The rise of the warriors goddess in ancient India

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Chapter 4

Vindhyavāsinī in the Skandapurāṇa

4.1 Vindhyavāsinī in the Śaiva Myths

In the previous chapter, we argued that Vindhyavāsinī is, as it were, an intruder into the myths of Viṣṇu-Kṛṣṇa related in the Harivaṃśa, on account of the considerable difficulties encountered in assimilating her to Ekānaṃśa, a sister of Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva. Therefore, the claim that Vindhyavāsinī was originally closely related to the Bhāgavata context is untenable. Furthermore, there are also difficulties in considering her a Vaiṣṇava goddess, because her association with Nidrā, which brought her into the Vaiṣṇava context, was known at an earlier period only in Kṛṣṇa’s birth story. In that case, how can her relationship with the Śaiva context be appraised? Was her myth closely associated with Śaiva mythology in its formative period, and later adapted to the Bhāgavata one? In order to answer this question and open this chapter, we shall turn to the narrative of Layer A of the Kauśikī cycle in the Skandapurāṇa, which functions as a link between the Vindhyavāsinī myth and the myths of Pārvatī, Śiva’s Consort, as a part of Śaiva mythology. The role that Layer A played in connecting the Kauśikī cycle with the Śaiva myths in the Skandapurāṇa was studied in Chapter Two (2.2). Here, it will be studied from the perspective of the historical development of the Pārvatī myths. In the Layer A narrative, which is embedded in the main story of the Skandapurāṇa after Śiva married Pārvatī and before he undertook to impregnate her with their future son, Skanda, Pārvatī practised tapas and succeeded in obtaining a fair, golden, complexion by sloughing off her dark skin. Kauśikī was then born out of this dark slough, who was Vindhyavāsinī herself because she settled her abode on a peak of the Vindhya mountains at Pārvatī’s command.1 The contentious point here is whether the mo-

1The epithet Vindhyavāsinī occurs singly in SP 68.16b and 69.13d and alongside with Kauśikī in SPbh 60.40d and SP 69.64c. Among them SP 69.13d and SPbh 60.40d are in the
tif of Pārvatī changing her complexion historically preceded the motif of Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsini being born from her slough. If the former motif had existed separately, preceding the latter, it would allow for the possibility that Vindhyavāsini’s myth developed supplementarily to and under the influence of Pārvatī’s myths in Śaiva mythology.

The motif of Pārvatī changing her complexion does not appear in any literature older than the Skandapurāṇa, to the best of this author’s knowledge. On the matter of her complexion, the Mahābhārata offers a faint clue that she was considered to be golden-coloured. When the Pāṇḍava brothers and their wives visited Dhṛtarāṣṭra in his retreat, Saṃjaya introduced them one by one to the ascetics who gathered to see them. Subhadrā, Kṛṣṇa’s sister and Arjuna’s wife, was presented immediately after Draupadī at 15.32.10, in which she was described as ‘shining like the purest gold (kanakottamabhā)’ and compared to Gaurī, who is likely to be Pārvatī here, since the preceding verse compares Draupadī to Lākṣmī. Though kanakottamabhā is an adjective applied to Subhadrā, not Gaurī, the point of comparison between them is possibly their golden appearance. On the other hand, in Kālidāsa’s Kumārasambhava, which contains Pārvatī’s story from birth to her eulogies to Pārvatī and these epithets are applied to Pārvatī. Concerning the relationship between Pārvatī and Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsini, see 2.3.

2MBh 15.32.10:
asya tu pārśve kanakottamabhā yaśā prabhā mūrtimati gaurya|
madhye sthitāśā bhagini devaśyā ca kāravatāpantīmasya taṣa[y].

Kanakottamabhā, with a wiggly line under “mabhā in the critical edition, may have been kanakottamatoig, which some manuscripts read. However, this does not affect the following argument, because the alternate reading, which means ‘having a skin like the purest gold’, also intends to depict the subject’s golden complexion. In addition, yaśā prabhā in pāda b, with a wiggly line under it in the critical edition, does not make sense and is almost certainly corrupt. Madhye in pāda c is also doubtful.

3MBh 15.32.9:
iyam punah padmadalayatākṣi madhyam vayaḥ kimcid iva sprānti |
nilotpalabhā puraveva kṛṣṇā sthitā mūrtimati laṁkṣīm].

A sharp contrast between Draupadī’s dark complexion and Subhadrā’s golden one is clearly intended in the two verses (9 and 10). In verse 9, however, it is very unlikely that the point of comparison between Draupadī and Lākṣmī is their dark complexion (for the identification of Draupadā with Śri-Lākṣmī in the Mahābhārata, see Hiltebeitel 1990, chapters 7 and 8). In addition to this example Pārvatī is called Gaurī (‘Fair Lady’) a few times in the Mahābhārata: 3.82.131a (mahādevyā gauryāḥ), 10.7.8d (gaurīdhaya- vallabhau), 14.8.28d (gaurīṣam). However, although the fact that in the Skandapurāṇa, the epithet Gaurī is used only after the event of her complexion change (SPbh 166.11c and 171.100c) seems to imply that the epithet is consciously used to describe her complexion, it is not certain that this is also true of the Mahābhārata. ‘Gaurī’ could have been used simply as one of her epithets, without consciously referring to her complexion. Furthermore, it is also uncertain if a fair complexion was the actual cause for the application of this epithet to Pārvatī. In the Mahābhārata, Gaurī is used as Varuṇa’s wife’s name four or five times. It is also the name of a river and of an Apsaras. The adjective, gaur, from which the feminine gaury derives, also conveys the sense of ‘shining, bright’. Except for 15.32.10, I have not yet found any definite reference to Pārvatī’s complexion in the Mahābhārata.
early married life with Śiva, she is compared to a starry night (vibhāvarī) at 5.43 and the night at 7.21, 7.26, and 8.59. However, since the point of comparison is not black coloration in any of the verses, it cannot be determined whether Kālidāsa had any idea that Pārvatī was dark-skinned during the period of her life dealt with in this work.

In order to solve the question of whether the above motif was known before the composition of the Skandapurāṇa, it may be helpful to examine the legend of the Gaurīsikhara, ‘the Peak of Gaurī’, which, according to the Skandapurāṇa, was a peak in the Himalaya where Pārvatī practised tapas and obtained a fair complexion. This setting is significant to the Layer A narrative, because the peak was so named after she had become golden coloured, namely, Gaurī, ‘Fair Lady’, there (SP 59.4 and 69.40cd). As a result, the whole of Layer A can be regarded as a Mahātmya of the Gaurīśikhara (see n. 3 in 2.1). A reference to the Gaurīśikhara has already appeared in descriptions of pilgrimages to sacred places in the Mahābhārata.

5Kumārasambhava:
kim ity apiṣyābharaṇāṇī yauvane dhṛtaṁ tvayā vārdhikasōbhī valkalāṁ |
vada pradoṣe śphaṭacandratārake vibhāvarī gady arunāya kalpate || 5.43
sā saṁbhavaadbhiḥ kusamair latēva ṣvātīḥ udyābbhir iva ṛṣyāmā |
sarid vihaṅgaur ieva liyamānaṁ āmucyamanābharaṇā cakāse || 7.21
kṣaṇodaveva sapenapuriṣa pariṣṭhacandreva śa-raṭryāmā |
navam navakaṣmamanvāsini sā bhūyo bahuḥ darpaṇam addhānā || 7.26
mandorāntaritamārtpinā niśā laksyate śa-ahṛtī satārakā |
tvaṁ maṁ̄ pṛiasakhiṣamāgataś śroṣyateva vacanāni pṛṣṭhataḥ || 8.59.

6In the Skandapurāṇa, the epithets Vibhāvarī and Sarvārī, both meaning ‘a starry night’, are applied to Pārvatī after her complexion change: SP Bh 127.60b (Vibhāvarī), 157.15a (both, in the list of her epithets in a eulogy), 162.39b (Sarvārī), and 162.57b (Vibhāvarī). This suggests that the epithets actually refer to her brightness rather than her black coloration. In some cases, wordplay may have been a significant factor in the choice of epithet. For example, vibhāvarī vāricarī sarvārī sarva-vallabhā (157.15ab), and usīrā sarvarītēm sarvāry amitavikrame (162.39ab).

7Pārvatī is called Gaurī several times, but this does not definitely substantiate the idea that she was regarded as fair-skinned, as discussed in n. 4.

8This origin of the name is also mentioned in an account of the Gaurīśikhara as one of Śiva’s sacred places in SP 167.49–51 (SP Bh 167.53cd–556b). The passage is quoted in n. 8 in 2.1.

9MBh 3.82.131–132:
śīkharām vai mahādevṝ gauryās traiyokṣavatūtāṁ |
samārathya narāḥ śraddhaḥ stanaṅkuṇḍesu saṃviśēt ||
tatrābhinākarn kavānāḥ pitṛdevārcaṁ rataḥ |
hayaṃdham avāpnotī śakruṇoṁ ca gacchati ||
Here Stanakunḍas are also mentioned, though in the plural form rather than the dual as in the Skandapurāṇa (cf. Bischop 2004b, 175). A river called Niśāra, into which Śiva is said to have transformed Pārvatī’s bark garments on the Gaurīśikhara in SP 69.66–70, is mentioned in MBh 3.82.119–120. According to Dey (1927, s.v. Gaurīśikhara), Gaurīśikhara is the same as Gaurīśāntika, which is identified as a peak near Mount Everest on current maps (for example, see Bartholomew’s map of the Indian Subcontinent). SP 57.104 refers to an Agrāraṇya as the place where a tiger that accompanied Pārvatī during her tapas became her Gaṇapati thanks to her, which means that this Agrāraṇya is the
There, the peak is somehow related to Gauri, who is certainly Parvati because she is described as Mahādevi, but how it is related to her is not explained. Kumārasambhava 5.6 mentions a peak (śikhara) called Gauri as the peak where she went to practise tapas in order to obtain Śiva as her husband, and suggests that it was named after her because of this event. The Skandapurāṇa, on the other hand, calls the place where she practised this first tapas Citrakūṭa11 and the place where she practised her second tapas to obtain a fair complexion Gaurīśikhara. As her second tapas sounds like a repetition of her first one, it would be not unreasonable to suppose that the Gaurīśikhara first came to be associated with her first tapas and then, once the motif of her second tapas resulting in her complexion change had taken shape, it was assigned as the site of her second tapas because of the aptness of its name (“the Peak where she became Gauri”).12 If so, it would
be probable that Kālidāsa did not know the motif of Pārvatī’s complexion change.

The examination made so far has failed to reveal any evidence that the motif of Pārvatī’s complexion change was known separately from the motif of Kaūśikī-Vindhyāvāsinī’s birth before the composition of the Skanda-purāṇa. In the Layer A narrative of the Kaūśikī cycle, the dark-skinned Kaūśikī is born from the dark ‘sheath’ (kośī) that Pārvatī sloughed off in order to attain her golden complexion (SP 58.7–8). Thus, by interpreting the epithet Kaūśikī as deriving from kośi,13 Kaūśikī is inseparably linked with Pārvatī’s slough. Moreover, the dark coloration of Kaūśikī-Vindhyāvāsinī can also be explained as a result of Pārvatī’s ‘dark’ (krṣṇā) slough having been transformed into her.14 Therefore, the two motifs, Pārvatī’s complexion change and Kaūśikī-Vindhyāvāsinī’s birth, are very likely to have been invented jointly in order to associate Kaūśikī-Vindhyāvāsinī with Pārvatī and, consequently, integrate the Vindhyāvāsinī myth into the Śaiva myths. This means that Kaūśikī-Vindhyāvāsinī was originally independent from Pārvatī and her myth from the Śaiva myths.

4.2 The Reconstruction of the Proto-Myth of Vindhyāvāsinī

From the arguments presented so far, it can be surmised that a myth of Vindhyāvāsinī once existed independently from either the Bhāgavata/Vaiṣṇava or Śaiva myths. This myth, the proto-myth of Vindhyāvāsinī, can be reconstructed from features preserved in common in the Bhāgavata/Vaiṣṇava HV version and the Śaiva one in the Kaūśikī cycle of the Skanda-purāṇa. The comparison between them brings to light the fact that the following features are common to both versions of her myth:

1. she had an abode in the Vindhya mountains
2. she killed the demon brothers Sumbha and Nisumbha there
3. she was dark-skinned
4. she was a virgin
5. the gods performed an abhiṣeκa (a consecration ritual) for her
6. Indra adopted her as a sister

work, this episode is located to Nandigiri in Kashmir and seems to be conflated with Pārvatī’s first tapas to obtain Śiva as her husband: asmin girau tvayā devi madarthinyā tapah kṛtam | śīvaṁ vupah parītyajya gaurūrīṁṛtiś ca nirmitā∥. See Bisschop 2004b, 174ff.

13DM 5.40 provides an etymology of this epithet from śarīrakośa: śarīrakośād yat tasyāḥ pārvatīga niḥrtaṁbūkā| kaūśikīti samasteṣu tato lokeṣu gīyate ∥. This etymology is also implied in VmP 22.6ab (yathā ca pārvatikosāt samabhūtā hi kaūśikī) and 28.25cd (teṣa-kūrṇāyasthitā veyam kauśikī kauśikī hy abham∥; see n. 46). The meaning of the epithet Kaūśikī will be discussed later in this chapter (see p. 93 and n. 43).

14See p. 89ff for Vindhyāvāsinī’s dark complexion.
7. she was called Kauśikī.

The first feature is the actual meaning of the epithet Vindhyavāsīṁī. The HV version describes her abode in the Vindhyā mountains in 65.54–5615 and the Kauśikī cycle in 58.27–30. Though the former calls her abode ‘a forest (vana)’ and the latter ‘a peak (śikhara)’, no distinct difference between these ideas about her abode can be discerned as both passages merely offer general descriptions. There are also no clues locating her abode in a particular spot in the mountains.

As for the second feature, because the Harivaṁśa only refers to this exploit,16 it is impossible to say which details from the battle between her and the demons described in the Kauśikī cycle, which covers four and a half chapters from the middle of SP 62 to the end of SP 66, may have been derived from her proto-myth. Here, attention should be drawn to the names of the demon brothers whom Vindhyavāsīṁī killed. Although they are usually known as Śumbha and Niśumbha, S1, the oldest SP manuscript, dated AD 810, and S2, the one a little less old than S1, consistently read Śumbha and Niśumbha.17 In addition, the oldest dated manuscript of the Devimāhātmya, preserved in Nepal, dated Nepal Sv. 229 (AD 1109),18 as well as another manuscript ascribed to the twelfth century on palaeographical grounds,19 also reads Śumbha and Niśumbha. Therefore, it is beyond question that the names of the demon brothers were originally Śumbha and Niśumbha, rather

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15HV 65.54–56:

dṛptakukkutasoṇnādām vanaṁ vīyasanādītam |
chāgāyūthaś ca sampūrṇaṁ aśiruddhaś ca pakṣibhiḥ ||
simhatavādvarāhāṁśaṁ nādena pratinādītam |
vṛksagambhiranīdīṣaṁ kāntāraṁ sarvato utoṁ ||
dīvyabhṛgūraścaraṁ rāharśa ca vibhūṣitaṁ |
devatāryaninādīsaṁ ca śatasah pratinādītam |
sānāṁ tasyāṁ nage vindhye nīrmitāṁ svena tejasa || 56.

16HV 47.49:
tataḥ sumbhanisumbhau ca dānavau nāga caśāṁ |
tau ca kṛtvā mānasi māṁ sānugau nāsyasāṁ ||;

17In S3 the letters of su and śu are usually indistinguishable. The manuscripts belonging to the R and A recensions always read Śumbha and Niśumbha. The critical edition of the Harivaṁśa reads Śumbha and Niśumbha once and Śumbha and Niśumbha once, as quoted in the previous footnote. However, it should be noted that the oldest manuscript used for the critical edition is ascribed to around AD 1100 by the editor (p. XVIII of Introduction), which is later than all manuscripts of the S recension of the Skandapurāṇa.


19This manuscript is in the possession of Sam Fogg (London). I used the photographs of it that Prof. H. Isaacs took and kindly provided for me. Another manuscript preserved in Nepal, dated NS 518 (AD 1398), reads Śumbha and Niśumbha more often than Śumbha and Niśumbha (NGMPP Reel Nr. A1157/12 (MS.No. 1534, ca of Shastri’s Catalogue, though Shastri misreads the date as NS 118)). See Yokochi 1999, notes 1 and 11.
The Kauśikī cycle also contains the story of Sunda and Nisunda (SPbh 60.14–21, SPbh 60.72–SP 62.52), which gives an answer to Vyāsa’s question about the origin of the demons killed by Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī (SPbh 60.14–15). Whether this story was originally a part of the Vindhyavāsinī myth will be examined here. The story runs as follows:

The demon brothers, Sunda and Nisunda, practised tapas at Gokarna and were granted immortality by Brahmā, unless their deaths were by each other’s hand. They held a council with the chiefs of the demons and decided to commence the war against the gods. Leading the demons’ army, they conquered the world by destroying the social order and defeated the gods in heaven. Then, they settled themselves on the foothills of the Vindhya mountains. In order to kill them, Brahmā created a beauty called Tilottamā and went with her and the other gods to the Vindhya mountains to propitiate Śiva. Śiva appeared there in the form of a liṅga at their request and, when Tilottamā had walked around the liṅga clockwise, four faces emerged on its four sides and gave her the power of sexual desire. Then, Śiva told the gods that this place in the Vindhya mountains would be called Maṇḍalesvara and that he would be present there as Maṇḍalesvara [in the form of the four-faced liṅga]. He blessed Tilottamā, predicting the success of her task. After the gods sent Tilottamā to the demons, Śiva, [taking shape of another liṅga], appeared again in the midst of the huddling gods and was named Pinḍaresvara. Then, all the gods returned to their abodes. To the south on the foothills of the Vindhya mountains, the demon brothers saw Tilottamā singing a sweet song under a Aśoka tree. As soon as they saw her, they were overcome by lust and fought for her to death. When they died, they emitted semen in lust for her. Whereupon, their souls left their bodies and became two

\[\text{SP 62.52, in which the demon brothers declared their names at birth, seems to imply an etymological significance to their names. There, one said ‘I am sumbha towards my enemies, [hence I am Sumbha], and the other said ‘I am also sumbha, the second one (ni-) [hence I am Nisumbha]’ (ekas tatrāvaiḍ bāḷaḥ sumbho ‘haṁ dvāṣatāṁ iti nisumbho ’py aham anyas tu bālas tatrāvadat tādā ∥). Mayrhofer enters a verb-root sobh into his Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindoarischen and states that it probably means ‘schlagen’, although he adds ‘Nicht klar’ at the end of the subject. According to Prof. H. Isaacson (an e-mail dated on 25th Nov., 2004), the verb forms derived from this verb-root, such as imperatives, sumbha and nisumbha, and a finite form nisumbhayati, occasionally occur in Buddhist tantric texts, and the root is explained as meaning to destroy or kill. For example, on the sentence om sumbha nisumbha in the Guhyasamājatantra Paṭāla 14 (p. 86 in Gaekwad Ed.), sumbha is explained as a vocative meaning nisūdaka (‘destroyer’ or ‘slayer’) and nisumbha is glossed as niḥśeṣaṇa māraṇa (‘destroy totally’), in the Pradipoddhyotanatīkāsātkōtvīvākyā, a commentary of this text (p. 153 in Cakravartī’s Ed.).]
boys, Sumbha and Nisumbha.

