Chapter 2

The Myth Cycle of Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī in the Skandapurāṇa

2.1 The Structure of the Kauśikī Cycle

The myth cycle of Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī (Kauśikī cycle) in the Skandapurāṇa covers many chapters, the first half of chapter 34¹ and chapters 53 to 69, and is very rich in content. It can be classified into the following three narrative layers.

Layer A (34.1–61; 53–55; 58–59; 69): Pārvatī’s myth

This layer is embedded into the myths of Śiva and Pārvatī from her previous births to the birth of Skanda, which is the main story of the Skandapurāṇa. The main subject of this layer is Pārvatī’s change of complexion from dark to fair and the consequent birth of Kauśikī from her sloughed dark skin. Then, Pārvatī assigns Mt. Vindhya to Kauśikī to be her abode.²

¹The second half of chapter 34 contains the episode in which Śiva fulfills wishes of his devotee Upamanyu. The episode starts with Vyāsa’s question about what Śiva did while Pārvatī was practising tapas (SPbh 34.70). Then another episode of Śiva’s boon-giving to his devotee Sukeśa, which is said to have occurred successively (SPbh 35.1), is related in chapter 35, with the Sukeśa cycle continuing until the end of chapter 52. Hence, these two episodes, the stories of Upamanyu and Sukeśa, are supposed to have happened parallel to Pārvatī’s tapas related in Layer A and cannot be incorporated into the Kauśikī cycle.

²A version of this episode is found in the Matsyapurāṇa. MtP 154.583–155.24 relates that Śiva joked about Pārvatī’s dark complexion and caused a row with Pārvatī, and 157.4–19 that Brahmā granted a golden complexion to Pārvatī as a result of her tapas and that Kauśikī was born from Pārvatī’s dark slough. In this version, the story is preceded by a passage that explains this episode as a part of Brahmā’s long-term plan for the destruction of the demon Tāraka (154.56–95). The version has parallel passages in the Padmapurāṇa Śṛṣṭikhaṇḍa and Skandapurāṇa Māheśvaratikaṇḍa. The episode is also found in VmP 22.1–22, 28.6–29; ŚīP Vāyavīyasaṁhitā 1.24–27; Haracaritacintāmaṇi 22. The complexions of the two goddesses are reversed in a version of Kauśikī’s birth from
The narrative of this layer can also be interpreted as a Māhātmya of Gaurī-śikhara, ‘the peak of Gaurī’, where Pārvatī practised tapas and became Gaurī ‘Fair Lady’.  

Layer B (60.14–21, 72–132; 61–68): the Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī myth with a prologue and a supplement

This layer is devoted to the myth of Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī, interrupting the main story of the Skandapurāṇa. The main subject in this layer is her slaying of the demon brothers Sumbha and Nisumbha and her consecration by the gods headed by Indra. It also contains Sumbha’s courtship of her and the battle between the demon army and the animal and bird-faced goddesses who sprang forth from Kauśikī. These goddesses were distributed over various locations by Kauśikī after her consecration. The story of Sumbha and Nisumbha is preceded by the episode with their fathers, Sunda and Nisunda, in which Tilottamā caused these demon brothers’ death. Their death through lust for Tilottamā gave birth to Sumbha and Nisumbha. Kauśikī’s slaying of the demon Mahiṣa, Sumbha’s son, supplements the narrative of this layer.

Layer C (56–57; 60.1–13, 22–71): Other episodes

While each of the narratives of Layers A and B is formed with a sequence of events, the episodes that cannot be accommodated to either sequence are relegated to this layer. There are four of these episodes, which are somehow connected with the stories in the upper two layers or, in one case, another episode in Layer C. The story of the transmigration of seven Brahmīns related in chapter 56 and the first half of chapter 57 appears to be linked with chapter 52, but the second half of 57, which contains the episode of chaste wives, associates one of the seven Brahmīns with a Gaṇa of Pārvatī called Somanandin, who figures in Layer A. In SPmb 60.1–5, Pārvatī’s assignment of Kauśikī to Mt. Vindhya, related in SP 58, is questioned and explained as due to a past event that Pārvatī granted Mt. Vindhya’s wish as a reward for his tapas. Subsequently, SPmb 60.6–13 tells the popular myth that the Vindhya mountain once obstructed the path of the sun, which is occasioned by the usage of Vindhya’s epithet, Ādityarodhana ‘the blockage of the Sun’, in SPmb 60.4b. In the episode concerning Tilottamā in Layer B the demon brothers Sunda and Nisunda practised tapas at Gokarna, which triggers a

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Pārvatī found in DM 5.37–41.

3SP 69.36–77 is especially composed in Māhātmya-style, listing several sacred spots on the Gaurī-śikhara: a pair of Stanakunda, Nilakunda, Alamkāradhāra, Niśćīrā, Agraśāya, a golden rock, and a black antelope hide. See also n. 8.

4DM 5–12 relates Kauśikī’s killing of the demons Sumbha and Nisumbha, which was made a model in several later Purāṇas; for instance, VmP 28–30, ŚP Umāsaṅgītā 47–48, and DBhP 5.21–31. Haracaritacintāmaṇi 23 also contains this episode. SkP Prabhāśa-khaṇḍa 3.24 narrates an episode in which Kātyāyānī kills the demon Sumbha on Mt. Arbuda.
Māhātmya of the northern Gokarna, as well as the southern one, related in SPdh 60.22–71.

These three layers are arranged in the following way in the Kauśikī cycle.

LA 34.1–61: In reply to Vyāsa’s question of how Pārvatī obtained a fair complexion, Sanatkumāra starts relating the story. Śiva joked with Pārvatī about her dark complexion. Pārvatī wished to obtain a fair complexion and a son by means of tapas. With Śiva’s permission, she went to the Himālaya mountains and started practising tapas on a peak there.

LA 53–54: Sanatkumāra answers Vyāsa’s question about Pārvatī's tapas and the boons she obtained. With Śiva’s permission, Brahmā went to Pārvatī in order to stop her tapas.

LA 55: Brahmā bestowed the status of Gaṇeśvara on a tiger, who was named Somanandin, and granted a fair complexion and a son to Pārvatī.

LC 56–57: Vyāsa asks Sanatkumāra how Brahmins who have committed evil deeds can attain happiness. In reply, Sanatkumāra tells Vyāsa the story of the transmigration of seven Brahmins, one of whom transformed himself into the tiger who was said to become Somanandin in chapter 55.

LA 58: Sanatkumāra answers Vyāsa’s question concerning what Pārvatī did after obtaining the boons. Pārvatī sloughed off her dark skin and became golden-skinned. Her dark slough was transformed into a goddess named Kauśikī. At Pārvatī’s command, Kauśikī went to the Vindhya mountains and made her abode there.

LA 59: After bestowing boons on the peak, which is later to be named Gaurīśikhara after her, and other beings on the peak, Pārvatī left the peak to go home.

LC 60.1–5: Sanatkumāra answers Vyāsa’s question about why Kauśiki was sent to Mt. Vindhya.

LC 60.6–13: Sanatkumāra answers Vyāsa’s question about why Mt. Vindhya became called ‘the blockage of the Sun’.

LB 60.14–21: In reply to Vyāsa’s question about the demons whom Kauśikī killed, Sanatkumāra embarks on the story of Sunda and Nisunda. The demon brothers Sunda and Nisunda went to Gokarna to practise tapas.

LC 60.22–71: In reply to Vyāsa’s question about the origin of Gokarna, Sanatkumāra tells him the story of the installation of liṅgas at the northern and southern Gokarṇas.
The Myth Cycle of Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsini

LB 60.72–132: [Sanatkumāra resumes the story of Sunda and Nisunda.] Sunda and Nisunda practised *tapas* at the northern Gokarnaṇa and obtained a boon from Brahmā. They consulted the chiefs of the demons about the war with the gods.

LB 61: The war between the demons and the gods commenced. The demons defeated the gods and settled themselves in the Vindhyā mountains.

LB 62: Brahmā created Tilottama and Śiva in the form of a catur-mukhalīṅga gave her amorous power. Enticed by her charm, Sunda and Nisunda fought with each other to death. At the moment of their death, Sumbha and Nisumbha were born from their souls and were brought up by Mt. Vindhyā and his wife. When they were grown up, they headed the demons and defeated the gods in the war.

