

Mahisasuramardini in Myths: A Chronological Discourse

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Abstract

Mahiṣāsūramardīnī is one of the most celebrated devī in the subcontinent. Historically, her legacy can be traced since the early historic period. A profusion of literatures mentioned this devī at different times and in different variations. The variety of these myths created and nurtured her iconography and overall persona, which is still active and evolving in the society. This article is an attempt to portray the diversity and chronological history of Mahiṣāsūramardīnī through all the available literatures.

Keywords: Mahiṣāsūramardīnī, Devīmāhātmyam, Religion, Chronology, Iconography, Transformation.

Introduction

Myths can exist in a society in the form of literature, paintings or oral traditions. Both history and myth are nothing but creations of human imagination. History, however, is based on facts and evidence from the past, which is often construed as a reality; but in the case of a myth, it has no such limitations or complications. Myths are not bound by space, chronology, evidence or theory. Myths make the past, the present and every event out of time, therefore it is acceptable at any time. This is the reason why myths are always easily accepted by the society and become a natural part of it. Actually, myths play a significant role in influencing and shaping the human minds, their beliefs and cultures. One of such myth can be found in the Devī Māhātmyam section of the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa which describes the birth of an icon Mahiṣāsūramardīnī (the slayer of the 'buffalo-asura'). The vivid narrative imagery presented in the Devī Māhātmyam has long been separately copied, read and chanted as an independent work, often under the name Durgāsaptasatī or Caṇḍī and gradually came to be considered the master text for the veneration of the devī throughout the subcontinent. However it is to be remembered that this is not the sole text, along with the Devī Māhātmyam, there grew several other texts recounting tales and myths surrounding the Devi and the asura. All of this needs to be discussed in a chronological manner.

Aim of the Study

By dating the relevant early historic and early medieval texts, this article chronologically arranged all the available data regarding Mahiṣāsūramardīnī which aims to demonstrate , the religious transformation of the devī in the subcontinent.

The earliest mention of the Mahiṣāsura occurs in the epic (itihāsa) Mahābhārata (c. 400 BCE – 400 CE)¹. Here the asura first appears as a member of Tārakāsura's army engaged in a severe war against the devatās and is represented anthropomorphically. The narrative unfolds with the asuras attacking the heavenly army led by Skanda. As the battle raged on Mahiṣa remained unconquerable because he had obtained a boon of invincibility from Brahmā. When Mahiṣa all powerful and vigorous advanced toward the devatās destroying much of their army by hurling rocks at them, many of the devatās retreated. Then as the story goes, suddenly, Mahiṣa grasped Rudra and immediately managed to over power him by virtue of Brahma's boon. However, Skanda on seeing Rudra in danger wasted no time in releasing his spear (śatki) in the direction of the great asura. The spear cut off his head thus ending his life².

The Mahabharata in the tale of Mahiṣāsura and Tāraka gives another account of this narrative albeit in a much-abridged form³. The devī on the other hand finds mention in the Virāṭa Parvan of the epic. Here Yudhiṣṭhira praises Durgā⁴ as "tribhuvaneśvarīm"⁵ the supreme devī and also as "trailokyarakṣaṇārthāya Mahiṣāsūramardīnī"⁶. Her



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Mahiṣavadha episode is also adduced to in the Durgā stotra of the Bhīṣma Parvan where she is called “Mahiṣārṅkriye”⁷, meaning as one fond of buffalo’s blood⁷.