In this way, Sunda and Nisunda are the fathers of Sumbha and Nisumbha respectively and Tilottamā is their mother, of sorts.

This story can be traced back to an account where the demon brothers Sunda and Upasunda, after conquering the whole world, brought themselves to their deaths through lust for Tilottamā, found in the Adiparvan of the Mahābhārata (1.200.18–204.26). Its plot is not much different from the version in the Kauśīki cycle,21 except for the scene with Śiva. In this account, when Brahmā ordered Tilottamā, who had been created by Viśvakarman at his command, to go and seduce the demon brothers, Tilottamā, before taking leave, walked round all the gods and sages who had gathered at Brahmā’s palace. There, Śiva, in an anthropomorphic form, not in the form of a liṅga, is said to have taken a seat separate from the other gods, on the southern side of Brahmā, facing east, while the other gods took seats on Brahmā’s northern side.22 As she walked round clockwise, three faces sprang from Śiva on his right, back, and left sides in that order, brought about by his desire to watch her. It is also said that a thousand eyes sprang from Indra, all over his bodies.23 In the Anuśīsanaparvan of the MBh, in reply to Pārvatī’s question of why his four faces were as they were (13.127.46–47a), Śiva told

21There are parallel passages in both texts, which yield the same etymological interpretation for the name Tilottamā.

SP 62.4ab–5ab:

\[\text{tilam. tilam. samādyāya ratnebhyaś cārudarśanam |} \\
\text{sasarja kamanīyaṁīm arigānām vaṅgūśamvanām ||} \\
\text{tilottameti tasyāś ca nāma cakre pitāmahaḥ;} \\
\]

MBh 1.203.17:

\[\text{tilam tilam samāniya ratnānām yad vinirmitā |} \\
\text{tilottamety atas tasyā nāma cakre pitāmahaḥ ||} \\
\text{(some of the manuscripts read samādāya for samāniya).} \]

A similar passage also occurs in the Anuśīsanaparvan of the MBh, discussed below. The passage, 13.128.1, is quoted in n. 24. The passage, 13.128.1, is quoted in n. 24.

22MBh 1.203.20–21:

\[\text{sā tatheti pratijñāya namaskṛtya pitāmaham |} \\
\text{cakāra mandalam tatra vmbūdhānāṁ pradakṣiṇam |} \\
\text{prāṇimukho bhagavān āste daksinena mahēśvarah |} \\
\text{devaś caitottarenāsan sarvatas tv rṣayo 'bhavan ||} \\
\text{prānmukho bhagavān aṣṭe daksinena mahēśvarah |} \\
\text{devaś caiva taretrenāsan sarvatas tv rṣayo 'bhavan ||} \\
\text{For a different interpretation of this passage, see Bakker 2001a, 45.} \]

23MBh 1.203.22–26:

\[\text{kurvantya tu tasya tatra mandalam tatpradaksinam |} \\
\text{indraḥ sthāṇur ca bhagavān dhaiyena pratyaavasthitau |} \\
\text{drāṣṭukāmasya cātyaṛhaṁ gātāyaḥ pāśvatas tadā |} \\
\text{anyad aśicātākṣānāṁ daksinam niḥśrtaṁ mukham |} \\
\text{prāśthataḥ pavartaṁyaḥ paścimāṁ niḥśrtaṁ mukham |} \\
\text{gātāyaḥ cotaraṁ pāśveṁ uttaraṁ niḥśrtaṁ mukham |} \\
\text{mahendrasingāpi netrānāṁ pāśvetaḥ prāśthataḥ 'grataḥ |} \\
\text{rakṣāntam niśīlānāṁ sahasram sarvato 'bhavat̄ ||} \\
\text{evan catarmukhaḥ sthāṇur mahādeva 'bhavat̄ purā |} \\
\text{tathā sahasranātram ca bahūva balasūdanāḥ ||} \\
\text{25.} \]
They that he had become four-faced, in his desire to watch Tilottamā, as this extraordinary beauty created by Brahmā walked around him clockwise, and added a brief iconographical and theological explanation about each of the faces (12.128.1–6). This account seems to have taken the scene where Śiva became four-faced from the Tilottamā story in the Adiparvan and to have redacted it as a myth of Śiva, adding a Śaiva explanation about each of four faces.

Compared with these two accounts in the Mahābhārata, it is conspicuous in the account found in the Kauśikī cycle that Śiva appears in the form of a liṅga and that Tilottamā's circumambulation results in the origin of catur-mukhaliṅga, four-faced liṅga. Moreover, this account in the Kauśikī cycle offers a different interpretation of why Śiva became four-faced, here four-faced liṅga, as shown in the aforementioned summary. SP 62.25 is worthy of note on this matter. The first three pādas of the verse state that ‘four faces of Devadeva (i.e. Śiva) sprang forth on the four sides [of the liṅga] in order to achieve the gods’ aim’ (mukhāni devadevasya suryaṁ artha-siddhayey | catvārī niyayur dikṣu), which sums up the main point of the preceding story. Then, the last pāda continues that that was ‘not because of his surprise at her beauty’ (na tasyā rūpavismayaṁ ||), in which the reason of Śiva’s four-faced appearance given in both accounts in the Mahābhārata, i.e. his desire to see the charming Tilottamā, is explicitly denied. In light

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of this, it is evident that the story of the demons Sunda and Nisunda was not an original component of the proto-myth of Vindhyavāsini, because it has a source different from the Vindhyavāsini myth and, furthermore, because the main object of its incorporation into the Kauśikī cycle is probably to provide a Śaiva authentic version of the origin of four-faced ōṅga/Siva in the Tilottamā story.

In addition in the Kauśikī cycle, not only the scene where Tilottamā seduces the demon brothers but also that in which four faces emerge from the ōṅga on the event of Tilottamā’s circumambulation were set in the Vindhyā mountains.27 There, the ensuing caturmukhaliṅga was named Maṇḍaleśvara and another ōṅga that subsequently appeared on the site was named Pिन्धारेशvara. Hence the story of Tilottamā can also be regarded as a Māhātmāya of Maṇḍaleśvara, as well as Pिन्धारेशvara, situated in the Vindhyā mountains.28

27In the account of the Ādi Parvan, the setting where Tilottamā seduced the demons and caused their deaths was the Vindhyā mountains (vindhyasya pr. the in MBh 1.204.6ab), which may have been one of the reasons why the story was incorporated into the Kauśikī cycle. On the other hand, the place in which Ōṅga became four-faced was located in Brahmā’s palace in Brahmā’s heaven in the Ādi Parvan.

28In SP 62.27cd–30 Ōṅga explains the derivation of the name Maṇḍaleśvara, which is the name of the ōṅga and the sacred place where the ōṅga was installed, and also the benefits of Maṇḍaleśvara. Concerning Pिन्धारेशvara, SP 62.36–39 relates the emergence of the ōṅga, the derivation of the name, and the benefits of the ōṅga.

Maṇḍaleśvara and Pिन्धारेशvara have not yet been located in the Vindhyā mountains. One of the candidates is the Munḍeśvari Temple built atop of a hill situated close to the village of Ramgarh to the southwest of Bhabua, District Kaimur, Bihar. In the vicinity of the temple were found two halves of a stone slab bearing an inscription (edited by Banerji in 1907–08 and re-edited by Majumdar in 1920), which records that, in the reign of Udayasena, given the titles Mahāśamantā, Mahāpratihāra and Mahārāja, Gomibhaṭa in the office of the danāyaka founded a Matūra of Vinīṭeśvara, which seems to have been attached to the temple of Nārāyaṇa (śrī)nārāyanadevakulasyā). Subsequently, it refers twice to the ‘feet of the Lord Maṇḍaleśvara’ (śrīmaṇḍaleśavarasvamipāda), and says something to the effect that Gomibhaṭa also arranged to supply provisions and requisites for temple rituals for the sake of this Lord. It bears a date of the thirtieth year of an unspecified era. If this era is the Harṣa era, which seems to be the most likely, the date would correspond to AD 636 (Banerji 1907–08, whereas Majumdar (1920, 24–27) argues in favour of the Gupta era; Gai (1985) assigns the inscription to the first half or middle of the sixth century on palaeographical grounds, though he does not try to specify the era). The present Munḍeśvari Temple is ascribed to the early seventh century on stylistic grounds (Williams 1982, 166–168; Meister 1981, 77; for the bibliography about this temple, see the latter paper, notes 1 and 5; in addition, Deva 1985; 1990; Śrīvāsta & Pāṭhaṅka (eds.) 1994). The main object of current worship, the goddess Munḍeśvari, is evidently not a part of the original temple, and the original main image installed at the centre of the sanctum is a caturmukhaliṅga. The present caturmukhaliṅga with four uniform faces is a later replacement, dated to later than the twelfth century by Deva (1990, 160). However, there is an old caturmukhaliṅga in the courtyard, which may have been the original main image (Deva 1990, 161). The feature of its four faces cannot be discerned because of its severely abraded condition, and therefore it is difficult to date. The relation between the extant temple, this ōṅga and the three names recorded in the
Her third feature is her dark complexion. In the case of the Harivaṃśa, as discussed in the previous chapter, the dark complexion attributed both to Nidrā-Vindhyavāsini and Ekānaṃśa must have been a strong influence on their association with each other. On the other hand, it could not be determined whether the dark complexion was also a reason for the assimilation of Vindhyavāsini to Nidrā, or Nidrā’s dark complexion was given to Vindhyavāsini as a result of their assimilation. In the Kauśikī cycle, Vindhyavāsini’s dark complexion was interpreted as a consequence of Pārvatī’s dark slough being embodied in her. As discussed in the previous section, however, there are no clues pointing to Pārvatī being considered dark-skinned before the composition of the Skandapurāṇa. Therefore, it is very likely that

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29 When a pond was brought into being from her tears of pleasure at the promise of having a son (SP 58.4–5), Pārvatī dived into the pond and shed her dark slough (58.6–7), from which Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsini was born (58.8). In SP 69.54, Pārvatī pointed out to Śiva a pond on the Gaurīśikhara and explained that it had emerged from her dark slough that had been shed when Brahmā promised her that she could become golden-coloured. This pond must be the same one as the one into which Pārvatī dived. Later, Śiva named the pond Nilakunḍa and predicted the benefits to be attained by bathing in it (69.62–64). One of the benefits is to become a Mahāgaṇapati of Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsini after death (64), which suggests a close association between the pond and Vindhyavāsini.
the dark complexion was originally attributed to Vindhyavāsinī rather than Pārvatī. Moreover, the fact that her dark complexion is indispensable in the episode of her birth as a manifestation of Pārvatī suggests that it must have been one of her distinguishing characteristics. This means that her dark complexion is likely to have been one of her original attributes and, as such, would also have been a reason to assimilate her to Nīdṛā and Ekanāṃśā in the Bhāgavata/Vaiṣṇava version of her myth found in the Harivaṃśa.

Vindhyavāsinī is compared to the goddess of night in SP 58.8cd. The comparison evolved into their identification in a version of the episode of Vindhyavāsinī’s birth in the Matsyaapurāṇa (see n. 2 in 2.1). Ordered by Brahmā, the goddess of night entered into the womb of Mena, the wife of Himālaya and mother of Pārvatī, and dyed the embryo Pārvatī black, which implied that she became Pārvatī’s dark skin. Thus Vindhyavāsinī, into whom Pārvatī’s sloughed dark skin was transformed, was the goddess of night herself.

This development from comparison to identification with the goddess of night seems to have ensued from an influence of the HV version of Vindhyavāsinī’s birth. At the same time, this development may have been intended to make Pārvatī’s dark coloration accessory rather than original.

MtP 154.56–84 relates that Brahmā gave orders to the goddess of night and praised her. Her carrying out his orders is related in 154.85–95. When Brahmā called the goddess of night to mind in order to give her orders, she is described as Nīṣā who was born from his body in former times (MtP 154.56cd: niśāṃ sasmāra bhagavān svatanaḥ pūrva-sambhavām). The expression probably echoes SP 58.8cd (viśvaṃ srksato dhātur dehāvd iva purā niṣā), in which Kauśikī’s emergence from Pārvatī’s dark slough is compared to the emergence of Nīṣā from the body of Dhārti (i.e. Brahmā) in former times.

Brahmā first addressed the goddess who had just been born from the dark slough as Nīṣā in MtP 157.15c, and later, in 17cd, he assigned her an abode in the Vindhya mountains (gaccha vindhyācaḷaṃ tatra surakāryaṃ kariṣyasi). Her epithet Kauśikī is also mentioned later in 19ab (ity uktā kauśikī devī vindhyāsaḷaṃ jagūma ha). Although she is said to have been born from Pārvatī’s sloughed dark skin (157.13–14), the word used to denote this skin here is neither kośā as in SP 58.7–8 nor śarākośā as in DM 5.40 (see n. 13), but tvac. Hence, it is not explained why the epithet Kauśikī is related to her emergence from Pārvatī’s skin, nor is any other etymology of this epithet given. MtP 157.13–14 reads as follows:

tatas tatyāja bhrīṅgāṇaṃ phulaniṇotpalatvacam ||
tvacā sa cābhavāt dipā ghaṇṭāhastā trilocaṇā ||
nānābharaṇapūrṇāṇi pīṭakaśeyadhāriṇī||

In the Harivaṃśa, Viṣṇu gave Nīdṛā, the goddess of sleep, orders to enter Yaśodā’s womb, and Vindhyavāsinī, who was born from Yaśodā, is Nīdṛā herself (see 3.1). This Nīdṛā in the Harivaṃśa corresponds with the goddess of night in the Matsyaapurāṇa. In addition, the goddess of night, alias Vindhyavāsinī, is also called Ekanāṃśā in the MtP version (154.75a and 157.16b). There is also an attempt to offer an etymological explanation for this epithet Ekanāṃśā, though what was intended is unclear, in MtP 154.74–75ab:

tanus tuvāpi sabhā saikāmānī bhaviṣyati|
vāpāmaṇā tu saṁyuktā tvam amāgāṁ bhaviṣyasi||
ekānāṃśāti lokas tvāya varade pājāyasyati||

For Ekanāṃśā, see 3.2.
With regard to the next feature, her virginity, it should first be pointed out that it does not mean that she was just a child. Some passages describing her in the HV account point to her maturity and, in the Kauśika cycle, she is explicitly described as a girl in puberty. In HV 47.45c, she is said to have kept her observance of celibacy (kaumāram vratam āsthāya) without any connection to the plot. In the Kauśika cycle, by contrast, her virginity is an indispensable constituent of the narrative at two points: one where Sumbha and Nisumbha receive a boon from Brahma, and the other where they court her.

It was a popular theme in Hindu mythology that, as a reward for tapas, Brahmā would fulfil demons’ wishes for immortality, while necessarily attaching some exceptional, sometimes tricky, condition for their death. This theme, as found in the Kauśika cycle, has Sumbha and Nisumbha choose a condition where they can be killed only by the hand of ‘the maiden (kanyā) who is Mother of the world (jagannātā)’ (SP 62.60). The reason for their choice was that virginity and motherhood are normally incompatible in a woman, therefore nobody could kill them. As could be expected, the qualification of being both virgin and mother was finally satisfied by KauśiKi-Vindhyavāsini, who was a virgin and a manifestation of the Mother of the world, namely Pārvati.

Her virginity as the qualification for slaying of Sumbha and Nisumbha is also mentioned in later Purūnas, the Mutsypurūṇa and the Śivapurūṇa. In the Mutsypurūṇa, during the battle between the gods and the army of the demon Tāraka, Viṣṇu revealed to Sumbha (i.e. Sumbha) that he would be killed by a maiden (kumārivadhya). It may be interesting to note that under the same circumstances Viṣṇu revealed to Mahiṣa that he would be killed by a woman (yositvadhya). This means that, in the passages in the Mutsypurūṇa, Vindhyavāsini was distinguished from Mahiśāsuramardini by her virginity. ŚP Vāyaviyasanāhitā 1.24–27, which relates the emergence of KauśiKi-Vindhyavāsini from Pārvati’s sloughed skin, includes the motif that Brahmā gave a boon to Sumbha and Nisumbha, here called Śumbha and

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33HV 48.30bc: gajakumbhopamastanī rathavistīrṇagahanā; HV 65.53ab: surāpīśita-pārvabhyaṁ kumbhābhyaṁ upaśobhitā.

34SP 58.9–11 describes her beauty and compares her with Lakṣṇī. In this passage, two adjectives, kimētsamahyuyannatarorājī (9d), one meaning ‘one whose line of hair [on the abdomen] has just faintly appeared’ and the other prathamodgatastani (11a) meaning ‘one whose breasts have freshly protruded’, demonstrate that she looked like a pubescent girl.

