vaiṣya and a sudra" (Sharma 1978:16).

In ancient Cambodia society the highest-ranking category is that of King and Queen. The role of King is wildly subject of studies. However the queen of ancient Cambodia is very interesting. In several cases we learnt from the inscriptions that the kings claimed their right on the throne through their female ancestors. The family of queen also is the source of power for ruler.

The study emphasises the name and role of queen as spouse of king, not as the ruler and also excludes queen mothers. Following are the names of queens available in the inscriptions from Pre-Angkorian and Angkorian periods.

1. *Kulaprabhāvatī*, queen of Jayavarman of Funan (K.875)

Kula means family or dynasty, Prabhāvatī is from √Bhā 'to shine'. The total name indicates one who is the light of family.

Kulaprabhāvatī was referred in K.875 as the principle queen of Jayavarman of Funan (Śrī-Jayavarmmanogramahiṣī). The inscription eulogized her as the beloved of the king like Śacī of Śakra, Svāha of Fire, Rudrāṇī of Hara and Śrī of Śrīpati i.e. Viṣṇu (Śakrasyeva Śacī nṛpasya dayitā svāha saptārccīṣaḥ Rudrāṇīva Harasya lokaviditā sā Śrīriva Śrīpateḥ).

2. *Kambujarājalakṣmī*, queen of Bhavavarman I (K.273, 908)

Name means 'fortune of the king of the Kambujas'. She was a princess of Sūryavamāśa of Kambu and Mera through the maternal family of Śreṣṭhavarman. According to Coedes (1968: 66) she married *Bhavavarman I*. The inscriptions of Jayavarman VII, K.273 and K.908 compared her with the goddess Lakṣmī (V.8 jātā tadīye nanvagītakīrtti-candrollasanmāṭṛkulāmvrāśau rarāja lakṣmī-iva yā satīnām agresarī kamvujarājalakṣmīḥ).

3. *Sākāramañjarī*, queen of Īśanavarman I (K.437)

Sākāra means 'beautiful', Mañjarī denotes flower. The whole name narrates the beautiful blossom flower. *Sākāramañjarī* was mentioned in K.437 as the beloved spouse of King Īśanavarman I (Śrīśānavarmanāmnas tasya nṛpendrasya yā priyā patnī Sākāramañjarī). She was a Viṣṇavite devotee of the Bhagavata sect.

4. *Hyañ Pavitrā*, queen of Jayavarman II (K.278)

Pavitra or Pavitrā is a means of purification and also a name of Viṣṇu mentioned in Sahasranāma Stotra. Hyañ or Heñ is the title of the Lady in the High rank. Hyañ Pavitrā was ascribed in K.278 dated 1007 A.D. as the principal queen (agramahiṣī) of Jayavarman II and bore the position of Devī. She was the descendant of Haripura (V.2. āsīd kamvujarājendro vedadvinagarāyabhāk yasmin rājabhujirābhā ramyā pūrvveva samāpadā //V.3. hyañpavitrāhvayā devī tasyāgramahishī satī deśo hāripurāvikhya yasyās santānasantataḥ//). She was an ancestor of Paramācārya and Rudrācārya, the significant priests of Jalāngeśa and Kapāleśa.

5. *Kambujalakṣmī* also called *Prāṇa*, queen of Jayavarman II (K.382, 534)

Kambujalakṣmī means 'fortune of Kambuja'. K.382 and K.534 of the same date 893 A.D. tell us that *Kambujalakṣmī* was also called *Prāṇa* which means 'the breath of life' (Kambujalakṣmīs sā Prāṇākhyaṇyāpy-anujā satī). *Prāṇa* is considered as her original name. She got the prestige name of *Kambujalakṣmī* probably after becoming Devī of the king. She was a daughter of *Piṅsvaṅgrāmatī*, and had a son named *Dharmavardhana*.

6. *Dharanīndradevī*, queen of Jayavarman II (K.320 S)

The Prah Ko Inscription, K.320 S furnished the name of another queen *Dharanīndradevī*. Dharaṇīndra provides the meaning of the Indra on earth or Lord of the earth and explicates the King, thus the whole name connotes the queen of the god Indra on earth.

