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## *Succession to the Throne in Ancient Ceylon*

SINCE Geiger's study and translation of the *Mahāvamsa*, most authorities, such as Codrington,<sup>1</sup> have followed him in maintaining that the normal succession to the throne in ancient Ceylon was from brother to brother and then to the eldest son of the eldest brother.<sup>2</sup> This view was questioned by Senaveratne<sup>3</sup> who, however, did not bring together all the evidence relating to the problem. To establish the traditional system of succession in ancient Ceylon a more thorough examination of the relevant data in the Chronicles is necessary, so much so, that I propose in the following pages to examine the accounts of succession in the Chronicles, *Mahāvamsa* and *Cūlavamsa* with a view to testing Geiger's theory.

Vijaya, the first king of Ceylon, knew well the Indian tradition that the son succeeded to the father's throne, for the MV<sup>4</sup> records that in the last years of his life, he thought: 'I am old and there lives no son of mine. The kingdom peopled with (such great) difficulty may come to nought after my death; therefore would I fain have my brother Sumitta brought here . . .' (MV 8. 1). Even if the Vijayan story is considered mere legend, this statement is indicative of the fact that the Chroniclers were alive to the tradition that the father was succeeded by the son on the throne. Sumitta was old, and his youngest son Paṇḍuvāsudeva came over to Ceylon and ascended the throne after the death of Vijaya. His queen Subhaddakaccānā bore him ten sons and a daughter, the eldest being Abhaya who succeeded Paṇḍuvāsudeva. The MV next relates how Paṇḍukābhaya, the nephew of Abhaya, killed a host of his uncles and became king (ch. 10). The R<sup>4</sup> records that Paṇḍukābhaya was succeeded by his son Gaṇa(pa)tissa, but both Chronicles the MV and the *Dīpavamsa* and also the Pjv,<sup>4</sup> ignore him altogether. According to these works the successor was Muṭṭasiva, also the son of Paṇḍukābhaya, who was in turn succeeded by

1. *A Short History of Ceylon*, pp. 42, 43.

2. *Cūlavamsa* translation, Introduction, p. xx.

3. *Royalty in Ancient Ceylon*, *J.R.A.S.*, C.B., Vol. XXVI, No. 71, pt. 2, p. 110.

4. MV = *Mahāvamsa* translated by Geiger; CV = *Cūlavamsa* translated by Geiger;

Pjv = *Pūjāvaliya*, ed. Bentara Sraddhatisya, 2473; R = *Rājāvaliya*, ed. Watuwatte Pemananda, B.E. 2470.

his son Devānampiyatissa (MV 11. 7). Muṭasiva had ten sons of whom the second Devānampiyatissa was ' foremost in virtue and in intelligence ' (MV 11. 5, 6), and it is no doubt on account of this superiority that he was selected to succeed his father.<sup>5</sup> We may in this connection mention that kingship was hereditary as a rule ; but the new king could not succeed as a matter of right. He had to be elected or chosen. ' In theory the sovereign was elected by the people, and the tradition of the right to choose or approve of the prince nominated to succeed appears to have survived even the tyrannies established by the last occupants of the throne '.<sup>6</sup> Devānampiyatissa seems to have made his next younger brother, Mahānāga, Vice-Regent (*uṣarāja*) (MV 15. 169 ; MV 22. 2). After the king's death, another younger brother Uttiya came to the throne *as there was no son* (MV 20. 29). Devānampiyatissa had a son ; but he predeceased his father as a result of eating the poisoned mango which was meant for Mahānāga, the Vice-Regent (MV 22. 4, 5). This was the disastrous result of the miscarriage of an attempt on the life of Mahānāga by the king's consort, who coveted the kingship for her own son (MV 22. 3). Two points arise here : firstly, why did the queen plan to kill Mahānāga if the succession was from father to son ? Secondly, if the succession was from brother to brother, the queen's desire to have the throne for her own son would not have been satisfied by killing Mahānāga alone, when Devānampiyatissa had many more brothers. It may be conjectured that the throne went to the Vice-Regent (*yūvarāja*), irrespective of whether he was a son or a brother, for only if the *yūvarāja* had the right to the throne would the queen have been successful in achieving her aim. This is indicated by the *Saddharmālamkāraya* (ed. Bentara Sraddhatisya, p. 450) when it says: *yūvarāja tanaturhī sīhi mahānāga nam rāja kumārāyem jīvāva unahot tamangē putāṇuvanta rājyaya ne lābeyi sītā* (having thought that her son would not get the kingdom if the *yūvarāja* Mahānāga lived). If this was actually the position, it seems quite probable that the brother was made the *yūvarāja* either because the king, then had no son, or because his only son was still a child. However this may be, the statement that Uttiya became king as Devānampiyatissa had no son (*rāja puttā a puttāṃ tam rājjan kāresi*), makes it amply clear that the son had the claim to the throne.

After Uttiya three brothers ruled. It must here be assumed that these three had no sons, for otherwise the MV would in all probability have referred to them, as it does in other cases. Devānampiyatissa's second brother, the Vice-Regent Mahānāga fled to Rohaṇa to save his life and ruled there ' over the whole of Rohaṇa ' (MV 22. 8). He was succeeded by his son Yaṭṭhālayakātissa (MV 22. 10), who in turn was succeeded by his son Abhaya. Goṭṭābhaya's son Kākavannatissa reigned there after the death of Abhaya (MV 22. 11).

5. See also Senaveratne 3 above.

6. Hayley, *A Treatise on the Laws and Customs of the Sinhalese*, p. 41.

Asela, one of the brothers (?) of Devānampiyatissa, who was ruling in Anurādhapura at this time was overpowered by Eḷāra, who came from Coḷa (MV 21. 13).<sup>7</sup> This king Eḷāra was defeated by Duṭṭhagāmaṇi, the son of Kākavannatissa, who now came to the throne of Laṅkā which he united under one rule (MV 25. 71). Duṭṭhagāmaṇi was followed by his brother Saddhātissa, who came to the throne as Duṭṭhagāmaṇi's son Sāliya renounced kingship being ' greatly enamoured of the Asokamālādevi ' and did not care for kingly rule (MV 33. 3). After the death of Saddhātissa his second son Thūlathana was elected king in preference to the elder son Laṅjatissa (MV 33. 18) who later assassinated his brother and gained the throne. After the death of this king, his brother Khallātanāga reigned for six years (MV 33. 29 ; Pjv, p. 724 ; R omits this king). No sons of Laṅjatissa are mentioned. Khallātanāga met with his death at the hands of the Commander of the Troops, who was in turn put to death by Vaṭṭagāmaṇi, brother of the murdered king (MV 33. 35). It should be noted here that the brother came to the throne by assassinating a usurper, and that Mahācūlika, the son of Khallātanāga, was only a small boy at this time. ' The little son of his brother, king Khallātanāga, whose name was Mahācūlika, he took as his son ; and the (child's) mother, Anulādevi, he made his queen ' (MV 33. 35). Vaṭṭagāmaṇi was succeeded by Mahācūlika, who thus inherited the throne of his own father who, as we have seen, had been assassinated earlier. Vaṭṭagāmaṇi also had a son of his own, Coranāga by name, who is said to have lived as a rebel under the rule of his step-brother Mahācūlika (MV 34. 11). It may be that he desired to have for himself the kingdom which had been his father's. When Mahācūlika died, he seized the throne and reigned for 12 years (*rajjan kārāyi āgato*). Coranāga was poisoned by his consort, the infamous Anulā, and Kuḍātissa, the son of Mahācūlika, then ascended the throne. No sons of Coranāga are mentioned. A few more cases of poisoning by Anulā followed in quick succession, until she was herself killed by Kuṭakannatissa, the second son of Mahācūlika (MV 34. 30). According to Pjv (p. 724) and R (p. 42) she was put to death by Makalantissa, the son of Kuḍātissa whom she had poisoned. Kuṭakannatissa was succeeded by his son Bhātikābhaya, who was in turn succeeded by his brother Mahādāṭhika Mahānāga presumably in the absence of a son (MV 34. 68). Āmaṇḍagāmaṇi came to the throne after his father Mahānāga (MV 35. 1). This king was killed by his brother, Kaṇirajānutissa who usurped the throne. The usurper was succeeded by Cūlābhaya, the son of Āmaṇḍagāmaṇi. We see here that Kaṇirajānutissa ousted the son and usurped the throne, when in the normal circumstances the son would have succeeded the father. The son was perhaps not powerful enough or was too young, to avenge the murder of his father. This instance does neither establish the theory that the eldest brother's eldest son succeeded after the last brother had reigned, nor that brother succeeded brother, as no other princes were available.