35The choice of an exceptional condition for death was also applied to the demons Sunda and Upasunda in the story of Tilottamā in the Mahābhārata (1.201.23), as well as their SP alter egos, Sunda and Nisunda, in the same story in the Kauśika cycle (SP, 60.76–79), discussed above.

36For the examination of textual problem of the verse, see n. 40 in 2.3.

37MtP 152.32ab: kumārivadhyo 'si niṣaṃ vimuṇca śumbhāsurasvapatañair aha bhikī].

38MtP 152.24ab: yositvadhyaḥ puruko 'si sāksāt kamalayonīnā]. 153.12ab refers to both prophesies: kaścit strivadhyaṭām prāpto vadha 'ṇyaṣa kumārīkā'.
Niśumbha. When the demons made the wish that their slayer, if any, should be a maiden (kanyā), one of the qualifying characteristics for the maiden was that she should never have enjoyed any contact with men (ajātapum-sparśaratī). 39 These two examples show that Vindhyāvasīnī’s virginity was one of her enduring features in the Śaiva Purāṇas. 40

Her virginity was also an incentive in the motif of her courtship by Sumbha, which is related in detail in SP 63. When the demon brothers had settled themselves in the Vindhya mountains after conquering the gods, their guard, Mūka, found Vindhyāvasīnī on a peak and reported her surpassing charm to Sumbha. Sumbha ordered Mūka to convey his marriage proposal to her. In reply to his proposal, Kauśiki told Mūka that she was yuddhaśūlkā, which means that she required her suitors to fight with her (yuddha) as a nuptial present (śūlka) (SP 63.31–32; also 63.38 and 47ab). This condition implied that her suitors would not only have to fight with her but also defeat her at the risk of their lives, as she said plainly in 63.32, ‘The demon should take me to wife after defeating me. Or, killed by me, he shall become food for crows and jackals’. In SP 58.17cd, on the other hand, Pārvati told Kauśiki that she would become ‘invincible’ (aparājītī) in battle. 41 Combining these two qualifications, yuddhaśūlkā and aparājītā, leads to the idea that she was eternally virginal.

Lastly, the last three features will be discussed together, because all three are closely associated with each other in the Harivaṃśa and two of them in the Kauśiki cycle. Abhisēka is a ritual of consecration through the sprinkling

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39 ŚP Vāyuvāyasamhitā 1.24.24–27:

tathā gataś ca kāleśu yuddhāsa prajāsu ca [sic.]|
daityaṃ śūmbhaśumbhākhyau bhrātarau sambhāvatuḥ|| 24 ||
tābhyaṃ tapobalad datram brahmaṇā paramesṭhinā|
avadhyaṭvam jagaty asmin purusār ahūkhar apī|| 25 ||
aśvapāṇaṃ sparsāraś ca eva bhagaṃ yānāyaṇam|| 26 ||
tyā tu nav vadhah sanykhye tasyāṃ kāmālbhīhātayaḥ|| 27 ||
eti cābhyaṃ prāha brahmaṃ tābhyaṃ praḥa tathātva iti|| 27 ||.

When Brahmā requested of Śiva that he provide a maiden thus qualified to kill them, it is described in 1.24.30b that the maiden would have to be akāmā and kanyakātmakā (‘one who does not have any sexual desire and is essentially a virgin’).

40In chapter 23 of the Haracaritacintāmaṇi, which relates Vindhyāvasīnī’s slaying of Sumbha and Nisumbha, the slayer of these demons was described as a girl of eight (23.6cd: aśtavrāṇ kumāry eva nāhantā nāparāte iti), and Vindhyāvasīnī was said to be eight years old (aśtavrāṇā in 23.9c). In the same chapter it is said that the sage Nārada gave the demons a false report that there was a svayamvara (a bride’s ceremony of self-choice for a husband) to be held for Vindhyāvasīnī and that the demons sent a messenger to court her. The age of eight seems to be the most proper age for marriage for a girl in this text. She was also described as an extraordinary beauty worthy of courting (23.34–38, 87). In addition, Pārvati was said to have married Śiva when she was eight years old (22.3: devi himavatāḥ putrī kāti nilotpaladachaḥ| aśtavrāṇā tapoyuktā bharta-rāmā prāpa dhūryajīm). 41Aparājītā can be taken as either a predicative adjective or an epithet of Kauśiki. She is also described as such in 58.12d. See n. 89.
The Reconstruction of the Proto-Myth

of sacred water. The description of the gods’ performance of an abhiṣeka for Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī covers the whole of chapter 67 in the Kauśikī cycle, which can be summarized as follows.

After her victory over the demons Sumbha and Nisumbha, the gods praised Kauśikī and proposed her consecration. However, she wished to see her parents and receive their permission to be consecrated. In response to the gods’ meditations, Śiva and Pārvatī appeared, gave her their blessings and recommended her to accept the gods’ proposal. Then, Indra ordered the gods to prepare her abhiṣeka. All the gods and other divine beings gathered and consecrated her. At the end, Indra declared that she was his sister and gave her instructions to protect all the earth and so on.

In the Harivamśa, on the other hand, Vindhyavāsinī’s abhiṣeka is stated in Viṣṇu’s prophesy about what would happen to Nidrā after she assumed the appearance of a divine maiden—namely, after she transformed herself into Vindhyavāsinī—and went to heaven: Indra would consecrate her in heaven, adopt her as his sister Kauśikī and assign her an abode in the Vindhyā mountains, where she would kill the demons Sumbha and Nisumbha (47.46–49). Comparing the two accounts, although Indra’s charge in performing Vindhyavāsinī’s abhiṣeka and his adoption of her as his sister are common, there is a considerable difference between the HV and the SP versions concerning the significance of her abhiṣeka; for instance, in the HV version, Vindhyavāsinī was given the epithet Kauśikī and an abode in the Vindhyā mountains by Indra after her abhiṣeka and in the SP version, on the other hand, she was given them by Pārvatī in the beginning of the Kauśikī cycle. In order to examine the significance of the abhiṣeka in Vindhyavāsinī’s proto-myth, we should turn to the earlier passage, that in the Harivamśa, and study it in detail.

In HV 47.46–47, Viṣṇu prophesied that in heaven, Indra, along with the other deities, would consecrate her (i.e. Vindhyavāsinī, into whom Nidrā was transformed) in the manner Viṣṇu instructed and adopt her as his sister, which would result in her appellation of Kauśikī after [Indra’s] lineage name (gotra), Kuśika.42 In this passage, she was consecrated among the gods in heaven by Indra, and this consecration (abhiṣeka) was closely associated with her adoption by Indra as sister and with her name, Kauśikī. In view of this, it is not unreasonable to assume that the abhiṣeka sym-

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42HV 47.46–47:

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\begin{align*}
tatra tvāṁ śatädṛk śakro matpradīṣṭena karanāḥ | 
abhisekeṇa divyena daiva-vadah saka yokṣyate ||

tatraiva tvāṁ bhaganyathē grahīyati sa vāsavaḥ | 
uśisakṣa tu gotreṇa kauśikī tvāṁ bhavasyasi ||.
\end{align*}
\]

One of Indra’s epithets is Kauśika.
bolized that Vindhyavāsini, a goddess tied to a specific location on earth (viz. Vindhyā mountains), attained a position among the gods in heaven, in other words, a position in the Hindu pantheon. This is later defined as that of sister of Indra, the king of the gods in heaven. That she was given the lineage name Kauśikī, deriving from a Vedic sage Kuśika, a typical manner of authorization, strengthens the argument.43

Viṣṇu continued his prophesy. Indra would assign her an abode in the Vindhyā mountains (47.48ab), she would subsequently glorify the earth with thousands of her abodes (47.48cd), and she would kill the demons Sumbha and Nisumbha and their retinue inhabiting the [Vindhyā] mountains, keeping her mind on Viṣṇu (47.49). The statement that she would be placed in the Vindhyā mountains after being consecrated and given the lineage name Kauśikī may sound strange in view of the historical development of her myth. However, it may not need to be so. HV 47.48ab can be paraphrased as follows: Indra, the king of the gods, would give her the office to preside over the Vindhyā mountains,45 as a result of her affiliation with the Hindu pantheon, which was implied in the preceding verses. It may bear some analogy with the contemporary political situation, that is, a Gupta monarch gives a local chieftain the office to control his territory as a result of his

43There are some other possibilities for the derivation of the epithet Kauśikī. First, in the Mahābhārata, Kauśikī is usually used as the name of a river, the present Kośī. However, because this river is a tributary of the Gaṅga that has its source in the Himalaya and flows through Bihar (see also n. 9), it is geographically difficult to suppose that the name of the river came to be applied to the goddess in the Vindhyā mountains. Second, as pointed out by Humes (1996, n. 3), kauśikī is the feminine form of kauśika meaning an owl. Taking into account that it is stated in SP 64 that animal and bird-faced goddesses emerged from Kauśikī’s body, it is conceivable that Vindhyavāsini originated from an owl-faced goddess, and therefore has the epithet Kauśikī, ‘the Lady Owl’. However, evidence has not yet been found to relate Kauśikī with an owl. Third, in one of my articles (1999, n. 23), I suggested the possibility that Rātri, the goddess of night, was called Kauśikī in connection with the Kuśika lineage, on the grounds that the Anukramanī of the Rātri-sūkta (Rgveda 10.127) mentions Kuśika Saurabhā as one of the sages in charge of the Sūkta, and that that epithet of Rātri as Kauśikī became applied to Vindhyavāsini. This possibility is now in question because I have not been able to find any instance of Rātri being called Kauśikī in earlier literature. The Matsyapurāṇa may be the earliest text in which Kauśikī was identified with the goddess of night. As discussed earlier in this section, however, this identification is likely to have been developed from the comparison of the two goddesses found in the Kauśikī cycle, under some influence of the identification of Kauśikī with Nidrā, the goddess of sleep, in the Harivansha.

44HV 47.48–49: sa te vindhye nagaśreṣṭhe sthānam dāsyati śāśvatam |
| tataḥ sthānaśahasrasāṃ tvam prthiviṁ śobhayasyati] |
tataḥ sumbhānisaṃbhau ca dānau vagacāriṇau |
tau ca kṛtyā manasi maim sănuṇgau nāsatasyayati.]

45The ‘office’ corresponds to adhikāra in Sanskrit. In the Hindu dharma system, every being has its own adhikāra in the world, which can also be called svadharma. So the approval of her own adhikāra means that she is to become a member of the Hindu dharma world.
affiliation with the Gupta ruling system. Obtaining Indra’s permission, a goddess into whom goddesses, or rather female spirits, inhabiting in the Vindhyā mountains had been merged became the goddess of the Vindhyā mountains, the single legitimate deity in charge of the Vindhyā mountains. Therefore, it would not exceed the bounds of possibility to claim that HV 47.48ab represents Vindhyavāsīnī’s moment of emergence from goddesses, or female spirits, in the Vindhyā mountains into the goddess Vindhyavāsīnī.

It is inferred from this consideration that her ties with Indra were of critical importance in her proto-myth. The fact that her relationship with Indra appears to have been superfluous in both versions also underscores that point. In the HV version, she was regarded as a sister, or a foster sister, of Viṣṇu-Kṛṣṇa, and in the Kauśikī cycle, she was a daughter of Śiva and Pārvatī. Especially in the Kauśikī cycle, her epithet Kauśikī was interpreted as being derived from her birth from Pārvatī’s sheath (kośī), and further, Pārvatī assigned Kauśikī to the Vindhyā mountains; hence, Indra’s role in the Harivaṃśa was almost entirely taken over by Pārvatī. Concerning the performance of her abhisēka, Indra was in charge under the permission of Śiva and Pārvatī in the Kauśikī cycle and, in the HV version, Indra was said to carry it out according to Viṣṇu’s instruction. Therefore, in both cases, Indra is not required as an authority to perform the abhisēka for her. Nevertheless, both versions of her myth, the Bhāgavata/Vaiṣṇava one in the Harivaṃśa and the Śaiva one in the Kauśikī cycle of the Skanda-purāṇa, preserved her affiliation with Indra as his sister.46

The purpose of Vindhyavāsīnī’s abhisēka has been discussed above. The cause of her abhisēka that may have been given in her proto-myth will now be examined briefly. In the Kauśikī cycle, she was consecrated as a reward for her victory over the demons, but in HV 47.46–49, it was said that her battle with the demons Sumbha and Nisumbha would occur after

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46In a version of the episode of her birth from Pārvatī’s slough, related in the Vāmanapurāṇa probably under the influence of the Skanda-purāṇa, it is said that Pārvatī gave Indra Kauśikī, who had just been born from her dark slough (kośā), as his sister, and then Indra took her to the Vindhyā mountains and assigned her an abode there (28.24–28). In this passage, her epithet, Kauśikī, is suggested as the reason why Indra, alias Kauśika, adopted her as his sister. VmP 28.24–28: 24 tasmāt kośā ca samjñātā bhūyāh kātyāyanī mune | 25 tāṁ abhyetāḥ sahasrākṣāḥ pratijagrahāḥ daksinām | 26 provacā girijām deve vākyam svārthām vāsavaḥ || 27 iyaṁ pradyatāṁ mahaṁ bhaṇginī me ’stu kauśikī | 28 tvatkośasamābhāva ceṣṣaṇa kauśikī kauśiko ’py abhām || 29 tāṁ praddād iti saṁsārataṁ kauśikīṁ rūpasāmyutāṁ | 30 sahasrākṣo ’pi tāṁ gṛhāḥ vindhyām vēgāj jagāma ca || 31 tatra gateva te atha ucca tiṣṭhaste vāhābale | 32 pūjyamāṇā suraṁ nāṁmā khyātā tvaṁ vīndhyavāśīnī || 33 tatra sthāyaṁ harir deveṇa dattva sīnham ca vāhanam | 34 bhavānārādhānātuṁ uktavṛtva sāvargam upāgamat || 28.
her consecration. If the latter was the case in her proto-myth, there would have been no cause of her abhisēka, since the cause supposed in the Hari-
vaṃśa, her substitution for the baby Kṛṣṇa, cannot have been a part of her proto-myth. On the other hand, the story of her proto-myth must have required some cause for her to be consecrated. Therefore, the most convincing conclusion would be that, as far as the cause of her abhisēka is concerned, the Śaiva version in the Kauśikī cycle transmitted the original.

To conclude, Vindhyāvāsinī’s proto-myth can be reconstructed as follows: she had an abode in the Vindhya mountains and killed the demon brothers Sumbha and Nisumbha there; as a reward, Indra along with the other gods consecrated her and gave her a position among the gods in heaven by adopting her as his sister; she was also given the lineage name Kauśikī, derived from Kūśika, after Indra’s epithet Kūśika. Acknowledged by Indra, she became the goddess Vindhyāvāsinī, the legitimate deity presiding over the Vindhya mountains. Her defining characteristics were virginity and a dark complexion. Concerning the date when her proto-myth took shape, it is safe to say that it occurred before the composition of the Harivaṃśa. However, the fact that there was no allusion to her in the Epic suggests that it was not long before then. Therefore, suffice it to say that some time in the early centuries of the first millennium is the most plausible period.

4.3 The Evolution of Vindhyāvāsinī from the Harivaṃśa to the Skandapurāṇa

The features of the Vindhyāvāsinī myth found in common in the Harivaṃśa and the Skandapurāṇa were discussed in the previous section in order to reconstruct her proto-myth. In this section, the differences between them will be examined and the historical development of the worship of Vindhyāvāsinī from the form found in the Harivaṃśa—roughly ascribed to the fourth century—to that of the Skandapurāṇa—ascribed to the sixth or seventh century—will be investigated.

47 On the other hand, HV 65.51–52 may imply that her consecration was performed after she killed the demon brothers:
sā tu kanyā yaśodāyā vindhye parvatāsattame | hatvā sumbhanisumbhaiva dvau dānavau nagačārīṇau ||
krāṭaḥbhiṣeka varādh bhuṭaśaṃghaniśevitā ||
arcyate dasyubhir ghorai mahāpaśubalipriyā ||.

48 Another early reference to the Vindhyāvāsinī myth is found in Śrūdraka’s Mrcochakaṭīka, probably composed in the Gupta period. In verse 27 of the sixth act of this work, Devi who killed Sumbha and Nisumbha in order to protect all the beings is compared to Hara (i.e. Śiva), Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Ravi (the Sun) and Candra (the Moon): abhaṁ tva deu haro viśvā brahmā ravi a cando a | hatiṁśa satvavakhaṁ sambhaṇisumbhe jādā devi||, which indicates that this goddess, who must be Vindhyāvāsinī, had already been considered comparable to these leading gods in the Hindu pantheon.
Vindhyavāsini was considered to be a terrifying goddess in the HV account. She is said to have been accompanied by horrible spirits (kīrnā bhubagaṇair ghorair in 47.45a; kṛtānugātrā bhūtāis tvam in 47.51a) and, when she resumed her divine aspect, it is related that ‘she, being resplendent, shone forth in the pitch-dark night full of spirits, dancing and laughing inauspiciously’ (48.32: sā vai niśī tamagraste babhau bhubagaṇākule | nītyati hasati caiva viparitena bhāsvati ||). Because she is subsequently said to have gone to heaven along with the spirits (sagāṇa in 48.36d), these spirits (bhūtakaṇṭha), thronging in the darkness, can be regarded as her attendants. Some passages attest to the fact that animal sacrifices were offered to her, especially on the ninth day of a lunar month (47.51cd: tithau navamī. pūjā. ca prāpsyase paśu. | and also nityam māṃśabalipriyā in 47.51b and mahāpāśbalipriyā in 65.52cd), which is even now a popular ritual for the terrific type of goddess and seems to have already been popular by the HV period. Alcoholic drink was also probably offered to her because the attribute of one of her four arms is a cup filled with wine (pāṭrī. ca pūrṇā. madhunāḥ. in 47.40c), which she is said to have drunk before roaring with laughter and threatening Kaṃsa. Her threat to Kaṃsa that she would rend his body with her own hands on the moment of his death and drink his warm blood suggests how she was imagined to enjoy the animal sacrifices offered to her. Furthermore, 65.52cd states that ‘she, being fond of an offering of great animals, will be worshipped by fierce bandits’ (arcyate dasyubhir ghorair mahāpāśbalipriyā), which reveals that she was regarded as a favourite deity for people on the fringes of society, such as bandits (dasyu). ‘Great animal’ (mahāpāśu) in this passage may refer to human sacrifice.