According to Coedes (1968) she was mother of *Jayavarman III*. Later the king *Indravarman I* dedicated the statue of Gauri, wife of Śiva in honour of *Dharanīndradevī* and enshrined in the middle sanctuary in the second row at the temple of Preah Ko which completed in 879 A.D. Since other queens were never given the noteworthy endowment like her we may assume that she was the principal queen of *Jayavarman II*. Briggs (1974: 90-91) recommended that *Kambujalakṣmī* and *Hyang Pavitrā* may be one and the same person and after the death was called *Dharanīndradevī*. But this conclusion is clearly incorrect for the reasons that (1) *Kambujalakṣmī* as shown above had original name as Prāṇa, not Pavitrā (2) the posthumous name has never found in the case of queen.

To compromise the assumption of Briggs we may guess that *Hyañ Pavitrā* may receive the name of *Dharanīndradevī* after becoming the principal queen, not after death.

7. *Nṛpendradevī* alias *Teñ Hyañ Amṛtā*, queen of Jayavarman II (K.449)

Amṛtā means ambrosia or nectar and also signifies the beautiful one. With the title *Hyañ* we know that she was a lady from the aristocrat family. She was described in K.449, Palhal inscription dated 991 Śaka or 1068 A.D. as a younger sister (anujā) of *Śivakaivalya*, the important priest of *Jayavarman II*. She married *Jayavarman II* and was known as *Nṛpendradevī* (V.28 nṛpendradevīsamājñāyā ten hyaṇamṛtayoṣitāaḥ). *Nṛpendra* literally means the Indra among Kings or Lord of kings and implicates the King. So the total name of *Nṛpendradevī* depicts the simple meaning of the queen. She probably lasted long to the reign of *Jayavarman III*.

8. *Bhāsasvāminī*, queen of Jayavarman II (K.275)

Bhāsa means light or brightness and *Swāminī* denotes the mistress, thus the entire name describes the bright mistress. *Bhāsasvāminī* was referred in K.275 of 10th C.A.D. as a queen of *Jayavarman II* (tasyāgramahiṣī devī). She was an ancestor of *Yogasvāmin*, the significant priest of *Sūryavarman I*.

9. *Indradevī* queen of Indravarman I (K.95+, 293 n^o, 330 S, 485 B, C, D, 832 A)

Indradevī provides the simple meaning of the queen of Indra which clearly denoted to *Indravarman*, her husband. This name shows the tradition of naming after husband which prevailed in the Angkor time.

Indradevī was the queen of *Indravarman* and mother of *Yaśovarman*. She descended from the line of King *Puṣkarākṣa*, the ancient royal family of *Vyādhapura*, *Śambhupura* and *Aninditapura*. According to 14 digraphic inscriptions (K.42, 45, 47, 57, 95, 101, 110, 223, 309, 323, 346, 362, 479 and 1005) of *Yaśovarman*, *Indradevī* was a daughter of king *Mahīpativarman*, and this *Mahīpativarman* was the son of *Rajendravarman I* of Chenla with his queen *Nṛpatīndradevī*. *Rajendravarman I* was connected with the royal family of *Vyādhapura* through his mother, and was a descendant of *Puṣkarākṣa*. *Indradevī*'s mother was the queen *Rajendradevī* who was descended from a royal family founded by *Agastya*, a Brahmin from *Aryadeśa* i.e. India. Since *Indravarman* was a remote relative of the former kings, *Jayavarman II* and *III*, the marriage to *Indradevī* might have paved the way for his accession to the throne.

10. *Jayadevī*, queen of Jayavarman IV

Jayadevī stands for the meaning of queen of Jaya which denoted Jayavarman IV, her husband.

Jayadevī was a daughter of *Indravarman* with his principal queen *Indradevī*, thus she was a sister of *Yaśovarman*. She married *Jayavarman IV* and possibly got the honorific name after her husband. She had a son who succeeded the throne under the name of *Harṣavarman II* in 941 A.D. The King *Rajendravarman II* who succeeded *Harṣavarman II* also dedicated an image of *Umā* in honor of *Jayadevī* at Prasad Pre Rup in 961 A.D.

11. *Narapatīndradevī*, queen of Jayavarman IV (K.989)

Narapatīdra means Lord of the Kings, thus *Narapatīndradevī* marks the queen of Lord of Kings.