7. See also Pjv, p. 721 ; R, p. 25 ; EZ (*Epigraphia Zeylanica*), Vol. 3, p. 5, n. 1.

Cūlābhaya was succeeded by his sister Sīvalī, no doubt in the absence of any sons or brothers.

Ījanāga nephew of Āmaṇḍagāmaṇi married Sīvalī and reigned for ten years, and was succeeded by his son, Candamukha Siva (MV 35. 46), who was killed by his brother, Yasalālakatissa (R, p. 42), another instance of brother killing brother to gain the throne. Yasalālakatissa was assassinated by Subha the usurper, who was in turn slain by Vasabha, a descendant of the Lambakannas.

Vasabha was followed by his son Vaṅkanāsikatissa whose son Gajabāhu succeeded next. Gajabāhu was succeeded by Mahallaka Nāga, either a grandson (or son-in-law or nephew) of Vaṅkanāsikatissa. 'The inscriptions of Gajabāhu distinctly state that he was a son' of Vaṅkanāsikatissa. 'Therefore the third (Mahallaka Nāga) must have stood in the relation of a son or nephew or a brother-in-law to the second (Gajabāhu I)' (EZ I, p. 59). The literary sources differ as regards this relationship: The MV calls Mahallaka Nāga *sasuro*; the Pjv calls him *suhurubaḍu* (p. 726) and the R calls him father-in-law *bisavin piyavū* (p. 46) (R ed. B. Gunasekara, p. 34 also gives *suhurubaḍu*; see also EZ IV, p. 216). Mahallaka Nāga was followed by his son Bhātikatissa, who was succeeded by his brother Kaniṭṭhatissa (36. 6). No sons of Bhātikatissa are referred to. Kaniṭṭhatissa was succeeded by his son Khujjanāga, who was killed by his brother Kuñcanāga (36. 19)—a third instance of brother killing brother to gain the throne. Then came the brother-in-law (*sahōdariya gē svāmi puruṣayā*) (R, p. 47) or nephew (*bāna*, Pjv, p. 726) of Kuñcanāga, Sirināga who rebelled against the king and defeated him (MV 36. 23). This rebel was succeeded on the throne by his son Vohārikatissa. The MV here records an intrigue of the king's brother, Abhayanāga, with the queen, as a result of which the king was murdered and Abhayanāga came into possession of the throne—the fourth assassination of a brother (MV 36. 51).

After the death of the usurper Abhayanāga, Sirināga II, the son of Vohārikatissa, came to the throne which had been his father's and was thus rightly his. The MV mentions no offspring of Abhayanāga. Therefore, he must be presumed to have died without issue, and Sirināga, his brother's son would have been the only possible claimant. This case too, therefore, does not prove Geiger's theory that the eldest son of the eldest brother ruled after the youngest brother had ruled. Sirināga was succeeded by his son Vijaya Kumāra (MV 36. 57).

The Lambakanna kings, Saṅghatissa, Siri Saṅghabodhi and Goṭhābhaya followed Vijaya Kumāra. Goṭhābhaya was succeeded by his son Jeṭṭhatissa (MV 36. 118), who was in turn succeeded by his brother Mahāsena. No sons of Jeṭṭhatissa are mentioned.

Mahāsena was succeeded by his son Kitti Siri Meghavanna (CV 37. 53) who was followed by his brother Jeṭṭhatissa II. No sons of Meghavanna are mentioned. Buddhādāsa, Jeṭṭhatissa's son ruled after him (CV 37. 195). Buddhādāsa's son Upatissa succeeded him; but was slain by his queen (CV 37. 209) who was guilty of an intrigue with his brother, Mahānāma who now came to the throne, thus causing the fifth assassination of a ruling brother. Mahānāma was succeeded by Sotthisena, his son by a Tamil woman, and was poisoned by Saṅghā, the daughter of the *mahesi* of Mahānāma (CV 38. 2). Sotthisena was killed perhaps because he was not of full royal blood, and therefore, was not entitled to the throne. Saṅghā being of full royal blood had claims to the throne. Lāmāni Tis, husband of Saṅghā then ruled for one year (Pjv, p. 729; CV 38. 2).

After a period of foreign rule we come to Dhātusena, son of Dāṭhānāma who also had another son Silātissabodhi (CV 38. 15, 35). Dhātusena was imprisoned by Kassapa I, his son by a queen of unequal birth, in league with the *senāpati* (CV 38. 88). Kassapa's death was brought about by Moggallāna I, a son of the chief queen. Here we have the first instance of a son imprisoning a father to gain the kingdom, and it is evident that Kassapa took this course of action being instigated by his cousin the *senāpati*. When Moggallāna caused Kassapa to commit suicide he seems to have been conscious that he was only avenging the death of his royal father, to gain the throne which was his. The MV records that he was 'glad at his brother's death' for he was spared the necessity of meting out justice himself.<sup>8</sup> We must mention here the fact that the Chronicle referred to two sons (Dhātusena and Silātissabodhi) and a daughter of Dāṭhānāma (CV 38. 15, 81). When Dhātusena became king he made over 'his former revenues' to Kumārasena, his brother, who may or may not be identical with Silātissabodhi. Thus we see that in spite of this brother or brothers the throne passed in succession into the hands of the sons. His sister also did not reign.

Moggallāna was succeeded by his son Kumāradāsa, who was in turn succeeded by his son Kittisena (CV 41. 1, 4).