LB 63: Sumbha courted Kauśikī through the messenger Mūka and was challenged to defeat her in battle to gain her for his wife. After consulting other demons Sumbha decided to fight.

LB 64: The war commenced. The animal and bird-faced goddesses sprang forth from Kauśikī’s body.

LB 65: The war between the goddesses and the demons.

LB 66: The war between the elephant troops of both sides. Kauśikī fought with Nisumbha and Sumbha and killed them.

LB 67: Śiva and Pārvatī appeared in front of their daughter Kauśikī, blessed her and gave their permission for her consecration. The gods, headed by Indra, consecrated her. Indra adopted her as his sister.

LB 68.1–9: Kauśikī assigned the goddesses who had sprung out of her body to various countries and towns.

LB 68.10–23: Some time later, Kauśikī was attacked by the demon Mahīśa, Sumbha’s son, and killed him.

LA 69: Sanatkumāra answers Vyāsa’s question about what else Pārvatī did after obtaining the boons. Pārvatī returned home and told Śiva what she had done. Then, she took Śiva to the peak where she had practised *tapas* and become golden-coloured. Śiva granted boons to the peak and named it Gaurīśikhara. Pārvatī showed him various spots related to her *tapas*. Śiva gave them names and connected them with benefits.

As is clear from the above outline, all the stories in the Kauśikī cycle are narrated by Sanatkumāra to Vyāsa. This framework, in which Vyāsa asks Sanatkumāra several questions, plays either of two roles: (1) introducing a
new subject (SP 34.1–2; SP 56.1–4; SP_60.1–2, 6–7, 14–16, 22–23), or (2) resuming a former subject after a long interruption (SP_53.1–2; SP 58.1; 69.1–6). Because a new subject is always introduced by Vyāsa’s question, which layer each story unit belongs to does not depend on the speaker of the unit but rather its content, viz. the unit fits in either the sequence of events of Layer A, that of Layer B, or neither of them. As far as a narrative consists of several layers of frames, who is the speaker of a unit and which frames he/she belongs to is generally important in the structural analysis of the narrative. This frame story structure is used in the Kauśikī cycle, too. As mentioned above, the scene in which Sanatkumāra has a conversation with Vyāsa is the outer frame that envelopes all the stories. In the stories narrated by Sanatkumāra there are two brief stories, each of which is narrated by a figure appearing in Sanatkumāra’s narrative: one in SP 56 (56.64–82) and the other in SP 57 (57.84–98). The first one, a past birth of the hunters’ father, is told by the father to his sons, and the second, an episode concerning Bhalandala and his chaste wife, is told by the ascetic Hāla to his wife. However, both stories are brief and included in the episode (SP 56–57) that belongs to Layer C. Hence, in the case of the Kauśikī cycle, a structural analysis based on the content of a story unit, as in this section, is far more useful than that based on the speaker of it.

2.2 The Function of the Kauśikī Cycle in the Skandapurāṇa

In his review of SP I, J.C. Wright points to the possibility that ‘much Devīmāhātmya material’ is an interpolation, based on passages in the Anukramaniṇikā in SP 2. Since this is an understandable suspicion, we should first discuss the question of whether the Kauśikī cycle is originally an integral part of the Skandapurāṇa or not. Then, if it is, how it is integrated into the Śaiva myths of the Skandapurāṇa will be studied.

Concerning Layer A, the fact that Brahmā granted Pārvatī’s wish to have a son of Śiva, namely Skanda, related in SP 55, is referred to later in SP_60.72. Moreover, in the list of Śiva’s sacred places in SP 167, Gauriśikhara

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5In SP_60.72, when Sanatkumāra resumes the story of Sunda and Nisunda after the interruption by the Gokarna-Māhātmya, he does it without being questioned by Vyāsa. This is probably because the interruption is so brief that it is not necessary to remind the audience of the resumed subject.

6Wright 2000, 302f. He says that ‘Taking a hint from the editor’s own conjecture (p. 62, line 2), one might suspect that a rubric kathanam apy aśeṣataḥ in the Anuk., has been so interpreted as to provide for the interpolation of much Devīmāhātmya material. In the Anuk., this material intervenes between ganānāṁ darśanam caive kathanam apy aśeṣataḥ and a virtually duplicate rubric ganānāṁ āpaṇas caive sanjakhyānastravanam tathā; but the actual text seems to introduce it only after completing its treatment of the Gaṇas.’

7See n. 27.
The Myth Cycle of Kausīkī-Vindhyavāsinī

is mentioned as the place where Pārvatī practised her tapas in order to obtain a fair complexion (gauravarga) and the place was named so after this event, viz. Pārvatī became Gaurī 'Fair Lady', which corresponds to the story of Layer A. In Layer B, it is said that a number of terrifying goddesses sprang forth from Kausīkī’s body and fought the demons. In SPbh 164, when the gods inaugurated Skanda as the commander of the gods’ army and presented him with a part of their retinues, Kausīkī is said to have presented him with these goddesses, called the Mothers there, who had emerged out of her body (SPbh 164.142). Therefore, Layers A and B can safely be considered to be an originally integral part of the Skandapurāṇa.

As far as Layer C is concerned, the situation is less clear. There are four episodes contained in Layer C. SPbh 60.1–5 tells that, in order to grant Mt. Vindhya’s wish for her eternal residence on him, Pārvatī divided herself into two and sent one half, namely Kausīkī, to the mountain. Kausīkī had already been an epithet of Vindhyavāsinī in her proto-myth (see 4.2), so that this episode explaining why Kausīkī resides in the Vindhya mountains is clearly a later invention; however, this does not mean that it is later than the main body of the Skandapurāṇa. Also, in this episode Kausīkī’s birth from Pārvatī is described in a manner different from that given in SP 58 in Layer A. However, this is due to the difference in the aims and length of both accounts and cannot be regarded as a contradiction. Therefore, it cannot be claimed that this episode is secondary, although there is no evidence to prove its originality. The next episode, SPbh 60.6–13, is a version of the myth in which Mt. Vindhya made himself higher in order to obstruct the sun’s course and the sage Agastyā stopped him. This version seems to have condensed the same myth found in MBh 3.102.1–13 and does not bear any peculiarities, such as traces of Śaiva adaptation. Thus there is no indication to determine its originality either way. It also depends on the originality of the preceding episode, since the episode in SPbh 60.6–13 is occasioned by the usage of Vindhya’s epithet Ādityarodhana in the preceding one.

Another episode is a Māhāmya of the northern and southern Gokarnas, related in SPbh 60.22–71. The primary aim of this account is to tell how

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8SP 167.49–50ab (SPbh 167.53cd–54). A pair of ponds formed by two streams of milk from her breasts (SP 69.52), called a pair of ‘Breast Ponds’ (Stanakunāḍa, 69.58), on the Gauriśikhāra is also referred to in SP 167.50cd (SPbh 167.55ab) under the synonym Kuca-kunāḍa. The passage relevant for Gauriśikhāra in the list, SP 167.49–51 (SPbh 167.53cd–56ab), runs:

mahad dhimavatas tv anyat kūṭam siddhanīyevatam|
yatra devi tapas tepe gauravargassamīpsayā || 49 ||
gauriśikhāram ity eva tṛṣu lokeṣu viśrutam|
kucakunāḍa iti khyāte tārthe gatromayā kṛte || 50 ||
tad gauriśikhāram puyam ye bhigacchanti mānavaḥ |
aseamadhaphalam prīpya te yānti paramām gatim || 51 ||.

The Peak of Gauri is also referred to in SPbh 109.3c (Gaurikūtā), 43cd, and 50d. For the location of Gauriśikhāra, see n. 9 in 4.1.