The Prasad Beng inscription, K.989 dated 930 Śaka or 1008 A.D. gave detail that *Narapatīndradevī* was a daughter of *Steñ Gāddhāri* who descended from *Steñ Vrau* from *Aninditapura* who served *Jayavarman II*. She had original name as *Steñ Pit Vrau* and got the honorific designation (dār jmaḥ) of *Narapatīndradevī* after the marriage to *Jayavarman IV*. She had a son named *Narapatīndravarmān*.

12. *Narendradevī*, queen of Rajendravarman II (K.56 B/12)

Narendradevī gives the simple meaning of the queen. According to K.56 from Adei An *Narendradevī* was niece of *Nṛpatīndropakalpa* and became the queen of *Rajendravarman II* (V.16. yadbhāgiṇeyī mahiṣī Śrīmad-Rajendravarmanmaṇaḥ Narendradevīty abhavad sarvvābharaṇabhūmibhāk).

13. *Prāṇa*, queen of Rājendravarman II (K.136 A)

Prāṇa means ‘the breath of life’ and is a name of Lord Viṣṇu out of thousand names. *Prāṇa* was mentioned in K.136 as *Devī* of King *Rājendravarman II*. She was a member of *Saptadevakula* family which played important role in the Angkor court since the time of *Jayavarman II*.

14. *Nṛpatīndralakṣmī*, queen of Jayavīravarman and of Sūryavarman I (K.221 N/14, K.989 A/26, B/6,31,33, K.991/2)

Nṛpatīndralakṣmī means the fortune of Indra of Kings or of Lord of Kings. According to K.989, Prasad Beng inscription dated 930 Śaka or 1008 A.D. *Nṛpatīndralakṣmī* was a daughter of *Steñ Vrau*. She was from the prosperous family and had wealth equal to great king (Maharājasamānabhogā). In the inscription she was the queen of two kings i.e. *Jayavīravarman* as reported in Sanskrit text and of *Sūryavarman I* in Khmer text. With the latter King she gave birth to the prince *Vīravardhana*. Moreover her brother, *Narapatīndravarmān* served as general of both *Jayavīravarman* and *Sūryavarman I* and got honours from them. It has to be admitted that *Sūryavarman* married the queen of his rival *Jayavīravarman* and took her as legal queen by giving the title of *Devī*. This may be regarded as an attempt to legitimize of his seizure of the throne. Chakravarti (1982: 69) identifies *Nṛpatīndralakṣmī* with *Narapatīndralakṣmī* by similarity of names. Moreover, in K.782 *Narapatīndravarmān* is referred as older brother of *Narapatīndralakṣmī*. *Narapatīndravarmān* of K.782 cannot be another person since he served the same king.

15. *Narapatīndralakṣmī*, queen of Sūryavarman I (K.782 N/6)

Narapatīndralakṣmī gives the meaning of the fortune of Lord of Kings. She was referred in K.782 from Prasad Sralau dated 1071 A.D. The Khmer text of the inscription recites that she was younger sister of *Sañjak Vrai Kanloñ* who later got the honorific name of *Narapatīndravarmān*. She was also called the younger *Vrai Kanloñ* (Vrai Kanloñ ta pha-un). After becoming the chief queen (agradevī) of King *Sūryavarman I* she was called (ti hau) *Narapatīndralakṣmī*.

16. *Vīralakṣmī*, queen of Sūryavarman I (K.235, 237 N, 258 c, 293, 380 O, 521 N, 660)

Vīra means brave and is a name of Lord Viṣṇu. Lakṣmī indicates the goddess Lakṣmī, goddess of fortune and prosperity. The full name characterizes the good fortune of the hero or of the king.

The K.380 and K.660 inscriptions give information that *Vīralakṣmī* was born of the royal line of *Harṣavarman I* and *Īśānavarman II*, sons of *Yaśovarman I*. She was called *Mahādevī* which means the great queen of *Sūryavarman I*. Coedes (1968: 133) suggested that the name of *Vīralakṣmī* seems to show relationship in some way probably a daughter of *Jayavīravarman*, the former king and opponent of *Sūryavarman*. If the assumption of Coedes is true, this confirms the legitimization of power by means of marriage to the wife and daughter of a predecessor. In the reign of *Udayadityavarman II* a sister of *Vīralakṣmī* married to *Jayendravarman*, the former chief priest of *Devarājā* and the king's spiritual master.