After the reign of Siva, uncle (*mātulo*) of Kittisena, Upatissa II, husband of the sister of Moggallāna (CV 41. 6), came to the throne. We hear of a war between Kassapa, Upatissa's son and Silākāla his son-in-law (CV 41. 12) during this reign. In the course of the war Kassapa, Upatissa's son committed suicide, and his father, the king died of grief. Hence Silākāla succeeded to the throne (CV 41. 26). Silākāla had three sons, Moggallāna, Dāṭhāpabhuti and Upatissa. 'To the eldest (Moggallāna) he handed over the Eastern Province' and conferred on him the title of *ādīpāda*. On the second son (Dāṭhāpabhuti) he con-

8. CV, pt. I, p. 46, n. 2.

ferred the post of Malayarāja and gave him the Dakkhinadeśa, the Southern Country, and Upatissa ' he took to live with him for he was particularly fond of him ' (CV 41. 33-36). When Silākāla passed away Dāṭhāpabhuti seized the throne and had his brother Upatissa murdered because he had sought to prevent his usurpation (*akkamo ti nivārentaṃ mārāpesi vibuddhiko*) (CV 41. 42). On hearing tidings of this, Moggallāna, roused to anger, spoke thus: ' he has usurped the government though he had no right to it ' (*apfallaṃ rajjaṃ aggahi*, CV 41. 43). These words and also Upatissa's attitude show that the kingdom was rightly Moggallāna's. If the succession was from brother to brother, Dāṭhāpabhuti would have had his chance to rule after Moggallāna. Why then did he usurp the throne? Probably because he would not have become king when Moggallāna had his own sons to succeed him. Dāṭhāpabhuti committed suicide and Moggallāna became king (CV 41. 54). After the death of Moggallāna II, the *mahesi* established her son Kittisirimegha on the throne and ' carried on the government herself ' (CV 41. 64). The CV states that the *mahesi* had killed her son's kindred with poison (*ibid.*); but neither mentions her motive nor gives us the names and relationship of the murdered kinsmen. The kindred referred to cannot be Kittisirimegha's uncles for the two brothers of Moggallāna were already dead, and the CV tells us that Silākāla had only three sons. No sons of Dāṭhāpabhuti I and Upatissa are mentioned. The Pjv and R only state that Moggallāna's son, Kuḍā Kitsirimevan reigned after his father (p. 730; p. 53). The Pjv term *kuḍā* (small) suggests that Kitsirimevan was a minor, and this was perhaps why the queen-mother carried on the government herself. In circumstances such as these,—when the heir to the throne was a minor—it is probable that some elder, e.g. a brother of the king succeeded as in the case of Vaṭṭagāmaṇi in slightly different circumstances. It should then have been incumbent on the part of such a successor to relinquish the kingship and hand over the throne to the heir when he came of age. This hardly happened as no one who ascended the throne ever gave it up. This may perhaps be the reason why the Chronicle deemed it necessary to give a reason for the succession of a minor. Kittisirimeghavanna's kindred, probably his cousins (step-brothers) elder sons of Moggallāna by lesser queens, had already been killed by the *mahesi*, perhaps in fear that they would prevent her son the rightful heir, from coming to the throne, as he was yet a minor.

The Moriya-Lambakanna conflict was revived when Mahānāga of the Moriya clan put Kittisirimegha to death. Mahānāga evidently had no sons or brothers and this is perhaps why he sent for his sister's son, who turned back because of an unlucky omen and died on the way (CV 41. 93). ' Mahānāga ' out of gratitude, made the son of his mother's brother (Aggabodhi) Uparāja' (CV 41. 93), of whose subsequent fate we hear nothing.

Mahānāga was succeeded by Aggabodhi I, his sister's son (Pjv *bāna*; R *bāhāna*)<sup>9</sup> ' On his mother's brother he conferred the dignity of Uparāja, on his brother that of Yuvarāja, on his sister's son that of King of Malaya ' (CV 42. 6). The province of Dakkhinadeśa, with the appropriate retinue, he made over to the *yuvarāja*. After the death of *ādi-pāda* Dāṭhāpabhuti the title of *mahādi-pāda* was conferred on Aggabodhi, the son of the king's sister who next became king (CV 42. 38). Dāṭhāpabhuti may have been the brother who was made the *yuvarāja*, and the sister's son Aggabodhi may have been the same person who was king of Malaya and who married Dāṭhā, the king's daughter (CV 42. 6, 10). On the other hand if Dāṭhāpabhuti was identical with the brother, the *yuvarāja*, the Chronicler had no reason, to speak of him as *ādi-pāda* instead of *mahādi-pāda* or *yuvarāja* as he had already been referred to as *yuvarāja* before (CV 42. 6) (of course the possibility of the terms been confused is always there). It is even possible that Dāṭhāpabhuti was another brother or else a prince of the royal family. If this was the case, we see that the title of *mahādi-pāda* was conferred on the nephew in spite of the brother, who was also the *yuvarāja*, and that it was the nephew who succeeded to the throne even when the brother was alive. We would otherwise have to presume that the *yuvarāja* brother was dead.

Silāmeghavanna was succeeded by his son Aggabodhi III who had many brothers (*sodariyā narā*, men of the same womb CV 44. 103). These, hidden here and there, caused rebellion against Jetṭhatissa (see below). Aggabodhi is said to have invested his younger brother Māna with the dignity of *u-parāja* and granted him the Dakkhinadeśa (CV 44. 84). This no doubt was done in the absence of any sons, for we are told that Aggabodhi had many brothers, and if he had sons, reference would certainly have been made to them. After the death of Māna, the king invested his younger brother, Kassapa by name, with the dignity of *u-parāja*, being desirous of securing the succession for his family (both brothers are referred to as *kanitṭham*) (CV 44. 124). This last statement makes it clear that he had no sons eligible to succeed him. The phrase *sodariyā narā* may even apply to Aggabodhi's direct cousins, that is, his father's brothers' children, for according to Sinhalese kinship terms, the word brother (*sahodara*) is also, applied to father's brothers' children (as done in Bengal). The term *sodariyā narā* certainly seems to indicate more than two people. Nothing is known of the other brothers of Māna and Kassapa.

Then followed a period of anarchy, during which period a prince Jetṭhatissa (a son of Saṅghatissa who ruled in A.D. 611) sent Aggabodhi into exile and was later killed (Pjv) by Aggabodhi, who was once again driven into exile by Jetṭhatissa's minister Dāṭhāsiva, who according to the Pjv (p. 730) was put to death by Kassapa, the *yuvarāja*. Dāṭhāsiva is said to have become king

9. CV 42. 1; see also CV, pt. I, p. 64, n. 1.



'according to custom' (*yathāvidhi*) (CV 44. 128). The nature of this custom cannot be ascertained. Aggabodhi died while in Rohaṇa (CV 44. 145), and after his death *yūvarāja* Kassapa (earlier referred to as *uparāja*) sent Dāṭhapatissa (Dāṭhāsiva) 'flying to Jambudvīpa and united the country under one dominion' (CV 44. 145).

Kassapa is said to have had many sons, the eldest being Mānaka (CV 45. 6). Kassapa, when seized with illness, thought: 'My sons are all still children incapable of reigning' and sent for the very clever son of his sister who lived in Rohaṇa, and to him he transferred the whole government and the care of his children (*āhūya sabbaṃ pādāsī rajjāṃ puttāni attano*) (CV 45. 8). The words 'transferred the government' are significant as they seem to indicate only a position of trust till the sons came of age. If, as seems probable, Kassapa had cousins or brothers, it is to be noted that the regency was not given to them but to the nephew, and the son's right to the throne is established by Kassapa's statement that his sons were still minors—' *puttā me bālakā sabbe, n'ete rajjak-khanā* '; *sabbe te na vaya p'uttā bālā vigatabuddhino*' (CV 45. 6, 7). Kassapa had 'brothers in blood' or direct cousins, and if, as Geiger asserts, the rule of succession was from brother to brother and then to the eldest son of the eldest brother, or the next living cousin, the kingdom should have gone to one of the many 'brothers in blood' of Aggabodhi III, Kassapa's brother; but we here see that Kassapa favoured his sister's son in spite of his many brothers in blood, who even sought to help Aggabodhi against Jetṭhatissa seeking to 'make the land rebellious' (CV 44. 104).