9See p. 100 in 4.3.1.
these two places became sacred as a result of the installation of a *liṅga* in each place. The origin of Śaiva sacred places ensuing from the installation of *liṅgas* is a favourite theme in the *Skandapurāṇa*. In this regard, this Gokarnā-Māhātmāya narrates a unique myth: Śiva appeared in the form of a one-eyed, one-legged unicorn; when Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Indra grasped its horn, the unicorn disappeared, leaving a third part of the horn in the hand of each god: Viṣṇu took his third home; Brahmā installed his third as a *liṅga* at that site, which became the northern Gokarnā; the last third, carried by Indra and then by Rāvaṇa, was installed by itself at a certain place on the southern coast, which became the southern Gokarnā. The other aim of this account is a Śaiva retelling of the popular myth of Indra’s killing of Vṛtra. There are several versions of this myth found in the Epics, among which a version related in MBh 5.9.1–10.41 is the most similar to that incorporated into this account and may have been the original, recast here for the Śaiva faith. Śaiva adaptation of a popular myth is another favourite theme in the *Skandapurāṇa*. Hence, this account fits the general tendency of the text. The northern and southern Gokarnās are also mentioned in SP 167.101–106 in the list of Śiva’s sacred places. This passage does not have

10MBh 3.98–99; 5.9–10; 7.69.49–65; 12.272.1–273.9; 14.11; Rām 7.75–77.

11SP, 60.64, in which Śiva invisibly foretold the gods how Indra would kill Vṛtra, echoes this version. The verse reads in my provisional edition:

\[\text{vaiśeṣaḥ pāramāṁ teṣāṁ phāṇam avaṇeṣyatे surāḥ} \]
\[\text{śiśraḥ chetṣayati vṛtrasya tad āḍāyā śatākṛatuḥ.} \]

“Viṣṇu’s supreme tejas will enter into [a mass of] foam, O Gods. Śatākṛatu (i.e. Indra) will cut off Vṛtra’s head with it.”

In the Kauśikī cycle this unique manner of killing Vṛtra does not appear to have any connection with the preceding story, in which Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Indra each grasped a third of the horn of the unicorn-shaped Śiva. In the MBh 5 version, Viṣṇu promised the gods to enter the *vajra*, Indra’s weapon, invisibly, when Indra kills Vṛtra (5.10.12cd: *adṛṣṭaś ca pavaṇekṣyāmi vajran asāyaḥdhammadam*). Following Viṣṇu’s advice, Indra proposed a peace treaty to Vṛtra, who agreed to it on condition that the gods would not kill him by anything dry, anything wet, stone, wood, a weapon or the *vajra*, nor in the daytime nor at night (5.10.29–30a). Afterwards Indra, by chance, saw Vṛtra on the coast towards evening and called to mind Viṣṇu’s promise, thinking that evening (*samādhya*) is neither daytime nor night (5.10.33–35). Then he found a huge mass of foam in the sea and decided to kill Vṛtra with it because it did not break any condition of their peace treaty (5.10.36–37). He cast the foam with his *vajra* inside onto Vṛtra; Viṣṇu entered the foam and killed Vṛtra (5.10.38: *savaṇam atha phāṇam tāṁ kṣipraṁ vṛtra nisṛṣṭavān| praviṣṇya phāṇam tāṁ viṣṇur atha vṛtraṁ vyanaśayat||*). From this it is clear that Śiva’s prediction in SP, 60.64 presupposes a version of the Vṛtra myth similar to that found in MBh 5. In the SP version, a part of the unicorn’s horn, which is in Indra’s hand at the scene, may have been thought of as a substitute for the *vajra*, although it is not stated explicitly. The recast of the Vṛtra myth ends in this verse and Indra’s actual killing of Vṛtra is not related as if the redactor(s) of this Gokarnā account changed the original plan of telling a Śaiva recast of Vṛtra myth at this point. The present author is preparing a separate paper on this Gokarnā-Māhātmāya in the Kauśikī cycle.

12For instance, the Śaiva adaptation of the Tilottama myth in the Kauśikī cycle will be discussed on p. 86ff. in 4.2, comparing it with the two accounts of this myth in the MBh. There are many other examples in the Skandapurāṇa.
any reference to this account and, instead, relates different episodes, such as that Rāvana attained sovereignty in the triple world after practising *tapas* and propitiating Śiva in the northern Gokarna; and that Rāvana’s brother, Vibhiṣaṇa, continued enjoying kingship in reward for his worship of Śiva in the southern Gokarna.13 This might appear to suggest that the account in SP₅₆.₆₀ is a secondary interpolation. However, there is no definite contradiction between the passage in SP 167 and the account in SP₅₆.₆₀ because the former does not mention any origin for the two Gokarna. Therefore, on the grounds of the appropriateness of its themes for the text, it seems to be more likely that the Gokarna-Māhātmya in SP₅₆.₆₀ was part of the original composition of the *Skandapurāṇa*.

The last, longest episode covering two chapters, SP 56 and 57, is the most problematic. This episode consists of two parts: the first part, 56.1–57.47 and possibly 57.105–107,14 is the story of the transmigration of seven Brahmins, and the second, 57.48–104, is an episode linking the story of the seven Brahmins with the Layer B narrative, in which one of the seven Brahmins, called Brahmadhanvan at his latest birth, is said to have been transformed into a tiger under a curse. That this tiger/Brahmadhanvan lived in Agrāraṇya—the place where Pārvatī practiced her *tapas* was named so by Śiva in 69.71—and that Pārvatī made him her Gaṇapati there was stated in 57.104. Hence, the identification of the tiger/Brahmadhanvan with the tiger figuring in the Layer B narrative, who attended Pārvatī during her *tapas* and

13SP 167.101–106 (SP₅₆ 167.108–114) is as follows:

> tataś cottoragokarṇaṁ haralivagukitāranyam
> taptam yatra tapas tīvram rāksasaṁ piśitāsanaṁ
> rāvanaṁyaiś mahābhāgair labdhva ca vara īpsitaḥ || 101 ||
> pura yatra tapah kṛtvā prasādy ca pinākinam
> trayoki cakruvarītivam rāvanah samavāptavān || 102 ||
> āśvamedham dasāgaṇam tāṁ dṛṣṭvā labhate saṁraḥ
> nṛta ca rudrasāyaṁ garcchate nātra samavāyaḥ || 103 ||
> tato daksinagokarṇaṁ sthānaṁ punaṁ pinākinah
> sprkkaṁ jātyāṁ yatra laṁkāmalayasāṁyuṣu
> arcyate bhagavān devaṁ sarvānāravareśvāraḥ || 104 ||
> eko rāksasaśārdulā yatrādyapī vibhiṣaṇaṁ
> samabhjayeyareśānaṁ bhūṅkte rājyaṁ aṣāṅkitam || 105 ||
> māṇavā yev bhigacchante gokarṇāgatanaśramam
> dasānaṁ aśvamedhānaṁ prāparaṁ vanti phalaṁ saṁbham || 106 ||

A similar episode in which Rāvana and his brothers, Vibhiṣaṇa and Kumbhakarna, practised severe *tapas* in Gokarna and obtained several boons from Brahm— not from Śiva—is found in Rām 7.9.37–7.10.42. See also Bissing’s commentaries on the verses quoted above (2004, 192f). The two Gokarna are also listed among Śaiva sacred places in SP 29.83b and SP₅₆ 183.49b, and a Gokarna is mentioned in SP 68.3b as the place to which Kauśikī assigned Revati.

14To which part the three concluding verses (57.105–107) mentioning a *śrutiphala*— benefits from listening to and reciting a story unit, which are usually mentioned when one subject has ended— of the two chapters belong is open to question and will be discussed later.
was transformed into her Gaṇa called Somanandin in reward,\textsuperscript{15} is beyond doubt. Brahmadhanvan’s tapas in order to propitiate Pārvatī and obtain boons, described in 57.48–50, corresponds to Pārvatī’s statement in 55.13a that the tiger had once been her ardent devotee. Moreover, one of Brahmadhanvan’s wishes granted by Pārvatī, viz. that she would save him when he fell into serious trouble (57.50ab), foreshadows the future event related in Layer B (55.8–24), viz. that Pārvatī persuaded Brahmā into lifting the curse of his being a tiger and granting him the state of her Gaṇa. Therefore, it seems to be evident that, in SP 56–57 which interrupt the Layer A narrative, the redactor(s) intended to tell the story of the past life of the tiger/Somanandin figuring in SP 55 in Layer A.