17. *Harṣalakṣmīdevī*, queen of *Harṣavarman III* (K.91 d/2)

Harṣalakṣmīdevī means the queen who is fortune of *Harṣavarman III*. *Harṣalakṣmīdevī* was mentioned only in K.91. The inscription provides the detail only that *Vāgīśvaraṇḍāita*, the chief priest (hotā ta agra) of *Harṣavarman III* was her teacher (guru).

18. *Vijayendralakṣmī*, queen of *Jayavarman VI* and of *Dharaṇīndravarman I* (K.191B/8)

Vijaya means victory and is a name of Viṣṇu. The full name provides the connotation of the fortune of victorious Lord i.e. Viṣṇu.

Vijayendralakṣmī was described in K.191 dated 1107 A.D. that she first married to the heir apparent prince or *Yuvarāja* who died before reigning, then remarried to two Kings i.e. *Jayavarman VI* and *Dharaṇīndravarman I* who are brothers of *Yuvarāja*. This is the evidence for the remarriage of widow in the Angkor time and for the practice of acceptance the queen of previous king.

19. *Jayadevī*, queen of *Jayavarman VI* (K.258c)

We do not know much about this *Jayadevī*. She was mentioned only in K.258, Samrong inscription dated post 1107 A.D. She was probably principal queen of *Jayavarman VI* as her name denoted.

20. *Jayarājacūdāmaṇi*, queen of *Dharaṇīndravarman II* (K.273 A/21, 273 A/71, 485 A/8, D/7, 908 D/38)

Jayarājacūdāmaṇi means the jewel on the head of victorious king. The first part of name may denote to the King *Jayavarman VII*, her son. It is likely that the king *Jayavarman VII* offered this prestige name to his mother after ascending the throne since the name do not give any her significance in the position of queen.

Jayarājacūdāmaṇi was a daughter of *Harṣavarman* perhaps III. She married to the King *Dharaṇīndravarman II* and in 1125 A.D. had a son who later became a King of Angkor under the name of *Jayavarman VII*. In 1186 A.D. the King *Jayavarman VII* after reigning for 5 years built the *Rājavihāra* temple, today known as Ta Prohm to enshrine the image of *Prajñāpāramitā* to commemorate to his mother queen, *Jayarājacūdāmaṇi*.

21. *Jayarājadevī*, queen of Jayavarman VII (K.485 B/7, D/31)

Jayarājadevī presents the meaning of the Devī of King Jaya which referred to her husband, *Jayavarman VII*. The K.485, Phimanakas Inscription composed by her sister, *Indradevī* mentions that she was the chief queen (*agradevī*) of Jayavarman VII. *Jayarājadevī* was the first queen of *Jayavarman VII*. She married him while he was a young prince and had a son named -----*indravarman* who governed *Lavo* in central Thailand nowadays. She had elder sister named *Indradevī* who on her death married the same King.

22. *Indradevī*, queen of Jayavarman VII (K.485 B/42, C/13, D/30)

Indradevī which name implies the Devī of Lord was the elder sister of *Jayarājadevī*, the first queen of *Jayavarman VII*. After the death of *Jayarājadevī* the King married her. She was prised in the inscription that 'her knowledge surpassed the knowledge of the philosophers', and was appointed as principal teacher of the Buddhist monastery. She was credited for composing the impeccable Sanskrit in K.485, Phimanakas inscription containing a panegyric of her sister and biographical information on career of *Jayavarman VII*.

23. *Rājendradevī*, queen of Jayavarman VII (K.908)

Rājendradevī means the Devī or queen of King. She was a queen of *Jayavarman VII*. Her name was referred in the last verse of K.908, Preah Khan Inscription written by her son, *Vīrakumāra*.

24. *Cakravartirājadevī*, queen of Jayavarman VIII (K.567 B/12)

Cakravartirājadevī provides the prestige meaning of the queen of the universal monarch. She was mentioned in K.567, the last Sanskrit Inscription of Angkor from *Maṅgalārtha* Temple. The inscription told that *Cakravartirājadevī* was the elder daughter of *Jayamahāpradhāna*, a Brahmin who came from Burma and served *Jayavarman VII*. She became the principal queen of *Jayavarman VIII* and was offered the prestige name of *Cakravartirājadevī* (V.18 mahīṣī Jayavarmmaṇaḥ Śrī-Cakravartirājādidevyabhikhyātivallabhā).