The succession was again interrupted when Hatthadāṭha, (CV 44. 154), a sister's son of Dāṭhāsiva (Dāṭhapatissa), occupied the royal city and ruled as Dāṭhapatissa II (CV 45. 22). He placed his cousin, Aggabodhi, the son of his father's sister (*pitucchā puttā*)\* in the position of *yūvarāja*. The Pjv. (p. 731) and R (p. 54) call him *bā* and *sahōdara* respectively.

The reign of Aggabodhi IV was followed by a further period of confusion, which continued until Mānavamma, a son of Kassapa II, came to the throne (CV 47. 1). The confusion was perhaps due to Māna, to whom Kassapa II had handed over the reins of government. Māna violated the trust by giving over the kingdom to his father, Dappula (CV 45. 8, 16), and did not try to establish any of Kassapa's sons on the throne when they came of age. On the other hand, the children may yet have been minors or may not have been powerful enough to fight for the throne. Mānavamma was over thirty-six years of age when he came to the throne. CV (45. 6) states that Kassapa had many sons, the eldest being Mānaka. CV (47. 2) refers to Mānavamma as a son of Kassapa, belonging to the line of Mahā Sammata, and bringing with him

\**Pitucchā* means father's sister. Geiger has translated it wrongly as father's brother (CV 45. 23); *pitucchā, nāndi - pitu bhagini pitucchā* (*Dhampiyā-āṭṭvā-gāṭapadaya*, ed. D. B. Jayatilake, p. 25).

the good qualities of his clan. Mānavamma may or may not have been identical with Mānaka. Mānavamma was succeeded by his eldest son Aggabodhi V (CV, pt. I, p. 109; CV 57. 25). Now when Mānavamma's son succeeded him it is obvious that his brothers, Mānaka and the many sons referred to above, did not rule. The theory that brother succeeded brother, requires the improbable assumption that all brothers died before Mānavamma.

Two brothers of Aggabodhi, Kassapa and Mahinda, are mentioned. Aggabodhi was succeeded by Kassapa the next in age, according to ancient custom (*pubbavuttino*) (CV 48. 20). This does not in any way establish the theory that the brother was the rightful heir to the throne as no sons of Aggabodhi are referred to. The exponents of Geiger's theory may interpret '*pubbavuttino*' (ancient practice, usage) to mean a custom of brother succeeding a brother; but in my opinion this may be interpreted as indicative of a practice of brother succeeding to the throne in the absence of an eligible son. It is stated that Mahinda, the youngest brother administered the kingdom as *ādīpāda* after the death of Kassapa (CV 48. 31). It should be noted that Mahinda bore the title *ādīpāda* and not the title *mahādi pāda* or *yūvarāja*, the title usually held by the heir to the throne.<sup>10</sup> We can now with some justification assume that Mahinda was not considered heir to the throne by his brother Kassapa. In fact he did not become king proper, but only administered the government as *ādīpāda*, and it has already been stated that no son of Aggabodhi is mentioned and Geiger himself admits this.<sup>11</sup> Kassapa was succeeded by Mahinda probably because his son (also Kassapa) was a minor at the time of his death. Thus this instance does not provide definite proof that brother succeeded brother. If we have instances of brothers succeeding to the throne in spite of eligible sons, then only can this view be upheld.

Mahinda I is said to have made Kassapa's son, Aggabodhi, *uparāja* (CV 48. 32), assigned him the Eastern Province and 'sent him forth to take up his abode therein', thus more or less getting him 'out of the way'. The province of Dakkhinadeśa was however given to his own son, also Aggabodhi by name. Geiger in a footnote<sup>12</sup> remarks that Dakkhinadeśa was the province reserved for the Heir Apparent. Why then did Mahinda not give this territory to the *uparāja* Aggabodhi, who according to Geiger's theory was Heir Apparent, since he was the elder brother's son, and there were apparently no other surviving brothers of Mahinda? It is also significant that the title of either *yūvarāja* or *mahādi pāda* was not conferred on Kassapa's son. We also see that Mahinda did not confer any of the titles on his own son Aggabodhi, but merely gave over Dakkhinadeśa to him. The motive for Mahinda's actions is not very

10. See CV, pt. I, p. 54, n. 4.

11. Ibid., Introduction, p. XXI.

12. Ibid., p. 113, n. 3.

clear. It may be that, recalling the circumstances under which he came to rule, he recognised that the kingdom belonged to Kassapa's son by right. This perhaps, was the reason why he made him *uparāja*; but he seems to have been loath to give the kingdom to him, and therefore gave the Dakkhinadeśa to his son, thus making a sort of compromise, and leaving the two claimants to decide the issue on his death.

After Mahinda's death, the kingdom 'came to the hands of his son Aggabodhi' (*rajjam hatthagatam*) (CV 48. 40); but he handed over the kingdom to Kassapa's son, also Aggabodhi who reigned as Silāmegha, Aggabodhi VI (CV 48. 42). As the new king was a minor when Mahinda came to the throne, he was probably childless at his accession (Mahinda I reigned only three years). His cousin Aggabodhi, Mahinda's son, was made *uparāja*, who administered the government, while the real king seems to have been a figurehead (CV 48. 43). Thus Mahinda's son seem to have been *de facto* ruler during the reign of Silāmegha and he thereby made sure that he did not lose the kingdom after the king's death. Geiger, in this connection, remarks that Mahinda's son handed over the kingdom to his cousin, for he willingly recognised that his cousin was rightful heir according to Sinhalese law,<sup>13</sup> but the foregoing discussion makes it clear that there was no such Sinhalese law, at least up to this time, and it is therefore probable that the kingdom was handed over to Silāmegha, Aggabodhi VI, not because he was legal successor to Mahinda, but because Mahinda's son Aggabodhi recognised that his cousin was the rightful heir of Kassapa III, and also that Mahinda had only held the kingdom in trust.

After Aggabodhi VI's death, Mahinda's son and Aggabodhi VI's cousin and son-in-law, the *yuvārāja* Aggabodhi VII, came to the throne, even though Aggabodhi VI had a son, who was Commander-in-Chief at this time and who had carried on the Government for his father (CV 48. 78, 79). It is not known why this Prince did not become king on the death of his father, but it may be conjectured that the *uparāja* or *yuvārāja* had the right of succession once the title was bestowed, irrespective of whether he was the son or the brother, and that it was for this reason that Aggabodhi VI's son Mahinda permitted his uncle Aggabodhi VII to rule. Further, Aggabodhi VII married Aggabodhi VI's daughter Saṃghā and thus was Aggabodhi's son-in-law. It is possible that Saṃghā was the elder daughter of Aggabodhi VI and thus had a right to the throne—for women were not debarred from ascending the throne—and Aggabodhi VII being her husband had a right as Prince Consort (Regent). Thus the succession after Mānavamma seems complicated and much confused and cannot be taken as establishing any regular rule of succession as the circumstances are extraordinary and exceptional.

