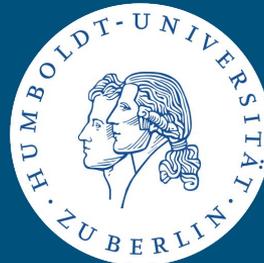




The use of the coronation name during the Somavamśin dynasty

Amandine Wattelier-Bricout • 15/09/2022
Humboldt Universität - ERC DHARMA-Project



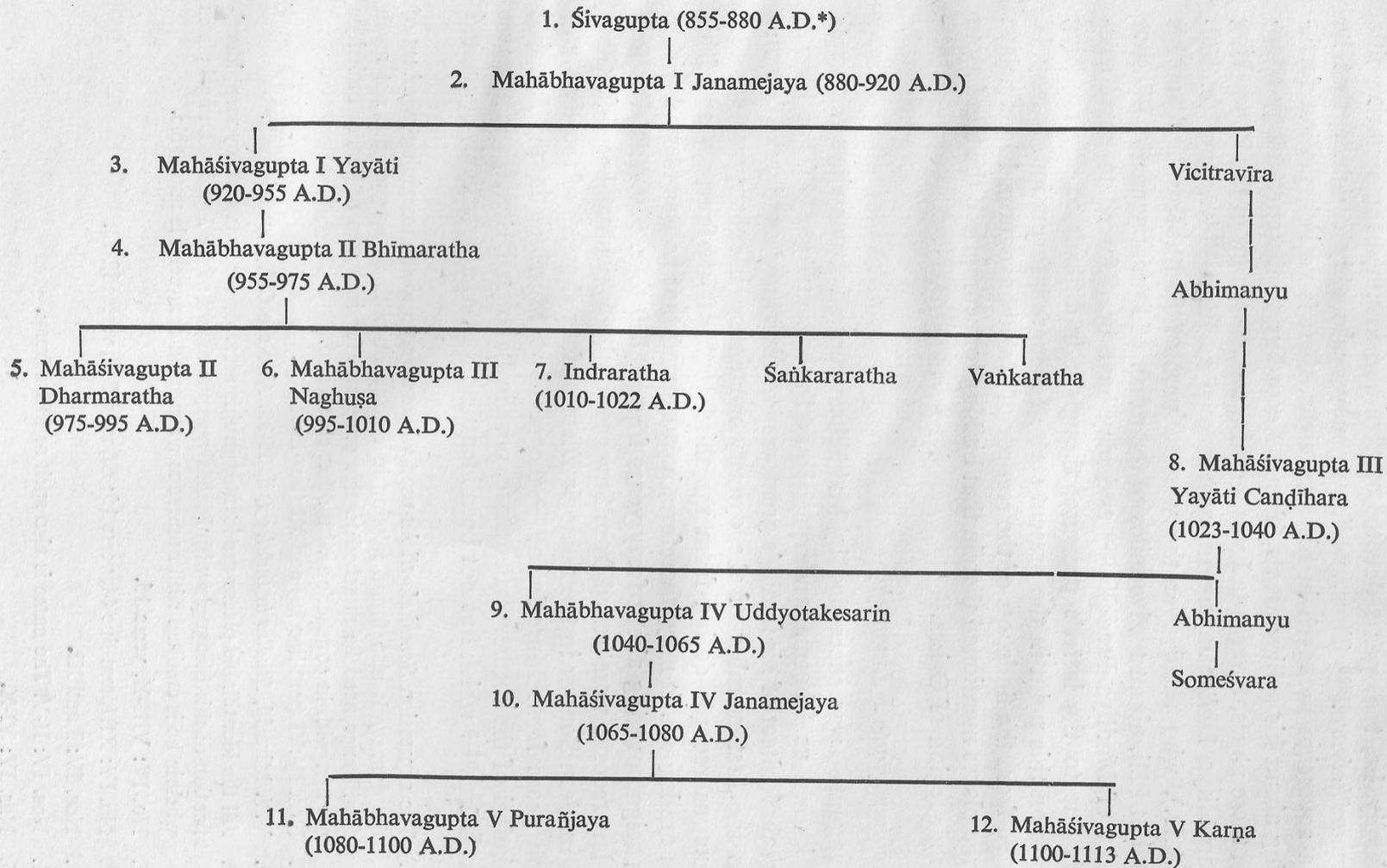


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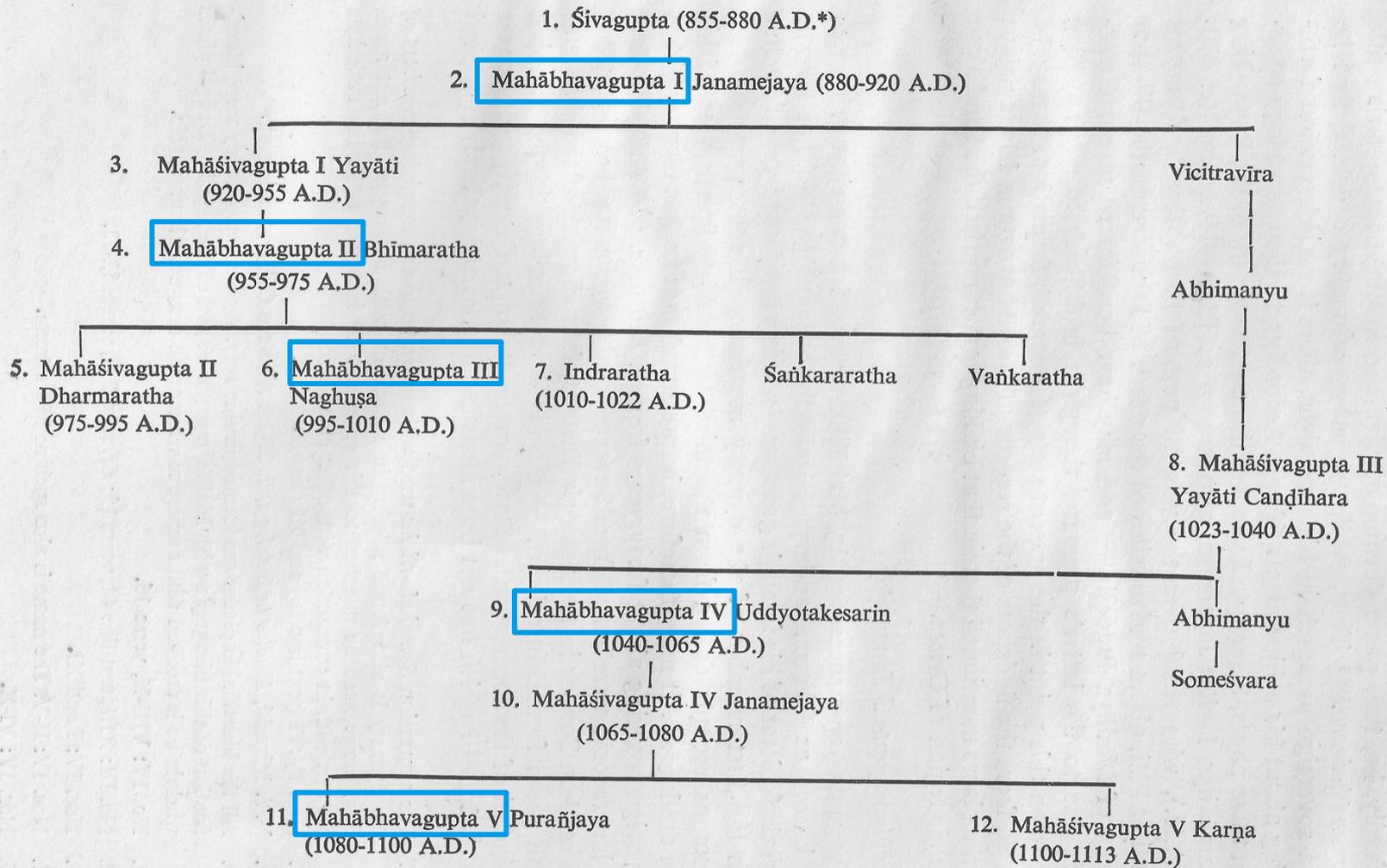
A mark of a religious enthronement, a
respectful expression, a statement of
legitimacy or a political claim?