25. *Śrīndrabhūpeśvaracūdāā*, queen of Śrīndravarman (K.569/14,35)

Śrīndrabhūpeśvaracūdāā totally means the jewel of the Lord of earth i.e. Śrīndra which signifies her husband, *Śrīndravarman*.

Śrīndrabhūpeśvaracūdāā was referred in K.569 dated 1226 or 1306 A.D. as the principal queen (*agramahiṣī*) of Śrīndravarman. She was the daughter (*agrarājaputrī*) of previous king, Jayavarman VIII. The account of Chou Ta-Kaun, the Chinese emissary who visited Angkor in the reign of *Śrīndravarman* narrated that she stole the golden sword which is the most important royal regalia and gave to her husband. This incidence helped her husband to become the king by depriving her brother of the succession.

26. *Sūryalakṣmī*, queen of Śrīndravarman (K.568/52, K.384 A/17)

Sūryalakṣmī means the fortune of the Sun who engenders all glory i.e. Lord Viṣṇu. According to K.568 she was a niece of Madhurendrasūri who was a great favourite and minister of the King. She married to Śrīndravarman and became the favourite queen (yasyānujāyānṛpabhoginīnākma gyrāsatapūrṇnasudhāḥaḥaddhā Śrīsūryalakṣmīḥṛdayābharāmā Śrī-Śrīndravarmmmāvanapālabhattuḥ).

Conclusion

From the epigraphic evidences we found that the queens of Ancient Cambodia consumed two kinds of name:

(1) Original name

We found that before they married the king and became queen, these queens had original name. Unfortunately very few were mentioned. Some names are in Sanskrit such as three queens of Jayavarman II i.e. Pavitrā, Prāṇa and Amṛtā. Some are Khmer names such as Pit Vrau and Vrai Kanloñ. For Sanskrit names it is interesting to note that they are one word name and provides very simple meaning.

(2) Queen name

The name they obtained after becoming the queen of ruling king. These names are composed with elaborated Sanskrit words which provide auspicious meaning. The several names of this type had ending with –devī or –lakṣmī. The queen names with –lakṣmī ending (Kambujarājālakṣmī, Kambujalakṣmī, Nṛpatīndralakṣmī, Narapatīndralakṣmī, Vīralakṣmī, Harṣalakṣmīdevī and Sūryalakṣmī) reflected the idea on the Lakṣmī, goddess of fortune and spouse of Lord Viṣṇu. This faith represented the role of King as the god Viṣṇu on earth. We found that most favourite method of queen name is naming after their husband.

These are the queens who had name after their husband:

1. Indradevī, queen of Indravarman
2. Jayadevī, queen of Jayavarman IV
3. Harṣalakṣmīdevī, queen of Harṣavarman III
4. Jayadevī, queen of Jayavarman VI
5. Jayarājadevī, queen of Jayavarman VII
6. Śrīndrabhūpeśvaracūdāā, queen of Śrīndravarman

This kind of name probably signifies the importance of those queens. As we already known that Indravarman and Jayavarman IV claimed their legitimacy on the throne through Indradevī and Jayadevī respectively. Śrīndrabhūpeśvaracūdāā also helped her husband who is only son-in-law of previous king, to ascend the throne by presenting the royal regalia.

It is significant to note that this trend started in Angkorian period and was introduced by Indravarman I. Hence Jayadevī of Pre-Angkorian was not the queen or widow of Jayavarman I as previously misunderstood. She was a daughter of the latter and was given this name probably to show her relation to Jayavarman I like her sister, Sobhājayā. Furthermore giving the name after father or mother is available in ancient time such as Narapatīndradevī, queen of Jayavarman IV had a prince named Narapatīndravarman. Another interesting example is Jayarājacūdāmaṇi, queen of Dharaṇindravarman II. The name shows significant feature to her son rather than her husband. This is an evidence of expression the gratitude by giving the name.

The study demonstrates the tradition of remarriage of widow and acceptance the queen of previous king as we have seen in the cases of Nṛpatīndralakṣmī and of Vijayendralakṣmī.

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