13. CV, pt. I, p. 114, n. 1.

It appears that Mahinda's father, Aggabodhi VI, expected Mahinda who was not the *yuvārāja*, to be king after him—for not only did he make him his *senāpati* but also gave into his hands the entire government which was being administered by his cousin Aggabodhi (CV 48. 79). It seems that Aggabodhi took over these duties when the king's son was not of age and relinquished them when he came of age: 'But when he grew up he made him his *senāpati*. He gave the entire government into his hands and as independent ruler the discerning (prince) fulfilled the royal duties in a just way' (CV 48. 79). In this connection Geiger remarks that this happened when the *uparāja* was in conflict with the king (*ibid.*, n. 6), but the statements in the chronicle are not indicative of any such coincidence. However, Aggabodhi VII became king and Mahinda, son of Aggabodhi VI, being a clever statesman did not accept the office of *senāpati* from him, but betook himself with a commission to the sea coast (CV 48. 80, 81). When Aggabodhi VII became king he appointed his own son Mahinda as *uparāja* (or *yuvārāja*) (CV 48. 70) thereby recognising his son's right to the throne. But this son died as *yuvārāja* (CV 48. 75). The CV next states that 'since then no son existed as heir to the throne' (*rajjam aputtam tam tadā ahu*) (CV 48. 75). The translators in a footnote to this add: 'the kingdom was sonless' (*ibid.*, n. 4). The above statement in CV and also the fact that Aggabodhi VII made his son the *yuvārāja* make it clear that the son had the right to the throne. It may also be remarked that the Pāli phrase *rajjam aputtam tam tadā ahu* has been rendered into English as 'since then no son existed as heir to the throne', and this rendering goes against the view held by Geiger.

Mahinda II, son of Aggabodhi VI, assumed kingship next. He was succeeded by his son *uparāja* Udaya (CV 49. 1), who had little children who were very dear to (him) and charming to look at' (CV 49. 2). 'The dignity of *yuvārāja* he bestowed on his eldest son, the others he made *ādīpādas*; of his daughters he made queens' (CV 49. 3). After Udaya's death his son Mahinda III came to the throne (CV 49. 38) and was followed by his younger brother Aggabodhi VIII (CV 49. 43). Aggabodhi VIII was succeeded by his brother Dappula (CV 49. 65). If 'his brother's son' referred to in CV 49. 84 was the son of Mahinda III, then there is no doubt that he was a mere child at the time of Aggabodhi's accession, for when Udaya came to the throne his sons were 'little children', and he reigned only five years (CV 49. 45). Therefore when Mahinda, Udaya's eldest son, took up the kingdom he may have just come of age. He reigned only for four years. Thus Mahinda's son must still have been very young when Aggabodhi VIII came to the throne to reign for eleven years (CV 49. 64). It is also possible that Dappula's 'brother's son' referred to in CV 49. 84 may have been the son of Aggabodhi VIII. Aggabodhi VIII, would have just come of age when he ascended the throne, and if he had a son he could not have been more than a little over eleven years on his father's death. Hence when Dappula gained kingship the prince could not have been

eligible for it, for even if the prince was Mahinda's son he could have only been little more than fifteen. If these were the circumstances under which Dappula III, the third son of Udaya, became king, it was his duty to see that the brother's son was established on the throne when he came of age. Instead he safeguarded the throne for his own sons. 'His father (Dappula), to safeguard the succession for his sons, had not made his brother's son, Mahinda by name, *ādīpāda*' (CV 49. 84). At Dappula's death Prince Mahinda should have been a major, and of course legally eligible and rightful heir to the throne. Hence the throne should have been his—for it was his father's kingdom over which the uncle or uncles ruled during his minority. Geiger himself recognises the fact that minors were disqualified from ascending the throne.<sup>14</sup> Dappula had cause to safeguard the kingdom for his sons as he feared that Mahinda, the previous king's son, would claim the throne. Dappula did not, therefore, override the law of succession in securing the kingdom for his sons, but usurped the throne that was another's according to the same law of succession by which he intended his children to succeed.

A further point must be noticed here. Udaya had 'little children' (*khuddā puttā*) (CV 49. 2), and the translator notes this fact when he says: 'I merely point out that in the very next verse SEVERAL sons and daughters are mentioned'.<sup>15</sup> The CV also states that 'others' were *ādīpādas*. Would the terms 'others' and 'several' refer only to three? Rather it suggests that there were other brothers of Dappula. Then what happened to these *ādīpādas*? Why did they not rule after Dappula II (III), or if they were legally heirs to the throne, why did they not rebel when Dappula safeguarded the throne for his sons? Either there were no other brothers (this should be ruled out on account of the term 'several') or if there were others they must be presumed to have died or to have recognised the son's right. The two foregoing examples quoted by Geiger to establish his theory are full of confusions and therefore, cannot be considered as clearly proving his case.

After Dappula II (III) his son Aggabodhi IX came to the throne. No sons of this king are mentioned, and we may assume that he had none. Sena I, his younger brother, succeeded him (CV 50. 1). This king caused Mahinda who had fled to the other coast, unable to show reverence to his younger kinsman, to be slain, as he wanted to clear the 'path of all who could dispute with him the royal dignity' (CV 50. 4). Sena I had three younger brothers: Mahinda, Kassapa and Udaya. The eldest of them, Mahinda, he made *yuvarāja* (CV 50. 7). This *yuvarāja* Mahinda and his brother Kassapa both died,

14. CV, pt. I, Introduction, p. XXIII.

15. CV, pt. I, p. 127, n. 1.

whereupon the youngest brother Udaya became *yuvarāja* (CV 50. 44). He too died soon afterwards so that the succession passed to Kassapa's eldest son (CV 50. 45).<sup>16</sup> This is quite in order as neither Sena I nor Udaya is spoken of as having had sons and Kassapa, who had sons, never became king. It is therefore quite natural that after the death of these three brothers, the throne should have gone to Kassapa's eldest son, Sena II, since he was the senior of the available princes of the royal family. This instance therefore cannot establish the theory that the crown passed on to the second generation after the first generation (brothers) had ruled.

When Sena II became king, he made his brother Mahinda the *uparāja* and gave him the Dakkhinadeśa (CV 50. 7). He (Mahinda), having committed an offence in the harem disappeared on being discovered (CV 50. 8). At this time the king's consort bore him a son, and the king was overjoyed when he saw him, for he thought 'my son endowed with the qualities of power and virtue, is worthy of the royal dignity (*rajjavoggo ti me suto*) not only of this Island, but of all Jambudīpa', and on the name-giving day itself he consecrated him *uparāja* and granted him the Dakkhinadeśa when he had another brother, Udaya (CV 51. 9-13). This action seems to imply that he considered his son to be the rightful heir even though he had brothers who, on Geiger's theory, would all have reigned in turn before the son came to the throne. When the king was so jubilant about his son was he dreaming of the son's possible reign after all the uncles had ruled or was he thinking of him as the king-to-be after him? It is significant that Sena II only made his brother *uparāja* in the absence of a son, for the son was born only at about the same time as the *uparāja* fled. The brother, *uparāja* Mahinda, later came back and cunningly made peace with the sovereign, who restored him to his previous position, because he thought the brother would be 'reliable' (*karittheko nissāṅko mayi hoti*) (CV 51. 17). Here the question arises, for what was the brother considered 'reliable'? The king perhaps expected that he would not obstruct the succession of his son. Reference must again be made to the observation made earlier that when the heir to the throne was a minor, the *yuvarāja* probably succeeded the king, regardless of relationship and that the *yuvarāja* also had claims to the throne once the title was bestowed. The king, to ensure his son's position, contracted a diplomatic marriage between his son and the *yuvarāja's* daughter (CV 51. 18). (Mahinda is first referred to as *upa* and later as *yuvarāja*). On the death of Mahinda, the next brother, Udaya, was made *yuvarāja* (CV 51. 63). He became the next king, Udaya II, thus giving us the only definite example of a younger brother coming to the throne when an adult son of the previous king was living.