Characteristic features of Somavamśin dynasty

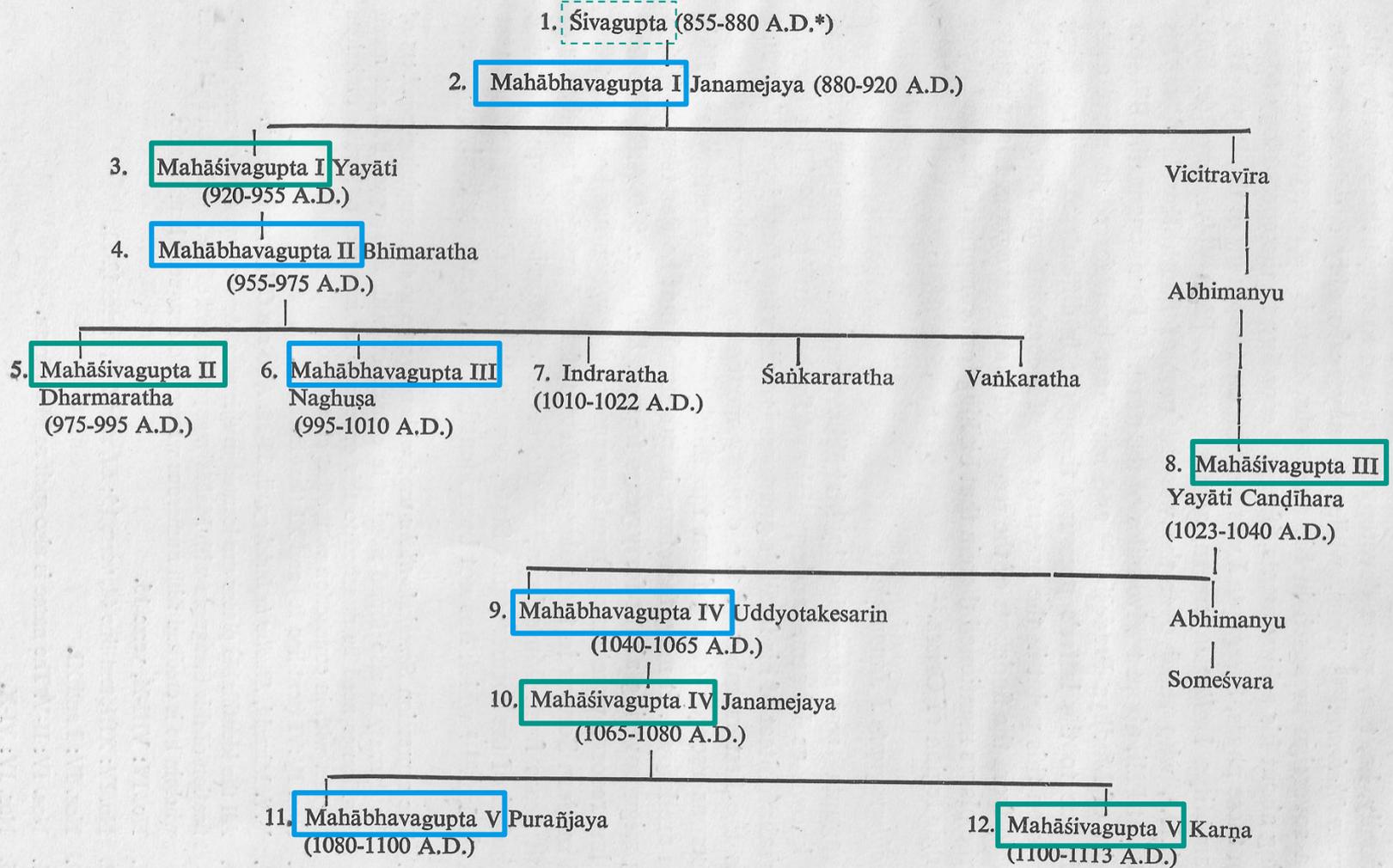
Shastri, Ajay Mitra. 1995. *Inscriptions of the Śarabhapurīyas, Pāṇḍuvamśins and Somavamśīns*. Part I and II. Delhi . Indian Council of Historical Research and Motilal Banarsidass.



