The Heroic Cult of the Sovereign Goddess in Mediaeval India

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Abstract

This thesis examines why the cult of the sovereign goddess was considered important for the expression of royal power in mediaeval India. In literature and ritual, the goddess was conceptualized as the sovereign of heaven and earth. Her cult was heroic because it was primarily a cult of warriors: a good hero was one who worshipped the goddess for great powers, foremost among them being sovereignty. Certain ritual practices of the cult such as self-mutilation formed the criteria for a warrior-worshipper's heroism. By assessing the available epigraphical, literary, scriptural and anthropological material, I will attempt to show that the association between Indic kingship and the cult's belief-systems, also referred to as heroic Śāktism, was indeed an ancient one. Tracing its roots to non-Aryan religion, the cult of the sovereign goddess became a vital part of the Sanskritic kingdom, particularly from the latter half of the 6th c., when tribal kingdoms began to elevate themselves on the political map. One of the hallmarks of the cult, responsible for its pan-Indic popularity, was its syncretic nature: besides outcastes, its followers were from a number of sects. The goddess at its centre had no fixed identity but was formed of various personalities. The more public and well-attested of these was the martial goddess Durgā/Caṇḍī/Caṇḍikā, although other goddesses were also worshipped as her other aspects. In all these aspects the sovereign goddess was believed to grant the power of the king and the community. This idea was evoked in the mediaeval Indic world in an array of symbols: sacred statues, ritually empowered swords and insignia put on display for all to see, legends circulated throughout the kingdom, festivals where the sacred might of the realm was ritually reinforced. By assessing these symbols, I will attempt to show the vibrant forms whereby the connection of the cult with power was manifested in the mediaeval period.

For Mayu

Acknowledgements

This thesis represents not the culmination but rather the beginning of a long road, that I have merely been preparing for since 2005, when I first grew acquainted with Sanskrit. This preparation would not have been possible without the help of others. My gratitude firstly goes to my Sanskrit teachers, Professor Alexis Sanderson, Dr. James Benson and Professor Christopher Minkowski, who introduced to a naive ingenue, the wonders of a rich and, often exasperating, language and literature, and an ancient world full of promise and excitement.

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And finally to Péter, my *cintāmaṇi*– all days, whatever their mettle, are turned to gold by his touch.

Clarifications

An effort has been made to to spell toponyms with the appropriate diacritics as much as possible. Where the use of diacritics has seemed unsuitable (Uttarapradeśa for Uttar Pradesh; or Vihāra for Bihar), I have maintained the modern and more recognized spelling. This might lead to inconsistency in the way toponyms appear in the thesis, but this was unavoidable.

Purāṇas have been indicated by their full names (e.g. *Agnipurāṇa*/ *Devīpurāṇa*) in the first instance, and subsequently referred to by their particular names (e.g. the *Agni*/ the *Devī*).

Due to restrictions concerning word-count, I have been unable to transcribe all the relevant Sanskrit texts in the footnotes, unless absolutely necessary. It is hoped that, where it has not been thought necessary to show the full Sanskrit texts, an indication of the relevant locus in the sources, most of which are published in Devanāgarī and hence more readily accessible, can suffice for the reader, for the time being. Among the transcribed passages are those from editions which are only available, as far as I am aware, in the Bengali script (I refer first and foremost to the *Devīpurāṇa* and the *Durgābhaktitaraṅginī*).

Sanskrit texts from inscriptions can sometimes be lacunose where parts are illegible or have broken off. Lacunae are indicated with +. Where the editor is reliable, I have usually followed his corrected text (eg. *bhagavatīṃ* for *bhagavati* where the accusative is clearly needed), but where the editor seems unreliable or bigger corrections have been made by the editor (eg. *paraṣadīyaiḥ* for *parṣadā vā*), I have indicated those either in brackets or supplementary notes. Problematic Sanskrit passages are marked by †.

Generally, when referring to Sanskrit verses, I have given their location as the chapter and verse numbers (eg. *Devīpurāṇa* 30.45). Chapter 50 of the printed *Devīpurāṇa* repeats the verse numbers (there are, for instance, three sets of different verses numbered between 1-50 in this chapter), so, to avoid confusion I have given the page number additionally in this particular case.

Verses from an inscription have been identified by the source where the inscription has been published followed by the line number (eg. EI 9.25, ll. 4-5, which means *Epigraphia Indica*, volume 9, inscription number 25, lines 4 to 5.).

All tables, figures, illustrations and maps indicated in the thesis are given in the section "Maps and Figures" (p. 221 ff.).

Due to technical difficulties, long vocalic "r"s are written as *ṛṛ*. It is hoped that the reader can be indulgent in this matter.

All translations, unless indicated, are my own.

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1 Introduction: Heroic Śāktism and Indian Kingship

arṇorājanarādhirājahṛdaye kṣiptvaikabāṇavrajaṃ
cyotallohitatarpaṇād amadayac caṇḍīṃ bhujasthāyinīṃ |
dvārālambitamālaveśvaraśiraḥpadmena yaś cāharal
līlāpaṅkajasaṃgrahavyasaninīṃ caulukyarājānvayaḥ ||[1]

In 1151 CE this curious inscription in Sanskrit was commissioned by the Western Caulukya sovereign Kumārapāla. In it he boastfully commemorates subjugating Arṇorāja, a rival lord of Mālava, with a savage and bloody act. Cutting off the head of the war-lord, "having shot his heart with a single flight of arrows" (*-hṛdaye kṣiptvaikabāṇavrajaṃ*), Kumārapāla hung it from his palace gate (*dvārālambitamālaveśvaraśiraḥ-*) as a trophy to please the war-goddess, the fiery "Caṇḍī present in his arm" (*caṇḍīṃ bhujasthāyinīm*). It was she whom he believed had furthered his success. As a sign of his gratitude, the king "intoxicated her with propitiatory offerings of [his rival's] gushing blood" (*cyotallohitatarpaṇād amadayat*) and "captivated her" (*aharat*) with Arṇorāja's "lotus-like head" (*śiraḥpadma*), given (the versifier notes with unintended humour) "her penchant for holding toy-lotuses" (*līlāpaṅkajasaṃgrahavyasaninīm*).

Vividly evoked in this intricately figured *śārdūlavikrīḍita* stanza, is a particular aspect of mediaeval courtly life and religion, one of utmost importance to Indian kingship – the cult of the sovereign goddess.

This was a deity of kaleidoscopic identity. Her immediately visible form was the amazonian Caṇḍī/Caṇḍikā/Durgā/Bhavānī, represented in mediaeval iconography as a tempestuous demon-slaying sovereign. She also incarnated divinities from wholly separate religious traditions such as the king's dynastic clan-goddess, the lady of royal fortune Rājyaśrī, esoteric Tantric goddesses, as well as tribal aniconic forms. She was celebrated in each of these charismatic embodiments with the greatest pomp, involving the entire populace of a kingdom and in absolute secrecy, with worship known only to a few.

It was considered necessary to appease the deity–widely regarded to be fickle and capricious– at the onset of the military calendar in autumn, through splen-

[1] EI 1.34, v. 15. I am grateful to Prof. A. Sanderson for indicating this verse to me.

did court ceremonies where large numbers of buffaloes, goats and sheep (and in a few cases even a human[2]) were sacrificed for her sake, where weapons and armies were blessed and infused with her energy and kings demonstrated their fealty to her. For the mediaeval Indians, this ritual appeasement was believed to encapsulate the very essence of the heroic ethos.

So much so, that, as shall be seen, the practice, initially flourishing mainly in tribal polities, continued when tribes developed into, or were appropriated by, kingdoms organized along brahminical lines.[3] Rather than being relinquished, goddess-worship grew more important to ideas of heroism, even when certain features such as offering blood and appeasing wilder, unbridled forms of a *devī* were condemned by the mediaeval moral codes. Why were Indic kingdoms loath to let go of these icons of archaic religion?

Their importance in kingship was due to several reasons. Some of these were social and political. As ancestral deities, they were held to pass on the right to rule to their clan members. By maintaining their worship in the family, successive generations preserved their inheritance of the throne.

In addition, the custom in mediaeval India required a kingdom and its ruler to be sanctified and affirmed by a powerful god and an associated cult.[4] The acceptance of the ruling clan by the local population depended greatly on the belief that an important deity, in a large number of cases a tutelary goddess who commanded a much broader following among groups other than the ruler's, had exclusively sanctified the family in power. It was politically appropriate that the continued rule of the dynasty was owing to her grace.

However, the literature of the times reflects that the reason for royal goddess-worship, besides the social need for inheritance and popular acceptance, was also more emotional and psychological.

On the one hand, a king had the consolation of his patron-*devī*'s prodigious protective powers safeguarding him through critical times, such as the loss of the throne or on arduous journeys, a gift ancient Indic sacred and secular literature associated most particularly with a female potency. However, her protection was not permanent but remained entirely contingent on regular placation. If this pact was to be broken, legends warned she could cast one of her awful curses in displeasure, or let loose a horde of ghastly ghouls, and the consequences for

[2]See n. 444 on page 147, and for the Maithila Navarātra, in which a human head was offered, see p. 180.

[3]See p. 83.

[4]Sanderson 2005, p. 232 ff; Sanderson 2009, pp. 252-273.

king and kingdom could be dire indeed.

On the other hand, a king would also turn to a *devī* for a profoundly intimate and revelatory experience of the basis of his authority – celestial power. The most heightened embodiment of this power was thought to be his tutelary goddess, whom he called his Śakti ("capability/potency/power" in Sanskrit). Given her immanence in the world, a well-attested and widely held view[5], it was possible, suggested the literature, to grow close to *śakti,* to be able to experience her without distance. This meant that a king could transform himself into a conduit channelling the energy of the deity.

This belief found expression in an impressive range of rituals whereby the Śakti's potency could be internalized by a ruler who was a committed practitioner of her creed. By performing these rituals a king believed he was transformed into a *mahābala*, a man of super-human might, unvanquished in the onslaught of battle, or indeed under any duress. These interactional, sometimes ecstatic, substantiations of mystical power in the person of the king took place in special ceremonies propitiating the royal *devī*, taught in traditions often refined in courts.[6]

So also in narrative – ranging from early mediaeval Purāṇic myths, the early modern *bakhar*s on the Marāṭhā emperor Śivāji's life, oral legends in the vernaculars, to the pre-colonial *maṅgalakāvya* genre in Bengali – is this intimate relationship between goddess and king revealed. This mythic corpus is considered in depth in the subsequent chapters. Some myths show the goddess appearing to a great warrior and granting boons. Some show kings losing their sense of self and speaking in the voice of the goddess. Certain legends even suggested that a king could be inhabited by *śakti* in dreams or trance.[7] Others

[5] See p. 139.

[6] Ritual strategies whereby power was invested in the king ranged from reciting secret mantras propitiating the deity, performing rites of self-identification whereby the body of the worshipper was transformed into the body of the goddess, to summoning the goddess and appeasing her with blood in return for great gifts. For the second among these, ie the transformation of the king into the goddess, an event that would take place during the Navarātra, see the *Sāmrājylakṣmīpīṭhikā* discussed here on p. 197. For nineteenth century eye-witness accounts of the Navarātra rites in Śivagaṅgai and Ramnad where the king is made interchangeable with Durgā on Navamī, see Price 1996. The ecstatic experience of a Śakti's power was often to be had by possession, such as we find in Śivāji's case (see p. 58) or through esoteric (Tantric) meditative-worship believed to grant mystical encounters with flying *yoginī*s. For tantric worship of this kind see the example of the Paramāra Naravarman discussed on p. 36.

[7] See p. 58 and p. 72 for Śivāji's possession by Bhavānī and the first Cooch-Behar king's experience of dream-visions of Kāmateśvarī. Consciousness occasionally permeated by *śakti* was presented in these narratives as a highly prestigious feature of divine kingship. When entered by the ideal projection of heroic power, the king was made cognate with her.

cast the *devī* in forms palpable to men – a royal sword or amulet kept close to the monarch's body, a Kumārī who counsels the king and plays dice with him[8]. Such was the passionate devotion roused by the deity, that a good king was even prepared to lacerate his body and offer his blood, or decapitate his head to appease her, should she grow more demanding.[9]

These richly allusive allegories in the early and late myths convey an important cultural belief about royal authority: in mediaeval India the relationship between sacred and mundane power – Devī and Rājā – was not abstract, but one of real, close and visceral engagement. It was even believed that both were mutually permeable, even different sides of one personality and occasionally fused identity.

The aim of this thesis is to examine this complex and multi-faceted relationship between kings, courts and the cults of the sovereign-goddess. I would like to demonstrate that, in their earliest forms, these cults were associated with Indic kingship, an association that continued throughout the mediaeval period. I encompass this period approximately between the 6th to the 16th centuries of the common era, with ramifications into the early-modern. Why and how did goddesses come to embody a particularly Indic heroic ethos during this time? Why was military might considered more the prerogative of *devī*s and less of male divinities? Why did *devī*s remain stable forms of power in mediaeval Indic kingship, despite the inevitable transformations in courts, religions and political structures? What was the relationship of these deities to each other and to Caṇḍī? Was their religion a religion of the elite?

1.1 Historical Development

The answers to these questions are to be found in the history of warrior-centric goddess-worship, which I shall also refer to as heroic Śāktism. There were several phases of development in heroic Śāktism during the mediaeval period. Firstly there was a premature phase of the religion coinciding with the rise of early Sanskritic empires such as the Kuṣāṇas and the Guptas (cca. 2nd-6th c.). The earliest material evidence of important goddess cults emerges from

[8] The legend of the dice-playing match between a tutelary-goddess in the form of a little girl and a king is best represented by the tales of the goddess Taleju of Nepal and her relationship with the Malla kings. See Allen 1976, pp. 18-19 for an overview of these legends in the Nepalese genealogies..

[9] For descriptions of such worship by heroes see p. 93 and p. 149.

the imperial domains of the two dynasties and, though sparse, it is important to consider these cults as the historical precursors to the more vigorous royal goddess-worship of the 6th c. Then, there followed a mature phase after the fall of the Guptas (cca. 6th-11th c.). This phase coincided with the incorporation of autochthonous goddess-cults by new Sanskritic kingdoms and an increase in written and artistic sources on the goddess as royal power. Finally there was a later mediaeval, aggressively Brahminical phase after the arrival of the Muslims (cca. 10th-16th c.). Heroic Śāktism became identified as a *kṣatriya* religion from this period onwards.

1.1.1 cca. 2nd-6th c.

From the general picture of ancient Indic warrior-culture painted by the epics and the Purāṇas (our oldest sources for Indic kingship), it would seem that goddess-worship had no place in the heroic ethos of the 2nd-6th c. The *kṣatriya* genealogies as presented in these works, in which the old heroic races of the Solar and Lunar lines displayed the power and glory of their heritage, offer us no evidence that those races worshipped *śakti*s for power.[10] It would seem therefore that kingship in ancient India, if the history presented in those classical works was a fully representative one, was not Śākta at all. The earliest evidence for a cult of a sovereign-goddess comes not from the descriptions of the warrior dynasties presented in these Brahminical texts of ancient kingship, but from, what Brahminical parlance would probably have described as, a *mleccha* context.

The Central Asian Kuṣāṇas were the first prestigious Indic dynasty to publicly acknowledge heroic goddess-worship as the royal faith, asserting in an early inscription from the 2nd CE to have been anointed by their family goddess "Queen Nānā".[11] The dynasty's reverence of a patroness-goddess continued even when they crossed the mountains of Afghanisthan into India, under Kaniṣka. From his capital in Mathurā, the later Kuṣāṇa king nurtured the artistic production of some of the earliest images carved on stone of the sovereign-goddess in her buffalo slaying form Mahiṣamardinī, and these images point to what must have been a flourishing cult. On the other hand, although we know that the Kuṣāṇa royal house was involved in the goddess's cult given the presence of a few coins from the reigns of Vima Kadphises, Kaniṣka and Huveṣka depicting

[10] For analyses of the classical epic and Purāṇic genealogies see Pargiter 1910 and Pargiter 1922.

[11] See p. 48.

Nānā[12], their other inscriptions do not provide any solid testimony for a royal cult of the sovereign-goddess.

Despite the ambiguity concerning the Śāktism of the Kuṣāṇas, their domains supply us with the earliest evidence of a Śākta sacred site. The Miñjaparvata, now identified as the cave Kashmir Smast (North Pakistan, Peshawar Valley), was the site of a shrine to the goddess Bhīmā of which a few archaeological remains, comprising seals and one copper-plate inscription, have been recently unearthed. In the seals, Bhīmā is depicted as a squatting figure, as if about to give birth, with full breasts, accompanied by a trident, a *kalaśa* and the figure of a dancing male companion. The symbolism of fertility evoked by this depiction was perhaps considered by the goddess's worshippers as her potency.

Bhīmā's cave-temple is described as a pilgrimage place of great power for seekers of wealth and merit in the *Mahābhārata*[13], in Purāṇic myth (where she is described as Durgā's vice-regent[14]) and in the account of the seventh-century Chinese traveller Xuanzang[15]. The copper-plate found in her cave records substantial donations made by a pilgrim to the shrine, possibly around the early part of the 5th c.[16] Not by any means was this site shrouded in obscurity. Much about Bhīmā's cult appears to be far more ancient and well-known than the first sources would have us believe, clearly pre-dating the layer of the *Mahābhārata* where she appears (namely the *Āraṇyakaparvan*). Already by the time these accounts – including the inscription – were written, the shrine was prosperous and famous (the inscription mentions that there was even a *maṭha* in charge of its business dealings[17]). Xuangzang emphasises the great numbers of visitors from all over India and of various religious backgrounds who would arrive there to have their wishes miraculously granted. Observing a weekly fast before seeing the goddess, pilgrims would first bathe in cleansing waters on arrival at the cave and thereafter, according to the *Mahābhārata*, would assuredly become the goddess's son (*devyāḥ putro bhaved*), accruing "a reward [equalling] a hundred thousand cows" (*gavāṃ śatasahasrasya phalaṃ*).[18] Inside the sanctum

[12] Ghose 2006, p. 108
[13] *Mahābhārata* 3.80.100-102 and 14.8 (passages identified by Falk 2003).
[14] For Bhīmā in the *Devīmāhātmya*, see p. 88.
[15] Beal 1884, p. 113.
[16] Falk 2003, p. 5 (text and picture), p. 6 (translation).
[17] Falk 2003, p. 5, ll.5-9.
[18] *tato gaccheta dharmajña bhīmāyāḥ sthānam uttamam |*
tatra snātvā tu yonyāṃ vai naro bharatasattama |
devyāḥ putro bhaved rājaṃs taptakuṇḍalavigrahaḥ |
gavāṃ śatasahasrasya phalaṃ caivāpnuyān mahat |
girimuñjaṃ samāsādya triṣu lokeṣu viśrutam |

sanctorum they would worship the goddess's idol of green-blue stone, which, according to Xuanzang, was a natural formation, arisen from the earth of its own accord. Bhīmā's aniconic nature suggests that she might have been an ancient autochthonous deity, for many of the early goddesses, as we shall see, began as indigenous deities worshipped in natural formations.

The evidence for the period immediately following the Kuṣāṇas also remains sparse. During the Gupta and the Vākāṭaka reigns, the popularity of Sanskritic goddesses with a royal aspect, particularly Mahiṣamardinī and the *mātṛs* can be inferred from the rise in their images commissioned by these imperial dynasties.[19] The patronage of the *mātṛ*s was encouraged particularly in the tribal region of Valkhā now in modern Madhya Pradesh by Samudragupta. His feudatory Bhuluṇḍa is said to have erected two shrines to these goddesses and to have granted several villages as permanent endowments (see Table 1). But the effort in elevating these, possibly older, goddess cults only seems to have extended to the peripheral reaches of the Gupta lands.

The only known case where the patronage of a goddess took place more centrally in the Gupta empire rather than in its *āṭavika* fringes is that of the goddess Piṣṭapurikā. This deity received donations thrice, from Gupta Parivrājaka and Uccakalpa vassals, Saṃkṣobha, and Śarvanātha (see Table 1).[20] The grants included a village for the maintenance of her shrine in Mānapura (possibly modern Manpur) and the performance of *bali*, *caru* and *sattra* and were made to individuals whose families were connected with the performance of the ritual duties of the shrine. Little though can be inferred as to whether the goddess's cult was a heroic one, that is to say, was linked to the power of a warrior, particularly a king, and of a community (as the cults of the Mātṛs[21], Mahiṣāsuramardinī, Bhīmā and Nānā certainly were). The argument of certain scholars (Fleet, and Willis largely following him) would suggest that it was– the deity was a Vaiṣṇavite goddess, a regional form of the imperial *devī* of the Andhra town of Piṣṭapura (modern Pīṭhapuram), mentioned in the Allahabad inscription of Samudragupta as one of the Gupta cities in the Deccan.[22] If she was indeed established as the protectress of Mānapura as she might have been of Piṣṭapura, then the deity was clearly one with a strong sovereign-aspect that would been viewed as protective of the community and her cult would have attracted war-

pitāmahaṃ namaskṛtya gosahasraphalaṃ labhet | *Mahābhārata* 3.80.100-102.

[19] Bakker 1997, p. 58.

[20] CII 3.25.15b; CII 3.29.19A; CII 3.31.20. See Table 1.

[21] For the association of the *mātṛ*s with the protection of communal spaces see p. 137.

[22] CII 3, p. 113, n. 2; Willis 2009, p. 89

riors.

Further hints of more robust royal goddess-worship under the Guptas and the Vākāṭakas abound – a coin of Candragupta's with a goddess seated on a lion[23]; the possibility that Samudragupta's policy of assimilating tribes was also religious in character, and goddesses worshipped by the so-named "forest kings" beyond Valkhā were incorporated by the Guptas in Sanskritic forms or amalgamated with the influential cults of mother-goddesses (*mātṛ*s) and *yoginī*s.[24] And yet, in the absence of vital written evidence, barring a few copper plate inscriptions, such areas of enquiry remain for the attention of future scholarship.

It is perhaps quite an obvious fact of the Gupta age that Sanskrit literature produced at that time seldom described goddesses in a significant way, and it is therefore not a coincidence that their patronage was quite meagre (see Map 1). This has something important to tell us about the status of goddess-worship under the Guptas: heroic Śāktism was very much a peripheral religion. This lack of status owed in part perhaps to the absence of goddesses in the Vedic religion, which the Guptas were keen to be seen as promoters of. The Vedas, the earliest known religious texts of the *brāhmaṇa*s, hardly ever discuss the worship of sovereign goddesses (barring two exceptions).[25] Their overall silence is a reflection of either ignorance on their part or the exclusion of these deities – their *bāhyatā* – from the canonical Aryan religion.

1.1.2 cca. Latter half of the 6th-11th c.

The concept of sovereignty as a woman with martial and fecund potency had far greater relevance to non-Brahminical communities, as it had with the early Kuṣāṇas, and was a belief that had first developed in many of those groups, before their incorporation by the early mediaeval kingdoms, particularly after the fall of the Guptas. It is from the 6th CE that we get solid evidence in Sanskrit concerning this. The period following the 6th CE marked the overall rise of these groups out of obscurity and hence their traditional religious practices are better accounted for in literature. When some of these groups grew into lineages with imperial ambitions, they became more assertive of their Śākta faith. It is thus this period that marks the efflorescence of the sovereign-goddess cult in Indic

[23] Kulke and Rothermund 1986, p. 85, 89

[24] As proclaimed in his Allahabad Inscription, Samudragupta had aggressively campaigned to bring mountain-dwelling "forest kings" (*āṭavikarājā*s) under his dominion. CII 3, pp. 10-17.

[25] The *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* of the Black *Yajurveda* and the *Ṛg Veda* Khilas, contain a Durgāsūkta, in which Durgā is described in terms similar to the Vedic Agni (*agnivarṇāṃ, jvalantīṃ, vairocanīṃ*). See *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* of the *Black Yajurveda* 10.1; *Ṛg Veda Khila* 10.127 a-d. I am grateful to Dr Elizabeth Tucker for identifying the Ṛg Veda Khila passages.

kingship.

The Śakas and the Vindhya-dwelling Śabaras/ Śavaras (a term that may have included a far wider range of communities resident in the Gayā region) are some of the earliest non-Aryan tribes named in 7th century Sanskrit literature as followers of tutelary-goddesses typified as Caṇḍī (to be shown). Among those to have left us epigraphical records from the period are the Orissan Śulkīs who did well in establishing themselves socially, and swore allegiance to their ancestral patroness, a regal deity who protected the tribe, in their inscriptions.[26] They claimed to have owed their successes to their continued worship of this goddess. Sanskrit secular literature from the time of Harṣavardhana provides more ample testimonia.[27] In all these 6th-7th c. accounts, written at the very time that the tribal cults of these deities were beginning to transform into court cults centred in temples, goddess-worship, not yet fully a *kṣatriya* custom, is still shown to be a tribal practice, or perhaps more accurately, a practice on the cusp of transition from indigenous to Sanskritic. From the evidence of these sources, as well as several recent studies on early mediaeval Eastern kingdoms, a scenario of indigenous heroic Śāktism may be reconstructed for the latter part of the Gupta era, that perhaps reached backed even earlier. I have analysed this scenario and the relevant data in greater detail in Chapter 2[28], but below is presented a brief summary.

Female divinities in non-representational forms such as stones, stakes, or mounds of earth were traditionally worshipped as clan-deities (*kuladevī*/*kuladevatā*) for protection, health and fertility by the groups designated as outcastes by Brahminical literature. Their worship gave these outcaste communities a sense of sacred and timeless ownership over the land. When tribal-pastoral warrior communities came into contact with larger urbanised kingdoms, after the fall of the Guptas they were eventually incorporated into Sanskritized states. Given

[26] Śulkīs are discussed on p. 84. Some other Śākta tribal clans were the Dimasas, worshippers of Kacai Kati; the Bhars of Bundelkhand, worshippers of Maniya Devī and Kālikā; the Raj Gonds of Nagpur worshippers of Banjari Mata and Vanadevi; the Śākta Athia Chaḍār tribe (so named because of their worship of Devī on Aṣṭamī of Kunwar); the Chotanagpur Oraons, votaries of Anna Kuārī, or the Bhonsles of Satara, devotees of Tuljā Bhavānī. The Bhonsles and the Dimasas are considered in depth in chapter two. For the rest see Russell and Lal 1916, vol. 4, 312; Crooke 1896, vol 2, p. 9; ibid. p. 80; ibid, p. 176; Russell and Lal 1916, vol. 2.2, pp. 181-2; vol 4, p. 312; ibid. p. 442; Sharma 2005, pp. 316-317. Besides these few examples, chosen since they acquired considerable political power when coming into contact with Hindu rulers and were Sanskritized, there are many more traditionally goddess-worshipping tribes described in the ethnographic works on tribes and castes prepared by Crooke 1896 on the North-West Provinces, Russell and Lal 1916 on the Central Provinces and Iyer 1928, 1935 on the Mysore provinces.

[27] See p. 24.

[28] See p. 83.

her irreproachable reputation as the ancient monarch of the terrain, the tribal patroness, rather than being repudiated, continued in her importance– albeit in a form amalgamated with the established Brahminical warrior-goddess Caṇḍī/ Durgā/ Bhavānī and related goddesses– worshipped by means of the same ritual systems, and received elite patronage from royal palaces. The more ecstatic aspects of royal goddess worship such as trance and deity-possession cultivated by later kings such as Śivāji were most likely continuations or assimilations of ancient tribal custom, where possession by the ancestral goddesses formed a hallmark of religious tradition.

Though barely a presence in very early testimonia, later history dictated a more public role for these deities. By the end of the 6th century CE, a more widespread accomodation of their non-Aryan faith was overseen by the great mediaeval dynasties, beginning with the Maukharis, who had commissioned one of the earliest temples to the popular demon-slaying regal goddess of the Vindhya hills.[29] We also have evidence from Orissa where the autochthonous goddess Stambheśvarī received the patronage of the rising kings of Dhenkanal-Talcher.[30] There was a greater effort both in patronising local royal goddesses important to regionally powerful dynasties[31] and in integrating them with forms of Caṇḍī enshrined in Purāṇic scripture. The number of official charters testifying this process, so far insubstantial, significantly increases, as we shall see further. All of a sudden, goddesses begin to emerge more fully in the records of Indian history.

Simultaneously, literature on *devī*s in Sanskrit, the language of the cultivated, began to appear, and did so in voluminous quantities.[32] This expanding culture of intellectual discussion was employed by a court to refine preexisting rituals and ideas concerning the clan-goddess.

In broadest terms the texts describe a theological tenet of feminized power called Śakti**.** Locally influential royal goddesses were described as emanations of this concept. A number of formulations on the subject of who or what Śakti was, and the appropriate method of her propitiation, appeared in esoteric Tantric and exoteric Purāṇic writings, leading to a diverse range of scriptural and ritual spheres available for a state to draw from.

[29] See n. 238 on page 90.

[30] For Stambheśvarī see p. 84 and p. 110.

[31] For example an early instance of patronage towards a local form of *śakti* is that of a Licchavi goddess, possibly Māneśvarī, in Haṃḍigaon in Nepal (see Table 1 and p. 101 for further details).

[32] The majority of the ancient written records in the form of Śākta inscriptions (see Table 1) and scripture (considered in chapters 3 and 4) date from this period onwards.

The Tantric Śākta texts articulated a higher, abstract philosophy for the learned select that was soteriological as well as this-worldly in goal. Purāṇic myth and popular religion viewed Śakti as incarnated in a singular female godhead who adopts various regional forms and whose primary agency is a valiant king or warrior.

The heroic Mahiṣāsuramardinī myth in the Purāṇas, particularly in the *Devīmāhātmya* (8th CE) the primary revelation of the brahminical followers of the Purāṇic Śakti, was employed in various rites and symbolic actions of the kingdom and thus served as an important political narrative. These myths symbolically conveyed the idea of the war-goddess as imperial metaphor: she is an image of the king himself in his most potent form, the *cakravartin*. This idea was expressed and reinforced at all times during the ceremonies empowering a mediaeval kindom.[33]

All these sources give a clear sense that a transformation had occured in the cult: heroic Śāktism had crystallized from a peripheral faith to a religion of state or Imperial power where political might was figuratively understood and ritually cultivated by a kingdom as Śakti.

So strong did the religion grow after the sixth century CE, that even an influential Muslim settler on the Konkan coast in the 10th century CE is stated in an inscription dated April 17, 926 CE to have offered sizeable land-grants and gifts to the sovereign-goddess Daśamī, in order to obtain her blessing in securing his political aggrandizement[34]; while the great imperial city of Kanyakubja was host to not one, but several *śakti* worshipping clans.[35] Why did this transformation happen?

The fall of the Guptas had precipitated the ideal social context granting impetus to royal goddess-worship – ongoing and dynamic processes of state-formation necessitating constant military action. The Gupta collapse (542-543 CE) marked the end of the protective canopy of a unified empire and ushered in

[33]Two features of the myth that had fed into the idea of the goddess as the Imperial *cakravartin* were i) its parallel with a legend of Skanda the commander of the heavenly army in which he is described as the slayer of Mahiṣa ii) the formation of the Goddess from the combined lustre of the gods. Skanda is the warrior-god par-excellence whose martial role Durgā takes over in legend– sharing also for instance his close connection with the Sapta Mātṛs and the idea of his non-uterine birth–while her creation from godly *tejas* is rich in allusions to Indian kingship where the king is similarly held to be formed of particles of the gods. See Sarkar (forthcoming) where I discuss these ideas in greater depth. For the royal implications of the formation from *tejas* scene see also Coburn 1984, p. 228 and Yokochi 1999, p. 80.

[34]See p. 103and Table 1

[35]See p. 95.

inter-state political rivalry and continuous regional warfare, the great century-long struggle over the prized city of Kanyakubja being a defining example of this turbulence. The battle for Kanyakubja witnessed the maturation of the military might of the Pālas, the Gurjara-Pratīhāras and the Cālukyas. After the cessation of hostilities and later, the fall of the city, emerged new dynasties hungry for power – the Coḷas in the south and in the north the Paramāras, the Chandellas, the Kāḷacuris, the Gāhaḍavālas and the first Rajputs.[36] These shifts coincided with a need for a religion and ritual system particularly benefiting military state-expansion.

That need was fulfilled by the rise and spread of the cult of the martial Caṇḍī, and royal goddesses assimilated with her who blessed the onset of battle, in particular the potentially dangerous march (*yātrā*) leading to armed confrontation. Its followers were, not surprisingly, mainly warriors. The era witnessed as a result a burgeoning of royal donations of land (one or a number of villages), money, images and kind made to support her shrines by kings and wealthy individuals (see Table 1). For example, in Thanjavur, the inventory accompanying a Coḷa grant to the goddess Umā-Parameśvarī included a gold crown set with an astonishing eight-hundred and fifty nine diamonds, three hundred and nine large and small rubies and six hundred and sixty nine large and small pearls; a gold garland set with five hundred and five diamonds, one hundred and ten rubies and ninety four strung pearls; earrings, armlets, a pearl ornament, arm-ornaments and bracelets all equally set with precious gems.[37] These were copious and splendid donations indeed. The business of commissioning Śakti icons was undertaken with equal care. Eminent artisans were commissioned to produce cult images of important royal goddesses and their names were proudly inscribed at the base of the images, given the great prestige they brought to the commissioner. For example, two striking and exquisitely detailed images of Bhadrakālī and Śakti Devī, commissioned by the early mediaeval Chamba king Meruvarman, who considered these goddesses sacred for his power, were carved by a master-craftsman Gugga.[38]

This upward arc in the religion's economic history is testified by a great

[36] Inden 2006, pp. 129-30; Kulke and Rothermund 1986, pp. 109-116.

[37] SII 2.1.7. See also SII 2.1.2, 2.1.6, and SII 2.4.79 for similar inventories of jewels, and also land-grants and other gifts, presented to Durgā in the Coḷa domain by the same donor, sister of Rājarāja.

[38] See Illustration 1. For the importance of these goddesses to Meruvarman see p. 107. On Gugga see Handa 2005, pp. 63-69. Other artists too would have their names inscribed on statuary if they were particulary eminent: see SII 15.2.405 an inscription from Badami which records that the image of Durgā donated was carved by Candrakīrtibhaṭṭa.

number of copper-plate and stone inscriptions where acts of donations to Śakti temples are recorded.[39] The deities, donors, dates of donations and sites are listed chronologically in Table 1 based on the information provided in the inscriptions and also by commissioned statuary. Well-known imperial dynasties such as the Pāṇḍyas, the Coḷas, the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and others, less famous but locally influential chieftains and associations, were major donors. The geographical areas in which these patronage networks appear is plotted out in Map 2. The map of this distribution demonstrates clearly that what were once obscure shrines to localized forms of the Purāṇic sovereign-goddess, acquired patronage between the 6th-12th c. in a remarkably broad area of the sub-continent covering i) the Nāgārjunī Hills, ii) Vasantgadh and Mewar in Rajputana iii) the Chamba valley, Kumaon Hills and the Himachal iv) Kudarkot v) Badami and Aihole vi) the Konkan coast viii) Orissa viii) Thanjavur and other parts of the Coḷa empire ix) Pāla Bengal (including Devīkoṭa) x) the Licchavi domain. The emergence of these shrines as officially patronized sites tells us that after the fall of the Guptas there was a remarkable turn of fortune for the Śakti cult in kingship– it had grown to pan-Indic eminence as a result of robust patronage, despite all the stiff competition from other cults advancing merits to client-rulers. We can also infer from the increased patronage to Śakti shrines that the cult as a whole had acquired the status of a great political religion, at par with other mediaeval court-religions such as Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism. Its accessing patronage, a key process of prestigious (Sanskritic) kingship, meant that it had by this time developed tremendously in stature, for, in the mediaeval period, the act of giving to a deity was no small matter casually undertaken but formed the most meaningful way a king could tie himself to divine power.

There also emerged at this time a number of royal dynasties who saw in the Imperial Caṇḍī's conquering exploits the apotheosis of the ideal Hindu sovereign. As a result, they began to incorporate the goddess into the narratives they employed to explain to their subjects their claim to power. Many major combatants in the struggles for power summarized just before[40], professed in their official

[39] The existence of a number of inscriptions discussed later in the thesis, including the South Indian ones, the inscription to Kṣemāryā, the Orissan inscriptions and the Kudarkot inscription was first brought to my attention by Louise Finn's table of Śākta epigraphs, appended to her translation of the *Kulacūḍāmaṇi Tantra* (Finn 1986). This table provided the following information: the name of the deity (Bhavānī/ Cāmuṇḍā etc), a list of the published sources for inscriptions pertaining to that deity (SII 1.4, CII 3.50 etc) and the general period of the inscription (6th/7th century), but no further details. Among the inscriptions dedicated to the Saṃyāna *maṭhikā*, Finn noticed only the Rāṣṭrakūṭa charter from Chinchani village.

[40] See p. 18.

inscriptions to having been sanctified by a warrior-*śakti* in their military endeavours: from the Cālukyas, to the Pālas, Gurjara-Pratīhāras, Yaśovarman of Kanyakubja, the Chandellas and in particular the Rajputs. Legends developed in Sanskrit about how great kings who went on to establish their mighty empires could do so only because they were granted kingship by Caṇḍī. Proper kingship in fact wholly depended on this belief. These legends are considered later in the thesis.

Let us now move to an important aspect of the religion in this early phase. Given that *devī*s synthesized with Caṇḍī were worshipped largely by peripheral social groups, it was felt that the ritually impure (tribals and *mlecchas*) had equal access to sovereignty in early Śākta kingship. This understanding that anyone could be a goddess-empowered king, sharply contrasted to the mutually exclusive caste relations strictly adhered to by later Brahminical kingdoms (where only high-caste *dvijas* served as goddess-worshipping rulers). 11th century Sanskrit narratives like the Kashmirian *Kathāsaritsāgara* provide ample instances of tribal rulers sanctified by a form of Caṇḍī and the goddess is portrayed as the chosen god of the outcaste.[41]

Indeed early heroic Śāktism idealized a conscious violation of the purity-rules determining caste. For instance, anyone could enter a goddess-shrine: there was little sense of breach, pollution or interdiction as there was in such self-consciously pure shrines as Vaiṣṇava ones. The Navarātra was celebrated even by Jaina and tribal kings. A view developed in early mediaeval esoteric thinking that caste-distinctions had to be dissolved in the *maṇḍalic* ambit of higher *śākta* worship. This was because *śākta* theologians felt that observing hierarchical norms was simply a matter of following the "mundane order" of the world. But, in their view, proper *śākta* worship, rooted in perceiving the goddess as ultimate non-dualism, ought to transcend dichotomies of caste.[42]

The cultural effect of this outlook was that the concept of Śākta kingship before the advent of the Muslims was all-embracing. It was neither exclusively tribal, nor Brahminical, but also Buddhist and Jaina, even an outsider's creed, for the Kuṣāṇas and groups generalized as *mlecchas* in early-mediaeval Sanskrit were all worshippers of a "Caṇḍī" or a form related to her.

The figure of the sovereign-goddess in the period simply represented a deity for all kings. Their sectarian affiliation did not seem to have mattered much, for only one specific spiritual credential was demanded by heroic Śāktism- the

[41] For example *Kathāsaritsāgara* 4.2.55ab.
[42] Sanderson 2009, p. 249; Sanderson 1995, pp. 16-18.

worship of a *devī*, identified under various names and appearing in common in several religious traditions.[43]

In addition, one may also infer from the texts appearing between the 6th-11th centuries that heroic Śāktism was to a certain degree a soldier's faith granting protection from danger and attainments necessary for human-survival, as opposed to the ascetic, world-negating outlook of Upaniṣadic Brahmanism, Buddhism and Jainism. This contributed to its popularity not just with warriors, but even with itinerant merchants who, like soldiers, undertook risky journeys.

1.1.3 cca. 11th-16th c.

With the rise of the later mediaeval states after the 10th c. warrior-centred *devīpūjā* particularly in autumn spread all over the Indic world and was performed almost *de rigueur*, from the Vijayanagara Empire, the kingdoms of Mysore[44], Ramnad and Śivagangai in the South, the Marāṭhā domains in the West, the Rajput kingdoms of the North-West,[45] Bihar[46] and the Nāga and Kākatīya domains in Madhya Pradesh, to the eastern kingdoms of Aṅga, Vaṅga[47], Kaliṅga, Mithilā and the Nepalese kingdoms[48] and further in the East, in the principality of Surakarta in Java.[49]

There are impressive accounts of the carnivalesque magnificence of these rituals and the great expense monarchs were prepared to lavish on mounting fine displays centering on the tutelary-*devī*, not just for their own clans, but for all dependent subjects. Brought out fully from behind the curtains of private, clandestine or tribal practice, goddesses had by now become much more visible in the systems ordinarily regulating a state.

By becoming more public and synonymous with what proper kings did, the practice also became restrictive regarding who was entitled to worship, particularly with the arrival of the Muslims. After the Ghaznavid invasion, there was a reactionary ossification of the "Hindu" kingdom and the privileging of the caste-model as the ideal social structure. Discussion on the finer points of Durgā's royal *pūjā,* including who was entitled to her worship, was dominated by the

[43] See p. 108 ff.
[44] Kinsley 1987, p. 106.
[45] For the Mewari rites for instance, see Tod 1829, Customs of Mewar, pp. 464-466
[46] For an eye-witness account of the Navarātra festival in Dumraon in Bihar see Gupta and Gombrich 1986, pp. 135-6.
[47] For an eyewitness account of the Navarātra in Viṣṇupur and the presence of the king see Ákos Ostor, 1980.
[48] See in this thesis p. 101.
[49] Brake L. 1997, pp. 257-263 in Sanderson 2007, p. 96, n. 188.

*smārta*s, orthodox commentators of the Dharmaśāstra, and their word on the subject was regarded as law (and indeed continues to be so in present-day practice).[50] The *smārta* appropriation of Durgā's worship is evidence of a process of increased Brahminical control in the domain of heroic Śāktism. As a result, the worship of Durgā was made to conform to Brahminical ritual conventions of purity and versions eschewing animal-sacrifice, offering alcohol and Tantric rites for the rule-abiding vegetarian and teetolling *dvija* began to appear in ritual manuals from this period.[51] As the royal goddess became more sanitized and subsumed by caste, her worship, formerly practiced by kings of all creeds, came to be associated with an exclusively Hindu, specifically *kṣatriya* form of kingship. There was little chance for an outcaste in this period to commission a glittering *devīpūjā* as an assertion of his sovereign independence.

As she was made into a *kṣatriya* deity, literary allusions to outcaste kings and Caṇḍikā, once abundant in the ancient texts, disappeared. In the political expression of the later mediaeval and the early modern age, any reference to goddess-sanctified tribal kingship would have been an admission of an atavistic form of government that a *dvija* king thought better to surpress.

The effect of the effacement of Caṇḍī's tribal identity is palpable in the present day: it is increasingly difficult nowadays to see in a modern tutelary-goddess's iconography and practice anything but the barest suggestions of a heterogeneous past. Modernity has so fully Sanskritized and domesticated[52] goddesses with a royal aspect, that any reference to a tribal identity is met with a certain amount of indignation in the modern worshipper.

Then again, room should be allowed for exceptions: some patron-*devī*s never were tribal in the first place, while some were appropriated only later by non-

[50] For *smārta* literature on the Durgā Pūjā, see Sarkar 2011 forthcoming b. See also in this thesis p. 144 ff.

[51] See n. 573 on page 181 for the teachings of the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* and the *smārta* Viṣṇubhaṭṭa Āṭhavale concerning the vegetarian Navarātra for brahmins. Elements from orthodox Brahminism began to dominate in the Navarātra in mediaeval Bengal. These included offerings of cleansing water; a Vedic verse inserted to exonerate animal sacrifice as "not a killing" (*avadhaḥ*); options to substitute animals with vegetables for vegetarians, and the exclusion of alcohol from the list of offerings. These brahminical influxes are in fullest evidence in the *smārta* Raghunandana's *paddhati* the *Durgāpūjātattva*. For a more detailed analysis see Sarkar 2011 forthcoming b. Durgā's depictions in literature also underwent a transformation. Whereas older literary depictions lavished praise on her antinomian character, her Kālī-like associations with the cremation-ground, later depictions, such as in the Bengali *Annadāmaṅgal,* preferred instead a less transgressive form that was in keeping with conventions of feminine propriety.

[52] In fifteenth century Bengal for instance the *zamindāri* royal goddess was the paradigmatic matriarch of an aristocratic household and her iconography came to include members of her "family". The rise of Durgā as a gentle figure associated with the harvest has been discussed in Sarkar 2011 forthcoming b in the context of the Brahmin *zamindāri*s of mediaeval Bengal.

Aryan communities and as for others, the reality should be faced that we will never know.

1.2 The Testimony of Kāvya

Sanskrit literature provides further clues. In *kāvya* from the 7th-11th c. there are two concomitant conceptions of the patron-goddess, one as the threatening, tribal "Outsider", the other as the integrated, civilized "Insider". In later times the latter would tend to dominate mirroring thereby a wider process of tribal-goddess assimilation by elite cultures.

In the strata of *kāvya* depicting the "Outsider", outcastes are overwhelmingly depicted as goddess-worshippers. In particular the Śabaras, a label designating any outcaste, used synonymously with Bhillas, Pulindas and Mātaṅgas[53], are the usual votaries of a "Caṇḍī", or more likely a non-Aryan patron-deity publicly acknowledged by her name, in for instance, the *Harṣacarita* and *Kādambarī* of Bāṇa, in the Prakrit *Gaüḍavaho* of Bappaī/ Vākpati, the hymn to Caṇḍī in the *Haravijaya* and in several tales of the *Kathāsaritsāgara*.[54]

Although potentially benevolent, she is in appearance a dark, liminal and occasionally vicious character homologized with Kālī, Cāmuṇḍā or Kālarātri, whose blood-thirstiness must be kept at bay with sacrifice, animal and human. The sites of her worship are usually located in the middle of the wilderness rather than in the urban environment of courts, usually in the forests of the Vindhyan mountains, which as acknowledged even by the Buddhist tradition, were the home of the Śabaras.[55] In Sanskrit literature, the Vindhyas form the boundary separating the Aryan from the non-Aryan world and its dangerous expanses represented to the Sanskrit writers the darkening glades of marginal religious beliefs ranging beyond the cities.

Contrary to the view that this might be a mere literary convention, a view that Caṇḍī is a *mleccha*-goddess appears elsewhere. In Brahminical scripture, non-Aryan Śabaras are emphasised as forming one of her principal devotees. For instance, the Eastern *Kālikāpurāṇa* teaches a Śābarotsava, the Festival of Śabaras, on Daśamī the day after the last *tithi* of the Navarātra, the pan-Indic

[53] The interchangeability of tribal groups in the *Kathāsaritsāgara* was first pointed out me by Professor A. Sanderson in a personal communication in May 2011.

[54] *Harṣacarita*, Ucchvāsa 8, p. 126, l. 4; *Kādambarī* pp. 30-31; *Gaüḍavaho* 336; *Haravijaya* 47.41; *Kathāsaritsagara* 4.2.88ab.

[55] P. D. Szántó drew my attention to the following. Yaśomitra, Buddhist commentator, understands Śabaras to be dwellers of the Vindhya mountain who are dark of hue, while Kirātas are the fair-complexioned dwellers of the Himalayas (*Abhidharmakośovyākhyā* or *Sputārthā* 326).

festival of the goddess.[56] The Śābarotsava is very evidently an old tribal rite, as even the Dharmaśāstric commentarial tradition first recognized.[57] By including rituals outside its jurisdiction, the Brahmanical tradition sought to maintain a continuity with traditions of goddess-worship that had a longer history among the indigenous population.

Additionally Brahmanical liturgy teaches kings more extreme rituals of self-mutilation and offering human heads to fully sate *devī*. These are taught on the strength that they are old tribal customs testing heroic potential. For instance, the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa,* and closely related passages from other Purāṇas cited in Dharmaśāstric literature, repeatedly note that Caṇḍī is venerated with such practices only by abject *mlecchas*: "hordes of outcastes" (*nānāmlecchagaṇaiḥ*), "dwellers of Aṅga, Vaṅga and Kaliṅga, Kiṃnara Varvaras" (*aṅgavaṅgakaliṅgaiś kinnarair varvaraiḥ*) and Śaka tribes (*śakaiḥ*).[58] While Aṅga, Vaṅga and Kaliṅga constituted lands that were understood more generally as non-Aryan– beyond the Sanskritic pale– *Śaka*s and *varvara*s were all terms in orthodox discourse used to denote outcastes and autochthonous races.

A further characteristic of the "Outsider" Caṇḍī is her strong apotropaic dimension and her consequent association with planets and causes of crises– *bhūta*s, *preta*s, *piśāca*s, *yoginī*s–frightening deities on the margins of orthodox Brahminical religion who cause death, illness and affliction. This dangerous side, reaches back into the earliest Purāṇic sources on *devī*'s legends, beginning with the *Skandapurāṇa*, several manuscripts of the *Mahābhārata* and extends into eleventh century courtly narratives such as the *Kathāsaritsāgara*.[59] In my view it draws from the character of the tribal clan-goddess who had strong associations with averting diseases such as cholera and small-pox.[60]

[56]Discussed in greater detail in this thesis on p. 150. The *Kālikāpurāṇa* also says that Caṇḍī is worshipped " by many groups" (*bahujātīyair*): see n. 444 on page 147.

[57]*Durgāpūjāviveka,* p. 33; *Durgotsavaviveka,* p. 24*; Durgābhaktitaraṅginī*, p. 207*; Durgāpūjātattva* summarized in Sarkar 2011 forthcoming b, p. 34. For the relevant passages see here n. 463 on page 150.

[58]For this passage and its variants in Dharmaśāstric literature see n. 253 on page 93. In a personal communication in May 2011, Professor Sanderson also indicated to me some references in the *Mahābhārata* (Mbh) on the Varvaras/Barbaras, which are summarized as follows. The Varvaras/Barbaras were a group commonly located in the north (Mbh 12.200.40) but there seemed to have been no consensus on their area of prominence. They are also said to be from the East (Mbh 7.94.13) and the South (Mbh 1.165.36). Some attestation in a supplementary passage in ms K4 D after the verse 3.241.15ab also call them a people from the West.

[59]Sarkar 2011 forthcoming a). The manuscripts of the *Mahābhārata* where the courtly Caṇḍī is depicted as the violent Kālī of the cremation-grounds are discussed in Chapter three (see n. 360 on page 121).

[60]For instance the propitiation with blood of clan-goddesses such as Kher Mata and Bhagavatī was an established tradition among the Baigas of Chattisgarh and in the Malabar coast in times of cholera and other disease (Russell and Lal 1916, vol. 2. 87; Iyer 1935, p. 326). For

While this early ferocious, afflictive personality was feared, it was simultaneously honoured and worshipped by warriors and kings as the energy-source of health, coveted powers, military prowess, worldly attainments called *siddhi*s and civic order.[61] Even horrific crisis-causers had their place in the ancient Indic universe for they controlled the well-being and continuity of a kingdom. An example is furnished by the 7th century *Harṣacarita*. Here Bāṇa describes the propitiation of Caṇḍī with human-blood by a man from the tribal hinterland of Andhra, while the ruler of the throne and father of Harṣavardhana of Sthāneśvara/Thānesar lay on his death-bed.[62] This was done in order to ameliorate the unpropitious after-effects of his death threatening civic harmony.

With the growth of the Hindu *rājya* with its ideologies of Dharma and the *daṇḍa*-wielding king, one finds that this early tribal ambivalent "Caṇḍī" transforms, in a parallel stratum of *kāvya*, into a more ethical, controlled and controllable, figure – the Sanskritic arbiter of Justice, the dignified "Insider". As an instance of this transformation, we have the *Caṇḍīśataka* of Bāṇa where it is Caṇḍī's personification of the Dharmic king characterized in her slaying the demon that is accorded the most exuberant homage in the acclamatory style of the court panegyric.

On the other hand threatening or unseemly characteristics (her fondness of blood, tribals and a tendency to inflict crises) such as we find in Caṇḍī's other depictions are toned down in Dharmic conceptualizations. Her identity with Kālī, Cāmuṇḍā or Kālarātri diminishes and the latter deities are fully separated in association. The goddess of the mature Hindu state is glorified in royal praise poetry as the ideal Hindu king, methodical and restrained in comportment. The legend and the rhetoric of her victory over demons were used by a Brahminical kingdom as a parable of the triumphant ruler, in which mode it sought to represent its own kings on such occasions as Vijayadaśamī, when a ruler would ritually enact such killings in the Marāṭhā, Maithila and the Vijayanagara lands.

A further aspect of the Hinduized "Insider" goddess, demonstrated almost exclusively in Sanskrit literature, is her embodiment of the king's consort. In this form she was known as the Rājyaśrī or the Rājyalakṣmī, the Fortune of

other deities such as Māramma, goddess of small-pox, Kokkālamma of measles, Uddālamma for swollen necks, and Cāmuṇḍī of death see Iyer 1935, vol 1, p. 326.

[61] See for instance the ferocious royal goddesses Carcikā and Caṇḍamārī discussed on p. 37 .

[62] The particular phrase is *kvacid āndhroddhriyamāṇabāhuvapropayācyamānacaṇḍikam* occuring in a long descriptive passage on Harṣa's entering the royal residence *(skandhāvāram)*: see *Harṣacarita*, Ucchvāsa 5, p. 76.

the kingdom. A powerful king was thought to be one who always had the Śrī by his side and so his accession was allegorized in *kāvya* as his marriage to the goddess. Her desertion would mean the loss of his authority.

As an ideology, this belief grew prominent in the early mediaeval period between the 6th -11th centuries CE under the auspices of large Sanskritized empires such as the Guptas, the Vardhanas and the Pālas, but surprisingly slipped out of political expression in the late mediaeval period. The reasons are unknown and indeed perplexing.

The Rājyaśrī is the dominant metaphor of kingship in the period appearing for instance in the *Harṣacarita*. Here she is conceptualized as the ultimate cause behind all shifts in political power. She bestows sovereignty on Puṣyabhūti the mythical progenitor of the Vardhana clan and enthrones Harṣa, forcibly seating him on the throne despite his reluctance to be king.[63]

Such was the compelling hold the deity had on conceptions of kingship that Bāṇa dedicates in his work a wonderfully exciting, carefully dramatized and substantial description of her appearance to Puṣyabhūti in a cremation ground. Here the particularly royal iconography of the deity is made explicit: her appearance for instance in the king's sword, her parallelism with Caṇḍī in consecrating a king, her pairing with conventional signs of *cakravartitva,* the chowrie (imagined as her breath), the *chatra* (whose shadow is imagined as the sectarian mark on her forehead), white-hued *yaśas* (imagined as the sandalpaste coating her body), her association with the flag (*patākā*) of the first rulers, a lioness wandering in a forest of swords, and a lotus in a pool of daggers–all these figures of kingship bespeak her sovereign status as the illustrious (co)-regent of a Brahminical kingdom. [64]

The Rājyaśrī's impact on the self-representations of a Sanskritic kingdom is further evinced by early Indian epigraphy. She would appear often in official inscriptions, in which she is described as the divine consort of the king, as for instance in the Junagadh Inscription of Skandagupta where the Gupta king is described as one "whom the goddess of Fortune had selected of her own accord as her husband".[65] By being anointed a monarch, a king was thereby thought to have had ascended his mortal state and to have made a commitment to a higher feminine power, whose partner he had now become. Furthermore, it is

[63] *anicchantam balāt āropayitum iva siṃhāsanam sarvāvayaveṣu sarvalakṣaṇaiḥ gṛhītam gṛhītabrahmacaryaṃ ālīṅgitaṃ rājalakṣmyā pratipannāsidhārādhāraṇavrataṃ* (*Harṣacarita*, Ucchvāsa 2, p. 32).

[64] Ibid. Ucchvāsa 3, pp. 53-54.

[65] *lakṣmīḥ svayaṃ yaṃ varayāṃ cakāra* (CII 3.14.l.5).

not he who chooses this union but the goddess of power herself. Later rulers, such as Rājarāja Coḷa would also subscribe to having figuratively performed this celestial marriage on ascending the throne in temple inscriptions.[66]

Portrayals of the Rājyaśrī in Sanskrit appear to conceptualize her as a Sanskritic version of non-Aryan tutelary devīs, particularly Caṇḍī, with whom she shared, in addition to granting investiture to a king, associations with the lion and warrior-weaponry such as the sword. But a distinct characteristic in this goddess of the established empires is her gentle, feminine nature. Although there were glimmers of a wrathful side and a "dark double" in her personality, these nevertheless squared with the expected conduct of the *māninī* much idealized in Sanskrit courtly lyric poetry, who could, if displeased by her lover, fly into fits of irrational pique.[67] A king's loss of power was for instance explained as the outcome of the Śrī's womanly caprice: she had cruelly deserted him for another man, the upstart pretender to the throne. In the *Mūdrārākṣasa* of Viśākhadatta, the Rājyaśrī is blamed as the celestial cause of the decline in Rākṣasa's fortune, and she is castigated as an oscillating harlot who has "panicked and deserted her ruined protector for a better house".[68]

In her imagery too the comely femininity of the Śrī is marked. The lotus, a sign of benevolence, is given prominence over the symbol of the sword (indeed the Śrī is said to be born from a lotus[69]), visible references of inflicting death, as in icons of Caṇḍī, are totally avoided, while sanguinary offerings are never mentioned as her preferred sacrifice. The old war-divinity had been thus appropriated by the Sanskritic state within a less primitive though more toned down, accountable and Brahminized conception of what a good Queen should be. Her wildness, suggestive of another, more primitive world, had been leached away.

A late reference to the deity is the *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā* a manual dedicated to her worship from the Tamil kingdoms affiliated to the Vijayanagara Empire. This work suggests that the Śrī commanded her own ritual practice that would be regularly performed by the monarch for the continuity of the State. The worship of the goddess according to this text is considered in the chapter four.

Despite this prominent role in state activity, the Rājyaśrī is seldom evoked in political literature in quite such a significant way after the fifteenth cen-

[66] SII 2.2.v.1

[67] See, for example, *Subhāṣitaratnakoṣa* (translated in Ingalls 1965) Section 21 about the *māninī* (the woman offended).

[68] *Mūdrārākṣasa*, Trans. Buitenen 1968, Act 6.

[69] As indicated in the figurative phrase: *mṛṇālakomalair avayavaiḥ kamalasambhavatvam anakṣaram ācakṣāṇām* (*Harṣacarita,* Ucchvāsa III, pp. 53-54).

tury. Though her rhetoric was employed in representing clan-goddesses by early modern warrior kings such as Śivāji, who often addressed his patroness Tuljā Bhavānī as Śrī, the particular features of iconography, characterization in literature and ritual practice, related as it was to a Sanskritic state, became defunct, particularly with the rise and refining of regional identities and languages.

1.3 One or Many

Given then, as we have seen, the emergence of so many distinct and related historical threads in the identity of the sovereign goddess, the question of one or many naturally arises. Did the court of a king worship one goddess throughout its history or several different goddesses?

The mediaeval understanding of a goddess's being was essentially paradoxical. If one were to imagine an eleventh century royal goddess as a cluster of intersecting circles, then each circle would represent a particular and unique goddess– for instance one would be a tribal clan-goddess, another the Rājyalakṣmī, a third Caṇḍī, a fourth perhaps a Tantric deity. Through a process of assimilation they were viewed enmeshed into one cohesive figure. Each facet, distinctive in her own right, could be, and usually was, worshipped separately, but also infused in a Supreme identity, what one can think of as a highly concentrated Energy source (this escalation in identity occured for instance through the medium of ritual at the Navarātra).

One can well read into this understanding a politics of gender: the permeability of all such divinities demonstrating the generalization and diminishment of the feminine identity into one undefined whole. On the other hand it would be anachronistic to do so. The hold and longevity of goddess-worship was possible in part due to this very scope and range in identity: because the state was required to represent a number of different affiliations and beliefs, the royal deity evolved different facets in order to encompass as wide a range of subjects.

Throughout history a tutelary-goddess's visible identities remained many and in constant flux, shifting and proliferating from tribal stone, stake or mound of earth, to village tree, several anthropomorphic images (*mūrti)*, *yantra*, amulet, sword and ultimately the syllables of a *mantra*. What mattered to the practitioner was the belief that she represented the clan's power regardless of her variety, that there was a constant animistic potency inhabiting these substrates.

The Dimasa tutelary goddess for instance, had no less than three unique

identities by the 16th century – the first being the tribal ancestral spirit Kacai Kati, the second the Sanskritic Raṇacaṇḍī in the palace-shrine, the third the royal sword held in the hand of the king–in these, potentially infinite, forms she was held to disseminate her essence. This sense of continuity and pervasiveness lay at the heart of a goddess's success in political practice.

1.4 Models of Divine Kingship

On the other hand models of divine kingship sanctified by a goddess were not the only ones employed in ancient Indian and even later mediaeval and early modern kingship. There was a repertoire of ways in ancient India whereby a king could affirm his power and lay claim to his right and ability to rule.

With the rise of Brahmanism and the great Hindu Empires beginning with the Guptas came more Aryanized forms of divine power. These gods soon represented the public face of a monarchy, inscribed on coins or patronized with great largesse in important temples. Among all the gods, it was Viṣṇu and Śiva who evolved into the most popular royal deities during the mediaeval period with major temple cults in the north and in the Deccan.[70] Brahminical literature on royal power promoted Vedic gods such as Indra or epic heroes such as Rāma as paradigmatic kings.

In the case of the Buddhists, theirs was one of the earliest religions to secure state-patronage. Under the orthodox Buddhist model of kingship developed under the Aśokan Empire, the king was the chief agent of an ethical form of governance consonant with Buddhist principles. It is not clear how accomodating Aśoka was of goddess-worship, and it seems that there was no patronage at all of heroic Śāktism. Theoretically there would have been a marked disjunct between the two religions, a mandatory aspect of heroic goddess-worship such as

[70] The worship of Viṣṇu gained widespread patronage throughout India such as in the Empire of the Gupta rulers and the Vākāṭakas in the 5th century and in the Eastern state of Orissa under the state sponsored Jagannātha temple-cult of Puri that flourished under the Ganga monarchs (1110-1435 CE) (Bakker 1997; Brighenti 2001, pp. 142-3).

The worship of Śiva rose to pre-eminence in mainland India and Southeast Asia during the mediaeval period due to several reasons. Chief of these was the fact that royal officiants offered the king a repertoire of specialized Śaiva rites such as a particular form of initiation granting greater powers than that provided by Vaidika rites. In addition to this, the Śaivas also developed a range of ritual texts aimed at lay devotees such as kings parallel to the esoteric ritual texts that already existed within its liturgical corpus but which targeted a more specialized and committed audience. These strategies ensured the acquisition of royal patronage for Śaiva temples and Gurus. For these arguments, see Sanderson 2005 and Sanderson 2009, pp. 254-273.

blood-sacrifice militating against principles of orthodox Buddhist non-violence.

The greater choice in religions meant that the indigenous methods of evoking a goddess for royal power competed with these other forms of divine kingship that were, in many ways, advocated to their prospective clientele as the more prestigious or advanced option. Nevertheless, though in competition, and even challenged in several cases, the royal *devī* was too established a tradition to be uprooted. She was absorbed after some modification by Vajrayāna, Jaina and Brahminical models of divine kingship, as shown below.

Following a hiatus of a thousand years after Aśoka, a very different Buddhist model of kingship appeared in the East under the Pālas. These kings, the chief of whom were proponents of Vajrayāna and the goddesses venerated in that system, did indeed actively promote Śāktism in the region (Tārā was for instance the deity Dharmapāla emblazoned on the ensign of his house).[71] In fact later histories claim their founder subscribed to the Śākta legend that he had been granted kingship by a goddess, while during the Pāla rule, temples to forms of Caṇḍī such as the Navadurgā were commissioned by later monarchs of the lineage. Śākta worship occured despite the fact that a Pāla king would be styled as a *saugata*, an adherent of the Buddha in several inscriptions.[72] The Buddhist model in the Pāla case was congruent with and supportive of the royal *śakti*, as also was the Śaiva model, in its more Tantric versions inseparable from the worship of the goddess.

Bengal was, and remains, a fertile terrain for clan-goddess worship and the reverence placed on female divinities in Pāla-sponsored Vajrayāna would have blended fluidly with the long-term traditions of *devī*-worship firmly embedded in such areas of Bengal as Vīrabhūmi (Birbhum).

So well-rooted were these goddesses in ideas of kingship that their faith was absorbed even by completely antithetical religions necessitating mandatory vegetarianism. When vegetarian Vaiṣṇavism reformed the Cachari worshippers of the flesh-eating clan-goddess Kacai Kati, the Dimasa royal court in due respect to their family-deity continued animal sacrifice to her at the ritually appointed times.[73]

So too with the Jainas. Reformistic Jainism, inherently uncomfortable with the sanguinary element of *devīpūjā*, gained momentum under Kumārapāla in Gujarat in the twelfth century and significantly questioned the nature and place

[71] See p. 126.
[72] For the Pālas' Śāktism, see p. 106.
[73] See p. 87.

of the older palace-centred Śāktism. However, instead of a wholesale purging of Kumārapāla's court of the dynastic Śakti, who had clearly been established there for a very long time, the rise of Jainism prompted instead a modification in his clan, who began to abjure certain elements of older tradition such as animal sacrifice but still continued venerating their family goddess. The story of this accomodation is shown more fully in chapter two.

The Jainas in fact, despite their suspicion of these deities, whose ferocity they exaggerated in prose as outright blood-thirstiness in such caricatured figures as Caṇḍamārī, embraced their practice, including for instance lengthy instructions on establishing and worshipping *devī*s in palaces in ritual works like the *Ācāradinakara.*[74]

The relation with Brahmanical notions of kingship was similarly ambiguous to start with. Despite the ethical standards imposed by Brahminization on the "sovereign goddess" (such as we have seen) the mediaeval goddess cult remained essentially a creed of raw militarism, an occasionally savage one (royal *narabali*s were mandatory in many kingdoms such as Bastar and among the princely worshippers of the goddess Anna Kuārī of the Chotanagpur Plateau[75]), which in appearance was, and in many respects remains today, far removed from the mainstream orthodox religion. In the view of the latter, these royal goddesses were dark and deadly, unbridled and atavistic, contrasting sharply with the dignified, sobre, contained masculinity extolled in Brahminical exemplars of sovereignty (Rāma, Yudhiṣṭhira, Dharma, the Seers, Manu). Blood, the central offering made to a *devī*, connotative in many ways of the military ethos, was deeply offensive to the Brahmanical communities in certain regions of India, as it was to the Jainas.

Nevertheless, an accomodation did indeed take place in the orthodox sphere, albeit somewhat late, particularly once the tutelary-goddess of a kingdom began to be identified as a *kṣatriya* deity, from the 11th century. A cycle of Purāṇic legends, for instance, on Caṇḍī and the investiture of the epic king developed. Additionally, orthodox models of kingship began to name royal goddesses in conventional genealogies, the traditional forms of political rhetoric whereby the king's ancestry was glorified during ritualized bardic recitations. The *Sahyādrikhaṇḍa* gives what appears to be the oldest genealogy list asserting goddesses as the source of a *kṣatriya*-line, along with a conventional Solar or Lunar source. The composition of such Śāktized versions of royal genealo-

[74] See p. 78.
[75] Russell and Lal 1916, vol 4, p. 312.

gies indicates the necessity felt for the inclusion, within established criteria of royal power, of the powerful *kuladevī*s, whom (formerly tribal but) exemplary *kṣatriya*-groups such as the Rajputs were loath to relinquish.

This was partly because of the fact that the new masculine deities of kingship did not have such a clearly expressed and archaic association with the worldly crises of kings. The theme of the war-goddess rescuing the king in times of state-difficulty and calamity (*utpāta*, *pīḍā*, *upadrava*) was one that was so firmly embedded and well-developed in the ideology of Indian kingship, echoed and re-echoed in a myriad legends (for instance in the *Devīmāhātmya* and in Śāktized versions of the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyana*) in art and poetry right from the earliest Indic sources, affirmed in court-ceremonies before any ambitious and potentially dangerous *yātrā*, that it was clearly difficult to occlude.

1.5 The Role of Magical Ritual

In this respect it is also necessary to query the crucial function played by ritual in the ancient Indic world, in contributing to the longevity of royal Śāktism. Ritual of course has been studied in various fruitful ways, is thought to convey many meanings (or famously none at all) and it is important therefore to mark the parameters with regards to warrior-centric *devīpūjā*.

Court sponsored goddess-worship had quite a specialized function to serve in protecting the state through crisis-management, warding off evil influence (for the mediaeval Indian universe was conceptualized beset with ghosts, evil-intentioned planets and spirits), galvanizing military activity, granting agricultural yield, and sustaining the welfare of the kingdom. For this purpose a highly sophisticated ritual system and terminology with particular application developed around warrior-*devī*s, with specialists employed in the field. In general kings would worship *devī*s to maintain harmony and order in a kingdom, and more importantly to ritually create and consolidate the substance of their power.

Goddess rites were thought to produce a tangible result. If one were to think of sorcery and witchcraft in relation to heroic Śāktism, the *yajamāna* in a royal goddess rite would be the magician, his mantras the spell, and the result would be something that manifested empirically: rainfall in periods of drought, the success of the king in an arduous campaign, the destruction of a hated rival, so on and so forth. So in the same way royal power was also something substantial

(a hot light, *tejas/prabhā*)[76] that could be sought and acquired in the sphere of the ritual. Only the king's goddess was the fountain-head of that power, but it did not follow that the deity would altruistically dispense power on the king at all times. There were special methods–elaborate systems of propitiation involving a huge amount of expense and grandiose display– by which the deity could be coaxed into sharing those gifts with humans. Courts therefore grew to become the arenas for the enactment of such ceremonies where the substance of power was ritually solicited from the *śakti* and transferred to the king and to the entire kingdom.

Among all the rites of kingship, it was the goddess-centric Navarātra that was the rite of heroic and civic glory par excellence. Annually celebrated, for if not disaster would strike, the Navarātra marked the occasion when the ritual of the court was publicly shared by all citizens, when goddess, king, and state were constituted as one energized entity. The regular performance of this rite, its association with cyclical patterns of time and seasons, fertility, abating the hunger of primeval spirits, its inclusion of tribal celebrations such as the Śābarotsava, at least in the Eastern versions, suggest that systems of mediaeval state *devīpūjā* were but transformed continuations of the older, tribal goddess-centric modes of honouring kingship (in Barabhum for instance the collusion of the tribal with the courtly was made palpable in a number of shared rituals between Hindu king and the Bhumij held in the sacred tribal grove of the goddess Koṭeśvarī[77]). These had not ended, simply been assimilated, enhanced and re-adapted to suit changing times.

By the mediaeval era, the vocabulary of state ritual was so strongly associated with Śāktism, given the latter's specialization in that area, that in all state enterprises, for instance, in the protection of fortresses, in harvests[78], as an ancillary rite (*aṅga*) in royal consecrations[79], in dealing with abrupt disas-

[76]See the *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā* 100.8-14 discussed in this thesis on p. 197 for a ritual whereby the king is said to shine with a bright light, envisioned as his might and power, after the goddess is summoned into his person during the Navarātra.

[77]See n. 215 on page 84.

[78]See the Navarātra among the Kumhārs of the Central Province for the sowing of wheat at this time, Russell and Lal 1916, vol 4, p. 13.

[79]The annual consecration of a king would be held after first worshipping the goddess. See for instance Śivāji's Tantric consecration (on p. 62 ff.). Consecrations would routinely initiate or close the Navarātra. For instance see the *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā* which prescribes opening the Navarātra with an *abhiṣeka* (p. 196). The Navarātra in the kingdom of Mithilā would close with the *abhiṣeka* of the king on Daśamī (p. 190). During the Navarātra at Śivagaṅgai and Ramnad, the *kuladevī* Rājarājeśvarī was identified with Mahiṣāsuramardinī and in this maximal form held a central position during the consecration of the king. This ceremony would be performed on Vijayadaśamī and two reports from 1863 and 1892 of the *abhiṣeka*

ters such as forest fires and earthquakes, and most importantly in war, the royal *śakti* was the chosen deity for appeal (shown in chapter three). The particular importance of heroic Śāktism in disaster-management is reflected in several scriptural texts where chapters appear on treating calamities in the kingdom through ritual. The propitiation, more specifically the pacification (*śāntikam*), of the state-goddess, who was believed to control the causes of those crises, with special effort and largesse (*mahāpūjā*) was instructed by this literature at such times.[80] For, it was in times of crisis that a royal goddess's protective aspect became fully manifest and her ability to oversee the state ritually reinforced.

In her dual capacity as Mother and Warrior, the *śakti* was both a source of

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provide details of the ritual and the place of the goddess during the rule of Rani Kathama Nachiar and Bhāskara Setupati respectively. During the 1863 ceremony, water empowered with the goddess's mantras during a *cakrapūjā* was poured over the Rani, who was thereafter crowned (Price 1996, pp. 140-143, p. 141). In the 1893 ritual the Rājā is said to have worshipped Rājarājeśvarī immediately after his coronation on the first *tithi* of the Navarātra. Bāskara's sword and sceptre which had been placed before Rājarājeśvarī and the green stone in which her essence was believed to be concentrated was then ceremonially presented to him. Thus holding the forms of the *śakti* in his hand, the king then meditated upon her. Only after this transferrence of power from the goddess was the king thought able to rule (Ibid. p. 144.)

[80]The Great Worship (*mahāpūjā*) of the state-goddess Sāmrājyalakṣmī was particularly associated with the handling of calamities such as those mentioned above or omens in the kingdom:

rāṣṭre pure vā deveśi janamāro yadā bhavet |
yadā bhaved anāvṛṣṭiḥ kṣāmaḥ kṣobho 'tha vā yadā ||
yadā janapado devi puraṃ vā śatrurājabhiḥ |
pīḍyate vā gajāśvādivāhanānām anekadhā ||
yugapad rogapīḍā vā netreṣv aśrunipātanam | [...]
akasmān nagare rāṣṭre vahnidāho gṛhe gṛhe | [...]
tadā taddoṣaśāntyarthaṃ mahāpūjā manīṣibhiḥ |
kartavyātra viśeṣeṇa rājabhiś ca yathāvidhi | [...]
Sāmrājyalakṣmyās tuṣṭyarthaṃ puṣṭyarthaṃ rāṣṭravāsinām |
janānāṃ trividhotpātajātabhītiśāntaye || Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā, "Sāmrājyalakṣmīmahāpūjānimittotpātasvarūpakathanam", 10. 4-28.

The worship of the Mātṛs was also ordained during such times.

bhūmikampo diśāṃ dāho grahadvandaṃ tu jāyate |
gagane dṛśyate ketur ādityaś caiva kampate ||
viparītāṃ nadīṃ caiva †rudhiraṃ caiva pravāhayet† | [...]
gaganāt śruyate divyaṃ nirghātaṃ caiva jāyate | [...]
rājyopasaṃharaṃ caiva rājānāṃ kṣayakārakaṃ ||
ity evam ādīnī |
tāny etāni sarvāṇy †adbhutāni prāyaścittāni bhavanti† |
gṛhe gṛhe bhavec chāntir mātṛṛṇāṃ pūjaṇaṃ baliḥ | Devīpurāṇa "Sarvotpātaśāntyadhyāya" 55.8

††= unmetrical

The worship of Rāṣṭraśyenā, goddess important to the Guhilas of Mewar, for instance was ordained in the *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya* 11.13-22 to prevent the occurence of trouble in the Guhila domains (see in this thesis, p. 135). As shown in chapter two, Jayasiṃharāje, Śivāji's adversary, worshipped Caṇḍī and other goddesses to ameliorate omens and augur victory before his campaign against the Marāṭhā Emperor. On an eye-witness account of a rite propitiating goddesses to elimininate a rival king held by the Prince of the Bihari kingdom of Dumraon in 1941, see Gupta and Gombrich 1986, pp. 135-6.

fecundity and of military success, representing thereby a dual idea of kingship in which the king represented both the provider and the slayer. That the model Indic King was an amalgam of both figures was a widespread belief testified in such sources as the *Raghuvaṃśa* 1.1-32 and the legend of King Pṛthu as the Earth-Milker.[81]

In addition, in her wild, occultic and highly dangerous aspect, her most ancient core as we have seen, the *śakti* represented a third, more esoteric, figure of kingship–the fountainhead of magical *siddhi*s unobtainable from anyone else. The king favoured by a particularly potent goddess was therefore also one who could obtain such *siddhi*s from her, vividly described in the narrative literature of the age such as the *Kathāsaritsāgara,* as flying, magical swords and equivalence with the celestial Vidyādharas.

At its most basic level, we can understand the relationship between *rājā* and *devī* to be something similar to that between a *sādhaka*, a seeker of power and his *iṣṭadevatā*, the chosen deity who, upon esoteric propitiation, would bestow those powers. The *sādhaka* must take certain risks in confronting the magic-bearing though dangerous side of the *devī*, confrontations for instance, often described in literature, with beings of the cremation-ground and the spirit world (consider for instance the onslaught of crazed *yoginī*s encountered by the king wishing to be a Vidyādhara in the shrine of Caṇḍamārī in the *Yaśastilakacampū*[82]); but in doing so he proves his fitness and heroic potential to her and thereby metamorphoses into a carrier of special gifts and knowledge, a warrior-magus.

It is easy to see how this essentially Tantric belief could serve interests in Indian kingship concerning royal power being a model of sacred omnipotence. When the Paramāra Naravarman (cca. 1094 -1110) ascribed to Carcikā– a powerful eschatological goddess said to manifest her cadaverous and ravenous self at the destruction of a *kalpa*–not just his sovereignty (*dharādhipatyam*), acquired merely by thinking of her (*smaraṇamātrakṛtaprāsādāt*), but also confessed in the same inscription that, when he had also worshipped her according to rule, she granted him *khecaratvam* (the magical ability to fly), the essential attainment (-*rasasiddhi*) advocated by esoteric Tantric texts, he was publicly acknowledging this very belief (indeed the pillar with the inscription still stands in situ in Bhilsā/ Vidīśā).[83] Naravarman also boasted that "simply by means of [Car-

[81] For a discussion of the latter myth, see Bailey 1981.

[82] See n. 85 on the following page.

[83] CII 7.2.26; Mittal 1979, pp. 178-179. For a photograph of the pillar see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Naravarman_PP.jpg accessed on 25-05-2011. The phrase as it appears in the inscription *śrikhecaratvarasasiddhipadasya labdhiḥ* presents difficulties,

cikā's] grace, he had acquired fitness to [conduct] wordly affairs".[84] One sees this theme of the occultic royal goddess omnipresent in *kāvya.* In the *Yaśastilakacampū,* king Māridatta worships at Mahānavamī the deity Caṇḍamārī, like Carcikā another wild and ambivalent goddess in command of the *yoginī*s, in order to obtain the magical sword of the Vidyādharas that would grant him the power of flight.[85] In the mediaeval world-view, kingship could also be a magical office with mastery over sorcery and the occult, and in this respect a goddess's grace and specialized skill in constituting magical kingship were considered equal to none.