16. CV, pt. I, p. 141, n. 5.

Udaya II (I) was succeeded by his brother Kassapa IV. No sons of Udaya are mentioned. Kassapa IV was followed by Kassapa V, son of Sena II. Kittagabodhi, the son of Mahinda the former *uparāja* and brother of the king, is said to have rebelled against the king, Udaya II (CV 51. 94). The question that arises is why this rebellion, which shows that Kittagabodhi disapproved of the rule of Udaya II. Kassapa IV assigned to *yūvarāja* Kassapa (son of Sena II) the Dakkhinadeśa. *Ādipāda* Mahinda, son of *yūvarāja* Kassapa (later Kassapa V) is also said to have rebelled when Kassapa IV became king. The king is said to have reconciled and given him his daughter in marriage. What cause was there for Mahinda to rebel? The fact that Kassapa V became king after his uncle Kassapa IV does not afford us definite proof that the crown passed on to the second generation after all the princes of the first generation had reigned, for no sons of Kassapa IV are mentioned. If Kassapa IV the last brother to rule had sons, and if in spite of them the eldest son of the eldest brother came to the throne then only will there be some proof of the above theory.

Thus we see that the solitary example to support Geiger was the succession of Udaya when a son of his brother the late king was living. This is an isolated instance and may have been due to special circumstances or misconception about a precedent. It is not impossible that the son may have fallen out of favour with his father who debarred him from ascending the throne by appointing an uncle as *yūvarāja*. Could it even be that the people did not approve of his succession?

One other very significant reference, which has baffled Geiger, is the use of the title *yūvarāja*, with reference to Sena's son Kassapa, when Kassapa, the youngest brother of Sena was already *yūvarāja*: 'The designation of the brother's son (*bhātuputta*) of Udaya II as *yūvarāja* is curious. In the verse 93 not this Kassapa is called *yūvarāja*, but on the contrary, the youngest brother of the king, who is likewise called Kassapa. Nevertheless according to the Sinhalese law of succession, the nephew Kassapa was heir to the throne after the brother, and probably for that reason he is here, in anticipation, called *yūvarāja*'.<sup>17</sup> The Chronicle insists on calling the brother's son Kassapa, *yūvarāja* even after Kassapa the brother was made the *yūvarāja* by the reigning king. Geiger's explanation of this seems rather curious. After Udaya's death, Kassapa, brother of Udaya, took over the government and assigned to the deserving *yūvarāja* called Kassapa, the Dakkhinadeśa (CV 52. 1). This statement also implies that he held the title *yūvarāja* all the time, since he was born. Kassapa V, in the Anuradhapura slab inscription, testifies to this when he states that he received consecration as *yūvarāja* at the very moment of his birth (EZ I, p. 50). It is not impossible to argue here that Kassapa, Sena's

17. CV, pt. I, p. 157, n. 3.

son, was prevented from coming to the throne, since the reliance Sena placed on his brother Mahinda was of no avail, as the brother died before him.

Kassapa V made Dappula 'a scion of his house' (*vaṃsa jātassa attano*), the *yūvarāja* (CV 52. 42). The Pjv and R do not mention the relationship but according to the table supplied in EZ III he is half-brother of Kassapa V, i.e. son of Sena II by another queen (EZ I, p. 184). But this has been questioned (*ibid.*). Dappula III (IV) succeeded Kassapa V. No sons of Dappula III are mentioned. The next in succession was Dappula IV (V) brother of Dappula III (IV). According to information available in the Vessagiri inscriptions Dappula IV (V) is half-brother of Kassapa V (EZ I, p. 24). Geiger's remarks in this connection may be observed: 'The Vessagiri inscription . . . belongs to this king. He calls himself here Buddas Abhay Salamevan Dāpuḷu, son of Buddas Sirisangboy Abhay and of Devā Rājna. The name Sirisamghabodhi can only apply to Sena II, or Kassapa IV. The latter is ruled out since according to the Sinhalese right of succession, sons of Kassapa IV could not possibly come to the throne before Udaya III, son of Mahinda, the younger brother of Sena II. Thus Dappula IV (and of course his predecessor D. III) was a brother of Kassapa V, but by another mother (Devā) who is however not mentioned in the Mhvs'.<sup>18</sup> Geiger bases his conclusion on his own theory of succession; but we have so far seen that sufficient evidence has not been forthcoming to establish this theory of his. Therefore the possibility of Dappula III (IV) being the son of Kassapa IV cannot be ruled out. Dappula IV (V) was succeeded by Udaya III (II) son of Mahinda who was the brother of Sena II. There is no record of any sons of Dappula III and IV. Udaya III made Sena his *uparāja* (CV 53. 13). Sena succeeded Udaya III and made his friend, *ādipāda* Udaya, *yūvarāja* (CV 53. 28). According to the Pjv (p. 732) and R (p. 56) Sena was brother of Udaya. Udaya IV next came to the throne and ordained as *uparāja*, the *ādipāda* Sena, whose relationship to the king is not revealed in any of the sources.<sup>19</sup> Wickremasinghe supposes him to have been a younger brother of Udaya III (II) and Sena III (EZ II, p. 59). Sena IV becomes king after Udaya IV (CV 54. 1) and 'made over the dignity of *yūvarāja* to the *ādipāda* Mahinda'. We see here some discrepancies in the sources—'The main difference is that the Sinhalese sources insert two Senas after Udaya IV (III) and before Mahinda IV whereas Mhvs has only one. We shall probably have to keep to the older source. It should be noted that Pjv and R call the last Sena of (their list) the son of his predecessor'.<sup>20</sup>

18. CV, pt. I, p. 171, n. 3.

19. CV, pt. I, p. 175, n. 7.

20. CV, p. 178, n. 1.



Mahinda IV (brother of Sena IV who had no sons) ascended the throne next. The drawing up of his family tree is beset with difficulties.<sup>21</sup> After Mahinda IV a new precedent appears to have been created when, his brothers being dead, he was succeeded by his twelve year old son, a minor, as Sena V. If according to Wickremasinghe Sena IV and Mahinda IV were sons of Kassapa V, Sakkasenāpati (CV 52. 52) was a brother of theirs. If this genealogy is accepted we see that this Sakkasenāpati's son, also termed Sakkasenāpati (CV 52. 79, 54. 53 and n. 3), did not come to the throne before Sena V although he was Mahinda IV's elder brother's son. Sena V made his younger brother Udaya *yūvarāja* (CV 54. 58). After Sena V, Mahinda V a younger brother of Sena V came to the throne. As Geiger himself has noted,<sup>22</sup> we hear nothing of the reasons why the *yūvarāja* Udaya did not reign after Sena V. We may conjecture that in this and other similar cases the *Saṅgha* and the people did not approve of these princes ascending the throne for which they were perhaps considered unsuitable. Mahinda V was succeeded by his son Kassapa (Vikkamabāhu) (CV 56. 1). It is not known whether Mahinda V's brother the former *yūvarāja* was still alive. If he was alive, the kingdom we see was passed on to the son, despite the presence of this brother, who was also *yūvarāja*. If he was dead the crown should have passed on (according to Geiger's theory) to Kassapa, the son of Sena V elder brother of Mahinda V.