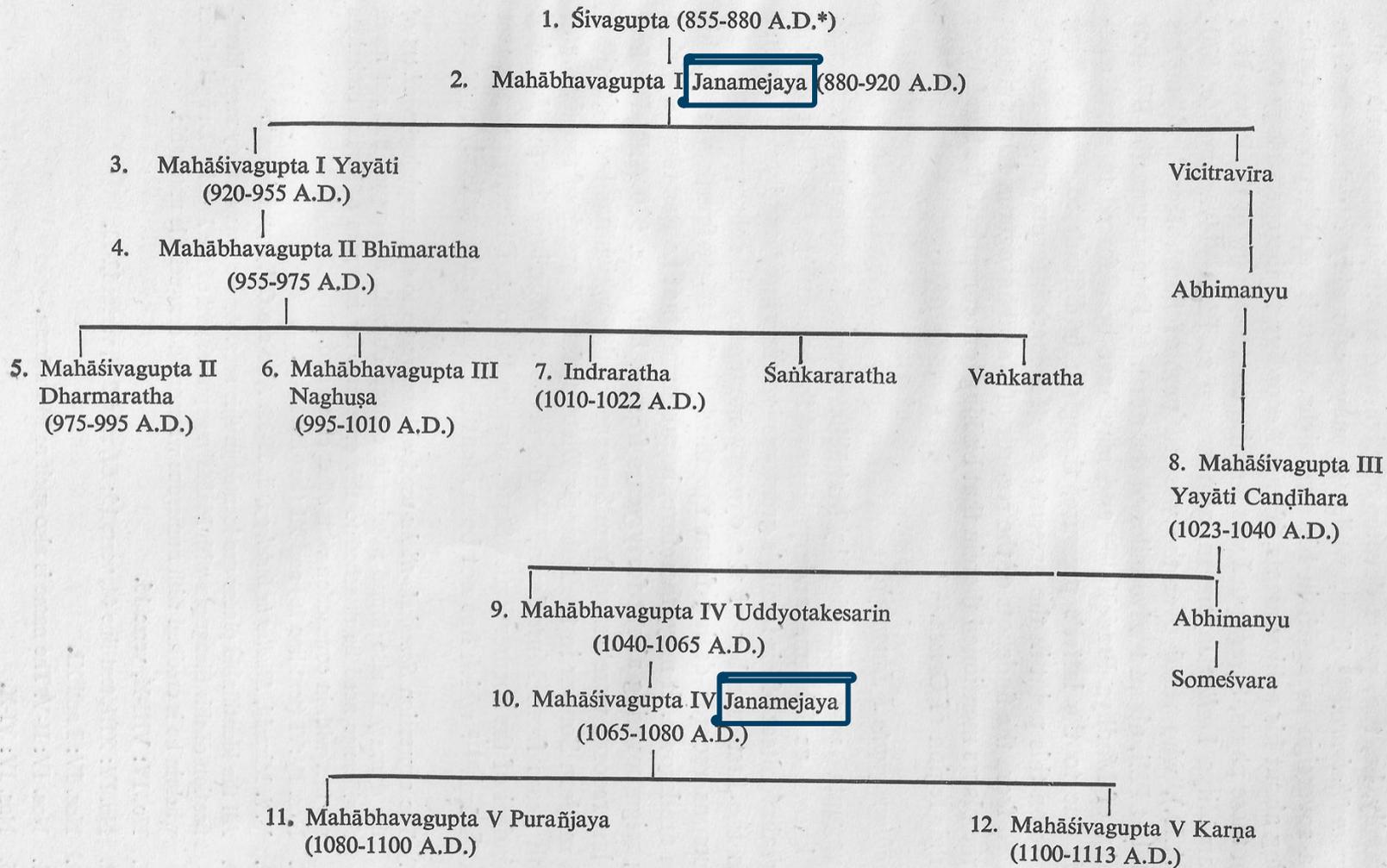
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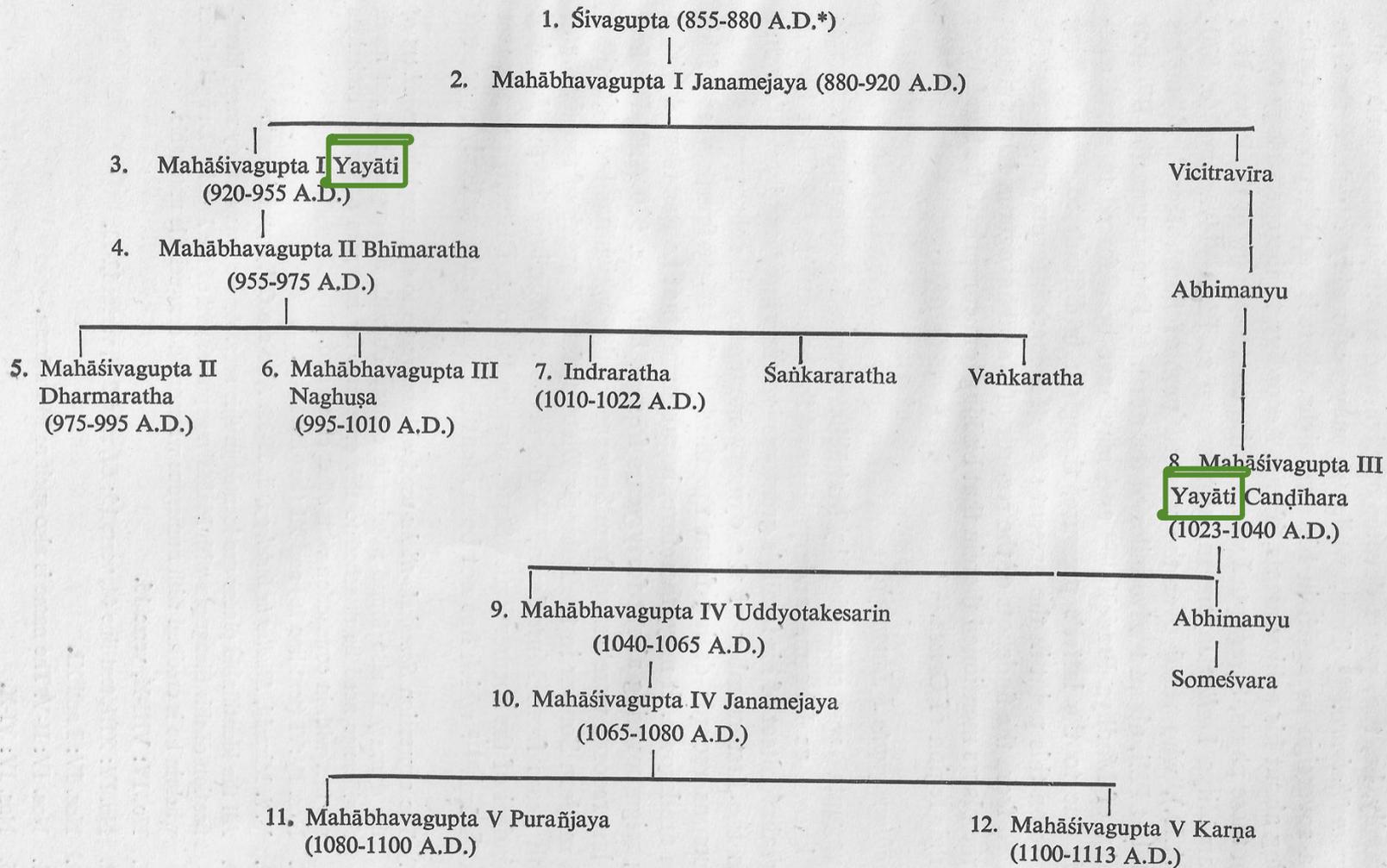
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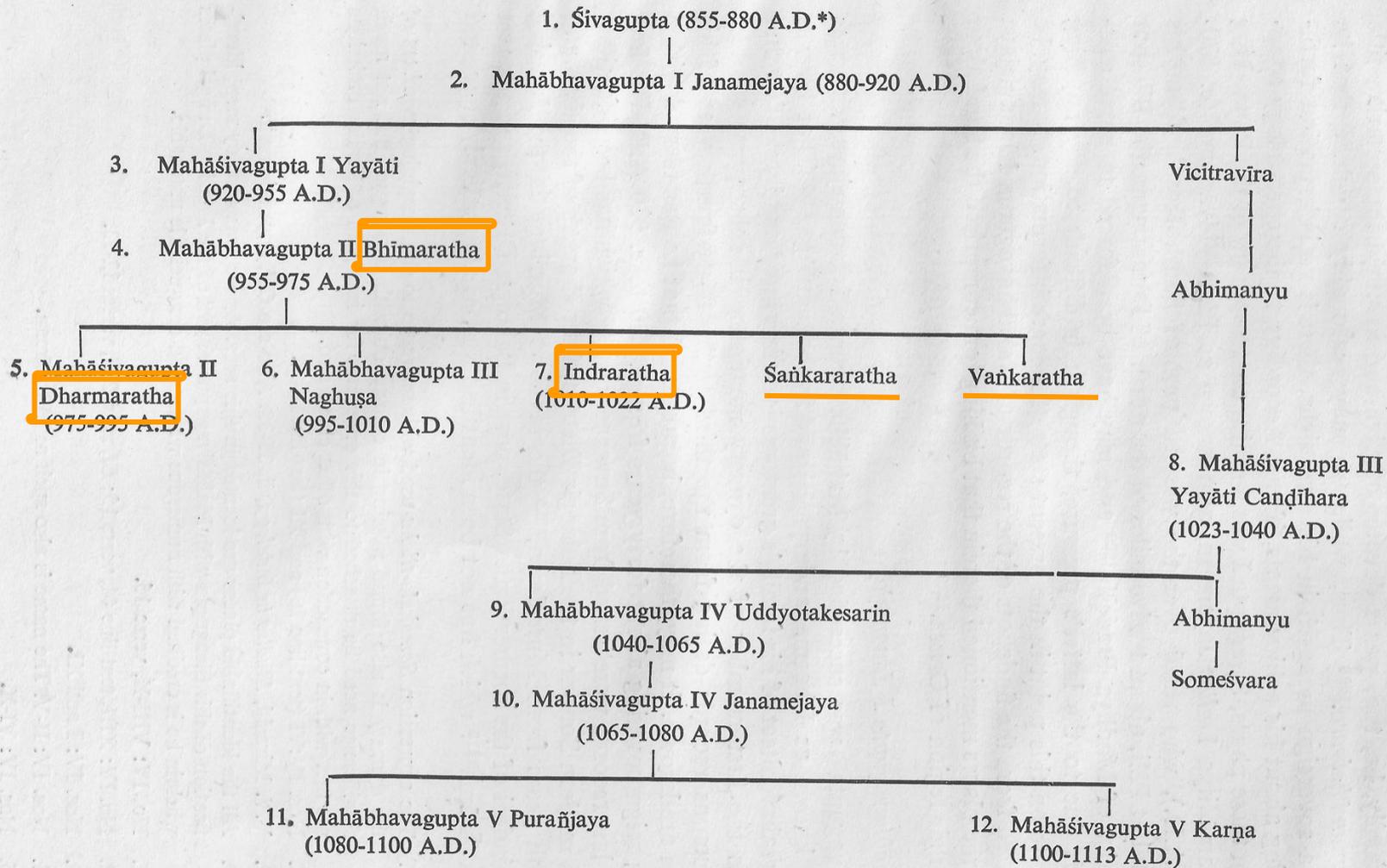