The most popular saga of killing the buffaloor mahiṣa features in the Devī Māhātmyam(c. 7th Century CE)⁸ section of the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa⁹ (c. 300-900 CE)¹⁰ which is also commonly known as Caṇḍī¹¹, and Durgāsaptasatī¹². According to this narrative, when Mahiṣa, head of the asura army took over the deva’s abode, all the devatās became frightened as now being banished from the heaven they would have to live on the earth as mere mortals. Therefore, they approached Śiva and Viṣṇu for help, from whose energy (tejas) a kumarī devī was born. The text depicts her as an incarnation of the divine power (śakti) that empowers all the devas¹³. The text further elaborates how each of the devas gave their primary weapons to her; Śiva gave his trident (triśulā), Viṣṇu the discus (chakra), Vāyu the bow and arrow, Vāruṇa the conch, Agni the spear, Indra the thunderbolt (Vajra) and bell, Kāla the sword and shield, Kubera the drinking cup with wine, Himavat the lion, Yama the danḍa (mace), Prajāpati the akṣamāla (rosary), Brahmā the kamaṇḍalu (waterpot), Viśvakarmā the battle-axe, armlets, anklets and rings, the devī of ocean, Ādiśeṣa, a ṅāgamāla (a necklace set with precious gems), and Varuṇa the pāśā (noose). This devī is called Ambikā and Parameśvarī. Soon, the text goes on to describe the battle in a dramatic style. As the two were engaged in combat, Mahiṣa started shape-shifting. When the devī went to sever his head, Mahiṣa changed from the form of buffalo to that of a lion. In the face of constant attack of arrows by the devī, Mahiṣa then transformed himself into an elephant, but when she attempted to cut off his trunk, he again changed his form into that of a buffalo. Furious, the devī drank from her divine flask and jumped onto Mahiṣa and as he was on the verge of assuming another form, she quickly severed his head, bringing about the death of Mahiṣāsura.

This particular uncertainty of the narrative in regards to the depiction of the devī and the form in which Mahiṣa was slain has left open myriad possibilities and offers various iconographical interpretations of the myth.

The Tamil Epic Śilappatikāram (c. 500 CE – 600 CE)¹⁴ describes Mahiṣāsuraṃardinī as the younger sister of Viṣṇu who is skilled in sword fighting¹⁵. In this text she is referred to as Korṅgavai, holding in her hand the victorious spear and standing upon the decapitated buffalo head with blood gushing from it.

The Skanda Purāṇa (c. 700-1050 CE)¹⁶ furnishes another unique account while tracing the origin of the name ‘Durgā’. As the story states¹⁷, Kartikeya once told sage Agastyā of the existence of an asura named Durgama. This asura called Durgama had pleased Brahmā through intense sādhanās and in return was blessed with a boon that made him virtually invulnerable. Empowered by Brahmā’s boon, he conquered the trilokas, dethroned Indra, expelled all other devatās from

svarga loka and forced them to dwell in the forests. He banned all religious ceremonies on earth, including the study of the Vedas by the Brāhmaṇas and forced the devatās and Brāhmaṇas to only sing his praises. The terror evoked by Durgama engulfed everything, so much so that it caused rivers to change their course, fire to lose its energy, and stars to disappear from sight. Of Durgama’s various special powers one was that he could assume the form of clouds and shower rains at any time of the year, making the frightened earth yield abundant harvest, the trees also bloomed and bore fruits even out of season so as not to invite Durgama’s wrath.

The vanquished devatās finally appealed to Śiva for help against the asura. Śiva, in turn, requested his wife, Parvatī, to destroy Durgama. Parvatī created Kālarātrī (dark night), a female form, whose beauty mesmerized the inhabitants of the trilokas. Kālarātrī on Parvatī’s order asked Durgama to restore the order. This enraged the asura and he sent a huge army to arrest Kālarātrī, but they could not do anything for just her heavy breath was enough to reduce the asura army to ashes. Durgama thereupon sent 30,000 asura soldiers, resembling huge monsters after Kālarātrī, these soldiers chased Kālarātrī who now sought shelter in Parvatī. This prompted Parvatī to engage indirect combat with Durgama. In this deadly conflict that ensued, Durgama assumed various forms, the principal among those were that of an elephant as big as a mountain and of a huge buffalo with large horns. As Durgama possessed a thousand arms, Parvatī also assumed the form of a warrior devī with a thousand arms. The army of the asura was totally destroyed in the fight and Durgama himself was slain by the mighty devī. The Skanda Purāṇa further recounts how Parvatī seized the asura, and setting her left foot on his chest, stabbed him with a spear which finally killed him. After witnessing the prowess of the devī and her extraordinary victory over the asura king, all the devatās eulogised Parvatī. The Purāṇa says that, it is since then that she has been given the appellation ‘Durgā’ meaning the killer of the asura named Durgama.

The Devī Purāṇa (c. 600 CE - 900 CE)¹⁸ is the oldest of the authorities dealing with the Bengali practice of Durgā Pūjā. The second half of the text narrates the rise of an asura named Ghora. The narrator of this story is Brahmā and Indra is the listener. The story narrates how Ghora was misled by his wife because of her conversion to a Digambara sect of Jainism. As a result of this, the asura got involved in sinful acts and assumed the form of a buffalo (Mahiṣa)¹⁹. Subsequently, the devī killed the Ghorāsura on navamī at Vindhyācala in the month of āśvina²⁰. This Purāṇa also makes an elaborate discussion on the proper timing and performance of the rituals during the nine nights of Mahanavami²¹.