Passing over a period of strife and foreign rule, we come to Vijayabāhu I who had two brothers, Mahinda and Rakkhita and a sister Mittā (CV 57. 42). The CV states that Vijayabāhu invested his next younger brother with the dignity of *uparāja*, and distinguished him in the customary way, by making over to him the Province of Dakkhinadeśa. On his youngest brother Jayabāhu, he conferred the dignity of an *ādipāda* and bestowed on him the Province of Rohaṇa (CV 59. 11, 12). There is no doubt that these titles were conferred immediately on ascending the throne and that Vijayabāhu had no sons at this time. After firmly establishing his position he consecrated Līlavatī as his mahesī, who bore him a daughter Yasodharā (CV 59. 25, 26). Then the king, 'wishful for the continuance of his line, fetched from the Kālīṅga country the charming young princess of the royal family of Kālīṅga, Tilokasundarī by name, and had her consecrated as his mahesī' (*nijavamsassa icchanto mahesitṭe bhisecayī*) (CV 59. 29). This queen bore him five daughters and a son Vikkamabāhu 'furnished with the marks of future power' (CV 59. 30, 32).

After the death of Vijayabāhu the younger sister of the king, her three sons, the highest dignitaries and the ascetics dwelling in the district, met together, and without sending news of the monarch's death to the *ādipāda* (Vikka-

mabāhu, the son) dwelling in Rohaṇa, they took counsel together and when they had become of one mind, bestowed the consecration as king of Laṅkā on the *yūvarāja* (Jayabāhu) the brother of the king (CV 61. 1-4). If the brother was the legal successor what cause was there for this secrecy? If the son had been informed of the death of the father, would he not have recognised his uncle's rights if they were legal? Would not this undue secrecy suggest that they were aware of the son's claim to the throne? The statement also shows that the people who met in conference were not of the same mind and that they reached unanimity only after discussion. Their fear that Vikkamabāhu might seize the throne was so great that they marched against him saying 'we will speedily seize Vikkamabāhu' who, seeing the army gave them battle and marched to the city victorious (CV 61. 17). Would not the king's anxiety to have a male heir also suggest that the king was thinking of his successor? We shall examine the Pāli stanzas themselves:

*sabbe te ādipādassa Rohaṇe vasato sato  
anūrocāpayitvāna bhūpālamatasāsanam*

*saṃbhūya mantayitvāna samānacchandatam galā  
adamsu yūvarājassa Laṅkārajābhisecanam,*

*oparajje nivesesum Mānābharaṇanāmakaṃ  
kumāram pubbacārittamaggam laṅghitvā te khilā* (CV 61. 1-4).

The clause *pubbacārittamaggam laṅghitvā* is important since the interpretation of the passage depends on its application. The stanzas relate that the *ādipāda* was not informed of the death of his father, that the conspirators conferred together and, when of one mind, consecrated the *yūvarāja* brother as king, and appointed Mānābharaṇa as *uparāja*, thus 'transgressing ancient custom' Geiger applies the phrase 'transgressing ancient custom' only to the last action, thus making it suit the custom or law he had enunciated.<sup>23</sup> But this phrase may refer not only to the last action but also to the first. It may hence be suggested that this phrase implies that the whole conduct of the conspirators was contrary to tradition. If, as Geiger interprets, we consider the appointment of the *yūvarāja* as the transgression, one may argue why they kept the news of the death of the father from the son and also march against him. One may conclude that this was at least due to the fact that the conspirators were aware of the son's claim to the throne as successor to the uncle Jayabāhu. Of course the exponents of Geiger's theory would grant this only if Jayabāhu had no brothers; but we would maintain that irrespective of whether Jayabāhu had brothers or not, the son Vikkamabāhu had the claim.

21. CV, pt. 1, p. 179, n. 2; p. 183, n. 2.

22. CV, pt. 1, p. 186, n. 1.

23. CV, pt. 1, p. 225, n. 1.

to the *yūvarājashīp*, at least under Jayabāhu, for the uncle was made *yūvarāja* when he was perhaps a minor. Attention may be drawn again to the position that once the *yūvarāja* was appointed he succeeded to the throne irrespective of relationship. We seem to have some proof of this in the Badulla pillar inscription when it says that Udaya III became king having served as Prince and Crown Prince : *āpā mahayā siri vidā pīlivelā se rādā pāmiṇā*.<sup>24</sup>

The CV mentions Mahinda and Rakkhita as brothers of Vijayabāhu I (CV 57. 42) ; but in the sequel Virabāhu and Jayabāhu are referred to as his brothers (CV 59. 11). The genealogical table (EZ II, p. 59) also shows four brothers of Vijayabāhu I. We have here either to conclude that Mahinda and Rakkhita changed their names later as did Vijayabāhu, or that there were four brothers in fact. If they were actually four different brothers, then we see that they had not the chance to rule. If these brothers were living when Jayabāhu was consecrated, the *yūvarājashīp* (according to Geiger's theory) should have gone to one of them and not to either Mānābharāṇa or Vikkamabāhu. We have either to presume that Mahinda and Rakkhita changed their names or that they died ; if it were not so, the conspirators had no necessity to keep Vikkamabāhu out of their deliberations and march against him. If the above was the case, then only is the secrecy justifiable in the sense that they were placing the nephew as heir instead of the son. We also have seen that nephews were made *yūvarājas* and also succeeded to the throne, and these instances indicate, as pointed out by Paranavitana, that remnants of a matriarchal system seem to have been preserved.<sup>25</sup> On this account, and because of precedent, some may even argue that the appointment of a nephew as *yūvarāja* was not a violation of custom. What then was the violation referred to ?

In battle with Jayabāhu, Vikkamabāhu was victorious and King Jayabāhu who had sojourned in Rohaṇa met with his death. The *yūvarāja* Mānābharāṇa gave up desire for worldly things, having suffered defeat at the hands of Vikkamabāhu, and withdrew into solitude lamenting that there was ' no prospect of the birth of a son capable of wiping out this stain ' (CV 62. 8). A dream brought him foreknowledge of the birth of a splendid son and he was full of joy and rapture. The news of the birth of this son, Parakkamabāhu, was sent to Vikkamabāhu who hearing the ' promising qualities of his sister's son thought : ' A splendid nephew . . . That no harm may at any time befall him, the boy shall grow up here in my immediate neighbourhood. To win unachieved and to keep achieved advantage this my son Gajabāhu will in no case be able. And my other son Mahinda, though gifted with heroic courage and other excellent qualities, stands lower owing to his mother's origin and is unworthy

24. EZ III, p. 75 ; see also *ibid.*, p. 83.

25. See also CV, Introduction, p. XXII.

of the crown. My sister's son shall one day enjoy to his heart's desire the dominion . . . ' ' (CV 62. 54-60). The great desire of Mānābharāṇa to have a son and Vikkamabāhu's statements about his sons, and his preference for the nephew suggest that the succession was from father to son.

Vikkamabāhu was succeeded by Gajabāhu, his son (CV 63. 19). ' When however the monarchs (of Rohaṇa) Kittisirimegha and Sirivallabha heard of the event, they reflected thus : ' as Vikkamabāhu was the elder, his dominion in the chief kingdom could in no wise be a reproach to us, but that his son who is not of age should now rule in the main realm—it is in truth not meet for us to permit that ' (CV 63. 20-22). These remarks indicate that their objection to Gajabāhu's rule was that he was a minor and therefore was not eligible to rule. We had instances earlier of uncles taking over the government in such circumstances. They, however, ' suborned ' the Velakkāra troops by gifts of money (CV 63. 24) and marched against Gajabāhu who vanquished them, but later on ' the (three) Monarchs, each in his province, lived in amity with one another ' (CV 63. 37). Kittisirimegha is said to have lamented that ' he lacked a son fit to inherit the royal dignity ' , but was comforted on seeing his elder brother's son (CV 63. 44). If the legal succession was from brother to brother we see no reason for him to have lamented the lack of a son fit to inherit the throne, when he had a brother who ruled in another province, and who could have brought the two provinces together after Kittisirimegha's death. Evidently Kittisirimegha wanted a son of his, instead of a brother to rule after him in his province.