However, Vyāsa’s introductory question to Sanatkumāra at the beginning of SP 56 does not have any reference to the tiger/Somanandin. Instead, Vyāsa first refers to Sanatkumāra’s teaching about who goes to hell and who goes to heaven in the description of hells (56.1). This instruction by Sanatkumāra is found in SP₅₆ 52, the final chapter of the Sukeśa cycle of SP₅₆ 35–52,\textsuperscript{16} in which Sukeśa, an ardent devotee of Śiva, liberated his ancestors from their fate of falling into hell thanks to Śiva (SP₅₆ 35), and then his ancestors, appreciating Sukeśa’s help (SP₅₆ 36), described several hells at his request (SP₅₆ 37–51). Then, in reply to Vyāsa’s following question of how Brahmins who have committed evil deeds can attain happiness (56.2–3), Sanatkumāra tells him the story of the seven Brahmins, in which worship of ancestry and services to one’s father are emphasized. Therefore, the first part, 56.1–57.47, is closely associated with the Sukeśa cycle in regard to both the narrative sequence and common theme, which points to the possibility that this part may originally have followed SP₅₆ 52 as the last part of the Sukeśa cycle. A similar story of the seven Brahmins is found in HV 14–19, in which HV 16–19 chiefly corresponds to the SP version. In the HV, this story forms the second half of the Pitrkalpa (HV 11–19) dealing with the worship of divine ancestry, as an illustration that proves the efficiency of ancestor worship.\textsuperscript{17} There is also an indication of some influence of the

\textsuperscript{15}SP 34.51–61; 55.8–24; 69.25–28, 29cd–30ab (cf. SP₉₆ 167.2.13). This tiger is also mentioned in Vmp 28.14–21 and SiP Vaiyavāsanhitā 1.25.8–17, 26.1–23, 27.28–35. In Haracaritacintāmani 22.15–16 and 29–34ab, two lions instead of a tiger approached Pārvatī during her practice of tapas and, leaving their lion bodies, became Gaṇas called Dīṇḍi and Mahodara thanks to her gracious look at them. Then, in 22.42–43, Pārvatī ordered Vindhyavāsinī, who is usually called Durgā-Katyāṇī in this text, to take the two lion bodies in charge as her vehicles and named them Somanandi and Upanandi.

\textsuperscript{16}The beginning of the Sukeśa cycle is told in SP 11.5–18. The story of Sukeśa related in SP 11.5–18 and SP₅₆ 35 is probably a Śaiva adaptation of the story of Jaratkāru found in MBh 1.13.9–42 and MBh 1.41–42. See SP I, p. 80 n. 61.

\textsuperscript{17}Another version of this story, which is much more faithful to the HV version than the SP one, is contained in MtP 20–21 under the name of Pitrmaññātmaya in the Śrīdhhakalpa. HV 14–19 has been studied in the light of the SP version in Yokochi 2000b. For the Pitrkalpa of the HV, see de Vries 1928; Saindon 1998; the latter study is not sufficiently cautious concerning the textual problems of this part.
Pitrkalpa of the HV in the Sukeśa cycle; a past event that Sukeśa’s ancestors told him in SP₃, 36.27–50 is similar with that found in HV 12.21–41. This underscores the close relation between the Sukeśa cycle and the story of the seven Brahmins in SP 56.1–57.47.

If the first part of SP 56–57 was originally attached to the Sukeśa cycle, the second part, the episode linking the seven Brahmins story with SP 55 must have been added when the first part was moved to the current place, so that the entire two chapters (SP 56–57) could have served to provide the story of the past life of the tiger/Somanandin figuring in SP 55. In this regard, we will now turn to the concluding verses of these two chapters, 57.105–107. In 57.105a, the demonstrative pronoun tasya refers to the tiger/Brahmadhanvan, who is the subject of the preceding verse. However, although the fact that he finally became Pārvati’s Gaṇapati is mentioned in 104d, the preceding story is devoted to the telling of his misdeed and consequent degradation into a tiger; hence, the expression ‘this tale of his greatness’ (imam. tasya māhātmyam) in 105a that probably refers to the entire story in SP 56–57 sounds strange. Furthermore, in 57.105 and 106, mastery of yoga (yogaisvaryam in 105; yogēśvaratvam in 106) is emphasized as the fruit of learning by heart and reciting ‘this tale of his greatness’. This calls to mind the seven Brahmins story contained in the first part, in which mastery of yoga is a recurrent theme.¹⁸ Therefore, it may be assumed that 57.105–107 was originally the ending of the seven Brahmins story, the first part of SP 56–57, rather than the entire two chapters. If that were the case, tasya in 105a may originally have referred to Brahmadatta, the legendary king of Kampilya (the capital of the Pañcāla country) and main character in the seven Brahmins story.¹⁹ On the other hand, the last verse of the first part (57.47) mentions the final fate of Pañcāla, Brahmadatta’s royal priest and one of his two companions at his last birth as king, so that 57.105 cannot follow 57.47 directly. Also, there must have been at least one verse that tells what happened to Brahmadhanvan, Brahmadatta’s minister and the other companion at his last birth, in the original version. Thus it could be supposed that the original version of the first part had a few more verses.

¹⁸ The original preceptor of the seven Brahmins, Kauśika Suparvan, foretold, when they were reborn as hunters, that they would transmigrate several births, retaining memory of their previous births and practising yoga, and finally reach the world of Brahmā (SP 56.40–42). Four of the seven became Yogesvaras at their last birth (57.21–22, 24–25, 28cd, 32). Of the other three (Brahmadatta, Pañcāla and Brahmadhanvan), King Brahmadatta attained heaven through his power of yoga (57.46). In the HV version of the seven Brahmins story, too, practice of yogadharma, along with ancestor worship, is considered to be the primary method to attain final happiness.

¹⁹ Compare these verses to the śrutiphala of the MtP version of the same story (21.39cd–40):

\[ ya idam. pitrmāhātmyam. brahmadattasya ca dvijāḥ || \\
\[ dvijeṣhyat śrūvayed yovā śrṇoty atha paṭhet tu vā | \\
\[ kalpakofiśatam. sāgatam brahmaloke mahiyate ||. \]
after 57.47 and before the concluding verses (viz. the current 57.105–107) and that, when the first part was relocated from the original place following SP₉₈ 52 to the current place, the second part—the linking episode of Brahmadhanvan via the tiger with Somanandin—was substituted for the verses following 57.47.

As pointed out earlier, the linking episode in the second part shows that the redactor(s) made an effort to connect the new episode with the account in SP 55. However, there remains an inconsistency: SP 55.22cd says that the tiger was a Yaksā and doorkeeper (pratihāra) of Pañcāla, while, in SP 57, the former self of the tiger is Brahmadhanvan, Brahmadatta’s minister. In the same chapter, furthermore, Pañcāla is the name of another of the seven Brahmins, Brahmadatta’s royal priest, at his latest birth, who is said to have become a Yaksā after fasting to death (57.47). This inconsistency suggests

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20 Pañcāla herein probably denotes a Yaksā king rather than the Pañcāla country, because the noun pañcāla is used in the singular; the plural is usually used for names of countries. In MtP 157.18, it is said that Brahmā gave Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī a Yaksā called Pañcāla as her servant, when she was born from Pārvatī’s dark slough: pañcālā nāma yaksā ‘yaṁ yaksalaksapadānuṣṭah | dattas te kīṁkaro deva maṇā nāyāsitaṁ yatāḥ ||. No animal attending Pārvatī during her tapas is mentioned in the Matsyapurāṇa. A chief of the Yaksas (yakṣendra) called Pañcāla also figures as a servant of Vindhyavāsinī (Durgā-Kātyāyanī) in the Haracaritacintāmaṇī (23.21):

pañcālanānāṁ yakṣendra durgāyās tatrā kīṁkaraḥ | sthāpto balavān tatrā dānavāsahpravikramah ||. He is referred to in 23.93c, too. In this text he is clearly distinguished from the two lions which correspond to the tiger in the Kauśikī cycle (see n. 15). According to Coomaraswamy (1993, 39), a Yaksā king in Gandhāra called Pañcāla is known as the father of Pañcika, husband of Hārīti, in the Saṁyuktavastu 31.