According to the narrative of the The Padma Purāṇa (c. 650-900 CE)²² it is stated that in the Svāyambhava-manvantara Mahiṣāsura was killed by Vaiṣṇavī on the Māndaragiri and was again defeated by Jananaśakti and Nandā in the

Vivasvata-manvantara on the Vindhya Mountain. The Vishṇudharmottara (c. 700 CE)²³ on the other hand describes these devīs as Chaṇḍikā²⁴.

The Vāmana Purāṇa (c. 700 CE-1000 CE)²⁵ also presents a story about the devī and the Mahiṣāsura. It describes how the devatās had fallen on bad times because of the asura and lost everything. Seeing no way to revive their fortune, led by Brahmā the vanquished devatās approached Viṣṇu for help. Viṣṇu patiently listened to their complaints and in order to rescue them, from the collective rage of the devatās including the Trinity, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Siva emerged the devī. The Purāṇa states that the anger of the devatas in the form of flames solidified into an effulgent form, lustrous like the Sun.

A Devi was thus formed having three eyes and eighteen arms, each of which bore a weapon gifted by the devatās. Śiva gave her the trident, Viṣṇu the chakra, Varuna the conch, Agnī the dart, Yama the iron rod, Vāyu the bow, Surya a quiver full of arrows, Indra the thunderbolt, Kubera the mace, Brahmā the rosary and the Kamandalu, Kāla the sword and the shield, Viśwakarmā the battle axe and the mountain Himavat gave her the lion. Armed with these, the devī proceeded to seek out the asura. When this news reached Mahiṣāsura about a woman looking for her and how beautiful she was, he sent a messenger to her with a marriage proposal, claiming her hand for himself. The messenger was also instructed to describe his valour and prowess to the devī. The devī also sent her reply through the messenger, it stated that she could marry Mahiṣāsura but under one condition, her suitor must first defeat her in a battle, it is only after that he could hope to marry her. The devī hence challenged the asura to meet her in the battlefield, the asura too immediately accepting her challenge came to the battlefield with his forces. Soon a bloody conflict took place, in the deadly combat that followed, Durgā dismounted from her lion and sprang upon the back of Mahiṣa, and with her own tender feet struck his head so hard that he fell unconscious on the ground and as soon as he fell on the ground, she immediately chopped off his head with sword ²⁶. The Purāṇa says that It was after killing him that Durgā came to acquire the title Mahiṣāsura-mardini.

Bhagavatī Pada Puṣpañjali is yet another text to describe the exploits of devī which is either attributed to Adi Shankaracharya (800 CE - 900 CE), or Tenali Ramakrishna Kavi (1514 CE- 1575 CE), or at times to both.²⁷ The text is important as it too depicts the victory of Mahiṣāsura-mardini over the Asuras. Though the narrative almost follows that of the Devī Māhātmya, there are certain variations that makes it distinct from the latter. For instance, unlike the Devī Māhātmya, in the Bhagavatī Pada Puṣpañjali, the devī is identified as the sister of Viṣṇu and the daughter of Nanda. She is also not a kumari as depicted in the Devī Māhātmya, but portrayed as the consort of Śiva²⁸, who in this text has his abode not just in the Himalayas²⁹ but in the Kādambha forest³⁰ and on the peak of the Vindhayas well³¹. Another point of departure from

the Devī Māhātmya is that she is not only the slayer of Mahiṣāsura but also the vanquisher of Madhu – Kaidabha³², Śumbha – Niśumbha³³ and Tārakasura³⁴. However, though she unleashed utter destruction in the battlefield and is portrayed as terrifying, she is also the merciful one as she forgave the enemy soldiers and gave them refuge when they surrendered to her grace.³⁵

In its course of description, the Varāha Purāṇa (c. 800 CE -1000 CE)³⁶ narrates that, while the devī was performing penance surrounded by the various Śatki attendants, Nārada passed by that way. Nārada is known for his mischief, it was his habit to create discord among the devatās and asuras by instigating them against each other leading to frequent fights among them. However, this time Nārada had something else in mind. Beholding the form of the Devi mighty enough to destroy the vainglorious Mahiṣāsura, he hatched out a plan. Nārada approached the asura and by way of describing to him in detail the solitary exquisite beauty of the mount Mandāra he ignited an intense passion in Mahiṣāsura for the devī. Desirous of possessing her, Mahiṣāsura dispatched a messenger to the devī to place before her his earnest wish. The messenger was also instructed to describe his various glorious deeds to her so that the devī too felt attracted towards the asura and agreed to this proposal. The messenger on reaching Mandāra, before going on to describe his various achievements thought it prudent to first narrate to the devī the birth history of Mahiṣāsura.