These characteristics conform to the Jaina idea about popular belief in goddesses in the Vindhya mountains revealed in Chapter 49 of Jinasena’s Harivamsapurāṇa, although the Harivamsapurāṇa was composed in the second half of the eighth century, much later than the Harivamsa. In a forest...
in the Vindhyā mountains, a band of mountaineer bandits (śabara in 27c, 28b, 32b; vanecara in 29a; kirātaka in 33b) mistook the Jaina nun Ekanāsā for a goddess of the forest (vanadevatā in 28a) and made a petition for the success of their robbery. When they returned to her, having succeeded, they found the blood Ekanāsā had left at the site on ascending to heaven, after being killed by a lion, thought that the goddess enjoyed killing and eating animals and decided to worship her with a buffalo sacrifice, offering her meat and blood (rudhiramāmsabaliprakara in 33b). In addition, one of the Tamil Epics, the Maṇimekālai, attests that a fearful goddess who lived in the Vindhyā mountains was known in South India, as well. In Canto 20 of the work, a guardian deity of Mt. Vindhyā, the abode of Antari (i.e. Durgā), is called Vintākāṭikai and said to be accustomed to prey upon beings who fly over the Vindhyā mountains.\(^{52}\)

In the Kauśikī cycle, however, descriptions of this sort suggesting her terrifying character do not occur. Some passages refer to her worship by the gods, demigods, sages, and ordinary human beings,\(^ {53}\) but there is no definite allusion to animal sacrifice offered to her.\(^ {54}\) On the other hand, the

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\(^ {52}\)Maṇimekālai Canto 20, lines 116–120: antarāṇi celvīr antari irunta
vinta mālvarui mīmicaip pōkār
pōvār ular enin pośkiya cīvatāl
cāyaiya vaiṁ ki tan vajśtvā itūm
vintam kākkum vintākāṭikai
‘Persons who travel by air never fly Above the Vindhya crest, home of Durga.
If they do, the guardian of the Vindhyas, Vindhaqhatika, is angered, and she Draws them through their shadows and eats them up’.
(Nandakumar’s translation, p. 104).

\(^ {53}\)SP 58.20, 21; 67.35, 36, 39. The rituals described in these passages are, praising (stosyanti) her with several names (58.20), ritual worship (pūjayis. yanti) with ṛṣa, ṛṛṇati, homa, upahāra, and so on (58.21), ritual worship (pūjayis. yanti) with balyupahāra (67.36), and adoration (arcais. yanti) and praise (stosyanti) (67.39). Of them, ṛṣa in 58.21 and 67.36 seems to be considered as being proper rituals performed by ordinary human beings.

\(^ {54}\)The expression balyupahāra in 67.36a might indicate an offering of meat. SP 58.21 is the other reference to the ritual worship of her performed by ordinary human beings (literally ‘living beings’ prāśin) on earth. In this verse the list of ritual forms is inclined to be more orthodox or Brahmanical (see the preceeding footnote). On the other hand, these passages should not be taken literally as representing a historical phase of Vindhyāvasī’s worship at the time of the composition of the Skandapurāṇa, because it is likely that the Brahmanical ideology of the Skandapurāṇa had some influence on them.

In Layer C, SP\( _{Bh} \) 60.45, in a eulogy dedicated to Pārvatī by Viṣṇu in the Gokarna myth, refers to the buffalo sacrifice offered to her by human beings. According to my provisional edition, it runs:

\( śirobhīr māhīsār bhrāntarākṣaparyantalocanaṁḥ |
nyāḥ kṣītalanyastakarajyānubhīr iyāse || \)
Kauśikī cycle reveals an alternative characterization of Vindhyavāsinī conspicuously different on two points. First, it is stated in SP 64 that a number of animal and bird-faced goddesses emerged from her at the commencement of the battle with the demon army. In the next story they are said to have fought with the demons under her command. Second, she is said to have fought with demons, riding a chariot drawn by lions that had been given to her by Pārvatī. A chariot battle is a typical mode of combat for a noble warrior, differing strikingly from her manner of killing Kansa mentioned in HV 48.35 and also contrasting with the idea that she was worshipped by bandits or mountaineers in the Harivaṃśa and the Jaina Harivaṃśapurāṇa. In the following, the character of the subsidiary goddesses who emerged from Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī will firstly be discussed and, secondly, the character of Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī in the Kauśikī cycle. Finally, her relationship with the subsidiary goddesses, as well as the significance of her abhiśeaka in the Kauśikī cycle, will be investigated in order to trace her evolution from the Harivaṃśa to the Skandapurāṇa.

4.3.1 The Mothers in the Skandapurāṇa

At the outset of the battle with the demons, Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī expanded herself and, then, a number of armed, terrifying maidens emerged from her limbs (SP 64.18–19). The following goddesses are said to have emerged with retinues of animal and bird-faced women (20–26):

- Vāyasī, Upakā, Pracaṇḍā, Ugrā, Jayā, Jayantī, Jayamāṇī, Prabhā, Prabhāvātī, Śivā, Saramā, Vijayā, Mrtyu, Niyati, and Asāni. After that, some goddesses are mentioned by name only, who are Revati, Vṛṣadaṃśa, Pūtainā, Kaṭaṇṭa, Ālambā, Kinnarī, Śaṣṭhī, Śakuni, Mukhamandālikā, Alakṣmī, Adhṛti, Lakṣmī, Potakā, Vānari, and Śṛṅghā (27–28ab). Finally, the statement in 28cd that these and others were born from Kauśikī suggests that those mentioned are a mere fraction of the goddesses who emerged from Kauśikī. In the next verse it is also said that all the goddesses led their armed women retinues respectively. In addition, Simhī is also named as a charioteer of Kauśikī in 64.40b. After the victory against the demons and her consecration, SP 68.1–9 relates that Kauśikī placed the goddesses

The reading māhīṣaṁ bhrānta in pada a is conjectured by the present author, based on S₁ (māṛṣṣaiṁ ṇaṁ bhṛantā), S₂ (mahisobhrānta’), and R (manuṣaiṁ bhṛantae’), while the A recension omits the first two padas. The reading of R may be interesting because it hints at human sacrifice instead of buffalo. Though the subject of the verse is Pārvatī, some verses (49, 50 and 51) in this eulogy allude to her martial aspect, which may well derive from martial goddesses, such as Mahiṣaśuramardini and Vindhyavāsinī, who were assimilated into Pārvatī (see p. 1171). The buffalo sacrifice mentioned in verse 45 must also have been concerned with goddesses of this type, not Pārvatī herself. In any case, this verse is neither directly associated with Vindhyavāsinī, nor included in the Vindhyavāsinī myth proper in Layers A and B of the Kauśikī cycle.55

55 Their theriomorphic appearances are to be examined later (see p. 104ff).
who had emerged from her body in various countries and cities. From this passage some more names can be added to the above list: Bahuputra, Pralambā, Lambauṣṭhi, Śānti, Lambikā, Bahuṃaṇṣā, Asprṣṭā, Nirāyāsā, Citraghaṇṭā, and Mahākālī. Who are these goddesses who are considered to be manifestations of and subordinate to Kauśikī-Vindhyāvāsī in the Kauśikī cycle?

In SPbh 164, after consecrating Skanda in order to inaugurate him as commander of the gods’ army, the gods each gave him a part of their own retinues. There, following a long description of the Gaṇas given to him by Śiva, Kauśikī is said to have presented him with the ‘Mothers’ (mātṛ) who were born from her body (SPbh 164.142). From this expression it is clear that this group of Mothers was intended to be identical to the group of goddesses who were said to have emerged from Kauśikī in SP 64. Subsequently, more than two hundred names of Mothers, including some of the above-mentioned names found in SP 64 and 68, are listed (SPbh 164.143–166, 167cd–170), and their appearances and characteristics are described (171–177).

This passage concerning the names and descriptions of the Mothers (SPbh 164.143–177) is parallel to MBh 9.45.3–39 except for 34cd–37. Just as in the Skandapurāṇa, this parallel passage in MBh 9.45 is found in an account of Skanda’s inaugural ceremony, which is a part of a version of the Skanda myth related in the Śalyaparvan, and the goddesses listed there are called the Mothers (mātṛgaṇa or mātṛ) attending on Kumāra (i.e. Skanda) in the beginning of the chapter. Though there are some differences between the parallels, they can mostly be attributed to either the isolated transmission of manuscripts or the revisions on the SP side in conformity with the SK.

56 For this passage, see p. 111ff.
57 The reading nirāyāsā in 68.8a is only supported by S₁ and is thus doubtful. See n. 86.
58 SPbh 164.142:

mātṛ ili ca pradadantu tasmai kauśikī dehasambhavāḥ
mahābala mahāsattvāḥ samares. v aparājitaḥ

They are called Mothers in 167ab as well: etāś cāṇyaś ca bahulā mātāra mārutasya dādāh. At the end of their description, in 178ab, it is again related that Kauśikī gave them to Skanda: etāś cāṇyaś ca samhṛṣṭā dadau skandāya kauśikī.

60 MBh 9.45.1–2:

śṛṇu mātṛgaṇāṁ rājaṁ kumārāṇucarāṁ imāṁ
kirttamanāṁ maya vīra sapatsnagaṇasūdanāṁ
yāsavyavivāṁ mātṛgaṇāḥ śṛṇu nāmāṁ bhārata
yāhīr nāyaptas traya lokāḥ kalgaṇāvahīśī caiva rācaḥ

61 While the names of the Mothers were given in the nominative case in the MBh passages, they are in the accusative in the SP parallels; words that do not fit in the SP context, such as those addressing the listener in the MBh, are changed; some of the names mentioned in SP 64 and 68 are incorporated, though they cannot be found in the MBh, and slight differences of names, probably mostly due to corruption, frequently occur. That most of the names that are found in the SP version but not in the MBh one are those
with its own context, and it is therefore evident that the Skandapurāṇa borrowed the passage from the Mahābhārata.62

It may be worth noting that MBh 9.45.34cd–3763 does not have a corresponding part in SPmb 164. The Mothers referred to in 35–36ab in this passage are Yāmī, Raudrī, Saumī, Kauberī, Vārūṇī, Māhendrī, Āgneyī, Vāyavī, Kaumārī, and Brāhmī, who are, in the list of about two hundred of the Mothers, the only ones whose names are derived from well-known male gods.64 The idea that the Mothers are female counterparts of male gods does not appear anywhere else in the MBh. The standard icon of the Seven Mothers consisting of Brāhmī, Māheśvarī, Kaumārī, Vaśīvarī, Vārūṇī, Ādīrī and Cāmuṇḍā, in which each of them except for Cāmuṇḍā has emblems paralleling her male counterpart, echoes this idea, but it was not until around the beginning of the fifth century that the earliest extant images of this icon emerge.65 In the Skandapurāṇa, on the other hand, the birth of another group of Mothers from their male counterparts is related in a Māhāmya of Kotīvarṣa (SPmb 171.78–137). This group includes the standard members of the Seven Mothers with Cāmuṇḍā replaced by Bhūmāṃsā (171.108cd–112). Moreover, following the birth of these seven, thousands of Mothers are said to have emerged from the bodies of other male deities, assuming the shape and power parallel to their male counterparts (113). Of them, Vāyavyā (or Vāyavī), Vārūṇī, Yāmyā (or Yāmī), Kauberī, Māhākālī, and Āgneyī are named (114).66 Therefore, the idea of the Mothers who are female counterparts of male gods is not unknown in the Skandapurāṇa;67

mentioned in SP 64 and 68 points to a revision of the MBh passages in the Skandapurāṇa.68 There is not only this passage but also many other verses borrowed from MBh 9.44 and 45 in this chapter of the Skandapurāṇa. The borrowing from 9.44 has already been noted by the editors of SP I (Prolegomena, p. 26, n. 103). As for 9.45, in addition to the passage at issue, SPmb 164.178cd–185 is based on MBh 9.45.44–47.

MBh 9.45.34cd–37:
varadāh kāmacnrinī nipampramuditās tathā∥ 34
yāmī raudrīs tathā saumysa kauberī 'tha mahābalāh∥
vārūnī 'tha ca mahēndrys tathāgneyyāh paraṃṣapta∥ 35
vāyavyās cāthā kaumārīs brāhmīs ca bharatāsahba∥
rupēṣaṃsarustain tulgā jave vāyusamās tathā∥ 36
paraṇṣapataṃ vāyke tathardhīyā dhanadopamā∥ šakravyopamās caiva diptā vaṃsamās tathā∥ 37.

64These are, in order, Yama, Rudra (i.e. Śiva), Soma (the Moon), Kubera, Varuṇa, Mahendra (i.e. Indra), Agni (Fire), Vāyu (Wind), Kumāra (i.e. Skanda), and Brahma.

66This account is to be discussed later in this section (see p. 106ff), wherein the relevant passage is quoted.

67Textual evidence of this idea that may be earlier than the Skandapurāṇa is in the Amarakośa (1.1.35d: brāhmyājīds tu māraḥ; 36d in Ramanathan’s ed.) and Varāhamihira’s Brhatsaṃhitā (57.56ab), ascribed to the first half of the sixth century. The latter states that ‘[the images of] the group of Mothers should be made having emblems corresponding to the male deities who are the origin of their own names’ (mātraṇāh kartavṛtyaḥ saumāmanasvārūrapakṛtyukthāḥ). The date of the Amarakośa has not yet been determined with any certainty. The earliest evidence of the work seems to be a quotation
nevertheless, the actual passage representing the idea found in the *Mahābhārata*, 9.45.34cd–37, does not have a parallel in the *Skandapurāṇa*. This suggests the distinct possibility that the passage is a later accretion, although it cannot be much later because it has been transmitted in all the regional recensions.

Analyzing the names and descriptions of the Mothers in the list in MBh 9.45, Tiwari, in his scrupulous study of the early history of the Mothers, summarized their characteristics as follows:

The malevolent character of the Mātrīs is clearly indicated in a graphic description of their forms and appearance in the Śalyaparvan of the *Mahābhārata*. Though also said to be generally of straight forms and sweet features, fair complexioned, endowed with youth and decked with ornaments, they are described at length as ugly, ferocious-looking beings, with long nails, long teeth and protruding lips. They are skeletal (*nirmāṇasagātryah*) and some of them have long ears, long breasts and stomachs. While some are said to be white in colour, others are tawny, coppery, green or dark like clouds and smoke. Their favourite haunts are trees, open spots, crossroads, caves and cremation grounds, mountains and springs, all of which, named together, have to be regarded as equally inauspicious places, and were often conceived as playgrounds of all kinds of demonial beings like Rākṣasas, Piśācas, Bhūtas, etc.

At another point he calls attention to the fact that the Mothers in the list were not simply regarded as being only malevolent, but also of being capable of being made benevolent through appeasement, saying that ‘Other names try to express the sentiment that, when appeased, the Mātrīs grant all kinds of boons; such as Paśuṇḍā, Vittadhā, Sukhadā, Payodā, Go-mahiṣa-dā, etc. Some names appear to be euphemistically formed with ānanda and bhaga endings, imputing a general auspicious nature to these deities’ (1985, 123).

Another, probably earlier, version of the Skanda myth found in the Āraṇyakaparvan of the *Mahābhārata* (3.213–221) may yield a further clue to the characteristics of the Mothers in the Kauśikī cycle. In this version, several groups called the Mothers appear, although the relationship between the groups is not clear. Relevant to the current discussion, attention should be
drawn to the instruction about Grahas (grahoddeśa) related in the middle of the story (MBh 3.219). Grahas (‘Graspers’) are spirits who take possession of people and cause disease or death. In the instruction, some of the Mothers who appear in the story are grouped in a class called Skandagraha, which consists of some Mothers and male Grahas who especially afflict embryos and children (3.219.42). It is also said that these Skandagrahas should be appeased in the proper manner and, once propitiated, would become benevolent (43–44). 71

Some of the Mothers found in the list of goddesses in SP 64 are named in the class: 72 Pūtanā, who is a Rāksasī (MBh 3.219.26cd); Revatī, who is Aditi (Mother of the gods) (28); Mukhamañḍikā, who is Diti (Mother of the demons) (29); Śakuni, also called Vinatā (Mother of the birds) (26ab and 32cd); and Saramā, who is the Mother of the dogs (33). Śītapūtanā, who is said to be a Pīśāci (27), is, according to the Kāśyapaśaṃhitā, 73 also called Kaṭapūtanā, who is one of the goddesses mentioned in SP 64. All of them but Saramā are well known as Grahas afflicting embryos and children in medical literature, as well. 74

71 MBh 3.219.42–44:

72 The most relevant passages are MBh 3.219.26–29:

73 For example, the Sūsrutasaṃhitā, the Asṭāṅgarājaśaṃhitā, the Asṭāṅgaśaṃgraha, and the Kāśyapaśaṃhitā contain instructions about these female Grahas; see Meulenbeld 1999, Vol.IA, 31–13, 443f, 563f; 2000, Vol.IIA, 32f. The Kāśyapaśaṃhitā has a long chapter, called Revati-kālpa, devoted to the subject (Meulenbeld 2000, Vol.IIA, 35f).
Returning to the Kauśikī cycle, there are two significant events relating to the Mothers, their birth and distribution. These were mentioned briefly earlier in this section, but should now be examined in more detail. The first one is their birth from Kauśikī related in SP 64. When Kauśikī accepted Sumbha’s challenge, conveyed by his messenger, which met her provocative response to his courtship, she expanded herself by the power of yoga (SP 64.18). Then, a number of armed maidens of terrifying appearance emerged from her limbs (64.19). It is remarkable that each of these goddesses are said to have been accompanied by women with the head of a specific animal or bird. Their names and appearances are as follows (SP 64.20–26): Vāyasi, who leads women with the heads of crows; Upakā, leading women with the heads of owls; Pracacchā, leading women with the heads of lions; Ugrā, leading women with the heads of tigers; Jayā, leading women with the heads of elephants; Jayantī, leading women with the heads of peahens; Jayumāṇā, leading women with the heads of horses; Prabhā, leading women with the heads of geese (*hamsa*); Prabhāvatī, leading women with the heads of ruddy sheldrakes (*cakrāhua*); Śivā, leading women with the heads of jackals; Saramā, leading women with the heads of dogs; Viśayā, leading women with the heads of hawks (*śyena*); Mrtyu, leading women with the heads of herons (*kaṅka*); Niyati, leading women with the heads of diver birds (*madgu*); Āsāni, leading women with the heads of hens. Though theriomorphic faces are attributed to the female retinue of each of the goddesses rather than to the leading goddesses named, the description compellingly suggests that the leading goddesses themselves were supposed to have the same ap-