21 In the HV version of this, Pañcāla, a learned Brahmin of the Bābhraya lineage and minister of Brahmadatta, is said in 19.29 to have become a promulgator of krama and śiksā and attained the state of Yogācārya:

kramaṁ prañiṣya pañcālaḥ śiksāṁ utpāḍya kevalāṁ | yogācāryaṁ paśaṁ prāpaṇaṁ cāgarāṁ mahātapatāḥ ||. Krama is ‘a peculiar manner or method of reading and writing Vedic texts’ (s.v. krama in Monier-Williams’ Dictionary) and is taught in the śiksā, one of the six Vedāṅgas, which ‘teaches proper articulation and pronunciation of Vedic texts’ (s.v. śiksā in ibid.). Keva-lāṁ in pāda b can be emended to gālavaḥ, which is found in some southern manuscripts including M₄₃ (representative MSS of the southern recension), on the grounds of similarity between pādas ab and MBh 12.330.38cd (kramaṁ prañiṣya śiksāṁ ca prañayitvā sa gālavaḥ). That Pañcāla, also called Bābhraya Gālava, obtained the learning of krama from the horse head (haṃśaśiras) of Viśnu is alluded to in MBh 12.330.36–38 and 335.71 (Yokochi 2000b, 543). A similar reference to this Pañcāla is also found in HV 15.12abcd, probably a part of a later interpolation, in which he is called Gālava (ibid., 541–545).

Comparing the SP version with this material, a confusion between Pañcāla/Pañcāla Bābhraya Gālava, a founder of the krama system in the Vedas, and a Yaksā Pañcāla/Pañcāla (see the previous note) seems to have happened in the Skanda Purāṇa. In HV 16.30a, the figure corresponding to Pañcāla is called Pañcika (pañcikaṁ pañcikas tatra), which may be a corruption of pañcīḷāḥ pañcīḷamas tatra, the reading identical to HV 18.17c (ibid., 542 n. 43). In any case, the substitution of Pañcika, one of the most famous Yaksas and, according to a tradition, a son of Yaksā Pañcāla, for Pañcāla Bābhraya
that the redactor(s) of SP 55 did not bear in mind the details of the linking episode, the second part of SP 56–57. However, this does not necessarily mean that the relocation of the first part of these two chapters and its revision by adding the second part are secondary to the original composition of the Skandapurāṇa. Rather, the following process may have taken place: the redactor(s), while composing chapter 55, got the idea that the story of the seven Brahmins that had followed chapter 52 was appropriate to an episode of the tiger’s former self—a Pañcāla in 55.22cd, who is probably a king of Yakṣas, may have recalled to the redactor(s) another Pañcāla who became a Yakṣa in the seven Brahmins story—, moved the story to the current place after chapter 55, and revised it, replacing a few verses before the three concluding verses with the newly composed, linking episode. Although the redactor(s) failed to make the new episode tally with the statement in SP 55.22cd, he/they left the inconsistency as it was and continued, rather than going back to 55.22cd and altering it in accordance with the new episode.

points to the confusion mentioned above. As discussed in detail in my 2000b paper, however, it is likely that this pāda is a part of a later addition that occurred not much earlier than AD 1100, the approximate date of the oldest manuscript of the HV (ibid., 541–545, 548f).

In the MtP version of the seven Brahmins story, Pañcāla Bābhrawya is said to be a promulgator of Kāmasūtra in 21.30:

\[
\text{kāma-sūtra-prānapā ca bābhrawyas tu subālakahā|} \\
pāncāla iti lokēṣu viśrataḥ savasaśāstraṇī.}
\]

In Vātsyāyana’s Kāmasūtra, Pañcāla Bābhrawya is alluded to in the transmission of Kāmasūtra leading to the extant work by Vātsyāyana. Concerning Prajāpati’s teaching about the triple goal of living beings (trīvarga, viz. dharma, artha and kāma) (1.1.5), Nandin composed the work teaching kāma (kāmasūtra) separately (1.1.8); Audḍāraka Śvetaketu condensed it (1.1.9); then, Pañcāla Bābhrawya condensed it further and composed the work consisting of a hundred and fifty chapers divided into seven topics (1.1.10: tad eva tu punar adhyādhyāyogasātena śādhanāsamyam isam prajñārakabharayādhikārīkāshādantāvāsikavaiṇanisadikāh saṃprajnapānā bābhrawyaḥ pāncālaḥ saṃcikṣepa)\[|\]. After him, each of the seven topics was taught separately until Vātsyāyana composed the extant, abridged work covering all seven topics (1.1.11–12). This third legend of Pañcāla, who may or may not be the same person as the founder of the krama system, may also have been related to the aforementioned confusion, because a mastery of the art of love is often attributed to Yakṣas. Concerning MtP 21.39 quoted above, on the other hand, it is not impossible that kāma in pāda a has been corrupted from krama, probably due to the confusion of different legends, on the ground of considerable resemblance between the HV and MtP versions of the seven Brahmins story. In that case, subālakahā in pāda b might be emended to sa galavāḥ.

As shown in the preceding footnotes, Pañcāla/Pañcāla as Brahmadatta’s companion was burdened with several legends. On the other hand, the other companion of Brahmadatta in his last birth, who is called Kaṇḍarika in the HV version and Brahmadhanvan in the SP one, appears to have remained more anonymous. So the redactor(s) may have felt that it was less problematic to identify Brahmadhanvan, rather than Pañcāla, with Somanandin.

Between SP 55.22ab and cd, the R and the A recensions interpolate four almost
To sum up, Layers A and B, each of which is formed by a regular sequence of related events concerning Pārvatī and Kauśikī respectively, were originally integral parts of the Skandapurāṇa. Of the four episodes in Layer C, the Gokarna-Māhātmya is likely to have been original, while the originality of the two brief episodes associated with Mt. Vindhya is difficult to determine. The other episode in SP 56-57 was probably affected by a revision—the relocation of the first part and the addition of the second part accompanied by a partial alteration of the first part—but this revision may have happened in the process of composing the main body of the Skandapurāṇa. Thus, although there is no definite evidence for the secondary character of any of these episodes, the originality of the episodes relegated to Layer C remains somewhat uncertain. However, because these episodes do not affect the story line of the Kauśikī cycle much, this uncertainty does not prevent us from considering the Kauśikī cycle to be an integral part of the Skandapurāṇa. Then, in order to examine how this cycle is integrated into the Śaiva myths of the Skandapurāṇa, attention should be drawn to Layer A, because Layer A links Layer B with the main plot of the Skandapurāṇa.

Pārvatī’s practice of tapas described in Layer A is said to have been performed to obtain not only a fair complexion but also a son, namely Skanda. In SP 34.11-12cd, Pārvatī told Śiva that her heart was broken whenever he called her Dark Lady (Krṣṇa) and asked him to grant her an excellent fair complexion. Subsequently, in 12ef, she wished that she may bear a son, which sounds abrupt on the surface since there is nothing foreshadowing this wish.24 In SP 55, Brahmā came to see Pārvatī and

24 A part of SP 34, including this passage, is lacking in S₁ and S₂ due to the loss of some folios. The passage is preserved in S₃, R and all the MSS of the A recension but A₄ (including A₅, A₆, A₇; relevant folios are lost in A₄). In this condition, the text of SP 34.12 is problematic, which runs:

\[
\text{etodarthis abham padau pranamyah tavam sankara} | \\
\text{vijnapayami sarvesa gauravaranm anutamam} | \\
\text{vijnapayami putrasa ca yathā mama bhaved iti} || 12 ||. \\
\]

Pādas cd is omitted in S₃, but something similar is definitely required from the context. The reading of pādas ef is, on the other hand, supported only by S₃. R reads for 12ef tat kuryāt prāname deve putro pi bhavitā hy abhāṃ, which may be reconstructed as putro ‘pi bhavitā deve tat kuryāḥ prāname hy abham. This reading is probably secondary, because prāname hy abham is a repetition of the meaning of 12ab. The A recension omits 12ef, which is certainly accidental since this recension, as well as R, adds the four pādas describing the coming son. The main problem is the repetition of vijnapayāmi in pādas c and e
offered to fulfill her wishes as a reward for her severe tapas. Pärñati asked Brahmā first to grant a boon to the tiger that had stood by her side during her tapas (55.8–10). When he fulfilled this wish after a discussion about its propriety and offered her another boon (55.11–25), she wished for a golden complexion and Brahmā agreed (55.26–27ab). Then, offered a further boon by him (55.27cd–28), she wished for a son and Brahmā assured her that her wish would be fulfilled (55.29–33). Here, her last wish corresponds to SP 34.12ef, which suggests that 34.12ef is not a later addition.