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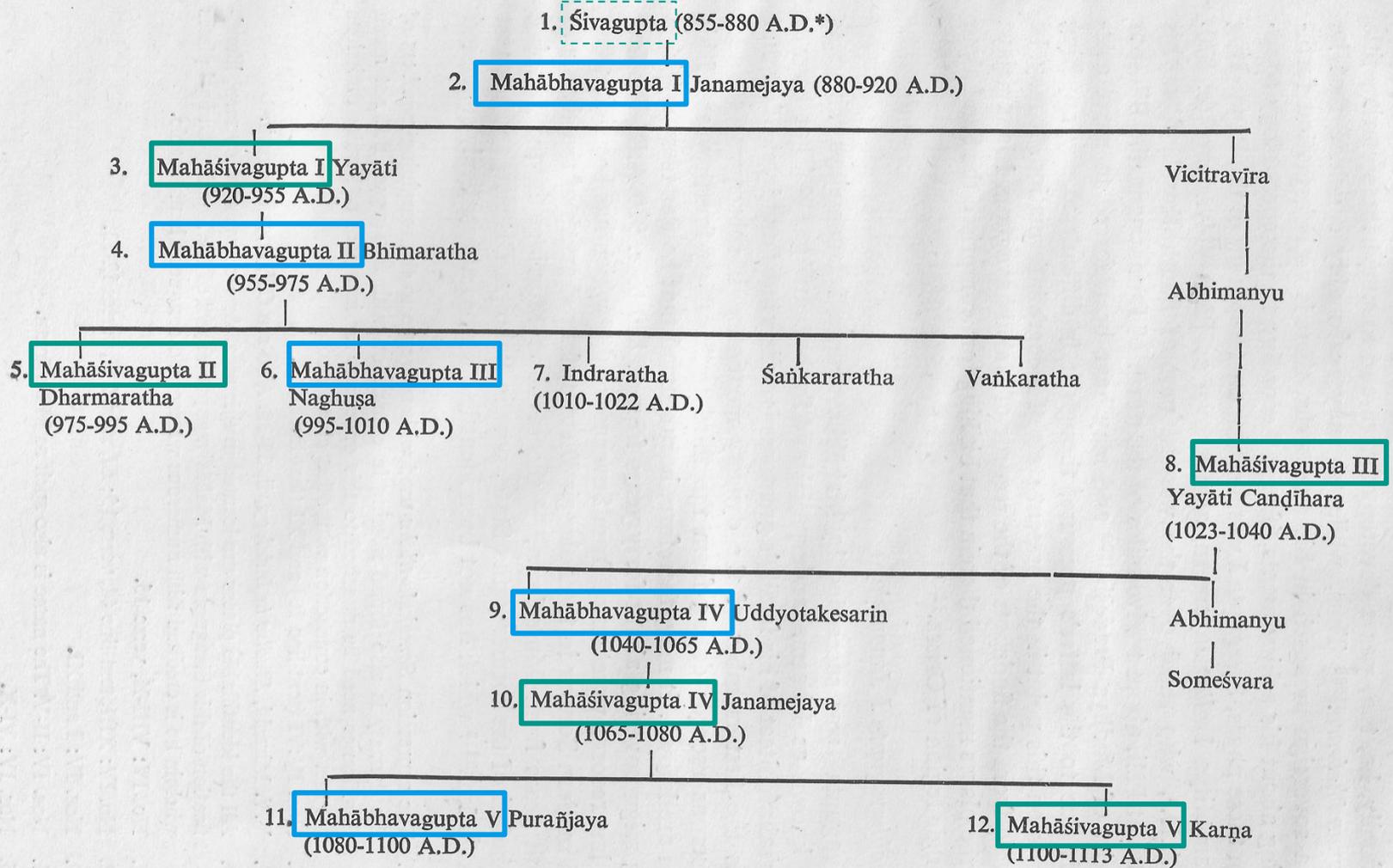
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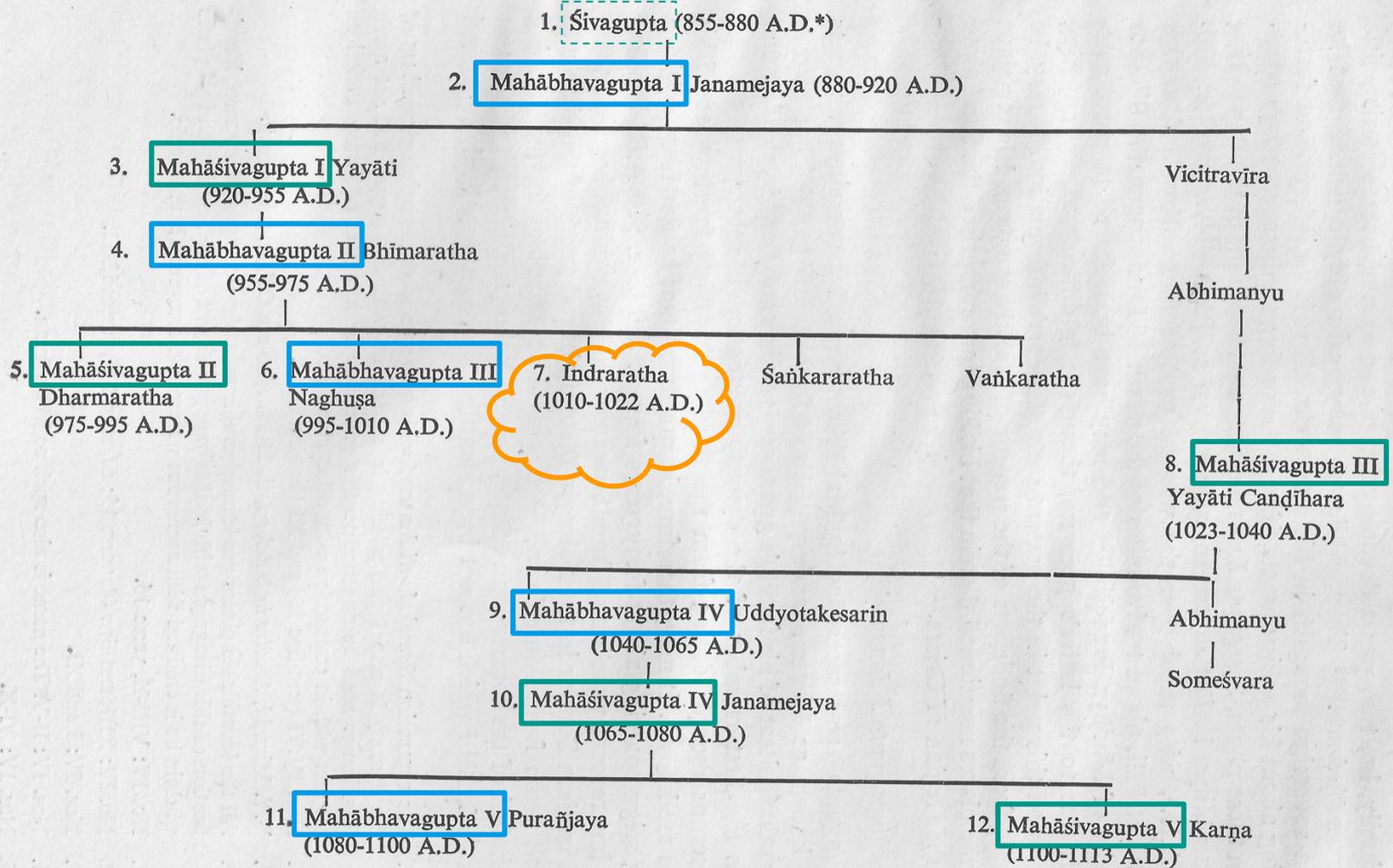
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Questions raised by the first observations