The story narrated to the devī runs as such:

“When the ṛṣi Sindhudvīpa, son of Supārśva, was doing sadhanā, a girl named Mahiṣmatī, daughter of Viprachitti, came with her friends to mount Mandāra for a trip. There, they came upon a beautiful abode of a ṛṣi, which she wanted to take possession of. To drive away the then inhabitant of the āsrama, they all took the shape of she-buffaloes and threatened the ṛṣi, during his sadhanā. The ṛṣi perceived the actual truth through his inner vision and cursed that, these girls should all become real mahiṣīs or she-buffaloes. As soon as they heard the curse, they began to realize the formidable nature of the offence they had committed and began to apologize. The ṛṣi also cooled down a bit, and promised them that their buffalo nature would disappear from them as soon as a buffalo-son would be born from Mahiṣmatī’s womb. After some years, one day Mahiṣmatī was grazing on the banks of the Narmadā. The rishi Sindhudvīpa, who had also gone there, met a heavenly nymph named Indumatī and fell in love with her. As he was not able to approach her his seed fell in the river Narmadā, and it was swallowed with the water of the river by Mahiṣmatī. This seed grew in the womb of Mahiṣmatī, and Mahiṣāsura was born”³⁷.

It was only after telling this story, that the messenger went on to extol the various qualities of the Mahiṣāsura. After hearing this out, Jayā, one of the attendants of the devī, on her behalf, categorically replied that none of the women of mount Mandāra intended to get married, thus

outrightly rejected the asura's proposal. The messenger hence left, soon after Nārada appeared before the devī and informed her that Mahiṣāsura who had defeated all the devatās would be coming to mount Mandāra to carry her away by force. True to Nārada's words soon the asura came with a large army for the devī, little had he expected to be outbitten by a woman. The devī with her female attendants met Mahiṣāsura and his army in a sanguinary battle which eventually killed Mahiṣāsura and all his forces.

The Devī Bhāgavata Purāṇa (c. 950 CE-1200 CE)³⁸ describes the devī as Bhagavatī Caṇḍīkā. In the description of a battle between the devī and the Mahiṣāsura³⁹, the asura is depicted as constantly shapeshifting with his forms varying between buffalo, elephant, human and myriad others. In the war between the Devī and Mahiṣāsura, it was not just the formidable warrior devī he had to deal with, the devī's lion too made a difficult opponent. At one point of the war as the asura got the opportunity he violently attacked the devī's lion resulting in gravely injuring the animal. Seeing this, the devī got furious and impaled her sharp trīśūla in the chest of the asura. The asura fell senseless on the ground, but not being the one to give up so easily, he got up in the next moment and attacked the devī again with renewed vengeance. He then yelled so loud that it terrified all the devas. Finally the devī held aloft the sudarśana chakra of thousand spokes and threw it on the asura severing his head from the body. In this way the devī achieved victory over the Mahiṣāsura in the Devī Bhāgavata.

Durgā's encounter with Mahiṣāsura is discussed in detail in the Kālikā Purāṇa, a work composed in c. 1300-1400 CE⁴⁰. This religious text describes in detail the devī's encounter with the asura in three different cycles of creation (kalpa), in all these three kalpas the devī killed him in three mutually distinct incarnations, that of eighteen-armed Ugracaṇḍī, sixteen-armed Bhadrakālī, and ten-armed or Daśabhujā Durgā. The main legend of the devī in the Kālikā Purāṇa goes thus⁴¹ -