Elsewhere, obtaining a son is mentioned twice as the object of her tapas, although obtaining a fair complexion is never mentioned. Furthermore, while Pärñati was happily reflecting upon her wishes that had just been fulfilled by Brahmā, her happiness is said to have been caused by [the boon of] having a son (putralambha: kṛṣṭam harsam) exclusively in 58.4a. These allusions indicate that the primary object of her tapas is to obtain a son. In the beginning of SPbh 72, to which the main story skips after the end of the Kauśikī cycle, it is told that Pärñati asked Śiva to realize her wish to bear a son comparable to him and that Śiva consented to this, referring to the fact that she had once wished a son before going to practice tapas (72.17), the fact related in 34.12ef. Hereafter, Śiva and Pärñati embarked on a project to give birth to Skanda, which starts the myth cycle of Skanda.

The following conclusion can be drawn from this consideration: Pärñati’s tapas, as well as her acquisition of boons from Brahmā, related in Layer A, is intended to serve two purposes. One is to introduce the myth of Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsini, which is connected with her wish for a fair complexion, in the reconstructed text, which actually does not occur in any manuscripts—the first vijñāpayāmi in pāda c is preserved in the R and A recensions and the second one in pāda e in S— and is very doubtful. An eyeskip from vijñāpayāmi in pāda c to a similar word in the beginning of pāda e, possibly ending in yāmi, may have happened in the transmission leading to S. Another alternative is that the first five aksaras in pāda c became corrupt and was replaced by vijñāpayāmi in pāda e during the transmission leading to the hyparchetype of the R and A recensions.

25SP 34.43d: putrārtham ca varārthini; SPbh 34.71c: putrārtham āsaktamanorathayām (... devyām).

26SPbh 72.12cd–13cd:
yathā me dehajah putro bhavitā govyādhvaṣa || tvādvyāras tvatprabhāvasa ca sarvadvemamaskṛtaḥ ||
tathā kuru mahādeva yadi te priyatā mayi ||
27SPbh 72.15–17:
evāṁ bhavatu devises evyāpitrīṃ saḥpaham imām ||
karsiṣyāmi taveśāmi putras te sa bhaved yathā ||
śreṣṭhāḥ sarvavyūrasyām mahāyogabālāniṣaḥ ||
kṛṣṇaṁ jagad idam yasya vaśe sthāyati bhāmīni ||
gacchayati tat tapah kartuṁ varah pārvam api tvayā ||
prāhitāḥ hy eṣa putrārtham tenaśaṣāhām dadāmi te ||
There is some correspondence in wording, for example, putras ca yathā mama bhaved iti in 34.12ef and putras te bhavitā devi mahāyogabālāniṣaḥ in 55.30ab.

28The relationship between Pärñati’s change of complexion and Kauśikī’s birth will be
and the second is to introduce the Skanda cycle as a result of her second wish, that for a son. The first purpose is primary in a small-scale plan, the Kauśikī cycle, by linking Layer A with Layer B, but the second purpose is more significant in a large-scale plan, the main story of the Skandapurāṇa, by linking Layer A with the subsequent Skanda cycle. Thus, by means of the two aims of Pārvatī’s tapas the Kauśikī cycle, into which Layers A and B are integrated, is furthermore united with the Skanda cycle by foreshadowing the coming birth of Skanda. So it can be concluded that the Kauśikī cycle functions as a prelude for the Skanda cycle in the whole composition of the Skandapurāṇa.\(^{29}\)

### 2.3 Pārvatī and the Hierarchy of Goddesses

Finally, this chapter will investigate the ideology concerning the goddesses in the Kauśikī cycle, taking into account the other parts of the Skandapurāṇa, as far as the current progress of research on the text will allow.

The goddesses featuring in the Kauśikī cycle can be grouped and ranked into three. First, there is no doubt that Pārvatī occupies the highest rank as Śiva’s Consort and would-be mother of Skanda. Pārvatī is called ‘the Mother of the world’ several times throughout the Skandapurāṇa (jagānmātṛ SP 11.37c, 55.27a, SP\(_{\text{bh}}\) 180.46a; jagādādhātṛ SP 59.11d, SP\(_{\text{bh}}\) 60.53c, 130.18c, 173.8a; jagato mātaram SP\(_{\text{bh}}\) 130.10a; viśvasya mātaram SP\(_{\text{bh}}\) 112.107b). Her motherly aspect is indicated by the episode of her adopting an Aśoka tree as her son (SP\(_{\text{bh}}\) 158–162) and by her ardent wish for a son, discussed earlier. She is regarded as the mother of Kauśikī (SP 69.19–20) and also adopts the demon Andhaka (SP\(_{\text{bh}}\) 157). In the gods’ lengthy eulogy to her in SP\(_{\text{bh}}\) 32, she is called mother of Skanda, Elephant-faced (Hastivaktra, i.e. Vināyaka), Viśākha, Nandin, and Naigamesa, and lastly the primordial mother of all the world.\(^{30}\)

Likewise, Apsarases called Paṃcācudās addressed as discussed in 4.1.

\(^{29}\)A parallelism between the myth of Kauśikī-Vindhyaśālinī and that of Skanda might have been a motive for this association between the two myth cycles. For instance, the following parallel characteristics come to mind: their main feature is to be a slayer of demons; they are both virgins; they are both consecrated by the gods (see n. 105 in 4.3.3 for a brief comparison of Kauśikī’s consecration ritual with that of Skanda). Concerning the myth of Kauśikī-Vindhyaśālinī, these characteristics are the subject of study in Chapter Four. On the other hand, their comparison with those of Skanda, which requires a thorough investigation of the Skanda cycle in the Skandapurāṇa, is far beyond the scope of the present study, so I will merely touch on the possibility here.

\(^{30}\)SP\(_{\text{bh}}\) p. 201 l. 22–p. 202 l. 1: skandacandrāraṇīṁ mātaraṁ hastivaktṛasya cāgṛyāṁ viśākhasya jannāraṇīṁ nandino naigamesasya colpādaniṁ sarvalokasya cādyāraṇīṁ. Bhattarāṇī gives this eulogy the verse numbers 123–144 in a lump at the end, failing to notice the Daṇḍaka metre of the first lengthy verse, which occupies a large part of the eulogy. The remaining part of the eulogy seems to be another pāda in Daṇḍaka metre. In the first compound of the above quotation the question is whether skandacandra is a Karmadhāraya (‘Skanda like the moon’) or a Dvandva (‘Skanda and the moon’).
her as mother of spirits (bhūta), Skanda, Viśākha, Śākha and Naigameṣa in their eulogy in SP 29.31 Two of her epithets, Ambā and Ambikā, which are generally used to address a motherly woman, may also represent this character. That she is an ideal wife is evident from her chastity and devotion to Śiva, not only in her birth as Pārvatī but also in her previous two births as Svarṇākṣā and Satī (SP 10). In SP Bh 111–112, furthermore, after giving the Mothers of the world (Lokamātrī), a group of Brahmanical goddesses,32 the instructions regarding the vrata (dāna, upavāsa and kṛcchra), she laid emphasis upon obeisance to their husbands, saying that all the vrata would be fruitless, unless they performed them with their husbands’ permission (SP Bh 112.69–74). Her ascetic character is emphasized by her several rounds of practice of tapas to fulfil her wishes. Thus it would be plausible to say that, in the Skandapurāṇa, Pārvatī is the Mother of the world, paired with Śiva, the Father of the world; she represents a Brahmanical ideal of woman, a chaste wife and affectionate mother. From her dark slough was born Kauśīki-Vindhyavāśī, a dark-skinned virgin and royal warrior, who is in the second rank. The goddesses who emerged from Kauśīki’s body, both animal and bird-headed, terrifying goddesses called the Mothers, are in the lowest rank.33