1.6 Methods and Sources

A philological study of the *Devīmāhātmya* had formed the core out of which the idea for this thesis grew. However in the course of research, it soon became clear that reliance on a a single text, or a single genre such as epigraphy, would at best provide a very limited picture of Śakti-worship in kingship. Since we are concerned with a belief regarding royal power, its expressions were culturally manifold. Thus significance was placed while researching the thesis in understanding the breadth and depth of a range of genres, from poetry, to legend, to epigraphy and ritual-material where the political ideology of a goddess substantiating sovereignty is expressed. Importance was first laid on studying these diverse forms in some detail, looking at them first as individual compositions, then assessing whether they could be integrated as a whole.

Broadly I would describe the approach taken here as eclectic, combining the following methods: 1) a textual appraisal 2) an appraisal of aspects of available material history such as epigraphy, art and numismatics 3) an appraisal of the

but the point that inscription appears to be making is that Carcikā granted the king the highest occult attainment according to the Vidyāpīṭha texts. Professor Sanderson notes in this regard in a personal communication "The term *khecaratvam* is very commonly used to denote the goal of practice in such Vidyāpīṭha texts as the *Picumata* and the scriptures of the Kālīkula. The term *rasasiddhiḥ* is less common... it is also found, in some early texts of the cult of Tripurasundarī, to mean the highest *siddhiḥ*, that which is the source of all the others, in a classification in which there are ten siddhis, namely the usual eight (*aṇimādayaḥ*), *rasasiddhiḥ*, and *mokṣasiddhiḥ*; see Jayaratha, *Vāmakeśvarīmatavivaraṇa*, KSTS ed., pp. 73–74. I also find it odd that the inscription would refer to the attainment of a goal which is two siddhis, i.e. *khecaratvam* and *rasasiddhiḥ*, especially when... they are so different in character. I therefore prefer to read this as an explanation of what this mysterious *rasasiddhiḥ* is, namely *khecaratvam*. For the centrality of the attainment of khecaratvam in the *Picumata* etc. see, e.g., *Picumata* 1.31 ".

[84] *yasyāḥ prasādamātreṇa lebhe saṃsārayogyatām* | CII 7.3.36, ll.17-19.

[85] *Yaśastilakacampū*, pp. 26-29.

autumnal royal goddess-rite where ceremonies associated with kingship, were and still are performed.

The evidence for the court-sponsored cults of Caṇḍī or independent goddesses assimilated with her, is surprisingly consistent and broad in geographical and temporal reach. Firstly there are the ancient *kuladevī*s (clan-goddesses) of royal dynasties, who are still worshipped in palaces and formerly monarchical households. There are numerous early mediaeval inscriptions commissioned by kings, mostly in Sanskrit, but also in Tamil, Bengali and Oriya, where acts of patronage to goddess shrines, or asseverations of personal faith are recorded, and dated. There is also a large body of mediaeval legends on goddesses and kings in various Sanskrit Purāṇic sources popularized in several recensions in different parts of India and in the vernaculars. Sanskrit belles lettres offer many extraordinary hymns and prose where the warrior-goddess and her exploits form the centrepiece–these as we have seen are useful heuristic tools to trace historical developments. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, are the records of religious ceremonies–the royal *paddhatis*. To sum up, in epigraphy we find a reflection of an aspect of the association between kings and goddesses that was official, in the Purāṇic legends the scriptural, in poetry the personal, and in ritual the practical.

One must also not underestimate the information given in the colonial reports of the nineteenth century Gazetteers and ethnographical accounts of tribes and castes. Though filtered through the imperialist's gaze, these reports contain detailed accounts of tribes and their customs of venerating clan goddesses with traditions which under the advent of modernity, the demise of kingdoms after Independence and the loss of tribal lands have long since died. When treated with necessary circumspection and only in relation to the older sources, the value of colonial reports as evidence for postulating continuity with ancient custom is indeed significant.

1.6.1 State of Current Research

In current research, Indian goddesses in general have formed a lively and varied topic of discussion.[86] However, the treatment of Śāktism in kingship in partic-

[86]These include works on the content and significance of the rite of the *devī* (Ostor 2004, pp. 53-117, Rodrigues 2003, Einoo 1999, Kane 1958 etc.), cults of local goddesses (Jansen 1995), the sociological phenomenon of the goddess tradition as a whole (Kinsley 1987) or on Śākta liturgical canons (Coburn 1984, Mackenzie-Brown 1990.)

ular has not yet warranted sufficient attention or tends to be a matter of mere incidental concern to scholarship.

Certain exceptions are noteworthy. The importance of the philosophy of *śakti* in forms of Indian government was pointed out in colonial ethnographic accounts of the warrior Rajputs, which had noted in descriptions of religion that "the principal deity of the Rajputs is the goddess Devi or Durga in her more terrible form as the goddess of war. Their swords were sacred to her, and at the Dasahra festival they worshipped their swords and other weapons of war and their horses."[87]. In recent years further observations have been made by Sinha-Kapur, Kulke, Levy and Price as components of their studies concerning mediaeval Indian political complexes to have developed in such areas as Rajasthan, Nepal, Orissa, Bengal and Tamil Nadu (Śivagangai and Ramnad). These emphasised that the Śakti cults in the courts under examination were essentially political.

In addition no discussion on the Imperial goddess would be ever complete without mentioning the Kumārī of Nepal. Among the many *śakti* worshipping kingdoms, Nepal still hosts a particularly vibrant tradition of venerating the political goddess, both in her form as the tutelary deity Taleju and in her human embodiment, the Kumārī. The work of Allen is particularly prominent in this regard. The cult of the royal Kumārī in the three kingdoms of Bhaktapur, Patan and Kathmandu forms the subject of Allen's detailed 1976 study. As Taleju, the presiding goddess of Nepal, incarnate, the Kumārī, a pre-pubescent girl from the Buddhist Newar gold-making clan, was believed to sanctify the Nepalese king and she was worshipped with due importance. Taleju, whose spirit was made to fill the Kumārī every Mahāṣṭamī, was of paramount importance to Nepalese kingship. Her mantra was a "mark of legitimate succession to the throne– rulers who failed to receive the mantra were regarded as liable to lose their kingdoms".[88] The significance of Taleju is visually represented everywhere in the architecture in Durbar Square in Kathmandu and Patan, where her public form as Mahiṣāsuramardinī or Cāmuṇḍā leaps forth from nearly every tympanum in the courtyards, both of the Kumārī palace and in the main courtyard at Pāṭan, where one is greeted, even today, by a garland of buffalo entrails offered to her festooning the entrance.[89]

[87] Russell and Lal 1916, vol. 4, pp. 421-22.

[88] Allen 1976, p. 17.

[89] That goddess-worship formed a common practice among Nepalese rulers as early as the 11th century is attested in records of Lakṣmīkāmadeva, a king of Kantipur (Allen 1976, p.

With regards to philology, the goddess-king collusion was pointed out in instances of Sanskrit poetic literature by Baldissera in the *Kathāsaritsāgara*, and by Sanderson both in the Tantric textual corpus of Orissa[90] and in the developmental trajectory of mediaeval Śaivism[91]. Indeed Sanderson's works particularly on philosophical Śāktism in the early stages of his research, the ritual material relating to the martial Bhadrakālī of Orissa, Taleju in Nepal and the historical contexts of the goddesses patronized under the Pālas and the Jainas are amongst a handful of studies to have investigated in depth the Sanskrit literature on the Śākta cult in ancient India in its estoric and more public dimensions.

The first analysis of the goddess-cult as the religion of a court was by Burton Stein, who examined the political implications of the South Indian Navarātra and its importance in consecrating the power of the Vijayanagara kings.[92] This was followed by Gupta and Gombrich[93] who assessed the links between Śākti-worship and royal power as a topic and Indic tradition in its own right. Their article assessed in detail the relevance of goddess worship in pan-Indian kingship, discussing in particular Dharmic and Tantric conceptualizations of *śakti* in the philosophy of royal power as it was mirrored in a number of Sanskrit texts.

Yokochi's fine study must also be noted in this regard. Her history of the Goddess was one of the first and few examples in the field that confidently and

16), and in the narratives of the Malla kings. Oral traditions claim that Taleju was a Maithila import. These traditions, seeking to establish dynastic connections between the Nepalese Malla and the Kārṇāṭa lineages of Mithilā, relate Taleju's rise in Mithilā among the Kārṇāṭas (Slusser 1998, vol. 1, p. 318; Levy 1992, pp. 234-6; Shrestha 2008, pp. 239-45). They say that she was a Tantric goddess who had revealed herself to the founding ancestor of the Maithila Kārṇāṭas, Nānyadeva, in a *yantra* contained in a casket in the Sarayū river and had caused the building of Simraun Gadh in one night. Under Harisiṃhadeva, the Kārṇāṭa capital Simraun Gadh fell when attacked by the Turkish Ghiyās-ud-din-Tughlaq in 1324. The ruling dynasty is said to have been forced to flee Mithilā and take shelter with Rudra Malla of Bhaktapur in Nepal, the country of their initial forays (Shrestha 2008, p. 241), eventually permanently settling there. Harisiṃhadeva brought with them their tutelary deity Taleju. When in Nepal, the first place where Harisiṃhadeva established her, report the legends, was in Bhaktapur, and her principal officiants in Nepal became the Rājopādhyāya Brāhmaṇas of that city (Levy 1992, p. 237). Taleju was appropriated by the Malla dynasty, the traditional rulers of Nepal, and her worship at the Nepalese Navarātra came to be associated with Newar Vajrayāna practice and esoterized. On the other hand, it is even before the purported arrival of this goddess on Nepalese soil that *devīpūjā* appears to have formed an integral part of royal practice– the 5th century Licchavis possibly worshipped the deity Māneśvarī (Slusser 1998, p. 317) while Kumārī worship was possibly a long-standing Vajrayāna, specifically Newari practice, that was incorporated by the Mallas when they sought credence among the Newars (Allen 1976, p. 15).

[90] Baldissera 1996, Sanderson 2007.

[91] Sanderson 2009

[92] Stein 1983.

[93] Gupta and Gombrich 1986.

knowledgeably encompassed a range of cultural genres, with particular attention to the early sources in Sanskrit both literary and epigraphical, reading trends of historical continuity in them. Her research was groundbreaking in the way it combined text-critical methods with cultural analysis so broad it even included a full assessment of the not inconsiderable artistic evidence of the early warrior-goddess cult. Working through a range of materials with emphasis placed on an early recension of the *Skandapurāṇa*, Yokochi discussed developments in the cult of a warrior goddess in ancient India and provided evidence for the historical primacy of the Vindhyavāsinī legend of the *Skandapurāṇa*, as testimony for the canonization of the martial *devī* in the 7th century. It was her concluding statement that the "Warrior Goddess" of the *Skandapurāṇa* "originated from the process that was probably promoted and supported by the social segment centred on kings and the warrior class,"[94] which formed the main stimulus for the research in the present thesis. Unfortunately work like Yokochi's, bold in ambition and result and demonstrating a sufficiently solid command of source-materials, is indeed rare in the field.

Both groups of scholarship, ethnographic and philological, had remarked extensively on the significant impact of palace-based goddess cults in the confines of the regions, texts and religious traditions under examination. It was initially my reading of these studies on palace-goddess cults, and the texts in which the royalty of the goddess was particularly manifest, that formed the hypothesis that a pan-Indic belief-system formed the bedrock for such specific practices and depictions, that what we were actually witnessing unfold in these accounts was the very concept and practice of political power in ancient Indic kingship.

Despite the presence of the range of primary sources and the consistent theme of power in monarchy that emerges from them, there has been as yet, as far as I am aware, no study in the past fifty years, consolidating these materials and reading them as composite parts of an interlinked canvas representing a complete tradition, rather than discrete curiosities. Most notably, a desideratum existed in the study of the numerous ancient Indic sources in Sanskrit on goddess-centric divine kingship which are crucial in assessing long-term historical trends and changes.

This scarcity is indeed unusual because the history of goddesses and kings is fundamental in raising profound issues about Indic culture at large, currently under great discussion in mediaeval and early-modern Indian histories. Much

[94] Yokochi 2004, p. 156.

of this discussion has focussed on South Indian kingship, but though it has observed patterns in kingship[95] that have a broader application, discussions on *śakti*-worship rarely appear in these studies. It has also been claimed that the Navarātra was an exclusively Vijayanagara tradition. My arguments demonstrating that the festival was a pan-Indic one, celebrated in kingdoms such as Devagiri and Mithilā long before the rise of Vijayanagara, are to be found in chapter four.

In terms of the early-modern the discussion on kingship has focussed on the Marāṭhās. In his carefully substantiated analysis of Marāṭhā state-formation, Stewart Gordon describes a social process generic to Central India before the advent of colonialism[96] – certain features of this process have remarkable implications for understanding the social context of later mediaeval heroic Śāktism, particularly under Śivāji.

Firstly, Gordon paints a structure of corporate power-distribution built up of diverse and complicated inter-relations between a number of individuals: there was first the prince with limited involvement in day-to-day government, but with considerable powers over patronage. Below him were the Marāṭhā chiefs, entrepreneurs and substantial property owners, with ownership over a large part of the prince's army, vying for greater patronage and honours. Under them were the independent Rajput chieftains linked together by vast kinship networks with their unique hierarchies, owners of fortified estates and armies. Below the Rajputs were the *zamindār*s again with their own lands and army, drawn from a variety of castes.

State-formation was galvanized by each of these individuals' need for "maximum stable land revenue", "maximum political control, that is, reducing the largest possible number of people to clientship or dependancy relations" and "the short-run need to pay troops" whom they employed (16). The fulfilment of these ambitions meant employing or offering services of invasion and marauding from or to a second party, so that Central India was always a field for military expedition: "some were besieging strongholds, some negotiating with bankers, some plundering their neighbours, some finding allies among Rajputs or Bhils [tribals], and a few were ruling peaceful and prosperous states" (16). However peaceful states were rare or it took a good thirty years of following through

[95] For example, sharing gifts to foster hierarchical ties, patronage of temple cults, claiming descent from a god, the use of ritual in promoting "an enlarged conception of royal authority" Dirks 1987, p. 28. See also Stein 1969, Appadurai 1981.

[96] Gordon 1994.

this programme from invasion to financial solvency to regular revenue to reach the stage of peaceful government (19). This meant a significant need for financial support and a continued reliance on bankers, in the face of undependable employers and enormous risk. In order to pay mortgages and loans, many chieftains, *zamindār*s and clan-groups were forced to plunder or employed specialists in the area. When overlords had to leave their fortresses when hired by other chieftains to lead their expeditions, there was the additional risk of rebellion: "thus there was operating a plunder dynamic" at all levels of the social system (21). This leads Gordon to the conclusion that there was no essential difference between the "state" and the "marauder": each constituent agent from the top to the bottom sought to secure stable land-revenue and the payment of their own troops through systematic plundering and expedition.

Gordon's analysis of the Marāṭhā kingdom as a plundering state goes a long way in explaining the socio-economic context of later mediaeval and early-modern courtly goddess-worship, which, not surprisingly, was particularly vibrant in marauding kingdoms like the Marāṭhās. As shown in chapter two, the cult of Tuḷjā Bhavānī was fostered by Śivāji's espousal of this policy against the Muslim kingdoms.

Can elements of Gordon's model be applied to our understanding of Śāktism in mediaeval India (6th-12th c.)? Perhaps yes. The aims he describes to have galvanized state formation also drove the expansion of states in mediaeval times, while the culture of aggressive military opportunism characterizing the later "marauding state" certainly marked an earlier period. Like the Marāṭhās who functioned in a climate of extreme instability and financial uncertainty, the kingdoms of mediaeval India existed in a fraught and continuously threatened political map. Their constant marauding of other dynasties necessitated a marauder's cult, that of Śakti, just as it did in the Marāṭhā domains. So it was that in similar periods of campaign, marauding and state-building among the mediaeval Pālas, the Cālukyas, particularly under the revival by Viṣṇuvardhana against the Gangas and the Kadambas, the Nāgas immediately during their rise in Bastar, the Maithilas during the early Nepal conquests orchestrated by Caṇḍeśvara, we find the exact same scenario of a flourishing court-sponsored goddess-cult.[97]

Like Śāktism under the Marāṭhās, mediaeval heroic Śāktism catered precisely

[97] See p. 80 for the Nāgas in Bastar, p. 106 for the Pālas' śāktism at a period when they were campaigning further westwards, p. 120 for Viṣṇuvardhana Cālukya's worship of Śakti and p. 165 for the Maithilas' Śāktism at the time of Caṇḍeśvara.

to those such entrepreneurs involved in the power-dynamics of mediaeval state-formation, who were involved in high-risk opportunities of advancement with little financial solvency. A royal goddess's being and function was intimately connected to these shifts of political power and dynastic ambitions. Time and again, it is the terminology of risk-management (terms for victory, for dispelling obstruction, for power and reward, the rhetoric of soliciting protection and quelling suffering, the particular relevance of a goddess in the battlefield) and metaphors of service and power transactions (the theme of the goddess investing a prince with kingship in return for loyalty) that heroic Śāktism resorted to in its liturgy and literature.

Throughout its long history, it remained essentially a religion providing risk-control, security and reward in such ventures, which is why any act of marauding – be it a state-sponsored campaign, or even an illegitimate robbery – began with the propitation of a goddess and the amelioration of crises; and why any aspirant in the social structure, from tribal chief, to robber to king at the helm sought security in a *devī*.

1.7 Structure of Thesis

In the following chapters may be found the historical evidence supporting the arguments made in the Introduction. Present day practices of venerating *kuladevī*s, widely observed in many households in India, form the most visible residue of the belief that kingly authority flowed from a concept-node projected as a woman. Beginning here, in chapter two, I work backwards in time, exploring whether this practice emerges from a past, and whether we can experience context-specific facets of goddess-derived kingship through a localized *devī*-cult.

I locate myself first in the seventeenth century court of Śivāji, the great Marāṭha emperor, which formed the vibrant field for the worship of Tuljā. Śivāji's court is a good example of a kingdom at the mature stage of its transition from pastoral to Imperial, in which past practices of clan-goddess worship had adapted itself to a new context but continued ancient features such as deity-possession. Exploring his intense and visionary relationship with Tuljā through the medium of the early modern *bakhar* literature in Marathi, I arrive then at his Tantric coronation ceremony, a ritual where the power of goddesses was invested in the person of the king. The exploration of Tuljā's cult in Śivāji's court illuminates two crucial issues: the fact that the goddess-model of kingship, though

deeply enmeshed with Brahminical kingship in the seventeenth century, derived from an autonomous sphere and that it was important enough an ideology to be given expression in legends of kingship and state-formation.

Sanskritic literature on *kuladevī*s is sparse, and the earliest Vedic literature appear to acknowledge not at all kingship sanctified by a female divinity, a clear indication of its heterogenous relevance. I then try to locate a period and a locus when and where Brahminical discourse began to contain goddesses, and assess the genealogical part of the *Sahyādrikhaṇḍa*, a Purāṇic work as an example of this containment.

I turn to later legends of mediaeval kingdoms, where heroic Śāktism is seen as the theology sanctifying a king, assessing the tropes and motifs whereby this sanctification and its concomitant concepts of power are evoked. I use as my main source, the legend of Kāmateśvarī, a story that was employed by the princely state of Cooch-Behar in explaining the divine right of its rulers, assessing this in parallel with Rajput ideologies and narratives, where too similar narrative structures and figurative devices centring on the goddess and the king are employed.

Most of these sources are quite late. Is it possible then to trace a history of clan-goddess worship earlier than the late mediaeval? It would seem so, and working through the early testimonia in *kāvya*, I present the stories of two royal *śakti*s– Kaṇṭeśvarī of the Caulukyas and Danteśvarī of the Nāgas and Kākatīyas of the Bastar Raj. These aid us in evaluating the intricacies of individual goddess-cults and their continuity through dynastic shifts up to the 11th century CE.

From these specific case-studies, I enter further into the past assessing the role of clan-goddesses in the foundation of the mediaeval state from tribes after the Gupta era, and the question of a royal-goddess's identity/-ies. With regards to the latter, the syncretism of clan-goddesses with the Purāṇic Devī is reflected in a number of Sanskrit sources.

In the third chapter I turn more specifically to the period between the 6th and the 12th centuries, the period when heroic Śāktism attained maturity. I first examine cults of royal goddesses to have appeared in the Gangetic plain, dynasties who claimed to have been sanctified by Śakti, and then patronage networks that developed in the period attesting the spread of warrior-centred goddes-worship. I then examine the beliefs and symbolic systems evoked by the cult to make itself meaningful to its adherents in the early mediaeval period, arguing that these beliefs were common to all sects and formed a pan-Indic

ideology. There was firstly the belief that a goddess had granted investiture to a king, secondly the belief that a king defeated in battle would regain power through a goddess, and thirdly the belief that a goddess was to be worshipped in times of war. The earliest records for the first belief are royal inscriptions dating from the 2nd c.. This indicates that the concept of the goddess as royal power had clearly ancient roots in Indic kingship and political practice.

I next turn to visual symbols whereby the mythic relationship between king and goddess was expressed in the mediaeval city, the swords, crests, amulets, and the array of abstact motifs whereby the goddess's presence and energy in the life of the king and his subjects was made manifest to citizens. If one were to inhabit a mediaeval Indian kingdom, it would be important to celebrate the investiture of political power. Links with the *śakti,* in all her forms, would be demonstrated in ways palpable for its citizens. Rites giving her connection to the king shape and meaning were seasonally repeated so as to ensure the continuance of this relationship with the divine. Various forms of the goddess, located at separate shrines would be seen as inter-related parts or grades of an all-pervasive energetic forcefield emanating from the palace (such as in the sacred geography of the Kathmandu valley). There were first symbols of punishment believed to atrophy rivals and grant victory in battle. From resplendent chariot-concourses headed by the deity, the erection of victory-bestowing flags to the ornate ceremonies of the royal sword charged by the being of the goddess–the repertoire of triumphal rituals was complex and their magical significance in overcoming enemies and threat was deeply embedded in the cultural life of a kingdom.

Next there were symbols of defence, whereby a kingdom girded itself from attack. In these too, the ability of goddesses in the protection of its citizens was reflected, from villages to citadels, in shrines from where they guarded their domains. The fortress emerged in this period as the most important defensive structure. All mediaeval kingdoms were organized around strategically located forts, the reservoir of food and military supplies, as well as centres for forging alliances and conducting diplomatic exchange. It was seen necessary to protect a mediaeval fortress with a goddess-shrine at a propitious location, whence her authority radiated through all inhabitants. In all these ways, through legend, sovereign lineages and symbolic objects, the investiture of the deity in the world of men was substantiated.

In the fourth chapter I turn more specifically to the ritual process in which the imperial cult of Śakti found its grandest and most complete expression. In

this chapter the development of the goddess's Nine Nights (Navarātra) festival as the preeminent rite of the state is considered. The festival started as a tribal ritual celebrated possibly in the Vindhyas, attaining maturity in Eastern India, and spreading from there to other kingdoms in India.

2 The Local Cults of Clan-Goddesses

The localized, particular expressions of the pan-Indic Śakti cult were clan-goddesses (*kuladevī/-devatā*) of the various warrior-lineages of the Indic world. In order to understand heroic Śāktism as a whole, it is necessary to first examine the cults of these royal goddesses in some detail. Worshipped initially in several cases by tribal polities for might and protection, the goddesses were later patronized by rising lineages with imperial ambitions. This patronage formed strong bonds between courts and powerful peripheral clans devoted to those same deities, and was thereby crucial in consolidating the rising Indic kingdom.[98] When elevated as divinities of the Sanskritic court, the *kuladevī*s became identified with the Durgā of the mature Purāṇic Śākta mythologies as her manifestations, and were presented in the Purāṇic myths as the regional vassals plotting out the map of her power.[99]

In its most archaic manifestation, the practice of clan-goddess worship can be traced to Afghanistan given the greater remnants of material history found in that part of the Indic world as compared to other parts. We have already encountered Bhīmā.[100] But the earliest evidence from the region attests the importance of another foreign goddess called Nānā. She was revered by the Kuṣāṇas, particularly by Kaniṣka (127-153 CE) and Huveṣka (153- 191 CE).[101] A near Eastern goddess with roots in the Ur III period, Nānā commanded a flourishing practice in Mesopotamia, Phoenicia, Arabia, Syria, Phyrigia, Egypt and Iran, where she was syncretised with various other local goddesses such as the Sumerian Innana/Istar, Greek Cybele and Artemis, Egyptian Hathor, and Iranian Anahita. Owing to this complex assimilation she had not only a defined warrior aspect but was also associated with motherhood and fecundity.[102] Her diffusion into Bactria and subsequent appropriation by the Kuṣāṇas as the divinity representing the source of their authority is evidenced in a Bactrian inscription retrieved in Rabatak, Afghanistan and dated to the first year of Kaniṣka's reign.[103] The inscription describes the foundation of a temple to various family-divinities important to the Kuṣāṇas, among whom Nānā, often described as Sao Nānā (Queen Nānā) in Kuṣāṇa coinage[104], occupies the cen-

[98] See 2.5 on page 83.
[99] See n. 233 on page 88.
[100] See p. 13.
[101] Ghose 2006, p. 99.
[102] Ibid. pp. 97-98.
[103] Simms-Williams and Cribb, 1996, Sims-Williams 1998, p. 79-92, Ghose 2006, p. 97.
[104] Ghose 2006, p. 108, fig. 5.

tral position. In the second line of the inscription, Kaniṣka is stated to have obtained kingship from her:

> ...of the great salvation, Kaniṣka the Kuṣāna, the righteous the just, the autocrat, the god worthy of worship, who has obtained the kingship from Nānā and from all the gods.

The inscription further goes on to state that

> King Kaniṣka gave orders to... to make a sanctuary...in the plain (of the royal house), for these gods...the above mentioned Nana...And he gave orders... to make images of the same...many rites were endowed, also many attendants...the king gave an endowment to the gods.[105]

Nānā's, and also Bhīmā's, presence in Afghanistan point to what was perhaps a more widespread Central Asian practice of worshipping clan-goddesses for sovereignty around the 2nd century.

If once the objects of worship in Afghanisthan and the Kuṣāṇa Empire, clan-goddesses soon became important south of Afghanistan in regionalized Indian kingship. The religious cults that developed in the vast majority of mediaeval Indian courts to enhance the divinity of the king all derived their key symbols (manifested in legends and rituals) from the ancient goddesses held to protect the royal lineage from its inception. The *kuladevī*s therefore represented not a discrete ideology particular to the courts where they were worshipped, but a broader, inter-linked pan-Indic concept that viewed the true locus of royal power to be a female divinity. If not already goddess-worshipping, an Indic monarch eager to establish his credentials would certainly ascribe to this concept, tying

[105]Trans. by Sims-Williams 2004, pp. 53-68; Sims-Williams and Cribb 1996, pp. 81-83, lines 1-2, 7, 11, 21-22; Sims-Williams 1998, p. 79-92. Further examples of material history bear witness to the privileged position of this goddess to the Kuṣāṇa lineage. These are a discovery of a partial sculpture of Nana from the *devakula* of Māṭ/Mathura, the principal seat of the Kuṣāṇas in India and several examples of statuary from Gandhāra. The general iconography in these images depict Nana in regal mode, accompanied by a lion, bearing a cup in her right hand and a sceptre in her left. Coins and seals from the reign of Kaniṣka and Huveṣka depict her with a sceptre with a lion protome, while one shows her consecrating the prostrate figure of a king with her sceptre. For an assessment of these and other examples of material evidence of her cult see Ghose 2006, pp. 97-112. For the coins see ibid. p. 108. A consideration of the available evidence supported by the strength of the Rabatak inscription ascribing divine authority to Nana, has led Ghose 2006 to conclude that 'around 127/128 Nana was regarded as the supreme deity by the Kuṣāṇa emperors to whom they owed their sovereignty' (Ibid. p. 103).

himself with the indigenous female divinities venerated in his dominion by the local population and publicly stating this allegiance in inscriptions. By the time it was enshrined and granted Brahminical respectability in the Purāṇic genealogies of the 12th century (to be shown), the worship of a *kuladevī* for power had become the substrate of *kṣatriya* identity across regions, and would so remain for centuries to come.

Such was their consequent impact and longevity, that *kuladevī*s remain a well-documented feature of royal clans in India. For instance, the Rajputs, the *kṣatriya* elites who have held sway in the West from the medieval period until very recently–and unofficially even in our days– have traditionally asserted a strong fealty to *kuladevī*s in their mythology. The Fire-Lineages of the Rajputs, the Caulukyas, Cāhamānas, Paramāras and Pratīhāras, claim in the legend of their birth from a mythical fire pit on Mount Abu (Arbuda) that their goddesses enabled them to conquer demons by feasting on the *rākṣasas'* blood, thereby aiding the progenitors of these clans to establish themselves as kings.[106]

Wherever royal lineages migrated, and they dispersed far and wide particularly after the Gupta fall (a notable example being the House of Cālukya) they carried with them their family-goddesses, even raiding the divinities of rival-kings whose empires they sacked.[107] This led to the spread of the practice all over the subcontinent. The areas of worship of some major *kuladevī*s, rising between the early-mediaeval and the early-modern eras, can be plotted over the

[106] Tod 1829, vol II, Annals of Haravati, p. 439-441. These goddesses are Āśāpūrṇā/Āśāpurī of the Cāhamānas/Cauhans, Gajun Mātā of the Pratīhāras, Keonj Mātā of the Solāṅkī/Cālukyas and Sañcer Mātā of the Paramāras. The Śākambharī line of the Cāhamānas assert in their origin-myth that in their regency over the Sambhar lake they were blessed by the goddess Śākambharī whose shrine still stands in the Sambhar lake (see in this thesis p. 99). Additionally, the Amber Mahārājās worship Śilā Devī, the Sisodias of Udaipur Kālikā., while the Rathores worship Rāṣṭraśyenā/Lāṭanā/Manasā also known as Pankhānī Devī (the Winged Goddess), whose shrine is located in the fortress of Jodhpur. She is said to have given the first Rathore king Rāṣṭroḍhā to king Nārāyaṇa of Kanauj (*Rāṣṭrauḍhavaṃśamahākāvya* 12,14,20,24,28-9 cited in Reu 1933, p. 13 and n.1).

[107] Śilā Devī of the Amber kings bears a colourful history connected to the military fortunes of this line. According to the 18th century Bengali *maṅgalkāvya,* the *Annadāmaṅgal*, she was originally the protective goddess of the Bengali king Pratāpāditya of Yaśohara (Jessore), a Kālī known as Śilāmayī, "the fearless Empress of Yaśohara" (*abhayā jaśoreśvarī*). The poem says of this king, that he was the "chosen son of Bhavānī" (*varaputra Bhavānīr*), for whom "Kālī was a veritable general in battles" (*yuddhakāle senāpatī kālī*) but his luck and power ran out, and with it the loss of his clan-goddess to his enemy. In the late 16th century Pratāpāditya faced in battle Mansingh of Amber, general of the Mughal army, when Akbar had sent his troops to conquer Bengal. He was defeated by him, because, the work claims, the goddess had cursed him in her anger for his misdeeds. After this battle, Mansingh married his daughter who took back the goddess with her to Rajasthan. The image of Śilā was installed near the enrance of the Amber fort and even today, worshipped, in honour of her eastern heritage, by the descendants of the Bengali priests who had performed her rites in Jessore (Gupta and Gombrich 1986, pp. 123-138, p. 134; Willis 2009, p. 89.).

entire the sub-continent (see Map 3 and n. 108 for individual descriptions).[108]

Despite the evident popularity of the practice, one is faced with a relative paucity of primary sources from the early mediaeval period whereby the form in which the practice manifested itself between the 6th-10th c. could be reconstructed. The early material in Sanskrit comprises a few scattered references from the 7th century in Bāṇa, Bhavabhūti, a few inscriptions, and Jaina literature[109]. From these one can glean that these goddesses formed a focal part of

[108]In Baluchistan lies the popular Śākta pīṭha of Hiṅgulā Devī known as Hinglaj. This goddess is also the clan-deity of a number of Rajput lineages such as the Bhavsars, Bhansalis, Jadejas and others. It is reported that before the Partition, several kings and princes from the western provinces of India made visits to this shrine to receive her blessings. A period of five days in April forms the occasion for a grand melā (fair) that attracts devotees in throngs (Shah 2009, p. 190). In the Deccan, there are several powerful *kuladevī*s: Tuḷjā Bhavānī in Mahārāṣṭra, who is discussed in depth later, was the tutelary goddess of the Marāṭhā kingdom, but her sphere of influence also encompassed other groups such as the Āre or Kunbi Marāṭhās, formerly a nomadic tribe. (Iyer 1928 (2005), p. 78; Russell and Lal 1916, vol.1, p. 343.) Through her counterpart Koṛṛavai in South India she was connected to groups of other devotees in the Tamil country (Jansen 1995, Chap.5). In Mysore, the Wodeyar dynasty worships Cāmuṇḍeśvarī for whom a shrine was built in the 17th century and whose image is still paraded in pomp on the city streets during the Navarātra festivities (see in this thesis p. 134). Similarly the clan-goddess Rājarājeśvarī enjoyed a prominent role in the rituals expressing the power of the king during the Navarātra of Śivagaṅgai and Ramnad (Price 1996). In the Bundelkhand region of central India stands the shrine of Maniya Devī at Mahoba, *kuladevī* of the aboriginal Bhars of Bundelkhand (Cunningham 1885, p. 69). In the mediaeval period, the Chandellas of Bundelkhand, builders of Khajuraho, who ruled a considerable part of central India from the 10th to the 13th centuries were worshippers of this goddess, whom they appealed to in danger (Mitra 1977, p. 186; Russell and Lal 1916, vol.4, p. 422). For Banjārī Devī of the *zamindārī* Raj Gonds, the Charans and Bhats see Russell and Lal 1916, vol. 2.2, pp. 176, pp. 181-2 and p. 431; Sharma 2005, pp. 316-7. The 13th century Gauḍahara Kṣatriyas of Narwar were worshippers of Cāmuṇḍā, the Navadurgās and Gauḍaharā. For a stone slab with an inscription of 1279 CE describing them, see EI 33.4.1, ll. 12-13. In Mahārāṣṭra the Moḍhas an influential clan ruling Saṃyana in the 11th century CE, claimed in their inscriptions to have obtained the grace of the clan-goddess Khadirāvatī *śrīmoḍhānvayaprasūtaśrīKhadirāvatīlabdhaprasāda-*(1053 CE) (EI 32.5.3, p. 74). In the East, many kings from tribal backgrounds in the largely tribal districts of Chattisgarh, western Bengal, Orissa and Assam, worshipped goddesses associated with their rise in status and subsequent brahmanization, such as Virajā (Donaldson 1985-7, vol. 1, p. 349), Khijjingeśvarī (ibid. p. vol 1. p. 230), Koṭeśvarī(215) etc. Śyāmarūpā's temple, in the ruins of an old fortress said to date from the later years of the Pāla empire, outside Shantiniketan (Birbhum) was seen by myself in situ. She is also called Ḍhekur Gaḍer Mā (Mother of the Ḍheku Fortress). Legends tell she had favoured Ichāi Ghosh or Īśvaraghoṣa of Ḍhekkarī (possibly Ḍhekur Gaḍ itself) *mahāmāṇḍalika* of the Pāla kings, who established the temple to her in his fort (for a summary of the legend in Bengali see Vandyopādhyāya, year uknown; for inscriptions of Īśvaraghoṣa see Majumdar 2003, pp. 149-157). For Sarvamaṅgalā established in 1604 CE by the *zamindar* Cakradhara Bhuiyān, feudatory of Man Singh agent of the Mughal government see ACDIWB, nos. 9 and 10; for Haṃśeśvarī, goddess of the Bansberia Raj of Hooghly see ACDIWB, no. 113; for Vāsalī goddess of the Sāmanta chieftains of Bankura see ibid, no. 70. In the Kathmandu Valley, there is Taleju, *kuladevī* of the Malla and later the Śāhī dynasties, whose role in Dasain, the most important festival in the Valley, is intimately connected with the empowerment of the ruler and the entire state. Levy 1992, pp. 234-241, pp. 523-525. Those goddesses not included in this description appear later in the thesis.

[109]The passages on *kuladevī*-worship in Jaina literature, particularly in the *Ācāradinakara*, the *Tilakamañjarī*, and the narratives on Kumārapāla were first pointed out to me by Prof. A

early courtly life. But little substance is conveyed.

The *Uttararāmacarita* of Bhavabhūti contains a stray reference to the river Gaṅgā being the *kuladevatā* of the clan of Raghus.[110] We fare no better from Bāṇa's *Harṣacarita*, but from the few references we have, certain important things may be understood. These goddesses seem to be the deities closest to the rulers' hearts, although Śiva and Sūrya are officially associated with the lineage.[111] Rather than the two established Sanskritic gods it is the house-hold *gṛhadevatā*s, elsewhere also referred to as the lineage-deities (*kuladevatā*s), who are intimately tied with the minutiae of the *laukika* but essential aspects of court-life, [112] and even in the 7th century, it is their protective ability that seems to have been recognized as their chief quality.[113] Even their acceptance of royal alliances seems to have been solicited, and their seal of approval was believed to manifest in various omens.[114] These suggestive glimmers in Bāṇa's prose convey that the Vardhana dynasty of Kanauj must have worshipped clan-divinities regularly, and a group of them rather than an individual deity (for all references are in the plural). But nothing more. Bāṇa, although describing *gṛhadevatā*s with a degree of tenderness, largely brings them up while making comparisons, and it also remains ambiguous whether he implies clan-goddesses in particular or the deities worshipped during the Vaiśvadeva and other Śrauta domestic rituals, who were primarily male. In my view signs in the text point to these divinities being female clan-deities: they are said to have braids and

Sanderson, whose recent research has focussed on this material, in personal communications in 2010.

[110]She is addressed as *raghukuladevate* in 1.23; and as Sītā's *śvaśurakuladevatā Bhāgīrathī* (*Uttararāmacarita*, p. 39)

[111]At Harṣa's fathers' death, such was the intensity of their grief that their icons were "distorted by the smoke [of omen] issuing from the parting of their hair as if they were exhibiting their sorrow by dishevelled braids". *rājadhāmani dhūmāyamānakabarīvibhāgavibhāvitavikārāḥ prakīrṇakeśapāśaprakāśitaśokā iva prākāśanta pratimāḥ kuladevatānām* (*Harṣacarita*, Ucchvāsa 5, p. 82).

[112]They are evoked for instance in a marriage scene. Towards the end of Chapter Four the reflections of Rājyaśrī's sleeping face in the mirrors of her bridal chamber are compared to the faces of *gṛhadevatās* crowding in their eagerness to overhear the newly-wed couple's conversation*: tatra ca hrītāyā navavadhūkāyāḥ parāṅmukhasuptāyā maṇibhittidarpaṇeṣu mukhapratibimbāni prathamālāpākarṇanakautukāgatagṛhadevatānanānīva maṇigavākṣakeṣu vīkṣamāṇaḥ kṣaṇadāṃ ninye* (*Harṣacarita*, p. 73).

[113]Ibid. p. 59. In a simile women night guards of the royal palace are compared to these deities as they ran forward in their duty to protect the royal person when Queen Yaśovatī wakens screaming from a nightmare. The phrase used is *atha gṛhadevatāsv iva pradhāvitāsu yāminīkīṣu.*

[114]In the same episode mentioned in the previous note, Prabhākaravardhana, Harṣa's father mentions divinities associated with the family and construes the dream Yaśovatī had taken as a nightmare as a blessing auguring Harṣa's birth occasioned by these deities' acceptance of her: *narapatis tu tac chrutvā* [...] *tām avādīt "devi mudo' vasare viṣīdasi* [...] *parigṛhitāsi kuladevatābhiḥ* etc. (ibid. p. 59).

are compared to female night-guards.[115] In the same way, many of the other examples of *kāvya* do not furnish us with a particularly detailed portrait of clan goddesses for, most examples of literary Sanskrit, with a few exceptions, tend to generalize individual goddesses as their pan-Indic Imperial exemplar, Caṇḍī. Clan goddesses therefore remain largely indistinct even in the great authors' works.

The early mediaeval inscriptions are even less helpful in this regard. Those that do mention goddesses in relation to kings give little more than the name of the deity followed by a few stock phrases, and it is difficult to extract a more expansive picture from this information: we cannot understand, that is, the personalities behind the names of the goddesses on the inscriptions. Furthermore, most inscriptions of Indian kings from the period are very keen to conform to norms of the ideal king promoted by the orthodox religion. A king's performance of Vedic rites such as the *aśvamedha*[116], his glorious descent from one of the seven seers, his parallelism with Viṣṇu, Śiva or Brahmā–these are usually the ways in which kings were conceptualized. In faith, he is either Śaiva, Vaiṣṇavite, Saurya, Jaina or Buddhist and the impression left by the inscriptions is that the religion of the king must swerve only in those directions. Any other form of kingship, such as the Śākta model, is rarely accounted with as much profusion. Thus, as in *kāvya*, *kuladevī*s are little acknowledged in early inscriptions, particularly the Gupta era ones,[117] or are so completely eulogized as Caṇḍī that their specific identity is unrecognizeable. If a historian were to use only inscriptions to interpret the cult of goddesses in kingship, then the emerging picture would be a skewed one.

One may ask why this absence in royal records. Intentional editing might have been one reason, and there is some ground to support this. The inscription was, particularly after the Guptas, the favoured political tool employed by a new king to efface his humble, that is to say his heterogenous, past and recreate himself in a more standardized way (such as in the case of the later Pālas[118]). The strong association of goddess-worship with elements of antinomianism, both

[115] See n. 111 on the previous page and n. 113 on the preceding page.

[116] Similarly their protection of Vedic learning – see EI 1.22.v.16

[117] The few exceptions from the early-mediaeval era where goddesses are acknowledged as the source of a ruling line's power are considered in chapter three, and see here (on page 80) for the Chindaka-Nāgas.

[118] The Pālas of Bengal did not claim in their early inscriptions descent either from a mythical man or a *kṣatriya*, rather from one Dayitaviṣṇu, the son of a soldier who most likely gained influence in the period of anarchy (*matsyanyāya*) that followed the subjection of Gauḍa around 730 CE in the hands of Yaśovarman of Kanauj. Hara Prasāda Śāstrī, Introduction to *Rāmacarita* by Sandhyākaranandin, pp. 15-16; Majumdar 1943, vol 1, p. 97.

in practice and in autochthonous affiilations–this in my view formed a motive, particularly after the strengthening of Brahminical kingship and the adoption of vegetarianism by many kings, for some *rājā*s to surpress that part of their history in their political literature. Or, as suggested by 15th century Jaina literature, in some cases it may have been the strongly secretive aspect of these goddesses that was partly responsible for their exclusion.[119] Even today they appear to be connected in some unique way to family members of a ruling dynasty, who have private shrines, legends describing the special favours granted to members in the clan and practices which are seldom fully shared with the general public apart from the Navarātra festivities in autumn. Clan goddesses were the objects of jealously guarded private/familial worship, while inscriptions were concerned with projecting the public face of religion.

As with inscriptions, so too with the canonical Brahminical texts. Although one would expect classic early warrior-texts such as the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyāṇa* to discuss clan-goddesses in some detail, they do not mention their worship by the principal heroes (although the worship of the Purāṇic Durgā is mentioned in later regional recensions of the *Mahābhārata* on two occasions for victory in war.[120]

The Jainas were more conscientous in their documentary efforts. Meticulous scholars and litterateurs, they had composed between the eighth and the eleventh centuries, prose accounts in Sanskrit that contain illuminating descriptions of court-practices surrounding the *kuladevī*. The Prakrit *kāvya Kuvalayamālā* by Uddyotanasūri which he completed in 779 CE, recounts a lively story where an heirless king turned to his clan-goddess to grant him a son, after being berated by his wife. The suggestion was made by his ministers, and though the king had considered other deities such as Śiva, it was ultimately the family-deity Rāyalacchī/ Rājalakṣmī who was favoured, owing no doubt to her unique ability for granting rewards and ameliorating crises. On an auspicious day, the king organized a lavish ceremony for his *kuladevī*. Having propitiated the protective gods of the town, granted gifts to *bhikṣu*s and the poor, and after

[119] In the *Ācāradinakara*, Vardhamāna though describing the procedure for the *pratiṣṭhā* of *devī*s (systematized as *prāsādadevī*s, *āgamadevī*s and *kuladevī*s). does not describe the method of worshipping them. He asks the reader to learn the method from the tradition transmitted by the guru (*gurvāgamāt*) and from the customs of the lineage (*kulācārāt*). One of the reasons for his intentional silence is to avoid making the tradition related to the goddess public, and he cites a teaching to support this, stating that only through the concealment of the ritual method, success comes about while its exposure leads to danger. (*Ācāradinakara*, vol 2, 209b fol.)

[120] See in this thesis p. 120.

the initial public rites, he worshipped the goddess alone. With hymns to the deity's numerous aspects and flowers he conciliated her for two days, but with no luck. On the third, in despair he was about to offer his own head when the deity appeared in full glory and held his hand back. She granted him the boon of a son and disappeared, thereby averting impending state crisis, and the collapse of the lineage.[121] A similar account also appears in the *Tilakamañjarī* of Dhanapāla (composed for king Bhojadeva, who ruled between cca. 1000-1055) where a childless king is given a mantra of Aparājitā to propitiate and is instructed to worship his clan-goddess Śrī in the palace for issue, rather than venturing into the wilderness.[122] These stories are perhaps the only in Sanskrit *kāvya* to contain such rich details regarding how these goddesses were propitiated as granters of royal power.

It is the vernaculars though that formed the medium in which *kuladevī*-narratives appear with greatest frequency. Oral legendary traditions in Nepal, Bengal, Mahārāṣṭra and Rajasthan offer an array of narratives about local kings and goddesses, which were popular but on the whole uncanonized in writing. Where inscribed by contemporary or later ethnographic histories, they provided the most valuable frameworks for conceptualizing the relationship kings bore to clan-goddesses. But these indigenous traditions were canonized only after the 15th century, a period that marked the growing confidence of the vernaculars and their emergence from the shadow of Sanskrit, and later, Persian. They are therefore reflective of the mature phase of the systems whereby the cult expressed itself. It would be imprudent to see them as mirrors of antiquity.

Does the absence of clan-goddesses in early Sanskrit literature suggest that the cults of the *kuladevī* in the landmass south of Afghanisthan were a later mediaeval phenomenon, or was it that they simply remained outside the purview of "high" language in the early-mediaeval period? Or is the opposite true: is their absence in descriptions of courtly life by early Indian authors an indication of their importance. Perhaps they were so well-known and highly regarded that authors simply took it for granted that their audience would already be aware of their significance.

I suggest that it is the latter. When the author is one who aims his/her gaze from the outside, one finds greater evidence for *kuladevī*s. The Jainas were effusive about *kuladevī*s because in part they saw them as outsiders, as alien to their own faith. Even more so with scholarship from the past 200 years. In

[121] *Kuvalayamālā*, pp. 11-15 (ref. given by Prof. Sanderson)
[122] *Tilakamañjarī*, pp. 32-35.

more modern studies on Indian kingdoms, particularly ethnographic ones, necessitating objective observation and the setting-aside of personal assumptions, *kuladevī*s have been discussed in detail, and in numerous works.

The historian of clan-goddesses is thus faced with a paradox– the richness of data on recent (colonial or contemporary) *kuladevī* worship (mainly by scholars working in the Western tradition) but a marked paucity of early sources, excepting one or two good Jaina writings. How then can one reconstruct faithfully an early history of royal clan-goddess worship?

In order to visualize a scenario that can be described as "ancient", one has to start from the recent and then work backwards into the earlier material. I start therefore in the seventeenth century, in the court of Śivāji, for it embodies all that is quintessential in a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. Given that the Marāṭhā court was concerned to continue (and preserve) archaic tradition, the goddess-cult in Śivāji's realm would have closely resembled an early-mediaeval court dedicated to Śakti worship. Śivāji's court is then used as a stepping-stone into the past.

Working through the evidence for early-mediaeval *kuladevī*s, we find that the cult remained a stable part of court-life despite historical ruptures. Unlike state-religions which changed from ruler to ruler depending on personal inclinations, the *kuladevī* remained a permanent fixture in the lineage, unconnected to the vicissitudes of public religion. Thus, as we shall see, her worship continued in the family whatever their faith, as in the case of the kings of Śivagangai and Ramnad who were Vaiṣṇavite but simultaneously worshippers of Rājarājeśvarī. Note must also be made of two other cases that I shall discuss in detail below: Kumārapāla, the Cālukya king who continued to worship Kaṇṭeśvarī, his *kuladevī,* even after his conversion to Jainism, and the kings of Cachar in Assam, who were Vaiṣṇavites but nevertheless built a shrine for Raṇacaṇḍī in their palace and offered animal-sacrifice to please her. A *kuladevī*'s displeasure meant bad luck, and even ruin for she was intimately bound to the family's fortune. Prestige, wealth, land, offspring– the material forms of power were what the *devī* offered to the clan. This meant that the very continuity of power in the family depended, and still depends, on her worship.

2.1 A Case-Study of Tuḷjā Bhavānī of the Marāṭhās

In mediaeval government, political decisions required religious authoriza-

tion, especially from the deity who conferred authority on the king. The impact of the Karṇātī/Marāṭhī goddess Tuḷajā/Tuḷjā Bhavānī on Śivājī (1627-80 AD), founder of the Marāṭhā empire, appears to be particularly noteworthy in this respect. The influence of Tuḷjā upon the powerful clans of the Western Ghats was significant. She was and still remains known as the *kulsvāmini* of Mahārāṣṭra and her shrine at Tuḷjāpur in Osmanabad, along with the neighbouring shrines of her attendants Toḷbhairava, Kāḷbhairava and Mātaṃgī still attract numerous devotees.

Among the many clans she was associated with, Tuḷjā was also the lineage goddess of the Bhonsles to whom Śivājī belonged, venerated as a form of Caṇḍikā and worshipped lavishly during the Navarātra in autumn. The *Turajāmāhātmya*, a seventeenth century *sthalapurāṇa* on the goddess, mentions Tvaritā as her alternative name, a goddess who killed a demon Kukura for the sake of Anubhūti, the widow of a *dvija,* when her ascetic practice on behalf of her husband was disturbed by this lecherous *rākṣasa*.[123] Furthermore, whether true or false, Tuḷjā is reportedly cognate with the Nepalese royal goddess Taleju as there is a claim that she was brought to Mithilā from Mahārāṣṭra by Nānyadeva, a rebellious commander of the Pāla kings in the eleventh century CE and then taken to Nepal by a successor Harisiṃhadeva, when Mithilā was attacked by Ghīyās-ud-din Tughlaq.[124] But her impact on political history is better known through the genre of the *bakhar* on Śivājī's exploits. These Marāṭhī hagiographies would have us believe that it was through the grace of this goddess that Śivājī prospered, from her that he received his legendary sword and at crucial moments preceding armed conflict received instructions from her through dreams or possession. As reports of historical event they are perhaps not the most accurate, but as insights into how a goddess cult could directly affect matters of state, these chronicles are indeed illuminating.

A number of *bakhar*s have been composed on Śivājī's life,[125] but the earliest and the one to contain most information on Tuḷjā is the *Sabhāsadbhakar* by Kṛṣṇājī Anant Sabhāsad, composed in 1616 Śālivāhana Year=1694 CE. The

[123] *Turajāmāhātmya*, Adhyāyas I-III.

[124] Jansen 1995, p. 263.

[125] There were at least nine bakhars on his life (Sen 1920). Some are: *Citraguptabakhar* by Tuḷpuḷe (1765); (Jansen 1995, p. 49); *Ciṭṇīs* by Malhār Rām Rāv Chiṭṇīs (1810) (Sen, 1920); *Śivadigvijaya*, early British period (Sen 1920); *śrīmantmāhārāj Bhosale yāṃci bakhar* (Jansen 1995, p. 49). The Catalogue of Marāṭhi Manuscripts by Blumhardt reports a *bakhar* (1782) by Bālāji Gaṇeśa Karkun (Mar. D.42 in Blumhardt 1950, vol. 2, p. 67). The Mārāṭhās were assiduous historians noting not just lineage lists but also calendars recording dates of principal events (Mar. G.15c *non vidi*; Blumhardt 1950, vol 2, p. 65, No. 134.)

work suggests that Śivājī was Śākta in orientation and his patron deity Tuḷjā, to whom the kingdom belonged (*śrīce rājya*)[126] was responsibe for the rise and fall of the entire Marāṭhā empire.

In his youth Śivājī was despatched by his father Rājaśrī Śāhjī to Pune, where removed from control, he built the fort of Raigaḍ, owing to a fortunate discovery of gold, which he accredited to Tuḷjā.[127] In this manner he steadily prepared for independence from the Bijapur Sultanate, to whom his father was attached as feudatory. Matters came to a head in 1659 CE, when his first major victory over the forces of Bijapur, led by the general Afzal Khan, took place. In the *bakhar*, Tuḷjā's role unfolds at this early stage in Śivāji's career. When Afzal Khan destroyed her icon at Tuljapur, she laid a curse on him. In the meantime Śivāji prepared to face him in battle but was dissuaded by the Marāṭhā ministers. In a dream the goddess appeared to Śivāji in person and commanded him to wage war. Śivāji's subsequent murder of Afzal Khan, a well-known historical event much lauded by the Marāṭhā hagiographers, is thus shown to have occured on account of her orders and in gratitude the king established his patron-deity in the fort of Pratapgadh. Villages were granted for her worship and the goddess is said to have revealed herself to all citizens in dreams and asked them to go to her new shrine.[128]

According to Sabhāsad, and also the later *bakhar Cīṭṇīs*,[129] Tuḷjā Bhavānī is said to have possessed Śivājī on several occasions and have made prophecies regarding the fate of the kingdom which scribes copied and later narrated to the king when he regained consciousness. This feature of Śivāji's story, largely

[126] See n. 138 on page 61.

[127] Duff 1921, vol. 1, p. 111

[128] *Śrī Śiva Chatrapatīṃce Caritra,* pp. 61-71; Trans. by Sen 1920, pp. 27-28. Grant Duff dates the above episode as 1661. Śivāji was unable to make a visit to the shrine in Tuljapur because of the monsoons so he built a shrine in Pratapgad [the shrine is near the fort]. 'Pratapgaḍ, 3543 feet above sea level, is famous in Maratha history. Early in his career it was the seat of Shivaji the founder of the Maratha empire, and here in 1659, he treachourously murdererd Afzul Khan the commander of the Bijapur army. The fort was designed by Shivaji in 1656 and built by Moro Trimal Pinghe. For many years it was a great Maratha stronghold, but is now a ruin. Inside is the temple of Bhavānī, Shivaji's family goddess...Fifteen villages yielding a yearly revenue of 335 Pounds (Rs. 3350) have been granted for the maintenance of the temple of Bhavānī" (*Bombay Gazetters*, vol 19, Satara, p. 509).

[129] While in Karṇāṭaka, encamped in Trivāpī on the Kāverī, the goddess took possession of the Rājā and made the following prophecy:

"The kingdom of Deś will be conquered by the Muhammedans, Rāigaḍ will be lost. Sambhāji Rājā will be captured and tortured. Then another king named Śiva will reign. He will conquer the country as far as Delhi and establish undisputed sway (over the whole area)...In a previous birth Śivāji had carried twenty seven loads of pitchers filled with Ganges water at Rāmeśvar and in his twenty seven previous births offered his head to Śrī Bhavānī. Owing to the merit of these deeds the Bhonsle power will last for twenty seven generations. The 27th descendant will be born blind and lose the kingdom" (Sen, 1920, p. 243).

unparalleled in the sobre histories of the Marāṭhās, is rich in implications, to which I now briefly turn.

Tuḷjā's oracular aspect draws from an ancient Indic belief linking Caṇḍikā and her attributary forms with divination. This idea is attested even in the earliest strata of the Vidyāpīṭha Tantric texts.[130] Usually a mantra summoning Caṇḍikā is given for the *sādhaka* to recite, whereby an apparition appears on a reflective surface, on the surface of a sword, on the left thumb smeared with luminescent substances or on water. The substrate is shown to a young girl (*dārikā*) or a boy (*kumāra*) who interpets Caṇḍikā's prognostication about the past, present or future to the practitioner, concerning anything that he wishes to know.

Besides the oracular side of these episodes in the *bakhar*, the aspect of possession is perhaps the most interesting of the monarch-goddess relationship. This too has a long history in Indian literature where in esoteric exegesis possession was described as having a strong metaphysical dimension connected to liberation.[131] Its early and privileged place within the Śākta religion is reflected in the well-attested belief that goddesses possess at the time of initiation and at the time of oracular revelation. With reference to the latter, Śākta goddesses were held to possess a human medium who had shown favourable signs, particularly a child, and communicate through them.[132] It is this oracular form of possession that appears to be implied in Śivājī's case, even though the *bakhar* does not mention whether Śivājī invoked Bhavānī in the manner prescribed in the Tantras. As Frederick Smith notes, "Tantric possession may also be a kind of ritually induced oracular experience practised by people who would never consider themselves *tantrika*s".[133]

Possession of kings is not a characteristic of gods of kingship, such as Śiva and Viṣṇu.[134] It is mainly goddesses who possess, and this feature may have

[130]Recently in a paper delivered in the Early Tantra Worshop in Hamburg, S. D.Vasudeva discussed the figure of the goddess-oracle called *prasīnā/prasenā/prasannā*, in a number of early Śaiva sources (and also *pratisenā* in Buddhist sources). The earliest material is contained in the *Niśvāsaguhya* 3.24-27. It is also found in the *Bṛhatkālottara* (NAK 1-273, fol. 321v (ref. kindly supplied by Prof. Sanderson), in the *Tantrasadbhāva* 9.375-384 (the verse numbering is that of M. Dyczkowski's etext) and also referenced in the *Kalāvilāsa* 9.17 of Kṣemendra. For further discussion on *prasenā* see Smith 2006, pp. 421-423.

[131]Abhinavagupta, *Tantrāloka* 1.173; Sanderson 1985, pp. 200-202; Sanderson 1988, pp. 176-177, n. 33; Smith 2006, p. 372.

[132]Smith 2006, pp. 367-376.

[133]Ibid, p. 368.

[134]It is important to note in this regard that Śiva's occultic form as Bhairava/Rudra has always had a strong association with possession. This association is quite an ancient one. Recently in the Early Tantra Workshop in Hamburg Dr. Shaman Hatley pointed out a pos-

attributed to the medieval Indian view that their association with kings was more direct and intense. The clan-goddess, could, as Śivājī's case demonstrates, assume the character of a real figure in the mind of the king, hence his relationship with her was calibrated with emotions similar to those that govern human relationships. This was of course to be construed as a sign of the king's proximity to the divine, and a special privilege accorded by his familial relationship with the goddess who was, like a parent, the guarantor of the power of the king. Possession also served to underline to his people Śivāji's special ability to be a conduit for the divine. In a ruler this was a charismatic and desirable quality.

Additionally, possession served a strong political motive for Śivāji. The argument of divine agency through the medium of the king seems also to have been a convenient justification for autocratic action in kingship, especially over contested government policies. The story that he was acting on the goddess's instructions was used by Śivāji to validate his actions particularly when disagreement arose with his ministers concerning war. After Śivāji's victory over Bijapur, Aurangzeb appointed the Deccan viceroy Śāistā Khan to subdue the Marāṭhās in 1662. The *Sabhāsadbakhar* says that hearing of the approaching army, Śivāji held a meeting with his counsellors who advised him to conclude peace with the Mughals. However, Śivāji defied their wishes and resolved to fight the Mughals to the last, whatever the outcome, since peace in his view seemed impossible to achieve. Tuḷjā's communication through Śivājī was used again to silence dissenting ministers. She is said to have entered his body and spoken through him, commanding the witness Karkun to fight Śaistā. On the strength of this command, the Marāṭhās are said to have attacked the Mughal leader.[135]

Śivājī's subsequent guerrilla raid on Śāistā's residence in Pune in 1663 is a much vaunted feat of daring in Marāṭhi history, after which Śāistā, greatly humiliated by the incident, was recalled and replaced by Aurangzeb. In 1665 the Mughal Emperor, anxious that his southern strongholds might disintegrate, despatched another army led jointly by the Rajput Mirza Jayasiṃha and the

session by Bhairava occuring in the early Śaiva Tantra the *Brahmayāmala* (BY). This was later confirmed by Dr. Csaba Kiss, who supplied me with the relevant reference from his draft edition of the *Brahmayāmala*. The passage states: *vaktram prasāryatām vatsa guhyaṃ hṛdi viśāmy aham / bhavase yena vai śīghram mama tulyabalavīryavān/ pradakṣiṇam tataḥ kṛtvā vaktram prasārya mantravit/ pravisen nātra saṃdeho praviṣṭe bhairavo bhavet/* BY 47.42cd-44ab. On the other hand, Dr. Kiss notes that this is indeed a rarity, and the association with possession is stronger with the goddesses promoted by the text. The greater occurence of instances of possession by goddesses in Tantric literature in general was also confirmed by Professor Sanderson in a personal communication in June 2011.

[135] *Śrī Śiva Chatrapatīṃce Caritra*, p. 82; Sen 1920, p. 42.

Afghan Dilel Khan. Empowered by an arduous and, what must have been, an expensive three-month long rite employing 400 *brāhmaṇa*s (*cāraśe brāhmaṇa anuṣṭhānasa ghātale*) to perform a *koṭi* "Caṇḍī"s (that is to perform recitations of the *Devīmāhātmya*), to make eleven *koṭi*s of Liṅgas and to propitiate Bagalāmukhī-Kālaratri for the fullfilment of the king's wishes (*kāmanārthaṃ*), the *bakhar* claims that Jayasiṃha acquired the ability to defeat Śivāji.[136]

The legend goes on to state that Śivājī was informed of the Rajput progress and was advised a second time to broker peace by his ministers who considered war against the combined Rajput and Mughal forces a foolhardy decision. At this stage the king was apparently struck by indecision. Thereafter he was possessed by Tuḷjā who advised him to wage war and prophesied eventual glory, though she warned him of her inability to defeat Jayasiṃha, because of his Tantric propitiation of goddesses. However, she promised to look after Śivājī in all his troubles when he would be taken to the capital as prisoner.[137] She also ordained the kingdom she had conferred on him as a boon would last for twenty-seven generations. Hers would be the task of looking after the Empire. This prophecy is said to have been written by the witness scribes.[138]

The chronicle holds the goddess's warning to Śivājī responsible for his eventual capitulation to the Mughals and in fact, Śivājī did for a while adopt an attitude of conciliation and concluded a treaty with the Mughals ceding his forts to them and becoming their vassal, later travelling to the north for an interview with the Emperor. In Delhi, his efforts to secure a successful interview with Aurangzeb did not bear fruit and he was kept under house-arrest by the Mughal Emperor. The *Sabhāsad* continuing after this point, inserts a further episode where Bhavānī is shown to intervene, and plant in his brain the ruse of escaping by hiding in baskets of sweets. Throughout his long journey back, she protected him by means of the "bewitching weapon" (*mohanāstra*).[139]

After his escape from the Mughal stronghold, the *Sabhāsad* describes Śivājī's conquest of Karṇāṭaka where Tuḷjā makes her final appearance in a legend of Śivājī wishing to offer his head to her thereby showing his devotion in the final stage of his life. Tuḷjā once again possessed him and preempted his sacrifice, guiding him to the path of his royal duties. The witness Karkuns communicated

[136] *Śrī Śiva Chatrapatīṃce Caritra*, pp. 87-88; Sen 1920, pp. 48-49. I am grateful to Professor Catharina Kiehnle (Leipzig) and Professor Sanderson for clarifying the Marāṭhi in the passage.
[137] This event is also described in Duff 1921, vol. 1, p. 173
[138] *Śrī Śiva Chatrapatīṃce Caritra*, pp. 88-89; Sen 1920, pp. 49-50.
[139] *Śrī Śiva Chatrapatīṃce Caritra*, pp. 103-8; Sen 1920, pp. 66-72.

this divine event to the king.[140]

Thus it is not as a peripheral character that Tuḷjā appears in the *Sabhāsadbakhar* but as one of its central figures. Not only is she the cause of the four defining moments in Marāṭha history, claims the *bakhar*, but even rescues its chief architect in the end from potential death. Her martial character and support of war where others called for peace closely reflects and supports the king's own *kṣatriya* identity (that he was keen to project against the Muslims) and imperialist agenda. In this way the chronicle forges a parallel between deity and king. Evoking Tuḷjā in this crucial way was felt to be an important means of reinforcing the king's pedigree establishing that he was a proper, *śakti*-worshipping hero. In the medium of the *bakhar* – officially commissioned histories of the Empire – the belief that Śāktism was the foundation of warrior-identity, once evoked (perhaps more benignly) in literature and Purāṇic myth,[141] had turned into political ideology.

2.2 Śivāji's Tantric Coronation

Śivājī's Śākta orientation is also reflected in his Tantric coronation.[142] An account of this appears in the Sanskrit *Śrīśivarājyābhiṣekakalpataru* by Govinda dated September 30th, 1596 Śaka era (= 1674 CE).[143] It was performed shortly after the more famous Vedic coronation by the noted *smārta* Gāgā Bhaṭṭa that formed the highlight of Śivājī's career on 6th June, 1674. The Vedic coronation by Gāgā was supposed to add credibility to Śivājī's claim of possessing the status of a legitimate Hindu Emperor (*sāmrājyapada*), given that his *kṣatriya* pedigree–or lack thereof–was a highly controversial issue. Just before, Śivājī had journeyed to Pratapgadh to pay homage to Tuḷjā to secure her blessings.[144]

[140] *Śrī Śiva Chatrapatīṃce Caritra*, p. 152; Sen 1920, p. 124.

[141] See in this thesis p. 108 ff.

[142] I am grateful to Professor Sanderson for identifying the Vāgdevīs, the *mūlamantra* of the Tripurā cult as well as distinguishing the Mahāvidyās mentioned in this work from the goddesses of the Daśamahāvidyā tradition of East India. Following his propostition, I have interpreted the Ten Mahāvidyās mentioned in Śivāji's coronation as simply a generic term for any Tantric goddess. His identifications also confirmed that the coronation was based on elements of the Śrīvidyā. I would also like to thank Anya Golovkova for sharing her knowledge of the Śrīvidyā textual traditions with me in this matter.

[143] The work was edited by D.V.Apte and K.N.Dīkṣita based on a manuscript from the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta (G10185) and was published in June 1929 in the *BISM Quarterly*, vol. 10, No. 1. Based on this edition, Bendrey discusses the Tantric coronation briefly in his introduction to the edition of the Vedic coronation (see pp. 53-54). This however is not a full summary. He classifies the Tantric ceremony as a 'periodical Rājābhiṣeka' a smaller coronation that was held annually at the anniversary of the rite, rather than a full 'Mahārājābhiṣeka', one that could happen only once in a king's lifetime.

[144] Henry Oxindon, a British visitor to the court of the Marāṭhās writes on the 19th of May, 1674: "Sevagee was departed thence to Purtabb Gurr to visit the shrine of Bowany a Pagoda

But, according to Govinda, omens appeared during the Vedic coronation– meteors fell on earth followed by the deaths of Śivājī's favourite general and his mother and lightning striking Pratapgadh. The inauspiciousness of the hour and the omission of several crucial rites, especially animal sacrifice, a fundamental feature of Śākta worship, were held to be the cause of the omens. Thereafter, in order to redress these lapses, Śivājī commisioned a Tantric by the name of Niścalapurī to perform a Tantric coronation, properly, that is with animal sacrifice. This is not surprising considering that Tuḷjā herself in several verses of the *Turajāmāhātmya*– which otherwise describes her vis-a-vis Purāṇic conventions– appears to be Tantric: she is called Ṣaṭcakrā, Ṣaṭcakrabhedakā (divided in to six cakras), Kuṇḍalinī, the seed-syllable (*bījāyai)* and the cause of the Mantramārga (*mantramārgapravartinyai).*[145] She is also principally collocated with the goddess Tvaritā in the *Turajāmāhātmya*[146] and, as chapters in the *Agnipurāṇa* attest, Tvaritā had borne in Indian culture from a very ancient period a strong, autonomous identity connected to martial *siddhi*s and royal worship of a Tantric character.[147] When she appears in the *Turajāmāhātmya,* Tvaritā/Tuḷjā is evidently conceptualized as this full-blooded and ferocious Tantric deity: she is accompanied by an ominous retinue of *bhairavas*, *yoginī*s, and the emaciated flesh-eating deity Reṇukā and given these implications it is reasonable to suspect that her regular worship by Śivāji may have well contained Tantric elements. A summary of the Tantric rite based on Govinda's account is as follows.

The coronation took place on Lalitā Pañcamī, the bright Fifth of Āśvina, a time closely associated with the worship of Durgā. At dawn Niścala installed the vases (*kalaśasthāpana*) whence the consecration waters were to be sprinkled on the king during the ceremony. The preliminary rites were performed according to the Tantras. He drew a 'Meru' yantra adorned with various charac-

of great esteem with him, and celebrate some ceremonies there in order to his Coronation, having carried with him presents, and among the rest a Sombrero of pure gold weighing 1 1/4 mds. which he hath dedicated to the said Pagoda's use". (*English Records on Sivaji* 1931, p. 328 cited in Bendrey 1960, p. 40) What Oxindon describes as a 'pagoda' was the top of the temple, which Śivājī had presented to the Bhavānī shrine.

[145] *ṣaṭcakrabhedakāyai ṣaṭcakrāyai te namo namaḥ | kuṇḍalinyai namas tubhyaṃ bījāyai te namo namaḥ | mantramārgapravartinyai ghaṭasthāyai namo namaḥ | Turajāmāhātmya* 2.23cd-24.

[146] *kathitā yā tvayā deva tvaritā nāma devatā | aparaṃ turajā nāma tasyā jātaṃ kathaṃ vibho |* Ibid 1.4cd-5ab.

tasyā conj.] *tasya* ed.

[147] *Agnipurāṇa* 147.1-9ab. This chapter explains the propitiation of Tvaritā before battle with a ritual highly Tantric in tone. The relevance of Tvaritā in this section of the *Agnipurāṇa* was first explained to me by Professor Sanderson in a personal communication in June 2011 in which he also identified Tvaritā/Tuḷjā in the *Turajāmāhātmya* as the Tantric Tvaritā, exemplified in the *Agnipurāṇa.*

ters (*nānāvarṇair vicitritaṃ*). The throne room was decorated with magnificent pavilions (*maṇḍapa*) adorned with beautiful canopies and pillars. The vases were worshipped in the pavilion and in the site of the royal throne. Having purified the ground of the throne (*bhūmiṃ saṃśodhya*), he filled it in the proper manner with the five jewels *(pañcaratna*s). He placed the royal lion-throne on top of the site after having performed the rite of installing life in the bodies of the lions (ringing the throne) with mantras *(prāṇapratiṣṭhāṃ saṃpādya siṃhagātreṣu mantrataḥ*). Śivājī entered the throne room with a sword and made sacrifices (*paśubali*) to the *lokapāla*s, divinites who guard the worlds stationed at the gates (*dvārasthitebhyo devebhyo*). They being thus propitiated offered safe passage to the king. Then, after the Guardians of the Gate had been feasted with food-offerings, the old throne installed by Gāgābhaṭṭa was said to have been "destroyed" (perhaps the meaning was that it was deconsecrated) and many Brahmins were fed– in this way all inauspicious obstacles were annihilated.[148]

In the old ceremony, Śivājī's throne, an opulent object built specially for the occasion, had been sanctified as Indra's seat. But given its association with the advent of unfavourable events in the king's life, it was deemed unsuitable for kingship and had to be reconsecrated. In the Tantric ceremony of investiture, the throne was sanctified as a *maṇḍala* and infused with goddesses embodied as mantras. Only then was it held to be fit to carry a king. An animal-sacrifice (*paśuṃ baliṃ*) was made to placate every lion encircling the throne, who acquired privileged status in this rite: Siṃha, in the Eastern corner; Haryakṣa in the South-East; Pañcāsya in the South; Kesarī in the South-West; Mṛgendra in the West; Śārdūla in the North-West; Gajendra in the North; and Hari in the North-East. A *yantra* was drawn on the throne and deities established therein. A further sacrifice was made to the whole throne.[149]

[148] *niścala uvāca | mayā prātaḥ samutthāya kalaśasthāpanādikaṃ | kṛtvā pūjāvidhiḥ sarvaḥ kṛtas tantrānusārataḥ || meruyantrasamuddhṛtya nānāvarṇair vicitritaṃ | lalitā pañcamīyoge hy abhiṣekamahotsavaḥ || vitānaiḥ śobhitaiḥ stambhair maṇḍapaiḥ samalaṃkṛtaḥ | yathā mahendrasadane viśvakarmākṛto mahān || kalaśān maṇḍape pūjya tataḥ siṃhāsanasthale | bhūmiṃ saṃśodhya vidhivat pañcaratnaiḥ prapūritāṃ | [...] kṛtvā taduparinyastam āsanaṃ siṃhasaṃyutaṃ | prāṇapratiṣṭhāṃ saṃpādya siṃhagātreṣu mantrataḥ || [...] rājā jagāma pāṇisthakhaḍgo rājasabhāṃ prati | dvārasthitebhyo devebhyo balidānaṃ tadākarot | saṃtuṣṭalokapālās te rājñe mārgaṃ dadur mudā | samucchedyāsanaṃ tat tu Gāgābhaṭṭena ropitaṃ | brāhmaṇān bhojayitvā tu sahasrāvadhi paṇḍitān | vighnānāṃ nāśanaṃ cakrur dvārapābalibhojanāt || Śrīśivarājyābhiṣekakalpataru*, p. 36.

[149] *aham abruvaṃ rājan siṃhebhyo baliṃ arpaya || samāhitamanā bhūtvā tataḥ sukham avāpsyasi || iti madvacanaṃ śrūtvā rājā harṣam upāgataḥ | cakāra balidānāni yathoktāni dvijottamaḥ |[...] prathamaṃ pūrvadiksthāya siṃhāya balim āharat | bhuñjan baliṃ pūrvabhāgaṃ rakṣaty apagatabhramaḥ | āgneyakoṇe haryakṣas tasmai balim adāt paśuṃ | tatkoṇarakṣaṇaṃ karttum †santoṣātmana† ādadhe | dakṣiṇe sthāpito nāmnā pañcāsyo bhiṣayan yamaṃ | balidānād bhṛśaṃ prīto dakṣiṇām anurakṣati | nairṛtyai kesarī nāma*

Śivājī was enthroned. The omens disappeared. This was followed by the rite of consecration (*abhiṣeka*), the signature rite of Indian kingship. Eight vases *(kalaśa*) filled with jewels *(ratna*), five kinds of leaves *(pallavaiḥ pañcabhir*), and draped in red silk cloth (*raktakauśeyasaṃyutāḥ)* were installed in the directions in a royal pavilion (*rājamaṇḍapa*) adorned with a canopy of gold (*vitānaiḥ hemacitrāḍhyaiḥ)*, and decorated with flowers, incense and lamps. During the *abhiṣeka* itself, the symbols of royal power were completely feminized. Women, representing the group of goddesses beginning with Vaśinī who are associated with the Tantric cult of Tripurasundarī and called the Vāgdevīs since they are believed to embody the deity of Speech Vāc, consecrated the king with water from the vases. Since there are eight deities of Speech in the Tripurā cult conforming to this pattern, the other seven implied must have been Kāmeśvarī, Modinī, Vimalā, Aruṇā, Jayinī, Sarveśvarī, and Kaulinī.[150] Then Niścala consecrated him with the Śiva-water (*śivāmbhas*) that was in the central vase empowered with the final two goddesses Rājarājeśvarī and Pītāmbarā embodied as *vidyās*/mantras. In this way, the king was consecrated by Niścala by "waters permeated with ten Tantric goddesses known as the Great Spells (Mahāvidyas)".[151] When the king had been fully consecrated by the power of Tantric goddesses, the Goddess Sundarī-Jagadambikā became manifest to him.

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sthāpito balibhug bhṛśam | baliṃ tasmai samarpāya rakṣaṇe viniyojitaḥ | mṛgendraḥ paścime bhāge sthāpito balibhuk kṛtaḥ || sa rakṣati nijaṃ bhāgam aṣṭamaṃ śrīmahāsane | śārdūlo nāma vāyavye sthāpitaḥ pūjitaḥ sutaḥ | paśuṃ dattvā baliṃ tasmai rakṣāyāṃ viniyojitaḥ | gajendram uttare sthāpya paśuṃ balim akalpayet | sa tasyāṃ diśi saṃhṛṣṭaḥ kuberam abhigarjati | harir haradiśāyāṃ tu niyukto balibhakṣakaḥ | sa rakṣati diśaṃ hṛṣṭo nidrātandrāvivarjitaḥ | [...] tasmin yantraṃ devatāsthāpanaṃ kṛtaṃ | tasmai siṃhāsanāyāpi balidānam akalpayata | Ibid. p. 37.

[150] *saṃsthitātra mahācakre mahātripurāsundarī | śṛṇu devi yathā sātra pūjyate sādhakottamaiḥ | vargānukramayogeṇa devatāṣṭakasaṃyutā | avargaḥ prathamo devi vaśinī tatra devatā. tatparas tu kavargo 'yaṃ tatra kāmeśvarī sthitā | modinī tu cavargasthā ṭavarge vimalā smṛtā / aruṇā tu tavargasthā pavarge jayinī tathā | sarveśvarī yavarge tu śavarge kaulinīti ca | etā vargāṣṭake samyag aṣṭāv eva hi devatāḥ | arcitāḥ puruṣasyāśu prakurvanti vaśaṃ jagat | Nityāṣoḍaśikārṇava* 1.82-86.

[151] *tatraiva saṃsthito rājā sarvaśatruinikṛntanaḥ |* [...] *yasmin siṃhāsane pūrvaṃ balidānaṃ na cārpitaṃ | tenaiva pāpadoṣeṇābādhayat sarvamaṅḍalam | siṃhāsanopaveśe 'pi rājño nidrātidurghaṭā | āsīd svajanacitteṣu bhaktir na viṣamā śubhā | anye'pi bahavotpātāś cābhavan rājasadmani | ta eva sarva utpātāḥ kṣaṇān naṣṭā dvijottama |* [...] *sthāpayitvābhiṣekāya mayā rājopaveśitaḥ | tatrāṣṭau kalaśā dikṣu sthāpitā ratnapūritāḥ |* [...] *pallavaiḥ pañcabhir yuktāḥ raktakauśeyasaṃyutāḥ | vitānair hemacitrāḍhyaiḥ śobhite rājamaṇḍape | dhūpadīpādisaṃyukte puṣpajātivirājite | vāgdevatāsvarūpābhiḥ saśivābhis tu śaktibhiḥ | dhṛtā hasteṣu kalaśā śivarājābhiṣecane | pṛthurājaṃ yathā sarvā mahānadyaś ca sāgarāḥ | svarūpeṇābhiṣekārtham āgatās tadvad atra hi | abhiṣiktaḥ śaktibhis tu vaśinyādibhir āditaḥ | tato madhyasthitenātha kalaśena śivāmbhasā | rājarājeśvarī vidyā yasya toye pratiṣṭhitā | pītāmbarā mahāvidyā brahmāstraṃ yat prakīrtitaṃ | sāpi tasmin ghaṭe vipra mayaiva supratiṣṭhitā | daśavidyāmayais toyais śivarājakṣitīśvaraṃ | abhyaṣiñcam ahaṃ tatra śivacchatrapatiṃ nṛpa | devatāsannidhau tasya sundarī jagadambikā | sannidhau pūrvam āsīd yā sedānīṃ prakaṭābhavat |* Śrīśivarājyābhiṣekakalpataru, pp. 37-38.