Once Mahādeva was propitiated by an asura named Rambhā to such an extent that the great devatā agreed to incarnate himself as the son of the asura in three different life cycles. The first incarnation of the devatā was born in the womb of a young she-buffalo with whom asura Rambhā had united with out of pure lust. This offspring of Rambhā and the she-buffalo had the physical form of a buffalo and came to be known by the name of Mahiṣāsura. Although born as a part of Śiva, Mahiṣāsura had in him all the negative traits of his biological parents. At that time Rāndrashva, a disciple of ṛṣi Kātyāyana, was practising severe austerities in the Himalaya. The buffalo-asura went there and assuming the form of a pretty nymph distracted the innocent young yogī from his sādhana. Incensed at this outrageous act ṛṣi Kātyāyana cursed the asura that as he had lured him in the form of a female, it would be a woman indeed to bring about his doom and he would soon be killed by that woman. Accordingly, the great devī manifested herself as an eighteen handed

divine female form of devī Ugracaṇḍī, the one of vicious appearance, and slew the asura. This is the story of the first cycle where the asura was slain by the devī in the first of her three incarnations. In the second cycle of creation, it was the devī Bhadrakālī who killed the asura. Svāyambhuva Manu was in charge of the trilokas then. During the Tretā Yuga of his reign, the buffalo-asura was born again as per Śiva's boon to the asura, Rambhā. In this birth also he continued with evil deeds, at last when his oppression exceeded all limits, the devī appeared before him as the sixteen-armed Bhadrakālī and on the northern shore of the milky ocean named Kśīroda, the asura met his end in the hands of the devī.

In his third birth, which took place in the current cycle, Mahiṣāsura constructed an unconquerable fortress on a hill and established his capital there. He was making preparations for conquering the trilokas, when one night he dreamt a very strange dream. In this dream he saw devī Durgā chopping off his head and sucking the fresh-blood from his severed head. This indeed seemed a portent of an impending disaster and Mahiṣāsura became extremely frightened. The very next day he invoked the mighty devī, the devī Durga too pleased with his devotion appeared before him and he eulogised her in various ways. Mahiṣāsura said he was prepared to die in her hands, but requested the devī to allow his humble self to be worshipped with her as one of her followers, after his death. Pleased with his humility, the devī granted his prayer. She assured Mahiṣāsura that, from now on, the asura too would be represented in her images at her footpad along with the devī he would also be worshipped by the devotees.

With these assurance, the devī blessed the asura with a divine vision by dint of which he could see images of his past lives flashing before his eyes. He saw how in his previous two lives he was slain by the devī in her Ugracaṇḍī and Bhadrakālī forms. The replay of events from his past lives led finally made the asura accept the inevitability of fate as he surrendered himself to the grace of the devī.

The Bṛhaddharma Purāṇa received its final form probably in the latter half of the 1300 CE⁴² but contains many later interpolations. It reflects a recognizably Bengali society and vernacular culture. The Purāṇa makes the devī herself the narrator in the episode dealing with the Rāmāyaṇa, here she specifically states her awakening in the autumn is "untimely" (akāl). In the first of the three sections of this text, the devī narrates the episode of Rāma's worship of her before he invaded Laṅkā, defeated Rāvaṇa, and returned with Sītā. She explains that this is the reason for her untimely (akāl) awakening. If this passage is not a later interpolation, then this reference can be taken as the earliest example of akālbodhan, the "untimely" awakening of the devī. Generally this 'akālbodhan' or the autumnal worship of the devī is considered her mahāpūjā which has been dealt with in this text.

The Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa was written in Bengal during c. 900 CE - 1000 CE and was again

rewritten in c. 1500 CE-1600 CE⁴³. It mentions the worship of Śiva and Durgā. In this text the devī is referred to as Durgatināshinī or the remover of multiple odious ills of humankind⁴⁴. Another otherwise lost text Brhannandikeśvara Purāṇa (c. 850 CE - 1000 CE)⁴⁵ is known to us through twenty-five lines which were quoted in the Durgāpujātattva also known as Durgotsavatattva by Raghunandana in c. 16th century CE⁴⁶. In the passage quoted by Raghunandana, it is said that the devī must be worshipped in earthen images and in the form of nine plants (navapatrikā) and should be bathed (mahāsnāna) with various ritual elements along with the accompaniment of music, animal sacrifices (bolidān) and fire rituals (homa).

Kṛttivāsa, in his Bāṅgla Rāmāyaṇa, (1418 CE) ⁴⁷ describes the autumnal worship of Durgā by Rāma, which he performed to gain victory over the virtually invincible Rāvaṇa. According to Kṛttivāsa's Rāmāyaṇa, king Rāvaṇa was also a worshipper of devī (Ambikā) and he worshipped her in spring with all rites. The devī pleased with the worship of the king of Lanka, had granted him multiple boons.