This hierarchical system of goddesses is not a simple ranking of three

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31SP 29.199cd–200ab: namo ’stu bhūtaṁatre ca skandasya ca namo namah || viśākhasākṣasā caiva naigameṣasya caiva hi ||

32The expression ‘Mothers of the world’ is frequently used in the Skandapurāṇa and, in all cases but one (SP Bh 171.134d), denotes a group of Brahmanical goddesses, which is a completely different group from the Mothers who are said to have emerged from Kauśīki. In the episode at issue, they are listed as follows (SP Bh 111.2–6):

gate divaṁ mahādeve deviṁ girivarātmajām ]
apatasthur mahābhāgā devyo lokasya mātaraḥ ] 2 ]
bharataśya sutāgnes tu mālinitī abhiśritā ]
sucāti ca devasya parjanyasya sutāνyāgā ] 3 ]
sāvitrī vedatāta ca gāyatrī dargaya saha ]
srīḥ kirtiṁ caiva laksminī ca dhṛtiḥ pracāja tathāva ca ] 4 ]
khyaṁ ditir dasuṁ caiva adityāṁ śyāṁkā khaṣā ]
rākā kuhūṁ siṁvāḥ tathāvānumatiḥ sūbhā ] 5 ]
gāṅgā sarvasvāti caiva tathāṅgāḥ saritaḥ śubhā ]
ṛṣṇīyaṁ caiva yāṁ patnaya devāṁ yāksaraśkasām ]
urugāṁ bhavānāṁ ca gandharvānāṁ tathāvä ca ] 6 ].

In SP 11.31, the same expression (lokamātrāḥ) denotes Pārvatī and her two sisters before her marriage to Śiva, which agrees to Pārvatī’s Brahmanical characterization.

33The characters of Kauśīki and the Mothers in the Kauśīki cycle will be studied in detail in 4.3.
classes, but the goddesses in the lower two ranks, Kaúṣikī and the Mothers, form one group in contradistinction to Párvatī on top. The figure of Kaúṣikī-Vindhyavāsini may have originated, historically, from anonymous goddesses locally worshipped in the Vindhya mountains, goddesses who can be included in the class of local or folk goddesses often lumped together under the name of Mothers (see 4.2). Párvatī, on the other hand, had already been firmly established as Śiva’s Consort in the Śaiva mythology by the time Kaúṣikī-Vindhyavāsini’s mythology began to take shape, around the early centuries of our era. Thus at the inception of the period dealt with in the present study, Párvatī was not yet associated with the goddesses in the lower ranks of the hierarchy. Later, when need was felt to incorporate the local and folk-origin goddesses into the Śaiva fold, that hierarchy was formulated in a manner such that Párvatī was placed, inserted, one might say, at its summit. In other words, the final set of three levels of goddesses is the result of two processes that took place in different circumstances and were largely independent of each other.

In the Kaúṣikī cycle, the hierarchical system of goddesses is presented as a series of emissions, the lower being produced out of the higher. Párvatī emits Kaúṣikī-Vindhyavāsini, who in turn emits the Mothers. It may be helpful to compare this with the myth of the destruction of Daśa’s sacrifice as related in SPbh 32. There two goddesses are said to have emerged from Párvatī. When Párvatī rubbed her nose in anger at Daśa’s disregard for Śiva, Bhadrakāli sprang from her nose, described as well-armed, dark-skinned and well-proportioned with four tusks, twelve faces, three eyes (per face) and ten arms.34 Accompanied by the Gaṇa Haribhadra and his retinue, she destroyed Daśa’s sacrifice. Although Bhadrakāli’s appearance differs in detail from that of Kaúṣikī, their natures are similar: both are beautiful maidens and well-armed, formidable warriors.35 When Daśa’s sacrifice was completely destroyed and the gods turned to Śiva to beg forgiveness, Párvatī emitted from her mouth a terrifying and gigantic goddess with gaping mouth and projecting teeth, with many toes and fingers, and equipped with weapons (SPbh 32.109–111),36 who is called Kālakārī (SPbh 32.113b, 115a, 120a, 121a). Later, Párvatī gave her to Brahmā as his daugh-

34SPbh 32.12–15: 

35For some connection between Bhadrakāli and Kaúṣikī-Vindhyavāsini, see n. 102 in 4.3.2. Bhadrakāli is one of the epithets used for warrior-type goddesses (p. 146 in 5.3).

36SPbh 32.109–111:
ter and Brahmā, naming her Death (Mṛtyu), assigned to her the office of taking the life of all beings (SPmb 32.228–230). This goddess Kālakarnī looks like a Cāmuṇḍā-type; a dreadful goddess who could be classed with ‘the Mothers’. Thus there are three goddesses in SPmb 32, but they are divided into two classes rather than three, because both Bhadrakālī and Kālakarnī/Mṛtyu emerge directly from Pārvatī. In the Kauśikī cycle, on the other hand, the Mothers (corresponding to Kālakarnī) emerge from Kauśikī (corresponding to Bhadrakālī) rather than Pārvatī herself. This therefore establishes a ranking among the goddesses subordinate to Pārvatī, with Kauśikī as representative of warrior-type goddesses being given priority and higher status than the Mothers. The Kauśikī cycle’s process of mythological emission and consequent theological hierarchy thus has two steps: first, the original unity, Pārvatī, is divided into Pārvatī and Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī; then, Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī, herself a unity of goddesses, divides further into Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī and the Mothers.

Since the second step, the divergence of the Mothers from Kauśikī, is to be studied in Chapter Four (4.3.3), the first step, the divergence of Kauśikī

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The reading of the last two pādas, largely conjectured by Bhāṭṭārāṇī from S1 and S2, does not make sense. There all MSS of the Nepalese recension appear to be irreparably corrupt. The R and A recensions, on the other hand, have an approximately identical reading (udvīhā hriyātāṁ kālā tvagṣyāḥ duhitum mama), which does not fit well in the context and appears to be a secondary attempt to make sense. Some verses may have been lost around these two pādas at an early stage. That Brahmā created the goddess of death, Mṛtyu, in order to bring death to all living beings and persuaded her to take the office in spite of her persistent refusal to take charge of the awful task is told in MBh 12.248–250.
from Pārvatī, will now be examined in brief, which may clarify how the hierarchical system of goddesses in the Kauśikī cycle serves the Śaiva Brahmanical ideology of the Skandapurāṇa.

When Kauśikī had just emerged from her dark slough, Pārvatī called her ‘One who stands for my embodiment (mūrtiśṭhānam mama)’ (SP 58.16d). Here Kauśikī is considered to become separated from the original unity of Pārvatī and live independently. The idea that Kauśikī is a daughter of Śiva and Pārvatī, which is indicated in SP 67.19–20 in that she calls Śiva and Pārvatī her parents, is also in a similar vein. In both cases, it is clear that Kauśikī is regarded as subordinate to Pārvatī, after they became independent from each other. In another passage that mentions Kaushikī’s emergence from Pārvatī in a different manner, the relationship between Kauśikī and Pārvatī approaches more to an equal footing than subordination. In SP Bh 60.1–5, Sanatkumāra answers Vyāsa’s question of why Kauśikī was sent to Mt. Vindhya: Vindhya practised tapas to propitiate Pārvatī, who, satisfied, offered to grant him a boon (SP Bh 60.3); he wished that she would stay on him forever, to which she agreed (4); she, splitting herself in two, sent one half of herself—namely Kauśikī—away to annihilate demons (5). In this passage, Pārvatī is one half and Kauśikī the other half of the original unity of Pārvatī. The demarcation between Pārvatī and Kauśikī is also manifest in the contrast between their characters: Pārvatī is a faithful wife and affectionate mother, while Kauśikī is a bellicose virgin.