He was given the *mantra* known as Rājarājeśvarī (also an important Deccan clan-goddess) to recite.

Then the courtiers attending the ceremony were asked to leave while auspicious mantras were installed on the king's body (*nyāsa*) to the accompaniment of music and the chanting of *sāmans*. The king and his courtiers adorned new clothes. Wearing new robes, the King appeared like a supreme sovereign (*rājarāja ivābabhau*). He made an offering of a heap of rice to propitiate the mountain of Raigaḍ and its deities.[152] After this point the text becomes corrupt. It appears that Niścala recited a passage to the King in which the goddess is described, among other things, as the cause subjecting the three worlds (t*railokyavaśakāriṇīṃ/ trailokye vaśyakāriṇīṃ*), the embodiment of the three syllables (*akṣaratrayarūpāṃ*) and gave him the *mūlamantra* of the Tripurā cult (*aiṃ hrīṃ sauḥ*) to chant[153]: these, the mention of the eight Vāk deities, along with the name Sundarī being given to the goddess earlier indicate that the procedure of the coronation was mainly drawn from the cult of Tripurasundarī/ Tripurā.

After this, the King departed to feast. On his return, the officiant made him ascend the lion-throne hailed by cries of 'Victory' from the audience. He empowered the throne with the mantras of the ten Vidyās. Through their power, a mighty splendour filled the throne-room. The Śaktis held lamps in their hands and lustrated the king, who shone like Brahmā. Thus was the ceremony concluded.

Several features contrasting with the Vedic coronation emerge in the rite chief of which were the importance of placating *ugra* deities through sanguinary offering, the worship of deities in a *yantra* and the importance of women in the

[152] *samīpe saṃsthitāḥ sarve rājñā dūrīkṛtās tadā | dūrīkṛteṣu sarveṣu mahāmantraiḥ śubhapradaiḥ | vādyamāneṣu vādyeṣu ḍiṇḍimādiṣu saṃsadi | gīyamāneṣu sāmeṣu brāhmaṇair vedapāragaiḥ | etasminn anantare rājasevakāḥ samupasthitāḥ | aṅgaproñchanavastrāṇi gṛhītvā rājaśāsanāt | sūkṣmavastreṇottamāṅgaṃ saṃveṣṭya pṛthivīpatiḥ |* [...] *paridhāya suvāsāṃsi rājarāja ivābabhau | tadāham abruvaṃ vipra rājan siddhānnaparvataṃ | samagrayā dṛśā paśya parvatāya nivedaya | atratyā devatāḥ sarvās tṛpyantv annamayādriṇā | tad annaṃ balimantreṇa parvatāya niveditaṃ | tena santoṣam āpanno rāirī nāma parvataḥ |* [...] *avadaṃ bhojanaṃ kṛtvā jhaṭity āgamanaṃ kuru | iti madvacanam śrūtvā rājā gṛham athāgamat |* [...] *tatra bhuktvā †mahotsāhakārakān naṭ yathāruci | ājagāma mudā yukto nṛpo rājasabhāṃ prati | śivarājaṃ tato dṛṣṭvā janāḥ prāpuḥ parāṃ mudaṃ | jayaśabdai +++ bandinaḥ stutivādinaḥ |* [...] *mayā śivamahīgoptā samārūḍho mahāsanaṃ / tadā daśamahāvidyā mantraś ca janarakṣaṇaṃ | siṃhāsane bhavarūpaṃ mantrarūpaṃ mahīpateḥ | tatkṣaṇe mahatī śobhā nānubhūtā purā janaiḥ | abhavat tādṛśī vipra mahāvidyāprabhāvataḥ | śaktibhir dīpahastābhiḥ kṛtakautukamaṅgalaḥ | siṃhāsane sthito bhūpa śuśubhe padmabhūr iva |* Ibid. pp. 38-39.

[153] The *mantroddhāra* is as follows: *dāmodara* [...] *yukta ādyavāgbījam īritaṃ | vidhir vāsavaśāntīnduyuktaḥ kāmābhidaṃ paraṃ | saṃkarṣaṇo visargṭārthoṭ +++ ttīṃ yamīritaṃ | tribījā gaditā bālā jagattritayamohinī | dakṣiṇāmūrtipaktī ca muniś chandaḥ kramāt smṛtaṃ | devatā tripurā bālā madhyānte śaktibījake |* Ibid. p. 39.

abhiṣeka. But the most notable significance of the Tantric coronation was that it invested the king's person with the power of goddesses whereas the Vedic coronation had invested him with the *devāṃśa* of Indra and the male divinities of the Vedic pantheon. The event thus shows that, parallel to the employment of Brahminical ritual emphasising masculine divinities in the consecration of kings, goddesses were employed by traditionally Śakti-worshipping courts as more powerful agents for the ritual substantiation of sovereignty.

2.3 Narratives of Kingship derived from Clan-Goddesses

Apart from coronations and other court-rituals, a king's power and right to rule were also reinforced by narratives asserting his divine connections. These were crucial accessories in the formation of a royal cult centred on the king, for, they articulated and mythicized royal identity. A significant number of such narratives of kingship presented ruling lineages as having been sanctified by a female-divinity. Such narratives explained the divinity of the ruler, why the worship of the clan goddess, the source of divinity, was inherited by one generation from the older and why she ought to be preserved by the family at all costs. Claims of a clan-goddess's connection to the royal family were made in two ways: either she was the ancestor of the royal family, or the divine appointer of kingship. I shall now examine the mythologies presenting these claims.

The first claim was was made in certain warrior-genealogies (*vaṃśāvalīs)* appearing from the 12th century. Several chapters in the *Sahyādrikhaṇḍa* (27-35)[154] for instance, a scriptural "ancillary/portion" from the 12th -13th centuries[155] claiming to be from the *Skandapurāṇa,* tabulate *kuladevī*-derived *kṣatriya* lineages, twelve in the Aikṣvāku line and seventy-seven in the Aila (see Figures 1 and 2). As is standard in Purāṇic scripture, the work explains the derivation with a myth.

Verses 1-12 of Chapter 27 describe, in the usual manner of Purāṇic genealo-

[154]The existence of this section of the work was first pointed out to me by Professor Sanderson in a personal communication in April 2010.

[155]A period between the two centuries may be hypothesized as the time of composition given that the general emergence of the *khaṇḍa*s of the *Skandapurāṇa* is held to be from the twelfth century onwards and a citation from the *Sahyādrikhaṇḍa* appears in Hemādri's *Caturvargacintāmaṇi* (Part I, pp. 718 ff and Part III, p. 306), a work from the latter part of the thirteenth century.The general period of the *Skandapurāṇa* is situated by the editors of the Groningen edition between the 6th and the 8th centuries in the Introduction to the Critical Edition of Chapters 1-25. The editors, Bakker, Isaacson and Adriaensen locate an early 'core' of the text to which were added newly composed texts styled as *khaṇḍa*s from the 12th century onwards. By the time of the *Caturvargacintāmaṇi* in the 1270s, the *Sahyādrikhaṇḍa* along with six other *khaṇḍa*s 'had gained enough respectability to be used'. (*The Skandapurāṇa,* Vol. I, p. 10).

gies, the direct descendants of the Aikṣvāku/Solar Line. In verse 12, the direct line suddenly ends with King Aśvapati. Since he was childless the Solar line terminated. Now a separate myth explaining goddesses as ancestors is worked in. Having obtained the consensus of the Ṛṣis, Aśvapati performed a *putreṣṭi* to beget a son and gave his entire property as payment to brahmins. Pleased by his worship, Nārāyaṇa advised him to propitiate Bhṛgu. When propitiated by him, Bhṛgu deliberated that if he disregarded the [Twelve] Rṣis and gave a boon to the king, they would be angered. Thus he bestowed on these seers twelve mantras.[156] These were syllabic embodiments of goddesses,[157] and this is further confirmed by the list of mantra-goddesses that follow. The text describes these mantra-goddesses to have manifested their power in conjunction with the *ṛṣi*s.[158] When uttered in the mouths of the seers, they bestowed all desires (*sarvakāmaphalapradāḥ*)[159], and magically re-proliferated the kings of the dead lineage.[160] They are also the *kuladevī*s of these lineages.

On the origin of the Aila/lunar line, something almost identical is described. Verses 6-12 of Chapter 30, describe the direct descendants of Ilā, said to have sprung from the flame emitted from the eye of the seer Atri. But the direct line ends with a king Kāmapati. Like Aśvapati in the Solar line, he too performed a *putreṣṭi* and propitiated Nārāyaṇa. The deity ensured the continuance of the Lunar line, not through the king, but through the magical powers of several mantra-goddesses, who produced kings when enunciated by seers.[161] In this way the *vaṃśāvalī* conceptualizes *kuladevī*s as one of the origins of royalty.

Attesting to its great popularity at the time, the same belief was proudly proclaimed in other non-scriptural genealogies, contemporary with, or dating shortly after, the *Sahyādrikhaṇḍa*, which explained the rise of several important Śakti-worshipping Rajputs. In the origin-myth of the Jajjapella (Yajvapāla) Rajputs of Narwar, their first king Jayapāla was said to have been created by

[156] *Sahyādrikhaṇḍa* 27.12-17

[157] Indicated in the line *munipraṇītā mantrās te teṣāṃ vai devatā śṛṇu* | Ibid. 27.20cd.

[158] *te mantrā ṛṣisaṃyuktā mantrabījasya devatāḥ* | Ibid. 30.26ab.

[159] *te mantrā ṛṣivaktrotthāḥ sarvakāmaphalapradāḥ* | Ibid. 27.17cd

[160] Ibid. 27.12-17. That the text conceives of the mantras as being generative is indicated in another tale found in Chapter 32 regarding the power of mantras chanted by holy men. In this tale (ibid. 32.28-30), a childless king performed a sacrifice to get an heir and fed his elder wife a portion of the sacrificial offering empowered by mantras recited by the officiating seers. Concerning these mantras the text extols:

ṛṣivākyān mantraliṅgāt putraḥ samabhavat kila | Ibid. 32.30 cd

"It is well known that a son was born from the utterance of the seer [that] bore the mark of a mantra)."

In accordance with this conception, a *kuladevī*-lineage (ibid. 33.15cd) is also described as "born from the mantras of those [seers]" (*tasya mantrodbhavo*).

[161] Ibid. 30.23-27ab

the goddess Mahāruṇḍā (*nirmito mahāruṇḍayā*), who instated this king as the ruler of the first seat of the Jajjapellas, a mountain called Ratnagiri. This myth is recorded in an important inscription commissioned by the lineage in 1282 CE.[162] Similarly in the origin-myths of the Agnikula Rajputs and the Rathores, all Śakti-worshipping *kṣatriya* clans, clan goddesses were closely associated with dynastic origination. Even if not presented as the direct ancestors, these goddesses are described in the origin-myth of these Rajput dynasties to have appeared at the birth of their first kings and to have played a protective, fostering role.[163] Since these kings had no human parents as they were all supernaturally born, the myths present these goddesses as the ancestors. In the case of the Rathores, their clan-goddess Rāṣṭraśyenā, also called Lātanā, is presented as the transporter of the first Rathore, a divine child called Rāṣṭroḍha, to the world of men. She requested the infant Rāṣṭroḍha from Śiva and Kātyāyanī (his initial protectors), for the sake of an heirless king of Kanyakubja called Nārāyaṇa, and then descending to earth, gave this king the first Rathore as his heir.[164] The *Sahyādrikhaṇḍa* was therefore not the sole witness of the belief that a *kṣatriya* king was delivered to earth by a goddess, but one among many indigenous traditions asserting divine ancestry from a Śakti.

Its importance was that it was one of the earliest examples of Purāṇic literature to accomodate the belief in Śākti-derived kingship within the appropriate Brahminical conventions concerning *kṣatriya* identity. For, its story that a *kṣatriya* line had originated from its clan-goddess was unattested by the classical myth of *kṣatriya* origination described in more ancient and more authoritative examples of Brahminical literature. The canonical Brahminical genealogies before the *Sahyādrikhaṇḍa*, described in early Purāṇic and epic sources, do not mention clan-goddesses as ancestors when cataloguing the descent of kings.[165] These viewed Indian monarchical clans as descendants of one of two lines, Aikṣvāku (Solar) and Aila (Lunar), beginning from a mythical progenitor Manu-Vaivasvata.[166] Following this early Purāṇic model of ancestry, the Solar or the Lunar adherence of a king was asserted in most early-medieval and medieval inscriptions and official genealogies. By adding the story of the clan-goddess,

[162] EI 33.4.2, ll. 4-5. Although Sircar, editor of the inscription, points out in a note that "Mahā" in "Mahāruṃḍayā" can also be read as "Sadāśivo", the supporting text in the inscription (photograph, ibid. page facing p. 41) cannot be read as anything other than "Mahāruṃḍayā". This is quite legible.

[163] For the origin myth of the Agnikula Rajputs, see p.50.

[164] *Rāṣṭrauḍhavaṃśamahākāvya* 24-26 cited in Reu 1933, p. 13, n. 1.

[165] Pargiter 1910; Pargiter 1922, pp. 84-125.

[166] Pargiter 1910 p. 16 ff.; Pargiter 1922, pp. 84-119.

it is therefore obvious that the transmitter/s of the *Sahyādrikhaṇḍa* genealogy had remodelled the conventional myth of the Solar-Lunar lines. Genealogical tampering was commonplace among the bardic transmitters of Purāṇas[167], and in the case of the *Sahyādrikhaṇḍa* genealogy, the tampering was done, it seems, to accomodate the sectarian claims of powerful Śākta warrior lineages such as the *kṣatriya* Rajputs, whose beliefs concerning their ancestry from clan goddesses had been thus-far uncanonized by the Brahminical tradition. It is owing to the widening pool of such *kṣatriya* lineages rising to power around the 12th century, and the concomitant strengthening of the conception that true *kṣatriya*s were necessarily *devībhakta*s, that newer genealogies like the one in the *Sahyādrikhaṇḍa* were composed, in order to incorporate the idea of *kuladevī*s from indigenous narrative traditions and to make it a salient feature of the Brahminical conception of the warrior.

Providing a further reason for the *Sahyādrikhaṇḍa*'s forced[168] but necessary inclusion is the regional importance of the goddesses mentioned in the list. Many of the *kuladevī*s in the *Sahyādrikhaṇḍa vaṃśāvalī* still command flourishing local cults –Śilā is the *kuladevī* of the Amber *mahārāja*s, Tvaritā is another name for Tuḷjā Bhavānī of Tuḷjāpur; Kāmākṣī is one of the most important Southern goddesses located at Kāñcīpuram; Reṇukā, Mahālakṣmī and Jagadambā are the deities of Mahur, Kolhapur and Saptashringi in Maharashtra, and, along with Tuḷjā, the four most important Śaktis of the region. Mahālakṣmī's great status in the mediaeval period is confirmed in a Cālukya inscription of Vikramāditya VI where she is referred as the governor of Soraṭūr.[169] Many of these deities are to be found in the Sahyādri region itself and were possibly well-known to the transmitters of the list.

To regard *kuladevī*s as the progenitors of the race, though popular, was however not a ubiquitous tradition.[170] Rather than having generated the first king as in the myth of origin in the *Sahyādrikhaṇḍa,* other traditions of *kuladevī*-

[167] Witzel 1990, pp. 3-4.

[168] Certain structural signs betray that the transmitters were hard-pressed in finding suitable narrative motifs to make the two dynastic schemes fit. The employment of an identical motif– the childless king– in both the Solar and the Lunar legends to explain why the *kuladevī* lineages arose in both lines strikes me as evidence of tampering– it is employed to forcefully establish continuity between the narratives. Rendering the motif additionally suspicious is the way the names of the kings mirror each other, perhaps rather too conveniently (Aśvapati, Kāmapati). Confusion in genealogies considered spurious also appears for instance in the Yādava dynasty in the *Harivaṃśa*, discussed in Pargiter 1922, p. 122.

[169] SII 15.2.10

[170] One need only to look at lineages such as the Kadambas of Bānavasi who claimed to descend from a mythical man, rather than a goddess Moraes 1931, p. 8.

myths, primarily in the vernaculars claimed that a clan-goddess, had appointed the first king-to-be to power. These kings were not supernaturally conceived but born in the usual way to men and women on earth. They are therefore conceptualized by the vernacular traditions as ordinary people, who are singled out for kingship by a female divinity. Flowering particularly after the 15th century with the rise of regional kingdoms promoting the vernaculars, such legends were used by these kingdoms as histories explaining how they had risen from obscurity. The Rajput narratives fostered by the strong cultures of the Rajasthani kingdoms were particularly robust in the period, but equally so were the narrative traditions of newly developing Eastern kingdoms such as Kāmatā (Cooch-Behar) and Cachar. It was in these traditions that the symbolism of Śakti emerged as a major theme in the narratives explaining state-formation. We have already encountered Tuḷjā's chronicles. I will now examine further legends of state-formation with particular attention to the myth connected to the kingdom of Kāmatā.

The legend described in the Bengali *Gosānīmaṅgal* chronicles the history of the Koch kings, formerly of Tibeto-Burmese stock, sovereigns from the 15th century of the vast kingdom of Kāmatā. At its height its area covered modern Cooch Bihar (Northern West Bengal), Kāmarūpa and Darrang districts of Assam, northern Mymensingh in Bangladesh.[171] In the legend Gosānī-Kāmateśvarī, the clan-goddess of the Koches[172] plays a central role in its foundation. The Koches were staunch supporters of Gosānī-Kāmateśvarī to whom one of their kings, Prāṇanārāyaṇa dedicated a shrine in Gosānīmārī in Cooch-Bihar in 1665 AD, a date indicated in the inscription attached to the temple.[173] The *Gosānīmaṅgal* composed possibly in the early nineteenth century by Rādhākṛṣṇa Dāsa Vairāgī, but emulating the older style of the medieval Bengali *maṅgalkāvya* genre, retells what appears at its core to have been a late-15th century legend.[174] The end was clearly added after the attack of the Muslims in 1493 century, for it describes the invasion of Kāmatā by the Pathans. It discusses the rise and fall of Kāmateśvara (Bengali: Kānteśvara), the mythical first king of the lineage. He is said to have been presided over by Caṇḍī (*caṇḍī jār pṛṣṭhopar*) manifested as the clan-deity Gosānī-Kāmateśvarī. The story can be summarized as follows:

[171] ACDITWB, A.K. Bhattacharya 1982, p. 94, n. 19; Ahmed 1936.
[172] Ahmed 1936 pp. 40-47 is a summary in Bengali of the history of the goddess as a Koch deity.
[173] ACDIWB Inscription 37, p. 94.
[174] ACDITWB, A.K. Bhattacharya 1982, p. 94, n. 19.

In a village called Jāmbāḍī in Kāmatā, where there was no king, Śiva and Pārvatī were conversing underneath a *śrīphala* tree. Śiva announced his pleasure at the devotion exhibited by the inhabitants of that land. Then Caṇḍī-Pārvatī prophesied that there would be a king called Kānteśvara to rule over that country.

A *kṣatriya* woman in the village called Aṅganā was urged by a divine voice to worship Caṇḍī. That night the goddess appeared to her and sitting by her head, showed her a dream where she prophesied the birth of a son who would be king. The next day the woman and her husband Bhaktīśvara worshipped Caṇḍī with various fragrant flowers, victuals, incense, lamps, unguents and hymns. Caṇḍī appeared to them in a vase (*ghaṭa*) pleased at their devotion, and the woman asked from her the boon of a son. In a few days Aṅganā fell pregnant and on the auspicious day delivered a son, whose splendour filled the room and whose beauty surpassed Kandarpa's. He was called Kāntanātha (Sanskrit: Kāmatānātha). At the age of five he began his education in Bengali, Sanskrit, grammar, poetry, *śāstra*, the Tantras and politics. Under instructions from Caṇḍī, a group of *yoginī*s disguised as village women dressed him in celestial ornaments and robes befitting a king. On the sudden death of Bhaktīśvara, Aṅganā and the boy-king were left destitute. A *brāhmaṇa* employed Kāntanātha as his cattle-herder but in this task he proved to be negligent, taking recourse to naps on more than one occasion, while the cows roamed elsewhere. To protect him from the heat of the sun as he slept, Caṇḍī the divine architect of this narrative, watching from heaven, caused her attendant Padmā to send two snakes to cast their hoods over his head. One day the brāhmaṇa stumbled upon this miraculous sight and catching sight of the royal marks on the boy's body recognized him as a king-to-be. From that day on, the boy gave up cow-herding and remained in the brāhmaṇa's household, having made him the promise of appointing him the royal preceptor (*rājaguru*) on his ascension to the throne.

One day Caṇḍī showed Kānteśvara a dream while sitting near his head. She prophesied that he was to undergo a trial in order to prove his mettle, although the kingdom was assuredly to be his. The king was asked to take a bath in a lake called Kājilī Kuḍā where he would witness three horrific creatures: first a makara, then a crocodile and finally a snake. If he caught hold of the makara, his lineage would flourish for all time, if the crocodile, his lineage would expand greatly but were he to hold the snake, his dynasty would die. Accordingly he followed Caṇḍī's instructions and saw the three terrible visions in the water of the lake. But he was too frightened to catch hold of either the *makara* or the crocodile, and instead touched the snake, whereupon, the snake turned into the goddess, who cast a curse on his lineage. The distraught king offered Caṇḍī a hymn,

and she gently warned him to follow her advice in the future at all times to ensure his success. Thereafter she ordered Viśvakarman the heavenly architect to build a commodious citadel and a palace inside it for the king, with a shrine to Caṇḍī and various other gods; and caused him to place therein a splendid lion-throne. It was all of silver, with four lions whose eyes were jewels. On it was placed a seat surmounted by a silver figure of a snake spreading its hood, in an evocation of the snake sent by Caṇḍī to shield him from the sun. The palace was furnished with a wide array of weapons for the king's use and was completed in the course of a single night. In a dream Caṇḍī granted him kingship and gave him the new title of Kānteśvara (Sanskrit: Kāmateśvara, King of Kāmatā), and in dreams to all the citizens of that land, informed them of their new king's investiture to power. The *abhiṣeka* rite having taken place on the fifth of Kārttika, Caṇḍīpūjā was promulgated in the land and a new coin issued with the name of the goddess Kāmateśvarī inscribed upon it.

Soon after a fisherman having cast his net in water and not obtained a catch, thought of the goddess and was gifted with a *śaula* fish in his net. But a kite flew off with it, which made the fisherman's wife laugh. Construing this as a sign of mockery, the fisherman started quarrelling with his wife. The quarrel was taken to the throne-room to settle. There the fisherman's wife while arguing her case recounted the history of Kāmatā to the king:

In the age of the Mahābhārata war, Bhagadatta, the ruler of Kāmatā, had aided the Kauravas in Kurukṣetra and was slain by Arjuna who had cut off his arm. On that arm, was tied a *kavaca* granted by Caṇḍī to the king. A kite carried the arm to Kāmatā where, having rested on a tree, it picked the flesh clean off the hand and left the arm with the *kavaca* intact under the tree. Recognizing the bird that had flown off with the fish as that very kite, the fisherman's wife had laughed out loud. Believing the woman's story, the king caused the roots of the tree, a *śīmūla*, to be dug and the goddess's *kavaca* was found in perfect condition. It was inscribed with the name Gosānī. Then, the king established the Gosānī-*kavaca*[175] in the temple of Caṇḍī in a throne shaped like a lion, and sacrificed countless goats and buffaloes in the goddess's honour. He established a fair for Gosānī and grew rich and content.

But the goddess's curse held strong, and misfortune followed. After a series of personal tragedies– the queen's affair with the royal minister's son and the defection of that minister to the Muslim nawabs of Bengal– the kingdom was invaded by the Muslims and the king

[175] According to Ahmed 1936, p. 42, the icon of the goddess in the temple was kept atop a box containing this same *kavaca*.

> taken prisoner. The *kavaca* of the *kuladevī* was hidden in the Kājilī Kuḍā lake by a priest. Eventually she informed the king in a heavenly voice where she was and asked him to join her in her subterranean home. The king entered the Kājilī Kuḍā lake to bathe and was magically transported to the goddess. The kingdom remained without a king for some time but soon the curse was lifted and a king of Śiva's stock ascended the throne. The worship of Gosānī began again. Lands were granted to support her worship. Countless animal-sacrifices were held in her honour. Through her grace, peace returned to the land.

Much in this tale is in common with contemporary vernacular accounts such as the legend of Raṇacaṇḍī, tutelary deity of the nearby kingdom of Cachar[176], Annapūrṇā's legend in the Bengali *Annadāmaṅgal*, Tuljā's legend, and also with stories of Rajput goddesses such as Āśāpūrī's. i) In all such chronicles a *kuladevī*'s character is conceived as a benevolent yet punitive Imperial patron (the patriarch-substitute). She appears by chance to disenfranchised men, and grants them success, guiding them throughout their careers with moral and political instruction.[177] Complementing her benevolent aspect, she also has an opposing dangerous side that can fly out of control easily ii) She grants the material substance of royalty (here jewels and clothes, the palace, the throne, the new coin; in others a sword[178] or a fortress[179]). iii) She often appears to the king in his dreams or when he is in a trance. The king is thereby presented not just as a ruler but as a conduit of the goddess. We remember of course how Śivājī presented himself occasionally in this role.[180] The *kuladevī* was thought not just to suffuse the outward spaces of the political realm, the palace and the kingdom, but also the spaces of the mind, the most internal and private. In this way a king's relationship with her is conceived as a particularly intense divine marriage, one that united goddess with king at the deepest level of being. In some legends (here and in Tuljā's), this interfusion is extended to the

[176] See p. 86.

[177] Just as in the *bakhar*, and the Kāmateśvarī-legend, the context of patronage is omnipresent in the myth of Aśāpūrī of the Cāhamānas, where, Aśāpūrī, protects and oversees the fledgeling king of the lineage, Iṣṭapāla from his initial stage of powerlessness to his final attainment of Aser, principle fort of the Cahāmānas (Tod 1829, vol II, p. 455). Similarly in Book III of the Śākta mediaeval narrative the *Annadāmaṅgal* by Bhāratcandra, the goddess Annapūrṇā guides the *zamindār* Bhavānanda Majumdar from petty chiefdom to eventual glory against the Muslims.

[178] Tuljā and Raṇacaṇḍī

[179] Āśāpūrī

[180] In *Annadāmaṅgal* Book III, the *kuladevī* Annapūrṇā frequently manifests herself in visions to a petty *zamindār* Bhavānanda during his war with the Mughals, engages in conversation with him and near his death shows him his past lives (*jātismara*), breaks the bonds (*māyājāla*) of transmigratory (*sāṃsāric*) existence and predicts the future of his kingdom.

city: the goddess communicates to all citizens in dreams. iv) Failed tests and their consequent ill-effects on the lineage that only the *kuladevī* is able to diminish are often included in the myths to explain the continued necessity of the goddess to the dynasty. The snake-in-water episode in Kāmateśvarī's tale appears as well in Raṇacaṇḍī's myth. v) The clan goddess is cast as a warrior mirroring Durgā[181] or evoked through warrior/Tantric-talismans (such as the *kavaca* with Kāmateśvarī) vi) She is both the cause of the state's growth and the symbol of the Imperialist aspirations of these kingdoms, who, if not as large as the great Empires of the early mediaeval period, nevertheless were eager to present themselves in the same mode. vii) If mediaeval kingdoms are thought to be located around a centre whence all power radiates, then all these tales are essentially about the symbolism of that centre. The centre is where both sacred and temporal power in their respective forms as goddess and king merge.

2.4 An assessment of early clan-goddesses

If the 12th-17th centuries marked a more expressive moment in the history of the *kuladevī* cults, our narratives for an earlier period are more reticent, for reasons discussed in the opening of this chapter. But certain exceptions from the 11th centuries do exist.

The 11th century indeed marked the appearance of *kuladevī*s in Sanskrit from behind their veil of secrecy (appearances in the earlier Bāṇa and Bhavabhūti as we have seen tending to be merely oblique), a process attaining its most confident expression in the vernacular literature of the 15th-17th centuries. There were several important reasons for this. The appearance of these goddesses in literature owed a great deal to the learned Śaiva-Śākta discourse that flourished in Tantric circles in the centuries preceding this period, particularly in the east under the Pālas.[182] Additionally with the corresponding refinement of mainstream Śākta narratives such as the Durgā-myths in Purāṇic literature from the 8th century onwards, it became acceptable–to an extent– within Brahmanism to worship goddesses openly with such hitherto 'suspect' offerings like alcohol and *paśubali*, at certain times of the year, for they were openly endorsed

[181] Āśāpūrī appears as Śaktidevī on her lion, holding in her hand the trident characteristic of Mahiṣāsuramardinī. In this manner she descended at the time that the Cāhamāna king was born from the fire pit on Mount Arbuda and promised to hear his prayers at all times while he battled demons (Tod 1829, vol I, 'The Rajpoot Tribes', p. 80).

[182] Sanderson 2009 pp. 173-179.

by the Purāṇic myths.

Let us now move to this period and try to locate individual cults that flourished in India. I shall also see if the rituals whereby these goddesses were worshipped can be reconstructed in order for us to understand how the relationship between clan-deity and king was expressed and made real in observable practice. The royal rituals expressed how power was conceptualized in the mediaeval world. It is therefore necessary to analyse their processes in order to gain a key insight into why the cults of the royal goddesses were important to the king.

2.4.1 Kaṇṭeśvarī of the Calukyas

An early example of a royal *kuladevī* for whom ample testimonia is available is furnished by Kaṇṭeśvarī[183], lineage-goddess (*gotradevī*) of the Western-Caulukya king Kumārapāla[184] (1149 Vikrama Saṃvat/1093 AD- 1230 VS/1174 AD). The court of this king was located at Aṇahilapura (modern day Pāṭan) in Gujarat.

The king's belief that forms of Śakti were responsible for his victories in battle was something he proudly made public in his inscriptions. We have already encountered how he had ritually gifted the head of his slain rival to Caṇḍī in the very beginning.[185] A further verse in that inscription, tells us, while eulogising the king's merits, that "war [for him] was a delightful carnival, for his enemies, [however] many, were crushed by a multitude of goddesses" (*devīmaṇḍala*).[186]

Information concerning one clan-goddess, Kaṇṭeśvarī is given in two histories of Kumārapāla in Sanskrit, *Kumārapāladevacarita* by Somadevasūrī and the *Kumārapālaprabodhaprabandha* by an anonymous author.[187] These state that Kumārapāla worshipped Kaṇṭeśvarī and other goddesses in the bright half Āśvina according to family tradition.[188] Both legends thematically deal with tensions caused in religious policy by Kumārapāla's prohibition of animal-slaughter (*amārī*) promulgated after his espousal of Jainism in 1216 VS=1160 CE,[189] and the requirement that Kaṇṭeśvarī was to be propitiated only by an-

[183] This clan-goddess was first brought to my attention by Sanderson 2009, pp. 246-247 and n. 575.
[184] *devī kaṇṭeśvarī gotradevī svaṃ bhāvyam īhate | Kumārapāladevacarita*, 387c-388b.
[185] See p. 8.
[186] *devīmaṇḍalakhaṇḍitākhilaripor yuddhaṃ vinodotsavaḥ* | EI 1.34, v.15 cd
[187] Published in the *Kumārapālacaritrasaṃgraha*, pp. 21, vv 387-397; pp. 94-95, Chapter 75.
[188] *āśvinaśuklapakṣo 'gāt | tatra kaṇṭeśvaryādidevatānām arcakair vijñaptam* [...] | Ibid. p. 75.
[189] The King was converted to Jainism by the ascetic Hemacandra Sūri, who quickly became

imal sacrifice. It is in this context that the importance of the goddess to the king is revealed, so much so that even in a case where Śākta worship conflicted with the official state religion, Kaṇṭeśvarī was nevertheless propitiated, despite all odds. For when she was not, the fury of the goddess is described by these sources as being dire, while great efforts were made to negotiate a balance that would be acceptable to the *kuladevī*.

In the legend it is said that after the promulgation of non-violence, Kaṇṭeśvarī became desirous of her dues on the occasion of Navarātra in the bright half of Āśvina. While according to Somadevasūri, she is said to crave 'a hundred goats and one buffalo on the First (of Āśvina), double the amount on the Second (Dvitīya), triple on the Third (Tṛtīya) and nine-times the amount on the Ninth (Navamī)' [Verse 387], the *Kumārapālaprabodhaprabandha* claims she asked for a hundred and seven beasts and seven buffaloes on the Seventh, a hundred and eight on the Eighth (Aṣṭamī) and hundred and nine on the Ninth (Navamī). This request left the Jaina king in a quandary. At first it is said in one source that Kaṇṭeśvarī was worshipped without *paśubali,* with a *sāman* and then with further Tantric rites performed by Hemacandra, the King's Jaina preceptor, but at one time, dissatisfied by substitutes, she still asked for a 'meal of pleasing flesh' (*cāṭumāṃsāhāram*). Torn between his devotion to Kaṇṭeśvarī whom he could not refuse at a time of the year most sacred to her, and his recent conversion to non-violence, the king nevertheless decided to go ahead with the Navarātra animal offerings, for his clan-goddess's desire was not to be rebuffed. However, in order that he would not infract the Jaina law, he arranged for the animals to be kept alive in the goddesses's shrine, instead of their customary sacrifice, in the hope that the deity would still be propitiated by this symbolic gesture in lieu of blood-shed. But the legends go on to state that this was not the case. Such was the goddess's wrath at this mere token of real blood, and the defilements caused by the animals, that in the second source she is said to appear before the king at midnight and striking him on the head with her trident, caused tumours of leprosy to befoul his entire body. The king summoned his minister and declared he would commit suicide, rather than continue in the horns of a dilemma. The minister solicited the counsel of Hemacandra, who through mantras restored the king to wholeness. The Jaina author of this legend now asserts the power of his faith over the *kuladevī*, for Hemacandra, his appeal to the goddess to accept vegetarian offerings having fallen on deaf ears,

his advisor on religious matters and influenced the king's decision to impose the mandate on non-violence. (*Kumārapālacaritrasaṃgraha*, p.18).

is said to have captured and imprisoned Kaṇṭeśvarī in a mantra *(kaṇṭeśvarīṃ mantrayantritāṃ)*. The lamenting goddess was freed once a promise of adhering to non-violence is extracted. Thereafter she is described as promoting the cause of Jainism, reporting to the king in dreams such acts of violence as the killing of a louse and a she-goat.[190] Persons guilty were duly punished.

Both legends thus end in a manner that conforms to Jaina ideology.[191] This is predictable enough. However, what appears significant is that goddess-worship, purged of animal-sacrifice to accomodate Jaina beliefs, continued in Kumārapāla's kingdom and indeed Kaṇṭeśvarī, rather than being rebuffed by the newly converted king, is shown to significantly manifest her power upon the juridical functions of the state, albeit through decisions in line with Jainism. This tells us something crucial about the degree of importance granted to *kuladevī*s by Indic culture: their cult flourished even if it contravened, however radically, the king's adopted faith.

What was the procedure of their worship in this period? Although the daily method of worshipping deities like Kaṇṭeśvarī was best known only by the lineage, some idea of the methods of propitiation for special purposes emerge from the Jaina *kāvya Tilakamañjarī* (10th-11th c). As inferrable from this work, the *pūjā* of the *kuladevī* by the king for a specific purpose, such as obtaining a son, was a simple affair: at dawn he would have proceeded with his courtiers directly to the palace shrine after the completion of his bath and his worship at the juncture (*saṃdhyopāsanakṛtyam*), adorned in new clothes and ritually sprinkle (*abhiṣeka*) the image, bedecked and anointed with her jewels and unguents, with consecrated water from gold pots. Perhaps this would have been completed with offering incense to the deity and the respectful chanting of hymns or the recitation of *mantra*s.[192] However it is the *kuladevī*'s *pratiṣṭhā* (installation) rites which are better known to us from later Jaina literature. One work in particular, normative in nature, offers us a rare glimpse of the precise operations of a mediaeval clan-goddess's rituals, those that would have been certainly prevalent in the Jālandhara area, the locus of its composition. The *Ācāradinakara*[193] of Vardhamānasūri prescribes an installation rite for god-

[190] K*umārapālaprabodha*, Chapters 77 and 85, pp. 95, 100

[191] For a detailed account of the Jaina accomodation of Tantric goddesses see Sanderson 2009, pp. 246-247.

[192] *Tilakamañjarī* pp. 33-35.

[193] In a personal communication of November 2010 Professor Sanderson clarified in considerable detail several issues including the context and date of the author of the *Ācāradinakara*, and the distinction made by him between the three groups of goddesses classified in the work as *kuladevī*s, *prāsādadevī*s and *āgamadevī*s. This exchange, including his translation of an

desses, specifying *kuladevī*s and *prāsādadevī*s (temple/palace goddesses) among them. First a *śāntika* rite passifying the planets and a *pauṣṭika* to bring about prosperity is taught for the sake of the sponsor. Having completed preliminary purificatory rituals of bathing, the officiant should clean and prepare the ground, install the *pañcaratna*s and install a lineage-seat (*kulapīṭha*) of wood from the Nauclea Cadamba placing on top the immovable image of the goddess used in the palace (*sthiraprāsādadevīpratimāṃ*). Next victuals are offered to the image with *mantra*s. Then after further rituals, he must ritually install the protective ancillary mantras on himself and the sponsors of the rite. After offering hymns with flowers, he must then form the *maṇḍala* of Bhagavatī in front of the palace-goddess's image. Having drawn a six sided *cakra*, in its centre he must either draw, install as a figure or visualize Bhagavatī with a thousand arms, holding various weapons, adorned in white and borne by a lion. The clan-goddess and the image of Bhagavatī-Durgā-Siṃhavāhinī are thereby ritually made cognate. Then *mantra*s are invoked in each direction to different goddesses, and a circle with eight petals is drawn. Further *mantra*s to are infused in the *maṇḍala* beginning from the right-side of the central Bhagavatī. The procedure is repeated until 64 goddesses forming Bhagavatī's retinue are installed. Then a further circle with petals is drawn and 52 male attendant deities are instated. Having made a penultimate circuit ringed with eight Bhairavas, a final ring is added and a collective offering is made to all the deities. Next are installed the ten *dikpāla*s and finally the ten planets. Outside this ring, the officiant must make four *bhūmīpura*s and install Gaṅeśa, Ambā, Kārttikeya, Yamunā, the Kṣetrapālas, Mahābhairava, his teacher and Gaṅgā therein. Having thus installed the Bhagavatī-*maṇḍala*, he must next worship it by summoning the deities and propitiating them with offerings, *mantra*s and oblations (*homa*s) offered in a triangular *kuṇḍa*. Then at the ritually appointed hour he must empower fragrant substances with *mantra*s and offer them to the goddess. Then taking clothes he must worship all the people assembled at the ritual and then sprinkle the goddess with five types of consecrated water from vases and offer her three types of unguents. He must then offer her various feminine embellishments.[194] The rite is then concluded.

important passage in *Ācāradinakara*, vol 2, fol. 209b that has been referred to previously (see n. 119 on page 54), was of considerable benefit to the present research.

[194] *Ācāradinakara* vol. 2, pp. 206-209b.

2.4.2 Danteśvarī/Dantāvalā of the Bastar Raj

The dense forest-tracts of Chattisgarh formed in the mediaeval period a hub for prolific temple-building activity. Chief among the temples falling in the subdivision of Bastar was Danteśvarī's. Danteśvarī[195] is the *kuladevī* of the ruling family of the largely tribal Bastari kingdom (presently in Chattisgarh). The cult of this deity emerges in the light of history in the 11th century, for she is named by a number of Bastar inscriptions commissioned by members of the ruling Nāgavaṃśin Chindaka lineage. Hers appears to have been a prominent court-cult at the heart of a powerful kingdom known as Cakrakūṭa that fell inside the Southern Kosala lands. Such was its autonomy that during the 12th century Cakrakūṭa waged war on neighbouring Vengi.[196] In the inscriptions left behind by two of Cakrakūṭa's rulers– Jagadekabhūṣaṇa-Dhārāvarṣa and his son Someśvara I–this goddess is specified as the object of royal reverence.[197] She is mentioned in these inscriptions under her archaic appellation Māṇikyadevī.[198] The dedication of the second king Someśvara I to the cult of Śakti appears to have been even stronger. In his Kuruspal inscription of 1019 Śaka Yar (1097 CE) recorded late in his reign, he asserts that he had acquired sovereignty of Cakrakūṭa through the grace of Vindhyavāsinī, the form of Durgā Mānikyadevī must have been associated with.[199]

After the Nāgavaṃśins, Bastar was ruled by a lineage calling themselves

[195] This deity was also first brought to my attention by Professor Sanderson in a personal communication in April 2010.

[196] For a history of the Nāgas of Bastar see Sharma 2001. For the Chindaka Nāgas of Cakrakūṭa see ibid. pp. 159-165. For the burning of Vengi by Someśvara I see Kuruspal Inscription, EI 10.7 (text), EI 9.3, Sharma 2001 p. 163.

[197] The Bhairamgarh inscription Jagadekabhūṣaṇa-Dhārāvarṣa, describes the king as "a devotee of the celestial lotus-feet of Māṇikyadevī" *(śrīmāṇikyadevīdivyapādapadmārādhaka)* (EI 9.19, p. 164; SII 10.649, Sharma 2001, p. 162). The Nagpur inscription of his son, Someśvara I (Śaka 1030=1108 CE), also called Jagadekabhūṣaṇa, styles the king, almost exactly like his father, as *śrīmāṇikyadevīdivyaśrīpādapadmārādhaka* (EI 3.45, pp. 314-317; Sharma 2001, pp. 164-165). For problems with the original date inscribed on this inscription (Śaka 1130) see Hiralal's analysis in EI 9.19, p. 162. Someśvara came to power after 1065 AD, ousting the overthrower of his father Madhurāntaka; see Kuruspal Inscription EI 10.7; Sharma 2001, pp. 163-4.

[198] Danteśvarī's is identified as Māṇikyadevī by Hiralal, editor of the Bastar inscriptions in EI 9.19.5, p. 164 and EI 10.4, p. 27, on the basis of Elliot's Report on the Dependency of Bastar 1861, p. 13. Elliot's Report is cited by Hiralal in EI 10.4, p. 27, n. 7. Here Elliot says that the Bastar kings worshipped the goddess 'Mānkeshwarea' before they came to Bastar and when they arrived there, she assumed the name of ' Dunteshwaree' under which name she is still worshipped. Lal adds "My own belief is that with the change of the dynasty the old name of the goddess was changed and tbe Māṇikyadevī of the Nāgavaṃśins became the Danteśvarī of the present family" (ibid.).

[199] *śrīvindhyavāsinīdevyāḥ prasādāsāditacakrakūṭādhīśvarāṇāṃ* EI 10.7. ll. 5-6.; Sharma 2001 p. 163.

the Kākatīyas, as they claimed ancestral links with the proper Kākatīyas of Warangal,[200] under whose auspices the change in the goddess's name appears to have occured. The Kākatīyas of Bastar allege that Māṇikyadevī was their clan-goddess, who came with them, as they did, from Warangal. In this regard, the family legend makes the claim that the Bastar line descended from Annamarājā, the brother of the last king of the Waraṅgal Kākatīya line, who fled to Bastar from the Bahmani sultanate around 1435.[201] Popular belief holds that he was granted kingship by Māṇikyadevī and received from her a sword. The sword was used in his resistance of the Muslim occupation and was held to be the embodiment of the goddess.[202]

The legend also claims that their family had a long history even before Warangal, during which time the name of the *kuladevī* changed a number of times. Prior to their establishment in Bastar, the family claims its descent from Delhi where their *kuladevī*, known then as Dillīśvarī/Ḍillyeśvarī is said to have granted an arrow to Birbhadra, a legendary king in the line. The lineage thereafter moved to Mathurā where she became known as Bhuvaneśvarī and is said to have given the king a trident. The *kuladevī* subsequently shifted with the family to Orissa, and thence to Warangal as Māṇikyadevī. Eventually as Danteśvarī she came to Bastar.[203]

The main shrine of Danteśvarī is at Dantewada, at the confluence of the rivers Śaṅkhinī and Ḍaṅkhinī. The image of the goddess inside, seen by the epigraphist Hiralall in the colonial era, is an eight-armed Mahiṣāsuramardinī.[204] Annual human sacrifices were purportedly offered to the goddess in the *sanctum sanctorum*,[205] and the British agent Macpherson appointed to surpress these actions in the hilly areas of Orissa adjoining Bastar provides a detailed account of the processes whereby victims were selected and captured. The practice apparently continued until they were banned by the British government.[206] The goddess was clearly a blood-thirsty deity. Indeed her name (The Goddess of

[200] EI, 9.19, p. 165.

[201] The relocation of the Kākatīyas from Warangal to Bastar is alleged in the inscription of Dikpāladeva. This says that the last king of Warangal was the Kākatīya Pratāparudra. When he died his brother Annamarāja left his country because of the terror of the Muslims and established a kingdom in the country of Bastar (*tasya* [...] *bhrātā annamarājanāmā yavan-abhayāt nijadeśaṃ parityajya daṇḍakākhyanikaṭabastaradeśe rājyam akarot* |) (EI 12.30, ll. 4-7).

[202] Mallebrein 1999 in Sanderson 2007, p. 289, n. 187.

[203] EI 12.30, p. 244.

[204] Hiralall, EI 9.19, p. 161.

[205] Ibid. p. 161.

[206] cited in Sharma 2001, pp. 162-3.

the Tooth) seems to specially refer to this quality. Inscriptions from the 18th century record the plentiful animal sacrifices made by the king to felicitate important events of the political calendar. A Kākatīya inscription of Dikpāladeva of 1703 found outside the shrine begins by paying obeisance to Danteśvarī, called Dantāvalā (*śrī dantāvalā devī jayati*), and says:

> One day he [Dikpāladeva] performed a *kuṭumbayātrā* with the members of the palace having arrived at the shrine of Dantāvalā. There he caused the waters of the river Śaṅkhinī to run red with the torrents of blood issuing from the multitude bodies of many thousands of buffaloes and goats [that were sacrificed].[207]

Dikpāladeva's *yātrā* was apparently to felicitate his conquest of the Navaraṅgapura fort and the birth of his son.[208] Elliot reports that similar processions *en famille* were regularly made to the shrine by the king on the occasion of a marriage or on the king's coronation, when animals were sacrificed to propitiate Danteśvarī.[209]

Popular folklore recounts how the first Kākatīya of the state Annamarāja propitiated the goddess before his flight from Warrangal and that Danteśvarī promised to assist him in his military campaign in Bastar. The tinkling of her anklets would signal to the king that she was behind him, but on no account was he to look back, otherwise his battle would end in defeat. But while crossing the Ḍaṇkinī river the goddess's feet sank in mud, and the king, unable to hear the sound of anklets, looked back. Then the goddess decided to remain at that site, but she promised the king victory nevertheless, albeit in a period of five days. At that site, the king was said to have built the Dantewada shrine. Besides the king's family, the goddess is said to have revealed herself to the priestly caste of the Bhāṇḍārī Naiks, who traditionally officiate at her temple.[210] Eventually Annamarāja conquered the remaining territory formerly under the Nāgavaṃśins after ousting their last ruler.

What is clearly underlined in the legend is the goddess's importance in the king's political aggrandizement. Her impact on all levels of government policy was noted by Glasford in 1862:

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[207] *tena caikadā svapuravāsijanena saha dantāvalāṃ samāgatya kuṭumbayātrā kṛtā | tatra bahusahasramahiṣachāgaśarīrasaṃghātaraktapravāhaiḥ śaṅkhinīṃ nadīṃ śoṇitodāṃ akarot |* EI 12.30, ll. 19-21.
[208] Ibid p. 243.
[209] Ibid
[210] EI, 12.30, p. 244.

> Nothing is done, no business undertaken...not even will the Rājā or Diwan proceed on a pleasure party or hunting excursion without consulting "Mai" (mother). Her advice is asked in matters of the most trivial nature, flowers are placed on the head of the idol and as they fall to the right or to the left , so is the reply interpreted as favourable or otherwise.[211]

2.5 Tribal Origination of the Śakti-Cult in Kingship

To reach further back into the cult of *kuladevī*s is to grope in the mists of the unrecorded past. I have already called this past "indigenous" and "non-Sanskritic" in the Introduction and have supported my use of both expressions with accounts from 7th century Sanskrit *kāvya* and later Dharmaśāstric commentaries, all of which tend to view goddess-worship as an old outcaste custom practised by tribal kings. That such a description was by no means simply the pejorative generalization of a Brahminical elite seeking to distance itself from goddess-worship but rooted in a degree of truth is already made evident in the material remains of *kuladevī*-cults found in Afghanisthan, discussed previously. But that other tribes, apart from Central Asian or the Vindhya dwelling groups homogenized as Śabaras by *kāvya*, were indeed worshippers of goddesses can be further supported by much stronger testimonia from East India. An impressive body of research on the histories of minor Eastern polities such as Cachar, Barabhum and the early mediaeval Orissan kingdoms has demonstrated on the basis of rigorous ethnographic study the development of many of such kingdoms from goddess-worshipping tribal polities.[212] Not only did these tribal groups worship goddesses when they were obscure, but they continued to do so when they sought to elevate their status as Brahminized kingdoms.

In his model of the formation of the Indian state after the fall of the Gupta empire, Kulke (1995), postulates four factors enabling the development of early medieval kingdoms from the peripheral unconquered regions outside Gupta provincial towns and capitals, particularly in the fertile riverine areas on the eastern coast: i) the growth of the chieftain's power in a central tribal "nuclear area"; ii) the penetration of this tribal "nuclear area" into neighbouring communities and the rise of an "early kingdom"; iii) the further expansion of the kingdom and the emergence of an "imperial" phase; iv) the development of a cohesive ritual policy by the Imperial ruler through the patronage of lo-

[211] Cited in Ibid.
[212] Kulke 1995 and 1978, Eschmann 1978, Sinha 1962, Mallebrein 1999, Bhattacharjee 1987.

cal cults.[213] Many of these cults centred on goddesses who traditionally held great power among the tribes in the kingdom, and whom the newly rising kings would worship as *kuladevīs*– the development of the kingdom and the acceptance of the king by tribes depended on this connection with, and elevation of, autochthonous *devī*-cults.[214] Links to these old tribal goddesses were maintained even when the polity was fully Sanskritized, for the power of the deities, regarded as the true sovereigns of the land, was held to maintain the might and unity of the kingdom.[215] These goddesses thus served as the sole surviving emblems of the new kingdoms' tribal history, a history which on the whole the *rājya*s sought to efface.

An example of a tribal goddess patronized by a formerly tribal monarchical lineage is furnished by Stambheśvarī. The patron-deity initially of Tuṣṭikara[216] in the 6th century and then of the Śulkī dynasty of the Dhenkanal-Talcher region of Orissa between the 6th and 9th centuries CE, the goddess was important to the predominantly tribal area around Sonpur. She is still worshipped by various communities such as Dehuris of the Kondh tribe in the Dhenkanal Talcher area in wooden-posts or stones planted outside the door to homes under the name Khambeśvarī.[217] The priests at her shrine today are both male and female and from tribes, while those at her shrine in Aska in Ganjam district are Śūdras.[218] The dynasty faithful to her for the longest period of time, the Śulkīs, who ruled Dhenkanal between the 6th-7th c. originated either (as suggested by Kulke) from the Śaulika tribe,[219] or (as suggested by Sircar) from the Śuklīs

[213]pp. 234-236.

[214]Ibid p. 239, 244.

[215]The same argument is made by Kulke in his analysis of early state formation in Orissa (Kulke 1978, see particularly pp. 32-36.). Here he argues that many of the Orissan kings, such as the Bhaumas of Jajpur and the Śulkīs were descendants of tribal chiefs (34-34).

In his examination of the tribal kingdom of Barabhum (Purulia, West Bengal) Sinha 1962 points out the importance of Koṭeśvarī, the ancient tribal goddess of the Bhumij tribe, in integrating the tribe with the new Hinduized core of the kingdom. The shrine of Koṭeśvarī located in the sacred grove of the Bhumij at Bhuni was visited by the king, who also worshipped the deity as his *kuladevī*. Durgā Pūjā was performed for the goddess both by the king and the members of the tribe.

> There was a widespread belief in Barabhum that the raja ruled on behalf of ...Koṭeśvarī and as such the raja shared in the divinity. The human congregation in Barabhum was thus bound by a moral order of shared sacred ideas and sentiments with the raja as the pivot. (p. 319)

In this regard, see also Kanaka and Reddy1992 and Mallebrein 1999.

[216]EI 30, p. 274 ff. Kulke 1978 p. 34. The king is described as *stambheśvarīpādabhakta* in the inscription.

[217]EI 28.20, p. 111 (Sircar); For the Dehuris see Rath 2009, p. 86.

[218]Rath 2009, p. 86-88.

[219]A discussion of their possible origin in Sogdia as a tribe who followed the Hūṇas in to India and eventually settled in Orissa is to be found in Satyasray 1937, pp. 44-50. See also Kulke

of Midnapore district in West Bengal, who even trace their origins to a city called Kedālaka that sounds very similar to the capital Kodālaka of the imperial Śulkīs.[220] They maintained their allegiance to Stambheśvarī by joining their name with hers (Raṇastambha; Kulastambha) and claiming to receive kingship from her in inscriptions.[221] Such seems to have been the deity's power, that she was even invoked as the legal-witness *(pramāṇa),* when a land-grant was issued by Kulastambha in about 709 CE to a *brāhmaṇa.*[222]

This is not to say that no changes occured in tribal goddess-cults when the transition into the Sanskritic occured. One such change brought about by the transition was the superimposition of a Sanskritic identity on the *kuladevī.*[223]

In many cases, Tantric identities were also overlaid on the goddess. Given the belief that Tantric goddesses were power-bestowers *par excellence*, the Tantricization of *kuladevī*s was particularly relevant for the power-seeking king. Thus the *kuladevī* was often worshipped as Cāmuṇḍā, Kālī or some other esoteric form. But the most visible assimilation of the tribal-goddess was with the imperial forms of the Purāṇic Durgā. It was Durgā's warrior-nature, her aspect as the bestower of royal power and victory, that provided common grounds of synthesis with tribal clan-goddesses.

The new kingdom would promote the establishment of temples for the Sanskritized *kuladevī* and the installation of icons whereas originally she may have been worshipped in stones, trees or stakes. Maṇināgeśvarī *kuladevī* of the kings

1978, p. 35. By 554 AD, they grew to become a considerable power noted for their infantry, who faced the Maukhari King Iśānavarman in battle, as reported in the Haṛāhā inscription of that year (EI 14, pp. 110-120).

[220] EI 28.20, p. 111.

[221] See p. 110.

[222] See n. 334 on page 111.

[223] Eschmann 1978 describes the foundation of the religious edifice of Orissan kingdoms from a tribal base. She indicates that village goddesses (*grāmadevī*s) of tribes who exerted great regional influence often evolved into royal goddesses with an established temple cult. In this way particular regional goddesses were assimilated in the form of the State Goddess (Devī/Durgā) whose main shrine was patronised by the king. The process of Sanskritic superimposition is in evidence in the case of the Orissan Tārā Tāriṇī. The temple of the goddesses Tārā Tāriṇī in southern Orissa houses two stones– the archaic tribal manifestation of the goddesses– which are daily 'anthropomorphised' by temple priests through the drawing of eyes and the bestowing of vermillion, thereby transubstantiating the goddesses from tribal stone to Hindu icon. Furthemore the original aboriginal deity is 'hinduized' by being given a Śākta legend. In the case of Tārā Tārinī there is a myth explaining her temple as a Purāṇicized pīṭha (Eschmann, 1978, p. 91)

A further example of the anthropomorphization of an aniconic goddess is furnished by Bargabhīmā in Tamluk, West Bengal. Everyday the stone representing the goddess is transformed by the priests into an image by placing on the stone a mask representing her face, weapons indicating arms, ornaments and robes. Her shrine is also said to be a Śākta *pīṭha* (observed in situ January 2010).

of Raṇpur in Central Orissa has a bronze image in the shape of Durgā and a Brahminical temple near the capital. But her archaic aniconic cult image inside the temple is a stone, still worshipped by tribal priests and to which were later added accompanying *mūrti*s of Cāmuṇḍā and Tārā.[224] Despite her Sanskritization, the old tribal identity of the goddess was not erased: it remained the seed of a many-layered whole, regularly propitiated by the emerging kingdom in addition to its new-found worship of a more Sanskritic manifestation.

The royal cult of Raṇacaṇḍī in the Dimasa kingdom of Cachar in Assam grew out of the veneration of a tribal clan goddess of the Dimasas and related tribes known as Kacāi Kātī (flesh-eater).[225] She was martial in character, held to be the protectoress of the tribe and the bestower of victory in war. With their rise to power and eventual Sanskritization, the originally Tibeto-Burmese Dimasa royal lineages continued to venerate this goddess whom they, through the apparatus of the Sanskritized state, projected as a fierce form of Durgā known as Raṇacaṇḍī (Bellicose Caṇḍī). Legendary traditions associated her with the conferral of a sword upon the king Nirbhayanārāyaṇa.[226]

The sword and the image of the goddess were kept in great secrecy. But they were seen by a canny British official in the 19th century who convinced Raṇacaṇḍī's guardian-priest of his entitlement to witness the sacred objects by saying that he, being an official of the ruling British government, was the true ruler of the region. His account published in the *Indian Antiquary* describes not one, but two swords, painted red and white and both of blunted iron. The brass image of Raṇacaṇḍī was accompanied by her attendant Śyāmā, represented in the other sword, a deity captured from an enemy king.

The principal rulers of the Dimasa lineage asserted their devotion to her in official testimonia such as coins and inscriptions in which she assumed the position of a fully-fledged state deity. A gold coin of Meghanārāyaṇa (1576

[224] Kulke 1978, p. 34.

[225] Bhattacharjee 1987.

[226] Bhattarcharjee summarizes as follows: "Raṇacaṇḍī appeared in a dream to Nirbhoyanarayana and told him to meet her next day at the riverside. The raja waited there for a long time and then observed a snake swimming in the river. He became aware that the goddess had assumed that form for the meeting and stretching out his hand, took hold of the tail. The snake turned in to a sword in his hand, which he carried home. That night Ranacaṇḍī again appeared to him and told him that he did wrong in not seizing the snake by the neck. However the sword would be the good luck of the state and the state would prosper as long as it was preserved with care" (Ibid. p. 181).

Indian Antiquary 4 (reference provided by Prof. Sanderson), pp. 114-115 gives a different version. After he took the sword, Nirbhayanārāyaṇa failed to worship it with animal sacrifice and thus angered Raṇacaṇḍī who placed a curse on the line. A new ruler thereafter ascended the throne who worshipped her properly, that is to say with *paśubali*. This legend only serves to underline the power the goddess held: she could at will make or break a dynasty's fortune.

CE) describes him as a 'worshipper of Raṇacaṇḍī'.[227] Hariścandranārāyaṇa I (1720-28) issued an inscription in which he is styled as the 'bee fluttering over the lotus-like foot of Raṇacaṇḍī' (*śrīśrīraṇacaṇḍīpadāravindamadhukarasya*) and as further tribute, a temple to the goddess was commissioned by him in the precincts of the palace.[228] Govindracandra issued a coin in 1814, on which he is described in a similar manner.[229] Though the latter two converted to Vaiṣṇavism, striving to appear orthodox by becoming vegetarian, they continued in their loyalty to the clan goddess and were reported to have offered animal and human sacrifice for the safety of the state as a continuation of former tribal practice.[230]

2.6 Assimilation of *Kuladevī*s with the Purāṇic Durgā at Navarātra

I will now conclude this chapter by analysing how the local cult of the clan-goddess attained its Imperial manifestation by being ritually associated with the Purāṇic Durgā, the prototype of the Sanskritic *cakravartin* (Emperor). As we have seen before, the assimilation was symbolically manifested in such rituals of the *kuladevī* as the *pratiṣṭhā* of the *Ācāradinakara,* where the central deity of the *maṇḍala* is a thousand-armed Durgā. Such rites though were usually open only to members of the court, and did not include ordinary citizens. The publicly shared ceremony where this symbolic unity between the particular and the Imperial forms of the *śakti* occured was the Navarātra. The ritual process of the Navarātra and its various regional systems are discussed in the fourth chapter. During the course of the nine *tithi*s (ten in the East) the identity of the clan-goddess escalated, becoming manifest to all its citizens as the cosmic *cakravartin* Mahiṣāsuramardinī during its duration. Though everything in the litany of the Navarātra referred explicitly to Durgā, in practice all those symbolic expressions referred as metonyms to the clan-goddess and as proxy she received the same rites intended for Durgā.[231] This ritual escalation in the de-

[227] Bhattacharjee 1987, p. 183.
[228] Ibid.
[229] Ibid. p. 195.
[230] Hunter, ibid. p. 190.
[231] During the Navarātri celebrations in Madurai, Mīnākṣī, the chief deity of the shrine, progressively grows violent during the nine *tithi*s, transforming from a pacific form in the opening of the rite, to the royal deity and *kuladevī* of the Ramnad sovereigns, Rājarājeśvarī and finally, into the asura-slaying Mahiṣāsuramardinī on Mahāṣṭamī (Fuller and Logan 1985, pp. 88-89, p. 96). In the Navarātri in the Marāṭhā kingdom some of the major rites centred on the shrine of Tuḷjā, who is also worshipped as Mahiṣāsuramardinī, *(Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency,*1885, pp. 565-566); In the Navarātra rites of Śivagaṅgai and Ramnad Rājarājeśvarī

ity's identity was thought to coincide with the escalation in the power of the kingdom and the king.

We can locate this process of collocation to have already occured in the 7th century, for an inscription from 664 CE from the upper Banas plain identifies the local goddess Ghaṭṭavāsinī as a form of Durgā.[232]

This process of assimilation is also well-attested in scripture. The earliest known Devī myth from the 7th century CE contained in the *Skandapurāṇa* contains a scene where the goddess fills the battlefield with animal-headed warrior women who leap as if by magic from parts of her body, and further towards the end, she assigns regency to these self-born goddesses in particular cities, towns, mountains and villages. The image is intended to evoke a mediaeval empire: these goddesses are her *sāmanta*s in fiefdoms, mapping out the Śākta essence over a *maṇḍala*.[233] Such maps of sacred geography are clearly images of syncretism that were embedded in the myth in order to allegorize the identification of local *kuladevī*s with the Purāṇic war-goddess.

Similarly, the *Devīmāhātmya* the *locus classicus* of the Durgā-myth, composed most likely in the 8th century CE, presents Durgā as a syncretistic deity in the Śumbha-Niśumbha legend, but most especially in Chapter 11.35-51. In these verses the goddess prophesies her descent on earth in several successive emanations among whom the following are named as locally relevant deities: Vindhyavāsinī (11.37-38); Śākambharī (11.42- 45ab); Bhīmā (11.4748). The first still commands a flourishing practice in the Vindhyācala, the second has her shrine in the Sambhar lake and is of particular relevance to the Śakambharī Cāhamānas[234], while the third is described by the text to have appeared in the Himācala (*kṛtvā rūpaṃ himācale*).[235] Here too we find a sectarian appropriation of autonomous cults.

At the level of individual goddess-cults, the language and iconography used to portray Durgā in the *śāstra*s were co-opted by the kingdom in its portrayals

was worshipped as an eight-handed Mahiṣāsuramardinī and paraded on the city streets in this form. (Price 1996, pp. 138-147); Āśāpūrī, tutelary deity of the Chauhans was homologized with Durgā in the Navarātra, and received buffalo and ram sacrifice on Pañcamī with a procession by the king to her temple: (Tod 1829, Vol II, Religious Customs of Mewar, p. 464); During Taleju's festivities in Dasain the major festival of the Kathmandu Valley, she is identified with Mahiṣāsuramardinī. Sacrifices are made to the goddess in this emanation. (Levy 1992, 241, 550, 560)

[232] Singh-Kapur 2002, p. 209, The identification of the local goddess Ghaṭṭavāsinī with Durgā is conveyed in the phrase: *ghaṭṭavāsinīnāmnā durgādevyā.*

[233] *Skandapurāṇa*, 64.19-29; 68.1-9 in Yokochi 2004

[234] See in this thesis p. 99.

[235] For Bhīmā, see in this thesis p. 13.

of the state clan-goddess in the literature dedicated to her and in her iconography.[236] In this way each goddess was knitted into a broader ideology of power while each kingdom connected into a prestigious concept of kingship.

Despite this over-arching association with the Paurāṇika Goddess, the *kuladevī* maintained her distinctive identity, practice and legends as seen. In this way both Purāṇic and distinctive identities existed simultaneously.

[236] Danteśvarī of Bastar is represented as Durgā-Mahiṣāsuramardinī in her icon, as observed above. Tuljā Bhavānī's assimilation with Durgā is not just asserted in the medieval *Turajāmāhātmya* but also in her icon at the Osmanabad shrine which is a mobile *mūrti* of black *śāligrāma* stone depicting her also as Mahiṣāsuramardinī. Further, her iconography in the *Turajāmāhātmya* corresponds to the Purāṇic Kauśikī, Durgā's maiden form: like standard epithets used to laud Kauśikī, she too is described as an eight armed girl, lustrous as the rising sun, bedecked in ornaments, coronet, white robes, mounted on a lion, holding various weapons accompanied by a retinue of fiersome *yoginī*s, ghosts, *vetāla*s, skeletons, *piśāca*s and *graha*s with animal heads and numerous legs–

yoginīvṛndasahitā cāmuṇḍāgaṇasevitā | bhūtavetālakaṅkālaiḥ piśācair bhairavair api | nānārūpacarair ghorair nānāsyair bhīṣaṇākṣibhiḥ | ekapādais tripādaiś ca catuṣpādair grahair vṛttā | śūcimukhair aśvamukhair vyāghrasiṃhamukhais tathā | [...] sandhyāmeghaprabhair ugrair yuktā prādur abhūt tadā | udyatsūryaprabhā devī siṃhavāhanavāhitā | śaśisūryāgninayanā pūrṇacandranibhānanā | ṣoḍaśārdhabhujā bālā nānābhūṣaṇabhūṣitā | śūlabāṇadhanuḥkhaḍgapāśacarmākṣatomarān | hastair dadhānā varadā kirīṭollikhitāmbarā | śuklavastraparidhānā raṇatkaṅkananūpurā | Turajāmāhātmya 2.10-16.

In the *Gosānīmaṅgal*, Kāmateśvarī is synthesised with the Purāṇic goddess in the *maṅgala* verses: she is called 'Caṇḍī' who had manifested herself of her own accord as Gosānī, the Empress of Kāmatā (Kānteśvarī); made Kāmateśvara the king, given him boons. Further Purāṇic cliches are applied to this goddess: when eulogized by the gods she slays Niśumbha as Kālī and she rescues the gods having slain Mahiṣāsura after a grim battle:

ye rūpe gosānī nām kānteśvarī anupam vyakta hoilo āpan icchāy | kānteśvar kari rājā tāhār loilo pūjā var diyā śāsila Behār | nama caṇḍī bhagavatī devatā karile stuti kālīrūpe niśumbha vadhilā | devī ghor yuddha kari mahiṣāsur vadh kari devagaṇe uddhār karilā | Gosānīmaṅgal, Maṅgalācaraṇa, p. 69.

3 The Making of a Pan-Indic Ideology: The shared symbols and beliefs of heroic Śāktism.

Previously I had observed how the cults of regional goddesses began to be elevated, and given a more universal relevance, by being integrated with the Sanskritic cult of Śakti just after the fall of the Guptas. Heroic Śāktism developed thereby a number of faces meaningful to different communities and sects. This syncretic nature led to the pan-Indic expansion of the cult of the sovereign-goddess between the 6th and the 12th centuries. At the same time as it was appropriated by various sects, the cult adhered to common defining symbols and beliefs in whatever sectarian manifestation it adopted. I will now examine these developments.

3.1 Early Mediaeval Cults of Martial Goddesses in the Gangetic Plains of North India.

As it rose to a religion of prestige, it was the Brahminical face of heroic Śāktism that attained influence in the prime political area in modern-day Uttar-Pradesh and northern Bihar near the Nepal border, intersected by the Ganges. This area enclosed the much sought after imperial city of Kanyakubja and the old kingdom of Magadha. Evidence suggests that the lineages ruling in the area, including Kanyakubja[237] itself, supported the cult of the warrior-Śakti at various stages between the 6th and 11th centuries approximately.

Anantavarman Maukhari, the son of the Maukhari Śārdūlavarman, whose seat was possibly in the Gayā region (for the Barābar and Nāgārjuni Hills were where the early Maukhari inscriptions have been found),[238] established in the first half of the 6th c. an image of Kātyāyanī in the Gopikā Cave in the Nāgārjunī Hills.[239] Villages were also granted as permanent endowment to the same goddess. The hills form a part of the Vindhya range, a region that early Purāṇic mythology associated with the warrior-goddess Kauśikī, a form of Caṇḍī, for,

[237] There are different spellings of the name– see Tripathi 1989, pp. 3-4, p. 4, n. 1– but Kanyakubja appears to be the standard form.

[238] CII 3.48-50.

[239] CII 3.50. See also Yokochi 2004, p. 142; and Falk 2006, p. 257. The inscription recording the donation is in the doorway of the Gopikā cave in the Nāgārjunī Hills. According to N.G.Majumdar (*Indian Antiquary* 56, p. 127) the script used in these inscriptions is older than that used in Īśānavarman's Hārāhā inscription of 554 CE. Anantavarman also established an image of Devī (Pārvatī) with Śiva in another cave in the Nāgārjunī Hills (CII 3.49).

it is the caves of this mountain that the *Harivaṃśa*[240] and the early *Skanda-purāṇa*[241] identify as the goddess's home, adopted by her after her destruction of malefactors, most particularly Kaṃsa and the *asura*s Śumbha and Niśumbha. Anantavarman's land-grant and dedication of images in the region may have been undertaken in keeping with the Brahminical belief in the Vindhyas as one of the traditional abodes for the warrior Śakti.

Indeed, early mediaeval authors of Sanskrit literature suggest that there was an important shrine dedicated to her in those mountains, for it is described in great detail in numerous literary accounts.[242] The poetic descriptions of these authors seem to be inspired by an actual Śākta site in the early mediaeval period, and this might have been the Vindhyavāsinī temple at Mirzapur, which still remains a prominent pilgrimage destination. A claim is also made in the *Gaüḍavaho* by the poet Bappaï/Vākpati that Yaśovarman, an important ruler of Kanyakubja (cca. 725-752), sought the blessings of Kauśikī at this shrine before his eastward campaign towards Gauḍa.[243] Vākpati suggests that the goddess's cult at the period was a Tantric one: human sacrifices are implied by the poet to have occurred there,[244] while his hymn eulogizes Kauśikī in her terrible power-bestowing aspects, as Bhairavī[245], Mahiṣāsuramardinī[246] and the bone-adorned, skull-bearing Kālarātri.[247] The cremation-ground is

[240] *Harivaṃśa* 65.51

[241] *Skandapurāṇa* Adhyāya 34.1-61; Adhyāyas 53-69 (critical edition in Yokochi 2004) narrate Vindhyavāsinī's tale.

[242] *Haravijaya* 47.11, 47.43, *Rājataraṅginī* III.386-431; Stein 1900, vol. 1, pp. 107-110. The relevance of the *Rājataraṅginī* legend was first indicated to me by Professor Sanderson. Kalhaṇa's work describes the Vindhya shrine as the abode of the goddess Bhramaravāsinī also known as Bhrāmarī, an ominous form of Durgā. The shrine was infested by swarms of ferocious bees commanded by this goddess. The swarms made the path to her shrine particularly arduous for devotees.

[243] He apparently sang her a laudatory hymn for victory in his forthcoming battle (*Gaüḍavaho* 285-338). The episode occurs in the middle of the king's *yātrā*, which he had commenced in a south-easterly direction from Kanyakubja. It remains speculative whether Yaśovarman had indeed halted at the shrine for prayers, but it is likely that he would have done so, given its convenient position on the route, and its popularity as a sacred place. Given Kauśikī's reputation as an indomitable warrior, her blessings would have been important to Yaśovarman for military power and fortune in his endeavour. For a reconstruction of the route Yaśovarman had taken during this expedition, see Tripathi 1989, pp. 197-99.

[244] *visasijjantamahāpasudaṃsanasaṃbhamaparopparārūḍhā |*
gayaṇe cciya gandhaüḍiṃ kuṇanti tuha kaülaṇārīo || Gaüḍavaho 319.
The use of *mahā-* in *mahāpaśu* conveys that the sacrificial victim was human. For a translation see Sanderson 2001, p. 11, n. 9.
There is also mention of offerings of human heads in the previous verse:
gambhīragabbhamandappahāo tuha devi dīvamālāo |
uvahāramuṇḍakesandhayāramūḍhāo va khalanti || Gaüḍavaho 318.

[245] Ibid. 287.

[246] Ibid. 286, 305-306, 316, 324.

[247] Ibid. 285-338. For the skull see v. 302.

evoked in one simile as the beloved haunt of this deity– she is said to roam her shrine, crowded with white-geese, as if in her "fondness for a skull-strewn *śmaśāna*".[248] At the same time as she was a Tantric deity associated with the occult, Kauśikī was a war-goddess: she is for instance said in the hymn to cause herds of war-elephants (*vāraṇaghaḍāo*) to flee even from afar simply by being recalled in the battlefield (v. 288). So too in all other literary accounts, the association of the Vindhya temple is with a wilder, more lethal form of Durgā (Kālī/Cāmuṇḍā/Kālarātri/Rajanī/Nidrā/Kauśikī) who embodies martial abilities in their most heightened form and grants military powers. A verse from the *Haravijaya* (47.13), collocating the Vindhyan Durgā with the eschatological Kālarātri, succeeds in exemplifying magnificently the overpowering ferocity – a quality thought to be simultaneously destructive and creative (for it spurred the creation of the new universe) – the deity was believed capable of. In this verse the poet asks rhetorically:

> *āviṣkṛtapralayadurdharakālarātri-*
> *mūrter udagravikaṭāvayavāntareṣu |*
> *paryāptim eti tava saṃhṛtasaptaloka-*
> *lokāsthisaṃbhṛtiśatair api maṇḍanam kim ||*
>
> Upon the hour of the Aeon's Death
> when you are manifest as untamed Kālarātri,
> Can all your fearful limbs of giant scale
> be ever fully decked with ornament
> even by countless heaps of human bones
> from the seven worlds that you have annihilated?[249]

The votaries of the fierce goddess described in the verse are envisioned as heroes: the *Gaüḍavaho* for instance describes the visitors to her shrine as Śabara warriors who would leave behind their swords to the deity as ritual offerings.[250] Parallel verses also appear in the *Haravijaya*, where the same image is evoked and this poem, though not an independent witness, supports the scenario presented by the *Gaüḍavaho*.[251] Only the very brave, it was thought, could win the

[248] *sohasi nārāyaṇi raṇiraṇeürārāvamiliahaṃsaüle |*
bhavaṇammi kavālāvilamasāṇarāeṇa va bhamantī || Gaüḍavaho 291.

[249] The translation is reproduced from Sarkar 2011 forthcoming a with minor corrections.

[250] See n. 389 on page 129.

[251] Several verses of the *Haravijaya* describing the Vindhyan goddess were taken over from the *Gaüḍavaho*– this borrowing was first noticed by Prof. A.Sanderson, who pointed out the parallel verses in a personal communication in 2010. For the verse on Śabara worshippers deriving from the *Gaüḍavaho* see n. 389 on page 129.

favours of such an irascible deity, whose magical powers were both protective and darkly ambivalent.

How would she be worshipped in a heroic context? Besides sword-offerings, further examples of the forms of ritual-homage that would have been performed by warriors for Kauśikī appear in literature. A description in Bāna's *Kādambarī* portrays a Śabara king worshipping the goddess of the Vindhyas with blood from his body: he is, praises Bāṇa, "adorned by a pair of arms whose shoulders were repeatedly scarred with the imprint of a sharp sword in order to offer his blood to Caṇḍikā".[252] Such practices of inflicting wounds on oneself to placate the goddess were identified by the Purāṇic and literary traditions as warrior-rituals undertaken by heroes and outcastes, as extreme and admirable tests demonstrating heroic ability.[253] Other, albeit more macabre, practices associated with warriors are said to have occurred at the Vindhyan shrine: the *Gaüḍavaho* suggests that the ritual of selling human flesh by a warrior for the attainment of heroic powers, occurred inside the temple precincts, underlining this point with a particularly gory image of trees hung with shreds of such flesh.[254] The Vindhyan Śakti cult must have served therefore a strong martial purpose and may have even included, given its uniform depiction in literature as a horrific place, the performance of antinomian rituals for enhanced military attainments.

The earliest account in Sanskrit contained in the *Harivaṃśa* paints quite a detailed portrait of the goddess as she may have been worshipped by the

[252] *caṇḍikārudhirabalipradānārtham asakṛnniśitaśastrollekhaviṣamitaśikhareṇa* [...] *bhujayugalenopaśobhitam* [...] | (*Kādambarī,* pp. 30-31.) Severing one's head with the hand exemplified another such extreme heroic act propitiating Caṇḍī and it is attested in the Southern iconography of the warrior-goddess, by images in Māmallapuram, sculpture from the Coḷa domains and a relief in the Virūpākṣa temple in Paṭṭadakal showing devotees worshipping her in this manner (Dezső 2011 forthcoming, p. 9.)

[253] For kings worshipping the goddess by mutilating themselves see *Devīmāhātmya* 13.9; *Kathāsaritsāgara* 15.1.103; *Tilakamañjarī* (Dezső 2011 forthcoming pp. 7-11); *Kṛttivāsī Rāmāyaṇa* (*Laṅkākāṇḍa*) pp. 382-89. For the association of outcastes with such practices see *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* cited in *Kṛtyaratnākara* (p. 357): *svamāṃsarudhirair dattair devī tuṣyati vai bhṛśam* | [...] *sahasraṃ tṛptim āyāti svadeharudhireṇa tu* | *tarpitā vidhivad durgā bhittvā bāhūrujaṅghake* | *nāreṇa śirasā vīra pūjitā vidhivan nṛpa* | *tṛptā bhaved bhṛśaṃ durgā varṣāṇāṃ lakṣam eva ca* | *evaṃ nānāmlecchagaṇaiḥ pūjyate sarvadasyubhiḥ* | *aṅgavaṅgakaliṅgaiś ca kinnarair barbaraiḥ śakaiḥ* | *māsi cāśvayuje śuklā navamī yā narādhipa* | *tasyāṃ yat kriyate vīra naraiḥ snānādikaṃ prabho* | *tat sarvam akṣayaṃ teṣāṃ tad vai siddhikaraṃ tathā* | The line *aṅgavaṅgakaliṅgaiś ca kinnarair barbaraiḥ śakaiḥ* is also cited in Lakṣmīdhara's *Kṛtyakalpataru*, p. 410, ll. 4-5 and in Śūlapāṇi's *Durgotsavaviveka*, p. 2 in a different verse.