Rāvana’s *Kumāratantra* and related works, which specialize in pediatrics, also deal with Grahas (ibid., 143–146). Treatment of illnesses caused by the Mothers is also taught in VDhP 1.227, called *mātr-dosaprasānana*. The Mothers are not named in this chapter; in the preceding one (1.226), however, the birth of the Mothers is related in the Andhaka myth and their names are listed. VDhP 1.226 is parallel to MtP 179 and, as argued elsewhere by the present author (Yokochi 1991; 1999, 86), the latter was probably borrowed from the former, adding some passages. In VDhP 1.226 and MtP 179 is a long list of about two hundred of the Mothers created by Śiva (VDhP 1.226.7cd–29; MtP 179.9cd–32), as well as Śūk拉萨vatī created by Viśnu (VDhP 1.226.33; MtP 179.36), all of whom drank down the blood of Andhaka and a number of his clones. In this long list, VDhP 28ab is missing in the MtP and, on the other hand, MtP 31–32ab is missing in the VDhP. This list includes all the names of the standard Seven Mothers, although they are not grouped together, and other names deriving from the popular male gods such as Anali (from Fire) and Viśayvā (from Wind). After Andhaka was defeated, the Mothers created by Śiva started satisfying their hunger by devouring the world. In order to hold them in check at Śiva’s request, Nṛśinha created the four Mothers—Vāgūṣa, Māyā, Bhagamālīni, and Kāli, alias Śūk拉萨vatī—from parts of his body and then thirty-two of these, eight attendants of each, all of whom were named (VDhP 1.226.60cd–70; MtP 179.63–74). In this second list of the Mothers, MtP 69cd–70 listing Māyā’s eight attendants is missing in the VDhP; however, this was certainly originally in the VDhP, because it is contextually necessary and because it is found in a MS of the VDhP (MS No. 28 of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (No. 89 of 1875–76)). See also Tiwari 1985, 111f, 176–181 (A list of the Mothers given in MBh 9.45 and MtP 179).
pearances as their respective retinues. The subsequent passage, 64.27–28ab, contains some more names of goddesses who emerged from Kauśikī. Though they are only mentioned by name, some of their names, such as Vānārī, meaning a she-monkey, and Potakī, meaning a female young animal, suggest that they may also have been regarded as having theriomorphic heads. Also, Sinhī, who is mentioned in 64.40b as the charioteer of Kauśikī’s chariot, may have been lion-headed because her name means a lioness.

Archaeological evidence has revealed that animal and bird-faced goddesses were popular in the Kuśāṇa period. Joshi lists thirteen features of iconographic importance in his 1987 paper about images of the Mothers in the Kuśāṇa period from Mathurā, based on a total of one hundred and seven pieces, most of them containing more than one Mother statue. One of their common features is, he says, that ‘Many of them have human faces, but some have the faces of birds like eagles and parrots, and others of animals such as lion, tiger, bull, etc.’ (1987, 159). In the list of the Mothers found common to both MBh 9.45 and SP 164 are names, albeit a few, that suggest their animal and bird-faced appearances, such as Gokarnī ‘Cow-eared’, Mahiśāṣāna ‘Buffalo-faced’, and Śāsālākamukhi ‘Hare and Owl-faced’. Furthermore, some of the Mothers regarded as Grahas in MBh 3.219 are said to be mothers of animals and birds: Saramā, mother of dogs; Surabhi, mother of cows; Vinaṭā, also called Śākuni, mother of birds. They may have been considered as having their respective theriomorphic forms, or as having anthropomorphic forms with respective theriomorphic heads.

Later in the Gupta period, on the other hand, the icon of the group of Seven Mothers consisting of Brāhmaṇī, Māheśvarī, Kaumārī, Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī, Aindrī and Cāmunḍā, who, except for Cāmunḍā, were modelled on their male counterparts, began to be produced around the beginning of the fifth century. This icon, becoming increasingly popular over the following cen-

\[\text{75} \text{According to Joshi’s classification into thirteen types, at least Types ii and vii include representations of the Mothers with animal and bird faces (1987, Figs. 4, 6). According to Harper (1989, 58–70, Figs. 4, 9, 10, 14), the first (single goddess with a human, animal or bird head) and the fifth (groups of goddesses with human, animal or bird heads) of her five categories include images of the Mothers of this type. In his 1987 paper, Joshi’s figures are the same as Harper’s Figs. 10 and 14, which were also in Agrawala 1971 (81f, Figs. 7, 8). Bautze published two more panels of a group of the Mothers with human, animal, and bird heads from the Russek Collection (1987, Figs. 1–4 for Russek Collection, Nos. 571 and 683). See also Pannikkar 1997, 31–53}

\[\text{76} \text{Three panels of the Seven Mothers located in Udayagiri Caves IV and VI, dated to about AD 400, may be the earliest examples of this icon datable with fair certainty, in which some emblems can be recognized in two of the panels. See Harper 1989, 75–79, Figs. 16–30. A group of five images, probably a part of the Seven Mothers of this type, housed in the Bāghbhairava Temple at Kirtipur in Nepal, may be attributed to the fourth century (Pal 1974, 129, Fig. 215; Harper 1989, 74–75). See also Yokochi 1999, 85. For the development of the idea of the standard Seven, or sometimes Eight, Mothers, see Tiwari 1985, 127–133; Harper 1989; Pannikkar 1997.}\]
Vindhyavāsinī in the Skandapurāṇa

turies, became standard as a representation of the Mothers, while the icons of animal or bird-faced Mothers fell into decline. As mentioned earlier in this section (p. 101), this standardized set of Seven Mothers, which postulates the idea that the Mothers are female counterparts of popular male gods, was also known in the Skandapurāṇa. A Māhātmya of Koṭīvarṣa related in SP Bh 171.78–137 contains an account about the birth of the Mothers of

77It has been common in the traditional texts about iconography since the Mediaeval period that this standard icon is described as the principal icon of the Mothers. An early iconographical description of it is found in MtP 261.24–39. For other textual sources, see Caturvargacintāmaṇi Vol. II part 1, pp. 82–84 (in Vratakaṇḍa 1); de Mallmann 1963, 150–152; Rao 1914, Vol. I, pp. 379–389, Appendix C (Pratimālaksāṇāni) pp. 143–154.

78Although Vāraḥī, who is usually depicted as boar-faced, is a member of the standard Seven Mothers, in that capacity, she is a female counterpart of Varāha, the Boar manifestation of Viṣṇu, and therefore cannot be regarded as reminiscent of the earlier icon. Images of the Mothers with theriomorphic heads appear later, from the ninth or tenth century, as Yoginīs in some of the Yoginī temples: the Sixty-four Yoginī temples at Ranipur-Jharial in Orissa and at Rikhiyan in UP and the group of Naresar Yoginīs preserved in the Gwalior Museum (Dehejia 1986).

79The text of this Māhātmya is transmitted in a different form, except for verses 116–135, in the S recension—actually only S2 due to the damage of the other manuscripts of this recension—on one hand and the R and A recensions on the other hand. In SP Bh 171.78-96ab, Bhatṭārāṇī conflated the text, combining the verses in the S recension (78, 81abc, 83b–84b, 86ab, 89cd–91, 93cdef) and those in the R and A recensions (79–80, 81d–83a, 84cd–85, 86cd–89ab, 92–93ab, 94–96ab). After 171.96cd, Bhatṭārāṇī follows the reading of S2.

Concerning the location of Koṭīvarṣa, it is referred to as a Viṣaya of the Puṇḍravardhana Bhukti in a grant of Mahīpāla I, issued on his ninth regnal year, which was discovered among some ruins called Bangarh in the West Dinajpur district, Bengal (Banerji 1917–18). According to Bhattacharyya’s Geographical Dictionary (s.v. Koṭīvarṣa), the headquarters of the viṣaya Koṭīvarṣa ‘has been identified with the medieval Diw-kot or Devakota. The ruins of the city are found about eighteen miles south of Dinajpur town in the village of Bangarh’. He also identifies Devakota with Devikoṭa, Umāvana, Bānapura, and Śonitapura (s.v. Devakoṭa). For further studies, see Sanderson 2001, 6f, n. 4, in which he lists the following names as synonyms of Koṭīvarṣa: Devikoṭa, Devikoṭa, Śrīpiṭha, Śrikoṭa, and Śonitapura. The same footnote contains valuable information about the references to Koṭīvarṣa in the Śaiva Tantras and, in addition to the above-mentioned inscription, the two relevant inscriptions: an inscription of another Pāla king Nyāyapāla (Sircar 1971–72) and a copper-plate inscription of the king Vanaṃālavarmar Dvārgīyotisa (Chaudhury & Sircar, 1951–52). A cursory comparison of the Māhātmya of Koṭīvarṣa in the Skandapurāṇa with these two inscriptions seems to support the identification of Koṭīvarṣa in the Skandapurāṇa with Bangarh, although more careful research remains to be done. See Dey 1927, s.v. Śonitapura, for alternative locations of Devikoṭa, which he identifies with Śonitapura (s.v. Devikoṭa). He does not cite Koṭīvarṣa in his Geographical Dictionary. In addition, as pointed out by the editors of SP I (p. 4 n. 9) and referred to by Sanderson (ibid.), this Koṭīvarṣa-Māhātmya contains a list of names of several Śaiva Tantric scriptures (SP Bh 171.128cd–129ab) grouped in the class called Mārtantras (127c). The place is described as dear to the Mothers and an eminent cremation ground (śmaṇa) in SP Bh 171.133cd–134ab.

An episode concerning the demon Bāṇa, found in HV 106–113, as well as ViP 5.32–33 and BhāgP 10.62–63, is mainly set in his city called Śonitapura ‘Blood city’ or ‘Red city’, which is usually identified with Devakoṭa/Devikoṭa as mentioned just above. There, in order to rescue the captured Aniruddha, Kṛṣṇa’s grandson, Kṛṣṇa and his companions
this type from the corresponding male gods. The event is said to have happened in a forest of the Himālaya, when the gods, afflicted by the demons living in Koṭīvarśa, a town or fort (puṇa) created by Brahmā, came there to ask Śiva for help. Then, the story runs (SP Bh 171.100cd–116ab):

In the forest where the gods entered, Gaurī (i.e. Pārvatī) was practising tapas. Consequently, all the gods became transformed into women due to the power of her tapas. When Devadeveśa (i.e. Śiva) asked them the object of their coming, they complained of the demons’ oppression, and then begged him to restore them to manhood. Deveśa ordered them to go to the demons as women, because the demons could only be killed by women. He continued that they would be restored to manhood after creating the Mothers, the embodiments of their female shapes. The gods asked him to create a female embodiment of himself, with whom they (viz. the embodiments of their female shapes) could destroy the demons. Then, Deva (i.e. Śiva) created the Mother Rudrāṇī and, taking a deformed shape, the second Mother Bahumāṃśā (108cd–109). By his order, Viṣṇu created the two Mothers, Vārāhī and Vaiṣṇavī (110abcd). Brāhmaṇī was born from Pitāmaha (i.e. Brahmā), Śarvāṇi (i.e. Rudrāṇi) from Śaṅkara (i.e. Śiva), Kaumārī from Śaṅmukha (i.e. Skanda), Vaiṣṇavī from Viṣṇu, Vārāhī from Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu), Māhendrī from Purandara (i.e. Indra), and Bahumāṃśā, the greatest among the Mothers, from Viṣṇadviva (i.e. Śiva) (110ef–112). Subsequently, thousands of Mothers, Vāyavyā (or Vāyavī), Vāruṇī, Yāmī (or Yāmī), Kauberī, Mahākāli, Āgneya, and so on, emerged from the bodies of other gods, each bearing the shape and power of her male counterpart (113–114). Then, these goddesses went to the town (i.e. Koṭīvarśa). They killed the demons and relieved the town of them.

In the passage that describes the birth of the Mothers from the male gods, verses 110ef–112 state the births of the seven Mothers in their proper order. They are said to have fought with Bāṇa and his demons. Since Bāṇa was a devotee of Śiva and had attained the state of his Gaṇapati (HV 106.6), Śiva, Skanda, and their retinue also fought with Kṛṣṇa in league with Bāṇa. Although it has not yet been ascertained whether Śoṇitapura in this episode can be identified with Koṭīvarśa in the Skandapurāṇa, it is noteworthy that Śoṇitapura was regarded as a Śaiva city in the Kṛṣṇaite myths. For a recent study of this episode, see Couture 2003, in which he favours the identification of Śoṇitapura with Devikotada on the Kaveri river in the province of Madras (n.3). See also n.82.

80 The passage, SP Bh 171.108cd–114, reads:
	tato devo 'ṣr. jad devaḥ rudrāṇiḥ mātaram śubhāṃ || 108 ||
	vikṛtam rūpam āsthāya devītīrṇaḥ api mātaram|

| namā tu bahumāṃśāntam jagatśaṅkharāyupīṇīṃ || 109 ||

| niyogā devadevaśya tato viṣṇur api prabhuh ||
der in the standard Seven Mothers icon: Brähmi, Śarvāni (i.e. Māheśvari), Kaumārī, Vaiṣṇavī, Vāraḥī, Māhendrī (i.e. Aindrī), and Bahumāṃśā, who corresponds to Cāmuṇḍā. Of the seven, four Mothers, Bahumāṃśā, Śarvāni (called Rudrāni in 108d), Vaiṣṇavī, and Vāraḥī have already been said to have been born in the preceding verses, 108cd–110ab. However, despite of redundancy, their births are repeated in the passage, putting their names in the proper order of the standard icon, which manifestly shows that the description in 110ef–112 is consciously based on the standard icon of the Seven Mothers.

Among the Mothers in this account, special attention should be paid to Bahumāṃśā, because, in this account, all the Mothers but her are called by names deriving from their male counterparts and because it is she who is the leader of all the Mothers, which is explicitly stated in verse 112. As Bahumāṃśā corresponds to Cāmuṇḍā in the standard Seven Mothers, she was probably a goddess similar to Cāmuṇḍā, who is usually represented as having an emaciated and dreadful appearance and as being horrific by nature.

In 114ab, vāya and yāmi may be emended to vāya and yāmi. Bahumāṃśāntāṃ in 109c, which does not make sense as a compound, can be interpreted as bakumāṃśāntāṃ tam, in which the demonstrative pronoun tam is used in the meaning of ‘well-known’. This passage is transmitted only in the S recension, actually only in S₂ (see the previous footnote).

Although Cāmuṇḍā, as well as Kāli, became usual epithets of the emaciated and dreadful goddess in the Mediaeval period, other names were also applied to this type of goddess in somewhat earlier literature. In VDhP 1.226, the goddess who is said to have become more emaciated as she drank Andhaka’s blood is called Śuskrāvati (VDhP 1.226.33–34). She is also called Śukā (81a) and Kāli (62–63ab). Cāmuṇḍā is, on the other hand, included in the list of about two hundred of the Mothers created by Śiva in the same chapter (8d). For this account, see n. 74. Her name also appears among many goddesses addressed in a Tantric mantra at the beginning of VDhP 3.346. Early evidence for the worship of Cāmuṇḍā is found in Bāha’s Harsacarita composed in the first half of the seventh century. The reference occurs in the description of a hamlet in the Vindhya woodland (vindhyavāsinī in the Skandapurāṇa). There, the king Harṣa saw a hamlet in the forest (vanagrāmakam), which was ‘indicated by patches of woods in which the shrines of Cāmuṇḍā were built in dense groves’ (gahantaraṇaṇaṇīrmitacakumānḍanapair vanapradesaiḥ prakāśyamānaṁ on p. 304, line 3, in Führer’s ed.). In the first half of the eighth century, Bhavabhūṭī set Act V of his drama
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The appellation Bahumāsa meaning ‘Well-fleshed Lady’ is likely to have designated euphemistically her emaciated appearance, and the statement that Śiva created her, taking a deformed shape (109a), points to her ugliness. Her dreadful nature and appearance are also detectable from an adjective qualifying her as an embodiment of the destruction of the world in 109d. Furthermore, though she is said to have been created by Śiva as one of his female manifestations in this account, Bahumāsa is mentioned once in SP 68.7c in an episode in which Kauśikī places the goddesses who emerged from her body in various countries and cities. This Bahumāsa is, beyond doubt, the same as the Bahumāsa in SP 171 because, in 68.7c, Kauśikī assigns Koṭīvarṣa to her. She may have been known as the tutelary goddess of Koṭīvarṣa at the time of the composition of the Skandapurāṇa.