Is there a particular function of the coronation name ?

Is it found in all inscriptions (Stone and Copper plate)?

Is it used by all kings?

Is the alternation *Mahābhava*^o-*Mahāśiva*^o a specificity of this dynasty?

Does it have a particular meaning or function?

Why did Indraratha not use the coronation name?

“Indraratha assumed all the sectarian and regnal titles found employed for other Somakula monarchs but did not adopt the *gupta*- ending coronation name for reasons that cannot be ascertained at present.”

Shastri, Ajay Mitra. 1995. *Inscriptions of the Śarabhapurīyas, Pāṇduvamśins and Somavamśīns*. Part I, p.213. Delhi . Indian Council of Historical Research and Motilal Banarsidass.

Methodology

Describe the corpus and consider its limits

- Distribution of the inscriptions by kings
- Identification of the issuer of the inscriptions : reigning king or third party?
- Identification of the media : stone or copper plate inscriptions?

Methodology

Data collecting relating to the coronation names

- Who uses the coronation name? On what media?
- Is the coronation name combined with that of the immediate predecessor to form a *Mahābhava*°-*Mahāśiva*° duo?
- In which part of the inscription is the coronation name used : seal, eulogy/genealogy, date, description of gift ?
- With what royal titles is it used?

Methodology

Data collecting relating to the birth names

- Who uses the birth name? On what media?
- Is the birth name combined with the birth name ?
- In which part of the inscription is the birth name used : eulogy/genealogy, date, description of gift ?
- With what royal titles is it used?

Methodology

Data collecting relating to the genealogies

- Which kings are mentioned in the genealogies?
- Are they mentioned by their coronation names?
- What can we learn about the relationship between the reigning king and his predecessor(s)?
- What can we learn about the transfer of power from a king to another?

Different perspectives

- ❖ *Inside the Somavaṃśin corpus:*

How does a particular reigning king refer to himself in his own inscriptions?

How do a third parties (subordinate or royal member) refer to this reigning king?

- ❖ *Outside the Somavaṃśin corpus:*

How do allies or enemies refer to Somavaṃśin kings?

- ❖ *Throughout the dynasty :*

Is the use of the coronation name a stable practice throughout the history of the dynasty or are there changes?

Features of the corpus

Copper plate and stone inscriptions

Total : 48 records

- 43 Copper plates
- 5 Stone inscriptions

including 4 incomplete Copper plates

including 2 complete Copper plates
but not sure for identification

Distribution by kings

Issued by	Janame-jaya	Yayāti	Bhīma-ratha	Dharma-ratha	Indra-ratha	Caṇḍī-hara	Uddyota-kesarin	Janame-jaya II	Karṇa	Mahābha vagupta
king	17	6	1	1	1	1	4	0	1	2
third party	3	0	1	0	0	1	6	1	2	0

Total :

- 35 copper plates issued by kings
- 14 inscriptions issued by subordinates, privates or members of royal family comprising 9 copper plates and 5 stone inscriptions

1. Śivagupta (855-880 A.D.*)

20

2. Mahābhavagupta I Janamejaya (880-920 A.D.)

6

3. Mahāśivagupta I Yayāti
(920-955 A.D.)

Vicitravira

2

4. Mahābhavagupta II Bhīmaratha
(955-975 A.D.)

Abhimanyu

1

5. Mahāśivagupta II
Dharmaratha
(975-995 A.D.)

6. Mahābhavagupta III
Naghuṣa
(995-1010 A.D.)

1

7. Indraratha
(1010-1022 A.D.)

Śaṅkararatha

Vaṅkaratha

2

8. Mahāśivagupta III
Yayāti Candīhara
(1023-1040 A.D.)

10

9. Mahābhavagupta IV Uddyotakesarin
(1040-1065 A.D.)

Abhimanyu

1

10. Mahāśivagupta IV Janamejaya
(1065-1080 A.D.)

Someśvara

11. Mahābhavagupta V Purañjaya
(1080-1100 A.D.)

3

12. Mahāśivagupta V Karṇa
(1100-1113 A.D.)

* The dates mentioned in brackets are only approximate.

Limits

- **Disproportion of the distribution**

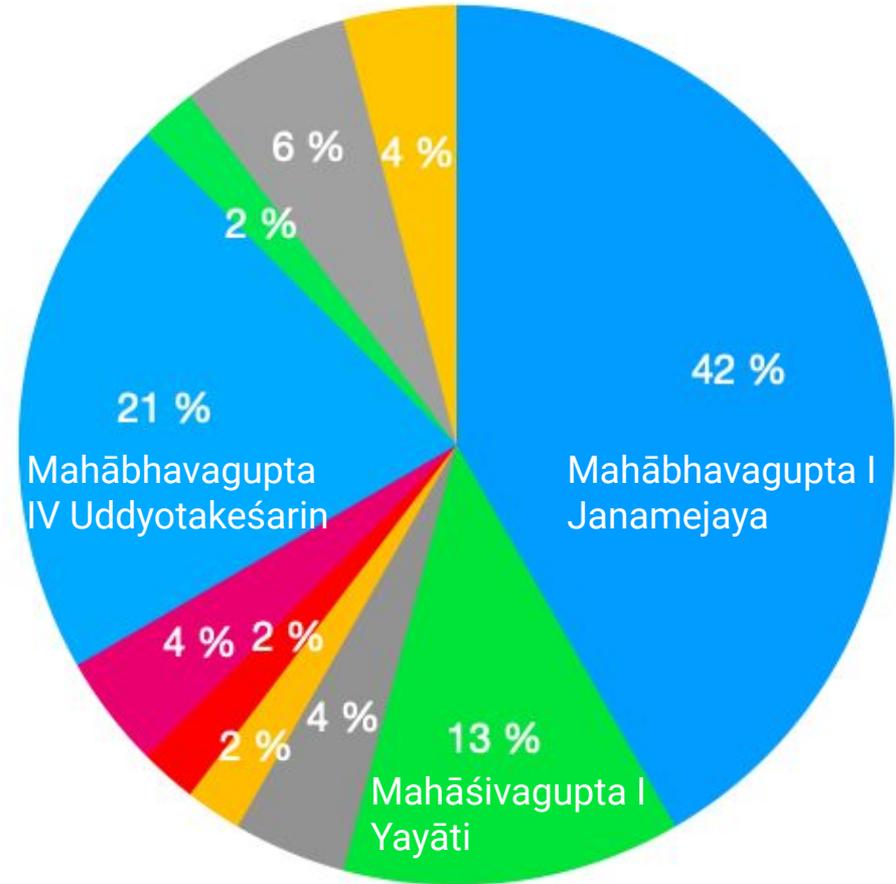
55% of inscriptions issued by or during the reign of the two first kings:

- Janamejaya I
- Yayāti

- **Absence of some reigning kings**

No inscription issued by :

- Śivagupta
- Naghuṣa
- Janamejaya II
- Purañjaya



Distribution by Kings

Material perspective

First results from the corpus description

- ⇒ No stone inscription issued by a reigning king / All stone inscriptions issued by third parties
- ⇒ No coronation name available on stone inscriptions
- ⇒ the use of the coronation name is almost strictly reserved to self-presentation

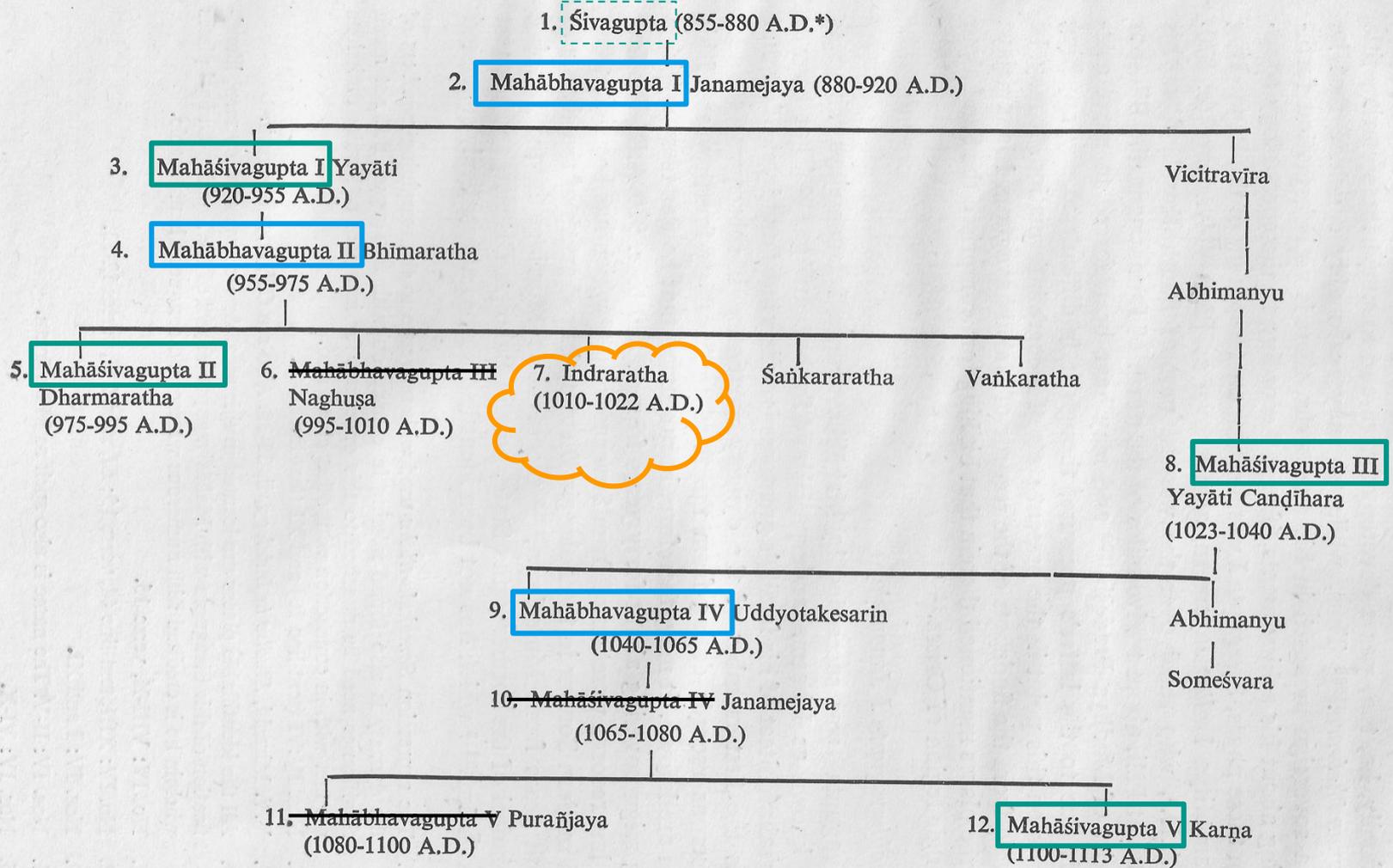
Main findings :