[254] *sūenti vīravikkayavikkamam iha jāmiṇīmasāṇesu* |
avalambiyakuṇavaccheyapāḍalā sāhisāhāo || *Gaüḍavaho* 327. The commentator Haripāla adds after his *chāyā* to the verse "It is well-known in the tradition of the Kaulas that warriors sell human-flesh for powers in the cemetery of the goddess." (Ibid.)

followers of the Vindhyan cult, that presages much of the description found in the poetic literature we have just seen. Here too the amalgam of the martial and the horrific is the most striking feature of the goddess. Collocated primarily with the Vaiṣṇava Nidrā (Viṣṇu's yogic sleep), dark in colouring, she is a celibate Amazon, for whom Viṣṇu promises, as a reward for aiding him kill Kaṃsa, the regency of the Vindhya mountains. He also fortells her adoption by the heavenly regent Indra as his sister, from whose lineage Kuśika she was to derive her own name and by whom she was to be consecrated as a monarch. The association established by the myth with Indra is the clearest symbol evoking the Vindhya goddess's martial character. She is also described as carrying a crest of peacock tail-feathers, a symbol that may have conjured for an early-mediaeval audience an image of the peacock-mount of the arch warrior-god Skanda. She is four-armed, bearing a trident, a sword with a gold hilt, a chalice filled with liquor, a lotus, adorned in a black lower-garment and a yellow upper-garment, bedecked in ornaments, boon-bestowing and shape-shifting. Though she is shown to protect, like any good monarch, by rescuing Kṛṣṇa from death at the hands of Kaṃsa, she is nevertheless a frightening and liminal character, who subverts, just as she fits, the image of the ideal warrior. When, having taken on the form of Yaśodā's new-born daughter she was dashed against the rocks by Kaṃsa, she revealed herself in her true form as the goddess Kauśikī, flying up to heaven from which, surrounded by cohorts of ghosts who blackened the sky, she loomed over the king and cackled wildly, swilling down liquor from her cup and gleefully dancing. In this awe-inspiring vision she foretold that at Kaṃsa's death at her hands she would drink his warm blood.[255]

Although we have as yet no certain material evidence clarifying whether indeed such a cult focused on the deadly Kauśikī existed in the forests of the Vindhyas at the time, we ought not to disregard the poets' writings and the testimony of the *Harivaṃśa* as pure fiction and therefore unimportant to the present context. Violent forms of Durgā characterized by cremation-ground imagery – of the kind envisaged in the poetic literature on the Vindhyan goddess– who were considered potent for all power-seekers, and especially warriors[256],

[255] *Harivaṃśa* Adhyāyas 47 and 48.28-36. The legend is summarized and discussed in greater depth in Yokochi 2004, pp. 57-74.

[256] For example, two hymns to Durgā (also referred to as Vindhyavāsinī and Caṇḍī) were interpolated into later accretions to the *Mahābhārata* (Mbh) (for the manuscripts in which these hymns appeared in see n. 360 on page 121). These hymns are sung by the heroes Yudhiṣṭhira and Arjuna and they invoke Durgā particularly as a violent, occultic goddess for power and protection in battle. She is for instance called Kālī, "holding a sword and skull-topped staff" (*khaḍgakhaṭvāṅgadhāriṇi*) (Mbh 4.5.30, C, l. 18); "fond of alcohol, flesh and

were not just the objects of esoteric (Tantric) worship, but were also established in temple-cults open to the public. An inscription etched in Vārāṇasī, exhibiting characters typifying those widely used in Northern India in the 8th c.,[257] records the installation of an image identified in the sixth line as that of Caṇḍī by a man named Pantha. Of Pantha we know little from the epigraph, except that he had always been virtuous and though "of modest means" (*parilaghuvibhava*), deeply dedicated in making the beneficence to the deity without sparing any costs. After having installed the image with what it seems great effort, he was still not content and built the goddess a magnificent shrine of stone, adorned with crests and yak-tail whisks. It is the versifier's mesmeric description of the goddess's image (*mūrti*) though that forms the true highlight of the inscription: he describes the installed Caṇḍī, also named Bhavānī, as "horrifying with a ghastly garland of human heads hanging down, her body encircled by slithering snakes with dried morsels of flesh stuck on her axe, revelling in a joyous dance, her eyes rolling about".[258] We thus have clear attestation that this wrathful form of the goddess, resonant of Cāmuṇḍā or Kālī, was indeed worshipped and that too in the holiest and most populous of all Brahminical cities.[259] The literary records of the cult of the dangerous Vindhyavāsinī worshipped by heroes in the 7th c. in the central Gangetic plains were perhaps not mere fanciful accounts but may well have been rooted in fact.

Let us now turn to Kanyakubja. The goddess Bhagavatī was the most popular deity of worship among eight generations of the illustrious Gurjara-Pratīhāra

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animal-[sacrifice]" *(sīdhumāṃsapaśupriye)* (Mbh 4.5 ff. D, l. 34); "fond of war" (*raṇapriye)* (Mbh 4.5 ff. G, l. 20); "accomplished leader of the army" *(siddhasenāni)* (Mbh 6.22.16, l. 7) etc. For the full texts of the hymns see *Mahābhārata* IV, Appendix 1, pp. 300-303; *Mahābhārata* VI, Appendix 1, No. 1, pp. 710-711.

[257] EI 9.8. The palaeographical analysis is P. Daya Ram Sahni's, editor of the inscription (Ibid. p. 60). The inscription was first indicated to me by P.D.Szántó.

[258] *atrābhūt panthanāmā śiśur api vinayavyāpṛto bhadramūrtir*
tyāgī dhīraḥ kṛtajñaḥ parilaghuvibhavo' py ātmavṛttyābhituṣṭaḥ | 3ab.
[...]
tenānekavidhānadīkṣaṇaśataiḥ saṃsthāpitārthavyayaiḥ
caṇḍī caṇḍanarottamāṅgaracitavyālambimālotkaṭā |
sarpatsarpaviveṣṭitāṅgaparaśuvyāviddhaśuṣkāmiṣā
lūlānṛttarucir vilola[nayanā bhavānyāḥ śubhā] || 4
[saṃsthā]pyāpi na tasya [tuṣṭi]r a[bha]vad yāvad bhavānīgṛhaṃ
suśliṣṭāmalasaṃdhibandhaghaṭitaṃ ghaṇṭāninādojjvalam |
ramyam dṛṣṭiharaṃ śilā + + + + + + + + + + + +
[prārūdha-]dhvajacāmaraṃ sukṛtinā śreyorthinā kāritam || 5 (EI 9.8)
-vyāpṛto conj. Sahni] *-vyāpaṭo* insc.
An earlier edition of the inscription was published by Hultzsch in ZDMG XL, 1886, p. 55 f. The conjectures by Hultzsch are largely supported by Sahni's reading. Though reading *vilolanayanā*, Hultszch does not supply *bhavānyāḥ śubhā*, as Sahni does.

[259] For the worship of Durgā as Cāmuṇḍā during the Navarātra of Mithilā see p. 170.

emperors of Kanyakubja (Mahodaya), beginning from Devaśakti. Among two rulers who worshipped the Sun, two who worshipped Śiva, and one who worshipped Viṣṇu, the Partābgarh Inscription of the Gurjara-Pratīhāra Mahendrapāla II (946 CE) records three kings, who were "ardent devotees of Bhagavatī" (*paraṃ bhagavatībhakta*). These predecessors were Nāgabhaṭa II, Bhoja I and Mahendrapāla I.[260] That the epithet *paraṃ bhagavatībhakta* was quite commonly used to style these early kings is indicated by an even older citation in a seal and the genealogical part of an inscription, both issued by Bhoja I himself and dated 706 CE approximately.[261] Although choosing not to present himself in the manner of his forebears since he was a devotee of Śiva (*paramamāheśvara*)[262], Mahendrapāla is evidenced in the Partābgarh inscription to have supported the goddess-cult in some measure for the inscription records his issuing a village to a local *śakti* shrine in the Śaiva Hariṣeśvara monastery.[263] The shrine belonged to the goddess Vaṭayakṣiṇī[264], and given that the inscription makes an elaborate invocation preceding its genealogical part to Durgā, it seems that an identification obtained between Vaṭayakṣiṇī and the Purāṇic war-goddess, and that it is she who is indirectly referred to as Durgā. It is not unreasonable to make this assumption. Benedictions in early-mediaeval inscriptions recording grants to deities often, though not always, praised the deities who were the recipients of the grants. Secondly, it was a common enough practice to identify otherwise obscure, local goddesses with the more recognisable Durgā in the invocatory preambles to early-mediaeval inscriptions recording donations to their shrines. We have for example the benedictive openings to Anantavarman's inscription to the Vindhyan goddess he had installed, the inscription to

[260]EI, 14.13, ll.6-8, p. 183. See also Handiqui 1949, p. 395 and n. 1; and Sanderson 2009, p. 52, n. 29. The religion followed by the other kings of this line is described as follows in the same inscription (ll. 4-9) : Devaśakti= */paramavaiṣṇavaḥ*; Vatsarāja= *paramamāheśvaraḥ*; (Nāgabhaṭa II); Rāmabhadra= *paramādityabhaktaḥ*; (Bhoja I); (Mahendrapāla I); Vināyakapāla= *paramādityabhaktaḥ*; Mahendrapāla= *paramamāheśvaraḥ*. The bracketed names are the goddess-worshipping kings mentioned in the main text.

[261]EI 5.24 ll. 4-6. For the seal see p. 212, ll. 5 and 10. For the date see ibid. p. 210.

[262]EI 14.13, l. 9.

[263]The editor's transliteration of the inscription reads Harirṣeśvara (EI 14.13. l. 12; the editor proposes Haryṛṣīśvara), but I understand this as Hariṣeśvara following Prof. Sanderson's hypothesis (in a personal communication in July 2011), which is summarized as follows. The inscription states that the grant was proclaimed "in the Jagir of a Talavargika named Hariṣaḍa" (*talavarggikahariṣaḍabhujyamānakharpparapadrakagrāme,* ibid. l. 9). Hariṣaḍa is in all probability the name of a local fief-holder, as we have attestations of closely related instances (Harṣaṭa/Harṣaḍa) from the early mediaeval period. He "marked his authority by creating a Śivaliṅga with his own name (following a long-established practice first attested in the fourth century), this *liṅga* being named accordingly Hariṣeśvara, with the dropping of the vernacular suffix -ḍa/-ṭa". The monastery was named after this Śiva.

[264]EI 14.13, ll. 12-13.

the goddess Kṣemāryā, the inscription to the local "Durgā" of the Kudarkot fortress, and the inscriptions to the goddess Daśamī, in which descriptions of Durgā were in fact references to the regional goddesses who were the recipients of the grants.[265]

The invocations from these inscriptions, in fact, tell us something important about how the Śakti cult became pan-Indic– by using concepts and terminology

[265]The opening to Anantavarman's inscription (CII 3.50) eulogizing the particular goddess installed by him in the Barābar caves is:

unnidrasya saroruhasya sakalām ākṣipya śobhāṃ rucā
sāvajñaṃ mahiṣāsurasya śirasi nyastaḥ kvaṇannūpuraḥ |
devyāḥ vaḥ sthirabhaktivādasadṛśīṃ yuñjan phalenārthitāṃ
diśyād acchanakhāṃśujālajaṭilaḥ pādaḥ padaṃ saṃpadaṃ ||

When her foot, throwing to shade with its light the light of a full-blown lotus, was placed in disdain upon the Buffalo Titan's head, her anklet rang forth– May that foot of the Goddess with gleaming toe-nails pouring lustre, guide you to success, as it unites your request, which equals this prayer of steady devotion, with its reward.

The implications of the description of the goddess in the verse and its association with Gupta era Mahiṣāsuramardinī iconography are considered by Yokochi 2004, p. 141.

The first *pāda* in the benediction to Kṣemāryā/Kṣemakarī (EI 9.25) is illegible but we can make out that the goddess is being identified with Yoganidrā, Durgā's established Vaiṣṇavite form associated with Viṣṇu's yogic sleep:

dhātur yā yoganidrā jalana + + +nasyākṛtir viśvayoneḥ
†kailāsoccāṅkaśṛṅgapratiniyatam udāvāsino† 'rdhāṅkasaktā |
yā rātriḥ sarvaloke smṛtir api ca satāṃ yā śrutir brahmagītā
sā devī durgameṣu pradiśatu jagate maṅgalāniha durgā || 1.
niyatam atipraṇatiparasyājau yāge kriyāphaleṣv asakṛt |
kṣemāryā kṣemakarī vidadhātu śivāni nas satataṃ || 2

She who is the yogic sleep of the Creator, the form of the Source of the Universe [+++], *who adheres to the half-body (of Śiva)* [††], *may that goddess Durgā who is Night in all the worlds, and the Smṛti of the wise, who is the Śruti sung by Brahmā, bestow felicities in times of difficulty in this world. In the battlefield, in the sacrifice and most assuredly at all times in the results of the rituals of one whole-heartedly intent on devotion, may Kṣemāryā, the Cause of Wealth, grant us constant blessings in this world for the benefit of the universe.*

The identification of Durgā as the object of Brahmā's hymn, with the goddess Rātri and the sacred canons of the Smṛti are commonplace in the theology promoted by the *Devīmāhātmya* (DM) and the texts indebted to it. See DM 1.78 ab., DM 1.59 cd; DM 5.28 ab; DM 1.58 ab

The benediction to the inscription found in Kudarkot (EI 1.12) also describes the deity as Durgā and is as follows:

sannihitanīlakaṇṭhā nitambataṭaśobhinī sasiṃhaguhā |
jayati prāleyācalabhūr iva durgā sadā sumukhā ||
Allied with blue-throated Śiva,
the flanks of her hips resplendent,
accompanied by her lion and Skanda,
Hail Durgā, eternally fair-faced,
like the frost -crusted mountain
frequented by blue-throated peacocks,
filled with caves of lions,
the sloping banks of whose rivers gleam.

In the translation I have separated the *śleṣa*.

For the inscriptions recording grants to the shrine of the goddess Daśamī, in which she is collocated with Durgā, see n. 294 on page 104

associated with the Imperial Durgā to describe a regional deity, they create a prestigious vocabulary whereby any goddess of territorial importance could be conceived, and elevated. In the Partābgarh inscription for instance the benedictive verses echo a verse from Bāṇa's hymn to Caṇḍī's triumphant heroic form, the *Caṇḍīśataka*, which, given the prestige of its author and its appearance in at least three known later mediaeval poetic anthologies widely used by students of poetry, was possibly already well-known to the versifier.[266] By evoking the poetry of Caṇḍī, the poet seems to be stamping Vaṭayakṣiṇī with all the hallmarks of the classical war-goddess, although she may have been, as suggested by her name, a deity associated with the banyan tree. If only a plausibility in this case, the process of integration was clearly evident in the other inscriptions, as just observed.[267] Indeed it is in most of the benedictions to the inscriptions from the Śakti cult from the mediaeval period that the universalized face of heroic Śāktism emerges, and that one can see how a single concept was being

[266]The benedictive verses to Durgā/Vaṭayakṣiṇī in the Partābgarh Inscription (EI 14.13) are:
rudre vidravati drutaṃ surapatau pastyaṃ prati prasthite
vitteśe pratipannarāyi +++++śaśāṅke sati |
vaikuṇṭhe matikuṇṭhitām upagate brāhmyaṃ śrite brahmaṇi
pāyād vo mahiṣāsuraṃ sureripuṃ devī dṛśā nighnatī || 3
varṇadvayābhyasanam amba tavedam eva
durgeti nākagamanāya ++++ [nti] |
kātyāyanīti varadeti ca santi kasyāḥ
nāmākṣarāṇi paramāṇi yathā bhavatyāḥ || 4.
śaśāṅke restored on the basis of the parallel in *Caṇḍiśataka* 66, see below] *+śāṅke* insc. The 4th verse is not clear to me, and I am not convinced by my interpretation. As it stands, a partial translation is:
"When in haste Rudra flies, Indra escapes to his stall, Kubera promised his wealth, the Moon [++], Viṣṇu grows lost in his purpose, and Brahmā takes recourse to meditation, may Devī who slays simply with a glance Mahiṣa the Foe of the gods, protect you!
O Mother, the repetition of the two syllables "Durgā" in order to reach heaven [+..+] "Kātyāyanī", "Varadā"– whose syllables could be greater than yours?"

The parallel for v.3 is *Caṇḍīśataka* 66, as follows:
vidrāṇe rudravṛnde savitari tarale vajriṇi dhvastavajre
jātāśaṅke śaśāṅke viramati maruti tyaktavaire kubere |
vaikuṇṭhe kuṇṭhitāstre mahiṣam atiruṣaṃ pauruṣopaghnanighnaṃ
nirvighnaṃ nighnatī vaḥ śamayatu duritaṃ bhūribhāvā bhavānī || 66 ||
"When the Rudras ran, the Sun-god trembled,
Indra's thunder-bolt was destroyed
affrighted grew the Moon, slack the wind
Kubera curbed his hostility
and Vaikuṇṭha's weapons were blunted
she slew with ease the fiery buffalo
dependent on manliness as a crutch–
May Bounteous Power Bhavānī end your sin."

The anthologies in which the verse appears are Bhoja's *Saduktikarṇāmṛta* 25.125; *Śārṅgadharapaddhati* 112; Harikavī's *Harihārāvali* 112.
[267]See n. 265 on the previous page.

uniformly applied to deities of independent sectarian affiliations to form a universal ideology of Śakti. The making of a single, pan-Indic cult of Śakti had reached its most mature phase.

3.2 Three Mysterious Goddesses.

This maturity is reflected in the emergence of a number of powerful Śākta lineages on the political map of India between the 6th and the 11th c., who would attribute the source and emblems of their power to their patroness-Śakti. Besides the Chindaka-Nāgas, and the Cālukyas of Aṇahilapura, observed in the previous chapter, there were several important dynasties to publicly assert their Śākta faith in the early-mediaeval period. Of these the Eastern Cālukyas and the Śulkīs are the earliest and will be dealt with later.[268] First I will assess the Śāktism of two other important mediaeval lineages, who present us with three of the most charismatic, if somewhat elusive, royal goddesses to have wielded power over monarchs at the period.

The first of these lineages are the Rajput Cāhamānas. The Cāhamānas were devotees of the clan-goddess Āśāpurī, who was said to have aided them during their mythic birth from fire in Mount Arbuda, and also to have been the hand behind their acquisition of the Aser fort.[269] Gaṇapati, a king of the Candavāra Cāhamānas who ruled in the 12th c., is said to have worshipped her[270], while even earlier Vigraharāja II, whose date can be ascertained from an inscription of 973 CE,[271] established a temple to her on the banks of the Revā (Narmadā) at Bhṛgukaccha (Broach). Having siezed the fortress called Kanthā (Kanthādurga) belonging to the rival Gurjara king Mūlarāja, he established Āśāpurī in the shrine he had built for her, of which we know only that there was a flight of stairs leading to the Narmadā (*revāspṛṣṭasopānam).*[272]

However, the territorial importance of the principal Cāhamāna seat, the Śākambharī (Sambhar) lake, caused a second deity to grew close to the hearts of the kings, the goddess of the lake herself, the eponymous Śākambharī. The claims made about this goddess's connection to the clan are confusing: one bardic legend, recorded by Tod, the colonial historian of Rājasthān, asserts that

[268] See p.110 and p.110.
[269] See n. 177 on page 74.
[270] Sharma 1959, p. 21.
[271] EI 2.8
[272] *Pṛthivīrājavijaya* 5.50-53. The existence of this work, and its relevance for the history of the Cāhamānas' Śākta faith was first indicated to me by P. D. Szántó.

she had granted Māṇikya Rāya, the son of Dula Rāya (684 CE) possession of the Śākambharī lake, and thereby sovereignty.[273] It is not clear who Tod's bardic source was, or indeed if he was echoing a contemporary legend, for this claim that the goddess granted the Cāhamānas kingship is not recorded in the more ancient testimony found in the Sanskrit epic-poem *Pṛthivīrājavijaya* of Jayānaka, a Kashmirian poet who was most likely the court-composer of Pṛthivīrāja Cāhamāna. The work was possibly composed between 1191 CE-1193 CE.[274] Here the legend[275] retold by Jayānaka establishes no direct relationship between the goddess Śākambharī and the Cāhamānas, that is to say she never appears in person to any of their members. It is rather Āśāpurī who is named as the clan-goddess of the mythical Cāhamāna ancestor, Vāsudeva, whereas Śākambharī, a form of Pārvatī, is the object of worship of a Vidyādhara called Śakambhara.[276] His devotion to Pārvatī so gratified her, that she adopted his name and the site later filled by the salt-lake as her home. Śakambhara's son the Vidyādhara made frequent trips to the shrine to maintain his father's tradition. It is this Vidyādhara, and not Śākambharī, who enables the king to produce the lake and be master of it. As a mark of gratitude for restoring to him the flight-enabling *gulikā* that had dropped out of his mouth, he asked the Cāhamāna to plunge his lance just as the night arrived at a particular spot. Then Vāsudeva was to ride forward and not look back. The king did as he was bade and from the hole in the ground gushed forth the salt-lake. The place where the king in his curiosity turned back to see the moving torrent marked the lake's limit. He is then told by the Vidyādhara that both Āśāpurī and Śākambharī would guard the Sambhar in partnership (*militvā*) and is advised to pay his respects at Śākambharī's shrine inside the lake. After this, Vāsudeva spent the night near the goddess's feet, and the next morning left. That is all. There are no grand encomiums to the goddess nor are there tales inserted describing the king's worship of her at autumn.

Where there are two different stories, it is better to be cautious and rely on Jayānaka rather than Tod's unspecified and much later account. Jayānaka's

[273] Tod 1829, vol 2, pp. 359-360.
[274] Date established by Ojha in the Introduction to the *Pṛthivīrājavijaya*, pp. 2-3.
[275] *Pṛthivīrājavijaya* 4.64-4.88.
[276] The verse where this distinction is made is as follows:
āśāpurīti nṛpate kuladevatā te
śākambharī bhagavatī ca mayi prasannā
ete dyusindhuyamune iva sarvakālaṃ
rakṣiṣyato lavaṇavārinidhiṃ militvā | *Pṛthivīrājavijaya* 4.84 (The speaker is the Vidyādhara)

legend shows that though the Cāhamānas swore primary fealty to Āśāpurī as their clan-deity, their possession of Sambhar made it necessary for them to also patronize and establish ties with the most important sacred site of the region, whose history can be traced back to at least the late 8th c. for Śākambharī is well-attested in the *Devīmāhātmya*.[277] Their power over the lake, clearly one of great strategic importance to them, could only be fully recognized in this way. At the same time, Śākambharī it seems could never replace the role of Āśāpurī– the two deities were venerated by the Śākambharī Cāhamānas together (hence their pairing in the chronicle) but in different capacities.

This seems to be reflected in the inscriptions. Śākambharī's name is conjoined with kings of this line such as Pṛthivīrāja Cāhamāna[278] and the founder of the Naddula line of the family, Lakṣmaṇa.[279] But in neither is she referred to, as the bardic tradition recorded by Tod would have us believe, as the granter of kingship, the conventional *biruda* for a sovereign-goddess. Nor are the kings described as her *bhakta*s, while to assume that the kings would have been thought "Lords over the goddess Śākambharī", the apparent meaning conveyed by the *biruda*s, is also unsuitable, for that would have been thought at the time highly disrespectful towards the deity. It seems that in reality the *biruda* simply meant that the kings were "Lords of the town of Śākambharī" and in fact one of the *biruda*s used to describe Lakṣmaṇa– "he who is lord of Śākambharī, the playground of Lakṣmī as it were" (*lakṣmīlīlāsadanasadṛśaśākambharīndraḥ*)– does indeed suggest this.[280]

Like the Rajputs, the warrior lineages of Nepal are also known for being strongly Śākta, and even today this sectarian current is observable in the ritual life of the city and in its architecture. Claims have been made advancing the Śākta affiliations of the Licchavis, the earliest prestigious dynasty from the kingdom whose rule spanned the 4th c. to the 8th c., mainly by Slusser 1998. The historian makes an argument proposing that the goddess Māneśvarī was the chosen deity (*iṣṭadevī*) established by the Licchavi Mānadeva (459-505/6 CE)[281] in his palace Mānagṛha.[282] There is much in Slusser's conjectures that

[277] See p. 88.

[278] *śākambharībhūpati* Inscription of 1220 Śaka Era, Tod 1829, Vol. II, p. 452.

[279] *lakṣmīlīlāsadanasadṛśākāraśākambharīndraḥ,* EI 9.9.c l.5 (1262 CE); *śākambharīmāṇikya* EI 9.9.d.v.12 and p. 80.

[280] The interpretation can be further supported by the *biruda* used in the Nadol plates of Kīrtipāla to describe Vākpati Cāhamāna, Lakṣmaṇa's father: *śākambharīnāmapure purāsīc chrīcāhamānānvayalabdhajanmā | rājā* [...] *vākpatirājanāmā |* (EI 9.9.b l. 2)

[281] Sanderson 2009, p. 75 and n. 105

[282] Slusser vol. 1 1998, p. 317.

may be true, and it is important to note that a temple to Mānamāneśvarī, dating though from later Malla times, stands in Hāṃḍigāon, the Licchavi capital.[283] The basis, nevertheless, on which her proposition rests is primarily embodied by a reference to an unspecified *devī* in Aṃśuvarman's Hāṃḍigaon inscription of 606 CE[284], whom the latter king made donations to in Mānadeva's palace; and a much later chronicle the *Gopālarājavaṃśāvalī*, written in the 14th c. under the rule of the Malla king Jayasthiti, that claims that King Mānadeva I established the cult of Māneśvarī.[285] While Slusser assumes that the mysterious *śrīdevyāḥ* in the ninth line of Aṃśuvarman's inscription (which could mean either Śrīdevī or simply be an honorific followed by "goddess") must be none other than Māneśvarī[286], nothing from the other inscriptional records of the Licchavis, nor indeed from other literary or legendary sources from the period accounts for their devotion towards this goddess. If the Licchavis were indeed the worshippers of Māneśvarī, they concealed it well from the world, and perhaps this was only proper, given that a goddess's presence in the royal family's life was something to be treasured and guarded. On the other hand, we do have evidence for the cult of a Durgā called Bhagavatī-Vijayeśvarī under Mānadeva's reign: an inscription found from the Bhagavatī temple in Palanchowk dated 425 Śaka Saṃvat (503 CE) records that such a goddess was established (*pratiṣṭhāpitā*) by Vijayasvāminī, with whose name the deity's seems collocated, wife of Samrāṭ Gṛhapati under the reign of Mānadeva.[287] Nepal's rich Śākta traditions flower more fully under the later Mallas, votaries of both Māneśvarī and the great royal goddess Taleju who is well-attested in at least three Malla-era inscriptions from the 17th century.[288] Tales and literature on both goddesses abound from the Malla times onwards and Taleju herself has been the object of much scholarly analysis.[289] Thus no more need be said about her in the present context.

The discussion of the two lineages above had been undertaken more in the hope of indicating avenues of research for future scholarship than for providing arguments justifying both lineages' Śāktism. For, as we have seen, there are still questions to be answered in the case of each. While it is clear that

[283] Slusser 1998 vol. 1, p. 115. Slusser disregards the fact that the shrine is a Malla one too readily– "That the existing temple elevation dates from the Malla period signifies nothing, of course, since any number of successive temples may have been risen over the same foundation".
[284] Vajrācārya 1996, No. 72.
[285] Slusser 1998, vol. 1, p. 318.
[286] Nowhere in her work does she provide the full Sanskrit text of the inscription whereby the reader could verify her claim.
[287] Lielukhine, 2009 No. 14. Inscription first pointed out to me by P.D.Szántó.
[288] Regmi 1966, vol. 4, nos. 64-66.
[289] See p. 39 and n. 8 on page 11 for sources on her legends.

the Cāhamānas were fervent Śāktas, swearing fealty double-fold to a pair of goddesses, it is uncertain whether one among them or both represented the clan-goddess. In the case of the Licchavis of Nepal, their Śākta affiliations in contrast to their successors the Mallas, seem only possible, but as yet unconfirmed, although patronage of the sovereign-goddess cult did occur during their reign. If the Licchavis' patronage of Māneśvarī was indeed fact, then they would be the most ancient Indian dynasty to have nurtured a royal goddess-cult. Much remains of promise but the histories of all three important royal deities, Āśāpurī, Śākambharī and Māneśvarī still remain shrouded in mystery, and work is left to be done.

3.3 The Establishment of Patronage Networks.

With the rise in status of the Śakti cult, the ties of patronage between imperial lineages and goddess shrines grew more established. The cult of Daśamī provides a good example of a Śakti-shrine that developed a firm and enduring tradition of accessing patronage from the powerful lineages of the surrounding region, in particular from the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, whose imperialist ambitions over central India, it is tempting to think, may even have prompted their generosity to the war-goddess. The shrine of the goddess, a form of Durgā, was attached to a Vaidika monastery (*maṭhikā*) in Saṃyāna (now Sanjan in Thana District, Mahārāṣṭra) which housed nine *brāhmaṇa*s of the Pañcagauḍīyamahāparṣad. Five donation-plates concerning this shrine provide quite a detailed history.[290] The first donor was the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king Indra III of Māṇyakheṭa (Malkhed). On April 17, 926 CE, a Muslim whose name is Sanskritized as Madhumati Sugatipa[291] issued on behalf of the king the donation of a village called Kāṇāḍuka and land in another village called Devīhāra for repairing the monastery, the preservation of Dharma and the feeding of the said resident brāhmaṇas[292]. The application for the *maṭhikā* was submitted by a Maitrāyaṇīya *brāhmaṇa* of the Bhāradvāja lineage named Annaiyya (Annammaiyya). In an appeal for merit made by the founder at the end of the inscription, two other names appear, one Revaṇa and one Kautuka, both of whom along with Annaiyya ask to dwell for a long time in the mountains of the gods through the grace of the goddess (*devyāḥ prasādāt*)

[290] EI 32.4.1-2 (also discussed in Sircar 1971 pp. 126-129); EI 32.5.1-3.
[291] According to D.C. Sircar, editor of EI 32.4.1-2, the name Muhammad is similarly Sanskritized as Madhumada in the Panjim plates of Jayakeśin I of Goa (EI 32.4. p. 47 and n. 2).
[292] EI 32.4.1 ll. 27-31.

for whom they had exerted such effort and must, therefore, have been privately devoted to.[293] These individuals too seemed to have been linked with Annaiyya with the establishment of the monastery and that such was truly the case is confirmed by another inscription (translated below) where Kautuka is named as its founder. Subsequently the Daśamī-*maṭhikā* appears in an inscription from the Rāṣṭrakūṭa Kṛṣṇa III (939-67 CE). By this time the shrine seems to have developed in stature and popularity for the inscription is particularly effusive in its praise, painting a vivid picture of a bustling religious centre:

> In this land there is a flawless and venerable monastery founded by Kautuka. It is appointed with rooms difficult to cross and freed of [the taints] of the age of Kali. It is filled with countless skilled students of the Veda (*svādhyāyikair*), who are sharp due to their intelligence which has increased because they have understood the substance of all scriptures (*akhilavāṅmaya-*), dexterous in all the Dharmic Aims (*sakalārthadakṣaiḥ*), learned in the meaning of the Vedas. Pleasing because of people who have examined the arts and are pure, piled with excellent heaps of fine-quality goods, it shines like the land of the gods with meritorious wise-men, in which the goddess Bhagavatī, worshipped by gods and *dānava*s, bestows boons to mankind like the wish-fulfilling tree. [The monastery] is adorned at its entrance (*dvāri*) with gates (*gopuraiḥ*) crowded with innumerable men busy in coming and going, their looming spires grazing the white clouds momentarily resembling crests; and is appointed with many countless jewels [that are none other than] the flawless members of the Association (*parṣadīyaiḥ*) endowed with learning.[294]

Such hyperbole is sharply contrasted by the purpose of the inscription: it records a legal resolution (*vyavasthā*) issuing a punitive fine of forty *dramma*s (and that too from a specific minting agency) the shrine was liable to pay every *dīpāvalī* to a neighbouring Bhillamāladeva temple for having encroached upon its land.[295] Clearly, being embroiled in legal disputes with the Vaiṣṇavas (Bhillamāla was

[293] EI 32.4.1 l.65.

[294] *astīha kautukakṛtir maṭhikānaghāryā durlaṅghyaśālakalitā kalinā vimuktā | svādhyāyikair akhilavāṅmayatattvabodhād udbhūtabuddhipaṭubhiḥ sakalārthadakṣaiḥ | vedārthasāraniṣpuṇair amitaiḥ parītā | lokair vilokitakalair amalaiś ca ramyā deśyaiś ca bhāṇḍanicayair nicitātisārair yā devabhūmir iva sadvibudhair vibhāti | yasyāṃ bhagavatī devī devadānavapūjitā varadā mānavānāṃ tu kalpāṅghripatarūpamā | virājitā dvāri ghanapraveśavinirgamāyāsitalokalakṣair yā gopurair ucchritakūṭakoṭikṣaṇadhvajībhūtasitābhrabhaṅgaiḥ adhiṣṭhitā koṭisahasraratnaiḥ śrutānvitaiś cānaghaparṣadīyaiḥ* EI 32.4.2 ll.27-34. *-parṣadīyaiḥ* conj. Sircar (p. 60, n. 3)]-*parṣadā vā* Inscr. I am indebted to Dr. Csaba Dezső for his help in interpreting this passage.

[295] EI 32.4.2. ll. 35 ff.

a form of Kṛṣṇa) did not stain its reputation. On three further occasions the shrine secured donations from local chieftains of Saṃyāna: in 1034 CE an oil-press (*ghāṇaka*) so that it could become self-sufficient in producing its own fuel (required for burning a lamp before the goddess's image and massaging the feet of the residents) granted by a subordinate of the Śilāhāra lineage named Cāmuṇḍarāja[296]; in 1048 CE a tax in favour of some of the residents of the *maṭhikā* granted by a Moḍha chieftain Vijjala[297]; and on November 13, 1053 CE a permanent endowment by the same patron.[298]

Even greater in terms of commitment and largesse was the patronage-nexus established by the Coḷa princess Arvar Parantakan Kundavaiyar, elder sister of Rājarāja Coḷa (985 CE-1014 CE) and queen of Vallavaraiyar Vandyadevar, with the goddesses of the Bṛhadīśvara Temple in Thanjavur, the two Umā-Parameśvarīs, consorts of the Tañjai-Vitaṅkar and Adavallar Dakṣiṇa-Meru Vitaṅkar. Over the course of four years, beginning from the 25th year to the 29th of Rājarāja's reign, and continuing into the rule of Rājendra Coḷa (1012 CE-1044 CE), the princess made a number of by no means paltry endowments to the deities, which are meticulously catalogued in the form of three inscriptions occupying different surfaces of the walls to the temple.[299] On the 310th day of the 25th year she gave a number of gold vessels.[300] From the 25th-29th years of Rājarāja's reign she gave, excluding these vessels, 141 gold ornaments and emblems to one goddess and 35 to another (including a gold parrot and a swan, two handles for a yak-tail whisk, two for a fly-whisk and a crown).[301] She also gave a large quantity of gold for decorating the sacred hall used for the chariot processions of the two goddesses.[302] Besides the movable goods presented, the princess devised a cash-flow scheme financing the food, temple-garlands, oil for the lamps and other expenses necessary for the goddesses' chariot-processions at their festivals: she made several investments (*kasu*) which were given on interest to villages. The interest had to be paid annually and could be paid either in cash (at 12 per cent) or in paddy. The investments were also used to buy sheep for milk for producing clarified butter for lamps.[303] In the third year of Rājendra Coḷa, Kundavaiyar again made a substantial donation, this time a

[296]EI 32.5.1
[297]EI 32.5.2
[298]EI 32.5.3
[299]SII 2.1.2, SII 2.1.6, SII 2.1.7.
[300]SII 2.1.2, ll. 1-12
[301]SII 2.1.2, ll. 13-59
[302]SII 2.1.6, l. 2
[303]SII 2.1.6, l. 10 ff.

hoard of thirteen large and heavily jewelled gold ornaments.[304]

Similar in stability to the patronage-network between the Coḷa queen and the goddesses of the temple at Thanjavur, were the ties to Śākta shrines established by the Pālas of Bengal. As pointed out by Sanderson 2009, at least four kings among the Pālas beginning with Devapāla were faithful supporters of the Śakti-cult, particularly, with Devapāla's son Mahendrapāla onwards, that of Carcikā[305]: Devapāla is stated in an inscription of his son to have founded a temple to Gaurī[306]; Mahendrapāla, as recorded in the eleventh century Sīyān inscription of his later successor Nayapāla, revered the Eastern Carcikā[307] an eschatolological deity similar to Kālarātri,[308] perhaps as his personal deity (*iṣṭadevatā*); while Nayapāla himself, among his religious numerous establishments indicated by the Sīyān Inscription, commissioned Vaḍabhī temples (topped by gold lions and a filial) for a Śaiva goddess, several stone temples for the Navadurgās – nine aggressive Durgās[309]– one for the Mother-Goddess, a temple of Bhairava surrounded by the sixty-four Mātṛs, and a temple on a hill for the Carcikā established by Mahendrapāla.[310] Once again, during the reign of Nayapāla's successor, Mahīpāla I, his *rājaguru* Mūrtiśiva, as reported in the Bāṅgarh inscription, built on behalf of the king another shrine to Carcikā.[311]

Indeed Bengal even before the Pālas was a fertile ground for a form of Śāktism that was particularly adaptable to Buddhism: we have an icon of Śarvāṇī standing on a lion from the Khaḍga period, assigned to about the 7th c., that was commissioned to be gilded in gold by Prabhāvatī, queen of Devakhaḍga, a great supporter of monastic Buddhism.[312] Such patronage extended after the decline of Buddhism in Bengal into the reign of the Senas–

[304]SII 2.1.7 (see here p. 19 for a summary of the contents of the grant). The fact that each gift in this donation was quantified so meticulously (right down to noting any flaws on the gems) suggests that the donor, besides displaying her devotion, wanted to make the status of the endowments as the goddesses' personal assets legally binding. In the event that their assets were misappropriated by others the inventory would immediately reveal what was missing, and the matter would be regarded as a theft of the deities' property.

[305]Sanderson 2009, pp. 108-114

[306]Sanderson 2009, p. 108, and n. 226

[307]Ibid, and n. 227,

[308]Compare for instance the obeisance verses in the Bāṅgarh inscription (Sanderson 2009, p. 227 and n. 512) with the verses on the goddess Kālarātri in Ratnākara's *Haravijaya* 47.12-27. As with Carcikā, Kālarātri manifests herself at the hour of the aeon's destruction, swallowing all creation yet craving for more beings to sate her appetite.

[309]See Chapter four for their importance in the Eastern Navarātra and in particular p. 185.

[310]Sanderson 2009, pp. 111-114.

[311]Ibid, p. 108 and n. 227; p. 226 and n. 512.

[312]EI 17.24.4, ll.2-3; Sanderson 2009, p. 84 and n. 145. Image can be viewed online at the Huntington Archive:
http://huntington.wmc.ohio-state.edu/public/index.cfm?fuseaction=showThisDetail&ObjectID=30031675

iconographic evidence is also available testifying the commissioning of Caṇḍī statuary in the third year of Lakṣmaṇa Sena (1121 CE).[313]

Patronage networks appear also in Himachal. One among the early mediaeval Chamba rulers was a firm supporter of the Śakti cult: Meruvarman– who may be assigned to the first half of the 8th c.[314]– was the commissioner of inscribed statues of the deities Bhadrakālī/Lakṣaṇā and Śakti Devī, the latter, represented as a sceptre-bearing regent, even being publicly acknowledged by the king, in the engraving on the pedestal, as having conquered his "enemies lodged in insuperable fortresses" (*ripūn durjayadurgasaṃsthān*).[315] Both images (see Illustration 1) were created by an eminent craftsman Gugga, and such seems to have been the associated prestige, that the commissioning of Bhadrakālī's statue, a four-handed Mahiṣāsuramardinī of great elegance[316], was a feat publicly recorded in the Chamba genealogy, attesting therefore the importance laid on it by the lineage.[317] Another, perhaps less important, king of the district of Kiṣkindha called Bhogaṭa also commissioned an inscribed image of Mahiṣāsuramardinī[318] while his son Sātyaki evidently inclined towards Śāktism for his Sarāhan Praśastī glorifies his wife Somaprabhā as Durgā for the most part of the eulogy.[319] No longer was the Śakti-cult a peripheral religion as it might have been further back in the Gupta era[320], but, supported over the years by great mediaeval lineages in the North, East, South and West of India, one of institutionalised stature.[321]

Evidence also suggests that it was not just members of ruling families who supported heroic Śāktism in the period: powerful individuals or associations of villages particularly in the South made grants which were as generous as royal donations, and all inscribed on copper-plate, the medium mostly reserved for royal charters. A resident of Naḷḷur under the Coḷas made a donation that equalled in measure the grandeur of the Coḷa beneficences, including a four-handed Durgā on a jewelled pedestal, enveloped by a solid aureole, and orna-

[313] EI 17.24.5. For the date see ibid. p. 360. Image can be viewed online at the Huntington Archive:
http://huntington.wmc.ohio-state.edu/public/index.cfm?fuseaction=showThisDetail&ObjectID=30035465
[314] Vogel 1911, p. 141.
[315] For Lakṣaṇā see ibid. p. 85. For Śakti Devī see ibid. p. 145, l. 3 and plate a facing p. 138.
[316] Ibid. plate b facing p. 138
[317] Ibid. p. 85, v.46.
[318] Ibid. pp.150-152,
[319] Ibid. pp. 152-159.
[320] See p. 14.
[321] See also Table 1 for other patronage networks

ments of gold and pearl that included one gold and ruby marriage band set with five diamonds and one ruby.[322] Similarly in the Pāṇḍya domain, Nakkan Kori, a lady of whom we know little except that she was the wife of Śattan Gaṇapat, commissioned two shrines, one to Durgā, the second to Jyeṣṭhā.[323] On two occasions powerful village-corporations made donations to goddesses set up as protectoresses of their villages, on one occasion to Durgā, also called Bhagavatī, in Aihole, on the other to Durgā, called Bhaṭārakī, in Puḷḷalūr.[324] We have already observed Pantha (his donation was recorded on stone, though his expenses were indeed great[325]). Heroic Śāktism was thus also richly supported by these private acts of patronage emanating from subjects and from the domain of local government.

3.4 The Shared Symbols of Heroic Śāktism.

Given this expansion and enrichment of the Śakti cult, one may wonder what these goddesses signified to devotees to have aroused in them such faith. Removed from the context by time and space, is it possible locate the core-beliefs in the heroic Śāktism of the 6th-11th c.?

The answer to this question is complicated by two problems: firstly, there was no "text-book" on heroic Śāktism explaining its fundamental tenets; secondly, many goddesses donned multiple sectarian cloaks and there were many sects worshipping warrior-goddesses in different styles and with different philosophies. How then can one tackle the problem of beliefs when there were so many, and is the claim that the cult of the sovereign-goddess formed a single, unified religion justifiable?

The first problem is resolved by directing our gaze outside the bounds of the sacred texts (of which there were many in Śāktism), at a number of no less important sources to locate the beliefs of the religion. This method enables one to see that there were indeed core-beliefs in the sovereign-goddess cult, binding together its many faces, that were reflected, apart from the spiritual literature produced by different sects, in court-literature, mythology, inscriptions, sacred objects (weapons and palladia) and the domain of urban-ritual. The second problem presented by the manifold nature of sects who syncretised Śāktism

[322] SII 2.4.79.
[323] EI 36.15.
[324] SII 15.2.463; SII 13.341.
[325] EI 5.8 l. 5.

into their own religious frameworks is then resolved. Those beliefs – because they were universally distributed in a wide array of sectarian literature and cultural media, and were principally evoked in the Navarātra festival performed by all civic members in the communal context of a town– were not owned by any particular group, but shared by all sects (by Jaina Śāktas, by Buddhist Śāktas, by Brahminical Śāktas, by Śaiva-Śāktas). They did not require abstruse knowledge to be understood, and formed a collective religious heritage belonging to mediaeval Indic culture at large. In the final part of this chapter I shall assess those beliefs and symbols underlying the cult of the sovereign-goddess that were pervasive in Indic culture. I also want to show that those symbols were closely bound up with the political realm. They guided the way royal power was commonly expressed by forming the main conceptual-patterns for mediaeval kingship. They were as follows.

3.4.1 The first King is granted kingship by a Female Divinity

The first belief of heroic Śāktism having a particularly wide currency in Indic belief-systems was the investiture of kingship by a supernatural female being. It appears for instance in the narratives of the dynastic *kuladevī*s from the 12th c. onwards[326], and even earlier in religious texts, in Purāṇic and in Buddhist scriptures from the 7th-9th c. (to be shown). But it seems that the locus of its primary appearance was not the religious literature of the early mediaeval period, but officially sanctioned royal inscriptions anteceding it, from the 2nd-6th c. This would suggest that the legend was perhaps enshrined in scripture after it had already attained a degree of circulation in the dynastic records of royal families.

As it is invoked in the early inscriptional literature, the legend viewed the granter of kingship to be a female being, a prototypical Emperor, usually Durgā or an associated deity. When worshipped, she grants the first-king of the line his kingdom and all the emblems of sovereignty. This belief, appearing for the first time in a 2nd c. Kuṣāṇa epigraph[327], was commonly invoked, as a formula of appropriate kingship, in the genealogy sections of the epigraphs of early Indian lineages, both Brahminical and tribal in their background, from the 5th-6th c. onwards. This demonstrates that the belief in the goddess as the source of royal

[326] See p. 67 ff.
[327] See p. 48.

power was widely held by Indian kings even at this early period, and was felt to be so important, that it was publicly expressed in official records.

The Imperial Cālukyas of Bādāmī (550-753 CE) are generally described in inscriptions issued from Śaka 552 (630 CE) the time of Pulakeśin II onwards, to have been "caused to flourish by Kauśikī" and to have been "consecrated to kingship" or "nurtured by" the Seven Mothers (*saptamātṛ*s), a group of bellicose goddesses closely associated with the first goddess as her accomplices in battle, and indeed even as aspects of herself, in several Purāṇic legends.[328] In later inscriptions the Cālukyas describe themselves similarly as being "protected by the Seven Mothers" and to have "obtained their kingdom by the grace of Kauśikī's favour" (*kauśikīvaraprasādalabdharājyānām*), variations appearing for instance in grants issued by the Veṅgi Cālukya Vijayasiddhi/ Maṅgi Yuvarāja (682 CE-706 CE), by Amma I (918 CE -925 CE), and also in a copperplate grant of the Western Cālukya sovereign Satyāśraya (999-1008 CE).[329] The use of the latter *biruda* in Satyāśraya's grant issued from the Western line of the family at Kalyāṇi, indicates that it was a formula used not just by the Bādāmī and the Veṅgi branch, but commonly employed by the Cālukyas at all the main seats of their empire. The epithet is slightly different in the Western inscription. Rather than a kingdom, it says that the clan "obtained such royal emblems as a white umbrella through the grace of Kauśikī" (*kauśikivaraprasādalabdhaśvetātapatrādirājyacihnānām*).[330] The claim that they were presided over by Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī was thus not particular to a single ruler in the lineage, but was faithfully evoked by all ruling members.

The modes of representation appearing in the Cālukyan epigraphs ought to remind us of the inscriptional terminology employed by the rulers adhering to the 6th century Orissan royal cult of the Śulkī *kuladevī* Stambheśvarī, that was mentioned previously. This needs greater inspection. The earliest inscription mentioning Stambheśvarī was commissioned by the Dhenkanal-Talcher

[328] *kauśikīsaṃvarddhitānāṃ mātṛgaṇābhiṣiktānāṃ* EI 27.39, l.5; *saptalokamātṛbhis saptamātṛbhir abhivarddhitānāṃ...cālukyānāṃ kulaṃ* (Sircar 1942, vol. II, p. 452, lines 2-5 ; *mātṛgaṇaparipālitānāṃ...cālukyānāṃ kulaṃ* EI 4.33, ll. 29-32 (I am indebted to Prof. A Sanderson who first noticed the importance of these *birudas* and provided me with these references in a personal communication in 2010.)

[329] *kauśikīvaraprasādalabdharājyāṇāṃ mātṛgaṇaparipālitānām* (undated grant of Vijayasiddhi/Maṅgi Yuvarāja published by Dr. Csaba Dezső online at http://avacurika.wordpress.com, accessed on October 30 2010, date also clarified by him); Amma I's grant uses the same *birudas* (EI 27.10 p. 39, p. 45) as also does Mallapadeva's grant (EI 4.33, ll.30-31) (these two refs. provided by Prof. A. Sanderson). In Satyāśraya's grant we have a slight variation: *saptamātṛikāparirakṣitānām* (copperplate of Satyāśraya published by Dr. Csaba Dezső at http://avacurika.wordpress.com accessed on October 30 2010).

[330] Copperplate of Satyāśraya, see note above.

king Tuṣṭikāra around the early part of the 6th CE from his capital Parvatadvāraka.[331] Here he calls himself a "devotee at Stambheśvarī's feet" (*stambheśvarīpādabhaktaḥ*). His mother too was a follower of the same deity, for in an endorsement to the grant engraved on the outer side of the first plate of the same inscription, she is described as the worshipper of Bhagavatī Stambheśvarī's feet.[332] Stambheśvarī appears next in the inscriptions of the Śulkī dynasty (600-900 CE). For example, the Hindol inscription of the Śulkī king Raṇastambha, who ruled in the same area, issued around 709 CE, states the lineage had "obtained the gracious boons of Stambheśvarī".[333] At the time of the inscription, this goddess enjoyed legislative power for she is the *pramāṇa* invoked to authorize the land-grant to the recipient *brāhmaṇa*.[334] The "Goddess of the Post" was therefore considered to be not just the appointer of kingship, but also (as demonstrated in this instance) the fountainhead of law, the true sovereign on whose behalf the lineage ruled. Thus already by the 6th and 7th centuries, we find the Śākta investiture-myth appearing in the literature expressive of royal power from the Deccan and Orissa. Given that its most ancient dated records emerge from the secular context of a court, the belief that Śakti had granted power was better known as a political philosophy of kingship in its early days, before acquiring a more conventional religious character in sacred literature. This also serves to demonstrate that Śāktism in its primary form was deeply associated with Indic kingship.

I now turn to an examination of the early religious character of the belief in investiture by Śakti. With regards to the sacred texts, the motif of a goddess granting kingship appears in early mediaeval Vajrayāna literature. In sources such as the *Kalyāṇakāmadhenu*[335], Pārvatī and Durgā are mentioned with regards to obtaining kingdoms or villages. Among a catalogue of goddesses associated with *siddhi*s, the work teaches a ritual involving the worship of Girikumārikā (Pārvatī) for a kingdom, followed by a rite worshipping

[331] EI 30.45. The date is conjectured on palaeographical grounds by D.C. Sircar (EI 30, p. 274).

[332] EI 30.45, l. 1. The inscription has the incomprehensible *Stasbheniryyā* which the editor, D.C.Sircar, interprets as *Stambheśvaryāḥ* (Ibid. n. 8).

[333] *stambheśvarīla⌊bdha⌋varaprasāde śulkīkule 'bhūt kṣitipaḥ kṣatāriḥ | śrīraṇastambha iti pra⌊tī⌋taḥ sphuratpratāpodayatāpitāriḥ* || EI 28.20, ll. 2-3. The date is conjectured by D.C. Sircar in EI 28, p. 108.

[334] *tathā ca dānam idaṃ asmadādikuladevatāṃ bhagavatīṃ surāsuravidvanmunimanujavandi⌊ta⌋śrimatstambheśvarībhaṭṭārikāṃ pramāṇīkṛtya pratipāditam asmai* | EI 28.20, ll. 23-24.

[335] Draft edition kindly allowed for use by Professor H. Isaacson, Hamburg University in a personal communication. The work which forms the subject of Isaacson's current research was discussed at the Early Tantra Workshop in Hamburg, July 2010.

Durgā for a village. In the first, the *sādhaka* is instructed to live on asafoetida (*piṇyāka*) for a lunar fortnight and to worship the goddess with oblations of *bilva* leaves smeared in clarified butter with the mantra "Mother Girikumārikā, grant me a kingdom, Svāhā!". Thereafter the goddess is said to fulfil his wish. In the second he makes a hundred oblations into a fire ignited with the wood of the fig-tree *(kṣīradruma)*, without having performed any preliminary practice (*puraścaraṇa*), while reciting the mantra "Oṃ O Durgā-Vidurgiṇī, Svāhā!" at night. Then, the text assures, the goddess will indeed bestow that village on him at the end of his *homa*.[336] The belief in Durgā or Pārvatī granting kingdoms or land thus constituted a wide substratum in the landscape of early medieval religious practice. We have already seen how the figure of the oracular Caṇḍikā *prasenā* appears both in early Śaiva sources and Buddhist literature. Although this is by no means conclusive evidence that the legend of a goddess's investiture was Buddhist in its early religious form, it does indeed reveal the prevalence in Indic culture of a firm tradition of female divinities and *siddhi*s relating to kingship, before the appearance of the Purāṇic *devī*-literature where this receives greater elaboration. Indeed, there is much in the myth of investiture that appears indebted to the archaic Tantric traditions, but an examination of those layers is outside the scope of the present argument.

Among the early Purāṇic texts, the legend appears in nearly all the Śākta Purāṇas, beginning with the *Devīmāhātmya*, which I shall discuss later. At present I will focus on the *Devīpurāṇa*[337], the Śākta scripture to have had a significant impact on the cultural programme of kingdoms, for it is cited in numerous famous Dharmaśāstric legislative compendiums *(nibandha*s) composed by *smārta paṇḍita*s serving in courts, for the benefit of their kings. Among many examples, early citations from the work appear for instance in the *Kṛtyakalpataru* of Lakṣmīdhara, the twelfth century minister of the Gāhaḍavāla regency of Kannauj, in the *Kṛtyaratnākara* of Caṇḍeśvara Ṭhakkura, the thirteenth century Minister of War and Peace (*sandhivigrahika*) in the court of Mithilā/Tirhut and in the fourteenth century *Durgābhaktitaraṅginī* of Vidyāpati who served in

[336] *āhṛtya pakṣam ekaṃ piṇyākam girikumārikā mātā |*
ājyāktabilvahavanād rājyaṃ dadyān na saṃdehaḥ ||
mantraḥ–oṃ girikumārike māte rājyaṃ me sādhaya svāhā |
durge vidurgiṇīti kṣīradrumasamidhena śatahomād |
grāmaṃ dhruvaṃ prayacchati puraścaraṇanirapekṣo niśi puṃsām |
mantraḥ–oṃ durge vidurgiṇi svāhā / vaṭāśvatthānāṃ samidhāṃ samānavatsāyāḥ kṣīreṇa grāmanāmagrahaṇena homānte grāmaṃ labhate | Draft ed., Prof. H. Isaacson, p. 3.

[337] The work, only available in a single edition in Bengali script, is highly corrupt and difficult to follow. The reader is warned that passages cited from the text include instances of irregular Sanskrit. A critical edition would be welcome.

the later Oinwar court of Mithilā.[338] The *Devīpurāṇa* is an eclectic scripture containing, besides legendary material on goddesses, a number of chapters on aspects of medieval government, and therefore doubles as a political treatise. This could well have been the reason why it was profusely quoted as an authoritative text of goddess worship among orthodox scholars. It contains information for instance on the building of gateways (*toraṇa*) (ch. 25), forts and cities (ch. 73), what to do in the case of calamities (*utpāta*) such as discord in the royal household, falling meteors, earthquakes, portents of the king's death, the rites of pacifying (*śāntika*) ferocious goddesses (*mātṛgaṇa*) in such times (ch. 55), and medical science (*āyurveda*) (ch. 108). The Śākta legends and rites are embedded within this framework, thereby suggesting that the Purāṇa could have been composed to serve, in addition to its scriptural function, as a practical manual for and within a Śākta state. Lending this greater support is the emphasis in the work on the association between goddesses and the attainment and preservation of kingship. It says in one place for instance:

> In particular, when [worshipped] in Fire, the goddess is considered to bestow long life and good health, [while] in a sacrificial pit, glory in battle, conquest of land, affection among all men, knowledge, fortune, heirs etc. Therefore, a king must worship auspicious Caṇḍī who bestows desires as a stream of wealth (*vasordhārā*) as best he can for the sake of power. [339]

And further that a utopian kingdom will be bestowed on the devout:

> [The devotee] having performed oblations to the various types of goddesses, in a *maṇḍala*, sacrificial pit or on in a painted picture, will never be afflicted anywhere by any griefs, internal and others. Moreover, never do torments of disease or care occur in that land. For his sake appears a kingdom where there is abundant victuals,

[338] For a full assessment of the impact of the *Devīpurāṇa* on Nibandha writers from the 12th CE onwards see Hazra 1963, vol. 2, pp. 71-73. The work was also apparently known to Kālidāsa who, claims the commentator Bhagīratha, based the narrative of the *Kumārasambhava* on the tale of Skanda from the *Devīpurāṇa* (Ibid. pp. 67-68 and n. 148).

[339] *viśeṣeṇa tu vahnisthā āyurārogyadā matā | vijayaṃ bhūmilābhaṃ tu priyatvaṃ sarvamānavām | vidyāsaubhāgyaputrādi kuṇḍasthā saṃprayacchati | tasmān nṛpeṇa bhūtyarthaṃ vasordhāraśritā śivā | pūjanīyā yathāśaktyā caṇḍī kāmaphalapradā | Devīpurāṇa* 25.4b -6.

I have maintained *sarvamānavām* as it is being here instead of *sarvamānavānām*. This usage is attested in Śākta-Śaiva scriptural texts and also the Buddhist *Mañjuśriyamūlakalpa* (personal communication, Professor Sanderson, July 2011).

> wealth, freedom from wordly desires, which are eternally splendid with elephants and horses, spread with mines of gold and jewels![340]

The scripture gives a number of detailed instructions on the making and consecration of Śākta insignia that provide an insight into how a mediaeval kingdom would have manifested its devotion to the goddess in visual media. These are discussed later.[341]

Mediaeval *kāvya* from the 10th c., also forms the medium in which a number of tales of a king attaining kingship by means of worshipping a goddess appear, and these serve to strengthen the well-established secular context of the myth. The *Kathāsaritsāgara*, a compilation by Somadeva (1063-1081 AD) of older tales now lost, contains a number of such royal Śākta legends[342] and these too formed the fabric of the mediaeval imaginative universe, just as much as the scriptures. A summary of one alone should suffice in demonstrating the vividness with which the political aspect of the goddess was conceived. In 15.1 it is said that once a *vidyādhara* emperor, Naravāhanadatta, set off with a large army on a quest to conquer Mount Mandara, on the northern side of Śiva's abode Kailāsa, that would grant him the status of a *cakravartin*. The mountain could only be accessed by means of a mountain pass connecting Kailāsa to Mandara. This was protected by with fiersome guards appointed at all the entrances by Śiva: *guhyaka*s and basilisks on one, a mighty *vidyādhara* on another, and the goddess Caṇḍikā in her terrible, apocalyptic aspect as Kālarātri, the all consuming "Night of Destruction", on another. Naravāhanadatta could only cross the cave guarded by this goddess to reach the other side if he propitiated her. However, he delayed and so angered her. Soon when night fell and the army had encamped on the pass, portents of Caṇḍikā's famous wrath appeared threatening with dangerous consequences– the northern slopes of Kailāsa were stained red; a black pall hung over the king's camp; hordes of the goddess's retinue, ghosts, *vetāla*s, *ḍākinī*s and jackals prowled menacingly as if, writes Somadeva in an elegant simile, they were the saplings of her anger, her mood put out of joint by the king's lack of homage.[343] In her rage, the goddess caused

[340] *†evaṃ yugādibhir† devyo bahubhedāḥ †sabhāskarāḥ† | yas tu maṇḍalakuṇḍasthāḥ kṛtvā citre 'thavā yajet | nāsāv ādhyātmikādīni duḥkhāni kvacid āpnuyāt | ādhivyādhikṛtā pīḍā tasmin deśe 'pi no bhavet | subhikṣaṃ kṣemavairāgyaṃ gajavājisadojjvalam | hemaratnākarākīrṇaṃ rāṣṭraṃ tasya prajāyate* | Ibid 50.99-103
˚*kuṇḍasthāṃ* Ed] ˚*kuṇḍasthāḥ* Em.

[341] Durgā's swords, crests, chariots etc. 3.4.5 on page 128 ff.

[342] *Kathāsaritsāgara* 15.1, 12.11.5-123, 12.14.54, 7.8.53-225.

[343] *saṃdhyāruṇā babhūvuś ca kailāsottarasānavaḥ |*
sūcayanta ivāsannasaṃgrāmarudhirokṣaṇam ||

the king's army to lose consciousness. When even the singing of an adulatory hymn could not make her relent, in his depair the king was about to cut off his head to appease her, when she finally warmed towards him. Thereafter she allowed him to pass, and so enabled him to conquer the other side of the mountain and achieve his ambition of universal sovereignty.

These wide-ranging sources for the legend, from early mediaeval inscriptional, scriptural and literary works, form the precursors to the myth of investiture by a goddess as it was echoed in the histories of later lineages, shaping and influencing the way they presented royal ancestry. We have already witnessed very similar narratives in the previous chapter on later-mediaeval goddess-worshipping dynasties, and in 12th c. Brahminical and Rajput genealogies. The myth also appears in the histories of other prestigious mediaeval dynasties appearing after the early Cālukyas such as the Buddhist Pālas and the *kṣatriya* Guhilas. These also tended to present the first Pāla and Guhila kings as having been appointed to regency by a female-divinity, in the case of the first Pāla, Gopāla, by the goddess Cundā, in the case of the first Guhila, Bappā (Bāṣpa), by Vindhyavāsinī.[344] The belief in investiture by a goddess therefore grew to become a staple in the conception of proper kingship[345], and no doubt this owed to its ancient pedigree.

āvṛṇot kaṭakaṃ tasya rājño labdhabalaṃ tamaḥ |
guhāgṛhaparābhūtivairam ārdram iva smarat ||
anarcādurmanaḥkālarātrikrodhāṅkurā iva |
babhramur bhūtavetāladākinīgaṇapheravaḥ || Kathāsaritsāgara 15.3. 94-96

[344]Gopāla (750-775 CE), the founder of the Pāla fortunes, is reported by Tārānātha in his *Rgya gar chos 'byung* (1608 CE) to have been blessed by the goddess Cundā before his assumption of power during the period of political turmoil in Bengal conventionally known as the *matsyanyāya* (Sanderson 2009, pp. 94-95. See Ibid, p. 95, n. 177 on the prominence of Cundā in Bengal and elsewhere at the period; L. Chimpa and A. Chattopadhyaya 1970, pp. 257-258). The *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya*, a *sthalapurāṇa* on the Śaiva shrine of Ekaliṅgaji that fell within Guhila territory, presents Bappā's consecration by Vindhyavāsinī in the following way: *yasmād bāṣpaṃ sṛjāmy adya viyogāc chaṅkarasya ca | pūrvadattāc ca me śāpād bāṣpo rājā bhaviṣyasi | kalau prāpte dvijāgryāṇām kule mahati pūjite | tava vaṃśasya vicchittir na kadācid bhaviṣyati | ārādhya taṃ jagannāthaṃ tīrthe nāgahrade śubhe | rājyaṃ śakra iva prāpya tataḥ svargam avāpsyasi | Ekalingamāhātmya* 6. 13-15.

[345]For further examples in royal inscriptions dating from the 10th-17th centuries where kings are said to have been invested power by a goddess, see Sanderson 2007, p. 289, n. 185. Some royal lineages discussed there are the Mallas from the time of Jayasthitimalla, who claimed in their inscriptions to have gained the boon of the goddess Māneśvarī; the Hoysaḷa kings, who had gained the boon of the goddess Vāsantī; vassal-kings of the Dakṣiṇa Kosala Empire, who also had gained the favours of goddesses such as Kāleśvarī and Khambeśvarī etc.

3.4.2 A Goddess restores power to a dispossessed King

In later tradition the narrative of goddess-sanctified sovereignty grew more complex and we find the addition of a king who has been defeated in war and has thus lost his kingdom. He is then shown to journey to a remote place, usually the woods or to a mountain, and while in the wilderness undergoes penance and worships the goddess. The event precipitates a period of self-reflection and the realization by the king of the transience of his status. This addition to the myth was first reflected in the *Devīmāhātmya,* a work from the late 8th c., in narratives indebted to it and in Śāktized versions of the epics popular in the East. It was perhaps composed keeping in mind lineages who if not Śākta in ancestry, adopted the worship of a goddess at a later point in their dynasty.

The *Devīmāhātmya* was regularly recited in court during the Navarātra, and the values of heroism presented in it, along with its image of the king and the deeds of Durgā, the king-above-all-kings, were viewed as glorified reflections and reinforcements of the monarch's own values and image. In this work the triad of stories concerning Durgā's origin and struggle with demons is couched within a frame story of a king called Suratha who has lost his kingdom and would go on to be born as the eighth Manu Sāvarṇi. Although the myths of Durgā have, over the centuries, taken on a life of their own, evidence suggests that the frame-story of the king had as much of an impact as, if not greater than, the tale of the goddess herself, for, it evoked a story that could (and did) unfold all too-easily in any mediaeval king's life. Given the great appeal of the *Devīmāhātmya*, and the vast range of insightful studies on it, no more need be said for the time being on the specifics of Durgā's legend contained therein.[346] Let us turn instead to the story of the disenfranchised king.

After losing his kingdom tricked by a cabal of dissident ministers and a rival power, Suratha escapes his kingdom on the pretext of hunting. Hiding in a forest, he laments his loss, going on to philosophically contemplate the transience of material possessions and his inexplicable attachment (*mamatva*) to the things he had lost. Thus absorbed in existential questioning, he meets

[346] This text has been the object of much critical and textual attention since the 19th c. The first English translation appeared in 1823, followed by a Latin translation (1831) and a Greek translation (1853) (Coburn 1984, p. 52). Coburn's 1984 study was the first major textual analysis of the complete work, followed by a translation of 1988. Y. Yokochi has written extensively on the subject: Yokochi 1999 (i) is an in-depth study of the *Devīmāhātmya* while Yokochi 2004 analyses the historical antecedents of the *Devīmāhātmya* in the *Skandapurana* incorporating the existing iconographic evidence that Coburn had overlooked. Thieme 2002 has also studied the narrative components of the Mahiṣamardinī tale.

a merchant Samādhi, in a similar plight. Along with Samādhi he goes to the hermitage of an ascetic, Sumedhas, in search of answers to their questions. From him they receive edification regarding the true nature of the Goddess's powers, her legends (the main text of the *Devīmāhātmya*), their benefits in reviving political fortune and the form of her worship. At the end of this exposition Samādhi and Suratha propitiate the goddess for a period of three years on the bank of a river, building a clay image of her and offering to her *bali*s moistened with their blood. Thereafter Durgā appears to them and grants them wonderful boons. Suratha receives from her his kingdom and also reincarnation as the eighth Manu.[347]

It is not clear where the story originated but its topos of humility (for that is what defeat teaches the king) affected other narratives of Śākta kingship. A Purāṇic parallel to the Suratha legend exists for instance in the well-known *Devībhāgavatapurāṇa* 32-35.

The story of the powerless king taught humility by his circumstances and then resurrected by Śakti also appears in literary sources. One of these, the *Surathotsava,* emerged in the context of an Imperial Caulukyan court, indicating thereby the appeal of the myth in the realm of politics. The *mahākāvya* was composed by Someśvaradeva who lived in Gujarat between 1179 and 1262 CE.[348] Though based on the *Devīmāhātmya*, it adds greater significance to the character of king, to the extent of excising the merchant from the frame-story altogether. Further, where the *Devīmāhātmya* posits a spiritual reason for the seer's exposition– the answering of the king's questions about self-hood and the induction of the king into Śāktism – here, the tales of the goddess are explicitly told to Suratha by the ascetic Sumedhas for a secular purpose so that he can regain his lost kingdom.[349] The motif of being restored to the throne is thereby even more enhanced in this version.

The work was commissioned by the Caulukya Bhīma II[350] (1178-1241 CE),

[347] *Devīmāhātmya* 1.1-48 and 13.

[348] Dasgupta, 1962, vol. 1. p. 678. Someśvara is also the author of *Kīrtikaumudī* a biograhy of Vastupāla, minister of the Vaghelā princes Lavanaprasāda and Vīradhavala. I am indebted to Prof. A.Sanderson who first indicated to me the existence of the *Surathotsava*.

[349] *sāmrājyam etasya punaḥ pradātuṃ saiva prabhuḥ parvatarājaputrī | †jñānād iti† jñānanidhiḥ sa matvā vaktuṃ tataḥ prakramate sma tasmai | Surathotsava* 2.39.

[350] That the poem was composed in his court is confirmed by the colophon to the end of each chapter where the author styles himself as the chaplain of a Gurjara king (*śrīgurjareśvarapurohitaśrīsomeśvara*). From the final chapter extolling the author (*kaviprasasti*), we know that this king was the Caulukya Bhīma II:

kāvyena navyapadapākarasāspadena
yāmārdhamātraghaṭitena ca nāṭakena |
śrībhīmabhūmipatisaṃsadi sabhyalokam

whose rule witnessed great turbulence in the Caulukya domains, both in the form of a rebellion by a feudatory in Dhārā[351] and in the form of continuous attack from the Turkish Muhammad of Ghor and his general Qutb-ud-dīn Aibak as well as severe disruptions in Malwa.[352] It has been suggested by certain scholars that the story echoes the events of the time, and that the Śākta myth of Suratha's loss, worship of Durgā and redemption may in actual fact be a political allegory of the Caulukya Bhīma himself.[353] The *Surothatsava,* a rich and valuable work, is neglected in modern times and it is hoped that a fuller study in the future will reveal the specific allegorical resonances in this work, which for the time being I must exclude from the present analysis.

Suratha also appears in the *Durgāvilāsa* (The Play of Durgā) a *mahākāvya* by Rāmakṛṣṇa, son of Govindācārya and grandson of Śivanātha.[354] As in the *Surathotsava*, here too we find a greater elaboration on the theme of the defeated king: while the *Devīmāhātmya* devoted a short final chapter and a portion of the first chapter to the story, the *Durgāvilāsa* narrates it in a lengthy three. Extra motifs are added, such as an ornate description of Suratha's court, a lengthier battle-scene, and an episode where Suratha obtains restorative magical boons and uses them to create a kingdom called Citrapura.[355]

One may enquire why a narrative of defeat should be important to a warrior-culture that valued victory above all else. The obvious answer is that the legend of the frame-story allegorized the importance of Durgā in the restitution of royal power in times of political crisis. But perhaps less obviously, the legend also teaches a moral lesson for kings– the necessity of humility in a warrior. A goddess does not appear to any ruler, but only to one who is humbled in war and has thus learnt the fleeting nature of political glory. Here we may rely on Rāmakṛṣṇa to summarize this quite elegantly:

> A King, whose soldiers cannot be surpassed, who is far-seeing in Politics, and illustrious of lineage is threatened as the moon is by successive eclipses, by enemies though they are weak, devoid

astokasaṃmadavaśaṃvadam ādadhe yaḥ || Ibid. 15.49; The editors identify the author thus: *śrīsomeśvaradevakaviḥ śrīmaddvitīyabhīmadevasabhāyāṃ sabhāsadgaṇaṃ maṇḍayām āseti pratīyate* | Ibid. Afterword, p. 8.

[351] *Surathotsava* 15.33-37; Munshi 1944, p. 208, n. 75.

[352] Munshi 1944, pp. 198-219.

[353] Munshi 1944, p. 208; Dasgupta 1962, p. 678

[354] This work survives in two manuscripts, of which a microfilm copy of one, MS Chambers 428, was made available to me by the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin where the original is kept. The other manuscript is designated in a handlist of 1152 mss of the State Library, Kota, Kota State as Kota 920, Aufrecht, *Catalogus Catalogorum*, vol. 9, p. 82 (non vidi).

[355] *Durgāvilāsa* 1.1-12, 1.16-28, 12.1-43.

of [knowledge] in governing and born into tarnished lineages.

Then the king [Suratha], his soldiers completely destroyed, having deliberated that even the Sun fades on arriving at its [final] hour understanding that its innate lustre cannot be perceived, went to his capital.[356]

It is the knowledge of political uncertainty– the anxiety of a king regarding the loss of power– that the myth reminds a ruler and that the cult of Durgā, or any royal goddess for that matter, claims to salve.

The revival of the king by Śakti was a theme echoed in *kāvya*[357], and also in the legends of historical dynasties who would in these narratives substitute the figure of the Purāṇic king with a member from their own lineage, and the figure of Durgā with their own goddess. The Cālukyas, believing as they did to have obtained Kauśikī's favour, invoked their own family-legend in the same way, describing a story of loss followed by revival through Śakti in several inscriptions.[358] The story can be summarized as follows. A Cālukya king, named Vijayāditya, who conquered Trilocana Pallava was slain in the Deccan in an unfortunate twist of fate (*daivadurīhayā*). After his demise, his principal queen, who was six months pregnant sought refuge in in an *agrahāra* called Muḍivemu with her coterie. There she gave birth to a son, the heir apparent Viṣṇuvardhana, and brought him up under the protection of the *śrauta* Viṣṇubhaṭṭa. When he grew old and had been educated in the rites proper to his lineage, he was informed of his ancestry and history by his mother and is said to have first

[356] *laghubhir api parair apāraseno*
nayarahitair api nītipāradṛśvā |
malinakulabhavair viśālavaṃśo
vidhur iva rāhumukhair vibhur vyabhartsi ||
atha nṛpatir atiprabhagnasainyo
nijam avibhāvyam api pramitya tejaḥ |
galati dinakaro'pi kālam eṣyann
iti ca vicārya nijāṃ purīm ayāsīt || *Durgāvilāsa* 1. 27-28.

[357] *Kathāsaritsāgara* 7.8.53-225 narrates the granting of a magical sword by Durgā-Ambikā, also called Mṛḍāṇī, to two dispossessed princes. They had been tricked by their generals during a campaign of world-conquest and consequently become powerless. In despair they escape to the Vindhya forests, the abode of Durgā. There they embark on a course of rigourous ascetic propitiation (*tapas*) to win from her boons. Vindhyavāsinī appears to one of the princes in a dream and grants him a sword with the command that they were to use it to conquer enemies hard to overcome and that whatever they desired would be theirs by means of it. Thereafter the princes subdue a mythical city, many fantastical celestial creatures and maidens, and having completed their *digvijaya* campaign, returned home after subduing all four quarters with the help of the sword. By its powers they endow their kingdom with riches, treasures and livestock, and give the entire earth, gained from the kings they had conquered, as tribute to their father. The tale thus demonstrates Durgā's agency, figured in the magical sword, in achieving the ideal status aspired to in Indian kingship, that of the *cakravartin*.

[358] See n. 359 on the next page for the sources.

propitiated the goddess Gaurī-Nandā, and then the Cālukyan family-divinities Skanda, Viṣṇu and the Seven Mothers, on the Calukya mountain. The closeness in circumstance to the mythic ideal of the Śakti-worshipping king is indeed remarkable. The Cālukyan story echoes common motifs from Purāṇic legend and *kāvya*: the disenfranchisement of the king; his retirement to a remote place and dedicated worship of a goddess to restore his might; and even the restitution of power at the end of the worship. For, after his propitiation of the goddess, he is said to have reclaimed the emblems of his Empire (*sāmrājyacihnāni*) belonging to his lineage, which had been seized. These included the white umbrella (*śvetātapatra*), doubtless the same as the one mentioned in Satyāśraya's inscription gifted by Kauśikī, a conch-shell (*śaṅkha*), musical instruments that produced the five "Mighty Sounds" (*pañcamahāśabda),* a row of flags *(pāliketana*), a crest emblazoned with Viṣṇu's Boar incarnation (*vārāhalāñchana*), a lance with a peacock-tail (*picchakunta*), the lion-throne (*siṃhāsana*), a gateway in the shape of a *makara* (*makaratoraṇa*), a gold club (*kanakadaṇḍa*), and the Ganges and the Yamunā rivers. He then defeated the Gangas and the Kadambas and re-established Cālukya sovereignty over the entire Deccan in the region spanning Adam's Bridge and the Narmadā, because of his Śākta worship.[359] In this case too a Śākta myth formed the underlying ideology for an example of court-sponsored literature that formed the main locus for the elaboration of royal identity.

The legend of the dispossessed king also influenced Eastern versions of the epics, the principal works embodying *kṣatriya* values, appearing first in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, and later also in the *Mahābhārata*. In the epics proper, or rather the critical editions available of these texts, no narrative exists where Durgā appears. Nevertheless, this particular legend of Śākta kingship is narrated in recensions propagated in Central India (in the case of the *Mahābhārata*) and in the

[359] *vijayādityanāmarājā apajigīṣayā dakṣiṇāpathaṃ gatvā trilocanapallavam adhikṣipya daivadurīhayā lokāntaram agamat | tasmin saṃkule purohitena sārdham [...] tasya mahādevī muḍivemunāmāgrahāraṃ [...] upagamya tadvāstavyena viṣṇubhaṭṭasomayājinā [...] abhirakṣitā satī viṣṇuvardhanananandanam asūta | sā tasya ca kumārakasya mānavyasagotrahārītiputradvipakṣagotrakramocitāni karmāṇi kārayitvā tam avardhayat | sa ca mātrā viditavṛttāntaḥ sannigatya calukyagirau nandāṃ bhagavatīṃ gaurīm ārādhya kumāranārāyaṇamāṭrgaṇāṃś ca saṃtarpya sāmrājyacihnāni samādāya kadambagaṅgādibhūpān nirjitya setunarmadāmadhyaṃ sārdhasaptalakṣaṃ dakṣiṇāpathaṃ pālayām āsa |* (compilation by Satyasray 1937, pp. i-ii from inscriptions published in the *Indian Antiquary* 7, 8, 9 and 19) For the royal emblems see EI 4.33, ll. 25-27, grant of 1124 Śaka Era=1046 CE issued by Mallapadeva, which repeats the same legend almost exactly with these richer details. Burnell regards this event to have taken place around the 4th century CE (Burnell 1878, p. 17, n. 3), but it is difficult to find support for this hypothesis in other documents.