Mālatimādhava in the crematory ground (śmaśāna) around the temple of the goddess Karālī (p. 95 in Coulson’s ed.). In the act, two Kāpālikas praised the goddess’s violent dance (vv. 22 and 23), calling her Cāmunḍā (p. 103, v. 25), and attempted to sacrifice the heroine Mālatī to the goddess. In the Gaiḍavaḥo by Vākpatirāja, a contemporary poet of Bhavabhūti, on the other hand, Revatī was, in the eulogy dedicated to the goddess who lives in a cave of the Vindhyā mountains, described as having an emaciated body (v. 329):

\[\text{pāṇī-parisvukka-kāyā paravo samavatī revatī tujha} \]
\[
\text{ṣa saṁvaḥmaḥā-paraḥ-bhaya-mukka-māsava}[.]
\]

In this verse, Revatī is distinguished from the central goddess of the eulogy, although some dreadful features that are usually attributed to the Cāmunḍā-type goddess, such as the dead body as her mount and ornaments of human skulls and bones, are attributed to the central goddess in the eulogy (e.g. vv. 297, 302, and 333). This eulogy will be studied in detail in 5.3. The popularity of the epithet Cāmunḍā since the Mediaeval period may have been due to the Devīmāhātmya. In DM 7.4–7, Kāli is said to have emerged from Cāndikā/Ambikā, and her dreadful appearance with skull-topped staff, a garland of human heads, an emaciated body, and so on, is described. Subsequently, it is related that she killed the demons Canda and Munḍa and, as a result, was given the name Cāmunḍā (7.25). She is also praised with the epithet Cāmunḍā in DM 11.20. An early iconographical description of Cāmunḍā as the last member of the standard Seven Mothers is found in MtP 261.33–38ab, in which she is also called Yogēśvarī and Kālikā. In addition, Cāmunḍā’s name occurs in a verse in AK 1.1.41 in Ramanathan’s edition, but the two southern commentaries in his edition do not have a section commenting on the verse. Neither do two early Bengali commentators, Jātāṛūpa and Vandyaghatīya Sarvānanda, comment on it. Therefore, this verse is clearly a later interpolation.

In an account of Kṛṣṇa’s fight with the demon Bāna in Bāna’s city, related in HV 106–113 (see n. 79), a goddess called Koṭāvī or Kauṭāvī appeared in the battlefield nakedly and hindered Kṛṣṇa from killing Skanda and Bāna (HV 112.49, 97–99). In the condensed versions of the same episode in the Viṣṇupurāṇa and the Bhāgavatapurāṇa, the goddess Koṭāvī, who is called Koṭarī and regarded as Bāna’s mother in the BhāgP version, hindered Kṛṣṇa from killing Bāna with her naked appearance (ViP 5.33.36–37; BhāgP 10.63.20–21). This goddess, being the protectress of Bāna in the episode, seems to have been the tutelary goddess of his city in origin. As mentioned in n. 79, there is a possibility that Bāna’s city, Śoṇitapura, was identical to Koṭīvarṣa in the Skandapurāṇa. If that were the case, this goddess may have been the same goddess that was called Bahumāsa in the Koṭīvarṣa-Māhātmya in SP Bh 171. For the goddess Koṭāvī, see Filliozat 1973, XXVIII–
The point of the above study of the animal and bird-faced appearances of the goddesses described in the Kauśikī cycle will be summarized as follows. The animal and bird-faced goddesses seem to have popularly been worshiped in the Kuśāṇa period, which is attested by the images of the Mothers of this period. The goddesses who are said to have emerged from Kauśikī in the Kauśikī cycle, called the Mothers in SP 164, had inherited this feature. On the other hand, the idea that the Mothers are female counterparts of male gods who are well known in the Hindu pantheon, which may be called as Hinduization of the Mothers, appeared later in the Guptan period, probably not much earlier than AD 400. This idea is also not unfamiliar to the Skandapurāṇa, as shown in the Māhātmya of Koṭīvarṣa related in SP Bh 171.78–137. In the Skandapurāṇa, however, the account of the group of Mothers that echoes this new idea was relegated to an episode of a local place, Koṭīvarṣa. Furthermore, the leader of this group of Mothers, Bahumānsa, is said, in the Kauśikī cycle, to have sprung out of Kauśikī’s body.

Dedications to the Mothers by kings and members of royal court were recorded in epigraphy since the second half of the fourth century. Although the types of these Mothers were mostly unknown, these records indicate that the worship of the Mothers began to be acknowledged by the high classes of the Hindu society by that time. The earliest evidence is in a collection of copper plates from Bāgh, Madhya Pradesh, which records land grants by the Mahārājas of the Valkhās, a local or tribal kingdom subordinate to Paramabhatārakas, who are almost certainly the Guptas (Ramesh & Tiwari 1990, vii–ix). The grants to the Mothers are recorded in two plates of Bhulund, the first Mahārāja of the Valkhās in the collection. One of them is a land grant in the year 50 (AD 369/370 or 370/371) to the Mothers of Navataṭāka, whose image had been installed by the king himself (ibid., 4–6, Plate II). The other grant is in the year 56 (AD 375/376 or 376/377) to the shrine of the Mothers (mātṛsthaṇadevakula) which had been established by Pāṣupatācārya Bhagavat Lokadadhi in the village of Piṅchikāāka (ibid., 21–23, Plate X). An early set of the Seven Mothers, ascribed to the first half of the fifth century, is sculpted, in company with a male figure, in an alcove on the hillside near the village Badoh, Vidisha District, MP (Agrawala 1971, 84f, Figs. 11–15; Harper 1989, 79–81, Figs. 31–39; Panikkar 1997, 76f, Plates 21–23). This set appears to have had the standard icon originally, although all the images are severely mutilated and their emblems are difficult to decipher. On the right side of the set is a paleographically contemporary inscription, which, according to Garde, refers to a Mahārāja Jayatsena and the divine Mothers (Garde 1925–26, 12, 25). Although the content of the inscription is unclear because of its heavily weathered condition, it is highly probable that the inscription recorded the dedication of the extant set of the Mothers by Mahārāja Jayatsena or somebody related with him. A well-known evidence from the fifth century is the Gangdhar inscription of the year 480 (AD 423/424 or 424/425), which records that Mayūrākṣaka, a minister of Viśavarman of the Mālavas, caused to be built, along with a Viṣṇu temple, a terrifying house (veśmātyugram) of the Mothers full of Dākinīs (dākinīsāṃprakīrtam) (CII 3, No. 17, Plate X). The Bihār stone inscription in the reign of Skandagupta, which a brother-in-law of Kumāragupta probably caused to be engraved, also alludes to the Mothers (ibid., No. 12, Plate VII). In addition, the epigraphy of the early Kadambas and Cāluṅgas attests the royal worship of the Mothers (Fleet 1877, 1878 and 1884).
and assigned to Koṭīvaśraṣa by her. This suggests that, as far as the Mothers are concerned, the old idea, which is closer to the indigenous tradition of the rural/tribal societies, was still predominant in the Skandapurāṇa over the new idea revealing an advanced stage of the Hinduization of the Mothers.\footnote{In the single combats between some chiefs of demons and goddesses who had emerged from Kauśikī, described in SP Ḍh. 65, they are said to have fought mainly driving their chariots and shooting arrows. This manner of fighting might be considered to have ensued from the Hinduization of the Mothers. In the Kauśikī cycle, however, the wars between the demons and the gods or the goddesses are narrated in conformity to the concept of war found in the Kautūhila’s Arthasastra and Kāmāndaki’s Nītisāra, sometimes using their technical terms. This was probably concomitant with the Kṣatriyaization of Vindhyavāsini, which will be discussed in the following section, rather than the Hinduization of the Mothers.}

SP 68.1–9 describes the other notable event: After Kauśikī, in the company of the goddesses who had emerged from her, defeated the demons and was consecrated by the gods, she assigned the goddesses to various locations (SP 68.1). In the passage, the following goddesses and places are listed by name (68.2–8): Bahuputrī and Pralambā in Lakā; Lambaustaṭī, Vṛṣadāṃśā and Kinnarī in Śinha; Revaṭī in Gokara; Mukhamañḍikā in Pāṇḍya; Śivā in Ābhira; Śānti in Varanāta; Prabhā in Vatsagulma; Laksānī on Kolāgiri (‘Mt. Kolā’); Upakā in Pārāśika; Vāyaṣī in Yavana; Praçañḍā in Tukhāra; Lambikā in Kausala; Jayā and Vijayā in their own city or cities (svapura);\footnote{What is meant by svapure in 68.5d is not clear. It may be a city called something like Jayapura or Vijayapura. It is also uncertain whether the two goddesses are assigned to a city or each of them to her own city.} Prabhāvatī in Kalinga; Jayantī in Nāgasāhvaya (i.e. Hastināpura); Saṃti in Kaśmīra; Saramā in Malayā; Pūtanā in Śiva; Mṛtyu in Piṣṭapura; Bhumāṃṣa in Koṭīvaśraṣa; Kaṭapūtāna in Paṇḍra; Asprṣṭā in Madhyadeśa; Kinnarī in Barbarā; Nīrāyāśā and Citraghanṭā in Varanāsi;\footnote{The two pādas referring to Nīrāyāśā and Citraghanṭā in Varanāsi (68.8cd), which runs vārāṇasīyaṃ nīrāyāśāṃ citrāghanṭāṃ ca kauśikī, are problematic. First, Nīrāyāśā sounds strange as a name of a goddess and the reading nīrāyasām is supported only by S₁ and partly by R (nirāṣāyā). Bhaṭṭārāṇi’s alternative reading, nirāyāṣāṃ, which is silently emended from the reading of S₂ and S₃, nīrāyāṣā, and partly supported by the A recension’s reading nīvāyāṣāṃ, might be original. In that case, the word can be an adjective of Varanāsi in such a meaning as ‘Varanāsi, where one does not make any effort [in order to attain heaven]’. However, nīrāyasāyāṃ would be the proper form in this usage and, moreover, there is no other place name qualified by an adjective in the list. Therefore, whatever the second word may originally have been, it would be more likely to have been an accusative feminine noun signifying a name of a goddess. Second, all the manuscripts but S₃ read the accusative kausīkīṃ as being the last word. However, this is odd as the subject who places the goddesses in their various places is Kauśikī. On the other hand, the nominative kauśikī, which is read in S₃, is also problematic as it brings out the unnecessary repetition of the subject. Bhaṭṭārāṇi reads the accusative in the main text and seems to propose emending it to the nominative, though misprinted as kausīkīṃ, in his note. kausīkīṃ or kauśikī might have been resulted from an early corruption of an accusative feminine noun designating another goddess placed in Varanāsi.} Malākālī in Mahākāla; Vānarī in Śabarā. Then, it is said that Kauśikī placed all the remaining goddesses in various villages, cities, towns, and
mountains (68.9).

In this list, some of the distributions, especially those of a few goddesses placed in foreign countries such as Pārṣāka, Yavana and Tukhāra, are very likely to be artificial and fanciful, but some of the relationships between a goddess and a place, such as those of Lakṣmī with Kolā, Bahumāṃsā with Koṭīvarṣa, and Citraghaṇṭā with Vārānasī, probably reflect historical facts at the time of the composition of the Skandapurāṇa. Whether each relationship is actual or artificial, the passage attests to a contemporary belief that some regions or cities had their own tutelary goddesses. Concerning the long list of the Mothers in MBh 9.45 along with that in MtP 179 (VDhP 1.226), Tiwari says that ‘In the face of these lists, therefore, it appears to us necessary to assume that, even if the names included are generally concocted ones, a widespread cult of feminine deities must have been a familiar phenomenon of the age. Real goddesses must have been locally worshipped all over India before such lists could be manufactured and made intelligible’ (1985, 123). He repeats the same point later, saying ‘It is transparent enough that the compiler of the epic list (and presumably that of the Matya Purāṇa, following it) had raw material in the form of the very large number of local goddesses to draw upon in reconstructing a group of Mothers in hundreds, and in actually being encouraged to coin names for them’ (ibid.). Tiwari’s supposition seems to be sound and convincing, but in these lists, nevertheless, emphasis is laid upon collecting goddesses and grouping them under a general category, the Mothers. In SP 68.1–9, on the other hand, the significance of affinity of each goddess to a place is more manifest.

87 The goddess Lakṣmī or Mahālakṣmī as the main deity of the Kolhapur district seems to have a long tradition (Ritti & Karvirkar 2000, lx–lxii). Bahumāṃsā is regarded as the main deity in the Māhāmya of Koṭīvarṣa related in SP 171.78–137, which was discussed earlier (see p. 106ff). The Sarnath Inscription of Mahīpāla, dated AD 1026, states that Mahīpāla, King of Gauḍa, caused to be made hundreds of ‘jewels of fame’, such as Iśāna, Citraghaṇṭā (temples) (iśāna citra graṇṭā dākṣikā tāra naśatāni; the translation of this compound follows that given in SP IIA, 60), in Kāśi (i.e. Vārānasī) (Hultzsch 1885; SP IIA, 60f, n. 156).

88 A list of the distribution of goddesses to sacred places is also found in MtP 13.25–53, which is incorporated in the episode of Sātī’s burning herself to death in a fury at her father Dakṣa, who did not invite her husband Śiva to his sacrifice. When Sātī cast a curse on Dakṣa and was about to burn herself, she, propitiated by Dakṣa, said to him, ‘Sixty maidens will be born as my partial manifestations, [who are] your daughters’ (13.22ab: madamśeṇaṃ gannā śaśīr bhavisyantya aigajās tava). Then, in reply to Dakṣa’s question as to which names and places she should be seen and praised, Sātī enumerated the names of goddesses along with the places (13.25–53). However, the enumeration contains a hundred and eight or ten names of goddesses and places and, thereafter, it is said in 13.54 that a hundred and eight of [goddesses’] names and sacred places were related (etad utdeśaṅ- taḥ proktam nāmaśaṅśatātam uttaman | aśottarām ca tīrthānām satām etad uḍāhytam |). Hence, the list may have been enlarged later from sixty goddesses and places to a hundred and eight. Among the correspondences between goddesses and places in the list, Jayaṃti in Hastināpura (MtP 13.28d) is the only one that is found in common in the SP list. In addition, Vindhyādhibhūṣāni in Vindhya is also mentioned in the MtP list (13.39d).
From these considerations about the Mothers, it should become evident that the goddesses, or the Mothers, who were said to have emerged from Kauśikī in the Kauśikī cycle are, in principle, not dissimilar to the Mothers enumerated as Skanda’s retinues in MBh 9.45 and the Mothers regarded as Grahas (‘graspers’) in MBh 3.219. Their animal and bird-faced appearances described in the Kauśikī cycle conform to some of the Mothers in MBh 9.45 and 3.219, as well as a feature of the Mothers’ iconography in the Kuśāṇa period. Hence, the Mothers in the Kauśikī cycle must have inherited the characteristics of the Mothers in the MBh, such as their being malevolent and terrifying by nature, haunting auspicious places, and prone to attacking embryos and children, while being capable of becoming benevolent through appeasement. In the Kauśikī cycle, on the other hand, every goddess grouped in the class of Mothers was regarded as presiding over a specific location, which had not been stated explicitly in the Mahābhārata, although the religious belief as such may have continued from the remote past.

4.3.2 Kshatriyaization of Vindhyavāsinī

When Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī was born from Pārvatī’s slough, she was poetically described as a young beautiful maiden (SP 58.9–11), and then, called Aparājīta (‘Invincible Lady’) or described as invincible, said to have had eight arms holding weapons and have worn various ornaments, protectors on

89Aparājīta in 12d can be taken either as an adjective or an epithet of Kauśikī, as the same word in 17d. In the case of the latter, it may be just a descriptive epithet; however, it is also possible that it came to apply to Kauśikī as a result of her assimilation to another goddess called Aparājīta. Aparājīta is used in MBh 3.218.47f as one of the epithets of Devasena, Skanda’s bride. Devasena’s other epithets mentioned along with Aparājīta are Saṭṣāhi, Lākhṣāni, Āśā, Sukhapradā, Sinivālī, Kuhū, and Sadvyṛti (47cdef). A goddess called Aparājīta is found in VdhPSh 3.66, which describes the iconography of Tumburu accompanied by two pairs of Mothers on either side: Jayā and Vijayā on his right and Jayantī and Aparājīta on his left (3.66.5). Because, except for Aparājīta, the three goddesses are included among the goddesses who emerged from Kauśikī, it is not unlikely that Aparājīta was identified with Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī in the Kauśikī cycle. The iconography of Aparājīta described in VdhPSh 3.66 is that she is two-armed and four-faced (3.66.6ab), bears a skull in her left hand (6cd) and a bhindipāla (a sling or javelin) in her right (8cd), rides on a cloud (10cd), and is dark-coloured (kṛṣṇavarṇā, 12ab).

Although most of the features of her icon are different from Kauśikī’s appearance, her dark complexion, which is distinguished from the white, red and yellow complexion of the other three respectively, is common to Kauśikī’s. As for the cult of Tumburu and these four goddesses—Jayanti is sometimes called Ajīta—as his companions, see Goudriaan 1973 and the Introduction to his edition of the Viṇāśikhatantra, a Śaiva Tantra devoted to the cult of Tumburu. Another early and detailed reference to Tumburu and the four goddesses is found in the Maṇjuśrīmūlakalpa, an early work of the Tantric Buddhism (Goudriaan 1973, 76–87). Concerning the date of this cult, Sanderson states that ‘Indirect evidence that this cult was already well-established in India at least as early as the beginning of the eighth century is provided by the incorporation of Tumburu and his sisters in the Esoteric Buddhism that reached China in the middle of that century’ (Sanderson 2001, 8 n. 5).

In the section dealing with the layout of the fortified city in Kauṭilya’s Arthasastra, it is taught that shrines of Aparājīta (or Aparājīta), Apratihata, Jayanta and Vaijayanta
her arms and fingers, a breast-plate that even gods and demons would find difficult to penetrate, a bow, two quivers and two of the yellow garments (12–14). Although she had already been depicted in the Harivamśa as holding two weapons, a trident and a sword, in the two of her four hands—the other two hands held a cup full of wine and a lotus—(HV 47.40),\(^{90}\) the description in the Kauśikī cycle provides a more vivid impression of her martial appearance with full panoply. On the other hand, the weapons in her eight hands were not specified here, which suggests that the main aim of this passage was to give Kauśikī the general appearance of a well-armed warrior, rather than a specific iconographical depiction.

Her martial character can also be culled from the conversation between her and Mūka, one of Sumbha’s guards. When Mūka saw her on a peak of the Vindhyā mountains, he was astonished by her beauty and asked her who she was and why she was living in the mountains (SP 63.3–9). In reply, Kauśikī pretended to be a human maiden with her parents deceased (63.10–12) and attributed her living in the mountains to her mother’s dying injunctions (63.14), saying ‘Then (i.e. at her death), O demon, my mother, giving me weapons, instructed me to live on the lovely Vindhyā mountain and practise martial exercises at all times’ (63.13). Later in the demons’ assembly, in reply to Maya’s question about Kauśikī’s appearance, behaviour and paraphernalia, Mūka described her appearances as being well-proportioned, having three eyes, a mouth with sharp teeth, eight arms, a fine nose, a sweet voice, and dark complexion (63.55), and said that she had all sorts of weapons, armour and ornaments always at hand (63.56). Thus, in this episode of her courtship by Sumbha, related in SP 63, it is a significant factor that Kauśikī is a charming young maiden and, at the same time, a warrior ready to fight.