1. the use of the coronation name seems to be only linked to copper plate records (caution : only 5 stone inscriptions)
2. Birth names can be found in all types of inscriptions

Coronation names in copper
plates : who ?

First results from the data collecting : who?

- ⇒ the coronation name is **never** used by **enemies or allies**
- ⇒ the coronation name is **irregularly** used by **subordinates**
- ⇒ the coronation names are **strictly reserved to** the reigning king and his immediate predecessor
- ⇒ the coronation name is **almost always used** to refer to the immediate predecessor forming a duo of coronation names
- ⇒ the coronation name is **always** used by the reigning king for **self-designation** :
except by Indraratha
- ⇒ Four reigning kings are only known from their successors and **without their coronation names** :
 - Śivagupta
 - Naghuṣa
 - Janamejaya II
 - Purañjaya



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First results from the data collecting : who?

Main findings :

3. Coronation name could be a **respectful mark** when used by subordinates
4. Coronation names **mainly** use for **self-presentation** and presentation of the **immediate predecessor** forming a duo of coronation names *mahābhava° mahāśiva°*
5. Some alternations are **not attested** in the inscriptions but are the result of Shastri's deduction

Coronation names in copper plates : where ?

Seal

Eulogy or genealogy

Official part describing the gift (donor, donee, purpose, boundary)

Date

First results from the data collecting : where?

- ⇒ the coronation name is **never** used in the genealogy
- ⇒ the coronation name is **sometimes** mentioned on the seal
- ⇒ the coronation name is **hardly ever** used in the date
- ⇒ the coronation name is **always** used in the official part of the copper plates issued by king to designate himself and to designate his immediate predecessor

Main findings :

7. the coronation name seems to be **almost strictly** used in the official part describing the donor
8. the coronation name is **not an ordinary manner** to designate the reigning king and its immediate predecessor (birth name is the usual or ordinary manner to refer to the reigning king)

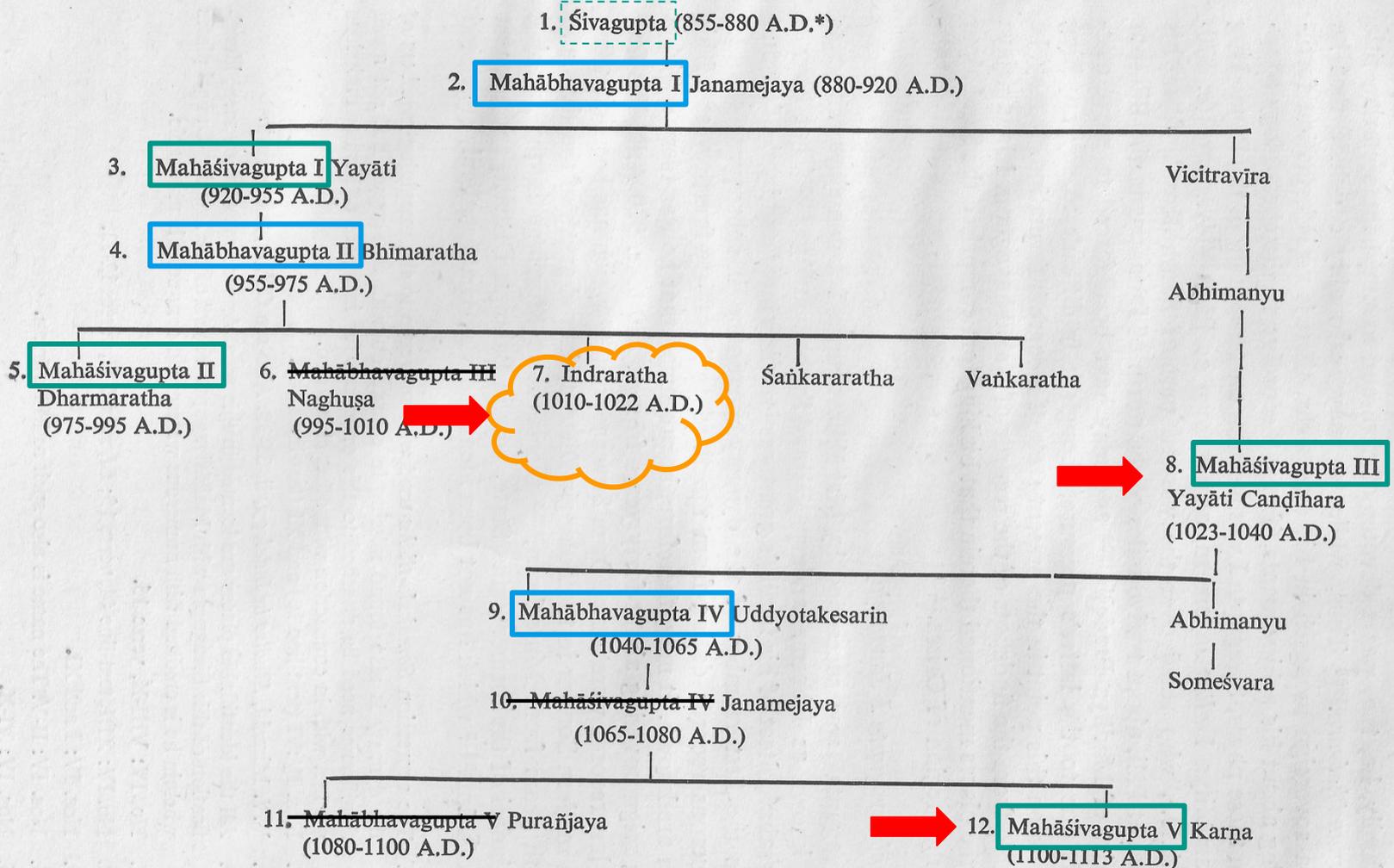
Association of royal titles with coronation names

*paramamāheśvara-paramabhaṭṭāraka-mahārājādhirāja-parameśvara
-somaikulatilaka-trikaliṅgādhīpati-rājadeva-*

Coronation name and royal titles

⇒ the royal titles are **always** combined with the coronation name of the **reigning king**

⇒ 3 kings (Indraratha, Yayāti Caṇḍīhara, Karṇa) use royal titles **only for themselves**



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Coronation name and royal titles

- ⇒ the royal titles are **always** combined with the coronation name of the **reigning king**
- ⇒ 3 kings (Indraratha, Yayāti Caṇḍīhara, Karṇa) use royal titles **only for themselves**
- ⇒ a little **mismatch** between the royal titles used for the reigning king and his immediate predecessor **only** in the plates produced by Mahābhavagupta Janamejaya (*mahā-xxx-gupta, paramamāheśvara- and rājadeva-*)
- ⇒ for all other reigning kings, the royal titles used for themselves are **also used for** their immediate predecessor