East, particularly Bengal (mainly in the case of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, and to a certain extent also the *Mahābhārata*) where strong goddess-centred cults were known to have flourished. In these sectarian versions Rāma and the Pāṇḍavas are shown to have worshipped Durgā at critical periods of their disenfranchisement: Rāma after the capture of Sītā, the Pāṇḍavas when they are in exile and just before the Kurukṣetra war, when they are about to face the Kurus in the battle to regain their kingdom. Their subsequent resumption of power is attributed to this worship. In the case of the *Mahābhārata* the Śāktized interpolation was made in early-modern manuscripts, mainly in Devanāgarī and Bengali, copied between the 17th and the 18th centuries[360](although they may have formed

[360]In the *Mahābhārata* (Mbh) Durgā's intervention is shown twice. Both episodes, with their manuscript-variants are published in the Appendices to the Virāṭaparvan and Bhīṣmaparvan of the Poona Critical Edition, rather than in the main text. The first intervention is in the Virāṭaparvan, Mbh 4.5.29 ff., published in the accompanying Appendix 1, pp. 300-304. On their way to the court of Virāṭa, the brothers hide their possessions in a *śamī* tree to protect them from enemies, and Yudhiṣṭhira mentally invokes Durgā for blessings. She appears to them and grants them boons of victory. Seven different versions of Yudhiṣṭhira's hymn (A-G) are shown in the Poona Edition. The manuscripts consulted by the Poona editors on which basis these seven *durgāstavas* are edited are as follows:

i) D2 (Mbh IV, p. 300): Devanāgarī, date unknown but colophon reads *saṃvat 74 caitre*, Poona Bombay Govt Collection, No. 115 (Mbh IV, p. vi.).

ii) D4 (Mbh IV, p. 300): Devanāgarī, 1700 VS (1644 CE) Baroda Oriental Institute Library 3949, (Mbh IV p.i)

iii) D5 (Mbh IV, p. 300): Devanāgarī, 1716 VS (1660 CE) Baroda Oriental Institute Library, No. 5 (Mbh IV, p. i)

iv) Dn (Mbh IV, p. 301): the 'Vulgate' Devanāgarī version of Nīlakaṇṭha of which there are two manuscripts–Dn1, dated 1606 VS (1684 CE) and Dn2 dated 1670 VS (1614 CE) (Mbh IV, p. i)

v) D7 (Mbh IV, p. 301): Devanāgarī, its conjectural date is given as 1550 VS? (1494 CE?), Poona Bombay Government Collection, No. 114 (Mbh IV, p. i)

vi) D3 (Mbh IV, p. 302): Devanāgarī, Poona Bombay Government Collection, No. 29 (Mbh IV, p.i)

vii) D6 (Mbh IV, p. 302): Devanāgarī, 1745 VS (1689 CE) Baroda Oriental Institute Library, No. 10803, (Mbh IV, p. i)

viii) D9 (Mbh IV, p. 303): Devanāgarī, Madras Adyar Library, No. 34 M 8, (Mbh IV, p. ii).

Thus, the period when this hymnal insertion was scribally recorded, as inferrable from the dated manuscripts, falls between 1614 CE (the date of Dn2) and 1689 CE (the date of D6). The provenance of this hymn appears to be Central India since all the "D" manuscripts hail from this region (Mbh IV, p. i).

The second intervention in the Mbh is in the Bhīṣmaparvan, Mbh 6.22.6 ff, published in Mbh VI, Appendix 1, No. 1, pp. 710-11. During the Mahābhārata battle, Arjuna is given a hymn to recite to Durgā by Kṛṣṇa. On reciting this, the goddess appears to him and grants him fearlessness in battle. The manuscripts consulted by the Poona editors where this hymn appears is as follows:

i) K2 (Mbh VI, p. 710): Devanāgarī copy of the Śāradā version. It is dated Śaka saṃvat 1693 (1828 VS; 1771 CE), Poona B.O.R Institute, Mahābhārata Collection No. 15 (246) (Mbh VI, pp. ix-x)

ii) K4 (Ibid): Bengali copy of the Śāradā version. It is conjecturally dated 1675 Śaka (?) Dhaka University Library No. 669 (Mbh VI, p.x)

iii) B (Ibid): Four Bengali Manuscripts form this group, three of which are from Shantinike-

a far more ancient tradition[361]), and since they fall outside our timescale we must exclude them from our analysis. The version of the *Rāmāyaṇa* to contain the theme of the dispossessed king is to be found mainly in the two Eastern Purāṇas, the *Kālikā*[362] 60.25-43 and the *Bṛhaddharma* 22.1-25[363], and also in the possibly Deccan *Devībhāgavatapurāṇa*[364] 3.30.18-60.[365] In these episodes a lamenting and powerless Rāma worships Durgā in Āśvina after Sītā's abduc-

tan, Viśvabhāratī University and one from Dhaka University (Mbh VI, p. x.)

iv) Da (Ibid): Two Devanāgarī manuscripts form this group, one from Poona, the other from Baroda (Mbh VI, p. x)

v) Dn (Ibid): The Devanāgarī "Vulgate" Version of Nīlakaṇṭha, of which two manuscripts were used– one from Poona (Dn1), the other from Indore (Dn2). Dn1 is dated saṃvat 1729 (1672 CE) (Mbh VI, p. xxxv) while Dn2 is stated by the scribe to have been copied between 7 November, 1782- 12 March 1783 (Mbh VI, p. xxxv). The editors conjecture that the Bhīṣmaparvan to this manuscript was copied a few months before the earlier date (Mbh VI, p. xxxvi.)

vi) D2 (Ibid): Devanāgarī, Poona Bombay Government Collection, No. 481 of Viśrāmbāg I (Mbh VI, p. x.).

It is to be noted that there are no significant variants between the manuscripts of this hymn (unlike the first hymn) and the text of the *stava* is fairly uniform in all manuscripts. As inferrable from the dated manuscripts, the period in which the insertion must have been made is between 1672 CE (the date of Dn1) and 1783 CE (the final date of Dn2). Since 5 out of the 9 manuscripts are in the Bengali script, this second interpolation seems to mirror a particularly Eastern tradition of the Mbh, prevalent in Bengal. But there is the possibility that this interpolation was already present in the Kashmirian version, since K2 and K4 are copies of this version.

I am indebted to Prof. C. Minkowski for clarifying issues of palaeography and manuscript-provenance.

[361]P.D.Szántó drew my attention to a Nepalese manuscript of the Anuśāsanaparvan dated 1053 CE (NAK 1/1321= NGMPP A 27/2). A number of other early Nepalese manuscripts of the *Mahābhārata* are also shown on the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project catalogue. It remains to be seen whether the two Śākta episodes depicting Durgā appear in these. A future study of these manuscripts would be welcome.

[362]The *Kālikā* is particularly relevant to Assam since the major part of it explains and glorifies the *pīṭha* of Kāmākhyā in the country of Kāmarūpa roughly located in that region.

[363]The *Bṛhaddharmapurāṇa* connects every *tithi* of Durgā's autumnal worship with a day of the *Rāmāyaṇa* battle. After seeing the goddess in the figure of a young and beautiful maiden sleeping naked in a *bilva* leaf, Brahmā charmed her with a hymn. She then advised him to worship her from the dark Ninth of Āśvina until the very end of Rāma's battle. She prophesied, in the manner of the Caṇḍikā-*prasenā*, the following: on the dark Ninth conjoined with Ārdrā, Brahmā was to ritually awaken her in the *bilva* (*bodhanavidhi*), on Trayodaśī the *rākṣasa* Kumbhakarṇa was to be slain by an arrow of Lakṣmaṇa, on Caturdaśī Rāvaṇa was to set forth on his campaign, on New Moon, Lakṣmaṇa would kill Indrajit. Now begins the bright phase: on Pratipat the demon Makarākṣa, and on Dvitīya, Devāntaka were to die; on Saptamī Caṇḍikā would enter Rāma's bow and thereby empower it; his confrontation with Rāvaṇa would begin on Aṣṭamī watched by all the gods; on the juncture of Aṣṭamī and Navamī (midnight) Rāvaṇa would be frequently decapitated, but due to his powers would refresh his heads; on the afternoon of Navamī Rāma would kill him; on Daśamī he would celebrate his victory.

[364]The work lists Mahālakṣmī of Kolhapur, Reṇukā of Māpurī, Bhavānī of Tuljapur, and the goddess of Saptaśṛṅga, the four most important Devīs of Deccan in 7.38.5–35 (reference provided by Prof. A. Sanderson).

[365]See also Kinsley 1987, pp. 107-8. The *Virāṭaparvan* episode was also analysed by Allen 2001. Neither author attempted dating these traditions.

tion, acquires the goddess's grace and a boon of victory in the forthcoming war in Laṅkā. His victory is therefore attributed to Durgā while each day of the Navarātra is explained as a day of his battle, with Rāvaṇa's death being said to have occurred on the Ninth *tithi* while the goddess's ritualized release from the world of men occuring on the Tenth with the performance of a lavish worship (*viśeṣapūjā*) and the Śāvarotsava. Indra then ritually lustrated his army and concluded the rite.[366] The myth, originating as a sectarian remodelling of the established *kṣatriya* legend, perhaps– it might be speculated– to accomodate the cult of heroic clan-goddess worship, outgrew its narrow context in the later mediaeval period. It significantly influenced the popular late-mediaeval Bengali version of the *Rāmāyaṇa* by Kṛttivāsa,[367] as well as the myth of Tuljā in the *Turajāmāhātmya*[368] and remains today a belief common among all sects throughout India.

It is difficult to ascertain the period when the legend that Durgā aided Rāma was interpolated in the Purāṇas: only a far more thorough analysis including the manuscripts of the previously-mentioned Purāṇas will succeed in clarifying the date. For the time being the available edited works must suffice as tools for tracing the period. A hymn to the demoness Saramā in the *Rāmacarita* of Abhinanda, who flourished in the 10th c. in Bengal[369] collocates Saramā with Durgā in its sixteenth canto and presents Hanumān's encounter with this syncretised deity exactly in the manner of a heroic Śākta myth: when in danger, the warrior worships a ferocious goddess and obtains from her safe and propitious passage.[370] Given, then, that the *Rāmāyaṇa* was open to additional Śākta

[366] *Kālikāpurāṇa* 60.25c-38.

[367] *Kṛttivāsī Rāmāyaṇa*, Laṅkākāṇḍa, pp. 328-89.

[368] Towards the end of Adhyāya 3, it is said in this work that Tuljā arrived at the Sahya mountains with her entire retinue of *yoginī*s and malevolent planets in her desire to see Rāma *(ājagāmāmbikā devī rāmadarśanalālasā | yamunāṃ prāpya śailendraṃ yoginībhir grahaiḥ saha)* and that she dwelt there wishing to meet with him: *ambāvasad girau tasmin rāmadarśanakāṅkṣiṇī (Turajāmāhātmya* 3.40, 45cd). When he passed by on his way to Laṅkā she was gracious to him. She is thus also known as "Rāmavaradāyinī" (She who bestows boons on Rāma) (Jansen 1995, p. 152). Her connection to Rāma is also evoked in her name: vernacular traditions connect one of her eithets Tukāī with a question Rāma supposedly asked the goddess on first meeting her (Jansen 1995, p. 261).

[369] A discussion of the evidence concerning Abhinanda's date and patron appears in the introduction by Śiromaṇi to the *Rāmacarita*, pp. 20-23.

[370] The terminology in Saramā's hymn echoes that used in Purāṇic hymns describing Durgā. Among a sequence of laudatory epithets in the vocative, Saramā is described as the slayer of the buffalo-demon, a clear reference to Durgā, "by whose foot, delicate as the sheath of a lotus, Mahiṣa was crushed in ancient times" (*abjakośamṛdunā mahiṣaḥ prāk cukṣude sa ca raṇe caraṇena).* Saramā is also addressed as Caṇḍī and Bhavānī. This is accompanied by a number of fairly conventional epithets used to describe Durgā's omnipotent aspect: she is unmanifest nature, Prakṛti; she is composed of all the Śaktis (*sarvaśaktisamavāyiśarīre*), and of Dharma in its entirety (*sarvadharmamayi*); she is the refuge of all beings (*sarvaśaraṇye*); the mother

inflections from the Pāla period, it is tempting to suppose that the proclivity to augment the *Rāmāyaṇa* with Śākta narratives fructified in the East from the 9th or the 10th century.

3.4.3 A Goddess is worshipped in War

It was in war, both in its defensive and combative aspects, that a goddess's potency was most sought after, and by all religious traditions. The belief that a female-being ought to be worshipped in times of war probably arose simultaneously with the first legend of her having granted boons to the king. Numerous interludes in mediaeval courtly literary works describe a king worshipping Durgā in her bellicose forms on the warrior-*tithi*s of Mahāṣṭamī or Mahānavamī, sometimes with rituals involving a degree of risk and even human sacrifice for the attainment of special martial powers.[371] The ferocity of the goddess, as we

of the Universe (*jagatprasavinīṃ*); the slayer of wicked Daityas (*duṣṭadaityakulamāri*), whose face is fiery with the flames of the gods (*devatānalamukhī*). In the following transliteration I have only isolated those epithets to Saramā that correspond to Caṇḍī:

sarvadharmamayi sarvanamasye sarvaśaktisamavāyiśarīre | sarvatoṣimukhi sarvaśaraṇye sarvabhūtapatipatni namas te | duṣṭadaityakulamāri namas te [...] *tvāṃ jaganmātāmahāṃ* [...] *jagatprasavinīṃ* [...] *brāhmi vaiśraviṇi raudri kaumāri* [...] *caṇḍi namas te* [...] *tvaṃ sṛjasy avasi saṃharasi tvaṃ tvaṃ vibharṣi bhuvanāni bhavāni* [...] *viprakīrṇavikṛtiḥ prakṛtis tvaṃ* [...] *udyatā himavataḥ śikharīndrāt tvaṃ trivargaphalavallir aparṇā | Rāmacarita* 16. 57-81.

Before the hymn Saramā had introduced herself in the mode of the Purāṇic warrior-goddess, as the ferocious Śakti of the lord of the world (*śaktir asmi jagadīśitur ugrā*) who both destroys the enemy in battle and rescues with a glance bound souls submerged in the ocean of creation, who approach her for refuge (*saṃharāmi samayapratipakṣam uddharāmi ca bhavārṇavamagnān īkṣitena paśukān upasannān*). The analogy with a ship in stormy seas is conventional in Purāṇic descriptions of Durgā. For instance: *durgāsi durgabhavasāgaranaur asaṅgā | Devīmāhātmya* 4.10cd.

In a motif familiar to us from the goddess-king narrative, Hanumān asks Saramā to offer him safe passage in order to rescue Sītā (*dehi devi gamanāya niyogaṃ yāmi rāmaramaṇīm anusartum*). She being pleased lets him pass, and also, in the manner of the regal Durgā blesses him, prophesies his speedy destruction of Rāvaṇa's clan, and the favourable presence of the gods, Siddhas and seers in the southern direction where he is headed:

sā tutoṣa tuṣitaiḥ saha tasya prajñayā ca vinayena ca tena |
tarhi vācam iti cāpratiramyāṃ saumyabhāvam upagamya babhāṣe |
ehi yāmi pavanātmaja tuṣṭā yat tvam icchasi dadāmi tad āśu |
gaccha saṃprati sukhena surais te sauṣṭhavaṃ hi viṣame 'pi sudṛṣṭam |
svasti te 'stu nikaṣātanayānām ekakaḥ kadanam āśu kuruṣva |
dakṣiṇāṃ diśam imāṃ ciramuktām avasantu surasiddhamunīndrāḥ | Rāmacarita, 16. 82-84.

This superimposition may appear at first sight as somewhat surprising (a goddess being "inverted" to demoness) but it only echoes a fairly conventional early-mediaeval conception of Caṇḍī: her aspect as the fiersome door-keeper (*dvārapāla*), the protector of passes and crossings. This aspect of Caṇḍī appears in *kāvya*. See for instance *Kathāsaritsāgara* 12.6.109-110 and 15.1 where she is presented as the wrathful guardian of mountain-passes.

[371] *Yaśastilakacampū* (royal worship of Aparājitā on Mahānavamī) 3.459-61; *Yaśastilaka-*

have already seen in the *Haravijaya,* was indeed understood to be her primary and most ancient characteristic. An inscription from Vaṭa (Vasantgadh in Rajasthan) dated 625 CE conclusively establishes that Durgā's connection to battle was prevalent at this early period, for in the benedictive stanzas the poet asks the goddess, named in the inscription as Kṣemāryā or Kṣemakarī, to provide blessings in the battlefield (*ājau* [...] *kṣemāryā* [...] *vidadhātu śivāni).*[372]

But inscriptions reveal little as to how that connection was manifested in ritual. For that aspect we must turn to prescriptive literature in Sanskrit. Many examples of this literature describe with detail how goddesses ought to be worshipped in Āśvina just before the departure of the army on military campaigns. It is difficult to historically contextualize such texts for, being written as divine revelations, they deliberately conceal specificities of context, such as the time and place of composition. Nor do they serve as eye-witness accounts of real events, since they are concerned with what ought to be done, rather than what was. And yet, despite these problems, the martial aspect of goddesses is manifested with sharpest clarity in these works and they all suggest that war served as the most important social context for heroic Śāktism. A consideration of these ritual works is to be found in the fourth chapter.

Among the religious texts, early Vajrayāna again reveals an awareness of an archaic form of this belief. The Buddhist Tantric text *Mañjuśriyamūlakalpa*[373] describes in considerable detail in chapter 52 (one of the Yamāntaka group) the worship of goddesses called *yakṣiṇī*s for war-like purposes. Several are named who can provide protection in war, or are employed in aggressive rituals to dispose of enemies. One, Tamasundarī, "kills enemies even removed from him by a hundred *yojan*as" when worshipped by the *sādhaka,* while another, Naravīrā, is described as "providing excellent protection in calamity".[374] Like the later *yoginīs,* some of these deities wander in large groups.[375] Some among them are benevolent (*sattvānugrahakārikāḥ*): they are said to fight Daityas in battle, are Dharmic (*dharmiṣṭhā*), compassionate (*karuṇāviṣṭāḥ*), and wander the earth

campū (royal worship of the Tantric Caṇḍamārī with human-sacrifice on Mahānavamī), pp. 26-29; *Gaṅgādāsapratāpavilāsanāṭaka* (royal worship of Mahākālī on Navarātra) as summarized by Kapadia 2010, pp. 128-129, 132, 152.

[372] EI 9.25. For a discussion of the benediction see n. 265 on page 97.

[373] Draft edition was kindly allowed for use by Dr. Martin Delhey, Hamburg University in a personal communication. Chapter 52 of the work which forms part of Delhey's current research was discussed at the Early Tantra Workshop in Hamburg, July 2010. All citations from the scripture are from Delhey's draft.

[374] *yojanaśatasthitam api śatruṃ ghātayate* (*Mañjuśriyamūlakalpa*, p. 17); *āpatsu ca mahārakṣāṃ karoti* (Ibid. p. 22).

[375] Āndhārasundarī for instance is *anekayakṣīśatasahasraparivṛtā* (Ibid, p. 18.)

for the benefit of good folk.[376] These are also the hallmarks of the Purāṇic Durgā/ Caṇḍī. As in the case of the first belief, here too one finds that the idea of warrior-like celestial women had appeared quite early on in Indian history. As before, one may wonder again whether, given the comparative antiquity of the early Tantric corpus to the Śākta Purāṇas, the descriptive terminology concerning these *yakṣinī*s and their aggressive rituals in this material might have influenced Durgā's depiction as the kingdom-bestowing war-goddess, the slayer of Daityas and the protector of men.

3.4.4 The Goddess's evocation in Symbols of War

The great martial ability of Caṇḍī or other martial goddesses collocated with her was evoked in a number of spectacular visual symbols such as the royal sword, crests and the deity's sacred chariot that were used in war and also regularly paraded in the city as important emblems of state. They displayed the wealth and magnificence of kingly power in its highest sacred form. The Pālas for instance were famous for owning a crest emblazoned with Tārā– a goddess whom one of their kings Mahendrapāla boasted to be presided over by in battle[377]– that was captured as war-booty by the Rāṣṭrakūṭa Govinda III,[378] while several important kings claimed to be the custodians of Bhavānī's sword, treated as the form of the goddess held in the arm of the king. Śivājī for instance was said to have owed his military successes to the magical power of the sword that he claimed Bhavānī had granted to him.[379] The sword always accompanied Śivāji or kept, when not required, at Tuḷjā Bhavānī's altar. It was kept in a shrine in the Rānī's palace in Sātārā and publicly paraded during the Navarātra in a palanquin.[380] Every year on Vijayadaśamī, the sword was reclaimed from her, in ceremonial enactments of her celestial favour, before the king proceeded on campaigns.[381]

Several Nepalese dynasties were also the bearers of such a sword whereby their lineages claimed to derive their sovereignty. A Nepalese inscription of 1387/8 CE reports the granting of a gift of a sword by the goddess Māneśvarī to the King Jayasthitimalla by which "other kings were brought in his domin-

[376] *saṃgrāmaṃ devadaityānāṃ yudhyante ca maharddhikāḥ [...] dharmiṣṭhā karuṇāviṣṭāḥ sattvakāmāḥ suvatsalāḥ* || || *sattvānāṃ hitakāmyarthaṃ paryaṭanti mahītale* | Ibid. 4.4-4.5ab, p. 19.

[377] One of the *birud*as of Mahendrapāla was *saṅgrāmatārā* (He who has Tārā in battle), see EI 42.2 l. 54.

[378] EI 34.19, ll.35-38 cited with emendation and discussed in Sanderson 2009, p. 94. n. 173.

[379] For the account from the *Śivadigvijaya*, see Sen 1920, pp. 181-182.

[380] Grieve 1909 cited in Sanderson 2007, p. 289 n. 187.

[381] Gode 1940-41, pp. 82-83.

ion" (*śāsitānyamahīpāla*).[382] The Malla Kings of Bhaktapur worshipped Taleju, their clan-goddess, in a royal sword that even in the present day is kept beside the statue of the deity in the palace temple.[383] Ritual manuals of the Newar Brāhmaṇas indicate that the sword was worshipped as the esoteric form of this goddess, Siddhilakṣmī, who is described in the litany as being "present in the sword" (*khaḍgasthā*) and as its "embodiment" (*khaḍgarūpiṇī*).[384] A Newar manuscript on the Navarātra also sets out the procedure and mantras concerning the installation of a goddess-empowered sword (*khaḍgasthāpanavidhi*) with Tantric rites and the attainment of the sword-*siddhi* on Mahāṣṭamī. The purpose of the *siddhi* was to cause wealth, crops, to achieve success in all deeds, to destroy enemies and to grant victory to the king.[385]

After the rise of Muslim powers in India from 1000 CE onwards, such swords, said to be gifted by a goddess, were often employed as symbols and instruments of crusades against Islam. During this period the expanding Muslim empires, from the Sultanate to the Mughals, posed an enormous threat to small Brahminical kingdoms, who struggled against the sophistication and organization of the former. Thus, legends of the origin of mystical swords, and the ideologies connected to their use, especially in the cases of Śivāji and the late Pāṇḍyas, often arose from the politics of religious opposition. The 14th century Pāṇḍyan prince Kumāra Kampaṇa claimed, for instance, that the sword he had used against the Muslims in the Madurai area was granted to him by a goddess so that he was able to extirpate the Muslim presence in the South and restore the temples and regions of that land to their former glory.[386] Śivāji himself constructed his political strategies, religious ideology, military career and Empire against the might of Aurangzeb's empire. His sword was not only a representative of the goddess, but also became an emblem of his political defiance.

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[382] Sanderson 2007, p. 289, n. 185.

[383] Sanderson 2007, p. 295. See Illustration 2 for a relief showing the sword in Kathmandu's Durbar Square.

[384] Ibid and n. 202.

[385] *Navarātravidhi* NGMPP E2363-29, fol. 1: *sarvakāryārthalābhāya sarvaśatruvināśāya ca | khaḍgasiddhijayaṃ dehi harasiddhyai namo 'stu te |*
-lābhāya corr.] *-rābhāya* MS.
-śatru corr.] *-sattu* MS.
harasiddhyai em. Sanderson] *harasiddhyā* MS.

[386] Kinsley 1987, p. 110.

3.4.5 How to Energize Symbols of Warfare

Given that they were no ordinary objects but rather totems of Śakti used in war, the question arises as to how these objects could have been ritually granted their sanctity and transformed into vessels of Śakti. Here we may turn again to the *Devīpurāṇa,* which formed one of the chief scriptural basis for courtly treatises instructing how to empower objects used in attack and defense. The work describes methods to ritually empower palladia such as swords, chariots and crests that would protect a king and the citizens of a kingdom. These instructions embody by no means simply a scriptural ideal, for, they had a real impact in shaping the ritual programmes of various Indic kingdoms– as mentioned before, the Dharmaśāstric treatises in which these methods were reiterated were used to formulate ritual policy.

Swords

With regards to swords or similar substrates, the text teaches a rite to be performed on the *tithi* called Śakrā or Vijayā, that of the full moon (*purṇimā)* in the month of Śrāvaṇa, an occasion important to *kṣatriya*s. The association of the festival with Indra (Śakra) is indicative of its military context. The text says that the ritual was to be done mainly for success in battle (*vijaya*), but also for heirs (*putrārthaṃ*), a kingdom (*rājyaṃ*), knowledge (*vidyā*), fortune (*yaśas*), good luck (*saubhāgya*), and good health (*ārogya*). On an auspicious asterism, the goddess was to be ritually installed in a sharp sword of gold or silver (*hemaṃ vā rajataṃ taikṣṇyaṃ khaḍgaṃ*), or in a pair of her slippers (*pāduke*)[387] or an image (*pratimā*) after the deity Fire had been summoned with mantras. This became her receptacle (*ādhāra*), empowered by her essence. It was to be adorned with mango leaves and placed on barley and *śālī* grains. She was to be anointed with sandal wood and *rocanā* and worshipped with various flowers, incense, scents and food offerings. Next various kinds of grain, and fruits were to be presented as *naivedya.* If the sacrificer desired specific rewards, fruits (*phalā*) were offered to the goddess, for victory in battle–barley grains (*yavāṅkurān*), for good luck–flowers (*puṣpaṃ*), for glory in war–jewels (*ratnāni*), for the destruction of enemies–a bow (*dhanuḥ*), for wealth–rice (*annaṃ*). Having asked for her forgiveness for errors caused in the rite, the sacrificer is instructed to feed children (if he wishes for offspring), or women and men of the twice-born

[387]The use of a regent's slippers as his representative in lieu of the person of the king appears in the *Rāmāyaṇa*: when Rāma is away on his fourteen years of exile, Bharata rules in his name placing his slippers (*pādukā*) on the throne. *Rāmāyaṇa* 2.107.22c

castes (if he wishes for victory).[388]

The relative antiquity of this tradition associating swords with the worship of martial goddesses is borne witness by the *Gaüḍavaho* and the *Haravijaya*; and also in various tales of the *Kathāsaritsāgara*.[389] Its great importance in the rituals consolidating the power of the state continued into the colonial period: during the Wodeyar rule over Mysore, the State-Sword was worshipped daily during the Navarātra and placed beside the royal throne during the Durbar. The tradition was initiated after 1610, when the Navarātra first began to be celebrated in the grand manner under the rule of Wodeyar I.[390]

Crests

As with swords, the *Devīpurāṇa* also describes how to make a martial crest emblazoned with the goddess's symbol (*devīdhvaja*). The ensign would be used in battles for repelling obstacles[391], or would fly on the palace turrets, at the gates and on mountain-citadels as an apotropaic seal against demonic beings who were otherwise thought to run amok and cause obstacles[392]– hence its symbolism of the goddess's punitive aspect. It was to be erected on the palace new, smooth surfaced, made of *aṇḍaja* or *uṇḍuja* metals, precious stone or other

[388] *agastya uvāca | sarveṣāṃś caiva pātrāṇāṃ devī pātraṃ tu śaṅkarī | tāṃ tu pūjaya vidyaiṣā dṛṣṭādṛṣṭapradāyikā | brahmaṇāsya vidhiḥ śakre kathitā vijayāvahā | śakreti paurṇimā tāta śrāvaṇasya śubhāvahā | śakra uvāca | vijayā yā samākhyātā sarvakāmaprasiddhaye | tām ahaṃ śrotum icchāmi tattvataḥ surasattama | putrārthaṃ rājyavidyārthaṃ yaśaḥsaubhāgyato 'pi vā | vijayārogyakāmāya vijayāṃ kurvīta paurṇimām | hemaṃ vā rajataṃ taikṣṇyaṃ khaḍgañ caivātha pāduke | pratimāṃ vāpi kurvīta sarvalakṣaṇasaṃyutām | tām ādāya śubhe ṛkṣe śuklavastravibhūṣitām | yavaśālyaṅkuropetām āmrapatravibhūṣitām | devīṃ suśobhanāṃ vastraiḥ kalpayet tatra tāṃ nyaset | hutvā hutāśanaṃ mantrais tato devīṃ tu vinyaset | rocanācandanacandrair upalipya prapūjayet | nānāpuṣpaviśeṣais tu dhūpagandhānnabhojanaiḥ | pūjayed vidhivad devīṃ tathā bījāny āharet | [...] dāpayec caiva bhaktyā vai naivedyāny aparāṇi ca | phalārthaṃ tu †phalā† deyā jayārthaṃ tu yavāṅkurān | puṣpaṃ saubhāgyakāmāya ratnāny āyudhanāya ca | dhanuḥ śatruvināśāya [...] annaṃ sarvārthakāmāya yathālābhaṃ tu dāpayet | tataḥ kṣamāpayed devīṃ [...] putrārthaṃ bhojayed bālān vijayāya striyo dvijān | dharmārthañ caiva bhojyeta anayā vidyayābhimantritaṃ | dakṣiṇāṃ †guru† ācāryakanyakābrāhmaṇeṣu ca | dāpayed yāvac chaktyā tu tathā tam anugṛhya ca | Devīpurāṇa* 100.1-15.

bījāny conj.] *bījāni* ed.

jayārthaṃ tu conj. Szántó] *jayārthaṃ* ed.

[389] The *Gaüḍavaho* 306, *Haravijaya* 47.40 and 41; *Kathāsaritsāgara* 7.8.53-225. For a discussion of several other legends in the *Kathāsaritsāgara* dealing with swords, the esoteric relevance of one of the tales and the association of the Tantric Kālasaṃkarṣaṇī with swords see Sanderson 2007, pp. 96-99.

[390] Iyer 1928, vol. 2, p. 48, p. 67-8, n. 5.

[391] *sācāro bhaktim āsthāya dhvajayaṣṭiṃ samucchrayet | na tasya saṅgare śukra vyādhayo na ca vairiṇaḥ | na ca śastravraṇapīḍā bhaved dhvajasamucchrayāt | Devīpurāṇa* 35.32cd-33. *dhvajasamucchrayāt* em.] *dhajasumucchrayāt* ed.

[392] *yāvan na dīyate śukra dhvajaṃ prāsādamūrdhani | tāvat tanu bhavet vatsa prāsādaṃ devalāñchitam | śūnyadhvajaṃ sadā bhūtā nāgagandharvarākṣasāḥ | vidrāvanti mahātmano nānābādhāṃ †karanti† ca | tasmād devagṛhadvārapuraparvatapattane | ucchritāḥ śāntikāmāya dhvajāḥ śukra sadā hitāḥ |* Ibid. 35.27-8.

metallic substances, and white in colour. On its surface a lion endowed with all auspicious marks was to be inscribed with *rocanā* and sandalwood with a gold paint-brush or with *dūrvā* leaves. An allusion to her Purāṇic myths where she is depicted attended by a lion, this was the principal symbol of the goddess in her aspect as Regent of heaven and Heroic Slayer of demons. The crest was to hang from the top of the ramparts to the earth. On the *dhvaja* the guardian deities, whose duty was to protect the crest, were to be emblazoned in their appropriate directions with their mounts. Having performed *homa*s, the sacrificer must adorn these deities with tinkling baubles, yak-tail whisks, bells, mirrors and leaves, and worship the goddess with music and chants, offerings of fragrant flowers and grandeur according to his means. Having fed maidens, *brāhmaṇa*s with yoghurt, *pāyasa* and candied sugar, and having sacrificed beasts to appease ghosts, he should hoist her emblem. In this way, the text assures that a king will obtain all his wishes and become the ruler of Vidyādharas. Alternatively, he can erect the emblem in another way: the king should have moulded from earth from a mountain in his country, or from gold, or silver a statue of a rampant lion. It was to be depicted in a wrathful posture, as if attacking a mighty elephant ("gouging masses of pearls with its great claws" adds the text). On Navamī he must worship the goddess with the rites taught for this occasion, fasting, feasting maidens, men of the twice-born castes and devotees of the goddess, offering animal sacrifice to all the ghosts who dwell in the ten directions. Then he was to chant a *mantra* of the goddess Vajraghoṇā or another, twenty-eight syllable mantra, and erect the lion on a pillar with joyous cries, invoking the *mantra*s of Carcikā and Kālikā, ferocious goddesses with occult powers and control of dark forces. He must contemplate the lion and then hoist on it the ensign of the goddess adorned with cloths and jewels. Thereafter he was to hoist the ensigns of the remaining deities such as Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Indra, Rudra, the Moon, and the Sun. For, the text says, as long as he does not hoist their emblems on the top of his palace, the palace will be bereft of the sign and presence of the gods.[393]

[393] *aṇḍajaṃ voṇḍajaṃ vāpi dhvajaṃ keśavivarjitam | navaṃ samaṃ ca ślakṣmaṃ ca prāsādādaṇḍavardhitam | samaṃ ślakṣmam ṛjuṃ śubhraṃ śailaṃ vā dhātujaṃ †pi vā† | tasmin paṭe likhet siṃhaṃ sarvalakṣaṇalakṣitam | rocanāsahacandrena hemalekhanyā dūrvayā | prāsādād valimānaṃ tu kṣitiṃ †vistarataḥ karam† | dhvajāpālanakartavyā darśayed dikṣu devatāḥ | sarve vāhanalāñchena lāñchitāḥ sahajena ca | kiṅkiṇīcāmaropetān ghaṇṭādarpaṇaśobhitān | kṛtahomān mahāprājñaḥ sahakāradalānvitān | mahāmaṅgalaśabdena devyāḥ kurvaṃs tu pūjayet | sugandhapuṣpanaivedyaṃ yathāvibhavavistaraiḥ | kanyakābrāhmaṇān bhojya dadhipāyasaśarkaraiḥ | bhūtānāṃ tu baliṃ dattvā tathā tam uparohayet | sarvakāmān avāpnoti vidyādharapatir bhavet | [...] athavā haimaraupyaṃ vā vārkṣyaṃ pārthivaśailajam | kārayen mṛgarājaṃ tu mahākarimadāpaham*

The *Devīpurāṇa*'s teachings concerning Śākta insignia evidently had an impact on the running of kingdoms– in the section named the "Rite of the [Royal] Ensign" (*cihnavidhi*) in the *Kṛtyakalpataru* of the *dharmaśāstrin* Lakṣmīdhara, minister to the Gāhaḍavālas in the twelfth century, a further passage attributed to the *Devīpurāṇa* is cited.[394] This *Devīpurāṇa* passage teaches the benefits of worshipping ensigns of different forms of goddesses on different mounts, and the description illustrates the great range of Śākta insignia available in the mediaeval world. Described, for instance, are the benefits of emblazoning a crest and flag, and also a yak-tail whisk, an amphora, a conch-shells, a royal parasol and an awning with the following auspicious ensigns (*cihna*): the goddess Umā seated on a lion; the goddess Mahāmāya on a monkey, or also on a bull, a camel, a swan, a peacock and Garuḍa; the goddess on a buffalo; the goddess holding a trident on an elephant; and the goddess Carcikā emblazoned in silver on a lotus, or on a corpse holding a blue-lotus in her hand. When displayed in this manner on the heraldic devices or important objects of a king desiring attainments, decorated with fragrant flowers, garments, gold, and fruits, the goddesses were thought to grant rewards– destroy fevers, pacify plagues, slay a king's enemies and grant knowledge and sons.[395] The *Devīpurāṇa*'s elaborate teachings con-

| *mahānakhakarotkhātamuktāphalasamaprabham | evaṃ vidhaṃ tataḥ kṛtvā navamyāṃ pūjayec chivām | sopavāsaḥ śucir dakṣaḥ sarvasaṅgavivarjitaḥ | kanyakāḥ pūjayitvā tu viprān vedavidas tataḥ | devyā bhaktāḥ sadācārās trikālahavane ratāḥ | te yathāśaktitas toṣyā dhvajārohaṇakarmaṇi | [...]dīnāndhakṛpaṇānāṃ tu annaṃ deyaṃ tu śaktitaḥ | [...] nānābhakṣyākṣatadadhidūrvā utkarakānvitāḥ | baliṃ vai sarvabhūtebhyo daśadikṣu nivedayet | vajraghoṇā tathā japtvā aṣṭaviṃśākṣarāpi vā | siṃhaṃ stambhe samāropya sarvamaṅgalaśabditam | vedadhvanimahāmantrakālikācarcikāpadam | nyasya siṃhaṃ paraṃ dhyāyed yādṛśaṃ pūrvakalpitam | evaṃ taṃ vastrasaṃvītaṃ sarvābharaṇabhūṣitam | devyā mahādhvajaṃ nyasya śeṣāṇām api vinyaset | brahmaviṣṇvindrarudrāṇāṃ somasūryadivaukasām | Devīpurāṇa* 35.5-25ab.

hemalekhanyā conj. Szántó] *hemalekhahya* ed.

kṛtahomān conj. Sanderson] *kṛtahoma-* ed.

-prājñaḥ conj.] *-prājña* ed.

samaprabham conj. Sanderson] *gadāprabham* ed.

I have followed the editor's interpretation of *valīmānam* in his Bengali translation to mean "hanging down" (ibid. p. 199). The editor also notes that the reading "Rudraghoṇā" appears in some manuscripts instead of "Vajraghoṇā" (Ibid. p. 201, n. 1.)

[394] *Kṛyakalpataru*, Rājadharmakāṇḍa (Section on the Duties of a King), pp. 190-199.

[395] *atha cihnavidhiḥ | tatra devīpurāṇe*

[...]

siṃhārūḍhā dhvaje yasya nṛpasya ripuhā umā |
dvārasthā pūjyate vatsa na tasya ripujaṃ bhayam |
kapisaṃsthā mahāmāyā sarvaśatruvināśinī |
vṛṣe yathepsitaṃ dadyāt kalabhe śriyam uttamam |
haṃse vidyārthkāmaṃ tu barhiṇe 'bhīṣṭaputradā |
garutmati mahāmāyā sarvarogavināśinī |
mahiṣasthā mahāmārī śamayet dhavajasaṃsthitā |
karigā sarvakāryeṣu nṛpaiḥ kāryā triśulinī |
padmasthā carcikā raupyā dharmakāmārthamokṣadā |

cerning goddess-empowered insignia were therefore well-known and respected by formulators of royal policy. Its belief that a king's emblems of royalty, emblazoned and sanctified with Śakti, could bring about powerful effects was one that was certainly strong in mediaeval kingship.[396]

Chariot processions

The ceremonial procession of the chariot (*rathayātrā*) through the city carrying the goddess is also described vividly in the *Devīpurāṇa*. The *yātrā* symbolized the journey of the deity as a regent in to battle. It thus enacted her role as the warrior and punisher of enemies, and functioned as the highest statement of her sovereignty. The chariot (*ratha*) was to be seven stories high, marked with the sign of the moon's digit, draped in fine cloths, adorned with pillars of ivory and gold, and glittering with rubies and other gems. It was to be celebrated with the fanfare of bells and drums , with yak-tail whisks, and decorated with banners, crests and mirrors. First the king was to ritually perfume the chariot and make it free of impurities with various fragrant flowers, unguents and incense. Then a beautiful image of the goddess was to be installed therein depicting her in her characteristic regnal form as the demon-slayer (*mahāsurakṣayaṅkarīm*). The image was to be worshipped with a hymn sung by the king in salutary mode, palms folded, asking this demon-slaying aspect for boons, and then *bali*s were to be offered. Then the chariot was to be led with songs. It was to be taken out on the lunar days of Pañcamī, Saptamī, Full Moon, Navamī, Ekādaśī and Tṛtīyā, accompanied by a great crowd of inhabitants (*mahājanapada*), men and women. The object of the journey was to reach a palace (*vāstu*) built on the confluence of two great rivers or on the banks of a mountain stream. There, in a pavilion made of great logs and bricks, stone or earth as prescribed in the architectural literature, the king was to offer animal sacrifice to appease the hungry deities hovering over the quarters, make an invocation to Durgā's ferocious occult aspect of Kālī, asking her to accept the sacrifice and grant boons in exchange, and then was to dismount the image of the goddess from the chariot. The image was

pretasthā sarvabhayadā nityaṃ paśunipātanaiḥ |
pūjitā devarājendra nīlotpalakarā varā |
bhavet tu siddhikāmasya cihnāgre saṃvyavasthitā |
gandhapuṣpārcitāṃ kṛtvā vastrahemasucarcitām |
phalaśāliyavaiḥ śukavardhamānair vibhūṣitām |
śobhanām ucchrayed agre patākāṃ vā manoramām |
cāmaraṃ kalaśaṃ śaṅkhaṃ sātapatraṃ vitānakam |
bhavet tu siddhikāmasya nṛpasya phaladāyakam | *Kṛtyakalpataru* (Rājadharmakāṇḍa) pp. 197-198. I have not corrected or marked the text with cruces, as the *Devīpurāṇa*'s particular style of Sanskrit was maintained by Lakṣmīdhara.

[396]For the Pāla royal crest emblazoned with the goddess Tārā see p. 126.

to be installed on an auspicious seat and there bathed with perfumed water from sturdy new vases of gold, silver and copper filled with leaves, flowers, and jewels, and then carefully wiped dry with fine cloths. Then the goddess, having been given offerings washed with the water from the vases, was to be anointed with sandalwood, camphor, vermillion and *gorocanā* and worshipped with gold and jewelled garlands, resplendent garments and incense. A feast was to be given for maidens, *dvija*s and paupers, and the king ought to next beg atonement for sins. She was then to be re-installed on the chariot and led back to her station. While the chariot meandered on its way, women are asked to cast salutary sprays of flowers, *dūrvā* grass and barley before it so thickly that the path had to be made muddy with their ceremonial showers. In every home gay adornments were to bedeck doors, alleys, and compartments in order to avert inauspicious obstacles. Trees were forbidden to be cut down, animals from being slaughtered and prisoners were to be given amnesty.[397] It was a time when the victorious

[397] *dantidantamayair daṇḍair hemabaddhaiḥ suśobhanaiḥ | vicitrapadmarāgādyair maṇibhiś copaśobhitaiḥ | rathaṃ taiḥ kārayed devyāḥ saptabhaumaṃ manoharam | dukūlavastrasaṃchannam ardhacandreṇa śobhitam | ghaṇṭākiṅkiṇīśabdāḍhyaṃ cāmaraiḥ kandukānvitaiḥ | patākādhvajaśobhāḍhyaṃ darpaṇair upaśobhitam | taṃ rathaṃ pūjayec chakra jātīkusumamandakaiḥ | pārijātakapuṣpaiś ca yakṣakardamacandanaiḥ | sugandhadhūpitaṃ kṛtvā devīṃ tatra niveśayet | pratimāṃ śobhanāṃ vatsa mahāsurakṣayaṃkarīm | pūjayed rathavinyastāṃ sarvamaṅgalamaṅgalām | durgā kātyāyanī devī varadā vindhyavāsinī | niśumbhaśumbhamathanī mahiṣāsuraghātinī | umā kṣamāvatī mātā śaṅkarasyārdhakāyikā | prasīdatu sadā me 'stu yac ca no vāñchitaṃ hṛdi | anena balipūrveṇa namaskārayutena ca | pūjayitvā tato neyā samastāpsaragītakaiḥ | pañcamīsaptamīpūrṇānavamyekādaśīṣu ca | tṛtīyā śivavighnena divase vatsareṣu ca | mahānadīnadasaṅgaparvatasravaṇeṣu ca | tatra maṇḍapavinyāsaṃ mahādārviṣṭanirmitam | śailaṃ vā mṛnmayaṃ vāpi kṛtvā vāstuvibhāvitam | sarvalakṣaṇasaṃpūrṇaṃ sarvaśobhāsamanvitam | pūrve ca kārayec chakra paścād yātrāṃ pracakrire | mahājanapadopetāṃ mahāstrīsaṃghasaṃkulām | sarvānnapānanaivedyaiḥ samastair api pūjayet | dadyāc ca digbaliṃ śakra sarvadikṣu samanvitaḥ | bhūtavetālasaṃghasya mantreṇānena suvrata | jaya tvaṃ kāli bhūteśi sarvabhūtasamāvṛte | rakṣa māṃ nijabhūtebhyo baliṃ gṛhna śivapriye | mātar mātar vare durge sarvakāmārthasādhini | anena balidānena sarvān kāmān prayaccha me | evaṃ dattvā baliṃ śakra tato devy avatārayet | vinyased bhadrapīṭhe tu maṇḍanair upaśobhitām | tatrasthāṃ pūjayed devīṃ haimarūpyaiś ca tāmrajaiḥ | kalaśais tu †sahasreṇa† gandhodakaprapūritaiḥ | samastaphalasaṃpūrṇair yajñiyair atha pallavaiḥ | snāpayed ekam ekena ratnagarbhair navair dṛḍhaiḥ | vedamaṅgalaśabdena śaṅkhavāditranisvanaiḥ | veṇuvīnāmṛdaṅgaiś ca ghaṇṭākiṅkiṇī-r-āvṛtaiḥ | snāpayitvā tato devīṃ nirmañchet dukūlaiḥ śubhaiḥ | gomayādikṛtaiḥ padmair dīpavartyā vibodhitaiḥ | svastikair nandikāvartaiḥ śaṅkhair nīlotpalotpalaiḥ | yavaśālyaṅkurodbhinnair yavavāsasamanvitaiḥ | pratyekaṃ ca dahed dhūpaṃ pratyekaṃ kalaśaiḥ snapet | tathā karpūrakṣodena candanaiḥ kuṅkumena ca | gorocanāsametena devīm ālipya pūjayet | hemajair jātijair mālyai ratnanyāsair anekadhā | vāsobhiḥ sumanobhiś citraiḥ punar dhūpaṃ samutkṣipet | bhakṣayet tu tathā kanyāṃ dvijān dīnān suduḥkhitān | bhakṣyabhojyānnapānena tatra sarvāṃś ca prīṇayet | bhojayitvā kṣamāpeta devī me prīyatām iti | tathā devyāṃ rathe kṛtvā punar eva gṛhaṃ nayet / mahatā janasaṃghena samastavibhavānvitaiḥ | śāntareṇupathaṃ sarvaṃ puṣpadūrvākṣatair jalaiḥ | prakṣipyamāṇaiḥ kanyābhiḥ strībhir maṅgalavādibhiḥ / salilena pathi pāṃśuṃ kṛtvā paṅkaṃ pracakrire | puraśobhāṃ pathiśobhāṃ dvāraśobhāṃ gṛhe gṛhe | kārayīta tathā śakra sarvabādhāṃ nivārayet | acchedyās taravas tasmin prāṇihiṃsāṃ vivarjayet | bandhanasthā vimoktavyā †vadhyā krodhādiśatravaḥ† | *Devīpurāṇa* 31.2-31.

power of the goddess was held to embody the military supremacy of the king and the kingdom. And indeed the importance of this tradition is borne witness by accounts of such processions in various medieval kingdoms, appearing for instance in the *Kṛtyaratnākara* of the Maithila Caṇḍeśvara Ṭhakkura[398], indicating that this was by no means a scriptural ideal. The ceremonial procession of a goddess, her revelation to the inhabitants of the city and the celebration of her punishment of demons also formed for instance the climax of the urban festivities of the Wodeyar kingdom of Mysore.[399] During Navarātra the royal goddess Cāmuṇḍeśvarī was paraded in her chariot in full regalia. The goddess's *rathayātrā* through the town remained until recently an important part of the festivities surrounding Taleju in the Kathmandu Valley, particularly during the tenth day of the Mohanī.[400]

Fortresses and urban-spaces

Apart from the combative side of war, the second crucial sphere where goddesses were employed by kingdoms for empowerment was in the domain of urban protection. In order to effectively defend itself against attack, a mediaeval city was usually built as a fortified citadel. Most mediaeval citadels would have shrines installed inside to a goddess who was thought to defend the city. For example, an 8th c. inscription issued in the twenty-first year of King Nandivarman (752 CE), a king of the Pallavas of Kāñcipuram, says that a vassal named Udayacandra, had seized a fort called Kālidurga, which was "protected by Kālī" (*kālībhagavatīparipālitakālidurgaṃ*) having defeated the army of the Pāṇḍyas to whom, doubtless, the fort belonged.[401] The term *paripālita* indicates that the fort had a shrine dedicated to Kālī either inside or near the gate who was worshipped as its guardian deity. Other historical examples illustrate this use. Śivājī's fort at Pratapgaḍ, the stronghold of his empire, was protected by Tuḷjā Bhavānī herself, whose shrine was located inside the fort, while his fort in Satara was protected by the deity Manglai Devī whose temple is in the north-eastern

maṇḍanair conj.] *maṇḍalair* ed.

kṣamāpeta conj. Sanderson based on attested Aiśa usage, e.g. *Picumata* 47.23: *tāṃ dṛṣṭvā tu tejavaraṃ arghahasto vicakṣaṇaḥ | aṣṭāṅgaṃ vandayitvā tu kṣamāpeta *yathåvidhi* (corr. : *yathāvidhiḥ* Cod.)] *kṣamāyeta* ed.

devyāṃ corr.] *devyāṃ* ed. The use of *devyā* for *devī* is common in Śākta-Śaiva texts (Prof. Sanderson, personal communication).

[398] *Kṛtyaratnākara* pp. 259-264.

[399] Iyer 1928, vol. 2, p. 59.

[400] Levy 1990, pp. 547-555

[401] *yo jagrāha kālībhagavatīparipālitakālidurgaṃ vighaṭayitvā maṇaikuṭigrāme pāṇḍyasenāṃ* [...] SII 2.3.74, ll. 59-60; Mahalingam 1988, No. 76, p. 231.

corner.[402] This protecive function remained relevant till the colonial area.[403]

Even today the tradition of employing goddesses amalgamated with Durgā in state-defense is preserved in the worship of the fortress-goddesses of Rajasthan, many of whom serve as the clan-goddesses of the lineages commanding the forts. Although most of the Rajasthani forts have now become relics of their former power, at one point they did indeed function as the very heart of the Rajput kingdoms. Hence protecting them served an important political function. Śilā Devī's shrine is located just before the entrance to the Amber Fort in Jaipur, because the deity is held to guard the entrance from demonic beings and to thereby protect the body of the state and the body of the king. In the Rathore stronghold, the Mehrangarh fort of Jodhpur, the principal protective deity of the citadel Cāmuṇḍā/Rāṣṭraśyenā occupies an important shrine in the sourthern corner of the fort. It is said that so important was she for the fortunes of the royal family, that she was brought to protect Jodhpur from her original site in the fortress of Mandore when the new fort was built by Rao Jodha in 1459 CE with the relocation of the dynasty to that city.

The defensive aspect of the cult of the sovereign-goddess may have been far more ancient than the function it served in military attack. Although the oldest Indic political treatise, Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra,* does not grant goddesses a significant place in kingship it does appear to grant certain goddesses some role in defense as protectors of forts. It says in this regard that a shrine to the goddess Kumārī must be built in a building of four compartments, one inside the other, contructed on a lotus pool in the centre of the parapets of the fortification with canals to hold weapons.[404] Furthermore, in its section on town-planning, the *Arthaśāstra* envisions a royal city bounded by the fort-ramparts in whose centre shrines to protective deities must be installed. Among this group of deities the goddess Madirā is named in conjunction with Śiva and other Vedic gods.[405] Little is known about either goddesses.

We know much more from Purāṇic sources. A Purāṇic myth for instance concerning the sacred site of Ekaliṅga in Medapāṭa (Mewar) links Rāṣṭraśyenā, a charismatic deity sacred to the Guhila lineages with the establishment of the

[402] *Bombay Gazetteers,* vol. 19. Satara, p. 509.

[403] A nineteenth century colonial account of Alexander Forbes reports the worship of a Fort-Goddess rather confusingly corrupted by the author as "Gudeychee" by Rajput chieftains on the eve of Dussehra. "On their return from the Shumee [sic] worship into the city, they join together in bands, brandishing their spears, galloping their horses, and enacting in other ways the part of an army taking the field."(cited in Kinsley 1987, p. 107.)

[404] *Arthaśāstra* 2.3.54

[405] Ibid. 2.4.56

Medapāṭa citadel.[406] Installed inside the fort as the overseer of the citadel by Vindhyavāsinī, with whom she is collocated and like whom is worshipped at the Navarātra, she is particularly envisaged as a female-falcon (*śyenā*) bearing a thunder-bolt in her talons, protecting the city from invaders, among whom are named the Muslims (*yavanebhyo*) and a host of supernatural, malevolent beings, "wicked daityas, *rākṣasa*s, *piśāca*s, ghosts, pretas, *yoginī*s, demons". At such times of invasion, Vindhyavāsinī commands her to "grant victory to the king of your land and likewise to citizens" .[407] Elsewhere in the work it is said that "no fear of enemies arises in those kings who offer sacrifice to her according to rule at a time of horrific crisis. One ought to contemplate her with all his attention as a bird with a thunder-bolt in its claws during battle and in violent endeavours etc., and as a gentle deity in benevolent actions".[408] Such a clearly defined role and status suggests that at some point the deity was propitiated by the Mewari royalty in the context of state-defense. And indeed her shrine still stands near the Vindhyavāsinī and Ekaliṅga temples in Mewar. Rāṣṭraśyenā's greater importance though is as the *kuladevī* of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas (Rāṭhoḍas) of Marwar, also called Lāṭanā/ Mānasā/ Vindhyavāsinī. Her falcon-apparition, who is said to have rescued the Rathore kingdom, is emblazoned on the State Flag of the Marwar Durbar.[409]

The protection of forts by goddesses is more elaborately formulated in the *Devīpurāṇa*. Chapter 72, entirely devoted to fortresses, teaches the necessity of installing in every fortress an image of Durgā as the buffalo-demon slayer, along

[406] *Ekaliṅgamāhātmya* 11.13-22. Rāṣṭraśyenā and her legend in this work was first pointed out to me by Professor Sanderson in a personal communication.

[407] *śyenārūpaṃ samyag āsthāya devi rāṣṭraṃ trāhi trāhy ato vajrahastā | duṣṭān daityān rākṣasān vai piśācān bhūtān pretān yoginīgṛmbhikebhyaḥ | †duṣṭagrahebhyo' nyatamebhya† evaṃ śyene trāṇaṃ medapāṭasya kāryam | ye 'smin deśe pratiyotsyanti kecit te hantavyā māyayā duṣṭarūpāḥ | jayaḥ kāryaḥ svadeśīye bhūpāle ca tathā jane | asya lokasya bhūpasya nityaṃ pūjā bhaviṣyati | aṣṭamyāṃ ca caturdaśyāṃ saṃkrāntyādiṣu parvasu | pūjayet tāṃ rāṣṭraśyenāṃ tadrūpāṃ ca striyaṃ tathā | brāhmaṇān api sampūjya devīprītyai viśeṣataḥ | tena tuṣṭā rāṣṭraśyenā pūjakānāṃ varapradā | tasmāt sampūjayed bhaktyā rāṣṭraśyenāṃ vidhānataḥ | caitramāsy asite pakṣe bhaktyā nityaṃ prapūjayet | rāṣṭraśyenetināmnīyaṃ medapāṭasya rakṣaṇam | karoti na ca bhaṅgo 'sya yavanebhyo manāg api | Ekaliṅgamāhātmya* 11.13-22.

All occurences of Rāṣṭrasenā have been conjectured as Rāṣṭraśyenā.

pratiyotsyanti conj.] *prātiyotsyanti* ed.

The section marked [†-†] is unmetrical.

[408] *mahābhaye mahotpāte baliṃ tatra vidhānataḥ | rājāno ye prakurvanti teṣāṃ śatrubhayaṃ na hi | raṇe krūrādikāryeṣu vajrahastāṃ ca pakṣiṇīṃ | smaret sarvaprayatnena saumyarūpāṃ ca saumyake | Ekaliṅgamāhātmya* 29.40cd-41.

[409] Reu 1933, p. 35. Reference provided by P.D.Szántó. For her legend see in this thesis p. 69. For a picture of a version of the flag made in the 19th century, which incorporates the falcon symbol and the Rathore motto into a European background, see Jackson and Jaffer 2009, p. 69.

with Kubera, Gaṇeśa and Brahmā, at the sides of the main gates (*gopura*).[410] Furthermore, each gateway it teaches, is named after a particular form of Durgā,[411] and the scripture thereby envisions the architecture of a citadel as being ringed and sanctified at all the entrances with the protective presence of some manifestation of the goddess. Chapter 73 also teaches the building of a "victory-citadel" (*vijayapura*) whose construction, described in technical detail between vv. 37b-58, must only begin after the worship of Śiva, Durgā, the planets, the Mothers and Gaṇeśa and having offered to them sacrifice.[412] Among these apotropaic deities, the text grants importance to the Seven Mothers as protectors of forts: they, among other gods, must for instance be installed in pavilions built inside a smaller guarded fortification underneath the victory-citadel to house provisions[413], for the scripture explains that when care is taken to worship the long-established goddesses of mountain-fortresses, they bestow prosperity on the kingdom of a king.[414] In fact their worship, as also observed in the case of Rāṣṭraśyenā, is linked to the warding away of fears from a kingdom, and the destruction of a king's enemies and this may explain their importance as guardian deities of citadels.[415] The *Devīpurāṇa* teaches that the Mothers are to be worshipped in all urban communes, in a capital, village, town and agri-

[410] *durgeṣu kārayed durgāṃ mahiṣāsuramardinīm | dvārasthaṃ gajavaktraṃ vā dhanadaṃ vātha padmajam | Devīpurāṇa* 72.124cd-125ab.

[411] The goddesses are named as follows:
śriyā kāntir dyutir lakṣmīr jayā bhadrāparājitā |
anantā śobhanā durgāḥ pūrveṇa parikīrtitā |
śāntir vṛddhir bhavā devī kālī ghoravimohinī |
vimalā ceti yāmyena pratolyaḥ śubhadāyikāḥ |
rocanā maṅgalā raudrī ugrā caṇḍā yaśovatī |
prāptir dīptīti vāruṇyāṃ vīthikāḥ sarvakāmadāḥ |
icchā prītiḥ śubhā mātā yaśodā dhanadā umā |
śaraṇyā ceti saumyena durge gopurikā matā | Devīpurāṇa 72.145-148.

[412] *evaṃ kālavaśāt kuryād vijayākhyaṃ mahāpuram |* [...] *pūjayitvā haraṃ durgāṃ grahān mātṛṛr vināyakān | prāsādoktavidhānena baliṃ dattvā puraṃ kuru | Devīpurāṇa* 73.37-59

[413] *durgādhaḥ kṛtrimaṃ durgaṃ kiñcitkālaṃ nirīkṣayet | vijayārthaṃ prakartavyaṃ yathāvat tan nibodha me | durgāśrayaṃ samālakṣya ṭūrdhvaṃ durgaṃṭ balaṃ tathā | jalendhanañ ca dhānyañ ca yavamudgagavādikam | tathā kuryān mahābāho kṛtrimaṃ vijayottamam | kāṣṭhaiṣṭham athavā śailaṃ khātikāracitaṃ tathā | drumavallīlatopetaṃ garbhaṃ toyasamanvitam | bāhyatoyaṃ surakṣyaṃ vā durgayantropalādibhiḥ | kartavyaṃ gṛhaprākārais toraṇair upaśobhitam | vīthipūrakasaṃyuktam athavā maṇḍapānvitam | maṇḍapaṃ śatadaṇḍeṇa dviguṇaṃ triguṇaṃ pi vā | mānād vṛttam atha tryasram āyatendu yathāśubham | anekagarbhagarbhāḍhyaṃ devatāmātarānvitam | Devīpurāṇa* 73.30-36a.

nirīkṣayet conj. Sanderson] *nirakṣayā* ed.

-mudgagav- conj. Sanderson] *-yumudgav-* ed.

[414] *cirantanās tu yā devya giridurgeṣu saṃsthitāḥ | tāḥ pūjaya dvijaśreṣṭha nṛparāṣṭravivṛddhidāḥ | Devīpurāṇa* 117.4-5b.

[415] *anye'pi ye dvijaśreṣṭha dvijā rājaviśo 'balāḥ | śūdrā vā bhaktim āsthāya pūjayiṣyanti mātaraḥ | na teṣāṃ vipra rāṣṭreṣu bhayaṃ kiñcid bhaviṣyati |* [...] *nivṛttavairā bhūpālā bhaviṣyanti na saṃśayaḥ | Devīpurāṇa* 117.1 and 2cd.

rājaviśo em. Sanderson] *rājyaviśo* ed.

cultural communities by those desirous of immediate (*dṛṣṭa*) and other-wordly (*adṛṣṭa*) rewards. For, when worshipped in a home, at a crossroad[416] or at the edge a market-place, they bestow wealth and sons; when worshipped before the eastern and other gateways of a city they increase the prosperity and happiness of a kingdom.[417]

Durgā has an accentuated protective function and it is this function that finds expression in her association with forts. Linguistically there is also a suggestive overlap. Both her name and the common expression for "fort" in Sanskrit (*durga*) are the same, meaning something difficult to pass and also, particularly in her case, "danger". According to the scriptural corpus, "Durgā" is so named because she is "a saviour from danger",[418] but it is also possible that she was so-called as she was dangerous herself, and the scriptures were simply stretching the meaning of her name to find another, less controversial option. The connection with danger meant she wielded power over it– because of this, and also because of the fact that, like the fort itself, she was insurmountable, a form of Durgā was installed in a citadel.

The homology between fortress and goddess was poetically evoked by scripture. An elaborate pun appears in Durgā's legend in the *Vāmanapurāṇa* where the goddess's limbs are compared to different parts of a fortress owned by Kāma – her arms to bars barricading a gate *(parigha)* and to siege-machines (*yantrāḥ*); her breasts to two impenetrable fortifications (*sudurgau*); her waist with its three undulating folds to a staircase (*sopāna*) that Kāma is afraid to ascend when besieged; her navel to Kāma's imperial seal (*mudrā*) affixed on his salt-store, the goddess's charming body (*lāvaṇyagṛha*); her hips adorned with a girdle (*mekhalā*) to a well-fortified city (*nagaraṃ sudurgaṃ*) concealed behind a rampart (*prākāraguptaṃ*); her thighs to two settlements (*deśau*) for people to

[416] Professor Sanderson reminded in a personal communication that the meaning of *catvara*, besides "crossroad", is also an enclosed courtyard in Bengali (*cātāl*) and Gujarati (*cācar*) usage. It can also mean a brick platform in front of a tree or built on a cross-road in Nepali (*cautāro*). The *Devīpurāṇa* may also be implying any of these other meanings.

[417] *pure vā yadi vā grāme nagare kheṭake 'pi vā | dṛṣṭādṛṣṭaphalārthibhiḥ pūjanīyās tu mātaraḥ* [...] *gṛhe catvare haṭṭānte pūjitā dhanaputradāḥ | nagaradvārapūrvādyā vṛddhirājyasukhārthadāḥ | Devīpurāṇa* 90.5-7.

kheṭake' pi conj. Szántó] *kheṭakeṣv api* ed.

The fact that the cult of the Mothers was believed to serve the protection of the king and his realm is also attested in the south Indian Mātṛtantra/ Yāmala literature: see Sanderson 2007, pp. 277-278, nn. 140-143 and Sanderson 2009, p. 282, n. 673.

[418] A number of Purāṇic attestations interpret "Durgā" as 'a saviour from danger': *durgāt tārayase durge tat tvaṃ durgā smṛtā janaiḥ | Mahābhārata* 4.5.31d.40 (Virāṭaparavan); [...] *durgāsi durgabhavasāgaranaur asaṅgā | Devīmāhātmya* (DM) 4.10cd; *durge smṛtā harasi bhītim aśeṣa jantoḥ* (Ibid. 4.19ab); *durgāyai durgapārāyai* (Ibid. 5.10a); *durgā durgatināśinī* (Ibid. 9.29b).

inhabit (*janasyāvāsanārthaṃ*).[419] Such imagery evokes the deity's symbolism of the urban space of the citadel, and was perhaps composed bearing in mind the association between *durga* and Durgā.

Durgā's apotropaic dimension was conveyed via other images in Sanskrit literature and her liturgical corpus. In the Purāṇas, what was held to set Durgā apart from other salvific divinities who could grant power but remained at a distance from ordinary men, was the view that she could actively and compassionately intervene in person in the world on behalf of men, to guard from wordly obstacles (*durgāni*) and calamities (*utpāta*/ *upadrava*).[420] In *kāvya* she is therefore the deity most often exhorted by heroes in trouble, while the myth of the restitution of a disenfranchised king drew also from this very belief. Further playing on the salvific resonance of her name, Durgā is often also figured as a ship carrying men through the stormy ocean of life (*durgabhavasāgaranaus*) or as a rescuer of one who is drowning in the sea of *saṃsāra,*[421] qualities she may have inherited from the Vedic warrior-god Agni, who also is described as a ship carrying men through difficult seas and the dispeller of inauspiciousness.[422] Like

[419]The passage where the pun appears is in a speech made to Mahiṣa by his two messengers Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa who had seen the goddess in the Vindhya mountain, and were enchanted by her beauty. It is as follows:

dṛṣṭvaiva śailād avatīrya śīghram ājagmatuḥ svaṃ bhavanaṃ surārī | dṛṣṭvocatus tau mahiṣāsurasya dūtāv idaṃ caṇḍamuṇḍau ditīśam | svastho bhavān kiṃ tv asurendra sāmpratam āgaccha paśyāma ca tatra vindhyam | tatrāsti devī sumahānubhāvā kanyā surūpā surasundarīṇām | jitās tayā toyadharālakair hi jitaḥ śaśāṅko vadanena tanvyā | netrais tribhis trīṇi hutāśanāni jitāni kaṇṭhena jitas tu śaṅkhaḥ | stanau suvṛttāv atha magnacūcukau sthitau vijityeva gajasya kumbhau | tvāṃ sarvajetāram iti pratarkya kucau smareṇaiva kṛtau sudurgau | pīnāḥ saśastrāḥ parighopamāś ca bhujās tathāṣṭādaśa bhānti tasyāḥ | parākramaṃ vai bhavato viditvā kāmena yantrā iva te kṛtās tu | madhyaṃ ca tasyās trivalītaraṅgaṃ vibhāti daityendra suromarājī | bhayāturārohaṇakātarasya kāmasya sopānam iva prayuktam | sā romarājī sutarāṃ hi tasyā virājate pīnakucāvalagnā | ārohaṇe tvadbhayakātarasya svedapravāho 'sura manmathasya | nābhir gabhīrā sutarāṃ vibhāti pradakṣiṇāsyāḥ parivartamānā | tasyaiva lāvaṇyagṛhasya mudrā kandarparājñā svayam eva dattā | vibhāti ramyaṃ jaghanaṃ mṛgākṣyāḥ samantato mekhalayā'vajuṣṭam | manyāma taṃ kāmanarādhipasya prākāraguptaṃ nagaraṃ sudurgam | vṛttāvaromau ca mṛdū kumāryāḥ śobheta ūrū samanuttamau hi | āvāsanārthaṃ makaradhvajena janasya deśāv iva saṃniviṣṭau | Vāmanapurāṇa 20.2-11

svaṃ bhavanaṃ conj. Sanderson] *svabhavanaṃ* ed.

Note the use of the double *sandhi* in *toyadharālakair* in the fourth verse given in the edition, no doubt done to keep the metre. The pre-*sandhi* form is "*toyadharāḥ+alakaiḥ*". Also note the *śleṣa* with *lāvaṇyagṛha* to mean both a store-house of beauty and a store of salt stamped by the *mudrā*, the seal of royalty. A salt store would certainly have been common in a king's domain.

[420]See for instance *sā devī durgameṣu pratidiśatu jagate maṅgalānīha durgā* EI 9.25 265 on page 97; *Rāmacarita* 16.48, see n. 370 on page 123.

[421]*Devīmāhātmya* 4.10ab. See also Baijnath Praśasti (EI 1.16) l.11: *saṃsārasāgarāc ceto bhīru me nīyatāṃ śamam*

[422]*sa naḥ parṣadati durgāṇi viśvā nāv eva sindhuṃ duritāty agniḥ* Taittirīya Āraṇyaka 10.1; *viśvāni deva savitur duritāni parāsuva | yad bhadraṃ tan na āsuva |* Ṛg Veda 5.81. Here the deity referred to is Savitṛ, the Sun, whose flames too are believed to ward away evils. I am

Agni, she is described as incandescent with an innate fire (*tejas*), a symbol of warding away evil. In the majority of the Purāṇic hyms, her protection is sought in arduous and treacherous situtations, exemplified by the *Devīmāhātmya* as being in forests, on lonely pathways, trapped in fire, ringed by bandits or seized by foes, chased by wild animals, condemned to death and cast to prison by an angry king, afflicted by pain, caught in a volley of missiles in battle, indeed in any calamity (*saṃkaṭa*).[423]

And although she is described as the granter of liberation, her worshippers, at least those envisaged in the early medieval texts, do not seem to have been primarily seekers of *mokṣa,* but rather of security against crisis, refuge and protection in affliction, a fact that contributed to her assimilation with protective clan-goddesses. As Headley notes about the goddess as she is worshipped in Java, "Durgā is associated with the consequences of creation more than as a creator: mankind makes offerings to divinities in exchange for protection".[424]

Given this worldly dimension, the goddess was considered to be the proper guardian of human spaces. When the two associations in Puḷḷalūr and Aihole had issued the donations previously discussed, it was to forms of the deity that were installed to protect their own towns.[425] The practice of worshipping goddesses as deities of towns and villages is still widely observable in present-day custom.[426]

Function was linked to character. The forms of Durgā held to guard human spaces and communes such as fortresses were usually ferocious, such as we have seen with Rāṣṭraśyenā, for in the mediaeval view, deities of territories were imagined as wrathful, energetic and forbidding in order to keep at bay unwanted elements. It was in these manifestations that guardian *devī*s were held to control ghosts, tribes of malevolent planets and frightening demons. Such goddesses were in fact considered to be partly demonic themselves, and to wander with deadly hordes who could potentially afflict a nation. In the

indebted to Dr. Elizabeth Tucker for providing me with these references.

[423] *araṇye prāntare vāpi dāvāgniparivāritaḥ | dasyubhir vā vṛtaḥ śūnye gṛhīto vāpi śatrubhiḥ | siṃhavyāghrānuyāto vā vane vā vanahastibhiḥ | rājñā kruddhena cājñapto vadhyo bandhagato 'pi vā | āghūrṇito vā vātena sthitaḥ pote mahārṇave | patatsu cāpi śastreṣu saṃgrāme bhṛśadāruṇe | sarvabādhāsu ghorāsu vedanābhyardito'pi vā | smaran mamaitac caritaṃ naro mucyati saṃkaṭāt | Devīmāhātmya* 12. 24cd-12.28ab.

mucyati em. Sanderson based on attestations in epic and Śaiva literature] *mucyate* ed.

[424] Headley 2004, p. 533.

[425] See n. 324 on page 108.

[426] The residents of Kogrām for instance a short distance away from Shantiniketan, on the banks of the Ajay river, worship a form of Caṇḍī called Bahalā/ Bahulā as the deity of the village (seen by myself in situ).

Purāṇas, while entering the fray of battle, Caṇḍikā is depicted for instance as the leader of groups of dangerous *yoginī*s, and in this regard the *Kālikā* states that "wherever the goddess should roam, [they] follow her [...] Caṇḍikā's *yoginī*s are renowned in this world as her friends (*sakhī*)."[427] Spirits, *yoginī*s and malevolent planets, controlled by Durgā in her dangerous aspect, were considered to pose a real threat to a kingdom and apotropaic rituals were taken very seriously in the mediaeval period. By worshipping a goddess and sating her and her fierce allies, it was believed that she, along with other demons, would not hover threateningly over an urban space, but rather would be converted to work in its favour, using her great powers for the defense of the realm. In this regard the *Devīpurāṇa* assures that when goddesses are worshipped by the twice-born "no terror (*bhayaṃ*) occurs in their dominions", while "kings (*bhūpālā*) will have their enemies annihilated (*nivṛttavairā*)".[428]

[427] *Kālikāpurāṇa* 61.115cd-116.
[428] *Devīpurāṇa* 117.1-2, see n. 415 on page 137.

4 The Autumnal Festival of the Nine Nights

In mediaeval India, royal cults were meaningless unless brought to life in the sphere of ritual. In this chapter, I will present the politically most important enactment of the cult of the sovereign goddess, so far examined in terms of the patronage it secured, its core symbols and beliefs. This ritual was the spectacular autumnal ceremony of the Nine Nights (Navarātra/Navarātri), also known as the Festival of Durgā (Durgotsava). In the various rites of the Navarātra transferring power and kingship from sovereign-goddess to king and thence to all citizens, the visible climax of the relationship between goddess and ruler was attained and publicly expressed. Held at the end of the monsoon, at a time heralding both the campaigns of kings and the onset of disease, ill-health[429] and inauspiciousness, the festival held a double significance: it was thought to bring military success in the former case and to ensure the protection of the realm from the latter. The autumnal nine nights festival of the cult of the sovereign goddess was therefore essential for the periodical rejuvenation of the entire kingdom.

It was at this time that the affinity between Śakti and the ruler was singularly evoked, and temporal power was made sacred. To draw an analogy with the ceremonials of the cult of the Roman emperor in Asia Minor, which served a function similar to the goddess's Navarātra : "It was at festivals and their ritual that the vague and elusive ideas concerning the emperor [...] were focussed in action and made more powerful [...] Here the conceptual systems of temple, image and sacrifice found their living embodiment".[430] During the Navarātra the range of symbols and beliefs evoking the regality of the sovereign-goddess, which we had observed in the previous chapter, were similarly "focussed in action and made more powerful". It was also a time when the collective nature of the cult was most visible, when the ceremonies honouring the goddess alone, complementing and finding at every stage of the nine nights their human counterparts in parallel ceremonies centered on the king, were shared with all the people of the kingdom. Certain groups fulfilled particular ritual responsibilities; some honoured members renewed their allegiance to the throne by being allowed to pay tribute at the court, while others simply participated as observers in the grand public rites, or celebrated individually with rituals in their homes.

[429] Iyer 1928, vol. 2, pp. 57, 59, 60.
[430] Price 1984, p. 102.

Such an understanding of the Navarātra as an "incorporative ritual" has largely been guided by an influential article written by Burton Stein. Though Stein was perhaps the first to locate the importance of the festival as a communal rite of kingship[431], his argument was somewhat weakened due to two reasons: one was his erroneous view that the Vijayanagara empire was where the first reports of the Navarātra emerge (and also the implicit suggestion that it was the only place where this ritual was performed)[432], and the second was his singular reliance on eye-witness reports composed by travellers (Nicolo Conti, Abdur Razzak, Domingo Paez and Fernao Nuniz) to the Vijayanagara court in the 15th and 16th c. His conceptual edifice was therefore primarily erected on the basis of these observational accounts. In adopting this methodology, he seems to disregard the fact that reliance on travellers' reports involves the danger of imputing to a tradition meaning which its own practitioners would not have recognized. This reliance on reports written by visitors who saw only the public, and not private, dimension of the rite unfolding in the *durbar*-hall and the arena, has led Stein to view the Navarātra as entirely focussed on the Vijayanagara king.[433] He does not explain fully either the rituals (which the reporters did not see) of worshipping the goddess in whom royal power was seen to be fully concentrated during the Navarātra, or how the worship of the king was necessarily tied in with the goddess's worship at this time. For, without the worship at Navarātra of a form of *śakti* for whom the rites were principally offered, a king's worship was believed to be meaningless, simply a secular act of homage that had little ritual validity without a transcendent power energizing it. A far more detailed account by Price on the Navarātras celebrated in the Tamil kingdoms of Śivagaṅgai and Ramnad, successors to the Vijayanagara kingdom, has revealed a secondary layer of rituals during the southern Navarātra, in which the king would either worship the goddess himself or would have her incorporated into his own worship, which unfolded inside the palace. These were not seen by Stein's witnesses, debarred from the crucial ritual areas as all outsiders were.

Had Stein looked beyond eye-witness accounts, and considered accounts in Sanskrit from all over India that predated the Vijayanagara accounts by much more than a century, he might have reconsidered his belief that the Navarātra

[431] Stein 1983, p. 78.

[432] "The Mahānavamī is first reported in the greatest south Indian kingdom of mediaeval times, the Vijayanagara kingdom", Ibid, p. 77.

[433] "In all cases the focus of the ceremonies is upon the reigning king and the revitalization of his kingship and his realm", Ibid. p. 78.

was spurred solely by the rise of that South Indian kingdom. These accounts in Sanskrit may be considered, in contrast to traveller's reports, as "insider-texts", being composed by and for the class of ritual-specialists who were directly involved in the performance of the Navarātra and in determining the ritual sequence that was to be followed by a kingdom. Describing the ritual sequence in detail (including the all-important liturgy that would be recited during ritual action and contained the key-concepts of the ritual process), the Sanskrit sources embody indigenous views on what constituted ritual meaning and ritual structure. It is therefore necessary to rely on these insider accounts for conceiving how the ritual was performed. Eye-witness reports, where available, are used, supplementarily, to verify the Sanskrit and to fill in the gaps.

Of these insider-accounts of the Navarātra in Sanskrit there are plenty, and from a number of regions, and scriptural traditions, attesting that the ritual was truly pan-Indic in scale. There are firstly the Purāṇas, the scriptural authorities for the rite, and, secondly, treatises or chapters in larger works based on these scriptures, composed mainly by the Dharmaśāstric cognoscenti, the *smārta*s (*brāhmaṇa* experts in the Smṛti, the orthodox legal corpus), who were located at various courts throughout India as advisors to kings.[434] There is also evidence of the Navarātra in ritual literature that was not strictly brahmanical but syncretic in character, assimilating Tantric elements. Sanderson 2007 revealed the existence of certain Orissan ritual texts of this type teaching a version of the Navarātra that had developed in the context of the Orissan Atharvavedic traditions and propitiated the goddess Bhadrakālī/Jayadurgā with *mantra*s from the Śākta Kālīkula.[435]

Although, the Purāṇas and the *smārta*-treatises are prescriptive and not factual in language ("this should be" rather than "this was"), they form by far our best and only sources for describing the rite.[436] No other sources in the form of eye-witness accounts from a period preceding the 15th c. exist, and, in this absence, it is crucial to rely on prescriptive literature as evidence for how the mediaeval Indians conceptualized ritual and their relation to the gods. The great importance of this literature is attested by 9th c. inscriptions from South East Asia, which conclusively confirm that prescriptive sources in Sanskrit were

[434] For a chronological assessment of *smārta* literature on the Navarātra and an account of the Bengali rite known as the Durgā Pūjā between the 12th-15th c. see Sarkar 2011 forthcoming b. Besides Raghunandana whom the article directly concerns, other early and important Gauḍīya Dharmaśāstric writers on the goddess's *pūjā* such as Jīmūtavāhana and Śūlapāṇi have been assessed in this article.