After Sītā was kidnapped by Rāvaṇa, Rāma undertook an expedition against the king of Lanka to rescue Sītā. Rāma, however, knew that Rāvaṇa had the devī's protection since she had granted him the boon of invincibility. Rāma very well realised that he had little chance of winning against Rāvaṇa unless he propitiated the devī. Hence, he made elaborate preparations for worship of the devī. The time was autumn and the worship of the devī at that season was unusual as the devī was invoked in spring only. Autumn was the time when devī Durgā was fast asleep and hence she had to be first awakened for Rāmachandra's prayers to reach her. This awakening of the devī at an unusual time or (akāl) gave rise to the concept of akāl bodhan or untimely prayer. Dakshinayana— six months from July to January (Āṣāḍh to Pauṣa) is considered as night of the devī-devatās when they remain fast asleep, hence without the 'awakening' (or bodhan) it is not possible to worship any devī or devatā in autumn. It is for this reason that Rāmchandra's Pūjā which was performed in autumn came to be called AkālPūjā. It was Brahmā (Vidhātā) on whose advice the pūjā was carried on. An earthen image of the ten-armed devī was awakened with much fanfare on the sixth lunar day of the bright half of Āśvina. When this pūjā reached its final stage, it was noticed that of the 108 lotuses offered to the devī, one had gone missing. Actually the lotus had not gone missing by itself, devī Durgā herself had hidden a flower to test the devotion of Rāma, to see to what extent Rāma could go to prove his devotion. Hanumān informed Rāma that not a single lotus could be found anywhere. Hence, Rāma finally took an arrow and went to pluck out one of his lotus like eyes to make up for the missing lotus and offer it to the devī. As he was about to act devī Durgā appeared before him, stopped him saying that she was pleased with his devotion and he no longer needed to offer his eye to her.

She then granted him the boon of victory over Rāvaṇa⁴⁸. It is in this way that Rāma Navamī that is the day on which Rāmachandra defeated Rāvaṇa, came to be celebrated. The day after this is the tenth day of the bright fortnight, the Vijayā Dasamī, which marks both the victory of Rāma over Rāvaṇa and of Durgā over the anti-devatās.

Conclusion

The early Vedic period was a time of pastoral economy. At that time pastoralism was the mode of life and dominant patriarchy was the order of the society. Therefore, naturally the Rg Vedic devatās got much more importance than the devīs. But this picture began to change from the later Vedic period onwards when Rg Vedic people started to migrate towards the Indo-Gangetic regions. In this period when society started shifting from pastoral to agricultural economy, the cult of the devī worship gradually gained prominence which is reflected in the later Vedic texts. Nirṛti, Śacī, Mīḍuṣī, Yamī, Ambikā, Rudrānī, Śrī, Lakṣmī, Vāk they all emerged at this time. The society now attracted towards an icon-worshipping cult which was aesthetically appealing and personally more satisfying than Yajñas. In this socio-economic circumstances devī - worship must have gained its popularity. But when a deity has to be raised for above the level of the existing devatās, she has to show extra power and capacity, she has to rise to power exactly like the Vedic devatās earlier had, by achievements of skill and killing asurs in war. Myths in the Mahābhārata clearly show that superiority of the devī. In the Purāṇas her elevated status is further sublimed and legitimated with further Brahmanical myths. Thus, at around c. seventh to ninth Century CE, the great devī crystallized into Mahiṣāsūramardinī. During the early medieval period her tremendous glory continued through upapurāṇas and regional literatures. Tales and myths of these texts actually creates, spreads and enhances her charisma enduringly. As a result, after thousands of years, even today she is vividly alive among us and still worshipped as a major deity in the subcontinent.

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24. Kramrisch, Stella. *The Vishnudharmottara Part III: A Treatise On Indian Painting And Image-Making*, p.5.
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27. Rao. T.A. Gopinath, *Elements of Hindu Iconography, Vol-I, part-II*, pp. 350-352.
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- which was later developed by Tenali Ramakrishna Kavi during the 16th century CE.
29. verse vii
30. verse ix
31. *ibid*
32. verse vii
33. verse ix
34. verse xiii
35. verse xxiii
36. Verse xii
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49. *bid*.