

Sui Dynasty.¹⁷ Nothing here necessarily entails matrilineal descent.

Malleret is so impressed by some remarks of Chou Ta-kuan in the thirteenth century regarding the specific role of women in the marriage ceremony (1941: 176–7), and in this he is supported by O'Sullivan (1962: 94):

the woman must lead the man away from the ceremony, in memory of the *naga* queen, the daughter of the land, through whom the first Hindu king is said to have gained his right to rule in Cambodia.

Like myths, however, many rituals have role reversals, so it is just as dangerous to use such scraps of evidence in support of speculations about the nature of social organization, especially in history. Even were this not the case, this particular item of ritual could just as easily be referring to uxori-local residence as to matrilineal descent.

5 Succession to the throne and to other offices of state

Porée-Maspero, following Finot and Dupont, has been the chief proponent of the view that succession to the throne in both Cambodia and Funan proceeded through the female line. She bases her argument on the legends concerning the rise of Cambodia in which Prah Thong, or alternatively Kaundinya, played a prominent part. As we have seen (3, above), according to these legends this Brahman was the first king of Funan, Cambodia's ancestral state, having received the kingdom from the Nagas through his marriage to Soma, a Naga princess. In fact, we have two opposed descent lines, each with its own totem and other emblems: that of Prah Thong/Kaundinya, with the bird Garuda (Khmer *krut*) as its totem and associated with Vishnu and with the sun, a masculine body; and that of Soma, with the serpent (Sk. *naga*) as its totem and associated with the feminine moon (Sk. *soma* = 'moon' *inter alia*) and possibly with Shiva. These lines also represent respectively Land Chenla and Water Chenla, the territorial divisions of Chenla, the successor state which absorbed Funan in the seventh century A.D., and hence their union in the legends is also the union of these two states, from which the Angkor monarchy sprang. The rulers of this union were the *cakravartin*, sovereign over both 'des rois solaires et lunaires', and the issue of the perpetual intermarrying of the two exogamous subject lines. But in order that both lines be represented by him simultaneously, a *cakravartin* had to hold power affinally from one line and consanguineally from the other. Moreover, father and son had to belong to opposite lines, so that both totems received equal expression over time. The only means of producing this was matrilineal succession.

Such in a nutshell is the author's thesis (1950; 1969: 862–72). Matrilineal succession to office is generally well attested, if of minor incidence globally when compared with

¹⁷ See on these matters Moura 1883: 340; Leclère 1916: 540; Majumdar 1944: 65; Briggs 1951: 50; O'Sullivan 1962: 92; Kalab 1968: 525; Nou and Nou 1973: 270; Ebihara 1974: 318; Martel 1975: 205, 209; Imbert 1961: 92.