[435] Sanderson 2007, pp. 255-276. See p. 161 here.

[436] Reasons for this are discussed in greater depth in Sarkar 2011 forthcoming b, pp. 2-4.

employed by mediaeval royal courts in directly shaping their ritual practices.[437] The charge of idealism, though at first sight imputable to such writings, can thus be laid to rest where one is dealing with a culture as indebted to the sacred books and as respectful of sacred learning in all religious activities as the mediaeval Indic one.

In terms of the Purāṇic material, there are a variety of different accounts, which indicates the fluidity of the Navarātra, showing that it is a flexible ceremony developing according to the needs and customs of particular regions. Valuable work has already been accomplished in systematizing this mass of sources: Kane[438] and Hazra's descriptive studies,[439] along with Einoo's tabulation and genericization of Purāṇic passages on the Navarātra[440] are foremost in the field. These studies succeeded in illuminating the great diversity in ritual programmes, showing that there was no monolithic template that the ceremony followed. However, given the difficulty in securely dating Purāṇic texts that changed and grew over the first to the sixth centuries, these studies have, with some reason, tended to avoid chronology. Furthermore, they, with the exception of Hazra, tended to see the rituals not as forming different regional traditions, but as isolated textual descriptions.

Regulations described in the Purāṇas regarding the Navarātra directly influenced the development of regional traditions, and these local traditions are reflected in the juridical literature by *smārta* writers originating in particular regional courtly environments. The *smārta*s drew from the Purāṇas as authorities. They include in their works vast passages on Navarātras from particular Purāṇas that doubtless were seen as forming important religious traditions in the regions of composition. Were it otherwise, those Purāṇas would not have been cited in the *smārta* treatises, which, being primarily legislative and constitutional in function, sought to embody the principles and religious systems guiding the kingdom. In *smārta* writings, one discerns therefore real historical contexts for the dateless and protean Purāṇic accounts of the Nine-Nights ceremony. One can also see an attempt by their authors, hired to create ritual curricula for their employer-kingdoms that would be put into action, to make sense of and coherently interpret the mystical descriptions of the Purāṇas. However, examples from this literature are quite late, since they were composed only

[437] Sanderson 2003-2004, p. 353; pp. 355-357.
[438] Kane 1958 (1994), vol. 5, part 1, pp. 155-195.
[439] Hazra 1963, vol. 2. pp. 2-15.
[440] Einoo 1999.

from the 12th c. onwards, at a mature phase of the Navarātra ceremony, when it had stabilized after centuries of change. I thus take them to mark the termini ante-quem for periodicizing the Navarātra.

The terminus post-quem is difficult to ascertain given that very few Purāṇic sources have been edited properly and the most ancient manuscripts are either unknown or have not yet been utilized: the reader is warned that the historical sequence outlined below is only provisional and remains in large part open to discussion and querying. Only a detailed examination of the manuscripts of some of the key scriptures, that I have been unable to undertake in the present work, can enable one to ascertain a sound chronological history. It is hoped that this effort will be undertaken in future studies.

4.1 Ancient Pre-Purāṇic Phase

Our sources for reconstructing the early history of the Navarātra are from Sanskrit accounts from approximately the 4th and 7th centuries, that describe, what seems to have been, an ancient ritual of the warrior-goddess, which formed the precursor to the Purāṇic ceremony. Brief descriptions of such a ritual appear in the *Harivaṃśa* in the context of the Vindhya-dwelling Kauśikī (discussed in the previous chapter)[441], as well as in Bāṇa's *Harṣacarita* and the *Caṇḍīśataka*.[442]

As inferrable from Bāṇa's *Harṣacarita*, the rite was a non-Aryan tribal practice associated with the Vindhya cult of the goddess. The mountain range itself, viewed in Sanskrit literature as partitioning the Sanskritic north from the non-Aryan expanses of the Deccan, was identified by scripture as the locus of various *mleccha* tribes. The goddess, considered the presiding deity of the mountain, would have been the protective deity for those groups.[443] Bāṇa is

[441] *kṛtānuyātrā bhūtais tvaṃ nityaṃ māṃsabalipriyā | tithau navamyāṃ pūjāṃ ca prāpsyase sapaśukriyām | ye ca tvāṃ matprabhāvajñāḥ praṇamiṣyanti mānavāḥ | na teṣāṃ durlabhaṃ kiṃcit putrato dhanato 'pi vā | kāntāreṣv avasannānāṃ magnānāṃ ca mahārṇave | dasyubhir vā niruddhānāṃ tvaṃ gatiḥ paramā nṛṇām | tvaṃ siddhiḥ śrīr dhṛtiḥ kīrtir hrīr vidyā saṃnatir matiḥ | Harivaṃśa* 47.51-53. See also Yokochi 2004, pp. 57-60.

[442] *Harṣacarita*, p. 126, l. 4; *Caṇḍīśataka* 16.

[443] The residents of the Vindhya mountains are identified by the *Devīpurāṇa* as follows:
veṇasambhavasantānasambhūtā barbarāvarāḥ |
pulindāḥ śabarāḥ taṅkākāpāliḥmlecchajātayaḥ |
kandamūlaphalāhārā yatra valkaladhāriṇaḥ |
guñjābharaṇakṛṣṇāṅgā mālāhārāvalambinaḥ |
śatapatrakṛtāṭopā śukapicchavibhūṣaṇāḥ |
dhātumaṇḍitasarvāṅgā nityaṃ muditamānasaḥ | Devīpurāṇa 13.52-53.
veṇa conj. Hazra 1963, vol. 2, p. 43 and n. 121] *reṇu* ed. Hazra (ibid.) also takes *taṅkā* to mean a tribe called the Taṅkas. I could not find a reference to any such tribe and have therefore not followed his interpretation of this.

not alone in emphasising the tribal following of the ceremony. The fact that the Navarātra had a greater relevance outside the Brahminical ritual sphere is made amply evident in examples from Purāṇic scripture, which clearly notes that the goddess's autumnal worship was celebrated widely by many non-Aryan communities.[444] But the tribe Bāṇa associates most particularly with Caṇḍī, in the *Kādambarī,*[445] and also to an extent it seems in the *Harṣacarita*[446], are the Śabaras who inhabited the Vindhya forests, a generic group in Sanskrit that may have included a number of tribes that resided in the area. The association of the Vindhyan Śabaras with the worship of Caṇḍī became something of a convention in Sanskrit literature,[447] attesting that her veneration by the indigenous population of the mountain was well-known to early-mediaeval Indian authors.

According to the testimony of Bāṇa's works and the earlier *Harivaṃśa*, Caṇḍī's principal worship in the Vindhyas was associated with one, rather than nine, ceremonial days identified in the Sanskrit as Navamī[448] or Mahānavamī[449] and Vijayamaha (the festival of victory), the Special Ninth lunar-day commemorating the festival of the goddess's victory over demons.[450] This Ninth day is

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kṛtāṭopā conj. Sanderson based on *Svacchandatantra* 1.40a, 2.92a, 9.5c and *Picumata* 56.55a] *kṛtāvoḍhā* ed.

[444] *aṣṭamyāṃ rudhiraiś caiva mahāmāṃsaiḥ sugandhibhiḥ |*
pūjayed bahujātīyair balibhir bhojanaiḥ śivām || Kālikāpurāṇa 61.14.
For a *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* passage cited in the *Kṛtyaratnākara*, stating that Caṇḍī is worshipped by "various *mlecchas*" see in this thesis n. 253 on page 93.
Among three categories of her autumnal worship described in the *Bhaviṣya*, Caṇḍī is said to be worshipped by Kirātas (a term possibly genericizing mountain-dwelling tribes) in the third category of the Navarātra named as *tāmasī* without mantras and accompanied by wine and meat:
śāradī caṇḍikāpūjā trividhā parigīyate |
sāttvikī japayajñādyair naivedyaiś ca nirāmiṣaiḥ |
[...]
rājasī balidānena naivedyaiḥ sāmiṣais tathā |
surāmāṃsādyupahārair japayajñair vinā tu yā |
vinā mantrais tāmasī syāt kirātānāṃ ca sammatā | Bhaviṣyapurāṇa cited in *Puruṣārthacintāmaṇi,* p. 80. For the reflection of this view in the *Skandapurāṇa* and *smārta* literature, see Kane 1958 (1994), p. 158.

[445] *Kādambarī* pp. 30-31. For the passage, see in this thesis p. 93.

[446] The Śabara Nirghāta is poetically likened to "a veritable Mahānavamī festival for countless buffaloes [...] Kālarātri's lover"(*mahānavamīmahaṃ mahiṣamaṇḍalānām* [...] *kāmukam* [..] *kālarātreḥ*), *(Harṣacarita*, p. 126, l.4). Kālarātri is an aspect of Caṇḍī, and well-known for her destructive violence at the end of a *kalpa*. It seems to me that the poet evokes this metaphor knowingly.

[447] *Gaüḍavaho* 336, *Haravijaya* 47.41, *Kathāsaritsāgara* 4.2.88a.

[448] See n. 441 on the preceding page.

[449] *Harṣacarita*, Ucchvāsa 8, p. 126, l. 4: *mahānavamīmahaṃ*

[450] *śūlaprotād upāntaplutamahi mahiṣād utpatantyā sravantyā*
vartmany ārajyamāne sapadi makhabhujāṃ jātasaṃdhyāpramohaḥ |
nṛtyan hāsena mattvā vijayamaham ahaṃ mānayāmīti vādī
yām āśliṣya pranṛttaḥ punar api purabhit pārvatī pātu sā vaḥ || Caṇḍīśataka 16.

particularly identified by both Bāṇa and the *Harivaṃśa* as sacred to the goddess, though none of these witnesses mention her worship on previous days. The silence of these works on that account suggests that the large-scale eight-day preamble, widespread in the later ritual, was either unknown or not widely followed at this time.

The myth of the *Harivaṃśa* identifies the Ninth lunar day as falling on the dark half of the rainy month of Śrāvaṇa. The importance of this ascription is explained by the *Harivaṃśa* as owing to the time of the goddess's birth: according to the myth of the goddess presented here, Kauśikī was born from Yaśodā at midnight on the dark Eighth lunar day, that is on the first hour of the dark Ninth lunar day.[451] The dark quarter of the month may have been associated with Kauśikī's dark colouring, and the fact that she conceptually evoked sleep and the night of *pralaya* when the universe was to be annihilated, through her collocation in the *Harivaṃśa* with the goddesses Nidrā and Kālarātri. The clearly ancient importance of the dark Ninth as the proper time for worshipping the goddess impacted the mediaeval Gauḍīya Navarātra which, in addition to beginning from the bright First, the more widespread practice, was also taught by Eastern treatise-writers to commence from the dark Ninth of the lunar month (*kṛṣṇanavamī*) because of the goddess's birth on that occasion. Even today particular traditions of the Durgā Pūjā in Bengal begin on the dark Ninth.[452]

At the primeval stage alluded to in these Sanskrit accounts, the festival may have been primarily aprotropaic, seeking to placate spirits who could otherwise cause disease or lay horrific siege on villages. It was also associated with protecting men in dangerous situations, exemplified by the *Harivaṃśa* as being trapped in a forest, deluged in a great ocean, or imprisoned by robbers.[453] This practical function of protecting a community from crises, war, supernatural dangers, pacifying omens and obtaining blessings and good-fortune remained the most important reason for worshipping the goddess during the autumnal ceremony even in the later tradition, attested in a number of later scriptural passages.

The hallmark of the tribal rite was offering blood to the goddess, a substance she greatly relished and nursed an insatiable craving for. The *Harivaṃśa* describes that the goddess's worship on the Ninth lunar day must be accompa-

[451] *Harivaṃśa* 57.35-36; 48.13. Kauśikī is said to have been born from Yaśodā at the same time as Kṛṣṇa was born from Devakī. She then exchanged places with Kṛṣṇa so that she would be dashed against a stone by Kaṃsa in Kṛṣṇa's lieu.

[452] *Durgāpūjātattva*, pp. 47-48. The *Purohitadarpaṇa,* the ritual manual currently most in use in Bengal still teaches this option (*Purohitadarpaṇa*, p. 227).

[453] See n. 441 on page 146.

nied by the offering of domestic animals (*sapaśukriyā*), for the goddess herself was, like the hordes of ghosts who attended her, "always fond of offerings of flesh" (*nityaṃ māṃsabalipriyā*).[454] Bāṇa's *Harṣacarita* associates Mahānavamī particularly with buffalo-sacrifice– a metaphor used by the author to describe a Śabara, suggesting that the sacrifice of many buffaloes occured on this occasion during his time.[455]

In addition to animal sacrifice on Navamī, Bāṇa's *Kādambarī* also describes rites of self-affliction such as the offering of blood from one's body, given that the ferocity of the deity was a potentially benevolent and thus venerated characteristic in this early form of the Navarātra.[456] There are also accounts of sacrificing one's own head to the goddess[457]– Śivāji himself was prepared to have done this[458]– or even gouging out one's eyes, as Rāma was about to have done on Mahānavamī in the *Kṛttivāsī Rāmāyaṇa* of Bengal[459]. The figure of the self-sacrificing king is one that appears with frequency in Indic literature on the warrior-goddess. As Baldissera notes "as supporters and legitimizers of royal power goddesses appreciate the *rājasika* qualities that characterise victorious kings...[they] reward passion and fervour".[460] Rituals of self-mutilation would have been viewed as ennobling demonstrations of heroism and self-sacrifice towards the deity. Besides self-mutilation, the Ninth was also marked by the performance of human-sacrifice, when the head of a human victim, would be offered to please the goddess.[461] This originally tribal practice of propitiating Caṇḍī

[454] See n. 441 on page 146.

[455] See n. 446 on page 147 for the description in the *Harṣacarita* associating Mahānavamī, when many buffaloes are ritually sacrificed, with the ferocity of the Śabara in hunting.

[456] See in this thesis p. 93.

[457] See n. 252 on page 93.

[458] See p. 61.

[459] See n. 253 on page 93.

[460] Baldissera 1996, p. 86.

[461] *Kālikāpurāṇa* 61.14 decribes the worship of the goddess "with [offerings] of Great Flesh"– see n. 444 on page 147. See also *Gaüḍavaho* 318 and 319 (for the verses see in this thesis, p. 91, the worship of Danteśvarī in Bastar (see in this thesis p. 80) and Caṇḍamārī with human sacrifice in the *Yaśastilakacampū*, pp. 26-29. A 19th century colonial report on the goddess Anna Kuārī or Mahādhanī in the Chotanāgpur Plateau describes that she was worshipped with human sacrifice by the Oraons, an indigenous group inhabiting the forests of the region. The Oraons inheriting this ritual responsibility were known as the Urkas or the Otongas (Russell and Lal 1916, vol. 4., p. 312). The report also notes that "Anna Kuārī finds votaries not only among the Oraons but especially among the big *zamindār*s and Rājās of the native states. When a man has offered a sacrifice to Anna Kuāri she goes and lives in his house in the form of a small child. From that time his fields double harvest, and when he brings in his paddy he takes Anna Kuāri and rolls over the heap to double its size. But she soon becomes restless and is only pacified by new human sacrifices. At last after some years she cannot bear remaining in the same house anymore and kills everyone." (Ibid). Human sacrifice in the Chotanagpur plateau by the Urkas was even reported as recently as 2005. On January 3, 2005, Ranchi police arrested an Urka Agapit Kharia, on charges of murdering a man. The 70

was continued, along with the practice of self-mutilation, into the Mahānavamī ceremonials of the later courtly Maithila Navarātra, discussed later.[462]

Joyous, incorporative rites involving the community would also have been performed. Purāṇic literature and its commentarial tradition discuss a festival called Śābarotsava, the Festival of the Śabaras, to be celebrated on the following lunar day, the Tenth (Daśamī) joined with the asterism Śravaṇa. This custom was associated particularly with Mithilā, Assam and Bengal since all the literature on the festival hails from those regions. According to the main witness, the Eastern *Kālikāpurāṇa*, the festival is envisioned as a celebration of communal identity when everyone is taught to join together in ecstatically paying farewell to the deity at her departure from the world at the end of the rite. Dancing, celebratory fanfares, bacchanalian game-playing and making conversation and songs larded with references to the male and female sexual organs were encouraged at this time, as the *Kālikā,* and the Bengali *smārta* commentarial tradition, suggest.[463]

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year old tribal officiant claimed that he had sacrificed the man for a good harvest and that he had inherited the practice from his forebears. In his lifetime he had beheaded five people (Biswas 2005, Frontpage of *The Telegraph,* Calcutta). Colonial reports also discuss human sacrifice performed for the popular central Indian goddess Banjārī Devī by the Banjāra tribe (Russell and Lal 1916, vol. 2, pp. 181-182). See also Hazra 1963, vol. 2., p. 18.

[462] That human sanguinary offering was believed to be an originally tribal practice is evidenced in Brahminical scripture. For a passage in the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* saying as much see in this thesis, n. 93. The Purāṇas earmarked Mahānavamī for the custom of offering human blood, and, though carefully distancing themselves from the ritual by calling it the practice of *barbara*s and *mlecchas*, taught the offering of human-blood to *dvija* kings as a highly effective, albeit eccentric, means of propitiating Caṇḍī. It was advocated by the Gauḍa *smārta*s as late as the 15th century. Offering blood from one's body on the Navarātra is taught for instance in Raghunandana's *Durgāpūjātattva* as follows: *svadeharudhiradāne tu eṣa svagātrarudhirabaliḥ oṃ mahāmāye jaganmātaḥ sarvakāmapradāyini | dadāmi deharudhiraṃ prasīda varadā bhava | ity uktvā oṃ jayantītyādinā dadyāt* (*Durgāpūjātattva*, p. 57).

[463] *visarjayed daśamyāṃ tu śravaṇe śābarotsavaiḥ |*
antyapādo divābhāge śravaṇasya yadā bhavet |
tadā sampreṣaṇaṃ devyā daśamyāṃ kārayed budhaḥ |
suvāsinīkumārībhir veśyābhir narttakais tathā |
śaṅkhatūryaninādaiś ca mṛdaṅgaiḥ paṭṭahais tathā |
dhvajavastrair bahuvidhair lājapuṣpaprakīrṇakaiḥ |
dhūlikardamavikṣepaiḥ krīḍākautukamaṅgalaiḥ |
bhagaliṅgābhidhānaiś ca bhagaliṅgapragītakaiḥ ||
bhagaliṅgādiśabdaiś ca krīḍeyur alaṃ janāḥ |
parair nākṣipyate yas tu yaḥ parān nākṣiped yadi ||
kruddhā bhagavati tasya śāpaṃ dadyāt sudāruṇam | Kālikāpurāṇa 61.17cd-22.

The Śābarotsava passage in the *Kālikāpurāṇa* is commented on by the Gauḍīya *smārta*s in the following way: Jīmūtavāhana writes *śabaravarṇa iva parṇādyāvṛtaḥ kardamāliptaśarīro nānāvidhāsambaddhavalgitanṛtyagītādiparo bhūtveti śābarotsavapadārthaḥ | krīḍākautakamaṅgalair ity asyāpy ayam evārthaḥ* (*Kālaviveka* cited in *Durgāpūjāviveka*, p. 33). Śūlapāṇi writes *atra bhagaliṅgābhidhānanṛtyagītādikaṃ kartavyam |* (*Durgotsavaviveka*, p. 24). Raghunandana writes *tato dhūlakardamavikṣepakrīḍākautukamaṅgalabhagaliṅgābhidhānabhagaliṅgapragītaparākṣiptaparākṣepakarūpaṃ*

Though the *Kālikā*'s teaching of the Śābarotsava speaks not of a tribal festival, but rather to a conscious cultivation of a tribal celebration, it seems possible that the Śābarotsava mentioned in this text was a fossilized remnant, or memory, of an older non-Aryan ceremony performed at the end of the goddess's worship. The requirement that people ought to behave like Śabaras may have been, therefore, based on actual Śabara customs, or tribal customs broadly genericized as Śabara practice, which had been assimilated into urban communities along with the cult of Caṇḍī.

4.2 cca. 500-1000: Purāṇicization and Incorporation by the Kingdom

With the rise of the early mediaeval kingdoms and the increased sophistication of courts promoting lavish ritualism as a key feature of culture and politics, the Navarātra spread from the Vindhyas and was incorporated by Sanskritized kingdoms. It became chiefly an urban, rather than a tribal, celebration and, very soon, the key political ceremony performed by any mediaeval kingdom in order to attain the beneficence of the goddess in its regular activities.

This development is reflected in the flowering of Sanskrit normative literature on the subject from c. 5th-12th centuries, prescribing the "how" and the "when" of ritual conduct and guiding governments eager to regulate themselves in a respectable manner. Revealing the appropriation of the ceremony by courts, these, mainly early Purāṇic, scriptural sources on the ceremony continually emphasise that the goddess's annual worship was *rājyārtham* "for the sake of (that is to acquire) sovereignty" or *rāṣṭravṛddhaye* "for the increase of the kingdom's [prosperity and power]".[464] The primarily secular purpose of the Navarātra is explained by these sources as its special ability to destroy fears and great enemies, grant great wealth and magical attainments, neutralize the bad effects of planetary conjunctions, bring rain, heirs, long-life and sovereignty and prevent

śābarotsavaṃ kuryāt | (*Durgāpūjātattva* cited and translated in Sarkar 2011 forthcoming b, pp. 72-73).

[464]The *Devīpurāṇa* uses the term *rājyārthaṃ* to explain why Vasu, Brahmā and Viṣṇu performed the Navarātra:

rājyārthaṃ vasunā kṛtvā brahmaṇā hariṇā tathā |
rudreṇa tripuraṃ dagdhaṃ viṣṇunā śarabho hataḥ | *Devīpurāṇa* 50.81 (p. 290).

The use of the term *rāṣṭravṛddhaye* in the context of the Navarātra is to be found in a quoted passage from the *Jyotiḥśāstra* in Jīmūtavāhana's *Kālaviveka*:

ṛkṣatraye tu mūlādau navamyām āśvine site |
caṇḍikām upahārais tu pūjayed rāṣṭravṛddhaye | *Kālaviviveka* in *Durgāpūjāviveka*, p. 35.

poverty and untimely deaths in the kingdom.[465] All these rewards would have been thought to particularly sanctify a mediaeval kingdom, its towns and their inhabitants. After death, the goddess's worshipper is promised, not liberation from the world, but rebirth in it as "an overlord of kings over kings, a patron, good-looking and beloved, having sons and wealth".[466] Without stating this directly, the scriptures nevertheless make it clear that the intended audience of their prescription of the Navarātra was the segment of society who owned and ruled over land.

Stimulated by this courtly appropriation, military rituals either blessing the army and weapons or prognosticating victory emerged as the most important feature of the goddess's Navarātra, performed with great pomp on Navamī. However, in contrast to sanguinary sacrifice, these rituals were not it seems an archaic constituent of the Navarātra. They appear rather to be derived from Brahmanical military traditions performed annually in the month of Āśvina. Such calendrically performed military rituals blessing the king's army and weapons, such as the lustration of the troops and state animals (*nīrajana*), which would later become necessary components of Caṇḍī's autumnal worship, were already well-established as civic ceremonies performed on Navamī in Āśvina, before the appropriation of the Śākta Navarātra by the early mediaeval kingdom. They are taught for instance in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* of Varāhamihira (chapter 43), the *Kāṭhakagṛhyasūtra* (57.1) and the *Arthaśāstra*

[465] *mahābhayavināśāya mahāripuvadhāya ca |*
mahābhyudayakāmāya mahāsiddhiphalāya ca |
pūjayed yājayed devīṃ ṣaṣṭidhā parameśvarīṃ |
ṛtunāgakṛtā pīḍā yakṣarakṣograhodbhavā |
saṃvatsaramahādoṣajanmarkṣa-m-upamardakāḥ |
ketūtthā śaśirāhūtthā bhaumārkisitabhānujāḥ |
śamayed yajamānasya devīhomaratasya ca | *Devīpurāṇa* 50.4-9 (p. 282).

avṛṣṭau kṛtavān āsīt kratur daśarathena ca |
anyaiś ca muniśārdūla prajāyurājyakāṅkṣibhiḥ |
kṛtavān suragandharvair yakṣarakṣomahānṛpaiḥ | Ibid. 50.83 (p. 290.).

na tatra deśe durbhikṣaṃ na ca duḥkhaṃ pravartate |
nākāle mriyate kaścit pūjyate yatra caṇḍikā |
anena vidhinā yas tu devīṃ prīṇayate naraḥ |
skandavat pālayet taṃ tu devī sarvāpadi sthitaṃ |
putradāradhanarddhīnāṃ saṃkhyā tasya na vidyate |
bhuktveha paramān bhogān pretya devīgaṇo bhavet | *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* cited in *Durgosava-viveka*, pp. 1-2. For the worship of Caṇḍī at the Navarātra to bring rainfall

[466] *evaṃ yaḥ pūjayed arcāṃ durgāyāḥ śraddhayānvitaḥ |*
[...]
punar etya mahābhāgo rājarājādhipo bhavet |
dātā surūpaḥ subhagaḥ putravān dhanavān bhavet | *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* cited in *Kṛtyaratnākara*, p. 349.

(2.30.51), but the goddess does not appear in this non-Śākta tradition honouring sovereignty.[467] It seems that the cult of the warrior-goddess was only later accreted to this antecedent martial tradition centred on Āśvina, when her worship was integrated with the annual royal ceremonies associated with the replenishment of a Brahmanical kingdom's power. From the 6th c. onwards, the time from which the first Purāṇic accounts of the Navarātra appear (as we shall see), the structures of the goddess's Mahānavamī had begun to subsume the function once served by the old Brahmanical kingship rituals on Āśvina. It formally marked the advent of the military calendar in autumn and was believed to organize and set into motion an army's success, the regeneration of the kingdom and the pacification of omens and crises, all practical goals any kingdom thought well to achieve before a period of potential uncertainty. In this newly enhanced ritual structure providing civic sanctification, the Śākta influx was significant– the goddess's role became central in causing the efficaciousness of the military ceremonies.

Despite the important role of kings, the early-mediaeval Navarātra was not an elitist political ritual intended just for the powerful or for the army. Perhaps as a consequence of its unorthodox beginnings in folk-religion, and Caṇḍī's assimilative nature, the festival retained even in its most courtly hey-day an ecumenical character. Though the main sponsor – given the high costs involved – would have been the king, anyone, of whatever religious background or degree of purity, could participate. Rājās, *kṣatriya*s, low-castes including Śūdras, Jainas, outcaste tribes, their rulers, foreign warrior clans, even women, along with the armed forces of the kingdom all would have joined together in propitiating the sovereign-goddess, or various goddesses as one. Many lower groups had special ritual responsibilities to fulfil.[468] Understood as the substance of power, the goddess in her forms was thought to permeate through the king into all levels of society binding the community of the kingdom together into a sacred whole. Indeed early normative literature makes quite a pointed note of the integrative aspect of the ancient rite.[469] In the later mediaeval period, the ceremony became more restrictive with increased Brahminization such that, as the Dharmaśāstrin Viṣṇubhaṭṭa Āṭhavale stringently noted, "*mlecchas* etc.

[467] Texts given in Sanderson 2005, p. 258, nn. 70-71. I am grateful to him for having pointed out the importance of this evidence in a personal communication.

[468] For example, during the Navarātra ceremony of Berar, only a member of the Mahār tribe could officiate at the killing of the buffalo (Russell and Lal, vol. 4, pp. 131-2).

[469] *kartavyaṃ brāhmaṇādyais tu kṣatriyair bhūmipālakaiḥ |*
godhanārthaṃ viśair vatsa śūdraiḥ putrasukhārthibhiḥ | Devīpurāṇa 22.5
See also *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* cited in Kane 1958 (1994), p.157, n.401.

do not have the authority to perform [worship] such as *japa* even through the agency of *brāhmaṇa*s. However they must only make mental offerings of various gifts such as alcohol and animal-sacrifice to the goddess".[470]

Among the Purāṇic sources, the earliest to mention autumnal goddess-worship appears to be the *Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa* (cca. 500-600, but acquiring its present form possibly as late as the 9th c.)[471], a work, composed in Southern Kashmir or its immediate vicinity[472], and frequently employed in ancient Indian kingship for programmes of royal sanctification. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* formed the litany for a great part of the later Navarātra: verses accompanying the consecration of royal animals such as horses and elephants and accoutrements like weapons, the lion-throne, insignia etc, are all attributed by the *smārta* treatise-writers to this work.

It teaches the worship of the goddess Bhadrakālī, a form of "Kātyāyanī, beauteous, free-willed and boon-bestowing who goes to a Lord of the World when worshipped with all objects of desire".[473] Her worship is spread over two lunar days in the bright half of *āśvina*: the eighth (Mahāṣṭamī) and the ninth (Mahānavamī). On Mahāṣṭamī a shrine to the goddess draped with various cloths was to be built in the north-east part of a military encampment (*śibira*). The goddess was to be painted on a cloth and worshipped therein.[474] This was to be followed by the worship of all weapons– the royal armour, parasol and ensigns– with flowers, perfume, fruits and sumptuous food. Then, offerings to the deity in the form of various staged entertainments were to follow. The king was to remain awake that night. On the following Mahānavamī, the same worship was to be repeated and concluded with a parade.[475] Animal sacrifice is not discussed, in all likelihood because the *Viṣṇudharmottara* is a Vaiṣṇavite

[470] *mlecchādīnāṃ tu brāhmaṇadvārāpi japādau nādhikāraḥ kintu surādyupahārasahitatattadupahārāṇāṃ paśvādibaleś ca devīm uddiśya manasotsargamātraṃ taiḥ kartavyaṃ | Puruṣārthacintāmaṇi,* p. 81 (discussion on the Navarātra). See also Kane 1958 (1994), p. 157.

[471] Scholarly opinions conjecturing dates for the compilation of this huge work is summarized as follows. Hazra 1963, vol. 1, pp. 205-212, suggests it was composed between 400 CE-500 CE. Buhler conjectures that its composition was no later than 500 AD; Winternitz dates it between 628 and 1000 CE (Ibid, p. 212, n. 250); Pingree 1990, p. 276 dates it to the 6th or the 7th century on the basis of astronomical material dateable from the period; Sanderson conjectures that the iconographical sections of this work took shape around the second half of the ninth century (personal communication to Pratapaditya Pal on 27th April, 2010, kindly made available to me for this research).

[472] Hazra 1963, vol. 1, p. 216. Buhler and Winternitz are of the same opinion (ibid. and n. 263). See also Sanderson 2005, pp. 275-276.

[473] *Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa* 2.158.6cd-7.

[474] For how a cloth (*paṭa)* is to be prepared for ritual worship see Sanderson 2005, p. 251, n. 50.

[475] Ibid. 2.158.1-8; Einoo 1999, p. 43; Sanderson 2005, p. 256.

text.

From this description, it is clear that the early form of the autumnal ceremony was primarily military in character. Mahānavamī initiated military campaigning and occasioned a cult of heroism sacred to warriors. Legends of its power in granting omnipotent kingship appear in examples of Purāṇic literature: the *Varāhapurāṇa* describes the practice of fasting followed on the day as being a *śauryavrata*, "An Observance of Valour", so called because "a [king] who has lost his kingdom assuredly gains his state, when this is performed".[476] The *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* explained it as a day of cosmic victory, when the goddess slew the buffalo-demon and was consecrated as the ruler of heaven[477], further mythicizing its monarchical relevance. Her slaughter of the buffalo-demon was to be enacted on earth by her most favoured devotees: the *Kālikā* teaches that all kings must perform animal-sacrifice on Mahānavamī.[478]

Given its archaic importance both in tribal customs of goddess-worship and also in certain Tantric texts (to be shown), it seems to have been this particular *tithi*, rather than the nine nights of the Navarātra, that was ubiquitously performed in the Indic world as the foremost ritual of prestigious kingship. One of the earliest *smārta* writers Lakṣmīdhara who was counsellor to King Govindacandra (1114-1154 CE) of the Gāhāḍavāla kingdom, whose nominal capital was in Vārāṇasī and Kanyakubja, codifies only the Mahānavamī rites[479], and this seems to be an indication that only this lunar-day was celebrated in that kingdom.

The Mahāṣṭamī-Mahānavamī rites described in the *Viṣṇudharmottara* as sacred to Bhadrakālī were by no means unnoticed: they find their way into the *Agnipurāṇa* (267.13cd-16ab), a further scripture of significance for Indian kingship. This later work based, along with various other sections, this particular autumnal ritual of the goddess on the *Viṣṇudharmottara,*[480] and circulated it among a wider clientele of monarchs. As in the ritual of the *Viṣṇudharmottara*, on Mahāṣṭamī Bhadrakālī's picture was to be painted on a cloth; weapons, crests, banners and parasols were to be worshipped on the Eighth; and the wor-

[476] *evaṃ kṛte bhraṣṭarājyo labhed rājyaṃ na saṃśayaḥ | Vārāhapurāṇa* cited in *Kṛtyaratnākara,* pp. 364-365.
[477] *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* cited in *Kṛtyaratnākara* p. 356.
[478] *Kālikāpurāṇa* 60.1cd.
[479] *Kṛtyakalpataru*, vol. 11 (*Rājadharmakāṇḍa*), pp. 191-195.
[480] *Agnipurāṇa* Adhyāyas 259-272 were based on the *Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa.* The dependency is identified in Hazra 1963, vol. 1, p. 209. In addition to the section on Mahānavamī, other influxes into the *Agnipurāṇa* from the *Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa* are also discussed ibid. This dependency was also noted by Sanderson 2003-2004, p. 382, n. 115 and Sanderson 2005, p. 256, n. 65.

ship was to be concluded with a *bali*, followed by a night vigil.[481] The same rituals were to be repeated on Navamī. The text specifies that the worship is for the sake of acquiring victory (*jaye*) and for the pacification of dangers (*śāntau*).[482] Here too the martial context for the early ceremony deriving from the *Viṣṇudharmottara* is underlined.

4.3 The Eastern Courtly Tradition: The Navarātras of Gauḍa, Kāmarūpa and Orissa.

The Mahāṣṭamī and Mahānavamī traditions of the *Viṣṇudharmottara* and the *Agni* centering on Bhadrakālī are also paralleled in two influential Eastern scriptures– the *Devīpurāṇa* and the *Kālikā*. The composition of these Eastern Purāṇas coincided with the Navarātra attaining its fullest shape in the regions where these texts were written– East India (Bengal and Assam). Later, these scriptures formed the chief viaduct channelling the rites of the Navarātra into other parts of India (to be shown).

The main innovation of these texts is that they present a Navarātra that is syncretic in nature, incorporating Tantric with Purāṇic ritual features, and, though never fully Tantric in that they did not arrogate to themselves the status of esoteric revelation but represented always mainstream religion, firmly embedded the autumnal worship of the goddess in an unmistakeably Śākta[483] framework. This Tantricization no doubt owed to the indigenous Śākta traditions that enjoyed great popularity in East India and suffused all other sectarian currents in that area.[484] The Śākta character of the earlier of these two texts, the *Devī* was clearly recognizable to early Indian authors, for, it drew remarks from the Dharmaśāstrins Aparārka (cca. 1127-1148) and Vallālasena (cca. 1160-1179).[485] The latter, in fact, a paragon of Vaidika respectability, poured scorn on the *Devī* since, in his view, it "conformed to heretical [ie Tantric] doctrine" and excluded the scripture, which he felt was of ambiguous Purāṇic pedigree, from his list of the eighteen Purāṇas "because it included foul rituals".[486]

This controversial and ambivalent text was composed between the latter half

[481] *Agnipurāṇa* 267.13cd-16ab.
[482] Ibid. 267.15cd-16ab.
[483] I use this term in the widest possible sense.
[484] Sanderson 2009, pp. 225-242.
[485] Hazra 1963, p. 73 and n. 167; Sanderson 2009, p. 250 and n. 585.
[486] *tattatpurāṇopapurāṇasaṃkhyābahiṣkṛtaṃ kaśmalakarmayogāt |*
pāṣaṇḍaśāstrānumataṃ nirūpya devīpurāṇaṃ na nibaddham atra | Dānasāgara v. 67 cited in Hazra 1963, p. 73, n.161. See also Sanderson 2009, p. 250 and n, 585.

of the 6th c. and the 9th c. approximately,[487] in Bengal[488] around Tāmralipti (present day Tamluk), the site of an ancient shrine to Vindhyavāsinī (now known as Barga Bhīmā) dating from at least the 7th century[489]. Instead of worship solely on Mahāṣṭamī and Mahānavamī, the text envisions a build-up starting from the first lunar day of the bright quarter of Āśvina, and climaxing on the Eighth and Ninth. The *Devī* therefore attests that the content of the ceremony had developed in the East from an archaic, martial core centred in Mahānavamī to a more capacious celebration spanning nine (or even four or ten) lunar days beginning from the First of the bright fortnight. The sequence of the moon's waxing marked at every phase a subtle transformation of the goddess's energy while the final two *tithi*s coincided with her fullest expansion– this sequential process of transformation would be most apparent in the Maithila court rite, where Durgā was made to metamorphose from substrate to substrate during the course of the nine nights (to be shown).[490] The worshipper is taught to observe a vow of restricted eating for the first seven nights, to worship Śiva thrice daily, recite *mantra*s, perform oblations in fire and feast a maiden. On the Eighth the text teaches the worshipper to build nine wooden shrines, or one (should the worshipper lack means). There the goddess was to be established in a gold or silver image or in a sword or trident. Gifts of clothes, jewels and fruits were to be offered to her, and she was to be worshipped splendidly with chariot-festivals, palanquin-processions, *bali* and the offering of various flowers. Then the worshipper was to fast and recite a *mantra* before the goddess.[491]

[487] Hazra is of the opinion that it was composed no later than 850 CE (Hazra 1963, vol 2., p. 73). The upper limit for its composition is conjectured as 500 CE (Ibid. p. 76 and p. 77).

[488] Hazra 1963, vol. 2, pp. 79-90.

[489] The shrine to Vindhyavāsinī at Tāmralipta is described in Daṇḍin's *Daśakumāracarita*, Ucchvāsa 6. Daṇḍin was active around 680-720 CE (date clarified by Professor Sanderson, personal communication, August 2011).

[490] According to the table in Einoo 1999, p. 36, another early witness for the programme beginning on the Bright 1st is the *Skandapurāṇa* 21.2.47.77-82. But Einoo was following a reprint of the Shree Venkateshvara Steam Press edition of 1910 and this edition is not, as pointed out by Bakker et. all, representative of the original text. The old *Skandapurāṇa* does not make any reference to the nine-night programme: the parts of the original so far published by Bakker et al. do not seem to be familiar with the nine night programme in autumn, and the edition by Bhaṭṭarāī likewise make no reference to it. The programme seems to have been associated principally with the Śāktism of Eastern India. It was seldom publicized by a wider tradition before the Gauḍīya jurist Jīmūtavāhana (cca. 1090-1130) first advertized it in his *Kālaviveka* (*Durgāpūjāviveka*, pp. 30-39)– from which one may infer that it was already in practice in Bengal– and thereafter the later Maithilas and Gauḍīyas promoted it in a much more aggressive way. Thereafter, other *dharmaśāstrin*s, further to the west, popularized this ritual structure, on the basis of testimony originating in the East.

[491] *kanyāsaṃsthe ravau śakra śuklām ārabhya nandikām |*
ayācī tv atha ekāśī naktāśī athavā ghṛtam |
prātaḥsnāyī jitadvandas trikālaṃ śivapūjakaḥ |

Next, the work includes rites for kings with the specific object of attaining victory in battle. These resemble occultic power (*siddhi*) bestowing rituals particular to non-soteriological Tantric practice and were: a blood sacrifice resembling a pacificatory (*śāntika*) ritual and another sacrifice, a *śatrubali*, resembling a destructive *(māraṇa)* rite. Both sets of magical rituals took place at midnight and are thus called the *ardharātrapūjā* (Worship at Midnight). The same rites are paralleled in the *Agni*[492], indicating that this occultic military tradition at midnight was a popular one, performed by a wider orbit of kings than those who followed the *Devī*. According to the two accounts, the ceremonies can be summarized as follows.

At midnight closing the Eighth and ushering in Mahānavamī (specified as when Aṣṭamī is joined by the asterism Kanyā), a sacrificial animal (*paśu*) was to be slain by the king and its blood was to be offered to pacify and dissipate the demons in the fours quarters: Pūtanā in the south-west, Pāparākṣasī in the north-west, Carakī in the northeast and Vidārikā in the south-east. The invocation which the king was to chant to salute the deity as he performed the sacrifice is *kāli kāli vajreśvari lauhadaṇḍāyai namaḥ* (O Kālī Kālī, Goddess of the Thunder-Bolt, Homage to Her, who bears a sceptre of iron). By addressing Caṇḍī as Kālī, the litany conveys their unity. Having thus satisfied her with blood, the king should then bathe in front of the goddess and decapitate a dough-doll of his enemy, offering the torso to Skanda and Viśākha. Through this aggressive magic by a proxy, his wishes to subdue his rivals are fulfilled. Its great popularity for kings in the East is evinced in the fact that it appeared in the Navarātra treatises of the Mithilā court between the 14th and the 15th centuries.[493] The worship is then concluded in a Purāṇic fashion, with an incantation of a verse intoning various names of the goddess beginning with Jayantī, Maṅgalā, bathing the goddess with five nectars (*pañcāmṛta*), chariot proces-

japahomasamāyuktaḥ kanyakāṃ bhojayet sadā |
aṣṭamyāṃ nava gehāni dārujāni śubhāni ca |
ekaṃ vā vittābhāvena kārayet surasattama |
tasmin devī prakartavyā haimā vā rajatāpi vā |
mṛdvākṣī lakṣaṇopetā khaḍge śūle' tha pūjayet |
sarvopahārasampannā vastraratnaphalādibhiḥ |
kārayed rathadolādipūjāṃ ca balidaivakīm |
puṣpādidroṇabilvāmrajātīpunnāgacampakaiḥ |
vicitrāṃ racayet pūjām aṣṭamyām upavāsayet |
durgāgrato japen mantram ekacittaḥ subhāvitaḥ | *Devīpurāṇa* 22.7-13ab.
sarvopahārasampannā conj.] *sarvopahārasampanno* ed.

[492] *Agnipurāṇa* 185.12-13a; Einoo 1999, p. 41. Hazra is of the opinion that the *Agnipurāṇa* drew these rites from the *Devīpurāṇa* (Hazra 1963, vol. 2, pp. 81-82).

[493] See p. 184.

sions (*rathayātra*) with festal images of the goddess and hoisting royal ensigns (particularly, as specified by the *Devī*, in the shrine of Carcikā) accompanied by offerings of *bali*.[494]

Further making its Śāktism overt, the *Devī* strengthens the position of many other goddesses in the ritual, envisioning them as the ultimate sources of concentrated power in all aspects of a kingdom. It promotes, for instance, *kumārīpūjā*, the veneration of young maidens transformed into the goddess and envisages an ambitious Navarātra programme held every Āśvina for a full Jupiter cycle (sixty years), involving the placation of not just Durgā, but a vast number of female divinities with distinct characteristics. As the ritual progresses during the course of the sixty years, these deities, beginning as pacific, become incrementally more violent and martial in form and character–and thereby more powerful– towards the finale.[495] Caṇḍī's figurations as malevolent, crisis-causing and quelling, occult deities with power over *graha*s and dangerous divinities, similar to the early Skanda or to Kālī, take a central place in the early form of the ceremony celebrated in the East, for, it was thought that the deeper the worship entered into the sphere of the darker and more dangerous aspects of the deity, the greater the power and rewards obtained from her, her violence being understood as nothing other than a dynamic manifestation of her gnostic and magical energy.

This Śākta tonality is not restricted to the *Devī*, but is also observable in other early Eastern Purāṇic scriptures. The *Agni,* a further Purāṇa speculated to emerge in the East, in Orissa or in western Bengal,[496] and also decried by

[494] *tad ardhayāminīśeṣe vijayārthaṃ nṛpottamaiḥ |*
sarvāṅgalakṣaṇopetaṃ gandhapuṣpasragarcitaṃ |
vidhivad kāli kālīti japtvā khaḍgena ghātayet |
tasyotthaṃ rudhiraṃ māṃsaṃ gṛhītvā pūtanādiṣu |
nairṛtāya pradātavyaṃ mahākauśikamantritam |
tasyāgrato nṛpaḥ snāyāc chatruṃ kṛtvā tu piṣṭajam |
khaḍgena ghātayitvā tu dadyāt skandaviśākhayoḥ |
tato devīṃ snāpayet prājñaḥ kṣīrasarpijalādibhiḥ |
kuṅkumāgurukarpūracandanaiś †cārghya† dhūpayet |
[...]
dhvajacchatrapatākādim ucchrayec carcikāgṛhe |
rathayātrābalikṣepaṃ baṭu-r-ādyavarākulaṃ | Devīpurāṇa 22.17cd-22ab. Compare with *Agnipurāṇa* 185.12-16ab, where the invocation is described (Ibid. 185.11cd) and the names of the other demonesses (Ibid. 185.12-13ab).

The sentence stating the rule – *tasyāgrato nṛpaḥ snāyāt* [...] (also found in *Agnipurāṇa* 185.13cd) would suggest that the king should bathe before the slain animal (*tasya+agrato*). However Hazra argues that incorrect *saṃdhi* has been used in this verse for *tasyāḥ+agrataḥ* "before her, ie the Goddess" (Hazra 1963, vol. 2, p. 81 and n. 202).

[495] *Devīpurāṇa* Adhyāya 50, pp. 283-318. For a summary see Hazra 1963, vol. 2, pp. 51-52.

[496] Hazra 1963, vol. 2, p. 82 and n. 203. Here Hazra presents evidence from inside the *Agnipurāṇa,* which indicate the possibility that it was composed in the East, this being exemplified by numerous references to Puruṣottama in Auḍra/Oḍra (modern day Puri in

Vallālasena for its Tantric content,[497] specially dedicates Mahāṣṭamī to worship that syncretizes Śākta elements with its mainstream Purāṇic framework. The work multiplies the number of female divinities appearing on that night. All are envisaged as emanations of Caṇḍī surrounding her unaccompanied by consorts. They are named as the Nine Durgās, terrific forms of Caṇḍikā of various colour, holding different weapons in the act of slaying the buffalo, showing the threatening (*tarjanī*) gesture and depicted in a warrior stance, with their left knee raised as they place their feet on the back of the buffalo demon. Their worship is described in great detail.

Such open reverence for a kaleidoscope of autonomous goddesses (i.e. unaccompanied by consorts) as supreme beings in their own right was in keeping with the theological attitude of proper (esoteric) Śākta worship.[498] This tendency would be emphasised in the later mediaeval Eastern Navarātra. In later Eastern scripture, such as the *Kālikā*, Mahāṣṭamī included, besides the worship of the Nine Durgās, the placation of a wider retinue of *mātṛ*s and *yoginī*s.[499] A legend developed in the Purāṇic corpus associating Mahāṣṭamī with the manifestation of the goddess in her Tantric form, "extremely horrifying with her countless *yoginī*s" (*mahāghorā yoginīkoṭibhiḥ saha*) who descended on that day hungry for blood.[500] In that legend the goddess of Mahāṣṭamī is identified, in accordance with the *Viṣṇudharmottara* and the *Agni*, as Bhadrakālī and it is claimed that on this day she was the antinomian "destroyer of [the Seer] Dakṣa's sacrifice" (*dakṣayajñavināśinīṃ*).[501] This myth that the goddess obstructed Vedic *yajña* on the most important day of the autumnal festival shows that– at least in East India where this legend was primarily circulated– Mahāṣṭamī was understood to mark the day on which the goddess's threatening and disruptive powers escalated and were even thought to become wildly uncontrollable. It was for this reason that the pacific rites of the Navarātra become from this day on, chiefly placatory in character, such that sanguinary sacrifices become more frequent

Orissa) and a reference to a Vidyā named *bhelakhi*, widely known in Bengal as *bhelki* (ibid.). He also points out that the text was known initially only in the East: it was familiar to Vallālasena, to whom he attributes the earliest reference to the *Agnipurāṇa*, and later, was first popularized by the *dharmaśāstrin*s in the East, in particular by Viśvanātha Kavirāja (cca. 1300-1384), Narasiṃha Vājapeyin (15th century) and Govindānanda Kavikaṅkaṇācārya (cca. 1520-1560). It attained the recognition of writers outside Orissa and Bengal much later (ibid.)

[497] Ibid. n. 203.

[498] For a discussion of the autonomy of goddesses in the Vidyāpīṭha and in Buddhist Tantric scriptures, see Sanderson 1988, pp. 470 ff. and Sanderson 2009, pp. 173 ff.

[499] *Kālikāpurāṇa* 60.52-53; Einoo 1999, p. 41.

[500] *Brahmapurāṇa* cited in *Kṛtyaratnākara*, p. 350.

[501] Ibid.

in order to make peace with the deity and to calm her volatile nature, protective and yet capable of massacre. In fact all the rituals performed on the day adopt a more overt Tantric character to fully propitiate the transformed, more powerful, temperament of the goddess. The later Gauḍīya Navarātra of the 16th century would allocate Mahāṣṭamī for all practices associated with Tantric worship, such as the *bhūtaśuddhi* (purification of gross matter), *nyāsa* (installation of mantras on the body), the worship of *mātṛ*s and contemplative Tantric rites of visualization and self-identification with the deity.[502] In Nepal, Mahāṣṭamī would involve special occultic rituals such as the performance of the *siddhi*-bestowing, magical Rite of the Sword.[503]

In addition, overtones of the esoteric Śāktism that flourished in Kashmir can be found in the Navarātra of Orissa, where a Tantricized Bhadrakālī was well-established as the central goddess in the royal rituals celebrating the final nights of the Navarātra. In the Orissan manual *Bhadrakālīmantravidhiprakaraṇa*, the "Observance of Bhadrakālī" (*bhadrakālīvrata*) is taught to kings on the ninth day of the bright fortnight with *mantra*s that are derived from the Śākta Kālīkula tradition.[504] The text teaches that Bhadrakālī, also referred to in that work as Jayadurgā or Āsurī, the bestower of victory, must be worshipped by a king with a lengthy, complex and systematic array of rituals, some of which included: the daily repetition of Bhadrakālī's *mantra*s; oblations of parched grain and ghee into fire; a nightly fire-ritual; sacrifices of buffaloes and other animals; fire-sacrifices to empower the royal weapons starting from the dark Eight lunar day and continuing for a fortnight till the bright Ninth. The king is given four mantras of the goddess to choose from, each corresponding to a particular visualization of Bhadrakālī. As a necessary part of the worship, he was required to immerse his imagination in the form of the deity prescribed by the work while reciting the mantra. The first form is as a serene, dark-hued beautiful maiden on a lotus, bearing a skull filled with blood, with three copper-coloured eyes, wearing red garments.[505] The second is horrific, with fangs, lolling tongue, a large-nose "spewing fire from her mouth, terrifying the three worlds, running towards and slaughtering his [the king's] enemy".[506] The third is her lotus-seated

[502] This is most evident in the *Durgāpūjātattva* (Sarkar 2011 forthcoming b, p. 26 ff.)
[503] See p. 127.
[504] Text, translation and discussion of this work in Sanderson 2007, pp. 255-295. The mantras deriving from the Kālikula are as follows: *oṃ khphreṃ/hrīṃ mahācaṇḍayogeśvari phaṭ* and *hskhphreṃ* (Ibid. p. 278). For an analysis of the relation between this work and the texts of the Kālīkula see ibid. pp. 276-287.
[505] Sanderson 2007, p. 258-259.
[506] Ibid. p. 261.

form showing a fierce expression.[507] The fourth stands on a lotus resting on the back of a corpse, five-faced "with three large, copper-coloured eyes in each of her five faces. With the force of her great anger she crushes [the king's] enemy again and again, holding him face-down in her two uppermost arms, tortured by the twenty fangs of her five faces".[508] Only after the worship of the goddess, is the king taught to proceed to battle: if during the battle he simply chants a special mantra of Bhadrakālī or wears an amulet containing the mantra, he will secure victory and effortlessly destroy all his enemies.[509] Bhadrakālī's Tantricisation was by no means restricted simply to the sphere of syncretic Orissan practice. That her worship on Mahāṣṭamī and Mahānavamī seemed to have also occured in Kashmir within the domain of royal Tantric practice, is suggested by the fact that she appears, apart from the Kashmirian *Viṣṇudharmottara*, in the Śaiva scripture known as the *Netratantra* in the context of the autumnal military ceremonies sacralizing the king and his weapons and insignia. This work, composed sometime between 700-850 CE, teaches Bhadrakālī's propitiation in the king's sword with mantras of Amṛtalakṣmī, consort of the chief deity of the text, Amṛteśvara on Mahānavamī in *āśvina*.[510] Given that this process of Tantricizing the ritual framework of the final two nights of the goddess's Navarātra was thus attested in contemporary examples of Tantricized and properly Tantric literature, it is not suprising that the Eastern Purāṇas should have articulated the conception of dangerous, hot-blooded and power bestowing goddesses appearing from Mahāṣṭamī onwards.

The Mahāṣṭamī and Mahānavamī tradition of the *Viṣṇudharmottara,* the *Agni* and the *Devī* then appear in a further influential Eastern Purāṇa, the *Kālikā*, composed sometime between the 7th and the 12th CE[511] in Assam as much of it eulogizes the Śākta sacred site of Kāmākhyā.[512] Not only does this work advocate the Eastern traditions of worshipping Bhadrakālī and the Navadurgās[513], but it also strengthens the Śākta overtones first glimpsed in

[507] Ibid. p. 263.
[508] Ibid. p. 268.
[509] Ibid. pp. 272-273
[510] Sanderson 2005, pp. 255-262. For the date and Kashmirian provenance of the *Netratantra*, see ibid. pp. 273-294.
[511] Hazra 1963, vol. 2, p. 245 dates the present form of the text to the 12th century CE, and elsewhere locates an early core originating in the 7th century (Ibid. p. 241). A citation identifiable from the *Kālikāpurāṇa* appears in the *Kālaviveka* by Jīmūtavāhana (*Durgāpūjāviveka*, p. 33), composed likely between the 11th and the 12th c. This means that the Purāṇa was well-known by his time.
[512] For more analysis see Hazra 1963, vol. 2, pp. 231-259.
[513] *Kālikāpurāṇa* 59.22-23.

the *Devīpurāṇa,* including new features such as the homology of the warrior Caṇḍikā with the erotic deity of the eponymous shrine Kāmākhyā[514], the identification of the sacrificial buffalo with Śiva[515], a myth about the sixteen-armed Bhadrakālī and her other forms the eighteen-armed Ugracaṇḍā and the ten-armed Kātyāyanī[516] and encourages the accompanying worship of a vast number – sixty four, but preferably incalculable *koṭi*s in its language – of *mātṛ*s and *yoginī*s.

Sometime contemporaneous with, or pre-dating, the emergence of the *Kālikā*, a tenth lunar-day Daśamī or Vijayā Daśamī celebrating the return of the goddess to her heavenly home, came to be added between the 9th and the 11th c. The *Kālikā* gives the earliest testimonia for Daśamī and teaches releasing the goddess in water (*visarjana*) accompanied by illuminating descriptions of a joyous civic festival where citizens became caste-less for the day and were encouraged to imitate the ecstatic abandonment of social distinctions and decorum of the Śabaras.[517] This tradition of immersing the goddess in water on Daśamī was perhaps Assamese in its origin, given that its main witness is the *Kālikā,* but it is performed *de rigueur* in Bengal even today. Daśamī appeared much later in the Deccan, particularly promoted by the Vijayanagara Empire, and was marked differently, according to Vaidika norms deriving from the *Gopathabrāhmaṇa* (to be shown). It had little to do with venerating Durgā. What was common between both the Eastern and Deccan traditions of Daśamī was that it was a festival of the people. Though the king, and in the south the army, had a prominent role, the point was that everyone else in the capital, and outside it had to join in. The festival elevated the idea of a singular rather than a stratified social system, where all members were integrated as one working unit.

From the 12th century we find expressed in literature a tendency to view goddess-rites as disreputable, a reaction perhaps against their non-Aryan beginning or their association with Tantric practice. Both the most important scriptures shaping the Eastern Navarātra, the *Devī* and the *Agni,* were roundly condemned as spurious works, Tantras disguised thinly as Purāṇas, by Brahminical stalwarts like Vallālasena.[518] Perhaps roused to action by this opprobrium, the juridical *smārta paṇḍita*s in the East patronised by Assamese, Gauḍīya and

[514] Ibid. 65.30-32ab; Sarkar 2011 forthcoming b, pp. 15-16.
[515] *Kālikāpurāṇa* 60.146.
[516] Ibid. Adhyāya 59.
[517] See n. 463 on page 150.
[518] For Vallālasena's denunciation of the *Devīpurāṇa* see n. 486 on page 156. Like the *Devī*, the *Agni* too came under Vallālasena's firing-line in the *Dānasāgara* for being a spurious Purāṇa concerned with *pāṣaṇḍayukti*, the arguments of heretics (Hazra 1963, p. 82, n. 203).

Maithila kings began to circulate Purāṇic testimonia of the Navarātra from 1100 CE (the first among them being the Gauḍīya Jīmūtavāhana, who was active between cca. 1090-1130). They initiated a programme accomodating the rite, and the dubiously thaumaturgical texts teaching it,[519] within a more flexible model of brahminical orthodoxy, transforming the Navarātra into a ceremony of licensed antinomianism (as indeed evidenced in the teachings concerning the Śābarotsava) a Brahminical kingdom could indulge in within the strict limits of a single day in the religious year. It is owing to their proselytizing efforts that Eastern Purāṇas such as the *Devī*, the *Kālikā* and the *Bṛhannandikeśvarapurāṇa* were popularized as the most authoritative sources for the Navarātra, and, via these Eastern Purāṇas, the ceremony percolated into other mediaeval kingdoms further to the west.

A leading role in proselytizing the Eastern Navarātra was taken by the *dharmaśāstrin*s in the court of the mediaeval kingdom of Mithilā/Tirhut, straddling the present day Indo-Nepal border. The scheme described in the Maithila treatises was that which had the greatest influence on the later Gauḍīya *āśvina* rite, and thereby on rites elsewhere in India, given that several features of the Gauḍīya *durgāpūjā* percolated into Southern and Western kingdoms. This influence may have been enabled in part by the high esteem Maithila Brāhmaṇas enjoyed at the time.

It is also from Mithilā that the earliest evidence of a distinctive court-ritual based on the early scriptures just discussed emerge. Though dating only from the 14th century, we must bear in mind that the sources were written at a late stage of the ceremony, after it had been performed for many generations. They may therefore show us the Navarātra in that kingdom when it had already departed substantially from the form it had when it was first adopted.

4.4 The Navarātra of the Kingdom of Mithilā

The most detailed account of the Navarātra in Mithilā is from the court of the Oinwars, but the precursor to the ritual of that court is to be found in the ceremony performed by their predecessors, the Karṇāṭas. Not much can be inferred though about the Kārṇāṭa ceremony, for, the available descriptive account is unsystematic. But clearer assumptions can be made about the historical con-

[519] Besides the spurious "Purāṇas", there were even certain Tantras. Caṇḍeśvara for instance bases the Navadurgāpūjā on a *Skandayāmala.* See Sarkar 2011 forthcoming b, p. 11 and p. 63, n. 113.

text of the Kārṇāṭas' Navarātra, and a few words are necessary, by way of a preamble to the Oinwars.

4.4.1 cca. 1314-1324: The Rite of the Kārṇāṭa Lineage

The earliest Maithila source is the chapter on the *āśvina* rites in the *Kṛtyaratnākara* of Caṇḍeśvara, son of Vīreśvara and learned "Compositor of Dharmaśāstric Digests" *(nibandhakāra*) whose approximate floruit may be placed between cca. 1314-1324.

Parallel to his scholastic side, Caṇḍeśvara had a significant political role– he held the important office of the *sāndhivigrahika*[520], the minister for war and peace, in the Maithila capital Simraun Gadh under the Kārṇāṭa sovereign Harisiṃhadeva. His family, a baronial one designated by their surname Ṭhakkura, was well-known to have held political power in Mithilā, for, his uncle Gaṇeśvara had headed the council of feudatory leaders in Mithilā while several members, including Caṇḍeśvara, had made donations and commissioned buildings, acts generally associated with eminent landlords or kings.[521] Sometime in 1314 CE, Caṇḍeśvara made incursions into Nepal for Harisiṃhadeva, promulgating the new rule with various administrative acts such as donations of lands to *brāhmaṇa*s, the building of a tank in Abhirāmapura and the performance of a *tulāpuruṣa* rite on the Vāgmatī, a gesture he records in the closing of his *Vivādaratnākara.*[522]

Such a conspicious public role lends greater credence to the assumption that the chapters on goddess worship in the *Kṛtyaratnākara* had a significant bearing on the religious activities of the state. The *smārta* digest-writers' works profoundly influenced social matters such as mediaeval legislation – Caṇḍeśvara's *Vivādaratnākara,* for example, formed the prominent authority in the Maithila school of law for six centuries.[523]

The idea of worshipping a goddess associated with a king's power is clearly central to the functioning of the society envisaged in that work, and its legislative authority prompts us to imagine a scenario in which the Kārṇāṭa state regularly performed various rituals of a public character honouring Śakti. The goddess's

[520]The colophon to the *Rājanītiratnākara* reads:
saprakriyamahāsāndhivigrahikaṬhakkuraśrīVīreśvarātmajaśrīCaṇḍeśvaraviracite (p. 87)
[521]Jayasvāla's Introduction to *Rājanītiratnākara*, pp. l-m.
[522]Ibid. p. k.
[523]Ibid, p. i. The *Dāyabhāga* of Jīmūtavāhana is another significant example, shaping legislation in Bengal even to the present day.

worship, a monthly affair, is described in three weighty sections: a *durgāvrata*, a sequence of observances for Durgā, to be performed on the Aṣṭamī of every month usually involving bathing the goddess, making offerings of flowers, incense, food, feeding young girls and *dvija*s based on the *Devīpurāṇa*[524]; a public chariot procession with a festal image of Durgā on the dark half of Bhādrapada to the outskirts of the city based on the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa*[525]; and the *āśvina* rites to the goddess forming the grand culmination of these ceremonies[526]. But the exact ritual sequences whereby this idea that the goddess was important for the sanctification of the kingdom was put into practice are unclear, for, the work is encyclopaedic, rather than systematizing, in character. A rough scheme can be gleaned from it as follows. Apart from the monthly worship of the goddess derived from the *Devīpurāṇa*, the kingdom would have performed Mahāṣṭamī and Mahānavamī during the Navarātra festivities also according to that work, for Caṇḍeśvara cites the Mahānavamī passage contained in the *Devī*. The kingdom may have begun worship on the Sixth of bright half of Āśvina, for Caṇḍeśvara, in a statement explaining a scriptural passage, seems to advocate initiating the ceremony from this *tithi*. He also explains, on the basis of that passage, that a worshipper was to eat once a day on the Fifth, follow observances of fasting, controlling the senses and to gift cows and recite the mantra whose presiding deity was Durgā having made an Oath in the morning of the Sixth, Seventh and the Eighth lunar days.[527] In addition, he teaches the worship of the Nine Durgās, the Śābarotsava, the worship of Aparājitā, the lustration of the army (*nīrājana*) and the ritual sighting of a white-wagtail (*khañjanadarśana*) on Daśamī. A large number of these rituals would be continued with greater pomp in the Oinwar ceremony.[528]

4.4.2 cca. 1375-1450: The rite of the Oinwar Lineage

The next source from Mithilā emerges after the decline of the Kārṇāṭas in the court of the Oinwar lineage (14th -16th c.). It drew directly from the tradition first outlined in the *Kṛtyaratnākara* explicitly acknowledging the older work as the source of many rites. This is not surprising as its author Vidyāpati Ṭhakkura was indeed a descendant of Caṇḍeśvara, a great-great-grand-nephew, and en-

[524] *Kṛtyaratnākara*, pp. 238-253.
[525] Ibid. pp. 253-264.
[526] Ibid. pp. 301-375.
[527] *Kṛtyaratnākara*, p. 361.
[528] The parallels are indicated in footnotes in the next section.

joyed a similar status at the Oinwar court. His composition the *Durgābhaktitaraṅgiṇī* ("A River of Devotion to Durgā") forms the most detailed and comprehensive historical record of the court Navarātra so far available. It gained a reputation of being one of the foremost authorities on the autumnal worship of the goddess among other writers of Navarātra treatises, influencing in great measure the later Gauḍa *smārta* Raghunandana Bhaṭṭācārya[529] and Kamalākara Bhaṭṭa of Vārāṇāsi. The latter in fact in his *Nirṇayasindhu* teaches rites attributed to the *Durgābhaktitaraṅgiṇī*, such seems to have been the stature enjoyed by its Maithila author.[530] On the whole the *Durgābhaktitaraṅgiṇī* can be said to represent the Eastern tradition (excluding Nepal)– minor differences emerge from treatise to treatise, but its general pattern conforms to the rites described in most Eastern treatises, preserving their quintessential features: the rites of adorning the goddess from the first to the sixth lunar-days, the rites centering on the *bel* tree, the rites worshipping the goddess in nine leaves from crops and the celebration of Daśamī with the goddess's immersion in water and the Festival of the Śabaras.[531]

Beginning with a lengthy dedication to his king and patron Rūpanārāyaṇa/Dhīrasiṃha, Vidyāpati states in the very beginning that the rite he is about to discuss was one commissioned by the king, who perhaps, as the verse suggests, was even involved in its composition.[532]

This courtly emphasis is made apparent in the very first ritual: the *kalaśapūjā*, the conferral of celestial substance to water contained in a vase (*kalaśa*), with which the king was to be anointed later. A king's consecration by this holy water was one of the most important rites of kingship conferring divine fitness on him as a ruler. The ceremony preparing the water was to take place on the first lunar day of the bright phase of Āśvina in a shrine built of timber

[529] Parallels in Raghunandana's *Durgāpūjātattva* appear as follows: Rites centering on the *bilva* tree (Sarkar 2011, forthcoming b. pp. 37-40; pp. 41-45), rites of adornment from the first to the fifth (Ibid pp. 40-41), the visualization from the *Matsyapurāṇa* (Ibid p. 46, 48), worship in the nine leaves (Ibid 49-50), the prayer for boons (Ibid p. 53, 57), the worship of the goddess's retinue (Ibid pp. 58-59, 61-62), worship of the Navadurgās (Ibid pp. 62- 64), the worship of weapons (Ibid pp. 65-72), dismissal in water on Daśamī with festivities (Ibid pp. 72-73). The *Durgābhaktitaraṅgiṇī* is also referred to on four occasions in the *Durgāpūjātattva* (pp. 1, 6, 12, 20, 25).

[530] These rites derived from the *Durgābhaktitaraṅgiṇī* are the worship of the goddess from the 1st to the 5th tithis of Āśvina, her awakening in a *bilva* tree on the Sixth, the installation of her icon, her worship on Mahānavamī and her immersion in water in Daśamī. See Sarkar 2011 forthcoming b, pp. 7-8.

[531] Hazra 1963, pp. 2-15.

[532] *viśveṣāṃ hitakāmyayā nṛpavaro vijñāpya vidyāpatiṃ*
śrīdurgotsavapaddhatiṃ sa tanute dṛṣṭvā nibandhasthitiṃ | Durgābhaktitaraṅgiṇī, p. 2, v. 6.

(in keeping with the *Devīpurāṇa* tradition) suitable for the goddess's worship, appointed with a square altar four square cubits in length and made smooth by being rubbed over with a mixture of water and cowdung so as to "resemble the reflective surface of a mirror" (*-darpaṇodaranibha-*). At an auspicious ritual hour in the forenoon, the king, identified as the chief sponsor (*yajamāna*) of the rite, having bathed and fulfilled preliminary practices, wearing two white garments and seated facing east or north, was to draw, or have drawn by means of some other *brāhmaṇa*, a lotus-shaped *maṇḍala* with powders of five colours. On this he was to install a previously unused (*navaṃ*), strong vase without blemishes (*avraṇam)*, smeared on the outside with yoghurt mixed with barley and filled with the five jewels and clear water, their necks wrapped with two cloths, each adorned with a garland, with their mouths filled with five kinds of leaves and a platter of barley set atop each of their mouths. These actions were to be accompanied by mantras. He was then to fill the pots with water with a chant invoking the pots as Varuṇa's supports, pillars and proper loci.[533]

Then the officiant was to install the sacred waters in the vase by sacralizing the water already present inside by means of the invocatory invitation "Oṃ. May all rivers beginning with the Gaṅgā, oceans, lakes and ponds that destroy the sins of the sacrificer enter [the vase]". The ingredients used to infuse the water are identified as follows: seven kinds of earth from the stable, elephant-shed, a street, an anthill, from a confluence of rivers, a lake, and a cow-shed; eight types of medicinal herbs, water from a sacred bathing place, fruit, *dūrvā* blades and unhusked barley. On four corners of the altar he was to install four

[533] *tatrāśvinaśuklapratipadi snātaḥ śuciḥ śukladvivāsāḥ suprakṣālitapāṇipādo darbhapaṇir ācānto dārumayaśuddhāsane prāṅmukha udaṅmukho vopaviṣṭo yajamānaḥ svayam anyabrāhmaṇadvārā vā pūrvāhṇe śubhalagne śobhanamuhūrte daivajñanivedite devīpūjāyogyaśubhadārumayaramaṇīye gṛhe caturaśracaturhastadarpaṇodaranibhavedikānvite pañcavarṇarajobhiḥ padmākāraṃ maṇḍalam ālikhya tanmadhye navaṃ dṛḍham avraṇam aśyāmamūlaṃ bahir dadhyakṣatavibhūṣitam antaḥkṣiptapañcaratnaṃ nirmalajalapūrṇaṃ vastrayugaveṣṭitagrīvaṃ mālyālaṅkṛtaṃ cūtāśvatthanyagrodhoḍumbaraplakṣapañcapallavamukhaṃ mukhadattayavaśarāvaṃ yavānām upari oṃ *ā jighra kalaśaṃ mahy ā tvā viśantv indavaḥ | punar ūrjā nivartasva sā naḥ sahasraṃ dhukṣvorudhārā payasvatī punar mā viśatād rayiḥ* iti mantreṇa kalaśaṃ sthāpayet | oṃ **varuṇasyottambhanam asi varuṇasya skambhasarjanī stho varuṇasya ṛtasadany asi varuṇasya ṛtasadanam asi varuṇasya ṛtasadanam āsīda** iti mantreṇa tatra jalaṃ dadyāt | *Durgābhaktataraṅgiṇī,* p. 122.

aśyāma- em.] *asyāma-* Ed.

Passage marked between * * is restored on the basis of *Vājasaneyisaṃhitā* 8.42 (the Maithila Brahmins followed the Mādhyandina recesion of this Veda, as pointed out to me by Prof. Sanderson in a personal communication)] *ājighra kalaśaṃ mahyātmā viśantv indavaḥ punar urjyā nivarttasvasānaḥ sahasraṃ dhukṣorudhārāpayasvatī punar mmāviśatādrayi* ed.

Passage marked between ** ** is restored on the basis of *Vājasaneyisaṃhitā* 4.36] *varuṇasyottambhanam asi varuṇasya skambhaḥ sarjjanī sthaḥ varuṇasya ṛtasadanam asi varuṇasya ṛtasadanīm āsīd* ed.

vases on top of barley filled with water and covered with a platter of barley. He was then to worship Brahman in the water of the central vase surrounded by the other four. First, he is instructed to summon Brahman in the vase with flowers, barley and a *mantra*, and offer the deity the water and flowers in a chalice, three kinds of guest-water (*pādyādikaṃ*), unguents, a cupped handful of flower thrice and a garment.[534]

According to another passage appearing in an earlier section of the *Durgābhaktitaraṅginī*, other deities, besides Brahman, were also to been summoned in the waters of the vase, including Bhavānī herself and the Mothers. The summoning of the goddess to be present in the waters of the vase was in keeping with a wider tradition, for it is taught in other ritual manuals.[535] From what we can understand from the *Durgābhaktitaraṅginī* passage[536], the king must bathe in those sacred waters permeated with the presence of Brahman, Bhavānī, the goddesses and the other

[534] *oṃ gaṅgādyāḥ saritaḥ sarvāḥ samudrāś ca sarāṃsi ca | sarve samudrāḥ saritaḥ sarāṃsi ca nadā hradāḥ || āyāntu yajamānasya duritakṣayakārakāḥ | iti mantreṇa sarvatīrthāni kalaśe nyaset | tato'śvasthānagajasthānarathyāvalmīkanadīsaṅgamahradagokulakṛtāḥ sapta mṛttikāḥ kṣipet | sarvauṣadhīś ca murā māṃsī vacā kuṣṭhaṃ śaileyaṃ rajanīdvayaṃ | śaṭī campakamustaṃ ca sarvauṣadhigaṇaḥ smṛtaḥ | iti kathitāḥ tīrthajalaṃ phaladūrvākṣataṃ ca kṣipet | vedīcatuskoṇeṣu vastramālyālaṅkṛtān jalapūrṇān yavaśarāvamukhān yavopari caturaḥ kalaśān niveśayet || atha kalaśe brahmapūjā | sapuṣpākṣatam ādāya oṃ bhūr bhuvaḥ svar brahmann ihāgaccha iha tiṣṭha ity āvāhya sthāpayitvā arghapātre dalapuṣpādi dattvā* [...] *itimantreṇa pādyādikaṃ dattvā idam anulepanaṃ oṃ brahmaṇe nama iti puṣpāñjalitrayeṇa pūjayitvā etāni gandhapuṣpadhūpadīpanaivedyāni oṃ brahmaṇe namaḥ | idaṃ vastraṃ bṛhaspatidaivataṃ oṃ brahmaṇe namaḥ iti dadyāt* | Ibid pp. 122-124.

kalaśe Em.] *kalase* ed. *duritam* conj.] *dūritam* ed.

śaṭī conj. based on the original verse *murā māṃsī* [...] *smṛtaḥ* from the unpublished Śaiva *pratiṣṭhātantra Mohācūrottara/ Mohacūḍottara* (identification of this verse by Prof. Sanderson in a personal communication of August 2011).] śaṭhī ed.

The *mantra* for offering the guest-water, appearing in the edition where the above citation gives [...], is illegible.

[535] Identified and summarized in Kane 1958 (1994), p. 183.

[536] *atha pratipadi yajamānasnapanāya śāntikalaśasthāpanavidhiḥ |*
matsyapurāṇe
[...]
sthāpayed avraṇaṃ kumbhaṃ varuṇaṃ tatra vinyaset |
gaṅgādyāḥ saritaḥ sarvāḥ samudrāś ca sarāṃsi ca |
gajāśvarathyāvalmīkasaṅgamāt hradagokulāt |
mṛdam ānīya viprendra sarvauṣadhijalānvitaṃ |
snānārthaṃ vinyaset tatra yajamānasya dharmavit |
sarve samudrāḥ saritaḥ sarāṃsi jaladā hradāḥ |
āyāntu yajamānasya duritakṣayakārakāḥ |
bhaviṣye
śrīkāmas tu nyaset samyak deśavṛddhikaraṃ śubhaṃ |
kāñcanaṃ ghṛtagodhūmān dūrvāṃ rocanayā saha |
brahmapūjā kalaśe | tathā ca durgotsavaprakaraṇe pakṣapūjāyāṃ kālikāpurāṇe |
agnir brahmā bhavānī ca gajavaktro mahoragaḥ |
skando bhānur mātṛgaṇo dikpālāś ca navagrahāḥ |
eṣāṃ ghaṭeṣu pratyekaṃ pūjayitvā yathāvidhi |
mūrdhni pavitram ekaikaṃ dadyād ebhyaḥ samāhitaḥ | Ibid p. 52.

deities on the first lunar-day, and he would also be consecrated with the empowered water on Daśamī.[537] Next follows the worship of the goddess in a chalice of gold or another precious metal (*sauvarṇādyarghapātre*)[538], and this was to be done daily until the sixth lunar-day when the substrate for worship changes into a branch of a *bel* tree (as we shall see).[539]Taking flowers with barley the officiant must summon Durgā and install her in the chalice. Placing in it water, flowers, unhusked barley, *dūrvā* and *kuśa* grasses, sesamum, turmeric and *bilva* leaves, he must recite the *mantra* from the *Devīpurāṇa* (Jayantī, Maṅgalā, Kālī, Bhadrakālī, Kapālinī, Durgā, Śivā, Kṣamā, Dhātrī, Svāhā, Svadhā, Homage to you). He must then offer the goddess the three kinds of guest water with the mantra known as the Durgā of Victory (Jayadurgā) "Oṃ. Durgā Durgā Protectoress, Svāhā (*oṃ durge durge rakṣani svāhā*),[540] followed by the incantation "Oṃ. Homage to Durgā" (*oṃ durgāyai namaḥ*). Then he must offer unguents such as sandalwood and turmeric with the latter incantation, having first anointed the chalice with those substances. Next with the same *mantra* he must worship the deity by offering a handful of flowers thrice, followed by offering perfume, flowers, incense, lamps, food-offerings, betel-nut and a garment. Then *bilva* leaves must be offered with the incantation: "O Empress of the Gods, I offer you this auspicious *bilva* leaf from the Bilva tree born from nectar and eternally adored by Śiva." Then he was to offer *droṇa* flowers with the incantation "O Durgā, I give you this *droṇa* flower eternally adored by Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva and others to accomplish all my wishes".

Then having sung a hymn, he must bow down and ask for boons with this verse: "Oṃ. Slayer of the buffalo, Mahāmāyā, Cāmuṇḍā, garlanded with heads, Grant me wealth, health and victory Goddess. Homage to you. O one auspicious with all good portents, benevolent, fully replete in wealth, bestow beauty, bestow fame, bestow good fortune on me O Goddess. Bestow sons, bestow wealth, bestow all my desires on me." Then he was to sacrifice goats, sheep

[537]For the *Durgābhaktitaraṅgiṇī's abhiṣeka* of the Maithila king on Daśamī, see n. 589 on page 190.

[538]For the text, see n. 541 on the following page.

[539]In the Gauḍīya rite of the *Durgāpūjātattva* a modified form of the *kalaśapūjā* appears, excluding the worship of Brahman and the consecration of the waters. Here the goddess, rather than Brahman is meant to be worshipped in a pot (*ghaṭa*) (albeit without the herbs, the water from sacred sites and other substances used for the consecration) continuously till the sixth, when she is invoked in the *bel* branch (*Durgāpūjātattva*, pp. 48-49). This leads me to think that the same pattern of daily worship must have been followed in the Maithila rite of the *Durgābhaktitaraṅgiṇī*.