Coronation names and royal titles

Main findings

7. The royal titles and coronation name go **hand in hand**

8. Two main practices :

- identical royal titles for both reigning king and his predecessor, except for the “first” king of the dynasty (**linear** transfer of power)
- royal titles only for reigning king (**nonlinear** transfer)

One, two, three or more predecessors : genealogies

⇒ Reigning Kings

- Śivagupta Svabhavatuṅga
- Mahābhavagupta Janamejaya Dharmakandarpa
- Mahāśivagupta Yayāti
- Mahābhavagupta Bhīmaratha
- Mahāśivagupta Dharmaratha
- Indraratha
- Naghuṣa
- Mahāśivagupta Yayāti Caṇḍīhara
- Mahābhavagupta Uddyotakeśarin
- Janamejaya
- Purañjaya
- Mahāśivagupta Karṇa

One, two, three or more predecessors : genealogies

⇒ Linear transfer of power

- Śivagupta Svabhavatuṅga
 - Mahābhavagupta Janamejaya Dharmakandarpa
 - Mahāśivagupta Yayāti
 - Mahābhavagupta Bhīmaratha
 - Mahāśivagupta Dharmaratha
 - Indraratha
 - Naghuṣa
 - Mahāśivagupta Yayāti Caṇḍīhara
 - Mahābhavagupta Uddyotakeśariṅ
 - Janamejaya
 - Purañjaya
 - Mahāśivagupta Karṇa
- reference only to father
- Reference to father and grandfather
- Reference to father, Naghuṣa (grandfather?), Dharmaratha, Bhīmaratha, Yayāti and Janamejaya

One, two, three or more predecessors : genealogies

⇒ Nonlinear transfer

- Śivagupta Svabhavatuṅga
- Mahābhavagupta Janamejaya Dharmakandarpa
- Mahāśivagupta Yayāti
- Mahābhavagupta Bhīmaratha
- Mahāśivagupta Dharmaratha
- { Indraratha } Reference to mother, father, eldest brother and youngest brothers
- Naghuṣa
- { Mahāśivagupta Yayāti Caṇḍīhara } Reference to Mahābhavagupta
- Mahābhavagupta Uddyotakeśarin
- Janamejaya
- Purañjaya
- { Mahāśivagupta Karṇa } Reference to eldest brother, father (Janamejaya), grandfather (Uddyotakeśarin), Yayāti Naghuṣa, Dharmaratha, Bhīmaratha, Yayāti and Janamejaya

Function of coronation name from this data collecting

Provisional sketch :

- In what media ? copper plates
- Who uses it? by reigning king
- To designate who ? himself and his immediate predecessor
- Combined with which titles? hand to hand with all royal titles
- When? linear handover duo of coronation names + royal titles

⇒ alternation of coronation name = one of the legitimation policies

Indraratha / Yayāti Caṇḍīhara?

Use or not use ?

Information given by genealogies

Indraratha :

- Brother of the late legitimate reigning king Dharmaratha
- Dharmaratha died childless
- Abhimanyu then took the power
- Indraratha killed Abhimanyu

Yayāti Caṇḍīhara :

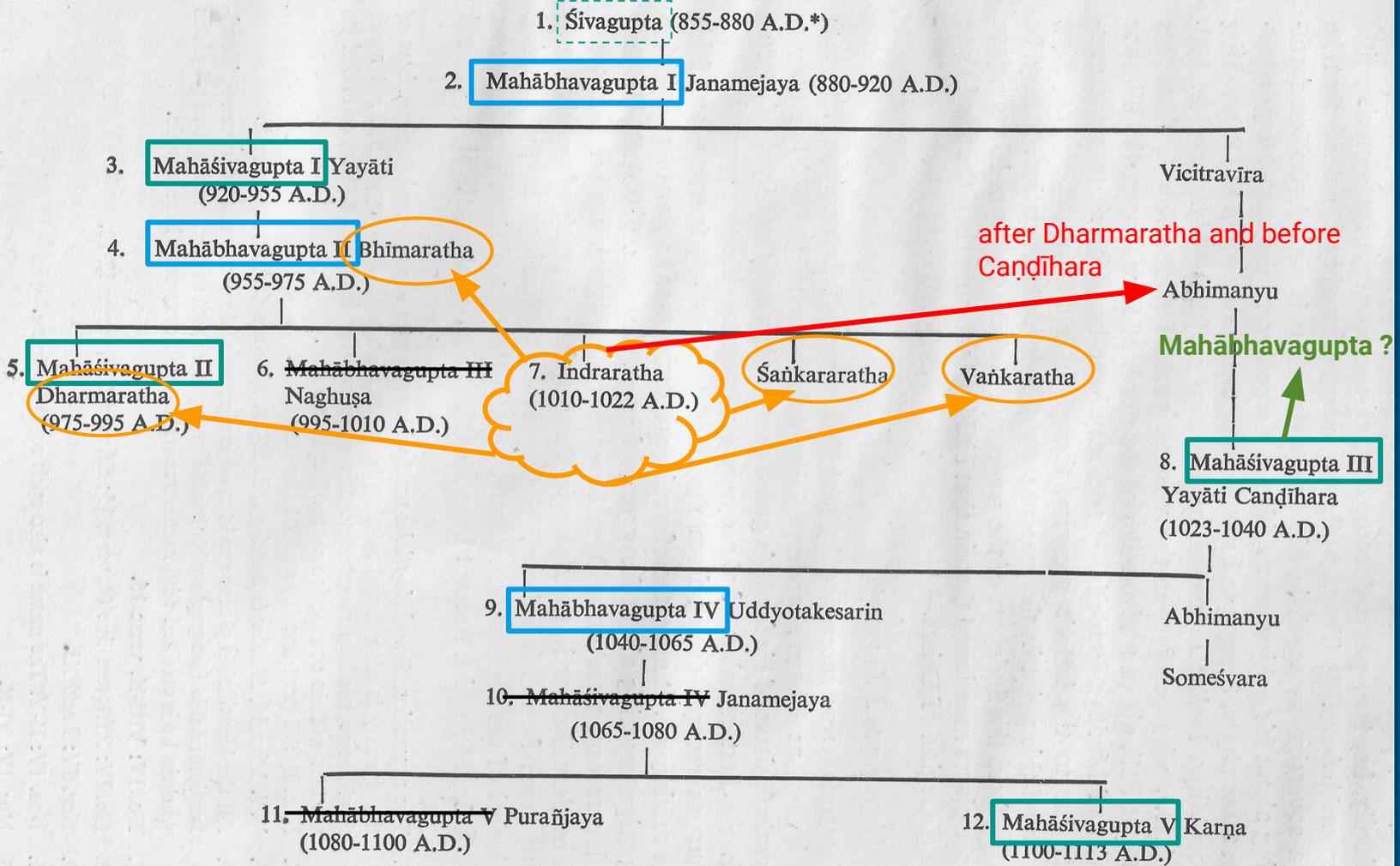
- no mention of Indraratha
- immediate predecessor Mahābhavagupta
- power by his own arms

Uddyotakeśarin :

- no mention of Indraratha
- Dharmaratha died childless
- Yayāti Caṇḍīhara obtained power by his own arms
- Insertion of a complete family tree from Janamejaya to Uddyotakeśarin
- Insertion of the name Naghuṣa unknown before between Dharmaratha and Yayāti Caṇḍīhara

Karṇa :

- identical as Uddyotakeśarin's genealogy
- addition of Janamejaya and Purañjaya



* The dates mentioned in brackets are only approximate.