On the other hand, the unity of Kauśikī with Pārvatī remains after their separation. SP 62.60 states that Sumbha and Nisumbha wished to be invincible and invulnerable to everyone but the maiden who is Mother of the world. This wish works as a prediction of their coming death at the hand

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38 The compound mūrtiśṭhānam, supported by all the MSS of the S recension, is peculiar. I have not come across any other occurrence of it. For this word, R reads mūrtiś cāsī and the A recension mūrtiśṭhāsi, of which the former is probably a corruption of the latter, and the latter looks like a secondary improvement from the reading of the S recension. The expression mūrtiśṭhα occurs once in SP 29.70cd: nilalohitamūrtiśṭhαm punaś cakre vapaḥ śubham ‘he (i.e. Śiva) resumed the form standing for the embodiment as Nilalohita (one of the forms of Śiva).’ Other viable alternatives include mūrtiśṭhαne, which sounds better from the viewpoint of the sentence construction, and the vocative mūrtiśṭhαna. None of the alternative readings affects the meaning.

39 SP Bh 60.5: suatanum sa dvidbāhkitām agner diptām śikhām iva |
| dāhaya dānavendrānam prahinot kaushikīm ataḥ ||.

40 SP 62.60:
| jagannātavaiva yā kanyā vinā tasyāḥ pitāmaha |
| mā bhātūm avayor deva sadā mṛtyuparājyau ||.

The reading jagannātava is supported only by R, whereas S2, S3, and the A recension read jagannatāvā. However, the meaning of the latter, constructed with kanyā, that is ‘the maiden who resembles the mother of the world’, is insufficiently strong to qualify as the condition for death. S3 reads jagatpatē ca, which means together with kanyā ‘the daughter (kanyā) of the Lord of the world (i.e. Śiva)’. But this reading does not fit the context, because Sumbha and Nisumbha set this condition for their deaths, thinking it
of ‘the maiden who is Mother of the world’, who is Kaušīkī in the course of story. In this phrase ‘a maiden’ (kanyā) points to Kaušīkī because she is considered to be a virgin and ‘the Mother of the world’ (jagamātrī) is a usual epithet of Pārvatī, so that this expression implies that Kaušīkī is Pārvatī herself. Furthermore, Pārvatī is, in a eulogy dedicated to her by the gods, called ‘one who tears the demon Mahiṣā’ (asuramahiṣadāraṇīm), ‘the slayer of Sumbha’ (sumbhamārīm) and ‘the death of Nisumbha’ (nisumbhasya mṛtyum). She is also described as ‘riding an excellent vehicle to which big lions are yoked’ (mahāsiṃhayuktātivāhām); riding on a chariot drawn by lions is one of Kaušīkī’s distinguishing features in the Kaušīkī cycle (see 4.3.2). When Pañcaćudā praised Pārvatī with a number of epithets, one of her epithets was ‘the slayer of Mahiṣa, Sumbha and Nisumbha’; subsequently, they attributed to her a lion chariot, equipment of various weapons and armour, and a standard made of the tail feathers of peacocks. These epithets, in which the deeds and attributes of Kaušīkī-Vindhyavāsini are impossible to satisfy.

41Kaušīkī’s virginity is to be discussed on p. 91ff. in 4.2.
42While the gods praise Kaušīkī for her saving them from the demons, they say that she is the Mother of the worlds (SP 67.18ab), but here she seems to be called so in a figurative sense.
43SP Bh 32, p. 200 ll. 3–5. For Bhatṭarā’s editorial problem of this eulogy, see n. 30. I read sumbhamārīm for Bhatṭarā’s sundamārīm, following S1, although S2 and S3 read approximately sundamārīm. Bhatṭarā’s niśumbhasya is corrected to niśumbhasya, based on the S recension (see p. 84 in 4.2).
44SP Bh 32, p. 201 l. 20f. In the eulogy are several other epithets that describe Pārvatī as a warlike goddess in full arms and panoply and killing demons.
45SP 29.196cd–199ab:

namo mahiṣahatiṃgayā tathā sumbhasiṃsambha yoḥ || 196 ||
namo siṃharatimgayā ca śūlinayā ca namo namo || 197 ||
namo mudgaradhārinayā kavacinyai namo namo || 197 ||
namo tāṇūradhārinayā dhārinayā jagato namo namo || 198 ||
namo dhunurdharasayā ca khaḍginayai ca namo namo || 198 ||
namo pīnccadhāvajinyai ca dhārinayā paṭṭīsasyai ca ||

‘The lady who rides a lion chariot’ (siṃharathinī) in 197a can mean that she either rides a chariot drawn by lions or has a lion as her vehicle. Pārvatī is described as riding on a lion in a eulogy dedicated to her by Viṣṇu in the Gokarna-Māhātmya in the Kaušīkī cycle (SP Bh 60.49; see p. 117 in 4.3.2). Concerning the epithet ‘the lady who makes peacocks’ tail-feathers her standard’ (pīnccadhāvajini) in 199a, Nidrā-Vindhyavāsini is described as adorned with a soaring standard made of peacocks’ tail-feathers at her side in HV 47.44ab (dhvajena sīkhbarhānām ucekṛtena samipatāḥ). A similar epithet (mayuvapakṣadhwajini) also occurs in a hymn to her interpolated after HV 47.54 (App. I, No. 8, 1.10). In the Kaušīkī cycle, Kaušīkī’s chariot is depicted as shining with a soaring golden pole with a dancing peacock on top (SP 64.39). In addition, Pārvatī is addressed as Kaušīkī and Kātyāyāni in Pañcaćudā’s eulogy at issue (SP 29.193cd). In Viṣṇu’s eulogy to Pārvatī in the Gokarna-Māhātmya, she is addressed as Kaušīkī Vindhyavāsini (SP Bh 60.40d), as well as Bhadrakālī (40c) and Durgā (41a), although many other goddesses are also identified with Pārvatī here (see n. 97 in 4.3.2), as in Pañcaćudā’s eulogy. In Nandin’s eulogy in SP 69.11–14, in the Kaušīkī cycle, she is also addressed as Kaušīkī (13a), Vindhyavāsini (13d) and Kātyāyāni (14a).
ascribed to Pārvatī, indicate that Pārvatī incorporates Kauśikī into her personality, which means that she has remained the original unity of goddesses ever after Kauśikī, as well as other goddesses such as Bhadrakālī and Kālakarnī in SP₃₂, was separated from her. In this case, what is significant is that Pārvatī is inclusive of Kauśikī and not vice versa. Although Kauśikī was equated with Pārvatī in SP 62.60, the phrase can be regarded as exceptional because it serves a special aim to set an impossible condition of death based on a common idea that virginity and motherhood are incompatible.

To conclude, Pārvatī and Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsini are demarcated as independent personalities, of which Kauśikī is subordinate to Pārvatī, and, at the same time, Pārvatī retains the original unity, being inclusive of Kauśikī, even after their separation. Kauśikī herself, as mentioned earlier, is not a single personality but a unity inclusive of the Mothers as her subordinates. It should be noted that ‘the original unity’ does not have any historical sense. From a historical viewpoint, as mentioned earlier, Pārvatī as a separate personality from Kauśikī and the Mothers, Pārvatī as a mythic figure in the Śaiva mythology, is original at least in the period dealt with in the present study. ‘The original unity’ of Pārvatī developed later as a result of an attempt to integrate the local and folk-origin goddesses into the Śaiva fold. In other words, Pārvatī, in the Skandapurāṇa, had evolved from a mythic figure as Śiva’s consort to the unity of goddesses, whom the present author calls the Consort Goddess (see 1.2.1), by extending her personality over the warlike goddesses and the terrifying Mothers. At the same time, by isolating the warlike and terrifying goddesses from this theological unity as independent personalities when it is required (e.g. when they use violence), she stands aloof from these goddesses, consolidating her distinct, Brahmanical character as an ideal wife and mother.

46 The eulogy to Pārvatī by the gods, mentioned above, also contains descriptions of her that refer to a dreadful nature and ugly appearance, which shows that Cāmuṇḍā-type goddesses were also absorbed into Pārvatī. For instance, ‘one whose vanity case is filled with fat, blood, entrails and marrow’ (vapāṣṇonitāntrovasāpāryñabhāṇyan on p. 199, l. 19f) and ‘one who has big knees and a pendulous belly’ (mahājānulambodarāṁ on p. 200, l. 24–p. 201 l. 1).