In the war between Gajabāhu and Parakkamabāhu the latter was victorious and a reconciliation was brought about by the *Saṅgha*, who advised him to give up the strife, for he was sure to come to the throne as Gajabāhu had neither a son nor brothers (CV 70. 333). The wording of the above statement (*putto vā bhātaro pi vā*) suggests that the son had precedence over the brother. Actually Gajabāhu had two brothers—the first stood lower than the others ' owing to his mother's origin ' and was ' unworthy of the crown ' (CV 62. 59), the second Anikaṅga was killed in battle (CV 61. 41).

After Parakkamabāhu I, his nephew, Vijayabāhu II came to the throne (CV 80. 1). Nissaṅka Malla was succeeded by his son Virabāhu (CV 80. 28) who only ruled for one night. According to the Pjv, he was slain on the ground that he was not of equal birth (*no samāna daruvahayi*) (p. 734). The CV however does not say anything about any inequality of birth. He was succeeded by the younger brother of Nissaṅka Malla, Vikkamabāhu (CV 80. 28). Virabāhu came to the throne despite two brothers, Vikkamabāhu and Sāhasa Malla, of Nissaṅka Malla, of whom Vikkamabāhu succeeded the son after his murder. The son was killed not because of any doubtful succession but only because he was not of equal birth ; it may even be suggested that he

was either weak witted or dissolute. It is most likely that the brothers planned the murder to gain the throne. Vikkamabāhu was slain by his nephew Coḍagaṅga who now came to the throne in spite of his uncle Sāhasa Malla.

After a further period of strife and war, Parakkamabāhu II restored peace and succeeded his father Vijayabāhu III (CV 82. 1) and was succeeded in turn by his grandson Vijayabāhu IV who was assassinated at the instigation of the General Mitta (CV 90. 3). On hearing this Bhuvanekabāhu, the younger brother of the king, hurried to avenge his death. Mitta's head was cut off by a warrior of Bhuvanekabāhu (CV 90. 25) who was then consecrated king. Here too the brother fought his way to the throne. Vijayabāhu IV left a son who was probably too young at this time to have avenged the death of his father. King Bhuvanekabāhu ruled for eleven years, and when he died Vijayabāhu's son should have been over eleven years of age. As he succeeded to the throne next it may be assumed that he was of age then (CV 90. 48). This young prince became king in spite of three uncles, the brothers of Bhuvanekabāhu I, the former king. Geiger, referring to this position states: 'The *Mahāvamsa* tells us nothing of the fate of the younger brothers of Bhuvanekabāhu I: Tilokamalla, Parakkamabāhu and Jayabāhu (CV 88. 19-20). Evidently they died before Bhuvanekabāhu'.<sup>26</sup> Geiger seems to have made this assumption to strengthen his theory regarding succession. It is most improbable that three brothers died before the king. If we consider the normal succession to be from father to son there is no need for such an assumption.

Parakkamabāhu III was succeeded by his cousin Bhuvanekabāhu II in the absence of sons and brothers. He in turn was succeeded by his son Parakkamabāhu IV (CV 90. 64).

Summarising this discussion, we see that there is not sufficient evidence to establish Geiger's view regarding the royal succession in ancient Ceylon, Geiger points out a few occasions in the island's long history when brothers seem to have ascended the throne.<sup>27</sup> He points out that Mahinda III, Aggabodhi VIII and Dappula II ruled in succession; but in this instance we see that there was some doubt about the son of Dappula II's brother (see above). In the case of Kassapa V, Dappula III and Dappula IV, the relationship between Kassapa V and Dappula III is doubtful, and Dappula III and IV had no sons. The one definite case of brother succeeding brother is the succession of Udaya II after Sena II when an eligible son was living. Even if we grant that during this period, that is, from about Mahinda III to Mahinda IV (797 A.D. to 956 A.D.), that brother seems to have succeeded brother, we do not have sufficient evidence to establish that this was the rule throughout. On the

26. CV, pt. II, p. 205, n. 1.

27. CV, pt. I, p. XXI.

contrary there is a mass of evidence to support the other view, that the succession was from father to son, before and after the above period. It is therefore not justifiable to base one's conclusions on the cases just mentioned above. These may have been due to exceptional circumstances and later perhaps due to precedence.

Codrington while reviewing the Kandyan system of government says: 'The king was supreme, and his autocratic power was controlled only by custom and fear of assassination. When the succession was doubtful, the selection of the new monarch in practice lay with the principal ministers and the choice was formally ratified by the people, but normally son followed father on the throne'.<sup>28</sup> Earlier in the same book he said: 'The succession to the throne normally seems not to have been from father to son, but from one brother to another, and then to the son of the eldest brother and his brothers. The Yuvarāja normally seems to have been the next brother of the reigning king or in default the eldest prince of the next generation'.<sup>29</sup> Codrington unfortunately for us neither tells us at which point in the history of the island this change of succession was effected, nor what causes led to such a change. It is, quite probable that no such change took place, and the normal rule of the Kandyan kingdom must have prevailed throughout the island's history.

Up to the time of Parakkamabāhu IV, about 42 sons succeeded compared with about 34 brothers (apart from doubtful cases). Out of the brothers, seven came to the throne after slaying the ruling brother, and of the rest about 18 died without issue. In three cases the sons were minors, in one case the son renounced the throne, and in a few other cases the brothers came to the throne either through intrigues of queens or as a result of fighting with foes or on the death of sons.

Such Sinhalese works as the *Saddharmaratnāvalīya* and the *Saddharmā-lamkāraya* refer to no other succession except that of father to son: *putanuvō taman piyānan santaka rājjaya ganiti* (the son takes the kingdom of the father);<sup>30</sup> *vāḍimālu putanuvanta rājjaya dīpiyā* (giving the kingdom to the eldest son);<sup>31</sup> *rājjaya rākalanta nisi obage putruwanekut nāta* (there is no suitable son of yours to look after the kingdom);<sup>32</sup> *kramayen piya rajahu āvāmen rājjayata pāmiṇa*;<sup>33</sup> *yuvarada tanaturen pudanaladuwa . . . piyarajahu āvāmen siyalu rājya dhurayehi niyuktava* (being bestowed with the rank of *yuvarāja*, took on the reins of government after the death of his father).<sup>34</sup>

28. *A Short History of Ceylon*, p. 179.

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 42, 53.

30. *Saddharmaratnāvalīya*, ed. D. B. Jayatilake, p. 172.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 314.

32. *Saddharmālamkāraya*, ed. Bentara Sradhdhatisya, p. 186.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 450; *Kāvakavarnavarga*.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 88.

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In India the royal succession was normally hereditary and by primogeniture. What N. N. Law says of regal succession in India is to the point: 'The selection of the eldest son as successor to the kingdom appears to have been the normal mode of disposition in ancient times. The ruling of a kingdom by brothers in rotation has, so far as we know, nowhere been recorded as having taken place in the dominion of the solar and lunar kings in ancient times'.<sup>35</sup> It is not reasonable to believe that Ceylon deviated from this general principle without strong evidence and this the *Mahāvamsa* does not provide us with. We may now state that the normal traditions or customs observed in Ceylon were :

- (a) succession hereditary and according to primogeniture,
- (b) *yuvarājashīp* stepping stone to kingship,
- (c) heirs must be of equal birth, and
- (d) minors not eligible to succeed.

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35. *Ancient Indian Polity*, pp. 51, 54.