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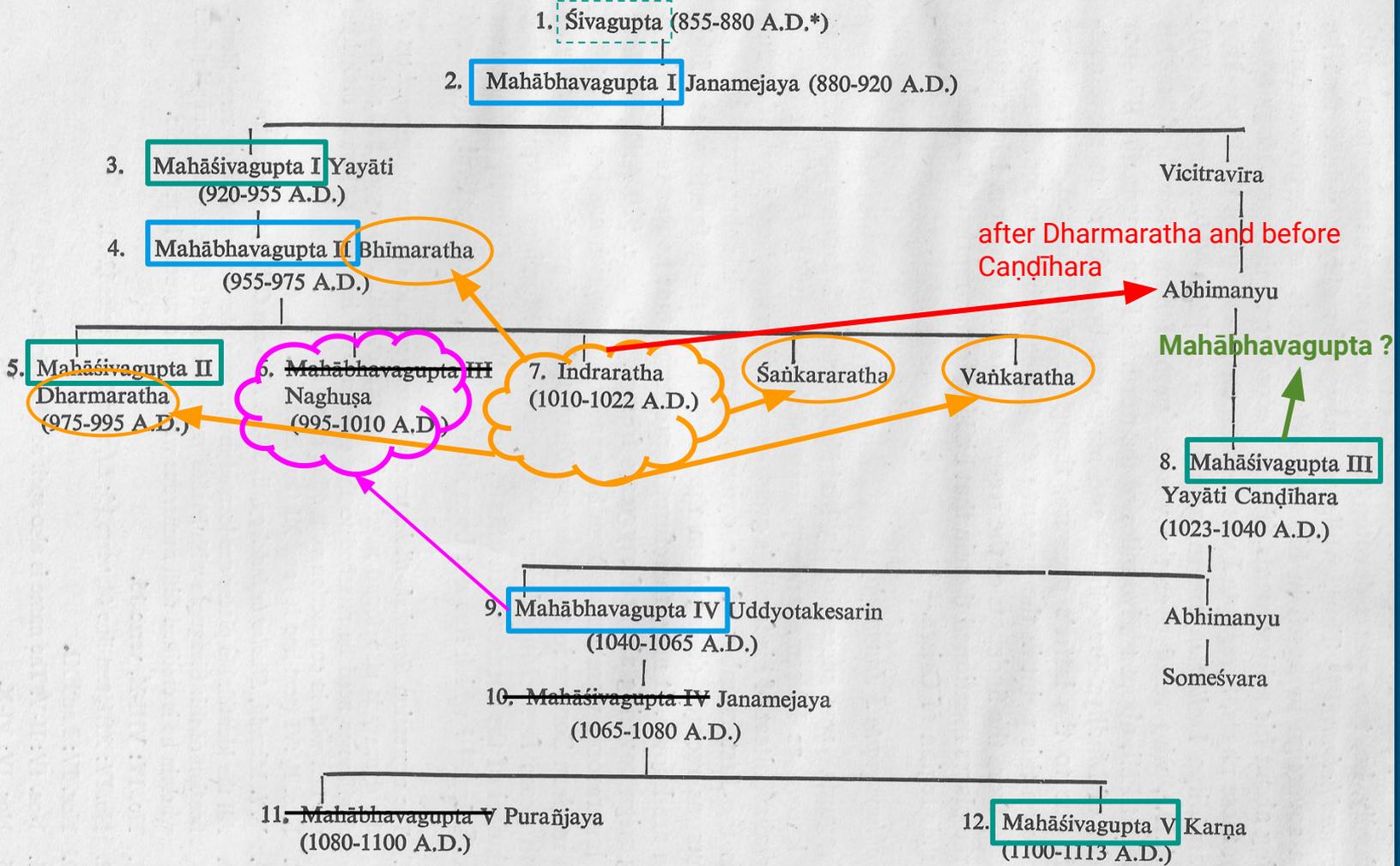
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Uddyotakeśarin :

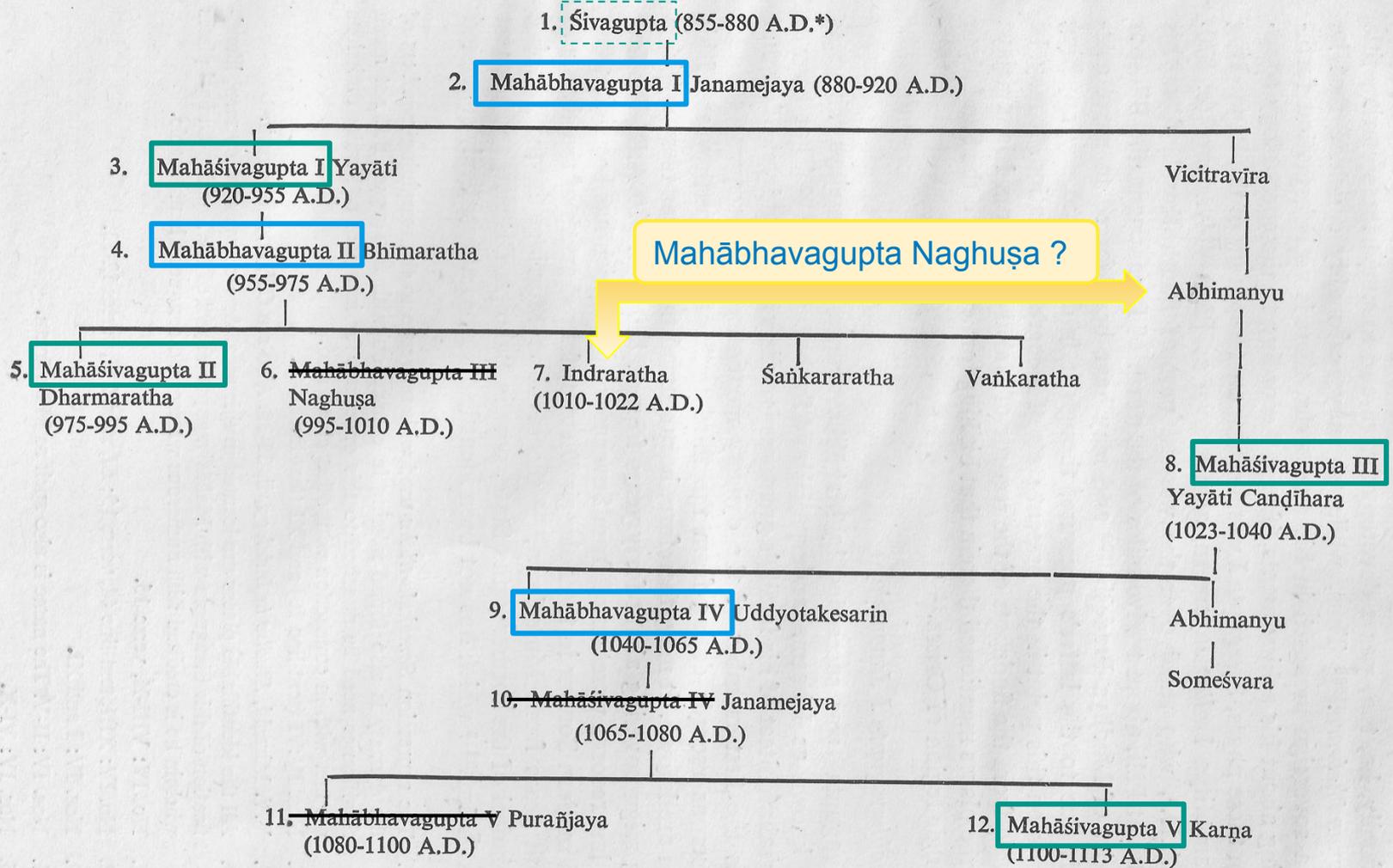
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Conclusion

Legitimation policies over time

⇒ alternation of coronation names

Mahābhavagupta Janamejaya Dharmakandarpa
Mahāśivagupta Yayāti

⇒ alternation of coronation names + lineage

Mahābhavagupta Bhīmaratha
Mahāśivagupta Dharmaratha
Mahābhavagupta Uddyotakeśarin

⇒ direct heir + lineage + birth names

Indraratha

⇒ alternation of coronation names

Mahāśivagupta Yayāti Caṇḍīhara

⇒ alternation of coronation names + lineage

Mahāśivagupta Karṇa



The use of the coronation name during the Somavamśin dynasty

A mark of a religious enthronement for
Janamejaya
a respectful expression for subordinates
a political claim for Yayāti Caṇḍihāra
a statement of legitimacy for Karṇa

Go further

Does Naghuṣa really exist ? If so, who is he ?

By which Mahābhavagupta are issued the two unidentified copper plates : five or six possibilities ?