[540]The use of this mantra during the Maithila rite also occured during Caṇḍeśvara's time. He refers to it as the *navatattvākṣarāṇi,* the Syllables of the Nine Levels of Reality (*Kṛtyaratnākara*, p. 362).

and buffaloes for the goddess, for the attainment of his wishes and was to keep lights, filled with clarified butter or oil, lit day and night in the goddess's shrine. He is also instructed to offer, if he can, cosmetics to the goddess– sandalwood and turmeric to dress the hair on the first lunar-day, a silken thread to tie the hair on the second, red-lac to dye her feet, vermillion to anoint her hair and a mirror on the third; *madhuparka*, collyrium for her eyes and powders of silver etc. for her *tilaka* on the fourth; four kinds of unguents, a bed and jewels on the fifth.[541]

From the second lunar day up to the ninth, the royal horses were to be worshipped daily in the palace-stables as their celestial prototypes Uccaiḥśravas and Revanta, simultaneously as the rites centering on the goddess took place. The importance of the ceremony lay in empowering the war-horses for battle. The stable is perfumed, anointed and decorated with flowers. A space for worship is prepared to the south of the horses, by being ringed with a circuit of three mounds and inscribed with two *maṇḍala*s with sandalwood etc. In these *maṇḍala*s the deities Uccaiḥśravas, the son of Sūrya and Chāyā depicted on horseback, and Revanta, Indra's celestial horse are summoned and worshipped for pacifying all catastrophes, for long life and wealth. Offerings, excluding water are flowers, are made to propitiate them. The king's horses are then bathed, decorated and worshipped in the stables with offerings. A cloth pouch filled with five jewels and various grains is tied around their necks in order to pro-

[541] *atha pratipadādipratidinaprāptadurgāpūjāvidhiḥ | kālikāpurāṇe pratipadam upakramya tāvat tu saptarātrāṇi sarvadevaiḥ supūjitā |* (kālikāpur 60.30) *pūjā kumbhe devīpurāṇe pūjā maṇḍalakumbhasthā iti | tatra kramaḥ | sapuṣpākṣatam ādāya oṃ bhūr bhuvaḥ svar bhagavati durge ihāgaccha iha tiṣṭhety āvāhya sthāpayitvā sauvarṇādyarghapātre jalapuṣpākṣatadadhidūrvākuśatilakuṅkumabilvapatrāṇi nidhāya | oṃ jayantī maṅgalā kālī bhadrakālī kapālinī | durgā śivā kṣamā dhātrī svadhā svāhā namo'stu te | iti devīpurāṇoktamantreṇa oṃ durge durge rakṣaṇi svāheti jayadurgāmantreṇa vā pādyārghācamanīyasnānīyapunarācamanīyāni oṃ durgāyai namaḥ iti pādyādi dattvā idam anulepanaṃ oṃ durgāyai namaḥ iti candanakuṅkumādinānulipya oṃ durgāyai namaḥ iti puṣpāñjalitrayeṇa pūjayitvā etāni gandhapuṣpadhūpadīpanaivedyatāmbulāni oṃ durgāyai namaḥ idaṃ vastraṃ bṛhaspatidaivataṃ oṃ durgāyai namaḥ iti dadyāt | oṃ amṛtodbhavaṃ śrīvṛkṣaṃ śaṅkarasya sadā priyaṃ | bilvapatraṃ prayacchāmi pavitraṃ te sureśvari iti bilvapatraṃ | oṃ brahmaviṣṇuśivādīnāṃ droṇapuṣpaṃ sadāpriyaṃ | tat te durge prayacchāmi sarvakāmārthasiddhaye iti droṇapuṣpaṃ | tataḥ kiṃcit stutvā praṇamya prārthayed anena oṃ mahiṣaghni mahāmāye cāmuṇḍe muṇḍamālini | dravyam ārogyavijayaṃ dehi devi namo'stu te || sarvamaṅgalamāṅgalye śive sarvārthasādhike | śaraṇye tryambake gauri nārāyaṇi namo'stu te | rūpaṃ dehi yaśo dehi bhāgyaṃ bhavati dehi me | putrān dehi dhanaṃ dehi sarvān kāmān pradehi me || chāgādibaliṃ nānāvidhakāmanayā devyai dadyāt | devīgṛhe ghṛtapūritāṃs tailapūritān vā ahorātrasthāyino dīpān prajvālayet | sati sambhave devīm uddiśya pratipadi candanakuṅkumādikeśasaṃskāradravyaṃ dvitīyadau keśasaṃyamanārthaṃ paṭṭaḍorakaṃ | tṛtīyāyāṃ caraṇarāgārtham alaktakaṃ śirasi dhāraṇārthaṃ sindūraṃ mukhavilokanārthaṃ darpaṇaṃ | caturthyāṃ madhuparkaṃ netramaṇḍanāya kajjalaṃ rajatāditilakaṃ | pañcamyāṃ catuḥ samānulepanaṃ śayyām alaṅkaraṇaṃ copaharet | Durgābhaktitaraṅgiṇī* pp. 124-25.

tect them. Special care is taken of them– they are guarded by weapon-bearing soldiers and are not allowed to be hit or to act as mounts. The stables are filled with music and sweet singing. Offerings of neem leaves, clarified butter and mustard seeds are made to the horses, a cow, a bull, a sheep and goat are placed in the stables, it is ensured that the horses are protected from sunlight and an oblation in fire for warding away, and counteracting all types of dangers (*śāntihoma*) is performed accompanied by Vaidika *mantra*s.[542]

On the evening of the sixth lunar day, either conjoined with the asterism Jyeṣṭhā or without it, Durgā is ritually summoned into a *bilva* tree. Her presence ritually manifested in the tree, she is then worshipped with offerings and musical fanfare. Since autumn is regarded as the time that gods sleep, she is ceremonially roused from her slumber with hymns in which the supplicator asks her to rise and slay Rāvaṇa. Then the *bilva*-tree infused with the presence of the deity and embodying her nature (*durgāsvarūpataḥ*) is ritually invited to enter the timber shrine of the goddess.[543]

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[542] *athāśvaśālāyām aśvapraveśanavidhiḥ | tatrāśvinaśukladvitīyāyām aśvaśālāmanoramām anuliptām sarvataḥ parivṛtām nānāvidhapuṣpālaṅkṛtām sudhūpitām vidhāya tasyām aśvabandhanasthānāt paścimadiśi vapratrayāvṛtaṃ sthaṇḍilam upakalpya tadupari candanādinā maṇḍaladvayaṃ kṛtvā tatra revantam uccaiḥśravasaṃ ca pūjayet || tatra kramaḥ | kuśatilajalāny ādāya | oṃ adya sakalāśvacaratyutpātapīḍāpraśamanair dīrghāyuṣṭvasamṛddhikāmo revantoccaiḥśravasturaṅgāṃś cāhaṃ pūjayiṣye | iti saṃkalpya | sapuṣpākṣatam ādāya oṃ bhūr bhuvaḥ svar bhagavan revanta ihāgaccha iha tiṣṭha ity āvāhya iti sthāpayitvā arghapātre jalapuṣpādi dattvā etāni pādyārghācamanīyasnānīyapunarācamanīyāni oṃ revantāya namaḥ iti pādyādikaṃ dattvā idam anulepanaṃ oṃ revantāya nama ity anulipya oṃ namo devādhidevāya turaṅgavanacāriṇe | sūryaputrāya devāya turaṅgānāṃ hitāya ca | †turaṅgopariṣadyasya mṛgajo paridhāvati† | sāśvam aśvādhipaṃ rakṣa śaraṇaṃ tvāṃ vrajāmy ahaṃ || iti paṭhitvā oṃ revantāya nama iti puṣpāñjalitrayeṇa pūjayet | etāni gandhapuṣpadhūpadīpanaivedyatāmbulāni oṃ revantāya namaḥ idaṃ vastraṃ bṛhaspatidaivataṃ oṃ revantāya namaḥ ity utsṛjet | oṃ sūryaputra mahābāho chāyāhṛdayanandana | śāntīṃ kuru turaṅgānāṃ revantāya namo'stu te | oṃ uccaiḥśravase namaḥ | idaṃ vastraṃ bṛhaspatidaivataṃ oṃ uccaiḥśravase namaḥ | iti pūjayet praṇamec ca | tataḥ snātān alaṅkṛtān aśvān sannidhyāpya eṣo 'rghaḥ oṃ turaṅgebhyo nama idam anulepanaṃ oṃ turaṅgebhyo nama iti naivedyādibhiḥ pūjayet | turaṅgapūjāyāṃ jalapuṣpāni varjayet | evaṃ navamīparyantaṃ pratyahaṃ pūjayitvā śāntisvastyayane turaṅgān uddiśya kārayet | dhānyabhallātakakuṣṭhavacāsitasarṣapān pañcaratnaṃ ca sūtreṇa vastrarakṣāpoṭṭalikāṃ baddhvā aśvānāṃ kaṇṭhe bandhayet | śastrapāṇipuruṣais teṣāṃ rakṣāṃ kārayet tāḍanavāhanādi varjayet | turaṅgaśālāyāṃ gītamadhuravādyādi kārayet | nimbājyasarṣapadhūpāṃś ca dadyāt | dhenuvṛṣājameṣān sthāpayed ravikiraṇasañcaraṃ vārayet | vāyavyādivaidikamantraiḥ śāntihomaṃ ca kārayet || ity aśvaśālāpraveśanavidhiḥ* || Ibid pp. 125-126.

dhānyabhallātakakuṣṭhavacāsitasarṣapān em. Sanderson] *dhānyāyabhallātakakūḍavacāsitasarṣapān* ed.

vārayet conj. Sanderson based on a *Jyotiḥśāstra* tradition cited in the *Puraścaryārṇava*] *kārayet* em.

[543] *atha bilve devyā bodhanāmantraṇavidhiḥ | tatrāśvinaśuklaṣaṣṭhyāṃ jyeṣṭhānakṣatrayuktāyāṃ kevalāyāṃ vā sāyaṃkāle bilvatarusannidhānaṃ gatvā arghapātre jalapuṣpākṣatāni nidhāya eṣo'rghaḥ oṃ bilvavṛkṣāya namaḥ idam anulepanaṃ oṃ bilvavṛkṣāya namaḥ iti puṣpāñjalitrayaṃ dattvā dhūpadīpanaivedyavāsāṃsi dadyāt | tataḥ*

On the seventh lunar day, either conjoined with the asterism Mūla or without it, the officiant was to go to the sacred tree and having eulogized it, sought its permission and prayed that it will feel no pain, cut off a single branch with two fruits chanting "Oṃ tear tear, *phaṭ phaṭ hūṃ svāhā*", a mantra attributed to the Gauḍanibandhas. Then the branch is brought to the shrine and installed on a seat (*pīṭha*) in the forecourt of the temple and then washed. Offerings are presented to it. The goddess is then summoned to enter the branch and a clay image of herself that will function as her main substrate from the evening onwards, and worshipped thereafter. A goat, sheep or a buffalo must be sacrificed. The branch and the clay-image are then carried in a palanquin to the door of the shrine. Worship commences propitiating ghosts and obstacle-causers in the ritual space with offerings of beans and placed in a circle made of cow-dung. White mustard-seeds and barley empowered with *mantra*s are then scattered to clear the room of these obstacle-causers.[544]

Then, the goddess is worshipped as the deity Cāmuṇḍā in the *bilva*-branch. The following hymn of visualization is invoked:

"I must bring you Śrīphala tree abode of Śrī, born on Śrīśaila, Go! You must be worshipped as the true form of Durgā. Oṃ. Dark as the petals of a blue-lotus, four-handed, holding a skull-topped staff and a scimitar in the right

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sapuṣpākṣatam ādāya oṃ bhūr bhuvaḥ svar bhagavati durge ihāgaccha iha tiṣṭha iti bilvavṛkṣe devīm āvāhya sthāpayitvā arghapātre jalādi nidhāya oṃ jayantītyādimantram uccārya oṃ durgāyai namaḥ iti pādyādibhir upacāraiḥ pūjayet | tato gītavādyamaṅgalaghoṣapuraḥsaraṃ devīṃ bilve bodhayed anena | aiṃ rāvaṇasya vadhārthāya rāmasyānugrahāya ca | akāle brahmaṇā bodho devyās tvayi kṛtaḥ purā || aham apy āśvine ṣaṣṭhyāṃ sāyāhne bodhayāmy ataḥ | iti devīṃ bodhayitvā bilvatarum āmantrayed anena | oṃ merumandārakailāsahimavacchikhare girau | jātaḥ śrīphalavṛkṣa tvam ambikāyāḥ sadā priyaḥ || śrīśailaśikhare jātaḥ śrīphalaḥ śrīniketanaḥ | netavyo'si mayāgaccha pūjyo durgāsvarūpataḥ || iti bilvābhimantraṇavidhiḥ | Ibid pp. 126-127.

[544] *tatrāśvinaśuklasaptamyāṃ mūlānakṣatrayuktāyāṃ kevalāyāṃ vā pūrvadināmantritabilvatarusannidhānaṃ gatvā tam abhyarcya kṛtāñjaliḥ prasādayed anena | oṃ bilvavṛkṣa mahābhāga sarvadā śaṅkarapriya | gṛhītvā tava śākhāṃ tu durgāpūjāṃ karomy ahaṃ || śākhācchedodbhavaṃ duḥkhaṃ na ca kāryaṃ tvayā prabho | iti prasādya śākhām ekāṃ chedayet | chedanamantro gauḍanibandhe oṃ chindhi chindhi phaṭ phaṭ hūṃ svāhā | tataḥ phaladvayayutāṃ bilvaśākhām ānīya gṛhaprāṅgane pīṭhopari sthāpayitvā snapayet | eṣo'rghaḥ oṃ bilvaśākhāyai namaḥ idam anulepanaṃ gandhapuṣpadīpatāmbūlanaivedyavāsobhiḥ pūjayet | bilvaśākhāyāṃ mṛnmayapratimāṃ ca devīm āvāhya sthāpayitvā pādyādibhir upacāraiḥ pūjayet | chāgādibaliṃ dadyāt | atha dolayā bilvaśākhāṃ mṛnmayapratimāñ ca pūjāgṛhadvāradeśam ānīya tatra gomayakṛtamaṇḍale bhūtān sampūjyāpasārayet | tatra vidhiḥ | sapuṣpākṣatam ādāya oṃ bhūtā ihāgacchata iha tiṣṭhata ity āvāhya sthāpayitvā oṃ bhūtebhyo nama iti pādyādibhiḥ saṃpūjya māṣabhaktabaliṃ tebhyo dadyād anena oṃ bhūtāḥ pretāḥ piśācāś ca ye vasanty atra bhūtale | te gṛhnantu mayā datto balir eṣa prasādhitaḥ || pūjitā gandhapuṣpādyair balibhis tarpitās tathā | deśād asmād viniḥsṛtya pūjāṃ paśyantu matkṛtāṃ || oṃ bhūtebhya eṣa māṣabhaktabalir nama iti sapuṣpajalam ādāyotsṛjet | oṃ apasarpantu te bhūtā ye bhūtābhūmipālakāḥ | bhūtānām avirodhena pūjākarma karomy ahaṃ ||* (kālikāpur 57.99) *oṃ phaṭ iti saptavārābhimantritān sitasarṣapayavādīn sarvavighnopaśāntaye pūjāgṛhe vikiret |* Ibid pp. 127-128.

hands, in the left a shield and a noose in the top and bottom hands, garlanded with a skull-garland and wrapped in a tiger-hide, emaciated, with long fangs, extremely tall and very frightening, a lolling tongue, sunken and blood-shot eyes, with a horrific shriek, seated on a corpse, with long ears and gaping mouth– She is known as Kālī and Cāmuṇḍā".

Having thus contemplated the *bilva* branch as having the form of Cāmuṇḍā, the officiant must hold the branch and impel Durgā collocated with the goddess to move with "Oṃ O Cāmuṇḍā Move! Move!", and enter the shrine with the clay-image accompanied by songs and music. Then having worshipped the goddess in the branch and in the clay image, the officiant requests her presence to become stable in those substrates and in the place of worship (*sthirīkaraṇa*). Then the officiant should worship nine leaves (*nava patrikāḥ*). These are bound with a vine of the *aparājitā* creeper and the goddess is also worshipped therein in nine different forms. Each form is summoned to enter a different leaf and the five-fold offerings (lights, incense, flowers, fruits and food) are made to her: Brahmāṇī (in a plantain leaf), Raktadantikā (in a pomegranate leaf), Lakṣmī (in the rice leaf), Durgā (in the turmeric leaf), Cāmuṇḍā (in the *mānaka*), Kālikā (in the *kacu*), Śivā (in the *bilva* leaf), Śokarahitā (in the *aśoka* leaf) and Kārttikī (in the barley leaf). Once these deities have been summoned into these leaves and worshipped there with the five basic offerings, a goat, a buffalo or a sheep is sacrificed. All royal weapons, musical instruments, royal ensigns and pictures, are installed in their proper place at the door of the shrine. A festal archway (*toraṇa*), pillars and flags are erected at the doors of the temple of the goddess.[545]

The following lunar-day, Mahāṣṭamī, signals a change in the rituals, so far centred on plants. Their focus now becomes military rites. Durgā herself trans-

[545] *atha punar bilvaśākhāyāṃ cāmuṇḍāyai nama iti pādyādibhir upacāraiś cāmuṇḍāṃ sampūjya oṃ śrīśailaśikhare jātaḥ śrīphalaḥ śrīniketanaḥ | netavyo'si mayāgaccha pūjyo durgāsvarūpataḥ || oṃ nīlotpaladalaśyāmā caturbāhusamanvitā | khaṭvāṅgacandrahāsaṃ ca vibhratī dakṣiṇe kare || vāme carma ca pāśaṃ ca ūrdhvādhobhāvataḥ punaḥ | dadhatī muṇḍamālāṃ ca vyāghracarmadharāmbarā || kṛśāṅgī dīrghadaṃṣṭrā ca atidīrghātibhīṣaṇā | lolajihvā nimnaraktanayanā rāvabhīṣaṇā || kabandhavāhanāsīnā vistāraśravaṇānanā | eṣā kālī samākhyātā cāmuṇḍeti ca kathyate || iti cāmuṇḍārūpatayā dhyātvā bilvaśākhāṃ gṛhītvā oṃ cāmuṇḍe cala cala iti cālayitvā mṛnmayapratimāsahitāṃ gītavādyādinā gṛhaṃ praviśya oṃ āropitāsi durge tvaṃ mṛnmaye śrīphale'pi ca | sthirānvitā tvaṃ bhūtvā me gṛhe tvaṃ kāmadā bhava || oṃ sthirībhaveti pūjāsthāne pīṭhopari sthirīkṛtya tat-samīpe samācārād aparājitālatābaddhā rambhādinavapatrikāḥ sthāpayed arcayec ca | [...] tato navapatrikāḥ pūjayet | tataḥ kadalyāṃ brahmāṇīṃ | dāḍime raktadantikāṃ | dhānye lakṣmīṃ haridrāyāṃ durgāṃ | mānake cāmuṇḍāṃ | kacau kālikāṃ | bilve śivāṃ | aśoke śokarahitāṃ | jayantyāṃ kārttikīṃ | pratyekam āvāhya sthāpayitvā pañcopacāraiḥ pūjayet | chāgamahiṣādibaliṃ dadyāt | sarvāyudhāni vādyāni dhvajāni citrāṇi devīgṛhadvāre yathāsanniveśaṃ sthāpayet | toraṇastambhapatākādi devīgṛhadvāreṣu yathāśobhanam uc-chrayet || iti patrikāpraveśanavidhiḥ ||* Ibid pp. 128-129.

forms on this occasion into a ferocious deity befitting the martial context. On Mahāṣṭamī the sacrificer, presumably the king himself, having bathed and performed the preliminary practices, was to sit on a purified seat facing east or north. He was, then, to meditate on the goddess by reciting numerous hymns eulogizing her functions, opening each hymn with a formal declaration of intention (*saṃkalpa*) in which he states identifies the action to be performed and the purpose for which he is undertaking it. The context of kingship is underlined during these recitations. The first three hymns for instance invoke the goddess's protective, wordly aspect with conventional images, declaring, for instance, that no fear of enemies arises in kings who recollect Durgā in times of affliction, such as those discussed previously (ch.2), or that those who recollect her do not drown in the impassable ocean of transmigration.[546]

The last oath is intended specifically for the heirless king– by observing a preliminary observance of fasting and then declaring the oath, he was thought to obtain heirs. Here the royal context is particularly revealed by the wording, which runs thus– "Oṃ Today on the Special-Eighth lunar day, I, who have fasted, desirous that famine and sorrow shall end, of long life, of the attainment of the supreme state, of ascending an excellent chariot adorned with crests and many garlands and travelling to the world of Brahmā, followed by continuous happiness lasting for the year [that will follow] and victory free of misery will perform the worship of the goddess Durgā".[547] The king's wishes are not for liberation but for attaining verisimilitude with a celestial prototype of the victorious ruler on the march. In this way every element of the ritual liturgy of Maithila Navarātra functions in elevating the sovereign power of the king. After taking oaths, the worshipper was to restrain his breaths while repating the mantras that begin with "Jayantī" and contemplate the form of Durgā as evoked in several verses attributed to the *Matsyapurāṇa*. In this verses she is described

[546] *atha mahāṣṭamyāṃ devīpūjāvidhīḥ | tatra karttā nityakṛtyakriyaḥ suprakṣālitapāṇipāda ācāntaḥ śuddhāsane prāṅmukha udaṅmukho vā upaviśya kuśatilajalāny ādāya saṃkalpaḥ vidhāya smaraṇādikam ācaret |* [...] *tatraiva smaraṇasya*

ye tāṃ smaranti nigaḍair api baddhapādā
vyāghrāhicauranṛpavahnibhayeṣu durgāṃ |
teṣāṃ na kiṃcid api śatrubhayaṃ nṛṇāṃ syāt
baddhās tu muktim upalabhya sukhaṃ ramante ||

oṃ adya sarvabhayābhāvakāmo bhagavatyā durgādevyāḥ smaraṇam ahaṃ kariṣye | mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇe svasthasmaraṇasya durge smṛtā harasi bhītim aśeṣajantoḥ | svasthaiḥ smṛtā matim atīvaśubhān dadāsi | oṃ adyātiśayitaśubhamatiprāptikāmo bhagavatyā durgādevyāḥ smaraṇam ahaṃ kariṣye | śivarahasye smaraṇasya ye manāg api śarvāṇīṃ smaranti śaraṇaiṣiṇaḥ | duṣpārāpārasaṃsārasāgare na patanti te | Ibid. pp. 132-136.

śarvāṇīṃ em.] *sarvvāṇīṃ* ed.

[547] See n. 549 on the next page.

as the slayer of the Buffalo-Demon, adorned with masses of matted locks piled high on her head, with a digit of the moon embellishing them, three-eyed, her face like a lotus and the moon, her colour dark-blue like the *atasī* blossom, richly endowed with [the physical attributes of] newly acquired youth[548], and bejewelled, with charming teeth, full and up-lifted breasts, in the *tribhaṅga* posture, arrayed with a trident, sword, discus, a sharp arrow and a lance in descending order in her right hands, with a shield, a fully drawn bow, a noose, an elephant-goad, either a bell or an axe in her left hands, the headless body of a buffalo at her foot, a *dānava* emerging from the hole of the torso, brandishing a sword, pierced through the heart by her trident, his limbs reddened with his blood, disgorging his entrails, his eyes blood-shot and his eyebrows furrowed in anger, the locks of his hair seized by Durgā. The right foot of the deity was to perch on a lion, vomiting blood, while the left toe was to alight on the buffalo. When the king had contemplated the goddess in this, her heroic, form, she was to be summoned to enter the image, asked to protect the worshipper, to grant all desires, and is addressed in her omnipotent aspect as the Empress of the Universe (*viśveśvarī*). Then the base-worship (*mūlapūjā*) commences. Various offerings are made to the deity accompanied by her base-incantation (*mūlamantra*), either the "Jayantī, Maṅgalā" verse or the mantra "O Durgā, Durgā, Protectoress, Svāhā" followed by "Oṃ homage to Durgā" (*oṃ durgāyai namaḥ*). [549]

[548] The translation of this particular phrase (*navayauvanasampannā*) is by Prof. Sanderson.

[549] *oṃ adya mahāṣṭamyāṃ durbhikṣaduḥkhanivṛttidīrghāyuṣṭvaparamapadaprāptidhvajamālākulavimānavarārohaṇapūrvakabrahmalokagamanapūrvakaśāśvatasamāvacchinnaharṣaviśokavijayakāmaḥ sopavāso durgādevyāḥ pūjanam ahaṃ kariṣye* | [...] *putravatām upavāsavyatirekeṇa evāyaṃ saṃkalpaḥ kālikāpurāṇīyavacanāt* | *upavāsaṃ mahāṣṭamyāṃ putravān na samācaret* | *yathā tathaiva pūtātmā vratī devīṃ prapūjayet* || *iti saṃkalpya* | *jayantītyādimantreṇa prāṇāyāmaṃ vidhāya matsyapurāṇoktalakṣaṇāṃ durgādevīṃ dhyāyet* | *jaṭājūṭasamāyuktām ardhendukṛtaśekharāṃ* | *locanatrayasaṃyuktāṃ padmendusadṛśānanāṃ* || *atasīpuṣpavarṇābhāṃ supratiṣṭhāṃ sulocanāṃ* | *navayauvanasampannāṃ sarvābharaṇabhūṣitāṃ* || *sucārudaśanāṃ tadvat pīnonnatapayodharāṃ* | *tribhaṅgasthānasaṃsthānāṃ mahiṣāsuramardinīṃ* | *triśūlaṃ dakṣiṇe dadyāt khaḍgaṃ cakraṃ kramād adhaḥ* || *tīkṣṇabāṇaṃ tathā śaktiṃ vāmato'pi nibodhata* | *kheṭakaṃ pūrṇacāpaṃ ca pāśam aṅkuśam ūrdhvataḥ* | *ghaṇṭāṃ vā paraśum vāpi vāmataḥ sanniveśayet* || *adhastān mahiṣaṃ tad vad viśiraskaṃ pradarśayet* | *śiraśchedodbhavaṃ tadvad dānavaṃ khaḍgapāṇinaṃ* | *hṛdi śūlena nirbhinnaṃ niryadantravibhūṣitaṃ* || *raktaraktīkṛtāṅgaṃ ca raktavisphāritekṣaṇaṃ* || *veṣṭitaṃ nāgapāśena bhrūkuṭīkuṭilānanaṃ* | *sapāśavāmahastena dhṛtakeśaṃ ca durgayā* || *vamadrudhiravaktraṃ ca devyāḥ siṃhaṃ pradarśayet* | *devyās tu dakṣiṇaṃ pādaṃ samaṃ siṃhoparisthitaṃ* || *kiṃcidūrdhvaṃ tathā vāmam aṅguṣṭhaṃ mahiṣopari* | *stūyamānaṃ ca tad rūpam amaraiḥ sanniveśayet* || *evam uktarūpaṃ dhyātvā sākṣatapuṣpam ādāya oṃ ehi durge mahābhāge rakṣārthaṃ mama sarvadā* | *āvāhyāmy ahaṃ devi sarvakāmārthasiddhaye* || *asyāṃ muktau samāgatya sthitiṃ matkṛpayā kuru* | *rakṣāṃ kuru sadā bhadre viśveśvari namo'stu te* || *oṃ bhagavati durge ihāgaccha iha tiṣṭha iha sannidhehi iha sthirā bhava suprasannā bhava ity āvāhanaṃ vidhāya* [...] *oṃ jayantī maṅgalā kālī bhadrakālī kapālinī* | *durgā śivā kṣamā dhātrī svadhā svāhā namo' stu te* || *iti mantraṃ paṭhitvā oṃ durge durge rakṣaṇi svāheti vā mantram uccārya* [...] *oṃ durgāyai*

As Mahāṣṭamī progresses, and the power of the Navarātra gradually escalates, tantricised rituals, more effective in bestowing martial powers and killing enemies, were performed. Befitting her name, Durgā is truly dangerous on this occasion. She was to be worshipped in her occultic form ringed by a circuit (*āvaraṇa*) of female accomplices, with whom she was said to manifest herself on this lunar-day. A group of eleven divinities invoked in the Mantra beginning with Jayantī and ending with Svadhā and Svāhā was first to be installed to the south. This was to be followed by the installation of nine goddesses (the Navadurgās) in the east, eight to Durgā's left beginning with Ugradaṃṣṭrā and ending in Jayā, sixteen before her beginning with Maṅgalā and ending in Sunandā, and a group of sixty-four along with either thirty two, sixteen or eight to the south.[550] Each goddess is summoned to enter the ritual space and, in keeping with her more powerful temperament, is propitiated with mantras that are properly Tantric, that is to say that include the syllable Hrīṃ, a typical Śākta seed-syllable, between the opening Oṃ and the name of the goddess.[551] The use of distinctly Śākta mantras serves in clearly marking the transformed character of the Maithila ritual from Mahāṣṭamī onwards. Next, the seven Mothers are summoned and installed in the east with Caṇḍikā in the centre and Bhairava is worshipped at the forefront of these deities. Worship commences propitiating the innermost circuit of divinities surrounding the central goddess, embodied by the ancillary (*aṅga*) mantras. Then points of the body of the central goddess, followed by her whole body, are worshipped with the five *brahma* mantras. Then the goddess's weapons and the royal lion-throne are propitiated.[552]

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nama ity utsṛjet | evaṃ mūlapūjāṃ vidadhyāt | Ibid pp. 136-139.

[550] For the full list of the goddesses see n. 552.

[551] The importance of the mantras as Śākta invocations was noticed by Professor Sanderson who pointed this out to me in a personal communication of August 2011.

[552] *athāvaraṇapūjā | tatra devyā dakṣiṇasyāṃ diśi sapuṣpākṣatam ādāya sambodhanapadenāvāhya sthāpayitvā pādyādibhir gandhādibhir vopacāraiḥ pūjayet | oṃ hrīṃ jayantyai namaḥ evaṃ maṅgalāyai kālyai bhadrakālyai kapālinyai durgāyai śivāyai kṣamāyai dhātryai svadhāyai svāhāyai | pūrvabhāge hrīṃbījam eva dattvā devyāḥ śaktīḥ prapūjayet | hrīṃ ugracaṇḍāyai namaḥ evaṃ pracaṇḍāyai caṇḍogrāyai caṇḍanāyikāyai caṇḍāyai caṇḍavatyai caṇḍarūpāyai aticaṇḍikāyai | vāmadiśi hrīṃkāram eva prakṣipya oṃ hrīṃ ugradaṃṣṭrāyai namaḥ evaṃ mahādaṃṣṭrāyai karālinyai bhīmanetrāyai viśālākṣyai maṅgalāyai vijayāyai jayāyai | devīpurataḥ hrīṃpadam eva dattvā oṃ hrīṃ maṅgalāyai namaḥ evaṃ nandinyai bhadrāyai lakṣmyai kīrttyai yaśasvinyai puṣṭyai medhāyai śivāyai sādhvyai yaśāyai śobhāyai jayāyai dhṛtyai ānandāyai sunandāyai | atha dakṣiṇe sakalāś catuḥṣaṣṭīr devyo dvātriṃśat ṣoḍaśāṣṭau vā pūjyāḥ | oṃ vijayāyai namaḥ evaṃ maṅgalāyai bhadrāyai dhṛtyai śāntyai śivāyai kṣamāyai siddhyai tuṣṭyai umāyai puṣṭyai śriyāyai ṛddhyai ratyai dīptāyai kāntyai yaśāyai lakṣmyai īśvaryai vṛddhyai śākryai jayāvatyai brāhmyai jayantyai aparājitāyai ajitāyai mānasyai śvetāyai dityai māyāyai mahāmāyāyai mohinyai lālasāyai tārāyai vimalāyai gauryai śaraṇyāyai kauśikyai matyai durgāyai kriyāyai arundhatyai ghaṇṭāyai karṇāyai kapālinyai raudryai kālyai mayūryai trinetrāyai svarūpāyai bahurūpāyai ripuhāyai ambikāyai carcikāyai karālyai surapūjitāyai vaivasvatyai kaumāryai māheśvaryai vaiṣṇavyai*

Then the goddess is bathed with clarified butter (*ghṛta*), milk (*dugdha*), yoghurt (*dadhi*), the five-products of the cow (*pañcagavya)*, ie milk, yoghurt, butter, dung and urine, the same from a tawny cow (*kapilāpañcagavya*), five nectars (*pañcāmṛta*) (though unspecified by the text, typically milk, yoghurt, ghee, honey and molasses[553]), sugar-cane juice (*ikṣurasa*), honey (*madhu*), water (*udaka*), diluted sandalwood (*candanavāri*), water infused with fragrant flowers (*surabhipuṣpatoya*), water mixed with *droṇa* flowers or some other appropriate plant (*droṇapuṣpādyānyatamayutaṃ vāri*), water compounded with gold (*hemavāri*), water compounded with jewels (*ratnavāri*), water compounded with camphor (*karpūravāri)*, and water compounded with fragrant aloe wood (*aguruvāri*).[554] These are performed for specific wishes (*kāmyāni*) that are declared in the oaths preceding each bathing (for instance bathing with the five-nectars is said to confer on the king "an incomparable royal consecration that surpasses the heavenly enjoyment of Indra's kingdom lasting for one aeon of the gods").[555] In case her image was of clay, which could disintegrate with contact with water, then the same substances were either offered or poured on her reflection in a mirror.[556] Then welcoming offerings (*argha*) are presented to the goddess envisioned as an honoured guest– water with flowers (*puṣpodakārgha*), perfumed water (*gandhodakārgha*), *pañcagavya*, an *argha* formed of twelve constituents (*dvādaśāṅgārgha*)[557] and one of eight (*aṣṭāṅgārgha),*[558] offerings pre-

mahālakṣmyai kārttikyai śivadūtyai cāmuṇḍāyai iti pratyekam āvāhya sthāpayitvā pādyādibhir upacāraiḥ pūjayet | atha mātaraḥ | pūrvādidikṣu oṃ brahmāṇyai namaḥ evaṃ māheśvaryai kaumāryai vaiṣṇavyai vārāhyai indrāṇyai cāmuṇḍāyai mahālakṣmyai madhye caṇḍikāyai iti pūjayed mātṛṛṇāṃ purobhāge oṃ bhairavāya nama iti pādyādibhir upacāraiḥ pūjayet | athāṅgāni oṃ kāli kāli hṛdayāya namaḥ | oṃ kāli vajriṇi śirase namaḥ | oṃ kāli kāleśvari śikhāyai namaḥ | oṃ kāli vajreśvari kavacāya namaḥ ity āgneyādiṣu | oṃ kāli lauhadaṇḍāyai astrāya namaḥ | iti pūrvādicaturdikṣu oṃ kāli kāli vajreśvari lauhadaṇḍāyai svāhā netratrayāya nama iti devyagre pūjayet | atha pañca brahmāṇi (pañcāṅgāni) oṃ īśānāya nama iti śirase oṃ kāli kāli tatpuruṣāya nama iti mukhe oṃ vajreśvari aghorāya nama iti hṛdaye oṃ lauhadaṇḍāyai vāmadevāya nama ity adhaḥ oṃ svāhā sadyojātāya nama iti sarvāṅge pūjayet || athāstrāṇi dakṣiṇahasteṣūrdhvataḥ | oṃ triśūlāya namaḥ evaṃ khaḍgāya cakrāya tīkṣnabāṇāya śaktyai vāmahasteṣūrdhvataḥ kheṭakāya pūrṇacāpāya pāśāya aṅkuśāya ghaṇṭāyai iti pūjayet | oṃ vajranakhadaṃṣṭrāyudhāya mahāsiṃhāsanāya hūṃ phaṭ nama iti siṃhāsanaṃ pūjayet / tataḥ puṣpāñjalitrayeṇa devīṃ pūjayet Ibid pp. 139-141.

[553]For example *Somaśambhupaddhati* vol. 1, p. 200, n. 2.(reference provided by Professor Sanderson).

[554]Ibid pp. 141-148.

[555]*divyakalpāvacchinnasureśarājyabhuktyuttarātularājyābhiṣekaprāptikāmo aham amunā pañcāmṛtena bhagavatīṃ durgādevīm ahaṃ snapayiṣye* | Ibid p. 144.

[556]*mṛṇmayapratimāyāṃ tu nivedanamātram ādarśapratibimbitāyāṃ vā kartavyaṃ* | Ibid p. 141.

[557]The constituents are water, thickened milk, the tips of *kuśa* grass, unhusked barley, yoghurt, rice, Aloe indica (*sahā*, glossed as *ghṛtakumārīti prasiddhā*), white mustard, *dūrvā* grass, turmeric, cow bile and honey. Ibid p. 149.

[558]The constituents are water, thickened milk, the tips of *kuśa* grass, yoghurt, clarified butter,

sented in three chalices of wood (*dārupātrārgha),* earth (*mṛtpātrārgha)* and copper (*tāmrapātrārgha),* lotus, *palāśa* and other suitable leaves (*palāśapadmapatrānyatamārgha*), in two chalices of silver (*raupyārgha)* and gold (*sauvarṇārgha*), in one gold chalice for all the gods *(sāmānyahemapātrārgha*), in silver *(raupyārgha*) and in a copper (*tāmrārgha*) chalice. Each offering, presented to the deity as if she were a newly-arrived guest, is connected to a specific royal reward.[559] Next gifts (*dāna*) are given to her and the list is unrestrictedly lavish– unguents (*anulepana*), flowers (*puṣpa)*, varieties of incense (*dhūpa*), lamps (*dīpa*), food-offerings (*naivedya*), cothes (*vastra*), ornaments comprising a crown, and optionally gold earrings, a necklace, a bracelet, an armlet, a ring, a girdle, anklets, a foot-ornament, toe-rings,[560], gold *tilaka*s (*hematilaka*), a pair of gold eyes (*hemalocanau*), gold (*suvarṇa*), gold vessels (*bahuhemapātra-*), a copper vessel (*tāmrapātra*), an earthen vessel (*mṛṇmayapātra*), vases and other accoutrements for her bath (*devīsnānopayogikalaśādi-*), a clear, jewelled, garlanded and anointed mirror (*-darpaṇa*), a parasol (*chattra*), a white parasol with a gold handle (*kanakadaṇḍadhavalachattra*), a chowrie with a copper handle (*tāmradaṇḍacāmara*), a chowrie with a gold handle (*kanakadaṇḍacāmara),* a chowrie made only of gold (*suvarṇamātraghaṭitacāmara*), a chowrie with a jewelled handle (*maṇidaṇḍacāmara),* an appointed jewelled bed (*sopakaraṇaratnānvitaśayyā*), an awning (*vitāna*), a pair of shoes (*upānahau*), a horse (*aśva*) or a palanquin (*dolā*), a cow (*go*) and a milch cow (*dhenu*), a white bull (*śvetavṛṣabha*), a slave-girl (*dāsī*), an ensign (*dhvaja*), another large ensign strung with a five-coloured cloth banner decorated with white lotuses and strung with a row of bells,[561] another strung with a white banner (*śvetavarṇapātākānvitamahādhvaja*), one with a banner of five colours (*pañcavarṇapatākānvitamahādhvaja*), a row of flags (*dhvajamālā*), a further eight Mighty Crests (*mahādhvajāṣṭaka*), land measuring four cubits[562], and crops (*dhānyādi-*).[563]

This is followed by sanguinary offerings of which the work presents a number of options, and the oaths to be sworn in each case by the king.[564] It seems that all the options were followed.[565] No vegetable-substitutes are given,

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rice, sesamum and white mustard. Ibid.

[559] Ibid pp. 148-151.

[560] *alaṅkāro mukuṭādiḥ [...] hemakuṇḍalakaṇṭhābharaṇakaṭakakeyūrāṅgurīyakakāñcīnūpurapādakaṭakapādāṅgurīyakānyatamālaṅkāradāne 'pi* Ibid p. 172-173.

[561] *kiṅkiṇījālasamvītavastranirmitaśvetapadmopaśobhitapañcarāṅgikapatākānvitamahādhvajaṃ* Ibid p. 184.

[562] *caturhastadaṇḍamānaparimitāṃ* [...] *bhūmiṃ* Ibid p. 186.

[563] Ibid pp. 166-187.

[564] Ibid pp. 187-189.

[565] The fact that more than one animal was sacrificed is suggested by the following:

in contrast to the other Gauḍīya *paddhati*s[566], suggesting that the Maithila rite was completely sanguinary. Provision is made for the sacrifice of one buffalo (*mahiṣa*), several goats (*bahuchāga-*), several buffaloes (*bahumahiṣa-*), several sheep (*bahumeṣa-*), an offering of blood mixed with other liquids (*rudhirādimelaka-*), sheep's blood (*meṣarudhira-*), goat's blood (*chāgarudhira-*), buffalo's blood (*mahiṣarudhira-*), blood from both the king's arms and thighs (*svabhujajaṅghādvayarudhiraṃ*), and finally a human head (*naraśiras*).[567] The last two, in fact, are extolled by the text as incurring for the king merit for the greatest period of time, blood from his own body a thousand years, the head-offering one hundred thousand.[568]

The offering of blood formed the main power-bestowing ritual in the autumnal rites of any kingdom – till recently the principal courtyard (Newari Mū Cuka, Nepali Mūl Cok) in Hanuman Dhoka, Kathmandu ran red every Mahāṣṭamī with the blood of 116 sacrificed buffaloes and many goats[569]. It enacted a transaction: in return for blood that was thought to fully satisfy the goddess in her terrible aspect and formed the most effective offering as far as Śāktism was concerned, the king received his political status from the deity, universal dominance (*sarvavaśyatā*),[570] offspring and several other rewards (these reasons were in fact formally enunciated during the taking of oaths prior to the sacrifice)[571]. Blood, not only the essential stuff of life, was believed to

devīpurāṇe

paśughātaś ca kartavyo gavalājavadhas tathā |

gavalaḥ mahiṣaḥ | paśus tadanyo meṣādiḥ | Ibid. p. 187.

[566]Sarkar 2011 forthcoming b, p. 33.

[567]*naraśiraḥpradānasya | nāreṇa śirasā vīra pūjitā vidhivan nṛpa | tṛptā bhaved bhṛśaṃ durgā varṣāṇāṃ lakṣam eva ca || adya lakṣavarṣāvacchinnātiśāyitadurgāprītikāma idaṃ naraśiro viṣṇudaivataṃ bhagavatyai durgādevyai tubhyam ahaṃ dade |* Ibid p. 189. See also *Kṛtyaratnākara*, pp. 356-357.

[568]On offering one's own blood:

svabhujādirudhiradānasya | sahasraṃ tṛptim āyāti svadeharudhireṇa tu | tarpitā vidhivad durgā bhitvā bāhū ca jaṅghake || adya sahasravarṣāvacchinnadurgāprītikāma etat svabhujajaṅghādvayarudhiraṃ viṣṇudaivataṃ bhagavatyai durgādevyai tubhyam ahaṃ dade | Durgābhaktitaraṅgiṇī p. 188. On offering the head, see previous note.

[569]Allen 1975, p. 24.

[570]This was most particular in the Gauḍīya ceremony, where the hymn to be invoked while offering the blood to Durgā in order to gain dominance is thus:

ity uktvā khaḍgarudhiram ādāya– oṃ yaṃ yaṃ spṛśāmi pādena yaṃ yaṃ paśyāmi cakṣuṣā | sa sa me vaśyatāṃ yātu yadi śakrasamo bhavet || oṃ aiṃ hrīṃ śrīṃ nityaklinne madadrave svāhā iti sarvavaśyamantreṇa svīyalalāṭe tilakaṃ kuryāt |

Saying thus, having taken the blood from the sword [the sacrificer must recite]:

"Oṃ Whosoever I touch with my foot, whosoever I see with my eye, may he fall in my power, [even] if he is as mighty as Śakra. Oṃ *aiṃ hrīṃ śrīṃ* O You who are eternally moist, flowing with passion, Svāhā."

With this Mantra of Complete Subjugation he must draw a 'tilaka' mark on his forehead [with the blood]. *Durgāpūjātattva*, Sarkar 2011 forthcoming b., p. 52 and pp. 55-56.

[571]Some of these reasons stated in the *Durgābhaktitaraṅgiṇī* were to incur merit (*puṇya*)

be composed of the element *rajas*, a quality that dominated both in the virile warrior and in the passionate nature of the goddess herself.[572] Thus, worship of her in autumn with blood came to be identified in certain Purāṇic texts and its commentarial literature as a *rājasīpūjā*, and associated most particularly with the obligations of a *kṣatriya*.[573] Caṇḍī was thought to be propitiated by blood, and certain examples of litany even seem to suggest that she was believed to be nourished and replenished by means of it.[574] In mediaeval Sanskrit literature,

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and Durgā's pleasure (*durgāprīti)* for a period of time. The animal sacrifice taking place at midnight on Navamī was specifically for victory. See p.184.

[572]Among three sets of goddesses, *sāttvika*, *rājasā* and *tāmasikā* described in the *Devīpurāṇa*, Durgā, Kauśikī, Aparājitā, Arundhatī and other goddesses such as Jayāvatī and Jayantī, who seem also to be warrior-divinities, are named in the second category, as follows:

brāhmī jayāvatī śaktir ajitā cāparājitā |
jayantī mānasī māyā ditiḥ śvetā vimohinī |
śaraṇyā kauśikī gaurī vimalā ratilālasā |
arundhatī kriyā durgā rājasā iti cāparāḥ | Devīpurāṇa 50. 13-14, p. 284. Their iconography is described in great detail in Ibid. pp. 296-301, and they are said to grant boons of a wordly character, such as freedom from enemies and wealth, which would have been much desired by kings. In addition, the warrior character of these deities is also underlined in one particular description: the goddess Brāhmī is supposed to be worshipped by "great kings" (*nṛpottamaiḥ*) with "offerings of blood" (*raktopahāraṃ)* (ibid. 50. 12-13, p. 297).

[573]Caṇḍī's autumnal worship with sanguinary offering is identified in the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* (cited in Viṣṇubhaṭṭa Āṭhavale's *Puruṣārthacintāmaṇi*) as a *rājasīpūjā* (in contrast to a *sāttvikī* category of her worship at autumn eschewing animal-sacrifice intended for orthodox *brāhmaṇa*s), in the following way:

bhaviṣye
śāradī caṇḍikāpūjā trividhā parigīyate |
sāttvikī japayajñādyair naivedyaiś ca nirāmiṣaiḥ |
[...]
rājasī balidānena naivedyaiḥ sāmiṣais tathā |
surāmāṃsādyupahārair japayajñair vinā tu yā |
vinā mantrais tāmasī syāt kirātānāṃ ca sammatā | Puruṣārthacintāmaṇi, p. 80.
sāttvikī conj.] *sattvikī* ed.

Viṣṇubhaṭṭa adds that, while "in this matter only *sāttvika* worship [that is worship without animal sacrifice] is [intended] for a *brāhmaṇa*" (*atra brāhmaṇasya sāttvikapūjaiva*), "the Rājasī category of the Navarātra alone is [intended] for *kṣatriya*s and *vaiśya*s" (*kṣatriyavaiśyayos tu rājasy api*) (ibid.). See also Kane 1958 (1994), p. 158 for a summary of this categorization in other examples of Purāṇic literature such as the *Skandapurāṇa* and its reflection in Raghunandana's *Tithitattva*.

[574]This aspect of nourishment seems to be suggested by the liturgy accompanying the animal sacrifice in the Gauḍīya Navarātra. The invocation while offering the blood runs as follows:

tato mṛnmayādipātre rudhiram ādāya devīsammukhe sthāpayitvā oṃ adyetyādi daśavarṣāvacchinnaśrīdurgāprītikāma imaṃ chāgapaśurudhirabaliṃ dāsyāmi iti saṃkalpya eṣa chāgapaśurudhirabaliḥ oṃ jayantītyādy uccārya dadyāt | tataḥ oṃ kāli kāli kāli mahākāli kālike pāpanāśini | śoṇitaṃ ca baliṃ gṛhṇa varade vāmalocane || aiṃ hrīṃ śrīṃ kauśiki rudhireṇāpyāyatām iti vadet |

"Thereupon having collected the blood in a chalice of such substance as earth, having placed it before the goddess, having declared the resolution 'Oṃ Today etc I who wish for Durgā's affection for a duration of ten years give this bali-offering of goat's blood"; having recited "Here is the *bali* offering of goat's blood. Oṃ Jayantī...', he must offer [the blood].

Thereupon: Oṃ Kālī, Kālī, Awesome Kālī, Kālikā, Queller of Sins, accept the offering of blood, O Boon-Bestower, Fair-Eyed One. Aiṃ hrīṃ śrīṃ, O Kauśikī, may you be nourished with blood." (Ibid p. 56)

the topos of blood formed the most evocative symbol of the goddess, appearing in numerous obeisance poems to Caṇḍī, in which the red of the slain animals' vital fluids is most often poetically juxtaposed to the lac adorning the goddess's feet,[575] contrasted and deepened by the white light said to radiate from her toe-nails,[576] or likened, in lyrical flights of poetic fancy, to the fiery tint of the sky at the Juncture.[577] Such was her appetite for this substance, that the *Gaüḍavaho* includes several gory verses playing with the idea: one describes how Caṇḍī's tongue was ever-pinned to her rows of nail-like teeth in her greed for a juicy bone (v. 328), while another wonders how her temple embellished with red-coloured banners, seemed to spew forth blood that she had drunk from the daily decapitations of animals (v. 322). In the mediaeval conceptual universe, blood was therefore profoundly redolent of Caṇḍī and her passionate, insatiable and more dangerous, nature. In addition, offering blood to Caṇḍī also satisfied and prevented the advances of other malevolent spirits, planets and disease which goddesses like herself in their more dangerous aspects were seen to control.

Following the singing of hymns (*stuti*), commences the worship of weapons (and other royal insignia) *(śastrapūjā)* resulting in empowerment, with invocations said attributed to the *Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa.* These royal weapons and insignia are named as the royal sword (*khaḍga)*, dagger (*churikā*), cutlass (*kaṭṭāraka*), bow (*dhanu*), lance (*kunta*), armour (*varman*), chowrie (*cāmara*), parasol (*chatra*), ensign (*dhvaja*), banner (*patākā*), kettle-drum (*dundubhi*),

[575] See for instance:
hūṃkāre nyakkṛtodanvati mahati jite śiñjitair nūpurasya
śliṣyacchṛṅgakṣate 'pi kṣaradasṛji nijālaktakabhrāntibhāji
skandhe vindhyādribuddhyā nikaṣati mahiṣasyāhito 'sūn ahārṣīd
ajñānād eva yasyāś caraṇa iti śivaṃ sā śivā vaḥ karotu || Caṇḍīśataka 2.
When the tinkling of the anklet triumphed over his fearful cry
by which oceans had been humbled;
when the scratch from chafing horns oozing blood had counterfeited
the redness of her own lac-dye;
her foot plundered Mahiṣa's life
placed on his scraping shoulder innocently
thinking it must be the Vindhya–
May that Śivā bless you with joy. (Translation reproduced from Sarkar 2011 forthcoming a.)
Compare this verse with opening obeisance verses EI 32.4, ll. 2-3:
śūlabhinnasya vinyasto mahiṣasya va(ba)lād gale | durgāyāḥ pātu vaḥ pādas tadraktālaktakāṅkitaḥ ||
Besmeared in the scarlet lac of his blood may the foot of Durgā clamped on Mahiṣa's throat, as he is pierced by her trident, protect you (Verse and translation reproduced from Sarkar 2011 forthcoming a with minor corrections in the translation).

[576] As for instance in the hymn to Caṇḍī in the *Kulacūḍāmaṇitantra* 7.22-35. For a discussion of those verses see Sarkar 2011 forthcoming a.

[577] *Haravijaya* 47.26; *Gaüḍavaho* 293, and the parallel for this appears in *Haravijaya* 47.43.

conch-shell (*śaṅkha*), lion-throne (*siṃhāsana*) and royal horses (*aśva*).[578] This was done to ensure the effectiveness of the army in the battles that were to ensue with the beginning of the military calendar. Then follow sacrificial offerings of peas to propitiate Durgā's retinue of female deities followed by a sanguinary offering combined with peas and pumpkins to propitiate all the deities in the various directions– the guardians of the worlds, planets, constellations, minor gods, ghosts, jackals and malevolent demons and demonesses.[579]

At midnight, on the onset of Mahānavamī, the Great-Ninth lunar day a king wishing victory in battle was to perform a further animal sacrifice to propitiate Durgā, now in her wrathful form as Kālī. A translation of the text's description of this ritual of military power (conforming exactly to the method of the *Devīpurāṇa* and the *Agnipurāṇa)* is as follows:

> Next [follows] the animal sacrifice after worshipping the goddess [Durgā], performed at midnight on Mahāṣṭamī, the Splendid Eighth lunar day [of the bright fortnight], by a king wishing victory in battle. Provisioned with all offerings, having made diverse worship as before with cloth, jewels, fruits and the like, and with *droṇa*, *bel*, mango, *jātī*, *punnāga* and *campaka* flowers, having performed a spectacular worship exactly as before, having uttered the base-*mantra* before Durgā as many times as he can, having eulogised her, having asked for a boon after bowing down, having taken *kuśa* grass, sesame seeds and water, [a king must declare the Declaration of Intention with the words]–
>
> "Today at Midnight on the Eighth lunar day in the bright fortnight of Āśvina, I, desirous of victory, shall slay this buffalo, a sheep or a goat, aged five years as an offering to the goddess Durgā." Thus declaring his intent, having taken a sword [he says], "Oṃ O Kālī, Kālī, goddess of the thunder-bolt, Iron-Stake, Homage to you!". Having thus recited the mantra, he must slay the buffalo adorned with sweet

[578] *Durgābhaktitaraṅgiṇī*, pp. 191-196. For text and translation of the litany of the *śastrapūjā* see Sarkar 2011 b forthcoming pp. 64-72.

[579] *atha balidānaṃ | tatra gomayopaliptabhūbhāge māṣabhaktādibalim upādāya | oṃ hrīṃ jayantyādibhya eṣa māṣabhaktabalir namaḥ | athavā oṃ hrīṃ jayantyai eṣa māṣabhaktabalir namaḥ iti pratyekaṃ vā ekādaśebhyo dadyāt / evam ugracaṇḍādibhyo 'ṣṭabhyaḥ ugradaṃṣṭrādibhyo navabhyo maṅgalādibhyaḥ ṣoḍaśabhyaḥ hrīṃ vinā vijayādibhyaś catuṣaṣṭhibhyo brahmāṇyādi navabhyaś ca baliṃ dadyāt |*

atha sāmānyato balidānaṃ | māṣakuṣmāṇḍamāṃsādyair deyo dikṣu balir niśi | tatra mantraḥ |

oṃ lokapālagrahanakṣatrasurāsuragaṇagandharva-

yakṣarākṣasavidyādharagaruḍamahoragakinnaragajendradevatāpsaro-

bhūtapretapiśācakravyādamanuṣyamātṛgaṇayoginīḍākinīśākiṇīgaṇā imaṃ nānādravyabaliṃ gṛhnantu oṃ huṃ svāhā | oṃ śivāḥ kaṅkālavetālāḥ pūtanājambhakādayaḥ | te sarve tṛptim āyāntu balidānena toṣitāḥ || Durgābhaktitaraṅgiṇī, p. 196.

smelling flower garlands and the like with the sword. He must offer the sacrifice along with the flesh and blood from that [sacrifice] empowered with the Mahākauśika mantra to the deities beginning with Pūtanā.

The procedure in this is as follows: having worshipped Pūtanā in the south-west direction of Durgā's temple with offerings beginning with the water for the foot (*pādya*); having brought forward the *bali* offering of blood and flesh; having recited the Mahākauśika *mantra* as follows, 'Oṃ *hrāṃ* throb, throb! Oṃ tear, tear! Oṃ shred shred. Oṃ *gulva gulva.* Oṃ cover, cover. Oṃ *dhulva dhulva.* Oṃ kill kill. Oṃ drive away, drive away. Oṃ shake, shake, *pura pura,* fill, fill. Oṃ *hāṃ* Oṃ *hūṃ bhaṃ vaṃ hūṃ phaṭ phaṭ* crush crush. Oṃ *hūṃ.* Oṃ *hūṃ*"; he must offer [the flesh and blood] to [Pūtanā] in the south west direction [while saying] "Here is the flesh and blood offering. Homage to Pūtanā". In the same way [he makes the offering] to [Pāparākṣasī] in the north-west [while saying] "Here is the flesh and blood offering. Oṃ homage to Pāparākṣasī", to [Carakī] in north-east with "Here is the flesh and blood offering. Oṃ Homage to Carakī"; to [Vidārī] in the south-east with "Here is the blood and flesh offering. Oṃ homage to Vidārī". In the same way he must make the offering to the demon Pilipiñja, carrion-eaters (*kravyāda*), and crunchers (*jambhaka*) with "Oṃ Homage to Pilipiñja; Oṃ Homage to carrion-eaters; Oṃ Homage to Jambhaka" beginning with the east. Next, having made an image of his enemy out of dough; having sliced off its head with a sword; he must offer the head to Skanda with "Oṃ homage to Skanda" and the trunk to Viśākha.

Then, the king having washed while clothed, dressed in white, carefully washed his hands and feet and sipped water, was to worship the goddess again towards the close of midnight. First the deity was to be washed with the various fluids each measuring 108 *pala*s, to the accompaniment of music, the recitation of the base-incantation and offering of lamps and incense in between. Once again, gifts of the scale and nature presented before, are made to the goddess. Having sung a hymn, the king was to offer a goat, sheep or buffalo as sacrifice. In this way the worship at midnight was to be completed.[580]

[580] *atha mahāṣṭamyām ardharātre vijayakāmasya nṛpasya devīpūjāpūrvakabalidāṇaṃ |*
"sarvopahārasampanno vastraratnaphalādibhiḥ | puṣpaiś ca droṇabilvāmrajātīpunnāgacampakaiḥ ||"
pūrvavad eva vicitrāṃ pūjāṃ racayitvā durgāgrato mūlamantraṃ yathāśakti japitvā stutvā praṇamya varaṃ prārthya kuśatilajalāny ādāya adyāśvinaśuklāṣṭamyām ardharātre imaṃ pañcābdaṃ mahiṣam ajaṃ meṣaṃ vā vijayakāmo'haṃ durgādevyai ghātayiṣye | iti saṃkalpya khaḍgam ādāya oṃ kāli kāli vajreśvari lauhadaṇḍāyai nama iti mantraṃ japitvā khaḍgena gandhapuṣpasragādibhir alaṃkṛtaṃ mahiṣaṃ ghātayet | tadutthābhyāṃ raktamāṃsābhyāṃ mahākauśikamantrābhimantritābhyāṃ pūtanādibhyo dadyāt |
tatra kramaḥ | durgāgṛhasya nairṛtyāṃ diśi pādyādibhir upacāraiḥ pūtanāṃ sampūjya

Then the Navadurgās (yellow Rudracaṇḍā, tawny Pracaṇḍā, dark complexioned Caṇḍogrā, blue-coloured Caṇḍanāyikā, fair-complexioned Caṇḍā, smoky Caṇḍavatī, yellow Caṇḍarūpā, white-hued Aticaṇḍikā, and at their centre, flame-faced eighteen armed Ugracaṇḍā) were worshipped on an eight-petalled lotus.[581] Then ancillary mantras were installed in the petals of the lotus, followed by the worship of the goddess's weapons, the king's lion-throne, the propitiation of the ten guardians of the world, their weapons and the seven Mātṛs/Śaktis. Further gifts of clothes and ornaments were to be given accompanied by the hymn to the goddess asking her for boons, particularly sons. Then the king and his court were to maintain a night-vigil, spent in dancing, singing and music– these were entertainments said to delight the goddess.

On Mahānavamī, the martial element of the rite is amplified. In the morning, the officiant having completed his preliminary rituals and oaths, was to install a trident of wood or another substance on bare ground– Caṇḍikā was to be worshipped in this substrate. She was first washed, then summoned to enter the trident and given various offerings. Then the trident, adorned with jewels and gold is placed on the back of a horse and taken, with fanfare and the

rudhiramāṃsabalim upanīya oṃ hrāṃ sphura sphura oṃ kuṭa kuṭa oṃ kṛnta kṛnta oṃ gulva gulva oṃ kumba kumba oṃ dhulva dhulva oṃ māraya māraya oṃ vidrāvaya vidrāvaya oṃ kampaya kampaya pura pura pūraya pūraya oṃ hāṃ oṃ hūṃ bhaṃ vaṃ hūṃ phaṭ phaṭ marda marda oṃ hūṃ oṃ hūṃ iti mahākauśikamantram uccārya nairṛtyām eṣa rudhiramāṃsabaliḥ oṃ pūtanāyai nama iti dadyāt | evaṃ vāyavyāṃ eṣa māṃsarudhirabaliḥ oṃ pāparākṣasyai nama iti dadyāt | aiśānyām eṣa rudhiramāṃsabaliḥ oṃ carakyaiḥ namaḥ | āgneyyām eṣa rudhiramāṃsabaliḥ oṃ vidāryai namaḥ iti dadyāt | evaṃ pilipiñjāya namaḥ oṃ kravyādbhyo oṃ jambhakāya nama iti prāgādi dadyāt | atha śatrupratimāṃ piṣṭamayīṃ kṛtvā khaḍgena tac chiras chedayitvā oṃ skandāya 2 nama iti śiraḥ skandāya 3 dattvā oṃ viśākhāya nama iti kabandhaṃ viśākhāya dadyāt | atha sacelaṃ snātvā śuklāmbaradharaḥ suprakṣālitapāṇipāda ācāntaḥ punar ardhayāminīśeṣe devīṃ pūjayet | tatra vidhiḥ | kṣīreṇa ghṛtena dadhnā ikṣurasena madhunā śarkarayā jalena ca pratyekam aṣṭorattaraśatapalaparimitena dhūpadīpāntaritaṃ nānāvādyaghoṣair mūlamantreṇa snāpayitvā yavagodhūmalodhravalkalacūrṇair uṣṇodakasahitair virukṣya sukhoṣṇavāriṇā prakṣālya sugandhavāriṇā snāpayet | tataḥ pādyārghācamanīyādi dattvā kuṅkumāgurukarpūracandanāny ādāya mūlam uccārya idam anulepanam oṃ durgāyai nama ity anulipya kauṣeyādivastrāṇi yathāvibhavaṃ ratnādihemamayāni bhūṣaṇāni grathitāni droṇajātīcampakādīni surabhipuṣpāni ca mūlam uccārya oṃ durgāyai nama iti nivedayet | dhūpadīpaprabhūtanaivedyasukhavāsatāmbūlārātrikopānacchatracāmaravyajanaghaṇṭāvitānayavadhānyāni dadyāt | tataḥ praṇamya stutvā chāgādibaliṃ dadyāt | ity ardharātradurgāpūjāvidhiḥ || Ibid pp. 196-198. See also *Kṛtyaratnākara* pp. 360-361. Here the Mahākauśika mantra given is as follows: oṃ *hrīṃ oṃ skuruṃ oṃ kulv* (2) *oṃ ghunu* (2) *oṃ gulu* (2) *oṃ tulu* (2) *oṃ ghunu* (2) *māraya* (2) *vibhrāmaya* (2) *kampaya* (2) *kampātaya* (2) *pura* (2) *pūraya oṃ drūṃ oṃ oṃ bhraṃ raṃ hruṃ phaṭ phaṭ mardaya* (2) *oṃ hruṃ oṃ hrīṃ* (Ibid. p. 353).

[581]For text and translation of this passage in the *Durgābhaktitaraṅgiṇī* see Sarkar 2011 forthcoming b, p. 64, n. 115. The Navadurgāpūjā also appears in the *Kṛtyaratnākara*, and was therefore known to the Maithilas since Caṇḍeśvara's time (*Kṛtyaratnākara,* pp. 362-3). He also provides the option of installing the goddesses in a straight line, rather than a *maṇḍala.* The later Bengali tradition of Raghunandana identified the central Ugracaṇḍā with Bhadrakālī (Sarkar 2011 forthcoming b, p. 64, n. 115.).

flourishing of standards, to the shrine of goddess and there installed before her image. In this martial form she is worshipped again. First the same sequence of rites as performed on the Great-Eighth was to be followed, for the sake of the goddess now in the form of a trident, the weapon with which she was renowned for having slain the Buffalo-Demon.[582]

This is followed by further sacrifices of a number of goats, sheep and buffaloes.[583] Then the circle of Mothers, the goddess's attendants in her war with demons, are propitiated in an eight-petalled lotus drawn with sandalwood paste, with Caṇḍikā in the centre. These goddesses were Brahmāṇī, Māheśvarī, Kaumārī, Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī, Nārasiṃhī, Aindrī, Śivadūtī, and Cāmuṇḍā. The reasons for this worship, as stated in the oath, once again evoke the context of the kingdom: the Mothers are worshipped for the removal of fears everywhere in the king's palace and in the kingdom, for plentiful milk from cows, the brahmins' being intent on the performance of sacrifice, the destruction of the king's enemies, abundant supplies of food, wealth, good health, appropriate rainfall and an abundance of grains. This is followed by a second worship at the evening-juncture propitiating the Mothers in order to destroy all dangers in another lotus-shaped *maṇḍala* with an offering of rice mixed with pulses and flesh to each goddess in turn.[584] Then three virgins are treated with care and

[582] *atha mahānavamīkṛtyaṃ | tatra triśūlākṛtidurgāpūjāvidhiḥ | prātaḥ kṛtanityakriyaḥ suprakṣālitapāṇipāda ācāntaḥ prāṅmukha udaṅmukho vopaviśya kuśatrayatilajalāny ādāya | adya mahānavamyāṃ mahāpātakādisakalapāpakṣayadharmayaśodīrghāyuṣṭvabrahmalokagamana-brahmendrarudraviṣṇvādiprāptiparamapadaprāptikāmas triśūlākṛtiṃ bhagavatīṃ durgādevīm ahaṃ pūjayiṣye | iti saṃkalpya sūpalipte sthaṇḍile kāṣṭhādimayaṃ caṇḍikātmakaṃ triśūlaṃ nidhāya tīrthavāriṇā dugdhamadhughṛtādinā snāpayet | tato vāriṇā prakṣālya mano jyotir ityādimantreṇa pratiṣṭhāpya sapuṣpākṣatam ādāya oṃ bhagavati caṇḍike ihāgaccha iha tiṣṭha ityādināvāhya sthāpayitvā etāni pādyārghācamanīyasnānīyapunarācamanīyāni oṃ bhagavatyai caṇḍikāyai nama iti pādyādi dattvā idaṃ kuṅkumānulepanaṃ dattvā oṃ caṇḍikāyai namaḥ iti sitakusumāñjalitrayeṇa pūjayet | karavīrajapājātībilvapatrādimālābhir abhyarcya eṣa ghṛtagugguladhūpa oṃ caṇḍikāyai namaḥ eṣa dīpa etāni tāmbulāni etāni naivedyāni idaṃ vastraṃ bṛhaspatidaivataṃ oṃ caṇḍikāyai nama iti pratyekaṃ dadyāt | evam eva hiraṇyaratnabhūṣaṇasindūrālaktakaṃ paṭṭakasūtikādi dadyāt | tataḥ praṇamya maṇikāñcanabhūṣitaṃ triśūlaṃ haye samāropya samantato dhvajachatracāmarādiśobhānvitaṃ nānāvāditranirghoṣair devyālayaṃ nītvā devyāḥ puratoḥ sthāpayet | atha punas tatrāpi pādyārghācamanīyasnānīyapunarācamanīyānulepanasitapuṣpadhūpadīpatāmbūlanaivedyavāsobhiḥ oṃ caṇḍikāyai namaḥ iti pūjāṃ vidhāya praṇamya durgāṃ śivāṃ śāntikarīm ityādistotreṇa stutvā oṃ mahiṣaghni mahāmāye ityādi rūpaṃ dehi ityādi sarvamaṅgalamāṅgalye ityādi kuṅkumena samālabdhe ityādikaṃ paṭhitvā kṣamasveti visarjayet | Durgābhaktitaraṅgiṇī*, pp. 200-202. The mantra *mano jyotir* etc. is in *Vājasaneyisaṃhitā* 2.13 (reference provided by Prof. Sanderson).

[583] Ibid. pp. 201-202.

[584] *atha mātṛcakrapūjanaṃ | tatra kuśatrayatilajalāny ādāya adya svanivāsarāṣṭrādhikaraṇakasārvatrikabhayābhāvagobhūripayastva-dvijayajñaparatvabhūpālavairinivṛttisubhikṣa-*

fed with all honours, and their forgiveness is elicited at the end of the worship. In the same way *brāhmaṇa*s and young women are fed with all courtesy. The *Devīmāhātmya* is recited aloud and the reciter is remunerated at the end of the reading. The king was to have a hundred and eight oblations of sesame seeds anointed with clarified butter, honey, thickened milk made into a fire established according to the Gṛhyasūtra followed by the tradition of the patron (*svagṛhyoktavidhināgnisthāpanaṃ).*[585]

On Mahānavamī the final worship of the king's horses was to take place. First Revanta was to be summoned in an open ground, installed, offered guest-water, a cupped handful of flowers thrice, and a hymn. Then a goat, a buffalo or a sheep was sacrificed and offered to the deity for "quelling all calamities and afflictions of horses, for health, long life and growth". Then boons were to be asked from the deity. The divine horse Uccaiḥśravas was to be summoned and installed in the same spot, and worshipped likewise. All the king's horses, their mane trimmed, washed, and embellished were to be assembled fronted by the chief horse. Offerings of guest-water were to be made to them and they were to be worshipped with perfume etc. Then eulogistic verses were to be recited in the horses' ears, exhorting their growth through the power of all the gods and their protection, as divine offspring of *gandharva*s, at all times in battle.[586] Indeed it

kṣemārogyayathākāmaparjanyavarṣaṇasasyasampattikāmo brahmāṇyādimātṛṛṇāṃ pūjanam ahaṃ kariṣye | iti saṃkalpya | candanenāṣṭadalapadmam ālikhya madhye caṇḍikāṃ sampūjyākṣatam ādāya oṃ brahmāṇi ihāgaccha iha tiṣṭhetyādināvāhya sthāpayitvā pādyārghācamanīyasnānīyapunarācamanīyagandhapuṣpadhūpadīpatāmbūlanaivedyavastraiḥ oṃ brahmāṇyai nama iti prāgdale | āgneyadale oṃ māheśvaryai namaḥ | dakṣiṇadale oṃ kaumāryai namaḥ | nairṛtadale oṃ vaiṣṇavyai namaḥ | paścimadale oṃ vārāhyai namaḥ | vāyavyadale oṃ nārasiṃhyai namaḥ | uttaradale oṃ aindryai namaḥ | īśānadale oṃ śivadūtyai namaḥ | madhye oṃ cāmuṇḍāyai namaḥ iti pūjayet | atha mātṛbhyaḥ sandhyābalidānam | kuśatrayatilajalāny ādāya | asyāṃ mahānavamyāṃ sāyaṃ sandhyāyāṃ sakaladuritakṣayakāmo brahmāṇyādi mātṛbhyaḥ pūjāpūrvakaghṛtadīpasamāṃsasamāṣabhaktabalidānam ahaṃ kariṣye | iti saṃkalpya gomayopalipte bhūbhāge candanādinā aṣṭadalapadmam ālikhya pradakṣiṇakrameṇa prācyādyaṣṭadaleṣu madhye ca brahmāṇī māheśvarīkaumārīvaiṣṇavīvārāhīnārasiṃhyaindrīśivadūtīcāmuṇḍā iti navamātṛṛ āvāhya sthāpayitvā pādyādibhir upacārair abhyarccya ete ghṛtapradīpā oṃ brahmāṇyai namaḥ iti krameṇa dīpān dattvā oṃ brahmāṇyai eṣa samāṃsasamāṣabhaktabalir namaḥ | ityādinā brahmāṇyādimātṛbhyo navabhyo'pi samāṃsasamāṣabhaktabalīn dadyāt | iti mātṛcakrapūjāvidhiḥ | Ibid, p. 203.

āgneyadale oṃ māheśvaryai namaḥ | dakṣiṇadale em. Sanderson] *oṃ brahmāṇyai nama iti prāgdale oṃ kaumāryai namaḥ | ed.*

[585]Ibid pp. 203-204.

[586]*athāśvaśālāyāṃ revantādipūjā |*

tatra kuśatilajalāny ādāya | adya mahānavamyāṃ sakalāśvotpātapīḍāśāntinairujya-

dīrghāyuṣṭvasamṛddhikāmo revantoccaiḥśravasturaṅgapūjanam ahaṃ kariṣye iti saṅkalpa sthaṇḍilopari sapuṣpākṣatam ādāya revanta ihāgaccha iha tiṣṭhety āvāhya sthāpyitvā etāni pādyārghācamanīyapunarācamanīyāni oṃ revantāya nama iti pādyādi dattvā oṃ revantāya nama ity anulipya

is to be noted that the worship of horses had a special place in the sequence of the Maithila Navarātra, and this was to ensure their sanctity and power before they were led into the battlefield. On Daśamī, the goddess is ritually released by being carried with the Śābarotsava "with singing, dancing, musing, the chanting of invocations, games, amazing spectacles, and auspicious hymns" to flowing water, and then submerged in it.[587] The goddess's rites therefore continue into Daśamī in the Eastern tradition. After this the king is to return to the shrine and the officiant is to be remunerated. After Caṇḍī has been dismissed by the submerging and releasing of her image in flowing water, the goddess Aparājitā is worshipped for success in the military campaign that is to begin after the completion of these rites.