Following Kauśikī’s birth, it was said in SP 58.22a–d that Pārvatī created a chariot, which was described there as a large, divine chariot, radiant like the sun, drawn by lions and adorned with flags and strings of jingling bells.

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\(^{90}\)HV 47.40:
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{trīśikhāṃ śālam udyamya khadgaṃ ca kanakasaram|} \\
pātrīṃ ca pūrṇam madhunāḥ paṅkajasya ca sunirmalam∥.
\end{align*}
\]
When Kausīkī went to the Vindhya mountains, she was described as having flown in this aerial chariot, made of gold and brilliant with various gems (SP 58.23–24). At the outset of the battle with the demon army, her chariot is described in more detail (SP 64.37–39). It glowed like a blazing fire, encircled with rays of gems, equipped with various weapons and armour and resplendent with a soaring golden pole which was brilliant with its own [golden colour] and gems, with a dancing peacock at its top. Moreover, it was drawn by mighty lions with yellow manes flying, who were conquerors of hostile armies in battle. After that, the text goes on to describe that Vijayā held a parasol, Sinhī the reins, and Jayantī and Jayā her chowries (64.40).

When Kausīkī, equipped with armour and various weapons and bestowed with blessings, took her seat in the chariot, the parasol, bright as the full moon, was stretched out above her head and the chowries, white as the moonlight, fanned her (64.41–42). A white parasol and chowries are well-known emblems of kingship and, as mentioned earlier, fighting in a chariot driven by a charioteer is typical of noble warriors in battle. Hence, she was represented here as a royal warrior who took to the battlefield.

Subsequently, the battle between the armies of goddesses and demons was joined, the single combats fought between some of the chief demons and goddesses and the battle of the elephant troops took place. Then, Kausīkī encountered the demon kings Sumbha and Nisumbha. During the battle both Kausīkī and the demon kings attacked their opponents, mainly shooting arrows in chariots (SP 66.18–32). Only in the final lethal fight, did they abandon their chariots. When the demon brothers leapt from their chariots into the air with swords in hand, Kausīkī, also leaping from her chariot, caught them by their necks and crushed them with her bare hands (66.33–34). The two demons, vomiting blood and all the joints in their limbs crushed, fell to the earth, bereft of life (66.35).

An important difference between Kausīkī and ordinary warriors in chariots, as well as the other goddesses and demons in the Kausīkī cycle, is that her chariot was drawn by lions and not by horses. The association of warrior-type goddesses with lions was already known in the Kuṣāṇa period. In the chapter devoted to the study of the iconography of ‘the multi-armed warrior goddess’ in the Kuṣāṇa period, Srinivasan isolates two distinct types of warrior-type goddess icon in the Kuṣāṇa period, ‘either (1) she stands straight, without her adversary, but sometimes with the lion crouched beneath her feet (Pl.20.1), or, (2) she stands with her weight on her right straight leg and the weight of the buffalo on her left bent leg, while her arms do battle with him (Pl.20.2)’ (1997, 282). While stating that ‘the general
appearance of the Goddess, in both Type 1 and Type 2, certainly reflects the Indian mode and taste’ (ibid., 292), Srinivasan, following Mukherjee, points out several elements of the iconography of this goddess that reflect foreign, Hellenistic, sources, one of which is the close association of the goddess with a lion. A goddess riding on a lion was known in the Kusāṇī by a lion or lions are not so common (Srinivasan 1997, Pls. 20.2 and 20.18; in the latter, dated to the late Kusāṇa, the goddess wrestling with the buffalo stands on the back of two lions). A terracotta plaque from Nagar depicting a goddess of this type accompanied by a lion, which was first published by Agrawala (1955, 37–39), is ascribed by Agrawala to the period between the first century BC and the first century AD (1955; 1958, 124–127), while Viennot (1956) and von Mitterwallner (1976, 205) dated it to around the fourth century. Srinivasan agrees with the latter dating. Regarding two reliefs at Udayagiri that represent an early Gupta variation of this type, one on the north wall of the outer courtyard of Cave VI and the other on the outer wall of Cave XVII, Barrett (1975) and von Mitterwallner (1976) suggest that the object on which the goddess’s left foot rests is a lion. Srinivasan’s Type 1 is more closely associated with a lion.

There is no definite evidence that Types 1 and 2 represent one and the same goddess, though the possibility of that being true is fairly high because of the resemblance of the ornaments and weapons between the two types of goddess and the appearance of a lion or lions in some of the examples of both types. Srinivasan regards the two types as different representations of one and the same goddess and proposes calling her the Warrior Goddess, avoiding the usual epithet Mahīṣāsura-mardini on the grounds that ‘there are no records, to date, which name the Kusāṇa Goddess’ (1997, 282). It is true that no textual sources corresponding to this Kusāṇa Goddess have been discovered as yet. However, the epithet Mahīṣāsura-mardini is not a personal name in the strict sense but a descriptive one, indicating only that the slaying of the buffalo demon is attributed to her, which is manifest at least in Type 2 of this icon. Moreover, the appellation ‘the Warrior Goddess’ seems to be more problematic than Mahīṣāsura-mardini on the same grounds, namely that there are no records attesting to the notion of ‘the Warrior Goddess’ in the Kusāṇa period. The possibility that there may already have been such an idea cannot be denied however (see n. 99 in 5.4), but, in my opinion, the full development of the idea of ‘the Warrior Goddess’ occurred later, from the Gupta period onwards, which is the main subject of this study. Therefore, I would prefer to call at least the Type 2 goddess, Mahīṣāsura-mardini, and, with regard to the Type 1 goddess, it may be advisable to retain a descriptive nomenclature, such as an armed goddess or a warrior-type goddess, for the time being.

The association of Mahīṣāsura-mardini with a lion is also popular in several versions of her iconography in South India, for which see Harle 1963, Kālidos 1989, and Tartakov & Dehejia 1984–85. This goddess, who is often depicted in the company of a lion and a stag, is called Kōṟavai, ‘the goddess of victory’, in Canto XII of the Cilappatikāram. Therein the goddess, being a virgin, bellicose goddess and identified with Durgā, Pārvatī, Lakṣmī and Ekaṇāṃśā (literally, ‘the blue-coloured, younger sister of Viṣṇu’), seems to have already been thought of as ‘the Warrior Goddess’ under the cultural influence from North India. For Kōṟavai in this work and other early Tamil literature, see Tiwari 1985, 229–235; Hart 1975, 23f.

93Srinivasan 1997, 294–304; Mukherjee 1969, 1985. It should be cautioned that neither author maintains that the goddess is of foreign origin but both argue that the iconography of the goddess reveals a combination of foreign elements with indigenous ones.

94Srinivasan 1997, 297f; Mukherjee 1985, 408–410. With regard to that point, Srinivasan concludes: ‘In sum, the way that the lion appears in the iconography of the Devī points more to outside influences than influences from within the ancient Hindu traditions of India. However, the juxtaposing of gods and animals is not unknown within local traditions; certainly the way Garuḍa carries the seated Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa in the Kusāṇa relief
cycle, too. In a eulogy dedicated to Pārvatī by Viṣṇu in the Gokarna story (SP\textsubscript{m} 60.38–51), SP\textsubscript{m} 60.49 says that Pārvatī shines like the sun, riding on a lion on the top of the mount Meru.\textsuperscript{95} Because the subsequent two verses describe her as fighting with demons on the battlefield, shooting arrows in 50 and wielding a battle-axe in 51,\textsuperscript{96} her riding on a lion mentioned in 60.49 is also likely to have been associated with her bellicose aspect and, along with her fighting with demons in 50–51, would have originated in myths of a warrior-type goddess or warrior-type goddesses who was/were assimilated into Pārvatī by the time of the composition of the Skandapurāṇa.\textsuperscript{97} However, this eulogy occurs in the Gokarna myth in Layer C rather than the Vindhyavaśinī myth proper in Layers A and B and, therefore, the reference to riding on a lion may have had nothing to do with the Vindhyavaśinī myth. In the Vindhyavaśinī myth proper, on the other hand, Vindhyavaśinī is always considered to have fought in a chariot drawn by lions, as described above.\textsuperscript{98} This means that, although a goddess or goddesses who fought riding on a

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{95}SP\textsubscript{m} 60.49: \hspace{1em}bhāṣī śimhaṁ samārūḍhā ca latpiṅgalakesaram |
dīptā prabheda sāvitrī merumārdhānam āsthitā ||
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{96}SP\textsubscript{m} 60.50–51: \hspace{1em}jighāṃsiṁśa raṇe dāityāṇi charaughair bhāṣy ajūhmagaib| |
raver mūrtis tamāṁsiva vikiranti gahastibhibiḥ ||
paraśūn śitam udgṛhya devadānavasaṁyuge | |
bhrājaṣe devi saṃkruddhā pāṭayantiva rodasi ||
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{97}See also n. 54. In SP\textsubscript{m} 60.40–42 in the same eulogy, Pārvatī is referred to by many epithets including Kauśikī-Vindhyavaśinī, as follows: tvam iśā devī devānām gaṇamātā gaṇāṃbākā| |
bhaḍrakāli maḥāgaurī kauśikī vindhyavaśinī||
durgā khyātir maḥāvidyā gāyatrī tvam sarasaṅtāri| |
suḥā svadāh maḥāmaiyā lakṣmīrī yoṛēvasvārā | |
ulkā satī gīreṇ patri maineyī brahmaśaṅkīriṇī| |
tāpasi revaṁ saṣṭhī vara varasabaṁradā ||
\end{flushright}

For the status of Pārvatī in the Skandapurāṇa, see 2.3.

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{98}There may also have been some influence from foreign sources for this icon of a goddess riding in a chariot drawn by lions, primarily from the Hellenistic goddess Cybele. A medallion excavated from Ai Khanoum in Bactria (Francfort 1984, 93–104, Pl. XLI) depicts this goddess riding in a chariot drawn by two lions. The goddess Nike takes the reins of the chariot and a parasol is held over Cybele by an attendant. In his 1994 paper, Joshi refers to this icon of Cybele in relation with the Gauri inscription discussed below and argues that the goddess for whom Gauri built a temple to which the inscription belongs was the Indianized Cybele. See also Möbius 1967, 457–461 and n. 94.
\end{flushright}
lion had been known, Vindhyavāsini was, in the Kauśikī cycle, moulded as a royal or noble warrior fighting in a chariot. This image of Vindhyavāsini would be regarded as reflecting that of an ideal Kṣatriya; hence, it would not be too much to call it Kshatriyaization of Vindhyavāsini.

This Kshatriyaization of Vindhyavāsini may have commenced before the composition of the Skandapurāṇa. An inscription of Mahārāja Gauri found in the Bhramaramatā Temple near Chhoti Sadri in the Chitorgarh district, Rajasthan, alludes to a goddess who fought with demons riding in a chariot drawn by lions. The inscription is dated to the tenth lunar day of the bright half of the month of Māgha in the year 547, which, according to Sircar, is doubtless of the Vikrama Śamvat and falls in January, AD 491 (1953–54, 122). The early date of this inscription suggests that the reference to a goddess riding a chariot is very unlikely to have been made under the influence of the Skandapurāṇa. The inscription records that Mahārāja Gauri built a temple dedicated to Devī, who was described in the first stanza as wielding a lance that tore demons and riding a chariot drawn by lions. It is clear from the second verse that this goddess is identified with Pārvatī, saying that she occupies half of Hara’s (i.e. Śiva’s) body and cherishes all the people like a mother. The question now is: who is this bellicose goddess described in the first stanza? She, although assimilated into Pārvatī and addressed as Devī, the most comprehensive epithet of a female deity, may have actually been the main object of worship in Gauri’s temple, since the bellicose aspect of Devī is firstly praised in the inscription. The main deity of the present temple is Bhramaramatā, ‘the Mother of bees’; according to Sircar, however, the temple is ‘a modern structure believed to be built on the ruins of an old shrine to which its sanctum is attributed. The inscription under study is naturally believed to have belonged to this old temple’. (1953–54, 123). No evidence has as yet been provided for this belief and, even if it were true, it would be uncertain whether the old shrine was dedicated to Bhramaramatā as the present temple is. Thus, it is

---

99 Sircar 1953–54, 120–127. For the genealogy of Gauri and other rulers of the western Malwa in the fifth and sixth centuries, see ibid., 130f and Salomon 1989.

100 The reading corrected by Sircar of the first two verses is as follows: devī jayaty asurādāraṇātikaṃsaśiūla pradṛṣṭaranatmakatāṃśucaalapraśāhā | simḥograyuktaratham āṣṭitaḥcaṇḍavēgā bhrūbhāṅgadṛṣṭiwinipātāniṣṭaraṣyā∥ 1 bhūyo ‘pi jayati yaḥ saśiṣekharasāṃ dehārdham udvahati bhaktatām āraṣyā| ya bhaktavatsalatāya prabhārti lokān māteva [svaikyasutapremaivṛdhhasneḥa]∥ 2. In the third pada of the first verse, the first accusative compound can be interpreted as dependent on āṣṭitaḥ’, the first member of the following compound, and the second compound as a Karmadhāraya consisting of āṣṭitaḥ” and a Bahuvrīhi caṇḍavēgā. This grammatically somewhat unsmooth structure may be due to metrical reason; a better expression āṣṭitaḥ (or āṣṭhitrā) caṇḍavēgā is metrically defective. Alternatively, it is possible to take m after ‘ratha as being inserted to avoid the hiatus: “ratha has been altered from the locative ‘rathē due to euphonic junction of e and the following ā. In this case, the second compound would be a usual Bahuvrīhi.

101 The goddess related with bees was not unknown, at least in the early mediaeval
impossible at present to specify the goddess to whom Gauri dedicated the temple. Nevertheless, it is true that the features of Devī described in the first stanza of the inscription resembles that of Vindhyavāsinī in the Kauśikī cycle. Therefore, there may be a fair possibility that the first stanza of the inscription describes the Devī who took the form of Vindhyavāsinī. 102

A goddess called Bhramarī ‘the Mistress of bees’ is mentioned as one of the future manifestations of the Goddess in DM 11.48cd–50ab. There it was predicted that she would take a form composed of innumerable bees, kill the demon Āruṇa, and become praised with the name Bhramarī:

\[
yadāruṇākhyas tāvālē māhābādham kārtiyat ||
\]
\[
tadābhya bhrāmārum rūpaṇ kṛtvasamkhyaṣyaṣṭpadan ||
\]
\[
trailokyaḥ sāvatāḥ vadhigamī mahāsuram ||
\]
\[
bhrāmārītī ca māṃ lokās tādā stosyantī sarvāḥ.\]

Another epithet of the probably identical goddess is Bhramaravāsinī, ‘the Lady who lives with bees’. The goddess so-called appears in an account of the previous life of a legendary king Rāṇādīya in Kashmir, which is related in 3.392–341 of Kalhaṇa’s Rājataranginī, ascribed to the twelfth century. In this account, Rāṇādīya’s consort Rāṇārabhā is said to be the goddess Bhramaravāsinī incarnate. The story is summarized as follows:

Rāṇādīya was a gambler in his previous life. When he lost all his property through gambling, he decided to go to see the goddess Bhramaravāsinī in the Vindhya mountains, desiring to obtain a boon from her. Her abode was a cave of five Yojanas deep and inhabited by a swarm of bees and other insects. Protecting his body with layers of covers, he reached the goddess barely alive after the bees’ horrible attacks. The goddess transformed herself into a charming maiden and revived him from the brink of death by the mere touch of her hand. When he had seen the goddess from the entrance of the cave, she had appeared terrifying and stood at the edge of a seat of lions. He now saw a lovely young maiden standing on the bank of a lotus pond and was unable to be aware that she was that goddess. He was struck with passion for her and, when she offered to grant him a boon, wished for union with her. In spite of her anger at this blasphemous wish and his realization of her divinity, he insisted on it and finally, the goddess promised him to fulfill his wish in the next life. He soon died and was reborn as Rāṇādīya, while the goddess was born as Rāṇārabhā on earth.

The most notable point of this account for the present study is that the abode of Bhramaravāsinī was located in the Vindhya mountains.

102VDhP, 3.71.8 describes the icon of Bhadrakāli as being charming, having eighteen arms and standing in the āśīrva posturė in the chariot drawn by four lions:

\[
\text{āśīrvaṣabhukṣa kāryā bhadrakāli manoharā}|
\text{āśīrvaṭhānasaṃsthānā catuḥsinhe rathe sthitā}.\]

The attributes of her eighteen arms are listed in the following verses, 9–11. This icon, though described under the name of Bhadrakāli, may have been related with Vindhyavāsinī. In the Skandaapurāṇa, Bhadrakāli is another goddess who is said to have emerged from Pārvatī. In the episode of the destruction of Daksā’s sacrifice found in SPB, 32, it is said that Pārvatī, enraged, created Bhadrakāli from her nose (SPB, 32.12–15; see p. 51 in 2.3). In the passage, Bhadrakāli is described as a fully armed, dark-coloured woman with four tusks, twelve faces, three eyes (per face), ten arms and fine proportions (32.13cd–15ab):

\[
jayī jīnī strī bhṛtucṣeviḥstrī caturdānstrī trilokanā|
\text{baddhagodhāṅgulitṛā ca kavacābaddhamekhalā}|
\text{sakhādya sadhanuṣkā ca satāniṣa pahāvī}|
\text{dvādaśāyga daśabhujā tanumadhyā tamonikā}||
the inscription refers to a Śaiva version of the Vindhyāsvini myth which is


ghanastāni prthukāti nāgamāsvarv auyāyā.

Compared with this description on one hand and Vindhyāsvini's appearance in the Kauśīki cycle on the other, Bhadrakāli's icon in the Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa is very different from the description of Bhadrakāli in SP 32, while it has some resemblance to Vindhyāsvini's, albeit with a different number of arms.

Agrawala (1997; see also 1998) lists three pieces that have an icon similar to that of Bhadrakāli described in VDHpś 3.71.8–11. The oldest of them (Agrawala 1997, Fig. 1), which is the main subject of his paper, comes from Swai, Chamba district, Himachal Pradesh and, according to Agrawala, may be dated around the ninth century on account of the inscription on its pedestal. In the inscription the goddess is called Bhagavati. The other two are both mediaeval images found in Kashmir, one from Dumathal (Nagar 1988, 236, Pl. 71) and the other from Tengapur (Siudmak 1993, 644f, pl. 50.7). In all the images the goddess is depicted as riding in a chariot drawn by two lions and, in those from Swai and Tengapur, she is shown killing two demons, who both Agrawala and Siudmak consider to be Śumbha (Šumbha) and Niśumbha (Nisumbha). With regard to the iconography of these images, Agrawala says that 'the inspiration from the Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa is quite evident at a glance' and considers the image from Swai as a prototype for the other two from Kashmir. The passage in question in the Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa, which was probably composed in Northwest India, and the three examples from Chamba and Kashmir seem to attest to some popularity in Northwest India of a version of the Vindhyāsvini myth similar to that in the Kauśīki cycle, at least after the eighth century. See also n. 98.

In addition, a mantra of the goddess Jyeṣṭhā, found in the Jyeṣṭhā-kalpa of the Bodhāyana-grhyāṣṭasūtra (3.9), which is parallel to Satyāsādha's Hiranayakesigrhyāṣṭa-sūtra 1.6.15, describes Jyeṣṭhā as one to whose chariot lions are yoked and whom tigers follow. This mantra is used twice, once to summon her and once to dismiss her, with different finite verbs. The invocation mantra is:

\[ \text{yasyāḥ śīrṣhā rathe yuktā vyāghrā cāpy anuṣūmināḥ} \]
\[ \text{tām imaṃ puṇḍarīkākṣin jyeṣṭhām āvāhayāmy ahām ||} \]

The dismissal mantra reads udvāsayaṁ instead of āvāhayāmy. For the relation between the two Grhyāṣṭasūtras, see Einoo 1996b, 263–268. According to him, the Hiraṇyakesi is the borrower from the Bodhāyana. See also Einoo 1995 and 1996a for the historical stage of deity worship rituals in these two texts, as well as other supplementary texts to the Vedas. A similar verse is found in the Jyeṣṭhā-vrata section of Hemādri's Caturvargacintāmaṇi Vratakhanḍa 23 (Vol. II, part 2, p. 642):

\[ \text{yasyāḥ śīnho rathe yuktō vyāghrā cāpi mahābalaḥ} \]
\[ \text{jyeṣṭhām ahām imaṃ devīṃ propadye śaranām śāhām ||} \]

This verse is included in a fairly long quotation from a Skandapurāṇa, which is not found in our Skandapurāṇa.

However, these verses cannot mean that riding a chariot drawn by lions is characteristic of Jyeṣṭhā. First, a nearly identical mantra found in BodhGSS 4.2 is used to invoke Skanda, replacing yasyāḥ by yasya and tām imaṃ puṇḍarīkākṣin jyeṣṭhām by tām imaṃ putrikāputram skandam. Moreover, a very similar invocation mantra is applied to Rudra in Atharvavedapariśiṣṭa 40.2.3 (Bisschop & Griffiths 2003, 329f):

\[ \text{yasya yuktā rathe śīrṣhā vyghrā ca viṣamānanaḥ} \]
\[ \text{tām ahām pāṇḍarīkākṣam devam āvāhaye śivam ||} \]

Second, this feature is unusual with Jyeṣṭhā, compared to her iconography and characters assessed by Leslie (1991, 113–123). As regards her mount, Leslie states that ‘In none of the images at my disposal is Jyeṣṭhā shown with a ‘vehicle’ or mount. In the texts, however, she (like Alaksṇī) is most often described as ‘riding a donkey’ (kharāṛuḍhā, Suprabhādevagama 3, garvaḥāṛuḍhā, Šabdakalpadruma 1.1, page 120). Other animals are also mentioned: a chariot drawn by lions and followed by tigers (Baudhāyana-grhyāṣṭa-
somehow related to that found in the Kauśikī cycle. If this were the case, it would mean that the Kṣatriyaization of Vindhyavāsinī had already started by the end of the fifth century, so that the image of Vindhyavāsinī as a royal warrior in the Kauśikī cycle was not an invention in the Skandapurāṇa, but rather that the Skandapurāṇa bears witness to the contemporary extent of her Kṣatriyaization.

4.3.3 Vindhyavāsinī as the protectress of all the earth

The relationship of Vindhyavāsinī to the Mothers will now be examined, comparing the Harivamsa with the Skandapurāṇa, in order to clarify the historical change of Vindhyavāsinī from the Harivamsa to the Skandapurāṇa. In the Harivamsa, although Vindhyavāsinī did not have any direct connection with the Mothers, her characteristics, summarized at the beginning of this section, are similar to those of the Mothers in many respects. First, it is the primary attribute of Vindhyavāsinī that she presides over a specific region, the Vindhya mountains. Also, according to the Harivamsa and Jinasena’s Harivamsāpurāṇa, she was considered to be worshipped by the people who are on the fringe of Hindu society, such as mountaineers and bandits, in the Vindhya mountains. It can also be gleaned from both texts that she was regarded as being terrifying and inauspicious and, when propitiated properly, as conferring on her devotees protection and worldly benefits. These suggest that Vindhyavāsinī originated from goddesses who were worshipped locally in the Vindhya mountains in cultural environments outside the Hindu dharmic society and who could have been included in the class of the Mothers as such. On the other hand, a significant distinction between Vindhyavāsinī and the Mothers had begun to be drawn before the composition of the Harivamsa. As discussed in 4.2, it is supposed to have been related in the proto-myth of Vindhyavāsinī that she was consecrated so as to attain a position among the gods in heaven and adopted as sister by Indra, the king of the gods. Thenceforce, her lineage name Kauśikī was granted, which could guarantee her legitimacy in the society of the Brahmanical norm. Furthermore, her control over the Vindhya mountains was legitimated as a result of Indra’s acknowledgement. In addition, she was, in the Harivamsa, incorporated into the Bhāgavata/Vaiśnava myths through her assimilation to Nidrā and Ekānāṃśā. Therefore, Vindhyavāsinī in the Harivamsa may be said to stand on the threshold of the Hindu world, becoming affiliated to the Hindu pantheon on one hand, while retaining some

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sūtra 3.9.4); the goddess seated on a lion (Caturvargacintāmani 2.2, page 638); even a camel (Kriyādhikāra 5.190; cf. Lal 1980:82) (ibid., 118). ‘Baudhāyanagrhyasūtra’ is actually the mantra of Jyeṣṭhā in BodhGīś 3.9, cited above. ‘The goddess seated on a lion’ seems to refer to śeṣtasimhāsanaḥ in Jyeṣṭhā’s invocation mantra quoted from the Bhaviyottarapurāṇa in the Jyeṣṭhā-vrata section of the Caturvargacintāmani. The word means that Jyeṣṭhā sits or stands on a white ‘throne’ (simhāsana) rather than a white ‘lion’.
characteristics of terrifying female spirits inhabiting the Vindhya mountains on the other.

In the Kauśikī cycle of the Skandapurāṇa, Vindhyavāsinī crossed the threshold and went one step or more further into the Hindu world. Although her affinity with the Vindhya mountains, her primary attribute, is still significant in the Kauśikī cycle, she is no longer a mere regional goddess. The point is clearly represented in her relationship with the Mothers. First, the goddesses, or the Mothers, emerged from Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī and fought with the demons under her command. Hence, Vindhyavāsinī is regarded as ranking higher than all the Mothers as their origin and leader. Second, Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī stationed the goddesses or Mothers who had sprung out of her body in various locations. As mentioned earlier, the episode suggests that every goddess who emerged from Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī was regarded as presiding over a specific locality; conversely speaking, every local or regional goddess can be thought of a separate manifestation of Vindhyavāsinī. In this way, she is elevated to a superior status that qualitatively differs from that of local/regional goddesses. In conformity with the distinction of her status from that of the Mothers, a considerable change was also made to the character of Vindhyavāsinī in the Kauśikī cycle, namely, her characterization as a noble or royal warrior who fights riding in chariot with regal emblems. Moreover, Vindhyavāsinī was incorporated into the Śaiva mythology as a manifestation of Pārvatī. Compared to the minor roles of Nidrā and Ekānaṁśā in the Bhāgavata/Vaisnava mythology, Pārvatī plays a central part in the Śaiva one as the Consort of Śiva and consequently as the Mother of the World. Therefore, Vindhyavāsinī’s assimilation into Pārvatī in the Śaiva mythology would have served for her to obtain a more central position in the Hindu pantheon.

Finally, what was Vindhyavāsinī’s ‘superior status that qualitatively differs from that of local/regional goddessess’ should be examined in a more precise term, for which the episode of her abhiṣeka (a consecration ritual) in the Kauśikī cycle will be worth studying, compared with that in the Harivamśa. In 4.2, it was argued that one of the main purposes of Vindhyavāsinī’s abhiṣeka in the Harivamśa—and therefore in her proto-myth—was to approve her as the legitimate deity presiding over the Vindhya mountains (see p. 95). In the Kauśikī cycle, on the other hand, this had been achieved at the time of her birth, when Pārvatī assigned her to the Vindhya mountains. Thus, the destination in the Harivamśa was the starting point in the Kauśikī cycle. In that case, what was the destination, namely, the purpose of Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī’s abhiṣeka, in the Kauśikī cycle?

The episode of Kauśikī’s abhiṣeka found in SP 67 was summarized earlier in this chapter (p. 93). A problem of this account is that the purpose of Kauśikī’s abhiṣeka is not explicitly specified. There are two other examples of the performances of abhiṣeka in the Skandapurāṇa, one of Nandin (SP 24) and the other of Skanda (SPbh 164). Nandin was consecrated for the sake
of his inauguration as leader of all the Gaṇas and Skanda as commander of the gods’ army. Although abhiśeka is not necessarily a part of an inaugural ceremony, some purpose comparable to these examples could be anticipated for Kuśikí’s abhiśeka, because the procedure of the main ritual is the same in all three cases; especially, Skanda’s abhiśeka is similar to Kuśikí’s in several respects. From this viewpoint, Indra’s instruction to Kuśikí at the end of her abhiśeka is worthy of consideration. After finishing her abhiśeka, Indra, in SP 67.67–68, told Kuśikí that she was now his sister and ordered her to protect all the earth, favour her devotees, kill demons and wander through all the worlds at will. His adopting her as his sister

103Śiva ordered all the Gaṇas he had summoned to inaugurate Nandin as their leader (senāna) in SP 24.8–10 as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
nandiśvaro 'yaṃ putro naḥ sarvesaṃ iśvareśvaraḥ \\
priyo 'granāyakaś caiva senānir vah samāhitah \\
tam iṃmaṃ manaṃ sandesād yāyaṃ sarve 'bhisaṃmatāḥ \\
seṇānir abhisāścādvaṃ mahāyogapatīṃ patim \\
adyaprabhrīṃ yuṣmākām ayaṃ nandiśivaraḥ śubhaḥ \\
priyo gauravavartkāś ca senānir amaraḥ prabhuh.
\end{align*}
\]

104In SP Bh 163.73, Indra asked Śiva to allow the gods to consecrate Skanda so as to install him in the office of commander of their army (senāpatya) and Śiva gave permission in 74:

\[
\begin{align*}
abhisiścya surāḥ skandaṃ senāpatya mahādyutim \\
jetum icchanti daityendram prasādād tava śānikuru \\
evam viśjūpitas tatra vaṃśaṃ vṛtthiḥ dvājadvajah \\
dadāv amujñāṃ skandāya senāpatyābhisēcane
\end{align*}
\]

105In the assembly of all divine beings, the chief priest, who is Brahmā for Nandin, Brahmā for Skanda, and unspecified in the case of Kuśikí, offers an oblation into the sacred fire, and the person to be consecrated takes a throne (simhāsana for Skanda and Kuśikí). Then, each participant takes a pot (kālaśa) filled with holy water and consecrates the person by sprinkling water upon him/her. Indra holds a parasol above him/her. The Lokapālas ‘the Guardians of the Quarters’ fan Skanda and Kuśikí with chowries, whereas Vīyu ‘the Wind’ fans Nandin.

Similar wordings, albeit in general descriptions, can also be found in Skanda’s abhiśeka and Kuśikí’s. For example, in SP 67.45, Indra ordered Apsaras to dance as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
nṛtyantu paritaś citrā darśayāntah prthaḥvividhān \\
rasāṃ bhāvaṃ vilāsāṃ ca sarve cāparasaṃ ganāḥ \\
and their dances are described in SP Bh 164.33:
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
nāntur āyatalolacanā vividhabhāvavilāsaraśāntīh \\
pāramāyavanarūjaṇāvītiḥ pramuditāḥ parito 'prasaso 'lasīh \\
in SP 67.46, Indra ordered Gandharvas to play music as follows:
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
pratisāryasya viṇāś ca gandharva madhvārasvarāḥ \\
layaṭālaśamam geyaṃ gāyantu ca samantataḥ
\end{align*}
\]

and, their music is described in SP Bh 164.37:

\[
\begin{align*}
maṇgalāni jaḍus toṣya gandharvā naṛdaś ca yah \\
pratisārya tadā viṇām tāraṃ raktam anākulaṃ
\end{align*}
\]

and, in SP Bh 164.9, Himalaya brought the pots:

\[
\begin{align*}
ratnair osadhibhir gandhasīḥ pūrṇān pūrṇāś ca vāriḥṣīḥ \\
ādāya kalasān haimān phullāmburumālānāḥ
\end{align*}
\]
Vindhyavāsinī can be regarded as a relic of her proto-myth, as discussed in 4.2. What is significant is Indra’s subsequent instruction given to Kauśikī, because it means that Indra approved of her control over all the earth in the assembly of the gods. However, this statement may have been mere lip service in that exaggerated remarks are common in the Hindu mythology.

In order to solve the problem, we should now return to the immediately following episode, Kauśikī’s distribution of the secondary goddesses into various places, related in SP 68.1–9, which can be interpreted in a different way in the light of the abhiṣeka episode of the Harivamśa. In HV 47.48ab, it was said, in the manner of Viṣṇu’s prophesy, that Indra would assign the Vindhya mountains to Nidrā-Vindhyavāsinī to be her abode. As argued in 4.2 (see p. 94), this implies that Indra would give her the office to preside over the Vindhya mountains. Here, in SP 68.1–9, Vindhyavāsinī assigned a specific locality to every goddess that emerged from her body, which means that Vindhyavāsinī, taking over Indra’s role in the Harivamśa, gave the office to every secondary goddess to preside over a specific locality. However, in order to realize this, Vindhyavāsinī must possess authority to rule over all the earth. So the distribution episode must have postulated that Vindhyavāsinī had attained the authority as such. This postulation conforms well with the implication of Indra’s instruction given to Kauśikī at the end of her abhiṣeka, mentioned just above. Therefore, the declaration by Indra concerning her protecting all the earth and so on should be accepted at face value, meaning that Kauśikī, acknowledged by Indra in front of all the gods, became the protectress of not only the Vindhya mountains but also all the earth. Hence it can be concluded that the purpose of Kauśikī’s abhiṣeka was her inauguration as the protectress of all the earth.

In consequence of her inauguration as the protectress of all the earth, Kauśikī would have become capable of giving every secondary goddess, who may originally have been a local/regional goddess, the office to preside over a territory, all of which were now under her control. This relationship between Kauśikī and the secondary goddesses may be analogous to that between a sovereign and his vassals. So it may be not too much to say that Vindhyavāsinī, in the Kauśikī cycle, came to reflect the image of a sovereign who, assuming the overlordship of all the earth, gives his vassals the offices of the actual control over their territories—so to speak, the image of cakravartin.

The proto-myth of Vindhyavāsinī reconstructed in 4.2 from the elements found in common in the Harivamśa and the Kauśikī cycle of the Skanda-purāṇa points to the inception of her evolution from among the female spirits worshipped locally on the fringe of Hindu society to a Hindu goddess affiliated to the Hindu pantheon. In this section, study of her characteristics in the Kauśikī cycle that are not found in the Harivamśa revealed great advances in this process of her evolution. In the Harivamśa, she still retained some features of terrifying female spirits, often called the Mothers as a group, from whom Vindhyavāsinī may have originated. On the other hand, these
features had disappeared from Vindhyavāsini in the Kauśikī cycle, while the goddesses who are said to have sprung out of her body, also called the Mothers, inherited the characteristics of the Mothers of an old type, namely terrifying female spirits found in the Mahābhārata and represented by some Kuśāna images of the Mothers. In the Kauśikī cycle, Vindhyavāsini was regarded as the commander of these goddesses and, furthermore, as their origin, meaning that she had embraced them as her subsidiary manifestations. Furthermore, Vindhyavāsini's distribution of these goddesses, her subsidiary manifestations, to various locations suggests that every goddess worshipped in a specific locality should be regarded as her manifestation in that locality. Therefore, Vindhyavāsini in the Kauśikī cycle is no longer a mere regional goddess, although she is still called Vindhyavāsini, 'the goddess in the Vindhya mountains'. Next, her representation as a royal warrior riding a chariot drawn by lions points to the direction of her evolution that can be called Kshatriyaization. It has further been inferred that her final destination implied in her abhiṣeka was to become the legitimate protectress of all the earth, in analogy with a sovereign who assumes the overlordship of all the earth, namely cakravartin. In this respect, too, she was, in the Kauśikī cycle, departing from the state of the regional goddess of the Vindhya mountains. Taking into account all these changes in her personality from the Harivamsa to the Skandapurāṇa, it could be surmised that her evolution was heading for her being a supra-regional goddess symbolizing a royal warrior, or further, a cakravartin.