This deity seems to have been well-connected to rituals initiating military

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oṃ namo devādhidevāya turaṅgavanacāriṇe |
sūryaputrāya devāya turaṅgānāṃ hitāya ca |
turaṅgapariṣadyasya nṛgajopari dhāvati |
svāśvam aśvādhipaṃ rakṣa śaraṇaṃ tvāṃ vrajāmy ahaṃ |
iti paṭhitvā revantāya nama iti puṣpāñjalitrayeṇa pūjayet | etāni gandhapuṣpadhūpadīpatāmbulanaivedyāni oṃ revantāya nama idaṃ vastraṃ bṛhaspatidaivataṃ oṃ revantāya nama ity utsṛjet | tato 'ñjaliṃ baddhvā
sūryaputra mahābāho chāyāhṛdayanandana |
śāntiṃ kuru turaṅgānāṃ revantāya namo 'stu te ||
iti stutvā praṇamet | chāgādibaliṃ dadyāt | adya mahānavamyāṃ sakalāśvotpātapīḍāśāntinairujyadīrghāyuṣṭasamṛddhikāma imaṃ chāgaṃ vahnidaivataṃ meṣaṃ vā varuṇadaivataṃ mahiṣam vā yamadaivataṃ bhagavate revantāyāhaṃ ghātayiṣye | iti saṃkalpya ghātayet | rūpaṃ dehītyādinā varaṃ prārthayet praṇamec ca | tataḥ sthaṇḍilopari sapuṣpākṣatam ādāya oṃ uccaiḥśrava ihāgaccha iha tiṣṭhetyādināvāhya sthāpayitvā uccaiḥśravase nama iti pādyādibhir upacāraiḥ pūjayet | atha kṛtakṣaurān snāpitān alaṅkṛtān mukhyāśvapuraḥsarān turaṅgamān sannidhāpya eṣo 'rghaḥ oṃ turaṅgebhyo nama ity arghaṃ dattvā gandhādibhir upacāraiḥ pūjayet | turaṅgānāṃ karṇajāpam imaṃ paṭhet |
oṃ gandharvakulajāto'si mā bhūyāḥ kuladūṣakaḥ |
brahmaṇaḥ satyavākyena somasya varuṇasya ca |
tejasā caiva sūryasya munīnāṃ tapasā tathā |
rudrasya brahmacaryeṇa pavanasya balena ca |
prabhāvāc ca hutāśasya varddhasva tvaṃ turaṅgama |
smara tvaṃ rājaputro'si kaustubhaṃ ca maṇiṃ smara |
surāsurair mathyamānāt kṣīrodād amṛtādibhiḥ |
jāta uccaiḥśravāḥ pūrvaṃ tena jāto'si tat smaraḥ ||
yāṃ gatiṃ brahmahā gacchet pitṛhā mātṛhā tathā |
bhūmyarthe 'nṛtavādī ca raṇe yaś ca parāṅmukhaḥ ||
sūryācandramasau vāyur yāvat paśyanti duṣkṛtaṃ |
vrajes tvaṃ tāṃ gatiṃ kṣipraṃ tac ca pāpaṃ bhavet tava ||
vikṛtiṃ yadi gacchethā yuddhe 'dhvani turaṅgama |
ripūn vijitya samare saha bhartrā sukhībhava ||
turaṅgama ciraṃ jīva paraśastrair alakṣitaḥ |
sadā māṃ samare rakṣa svāmikāryaṃ sadā kuru ||
iti revantapūjāvidhiḥ | Ibid. pp.204-206.
sakalāśvotpāta em. Sanderson] *sakalāśvotpatti*

[587] *gītanityavādyabrahmaghoṣakrīḍākautukamaṅgalapuraḥsaraṃ srotojalasamīpaṃ gatvā* [...] *srotasi pravāhayet* | Ibid. p. 207. See also *Kṛtyaratnākara*, p. 362, where the same Śābarotsava rites are taught.

campaigns throughout the subcontinent, for her courtly worship during the final *tithi*s of the Navarātra is attested in the literary work *Yaśastilakacampū*, composed in 959 CE, in Gaṅgādhārā, the capital of Vāgarāja (Vaddiga), the eldest son of the Cālukya Arikesari, feudatory of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa Kṛṣṇarājadeva (III). In this work she is described in a hymn (3.459-461), sung at the court of a king Yaśodhara by a royal bard, in order that she could "bestow immediate triumph" on the king, and as in the worship described in the Maithila text (to be shown), seems to have been viewed as incarnating a king's personal weaponry and parts of his body. A warrior is thereby imagined as transformed and incorporated into the deity herself before he embarks in to the battlefield.[588]

In the Maithila rite, Aparājitā was also figured as a king, and similarly invoked in a protective talisman that the king was to wear during the battle. After he had declared the initiatory oath, an eight-petalled lotus was to be drawn with sandalwood paste. Aparājitā and her attendants Jayā and Vijayā were to be summoned and installed in the *maṇḍala* with invocations. She was to be visualized by the king as four-handed, robed in yellow, adorned with all ornaments, carrying a sword and a shield in the top hands, showing the gesture granting boons and the gesture of protection, three-eyed, slightly smiling. She was to be summoned, installed and offered guest-water with "Oṃ Hrīṃ Homage to Aparājitā". Then having worshipped her with many *aparājitā* blossoms, *droṇa* blossoms and *bilva* leaves, he was to worship the goddess's heart-mantra and weapon-mantras with "Oṃ Hrīṃ Homage to Aparajitā's Heart" and "Oṃ Hrīṃ Phaṭ to the Weapon". Then having paid homage to Jayā to her right and Vijayā to her left, the king was to make them offerings and sing them hymns. Next he was to bind according to custom white mustard seeds and *dūrvā* grass in cloth dyed yellow with turmeric, place this "Armlet of Aparājitā" on the goddess's heart, and with his desired object in mind, was to tie this on his own body. Having then worshipped his weapons, he was to take his sword, circumambulate and empower the Armlet with the following invocation "Oṃ Since you, Aparājitā are renowned as supreme among all vines, I wear you in order to fulfil my wishes. O Goddess, bestow on me all prosperities. When worshipped grant me fortune for my general prosperity, [and may] my sin be destroyed." The king must then wear the armlet with the invocation "O Goddess, granter of

[588] *khaḍge khaḍgatanusthitir dhanuṣi ca prāptā dhanuḥsaṃhatiṃ*
bāṇe bāṇavapur bhuje bhujamayī gātre tanutrākṛtiḥ |
saṃgrāme 'grajayāya cintitavidhau cintāmaṇir bhūbhujāṃ
yā sā syād aparājitā tava muhur jaitrāya dhātrīpate || Yaśastilakacampū 3.459.

victory, granter of boons, Unconquered I wear you on my right arm on Daśam¯ for increased victory. O Armlet grant me might and my enemies defeat. By tying you, may there be wealth, crops and prosperity for my benefit." The goddess is then bade to depart to her supreme abode and the rites honouring her are concluded. The Navarātra is then concluded with the ritual consecration (*abhiṣeka*) of the king. With water from the vase installed in the beginning of the ritual, *brāhmaṇa*s would sprinkle the king with invocations from the Purāṇas. The water containing the powerful substance of the goddess and other deities is thereby transferred into his being. In the rituals of the Maithila Navarātra, the goddess took central place as the prototypical monarch presiding over the king, given gifts and paid tribute, just as he would. At the same time, a relationship between the deity and king was established throughout the ceremonies. Opening with the preparation of the consecratory waters of the ruler, the Maithila Navarātra frames the worship of the goddess within kingship rituals sanctifying the human king and his army, thereby visually setting up a ritually encoded analogy between *devī* and ruler. Each ritual accessing the goddess's energy is simultaneously paralleled with an accompanying ritual vivifying the energy of the military forces of the kingdom and the ruler.[589]

[589] *atha vijayādaśamyāṃ devīpreṣaṇānantaram aparājitāpūjāvidhiḥ |*
tatra kuśatrayatilajalāny ādāya oṃ adya śukladaśamyāṃ yātrāyāṃ vijayakāmo 'parājitāpūjām ahaṃ kariṣye iti saṃkalpya candanādināṣṭadalapadmam ālikhya tanmadhye oṃ aparājitāyai nama ity aparājitāṃ taddakṣiṇe oṃ kriyāśaktyai nama iti jayāṃ | vāme oṃ umāyai nama iti vijayāṃ pratiṣṭhāpya pūjayet | oṃ caturbhūjāṃ pītavastrāṃ sarvābharaṇabhūṣitāṃ dakṣiṇavāmayor uparitanahastayoḥ khaḍgacarmadharām adhastanahastayor varābhayacihnāṃ trinetrām īṣatprahasitavadanām aparājitāṃ dhyātvā †bāhya† sthāpayitvā oṃ hrīṃ aparājitāyai nama iti pādyādibhiḥ pūjayitvā bahutarāparājitāpuṣpadroṇapuṣpabilvapatram abhyarcayet | oṃ hrīṃ aparājitāhṛdayāya namaḥ ity aparājitāhṛdayaṃ oṃ hrīṃ astrāya phaḍ ity astrāṇi pūjayet | tato dakṣiṇe jayāyai nama iti jayāṃ vāme vijayāyai nama iti vijayāṃ pūjayitvā gandhapuṣpadhūpadīpatāmbūlanaivedyavastrāṇi nivedya praṇamya oṃ cāruṇā mukhapadmena vicitrakanakojjvalā | jayādevī śive bhaktyā sarvān kāmān dadātu me || kāñcanena vicitreṇa keyūreṇa vibhūṣitā | jayapradā mahāmāye śivabhāvitacetasā || vijayā tu mahābhāgā dadātu vijayaṃ mama | hāreṇa suvicitreṇa bhāsvatkanakamekhalā || aparājitā rudralatā karotu vijayaṃ mama | iti paṭhitvā haridrāpītavastre dūrvāsahitasiddhārthakān baddhvā ācārād aparājitāvalayaṃ ca devyā hṛdaye nidhāyābhilaṣitakāmanayā svāṅge dhārayet | ācārād astrāṇi saṃpūjya khaḍgam ādāya oṃkāram uccārayan pradakṣiṇaṃ kuryāt | sadāparājite yasmāt tvaṃ latāsūttamā smṛtā | sarvakāmārthasiddhyarthaṃ tasmāt tvāṃ dhārayāmy ahaṃ || bhavāparājite devi mama sarvasamṛddhaye | pūjtāyāṃ tvayi śreyo mamāstu duritaṃ hataṃ || ity aparājitāvalayam abhimantrya oṃ jayade varade devi daśamyām aparājite | dhārayāmi bhuje dakṣe jayalābhābhivṛddhaye || balam ādhehi valaya mama śatrau parājayam | tvaddhāraṇād bhaveyur dhanadhānyasamṛddhayaḥ || iti mantreṇa bāhau dhārayanti | tataḥ praṇamya | imāṃ pūjāṃ mayā devi yathāśaktyā niveditāṃ | rakṣārthaṃ ca samādāya vrajasva sthānam uttamaṃ | iti visarjayet | athābhiṣekaḥ | [...] iti mantreṇa śāntikalaśam utthāpya tajjalena brāhmaṇāḥ paurāṇikamahāmantrair yajamānam abhisiñceyuḥ | Durgābhaktitaraṅgiṇī pp. 208-209. See also *Kṛtyaratnākara*, pp. 365-366.
svāṅge conj.] *svāṅke* ed.

4.5 The Deccan Courtly Tradition: the Navarātras of Devagiri, the Nāyaka domains, Vijayanagara and Madras.

The Deccan seems to have followed in the wake of the Eastern form of the Navarātra outlined in the *Devī* and the *Kālikā* until at least the early half of the 14th century. For instance, our earliest source, from the kingdom of Devagiri (present day Daulatabad in Mahārāṣṭra), the *Caturvargacintāmaṇi*, (the Wishing-Jewel of the Four Aims of Man), by the court-scholar Hemādri (1260-1309 CE) attributes the greater part of the ceremony to the Bengali *Devī*, particularly its celebration of the core-martial lunar days of Aṣṭamī and Mahānavamī.

But independent elements that would later characterize the Southern rite and distinguish it from the Eastern Navarātra are also in clear evidence in this work: for instance, the Devagiri rite eschews the rites of adornment between the first to the fifth, worship of the Navadurgās (Rudracaṇḍā etc.) and the goddess's *visarjana* in water and Śābarotsava on Daśamī. In fact Daśamī is not mentioned at all in the context of the goddess's worship in the *Caturvargacintāmaṇi*: unlike the older Eastern tradition where the goddess's concluding rites continued on the day, here it was celebrated as a festival dedicated mainly to the king and the town, and this was a feature that would be perpetuated in the later Southern tradition.[590] Also in distinction from the Eastern rite, the *Caturvargacintāmaṇi* includes the worship, attributed to the *Skandapurāṇa,* of nine forms of the goddess summoned in the person of young girls aged between two and ten spread over each of the nine lunar days for the accomplishment of the king's tasks: the

[590]The rite of Devagiri can be summarized as follows:

First to the fifth lunar-days: Fasting, worshipping Śiva, feasting maidens, *japa* and *homa* (attributed to the *Devīpurāṇa*); worship of horses till ninth (attributed to the *Devīpurāṇa*); the worship of weapons and insignia by the king (*lohābhisārikakarman*) followed by the daily parade of horses and elephants in the city until the eighth (attributed to the *Bhaviṣyottarapurāṇa*); the worship of nine goddesses (not the *navadurgā*s) in nine virgins (*kumārīpūjā*) until the ninth (attributed to the *Skandapurāṇa).*

Sixth lunar-day: The goddess's awakening (*bodhana*) in a *bilva* tree (attributed to the *Liṅgapurāṇa*)

Seventh lunar-day: the cutting of a branch of the *bilva* and its installation in the shrine (attributed ibid.)

Eighth and Ninth lunar-days (Aṣṭamī and Mahānavamī): the establishment of nine houses; establishing the goddess in a gold or silver sword or trident used during battle; worship with flowers etc., hymns; fasting; at midnight on Mahānavamī, animal sacrifice for victory with the Mahākauśikamantra and offering to demons in directions; sacrifice of a dough-doll to Skanda-Viśākha; sharing the offerings with *kāpālika*s and miscreants (*duṣṭajanas)*; offerings to the goddess (attributed to the *Devīpurāṇa*); worship of devotees of the goddess and virgins (*kumārī*s). In the morning of Mahānāvamī, a chariot procession with the goddess and carnival (attributed to the *Devīpurāṇa* and the *Bhaviṣyottarapurāṇa*)*;* animal sacrifice to propitiate ghosts and demonesses; military procession (*yātrā*) (attributed to the *Bhaviṣyottarapurana)* (*Caturvargacintāmaṇi*, vol. 2.1 (Vratakhaṇḍa), pp. 900-921).

goddess Kumārikā summoned in a little girl aged two; Trimūrtinī in a three-year old girl; Kalyāṇī in a four-year old girl; Rohiṇī in a five-year old girl; Kālikā in a six year old girl; Caṇḍikā in a seven year old; Śāmbhavī in an eight-year old; Durgā in a nine year old; Subhadrā in a ten-year old virgin.[591] This practice would also appear in other Southern treatises, which teach the worship of each deity inside a little girl on every lunar-day.

The gradual independence of the Southern tradition, and its advocacy by the 15th c. of a Navarātra that was qualitatively different from the Eastern tradition in that it celebrated Daśamī differently and eschewed rites that were Tantric in their tone, is attested by the eye-witness accounts of the Navarātras of the Vijayanagara kingdom[592], of Mysore under the Wodeyars,[593] of Ramnad and of Śivagaṅgai in Tamil Nadu.[594] Unlike the rite of Devagiri, the ceremonies of these kingdoms bear little resemblance to the earlier Eastern traditions. In addition to the distinctions first glimpsed in the *Caturvargacintāmaṇi,* these ceremonies did not incorporate the goddess's awakening in the *bilva*-tree, the rites invoking the goddess in the *bilva*-branch and the nine-leaves, the occultic Ardharātrapūjā drawn from the *Devī* and the *Agni*, the worship of the Mothers, the *yoginī*s, the Navadurgās and Aparājitāpūjā. The authority of the *Devī*, the *Agni*, and other Eastern scriptures, did not hold as much weight in the South, where other scriptures traditionally commanded greater respect. The Śākta element is also, in complete contrast to the Eastern ceremony, significantly diminished here– wild and autonomous goddesses celebrated in the East for magical powers do not make their presence felt in the rituals of the South– or were manifested more covertly.

Among themselves the ceremonies of the four Southern kingdoms share a great many similarities, from which it can be inferred that they collectively formed a common religious heritage, and hence can be treated in totality. All for instance incorporate rituals such as the consecration of the king (*abhiṣeka*) on the first or tenth lunar-days; the king's wearing of a thread as an oath of commitment; the sanctification of the throne; the presentation of the sword; the holding of court-assemblies (*durbar*s); the payment of tributes to the ruler; parades of troops and war-animals followed by entertainments in an arena; worship of weapons; the worship of the *śamī*-tree with arrow-shooting according

[591] Ibid, p. 903.
[592] Stein 1983, pp. 67-90
[593] Iyer 1928, vol. II, pp. 56-71.
[594] Price 1996, pp. 139-146. The first report described by Price concerns Daśamī in Śivagaṅgai, the second describes the first lunar-day (*pratipat*) of the Navarātra in Ramnad.

to the *Gopathabrāhmaṇa* tradition[595] on the tenth lunar-day. Foremost among these similarities, was the central position of the king and the visible forms of his power: in large court-assemblies as the recipient of honours from his subjects and emissaries, ritually coronated on the sanctified lion-throne, holding the state-sword[596], the Southern king affirmed his position as the locus of a divine cult of the ruler. The Eastern Navarātra in contrast tended to focus its ceremonies on the goddess as monarch, who received all the homage and tributes usually reserved for the real king, as observed. Rather than being a worship of the monarch per se, it was an enactment of the cult of the sovereign at an archetypical level. But the king was treated as god-like in the Southern Navarātra, and was, as the goddess in the Eastern rite, continually on display. The emphasis on the king was by far the most significant innovation to have occured when the Navarātra penetrated southwards into regions where Śākta sectarianism was less pervasive than in the East.

If the later Southern Navarātra celebrated a cult of the ruler, what became of the goddess to whom the nine lunar-days were dedicated? The reports on the ceremonies of these kingdoms, with the exception of the two on Ramnad and Śivagaṅgai, do not fully explain how the symbolism of the goddess was incorporated in the framework of a festival ostensibly devoted to the human king, how, that is to say, her form was seen to empower and merge with the ruler. This is because the reporters of these accounts saw, as the rest of the subjects and the king's courtiers did, the public dimension of the rite embodied in the displays of dancing and singing, the splendid processions and the colourful parades of elephants, horses and troops that were viewed by everyone as entertainments or as demonstrations of the might of the kingdom.[597] But in these spectacles the king alone, and not the deity, took centre-stage, like a god at the centre of his/her universe.

The greater part of the goddess's symbolism, unfolded privately in a palace shrine[598], or inside a pavilion (*maṇḍapa*) built specially for the occasion, guarded from the view of the outside world and attended only by the king and his family members. It was inside this private shrine and *maṇḍapa* that the ceremonials

[595] See p. 190.

[596] Iyer 1928, pp. 60-61

[597] The Persian reporter Abdur Razzak, for instance, was seated in one of nine additional pavilions to view the public part of the festival in the arena, that were built to seat important officials and senior members of the army (Stein 1983, p. 80).

[598] In the case of the Vijayanagara Navarātra, this shrine was built inside the main viewing pavilion where the king was seated, presumably so that he could have easy access to the deity (Ibid. p. 79).

investing sacred power from goddess to king were evoked, that in fact the most crucial rituals energizing the state, such as the *abhiṣeka*, occured, privy only to priests, king, family and perhaps a few key courtiers.[599] These more private rituals occured in tandem with the public ceremonies open to other members of the Durbar and the kingdom: every occasion where the king was presented to his/her subjects as a singular (semi-) divine presence, was followed by trips to the goddess where his/her[600] divine substance was reconstituted. In this way the worship of king and goddess was integrated. In Mysore, the ruler would worship Cāmuṇḍeśvarī in the palace shrine immediately after the first Durbar session where the whole court was assembled, and was required to do so regularly through the course of the nine lunar-days.[601] In the 1893 Navarātra of Ramnad, the Setupati king visited his presiding deity Rājarājeśvarī's shrine on three occasions, before and during the Durbar on the first lunar day, worship that was also seamlessly interlinked with the other public ceremonies for the remaining days.[602] Similarly at Vijayanagara, in between the parades, the wrestling-matches, the procession of the State Elephant and the State Horse in the arena and the Durbars at court, the king would also visit the shrine and worship the deity[603], in all probability Bhuvaneśvarī the goddess established by their founder Vidyāraṇya at the establishment of the city in 1334.[604] It is important to understand the South Indian courtly Navarātra not just in terms of display as it has been thus-far analysed[605], but also as a choreography of two different but complementary ritual sequences: one which was a public sequence unfolding in the parade-arena, court-room and the city-streets that focussed on show, on opulence, on, that is to say, secular forms of power; the other a private sequence in which the relationship between king and goddess unfolded more discreetly in enclosed chambers of the palace, where divine kingship was renewed by association with the deity, and with comparatively less pomp.

[599]"For most of these purification and propitiatory rituals, performed by Brahmin priests with the raja or rani occasionally participating, ordinary...subjects were not present. The durbar assemblies, the arrow-shooting ceremony and the royal processions to and from these occasions required the presence of people." (Price 1996, p. 140). In 1863, the *abhiṣeka* and coronation of the Rani of Śivagaṅgai during the first lunar day of the Navarātra was performed in the palace temple of Rājarājeśvarī and in the *maṇḍapa* inside the palace specially built for the consecration, witnessed only by priests, king, family members and important associates of the ruler. (Ibid. pp. 141-142.)

[600]The 1863 Navarātra in Śivagaṅgai was performed by the Queen Kathama Nachiar (Price 1996, p. 139).

[601]Iyer 1928, vol. II., pp. 61-62.

[602]Price 1996, pp. 144-145.

[603]Stein 1983, pp. 73, 86.

[604]Ibid. p. 88.

[605]See particularly Stein 1983, pp. 78-84 and also Iyer 1928, vol II, pp. 60-62.

In order to access these inner rituals, one must look once again at the religious treatises available describing the details of the rites. Two such later treatises are available which corroborate the rites of the four kingdoms observed by the eye-witness reports and, in addition, fill in their gaps by providing greater details on the sequence and inner-workings of each ritual. These treatises are the scripture *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā* (approximately 17th-19th c.) and the *dharmaśāstric* work *Puruṣārthacintāmaṇi* (composed during or after the 17th c. by Viṣṇubhaṭṭa Āṭhavaḷe[606]). Of these the former will be dealt with in greater detail as it conforms more closely to the earlier Vijayanagara ritual and parallels in the second are indicated in footnotes.

The *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā* was a manual of South-Indian kingship employed by the Marāṭha kings of Thanjavur, and, at least until the 1950s, personal copies of several kings, with their signatures inside, were held by the Saraswati Mahal Library in Thanjavur.[607] This work describes the Navarātra in the following way.

It teaches first the building of an audience-hall (*āsthānamaṇḍapa*) in front of the king's apartments. This hall is likened by the scripture to Sumeru, the centre of the world, and for the duration of the ceremony, it would serve as the main locus for the king, the node inside the centre. It was to be elevated (*mahonnataṃ*), with a staircase fashioned from coral (*pravālamayasopānaṃ*), an altar of cats-eye gem (*vaidūryamayavedikaṃ*), pillars encrusted with pearls (*mauktikastambha-*), with a domed roof enclosing a jewelled room (*māṇikyavalabhīpuṭa*). It was to be appointed with ensigns, banners, canopies and arched entrances, and the ground before it was to be cleared for entertainments and sumptuously appointed with

[606] Viṣṇubhaṭṭa refers to Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita a scholar from the 17th century as an authority (*Puruṣārthacintāmaṇi* p. 101). Of Viṣṇubhaṭṭa not much is known (Ibid. Introduction, p. 35) save, from the opening verses of his work, that he was born in the lineage of Atri, that his father was known as Rāmakṛṣṇa Sūrī and that he had acquired the title "Āṭhavale". He also seems to have written in order to resolve certain points of difference between the works of the *dharmaśāstrin*s Hemādri and Mādhava, and his own writings were possibly viewed as clarifying in a new light the older *smārta* literature:

atreḥ samudbhavād rāmakṛṣṇasūrir abhūt kulāt |
āṭhavale iti khyātāt tannetrāc candramā iva |
tadātmajo viṣṇubhaṭṭa puruṣārthaprabhāsake |
granthe cintāmaṇau kālasamyagjñānaprasiddhaye |
hemādrinā mādhavasya virodhaḥ kālanirṇaye |
iti jñātvā kṛtās te 'taḥ parasparavirodhinaḥ |
navīnaviduṣāṃ granthāḥ suprasiddham idaṃ hy ataḥ | Puruṣārthacintāmaṇi, v. 2-5ab, p. 1.

The Introduction notes that the work was well known among *dharmaśāstra* scholars throughout India (Ibid. Introduction, p. 43). It was first published by Ānandāśrama Press in 1903 (ibid.).

[607] Note by the editor K. Vasudeva Sastri, Introduction to *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā*, p. 4.

lanterns and rows of chariots.[608] On the northern side of his palace, the king was to have a flower-pavilion (*puṣpamaṇḍapaṃ*) built for worshipping goddesses such as Durgā and Ramā (Lakṣmī) (*durgāramādipūjārthaṃ*), perfumed with incense etc, and where he was to sit on his throne. Both structures were integral for instance to the layout of the Vijayanagara rite, forming a permanent part of the palace, and their ruins still remain at Hampi.[609] It was from these two buildings that the Rāya kings would overlook the arena where spectacles occured.

Having thus taught the necessary architectural preparations, the *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā* says that a king was to begin worship from the first lunar day of the bright phase of Āśvina. Having risen at an auspicious hour, having purified himself with the preliminary purificatory rituals (*kṛtaśaucakriyaḥ śuciḥ*), having summoned the priests, he was to undergo the consecration ritual by being bathed with holy waters from sacred sites, poured from golden pots.[610] Then adorned in white (*śuklāmbaradharaḥ*), bedecked in white garlands and unguents, he was to complete all his obligatory rituals, worship the priest, the aged, the twice-born and married women with his chief queen (*mahiṣyā sahitaḥ*), and meditate on his chosen deity (*sveṣṭadevaṃ*). Next the priest was to place a gold amulet (*pratisaraṃ*) on a chalice of gold and worship it with flowers. Then, he was to ceremonially enthrone the king on his lion-throne, and tie on his right arm the amulet chanting invocations.[611] This amulet was meant to be worn by the king as long as the rites lasted as a sign of his commitment, and he was to take a vow of abstinence and fasting for the duration[612]. The ceremonial tying of the amulet, or in other cases a thread, was common in the South. In 1893, for instance, the king Bhaskara Setupati of Ramnad had his wrist tied with a thread called in Tamil *kāppu* (synonymous with the Sanskrit *pratisara*) and took an accompanying oath of abstinence and restricted eating on the first lunar day of Navarātra in just such an opening ceremony. The ceremony also included the presentation to the king of his sword and sceptre which had been placed at the base of the image of the Setupati tutelary-goddess Rājarājeśvarī, enacting thereby her granting permission to the king to rule and be the bearer of the

[608] *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā* 99. 8-10.
[609] Stein 1983, p. 79. They are identified by Paes as the "King's Audience Hall" (ibid.), which must be none other than the *āsthānamaṇḍapa*, and the "The House of Victory/ Throne Platform", where the king was to be seated on his throne (ibid.), which must refer to the *puṣpamaṇḍapa*.
[610] See also *Puruṣārthacintāmaṇi* p. 81.
[611] *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā* 99.11-21.
[612] Ibid 100.2-3. Read *vijitendriyaḥ* where the text says *vijitedriyaḥ*.

state weapons.[613] In Mysore, the Wodeyar kings would also have to wear a thread made of silk and make a vow before the commencement of Navarātra, and here the ceremony was known as the *kaṅkanadhāraṇa*.[614]

In the *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā*, the priest was next to perform the most crucial ritual investing the king with divine substance, thereby transforming him into a sacred being worthy of the worship that was to be lavished on his person in the next nine days. This was the summoning (*āvāhana*) of the goddess into the king and his being made cognate with her. With a number of powerful invocations, the priest was to exhort the goddess "Imperial Fortune" (Sāmrājyalakṣmī) to enter the body of the king.[615] Her summoning was to enable the king, "to rule the earth up to the girdle of the ocean", "to protect the cultured" and "to instantly slay the wicked". The magical potency of the invocation was to have a tangible effect. When the goddess had completely entered the king's person, there was to be an immediate and visible transformation of his appearance, which was to become lustrous like the goddess. "As a result of summoning Lakṣmī," explains the text, "the king blazes with *tejas*, might and valour like a jewel polished on a whetstone, as a tree that has borne little fruit becomes fruitful when its craving [is satisfied by the touch of beautiful woman]." In several successive similes, the goddess is viewed as the flame or the light of a kingdom's power. Union with her alone enables the king to shine with this light.[616] He is thereby made into a god-like being.

Having been caused to prosper with benedictions (*āśis*) chanted by the priest[617], and radiant with the goddess in his body, the king was to be instructed on his duties (*rājadharma*) by the priest.[618] More esoteric knowledge was then to be imparted to the king on the nature of reality (*tattvopadeśa*).[619] This was to be followed by the chanting of hymns by *brāhmaṇa*s, the offering of empowered barley to the king and the making of benedictions to cause him

[613] Price 1996, p. 144.
[614] Iyer 1928, vol. 2, p. 60.
[615] *Sāmrājayalakṣmīpīṭhikā* 100.5-21.
[616] *evam āvāhanāl lakṣmyās tejobalaparākramaiḥ | adhikaṃ śobhate rājā śāṇollīḍho maṇir yathā | yathā svalpaphalo vṛkṣo dohadena phalādhikaḥ | sāmrājyalakṣmyās tv āvāhād rājā caiśvaryavān bhavet | yathā kāṣṭhagatā jvālā guṇatailāt prabhādhikā | tathā lakṣmīsamāyogād bhūpo 'pi syāt prabhādhiko | [...] sthālī guṇarasāktāpi bhrājate nāgninā vinā | tathā śriyā vinā bhūpo rāṣṭraiśvaryair na bhāsate | tasmād āvāhanaṃ lakṣmyāḥ kāryaṃ rājñi purodhasā* | Ibid. 100.8b-13.
[617] *tasmāl lakṣmīṃ samāvāhya purodhās tadanantaram |*
āśīrbhir vardhayed rājyalakṣmīyuktamahīpatim | Ibid. 100. 15.
[618] Ibid. Adhyāya 101.
[619] Ibid. Adhyāya 102.

to flourish.[620]

Then, the king, carrying his sword, shield, armour and bedecked in all his jewels, was to be led by two *brāhmaṇa*s chanting auspicious hymns, while he meditated on his chosen deity (*sveṣṭadeva*), to the flower-pavilion built before the commencement of the ceremony. Here he was to sit on a beautiful seat, restrain his breaths, and summon the deities Durgā, Lakṣmī and Vāgdevī (Sarasvatī) in lidded pots of gold, silver, copper or earth, narrow-waisted, filled with turmeric and rice. Having first worshipped the three goddesses in the water of the pot, he was to worship Revanta, the king of horses, with incense, flowers, circumbulations, prostrations and hymns.[621] In the 1893 Navarātra of Ramnad, the Setupati king worshipped water in nine clay-pots on the first-lunar day in a pavilion (*maṇḍapa*) built specially for the ceremony, followed by the worship of nine metallic pots. Throughout the ritual, the king had to remain seated between the green stone representing Rājarājeśvarī, the Setupati lineage-goddess, and her icon, an eight-armed Mahiṣāsuramardinī, thereby symbolically evoking his unity with her.[622]

In the *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā,* the worship of the goddess in pots was to be followed by the worship of thirty two weapons with *naivedya*, food, hymns, and then the worship of royal insignia: the lion-throne, the white parasol, a pair of chowries, a key, a pot, a palm-leaf fan, a blanket with gems, palanquins, swings, crest, flags, kettle-drum, saddle, the bridle-bit and whips.[623] Weapons were consecrated in this way during the Vijayanagara rite.[624] Next, the king would have to worship his horses and elephants with offerings, and to tie around their necks protective amulets.[625] Such acts of homage to the state animals were customary in the Vijayanagara rite, during which state-horses were the particular objects of reverence, circumambulated by an array of the king's women gorgeously dressed in their finery.[626] The state-horse and elephants were also paid obeisance during the opening Durbar of the Navarātra in Mysore.[627] The *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā* then teaches that having bowed down and circumambulated the animals, the king was to witness the dance of the court-courtesans. The work envisages a

[620] Ibid. Adhyāya 104.
[621] Ibid. 105.1-9.
[622] Price 1996, p. 144.
[623] *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā* 105.10-30; *Puruṣārthacintāmaṇi* pp. 86-92 (here the worship is called the *lohābhisārikapūjā*, "Purification of Weapons") .
[624] Stein 1983, pp. 80, 86.
[625] *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā* 106.1-3.
[626] Stein 1983, p. 80, pp. 81-82.
[627] Iyer 1928, vol. 2, p. 62.

grand court-assembly at this point at the flower-pavilion, with bards, vassals, poets, singers, dancers and musicians paying homage to the ruler.[628] The court-assembly and the entertainments of the first lunar-day formed the spectacular and much-vaunted highlight of the Vijayanagara ceremonies,[629] of the festival in Mysore (during which, in the 1920s, three terrific rounds of gun-shots used to be fired to add to the grandeur of the proceedings)[630], and also in the 1893 Ramnad Navarātra[631]. In the latter ceremony, in addition to the assembling together of a large entourage, richly dressed and obsequious as the occasion demanded, tribute was paid to the king by priests of temples controlled by the king, representatives of the important monasteries, *brāhmaṇa* scholars, singers and British officials.[632] In the *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā*, the king was then to ascend the state elephant and travel in great pomp to the Assembly-hall. Alighting, helped by the hand of a trusted person, he was to ascend a ceremonial platform inside the Hall accompanied by his close coterie, facing east in a restrained manner, and contemplate his chosen deity.[633] Two women were to fan him with yak-tail whisks, and shining in their midst he was to resemble "Sumeru, the king of mountains, surrounded by many flowing waterfalls".[634] Held above him was to be a white parasol, emblem of sovereignty, with clusters of radiant pearls, that was to resemble "the moon together with the stars who had arrived there to serve him".[635] From his seat at the symbolic centre of the world, he was then to observe entertaining performances (*vinodadarśana*) by poets, singers, jesters, dancers, astrologers, courtesans, bards, with much fanfare from the priest and ministers, contemplating all the while his chosen deity in his heart.[636] This court-assembly would have even included a public display of the goddess's image in affinity with the king: spectators would have seen her either sharing his throne with him, or placed near him, as they did in the 1893 Durbar on the evening of *pratipat* in Ramnad[637], and also it would seem in Vijayanagara.[638]

[628] *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā* 106.1-6.
[629] Stein 1983, p. 80.
[630] Iyer 1928, vol. 2, p. 60-61.
[631] Price 1996, p. 145.
[632] Ibid.
[633] *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā* 106.8-9.
[634] *divyastrīvījamānābhyāṃ cāmarābhyāṃ virājitaḥ | sravannirjharapūgābhyām anvito nagarāḍ iva* || Ibid 106.10.
[635] *acchamauktikagucchena śvetacchatreṇa śobhitaḥ | sevārtham āgateneva satāreṇa sudhāṃśunā* | Ibid 106.11.
[636] Ibid 106. 12-18.
[637] Price 1996, p. 145.
[638] Stein 1983, p. 79. Even though the deity displayed with the Rāya king is unidentified in the sources consulted by Stein, it is highly likely, given the parallel in Ramnad, that this

The *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā*'s description of spectacles performed for the king on the great assembly on the first lunar-day is indeed a magnificent one. Included are a chariot-concourse, an elephant-concourse, an array of horses, all the foot-soldiers, elephants gifted by governors, the dancing of the principal courtesans, wondrous *vidyā*s, drama of different genres, puppet-shows depicting ancient legends,[639] performing poets, a ship[640], marvellous magic shows, rites stopping rain and fire, wrestling-matches, ram-fights, contests between wild-buffaloes, aerial deer artificially made from wood, cloth, hide and other substances, an image of Hanumat depicting his swift ocean-crossing,[641] a pair of ghosts, lanterns in the shape of chariots, a wooden model of a chariot and finally trees of arrows. The end of the spectacles was to be heralded by the sound of shooting arrows. All these delights would unfold in the arena prepared before the Assembly hall where the king was seated.[642] Such carnivalesque performances staged in arenas, observed by the king and his court in the *āsthānamaṇḍapa,* were customary in the Mysore[643] and Vijayanagara rites[644]. It was to be a daily affair held in the evenings and was to be followed by the distribution of gifts by the king. In the Mysore Navarātra of the 1920s, the distribution of gifts to worthy recipients even included the awarding of prizes to alumni of the Sanskrit College who had passed their examinations in that most difficult of languages[645], and thus, in a manner of speaking, had indeed triumphed over great odds, a deed justly deserving accolades on an occasion honouring universal triumph. At the end of the court-assembly, the king would depart the Hall and return to the palace on his elephant. At his entrance to the inner-compartments, the women of his harem were to lustrate him with lights.[646] In addition to the court-assemblies, the following lunar-days would have included, as they did in the case of the Mysore ceremony, the worship of the goddess in her shrine, her worship as Mahiṣāsuramardinī on the eighth lunar-day (Mahāṣṭamī), further worship of the state arms and animals and an oblation made to Caṇḍī in fire

would have been the tutelary-goddess of the Rāyas.

[639]The dolls (*pāñcālikāḥ*) seem to be described as shadow-puppets: *tato yavanikāvītakāyamānāntarasthitāḥ | paśyet pāñcālikāḥ pūrvakathābhinayasūcikāḥ || Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā* 107.16b-17a.

[640]*tato dvīpāntarajanapratibimbair adhiṣṭhitām | nāvan narapatiḥ paśyed vikārākārabhīṣaṇaiḥ* || Ibid. 107.28b-29a.

[641]*tatparaṃ tan nṛpaḥ paśyet pratirūpaṃ hanumataḥ | sindhūllaṅghanajaṅghālas smaryate yena mārutiḥ* | Ibid 107.26b-27a.

[642]Ibid 107.1-32.

[643]Iyer 1928, vo. 2, pp. 61-62.

[644]Stein 1983, p. 80.

[645]Iyer 1928, vol. 2, p. 64.

[646]*Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā* 107.33-48.

(*caṇḍīhoma*) on the ninth-lunar day, accompanied by the removal of the thread or the amulet signifying the king's oath.[647]

On Vijayadaśamī the king would have to worship a *śamī*-tree with the arrow-shooting ceremony. The tree, also known as a *vanni*-tree[648], was to be planted in a hall or shed specially built for the ceremony inside the palace-grounds. In the 1863 Vijayadaśamī rites of Śivagaṅgai, an enclosed shed was built inside the open grounds of the palace, and the tree was visible through a gate.[649] Having awoken on the morning of the tenth-lunar day of Āśvina, a day auspicious for undertaking new endeavours, and performed his preliminary purificatory rituals, having honoured the priest, worshipped several deities, including Jayadurgā and his lineage-deity and remunerated the priests, the *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā* teaches that a king was to ask the royal priest to bestow on him the royal sword, shield and arrows. The priest having empowered the weapons with invocations, would have to hand them to the king.[650] Such was the importance of the king's role that, in the 1863 Śivagaṅgai rite, the queen Kathama Nachiar, unable to emerge in public from the *purdah*, asked her son, the crown-prince, to officiate in proxy, and ceremonially gave him the five arrows she would have otherwise had to carry in public, to present to the priest.[651] In the *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā*, the king was then to ask the priest to install the weapons at the foot of the *śamī* tree and then to ask him to worship the weapons. Having done so, the priest was to return to the king. Having sung eight hymns to various gods asking for their might and auspiciousness in the campaign to come, the king was to recollect the guardian of the direction in which he was headed, and surrounded with his army and princes was to go with all ceremony to the *śamī* tree. Evoking the march of the victorious sovereign, such was the symbolic significance of this, doubtlessly short, journey, that the Śivagaṅgai prince's procession to the grounds where the tree stood was made on the palace elephant, followed by the priest on another elephant, trailed by a cavalcade of family-members, dancers and crowds of people.[652] Having worshipped Lakṣmī, Nārāyaṇa and the weapons installed under the tree, the *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā* says that a king was to proceed to the eastern direction, contemplate the guardian deity of that direction in his heart, and shoot the arrows, thereby killing his enemies in that direction. In

[647] Iyer 1928, vol. 2, p. 62.
[648] Ibid. p. 63.
[649] Price 1996, p. 142.
[650] *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā* 108.1-28.
[651] Price 1996, p. 142.
[652] Ibid.

the same way arrows were to be shot in all the other directions, and his dominion over enemies everywhere was thus ensured. Animal-sacrifice was also occasionally performed at each point where the arrows landed.[653] He was then to proceed with all his troops to the city and return to the Assembly hall. At night another grand assembly would take place with various entertainments.[654] The rite of worshipping the *śamī* followed by an opulent evening court-assembly was performed not just in Śivagaṅgai[655] but also in Ramnad[656] and Mysore[657].

Despite being an integral part of the later Southern Navarātra, *śamīpūjā* on Daśamī drew not from the ancient Śākta conventions concerning the goddess (that describe her despatch in water), but from a military ritual attributed to the *Gopathabrāhmaṇa* that was essentially unrelated to the goddess's autumnal festival. We know this from Viṣṇubhaṭṭa's *Puruṣārthacintāmaṇi*, which, while introducing the Daśamī tradition, clarifies to this effect: "the [ceremony] taught for a king on the bright tenth lunar day of Āśvina is in the *Gopathabrāhmaṇa*". The work then goes on to cite the passage from that Vaidika scripture.[658] It may be inferred that this tradition drawing from Brahmanical prose-works must have been united at some period with the autumnal festival of the goddess, and outside the East, for *śamīpūjā* was not performed at all in Gauḍa and Mithilā, where custom dictated a less Vaidika, more Śākta, goddess-oriented military ceremony. In the Southern Navarātra, the goddess's role ceased on Mahānavamī.

Parallel to the rituals centred on the king, the worship of various manifestations of the goddess would have taken place continuously throughout the nine nights. These manifestations were believed to enter the person of pre-pubescent girls (*kumārī*s) whose bodies formed the vessels for the deities. The worship is called *kumārīpūjā*. Through its magical power, the girls underwent a radical transformation into the divine nature of the deity. The *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā* describes the worship of nine virgins transformed as the goddess on each day

[653] Price 1996, p. 142.
[654] *Sāmrājyalakṣmīpīṭhikā,* Adhyāya 109.
[655] Price 1996, p. 143-143.
[656] Ibid. pp. 145-146.
[657] Iyer 1928, vol. 2, p. 63.
[658] *athāśvinaśukladaśamyāṃ rājānaṃ praty uktaṃ Gopathabrāhmaṇe*:
rājā nirgatya bhavanāt purohitapurogamaḥ | prāsthānikaṃ vidhiṃ kṛtvā pratiṣṭhet pūrvato diśi | gatvā nagarasīmāntaṃ vāstupūjāṃ samārabhet | sampūjya cātha dikpālān pūjayet pathi devatāḥ |
mārge śamītarumūle dikpālapūjanapūrvakaṃ vāstupūjanaṃ kuryād ity arthaḥ | mantrair vaidikapaurāṇaiḥ pūjayec ca śamītarum | amaṅgalānāṃ śamanīṃ śamanīṃ duṣkṛtasya ca | duḥkhapraśamanīṃ dhanyāṃ prapadye 'haṃ śamīṃ śubhām | tataḥ kṛtāśīḥ pūrvasyāṃ diśi viṣṇukramān kramet | ripoḥ pratikṛtiṃ kṛtvā dhyātvā ca manasātha tam | śareṇa svarṇapuṅkhena vidhyed dhṛdayaƒvarmaṇiƒ | diśāṃ vijayamantrāś ca paṭhitavyāḥ purodhasā | pūrvam eva vidhiṃ kuryād dakṣiṇādidiśāsv api | Puruṣārthacintāmaṇi, p. 183.

of the Navarātra, which agrees in all points of detail with the *Skandapurāṇa kumārīpūjā* described by Hemādri and the *Puruṣārthacintāmaṇi*.[659] On a *maṇḍala* strewn with rice and grains, the king having bathed and anointed himself was to summon the nine goddesses in the girl with invocations.[660] The same goddesses were also to be worshipped inside nine virgins in periods of state-crisis. The work also gives some details which formed the criteria for selecting the girls in whom the deities were to be summoned. Each girl could come from any of the four castes, and certain defects of appearance are stipulated that would proscribe a girl's eligibility.[661] Methods are also described as to how they were to be dressed for worship. In addition, the work describes the merits of worshipping each goddess. Kumārī grants wealth and heirs, Trimūrti/Trimūrtinī destroys enemies and pacifies evil effects, Kalyāṇī grants good fortune, Rohiṇī fame, wealth, knowledge and a kingdom, Kālikā grants victory in battle and kingship, Caṇḍikā mastery over a hot-tempered rival, the removal of poverty and pain and the satisfaction of the ancestors, Śāmbhavī grants mastery over a rival's fort and destroys sins, Durgā destroys dangers, Bhadrā grants slaves and slave-girls: for all these reasons the goddesses were considered sacred for a king's power.[662]

In sum, from the accounts of the Navarātra in Sanskrit from the 6th-15th centuries, we can infer the following developments: originating as a ritual associated with tribal communities, particularly those non-Aryan groups resident in the Vindhyas and genericized as the Śabaras, the autumnal ceremony of the goddess developed into a rite of civic sanctification performed by urbanized kingdoms around the 6th c., from which time Purāṇic accounts of the Śākta Navarātra begin to emerge. The ritual seems to have grown from an archaic ritual core centred on Mahāṣṭamī and Mahānavamī, to a ceremony of nine nights in the East, for the earliest testimony of the nine night programme emerge from that region, from around the 8th or the 9th c. The earliest testimony of a court sponsored rite emerges from the Kārṇāṭa and Oinwar courts of Mithilā in the 13th-14th centuries. Among these the account of the Oinwars by the Maithila *paṇḍita* Vidyāpati is the most extensive treatment of Caṇḍī's autumnal worship by a king, and attained great renown among the learned at the time as an authoritative source. His description portrays a spectacular court ceremony,

[659] Ibid Adhyāya 110; *Puruṣārthacintāmaṇi* pp. 84-86. For Hemādri's *kumārīpūjā* see page 192.
[660] Ibid. Adhyāya 111.
[661] Ibid 110.24-25.
[662] Ibid 110.11-19.

involving pomp and pageantry, in which horses and weapons were worshipped, the king was anointed, and the goddess propitiated as the central symbol of royal power in various substrates over the course of the nine nights. Vidyāpati's work also reveals the marked impact of Tantricism on the character of the rite, which employed Śākta mantras and propitiated autonomous, ferocious forms of the goddess associated with the occult, particularly on the penultimate days. Maturing in Eastern India, the goddess's Navarātra ceremony was proselytized by the *smārta*s further to the West and percolated into the Deccan, where, approximately from around the 12th century, it attained an independent Southern character. Whereas the Eastern rite focussed on the goddess as the central object of devotion, the Southern rite focussed on the symbolism of the king, attaining its most distinctive and lavish manifestation in the kingdom of Vijayanagara.

Throughout this development, the Navarātra remained intimately associated with the theme of augmenting secular power in the world, sustaining the power of the ruler and granting political might to a community.

5 Conclusion

Having shown the autumnal rituals in which the association between the power of the king, the community and heroic Śāktism came alive, I will now draw to a close and recapitulate some of the major issues we have so far encountered in this thesis. The development of the Navarātra as the principal rite of kingship was tied up with the expansion of the cult of the sovereign goddess and its attainment of various, complex local manifestations, which I have shown in the first, second and third chapters. As I have demonstrated in these opening chapters, this expansion, beginning in earnest from the 6th century, was carried through till the 15th century, and even continued later into the 17th century, from which period emerge the stories of Śivāji's ardent devotion to Tuḷjā Bhavānī. This process of expansion reveals to us that, throughout its development, Śāktism remained deeply associated with Indic kingship and with ideas of heroism and power, which were reflected in mediaeval Indic literature, legends, ritual life and art. Certain ritual practices of the cult, such as a king's offering the goddess blood from his body, were considered to form the criteria for heroism. It is for this reason that I have described the cult of the sovereign goddess as a heroic one. I have also called it the cult of the sovereign goddess, or the cult of the generic Śakti, on account of its complex nature: although on the surface many of these goddesses present a "Durgā" identity, there are other layers embedded in their syncretic personalities, which preclude the assumption that the cult was simply that of the Purāṇic Durgā. To assume so would be to disregard these other forms. However, what is common among all these goddesses is that they seem to have been always connected to royal power – an idea going back to the 2nd c.– and have, or in some cases have adopted, Durgā's identity in this regard.

Also to emerge from the process of this expansion is the fact that the most ancient connection borne by the cult of the sovereign goddess was with the religion of the outcaste. To this effect, the accounts in Sanskrit from the 6th century onwards are numerous and revealing. I have tried to collect in this thesis all such available accounts, which I believe have something significant to tell us about the worship of Śakti by heroes in early mediaeval India. Approximately around the 6th-7th c., and possibly even earlier, the heroic cult of the warrior-goddess was, as represented in this literature, largely a tribal one, and this is also supported by the fact that the Vedic pantheon was largely male, and the old Aryan religion appears unaware of the concept of a goddess as the source of royal power. The tribal following of Śakti was a fact well-known to Sanskrit writers

till the 10th century, a period when literary authors still described in great detail the warrior-goddess's *mleccha* devotees (as for instance the numerous tales of the *Kathāsaritsāgara* show), but thereafter was largely forgotten, or perhaps obliterated, from cultural memory.

Around the 6th c. of the mediaeval period, the cult of Śakti began to be incorporated by the Sanskritic kingdom, and became no longer simply part of the domain of tribal heroic practices, but also of that of urban practices empowering warriors. It is exactly from this period, when the cult was being assimilated into Sanskritic culture, that literature in Sanskrit emerges. The frequency with which tribals appear in this literature in relation to Caṇḍī suggests that at this period the cult of the sovereign goddess was at the cusp of a major change, beginning to attain both acknowledgement in literature and a fuller form in the processes of Sanskritic sovereignty, while not having shed completely its tribal identity.

Finally, the cult of the sovereign goddess and its association with kingship reveal that religion and politics were not separate in mediaeval India but formed aspects of a single idea of power. Its rituals formed the space in which the king's power was substantiated, in which the power of the community and the equilibrium of the kingdom were reinforced. The goddess at the centre, depicted as a sovereign and known by many names, was celebrated as an archetype of power. At one level this notion of power was temporal, for she was a ruler who mirrored the qualities of the good king. But at the same time, at another level, she also represented power, unlike that embodied by any human king, in its primeval form: uncontrollable, dangerous, to be feared, in a sense more essential and raw. In this way the cult of the sovereign goddess shaped and formed a major part of the understanding of power in mediaeval India.

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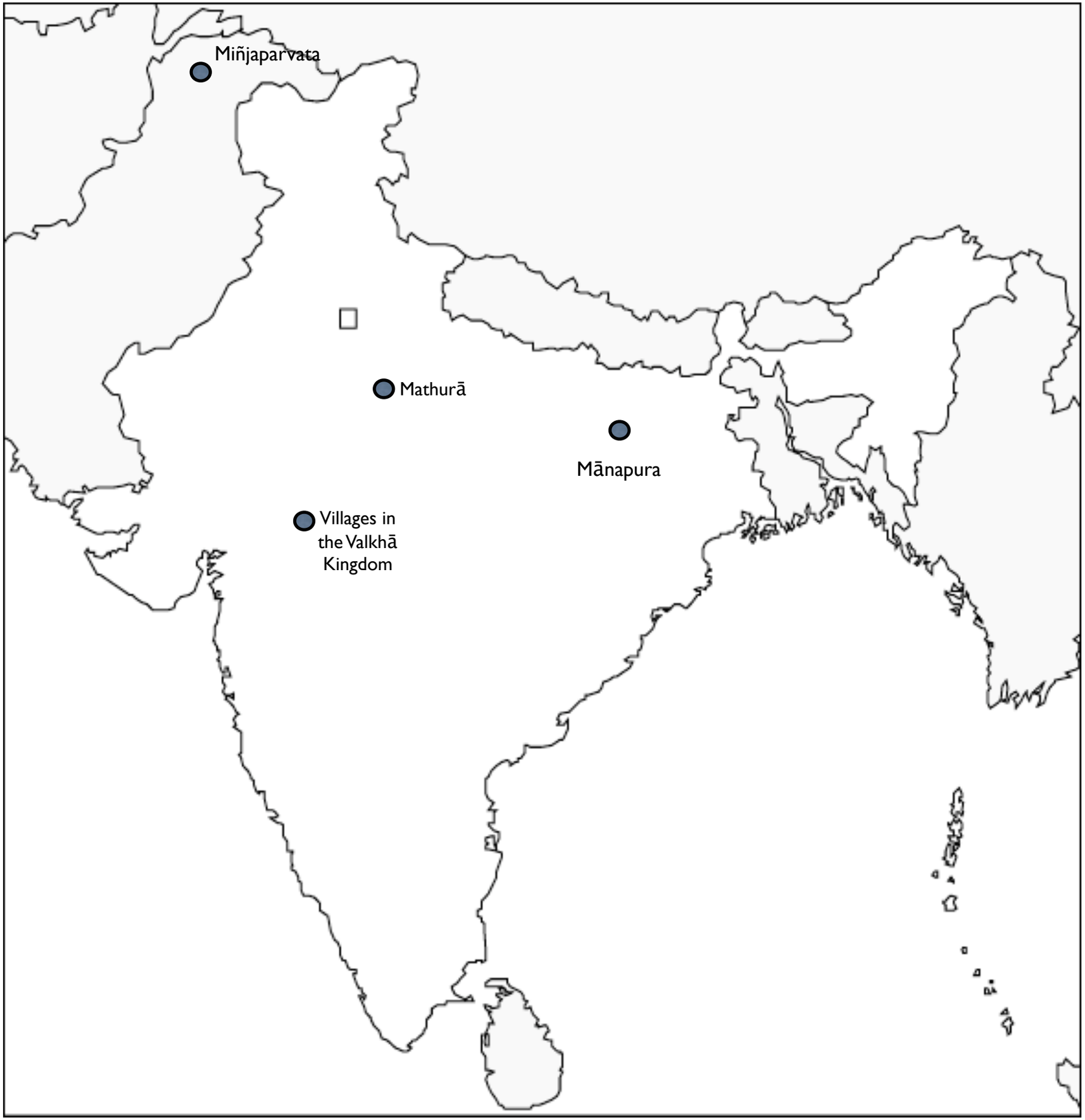
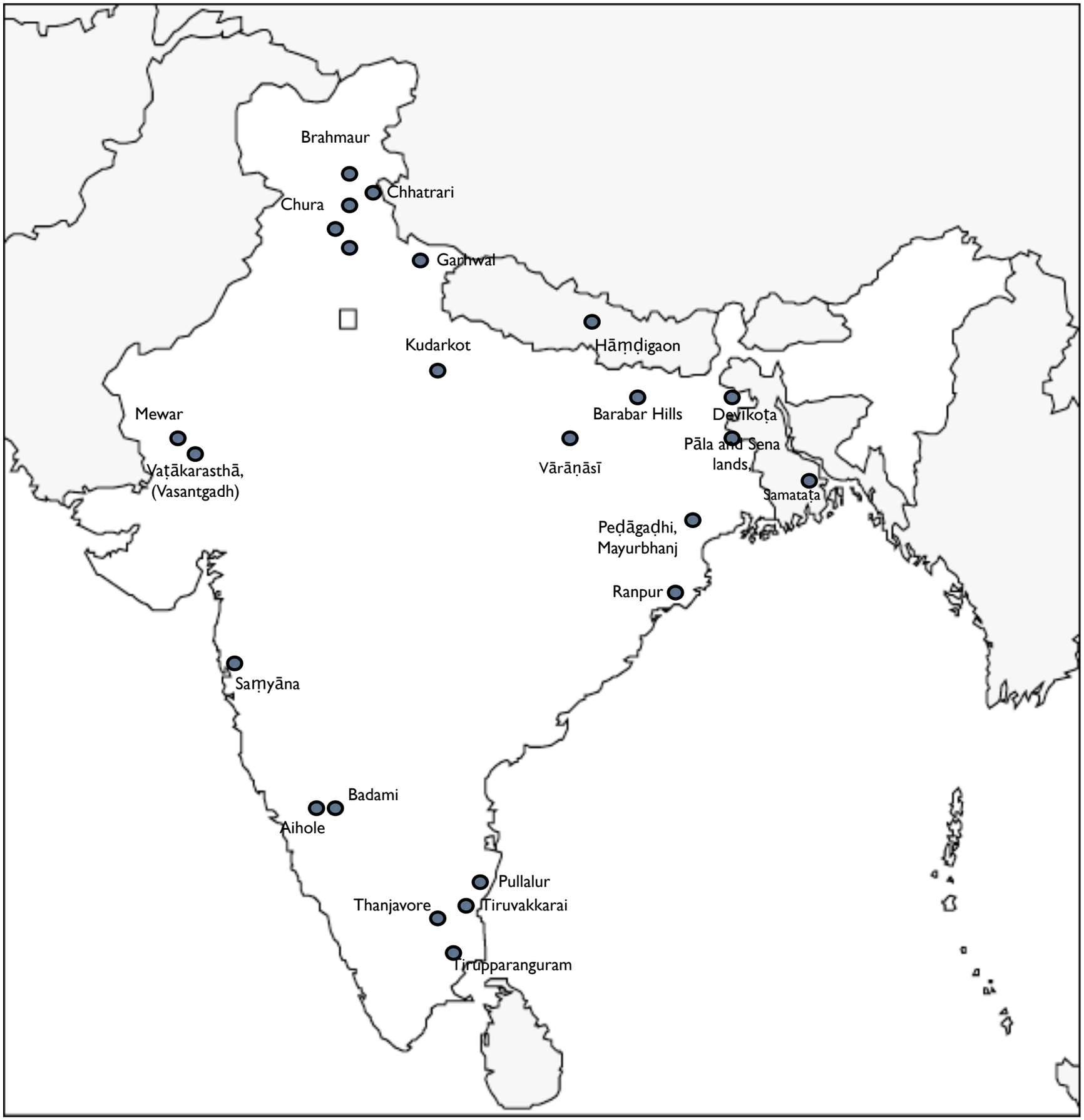
7 Maps and Figures

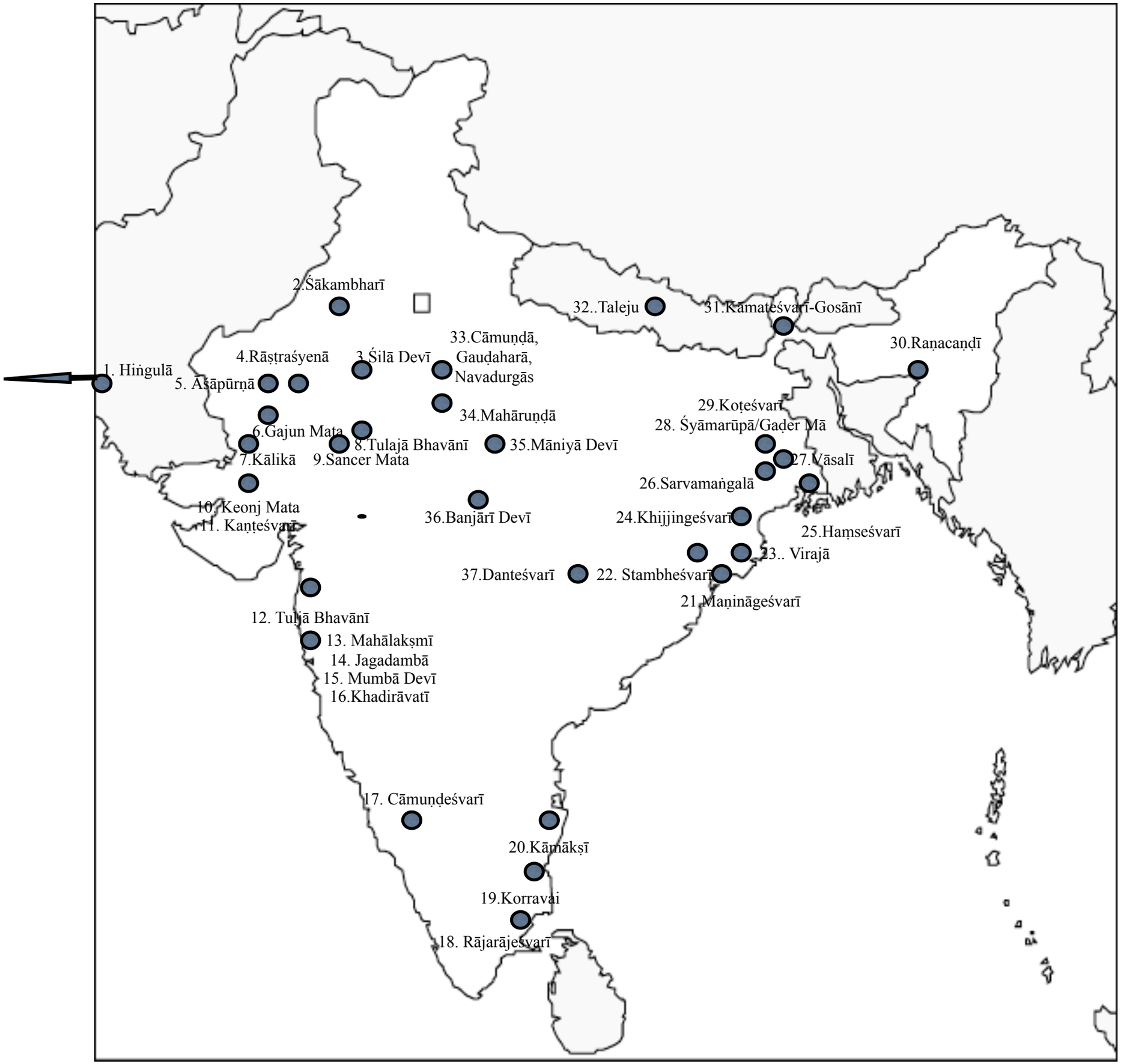


Map 1 (border outlines according to current political map): Goddess-sites receiving patronage 2nd-4th centuries

Map 2: Goddess-sites receiving patronage between 5th-13th c.



Map 3: The major clan-goddesses and their affiliated clans



Affiliated Clans:

1.Bhavsars, Bhansali and Jadeja kṣatriyas
2. Śākambharī-Cāhamānas (Chauhans)
3. Amber māhārājas
4. Rathores
5.Cāhamānas (Chauhans)
6. Parīhāras
7. Sisodias
8. Scribes of Chittaurgarh
9. Paramāras
10. Cālukyas
11. Cālukyas of Aṇahilapura (Patan)
12. Bhonsles
13. descendants of Ṛtuparṇa (see Appendix, Sahyādrikhaṇḍa vaṃśāvalī)
14. descendants of Nīla (Ibid)
15. Agri and Koli tribes of the seven islands of Bombay
16. Moḍhas of Saṃyana
17. Wodeyars of Mysore.
18. Sethupathis of Śivagaṅgai and Ramnad
19.Draviḍa tribes
20.descendants of Śārṅga (see Sahyādrikhaṇḍa vaṃśāvalī, Appendix)
21.Kings of Ranpur
22.Śulkī kings of Dhenkanal-Talcher
23.Keśarins of Jajpur
24.Bhāñjās of Baripada
25. Bansberia Raj, Hooghly
26. Cakradhara Bhuiyan
27..Chatna Sāmantas of Bankura
28. Īśvaraghoṣa
29.Barabhum Rājās
30. Dimasas of Cachar
31.Koches of Kāmatā (Cooch-Behar)
32. Śāhīs and Mallas
33.Gauḍahara-Kṣatriyas of Gwalior and Nalapura
34.Yajvapālas (Jajapellas) of Nalapura (Narwar)
35. Caṇḍelas of Khajuraho; Bhars of Madhya Pradesh
36. Raj Gonds of Jhansi and Nagpur; Charans and Bhats
37.Nāgas and Kākatīyas of Bastar

ERA/DATE	DURGĀ/ASSOCIATED DEITY RECEIVING PATRONAGE	DONOR	SITE OF PATRONAGE	PUBLISHED SOURCE
4th c.	Mātrs	Gupta-Vassal Bhulunda	Bagh, Gupta-Valkhā	Ramesh and Tewari 1990, p. 4
4th c.	Mātrs	Gupta-Vassal Bhulunda	ibid.	ibid, p. 22
4th c.	Bhīmā	Viṣnuśiri (Jaina charter)	Miñjaparvata (Kashmir Smast)	Falk 2003.
528-29 CE	Piṣṭapurikā	Gupta-vassal Saṃkṣobha	Māṇapura	CII 3.25; Willis 2009, p. 88.
6th c.	Piṣṭapurikā	Gupta-Vassal Śarvanātha	Māṇapura	CII 3.29; Willis 2009, p. 88.
6th c.	Piṣṭapurikā	Gupta Vassal Śarvanātha	Māṇapura	CII 3.31; Willis 2009, p. 88.
6th c.	Kātyāyanī/Bhavānī	Anantavarman Maukharī	Nāgārjunī Hills	CII 3.50
606 CE	Licchavi goddess (Māneśvarī?)	Aṃśuvarman Licchavi	Hadigaon	Vairācārya 1996, pp. 307-8.
644 CE	Ghaṭṭavāsinī	Dhavalappadeva; Guhila grant	Dabok, Mewar	EI 20: 13
646 CE	Araṇyavāsinī	Śīlāditya; Guhila grant	Mewar	EI 20.9
7th c.	Śarvāṇī	Prabhāvatī (Khadga charter)	Samatata	EI 17.24.4, Sanderson 2009, p. 84.
late 7th c.	Durgā	Harivarman, vassal of Harṣa	Kudarkot	EI 1. 22
7th-8th c.	Durgā	commissioner unknown	Badami	SII 15.2.405
726 c.	Kṣemāryā/Khimel Mata	Rājjila; chieftain of Varmalata	Vaṭākarasthā	EI 9.25
8th c.	Caṇḍī	Pantha (private charter)	Vārāṇāsī	EI 9.8
8th c.	Bhadrakālī/Lakṣaṇā	Meruvarman (Chamba charter)	Brahmaur	Vogel 1911, p. 85
8th c.	Śaktidevī/ Śivaśakti	Meruvarman (Chamba charter)	Chhatrari	Vogel 1911, pp. 138-45.
8th c.	Mahiṣāsuramardinī	Bhogata, Chura chieftain	Kangra Valley	Vogel 1911, pp. 150-152.
8th c.	Pārvatī	Sātyakī, son of Bhogata	Sarahan, Kangra Valley	Vogel 1911, pp. 152-159.
8th c.	Durgā	ibid.	Baijnath, Kangra Valley	EI 1.16.
8th c.	Durgā-Bhagavatī	civic association	Aihole	SII 15.2.463
8th c.	Durgā	Nakkan Kori (private charter)	Tirupparanguram	EI 36.15; SII 14.3
9th c-13th c.	Durgā-Bhaṭārakī	village mahāsabhā (Cola grant)	Puḷḷalūr, Tamil Nadu	SII 13.341
10th c.	Umā-Parameśvarī	sister of Rājarāja (Cola grant)	Thanjavore	SII 2.1
10th c.	Umā-Parameśvarī	sister of Rājarāja (Cola grant)	Thanjavore	SII 2.6, 2.7
10th c.	Durgā-Parameśvarī	citizen of Nallur (private grant)	Thanjavore	SII 2.4.79
10th-11th c.	Carcikā	Mahīpāla I (Pāla)	Bāṅgarh	Sanderson 2009 p. 108; p. 226 and n. 512
April 17, 926 CE	Daśamī	Madhumati Sugatipa (Rāṣtrakūṭa grant)	Chinchani, Mahārāṣtra	EI 32.4; Sircar 1971, pp. 126-132
late 10th c.	Durgā-Bhaṭṭārikā	chieftain Subhikṣarājadeva	Garhwal	EI 31.38. 3
1019-1024 CE	Bhīmā	Bhaumakara feudatories	Pedāgadhī, Mayurbhanj	EI 33.14.
1034 CE	Daśamī	Cāmuṇḍarāja (gov. of Samyāna)	Samyāna, Mahārāṣtra	EI 32.5
1048 CE	Daśamī	Vijjala (private charter)	ibid.	EI 32.5.2.
November 13, 1053 CE	Daśamī	ibid.	ibid.	EI 32.5.3
late 11th c.	The Navadurgās	Navapāla	Pāla Bengal	EI 39. 2.7; Sanderson 2009, pp. 111-112
late 11th c.	Ambikā	Navapāla	Pāla Bengal	ibid; Sanderson 2009, p. 112, and n.235..
1171-1172 CE	Ambikā	Sāmantasiṃhadeva Guhila	Jagat, Mewar	Sinha-Kapur 2002, p. 216.
12th c.	Durgā	Vāmanan Śrīrāman (private)	Tiruvakkarai	SII 17.203
12th c.	Caṇḍī	Lakṣmaṇa Sena	Bengal	EI 17.24.5
1249 CE	Ambikā	Jayasiṃhadeva Guhila	Jagat, Mewar	Sinha-Kapur 2002, p. 216.
13th c	Vindhyavāsinī	Vijayā (Guhila grant)	Dungarpur, Mewar	Sinha-Kapur 2002, pp. 216-7.
1298-9 CE	goddess of Kankroli	Rāval Samarasiṃha	Kankroli, Mewar	Sinha-Kapur 2002, p. 217.

Table 1: Evidence of sponsorship issued to heroic Śāktism (4th-13th c) in the form of copper-plate/stone inscriptions and inscribed statuary



HEIGHT 4' 6"

Image of Śakti Devī
(Vogel 1911, plate a facing p. 138).



HEIGHT 4' 1"

Image of Lakṣaṇā/ Bhadrakālī
(Vogel 1911, plate b facing p. 138.)

Illustration 1.



The Sword of Taleju in Durbar Square, Kathmandu (picture by P.D.Szántó)

Illustration 2.

Figure 1: *Aikṣvāku/Solar Line* (based on the *Sahyādrikhaṇḍa)*

[1]

SEER	KULADEVĪ/ MANTRA-GODDESS	FIRST KING	EPITHETS
Bhāradvāja	*Prabhādevī*	*Anuja*	*prabhādevyāś ca bhaktasya...anujavaṃśasya*
Pūtamākṣa	*Kālikā*	*Devaka*	*kālikāyās tu bhaktasya pūtamākṣamuneḥ*
Vasiṣṭha	*Caṇḍikā*	*Pṛthu*	*caṇḍikāyāś ca bhaktasya vasiṣṭhasya*
Kaśyapa	*Mahālakṣmī*	*Ṛtuparṇa*	*i) mahālakṣmyāḥ pādapadmasevakasya ii) kāśyapāḥ ṛtuparṇāś ca mahālakṣmīprasevakāḥ*
Hārita	*Yogeśvarī*	*Jaya*	*i) yogeśvarīsevakasya ii) yogeśvaryāḥ prasādajño*
Vṛddhaviṣṇu	*Indrāṇī*	*Suṣibhrū*	*vṛddhaviṣṇumuniḥ prokta indrāṇī nāma devatā suṣibhrūr nṛpatir jñeyas*
Brahmā-Janārdana	*Kāmākṣī*	*Saudāma*	*kāmākṣīdevatā yatra munir brahmājanārdana*
Saubalya	*Ekavīrā*	*Jāṅgalika*	*saubalyaṛṣivaryaś ca tv ekavīrā ca devatā*
Kauṇḍinya	*Ambikā*	*Bhadrapāṇi*	*kauṇḍinyān ambikāyāś*
Māṇḍavya	*Māheśvarī*	*Jāṭharī*	*māṇḍavyā...māheśvaryāś ca sevakāḥ*
Kauśika	*Durgā*	*Nahuṣa*	*kauśikaś ca muniḥ prokto durgā devī tathaiva ca*
Viśvāmitra	*Tvaritā*	*Mārtaṇḍa*	*viśvāmitrasya gotratvaṃ tvaritā devatā tathā*

[1]The two genealogical lines presented here were tabulated mainly on the basis of three lists given in the *Sahyādrikhaṇḍa*, Chapters 30.27-35 (List A), 30.36-46 (List B) and 31-34.67 (List C) of Da Cunha's edition. List A gave the names of seers, B the names of goddesses, and C was a more detailed list combining both sets of information with the names of the first kings.

Figure 2: *Aila/Lunar line* (based on the *Sahyādrikhaṇḍa*)

SEER	KULADEVĪ/ MANTRA-GODDESS	FIRST KING	EPITHETS
Padmākṣa	*Yogeśvarī*	*Padmarāja*	*yogeśvaryāś ca bhaktasya padmākṣasya*
Cyavana/Nava (30.27)	*Mahālakṣmī*	*Śāma*	*mahālakṣmyāś ca bhaktasya cyavanasya*
Gautama	*Ekavīrā*	*Pṛthu*	*ekavīrāsubhaktasya gautamasya*
Kauṇḍinya	*Kālikā*	*Śrīdhara*	*kālikāyāś ca bhaktasya kauṇḍinyasya*
Saunala/Saunalya (30.28ab)	*Padmāvatī*	*Brahma*[2]	*padmāvatyāś ca bhaktasya kauṇḍinyasya*
Campaka	*Kumārikā/Kumārī (30.37)*	*Campaka*	*kumārikāyā bhaktasya saunalasya*
Kaśyapa	*Kāmākṣī*	*Śārṇga*	*kāmākṣīdevatābhaktakaśyapasya*
Vasiṣṭha	*Jagadambā/ Ambikā (30.37)*	*Nīla*	*jagadambāsubhaktasya vasiṣṭhasya*
Viśvāmitra	*Sarasvatī*	*Vidyutpati*	*sarasvatyāḥ subhaktasya viśvāmitramuneḥ*
Bhṛgu	*Umā*	*Suratha*	*umābhṛgukule*
Atri	*Vāgīśvarī*	*Raghu*	*atrer vāgīśvarīdevītatkule*
Atri[3]	id	*Māgadha*	id
Bhāradvāja	*Lalitā*	*Śaila*	*lalitāyās tu bhaktasya bhāradvājasya*
Hiraṇya	*Hariṇākṣikā*[4] *(30.37)*	*Māna*	See Note
Hārita	*Caṇḍikā*	*Śrīpati*	*caṇḍikāyāḥ subhaktasya hāritasya*
Devarāja	*Reṇukā*	*Śaila*	*reṇukāyāś ca bhaktasya devarājamuneḥ*

[2] *brahma itīritaḥ*

[3] This repetition in Da Cunha's text is problematic

[4] 33.7 which also mentions this lineage says *hiraṇyasyāsya bhaktasya hiraṇyākhyarṣeḥ*. This does not convey any meaning and appears corrupt. On the strength of 30.37 (*hariṇākṣikā*) I conjecture the intended meaning of the text as: *hariṇākṣikābhaktasya hiraṇyākhyarṣeḥ*.

Bhūcaṇḍa	*Mahākālī*	*Nakula*	*mahākālyāś ca bhaktasya bhūcaṇḍākhyamuneḥ*
Aṅgiras	*Tāmasā/Tāmasī (30.39)/Tālikā (30.38)*	*Damana*	*i) aṅgirā tāmasā caiva devī lokeṣu viśrutā ii)dhṛtamanto...devībhaktā... brāhmaṇātithyakārakāḥ*
Gārgya	*Indrāṇī*	*Śaila*	*indrāṇyāś caiva bhaktasya gārgyanāmno muneḥ*
Māṇḍavya	*Brahmāṇī/Brāhmī (30.38)*	*Bhūratha*	*brahmāṇīdevatābhaktamāṇḍavyasya ṛṣeḥ*
Saunalpa/ Śaunaka (30.29cd)	*Padmāvatī*	*Yadu*	*padmāvatyāś ca bhaktasya saunalpasya*
Pārśva[5]	*Nīlāmbā*	*Pauṇḍraka*	*nīlāmbāsaktacittasya pārśvatasya*
Priya[6]	*Kolāmbā*	*Jaghana*	*kolāmbādevībhaktasya priyarṣer*
Vṛddhaviṣṇu[7]	*Ambā*	*Manmatha*	*ambāsaktacittasya vṛddhaviṣṇor*
Vaivasvata[8]	*Vāgīśvarī/ Nāgeśvarī (30.39ab)*	*Pārasi*	*vāgīśvaryās tu bhaktasya vaivasvatamuneḥ*
Bhadra	*Raktākṣī*	*Raṅghaka*	*raktākṣīdevatābhaktabhadranāmno*
Kṛpāyu	*Mahādevī*	*Pradyoṣa*	*mahādevyāś ca bhaktasya kṛpāyoś*
Cāmara	*Tāmasī*	*Śaśi*	*tāmasīdevatābhaktacāmarasya*
Mārtaṇḍa	*Vajriṇī*	*Dānarāja*	*vajriṇīdevatābhaktamārtaṇḍasya*
Dālbha/ Dālabha	*Mātṛnandā*	*Sāraṅga*	*mātṛnandāsubhaktasya dālabhasya*
Pūtimākṣa	*Līlā/Nīlā*	*Vajradaṃṣṭra*	*līlādevīsubhaktasya pūtimākṣamuneḥ*
Gaṇaka/ Jāmbilagaṇaka (30.31ab)	*Mātṛkā*	*Cāpapāṇi*	*mātṛkādevībhaktaś ca gaṇako*
Vairukṣa	*Mohinī/Mālinī (30.40cd)*	*Śrīpāla*	*mohinīdevatābhaktavairukṣasya*

[5]Not mentioned in List A of the seers (30.27-35)
[6]id
[7]id
[8]id

Jāmadagni	*Ūrśilā/ Ūrṣilā (30.40cd)*	*Śūrasena*	*ūrśīlādevatābhaktā jāmadagnimuneḥ*
Bhānu/Bhāvana (30.32ab)	*Yogeśvarī*	*Nṛhari*	*yogeśvaryāś ca bhaktasya bhānunāmno*
Soma/Saumana (30.32ab)	*Aruṇā*	*Manduka*	*aruṇādevatābhaktasomanāmamuneḥ*
Nānābhi/Nāmābhi (30.32ab)	*Varṇākṣī/ Cāruṇākṣi (30.41)*	*Bhārgava*	*varṇākṣīdevatābhakto nānābhir*
Dundubhi	*Karālā/Kurulā (30.41)*	*Sugrīva*	*karālādevatābhaktadundubheś*[9]
Draviṇa	*Pātamālinī/ Pānamālinī (30.41)*	*Satyasaṃgha*	*pātamālinīdevyāś ca draviṇo*
Gopa	*Campāvatī*	*Caitra*	*campāvatīsubhaktasya gopanāmno*
Kumāra	*Durgā*	*Dharmarāja*	*durgādevyāś ca bhaktasya kumārasya*
Kumāra	*Īśvarī*	*Ripunāśa*	*īśvarīdevatābhaktakumārasya*
Mitra/Maitreya (30.32cd)	*Vīreśvarī/ Viraheśvarī (30.41cd)*	*Śāsvata*	*vīreśvaryāś ca bhaktasya*
Maṇḍana	*Ṣaḍguṇī/ Śārṅgā (30.42 ab)*	*Dānarāja*	*ṣaḍguṇīdevatābhaktamaṇḍanasya*
Bakadālbhya	*Pāṭalā*	*Śālmalī*	*pāṭalādevībhaktasya bakadālbhyamuneḥ*
Romaharṣa/ Romāṇa (30.33ab)	*Tvaritā*	*Jāyavān*	*tvaritādevatābhaktaromaharṣamuneḥ*
Kūrma/Kumāra (30.33ab)	*Mālamālinī*	*Prāṇanātha*	*mālamālinībhaktasya kūrmanāmno*
Sukumāra[10]	*Muṃjā*	*Vidarbha*	*muṃjādevyārādhakasya sukumāramuneḥ*
Sāvana[11]	*Māheśvarī*	*Vaijayanta*	*māheśvarīpūjakasya sāvanasya*

[9] *karāla ◦ Ed.; karālā ◦ Em.*
[10] Not mentioned in List A
[11] Id

Mālivanta	*Kātyāyanī/ Kātyākāpi (30.42cd)*	*Pārthiva*	*kātyāyanyārādhakasya mālivantarṣeḥ*
Citra[12]	*Kātyāyanī*	*Bhūrisena*	*kātyāyanyārādhakasya citranāmno*
Antarīkṣa/Agniksa (30.33cd)	*Apsaras*	*Drupada*	*apsarodevatābhaktasyāntarīkṣamuneḥ*
Mudgala	*Dāḍimā*	*Vāsuki*	*dāḍimādevatābhaktamuḍgalasya*
Pārijāta	*Candanā/Bhadrikā (30.43ab)*	*Kīrtimān*	*candanādevībhaktasya pārijātarṣeḥ*
Pārṇava[13]	*Vaiṣṇavī*	*Suravara*	*vaiṣṇavīdevatābhaktapārṇavākhyarṣe*
Agastya	*Ugriṇī*	*Vāsudeva*	*ugriṇīdevatāpūjyāgastasya*
Śālmalī	*Mohinī*	*Ativāra*	*mohinīdevatābhaktaḥ śālmalī*
Atrayu	*Suvarṇā/ Suvarṇākṣī (30.43cd)*	*Sudeṣṇa*	*suvarṇādevatābhaktasyātrayaś*
Bhoma (Bhīma?)	*Bhairavī*	*Rukmaratha*	*bhairavīdevatābhaktabhomarṣes*
Mahātāpa	*Bhāminī*	*Suratha*	*bhāminīdevatābhaktamahātāparṣeḥ*
Upamanyu	*Jātikā*	*Ādirāja*	*jātikādevatābhaktasyopamanyurṣeḥ*
Śāṇḍilya	*Sauminī/Saumanī (30.44ab)*	*Mahārāja*	*sauminīdevatābhaktaḥ śāṇḍilyākhyarṣeḥ*
Vibhāṇḍaka	*Dalinī*	*Arimarda*	*dalinīdevībhaktasya vibhāṇḍakarṣeḥ*
Dhārmika	*Daityanāśinī*	*Prītimān*	*daityanāśinībhaktasya dhārmikasya*
Sāttvika	*Prabhāvatī*	*Sahasrajit*	*prabhāvatīpūjakasya sāttvikasya*
Brahmarṣi	*Śilā/ Śilāṃjā (30.44 cd)*	*Citraratha*	*śilādevyārādhakasya brahmarṣes tu ṛṣeḥ*
Janārdana	*Bagalā/ Bagilā (30.44 cd)*	*Simanta*	*bagalārādhakasyaiva janārdanarṣeḥ*
Vimala	*Bhāminī*	*Gaja*	*bhāminīdevatābhaktavimalākhyarṣeḥ*
Trātṛ	*Amarā*	*Mahādhara*	*amarādhakasyāpi trātṛnāmno*
Ugra	*Śakti*	*Sukṣetra*	*śaktidevīpūjakasya hy ugranāmno*
Prema	*Someśvarī*	*Svarṇabāhu*	*someśvarīpūjakasya premākhyasya*
Bhāṣaṇa	*Mahāmārī*	*Śrīdhara*	*mahāmārīpūjakasya bhāṣaṇākhyamuneḥ*

[12]Id

[13]From here onwards, the list of kings does not match with what is given in the corresponding part of List A.

Somarṣi	*Tūlānākṣī/ Tulā (30.45 cd)*	*Mahāvidvān*	*tūlanākṣyārādhakasya somarṣes tu muneḥ*
Nabhas	*Lālanīkā/ Bālaṇā (30.45 cd)*	*Prajāpāla*	*lālanīkārādhakasya nabhanāmno*
Vāyu	*Pannageśvarī*	*Suvidvān*	*pannageśvarībhaktasya vāyunāmno*
Vāmaka	*Tripurā*	*Kāmada*	*tripurādevatābhaktavāmakasya*
Prāyaṇa	*Antabhairavī*	*Vedavādarata*	*antabhairavībhaktasya prāyaṇākhyaṛṣeḥ*