THE JOURNEY OF A GODDESS: DURGA IN INDIA, JAVA AND BALI

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

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Abstract

This study examines the demonization of images of the goddess Durga in Indonesia, viewed first as a long-term historical process that appears to have begun in East Java sometime during the first half of the second millennium CE. An attempt is then made to show how this long-term process reflected largely in mythology may be related to the demonization of images of women of the Indonesian Women’s Movement (Gerwani) during the transition from the Old Order of President Soekarno (1945-1966) to the establishment of the New Order by Indonesia’s second president, Suharto (1966-1998). In this view, images of Durga and the women of Gerwani have shared a similar fate, moving from a state of being considered attractive and beneficial, but later being understood as terrifying, demonic figures feared by the community.

I contrast my study of the demonization of images of Durga in Indonesia with the situation in India, where the goddess Durga developed from its sources in the Indus Valley civilization where the “mother goddess” as a source of agricultural and human fertility. During a later period images of this “mother goddess” were incorporated into the pantheon of the nomadic Indo-Aryans as a female counterpart of prominent warrior gods of the pantheon. This has led to an understanding of the goddess Durga as a powerful, protective goddess who is worshipped throughout India during the festivals known as Durga Puja or Navaratri. It was this form of Durga that was most prominent in the early centuries of Indian influence in the archipelago (c.700-900 CE), and continued to be important to the kingdoms of East Java.

In the Malay-Indonesian archipelago images of Durga went through a radical change in comparison to representations of the goddess Durga Mahisasuramardini of India, which always show her as a beautiful and sensual warrior goddess who protects her devotees from any threat to their safety and well-being. Through a long process of evolution and change images of Durga in the archipelago came to depict her in demonic form. The first radical transformations of this type began to develop during the East Javanese period (c. 10th -15th centuries CE). In this dissertation, I look at the question of external and internal
threats to the security of the Majapahit dynasty as possible pressures that led to the development of a special exorcistic tale (the *Sudamala* tale), which featured a demonic form of the goddess Durga, which eventually is transformed back into an auspicious form through the power of a male figure of authority, in this case the god Shiva.

The further demonization of images of the goddess Durga began in East Java with the composition of the *Calon Arang*, a tale about an angry widow named Rangda who becomes a devotee of Durga who dwells in the graveyard called *Setra Gandamayu*, where she eats corpses. Rangda calls upon the goddess Durga to assist her in bringing disease and pestilence to the kingdom of King Airlangga. This tale has been immortalized in the Balinese performing arts, and has led to the identification of the goddess Durga as the patron of black magic in which form she is worshipped in order to gain magical powers, or *kesaktian*. It is this fully demonized form of images of Durga that I believe allowed the founders of the New Order to play on fears of the power of uncontrolled women, and to create a mythology about the women of Gerwani that identified them with all the negative aspects of the goddess that are brought out in tales about Durga and Rangda, which are well-known throughout much of Indonesia.

**Key Words:**

Durga India
Gerwani Java
Demonization Bali
Black propaganda Indonesia
*Sudamala* women
*Calon Arang* widow
Old Order New Order
Acknowledgements

First, I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to the School for Creative Arts and Humanities of the Faculty of Law, Business and the Arts of Charles Darwin University for its generosity in providing the scholarship which made it possible for me to carry out my research while also working as an Academic Director for the SIT Study Abroad program Indonesia: Balinese Arts and Social Change. I would especially like to thank my dissertation supervisor, Dr. Christine Doran, for her continuous support and for her encouragement in many ways from the very beginning of my research to the conclusion of my dissertation writing.

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Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. I would like here to express my gratitude to Dr. David Shulman, Dr. Nagaraja Rao, Dr. Yael Bentor, Dr. Dan Martin, Dr. Gerry Tubb and other scholars of the IAS for their kindness in letting me participate in the sessions of their seminar that were relevant to my study. Dr. Shulman and Dr. Bentor were particularly kind in setting time aside from their busy schedules to advise me on the progress of my writing.

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I should not neglect to thank my supervisors and employers at the SIT Study Abroad Program in Vermont, USA for their generosity in letting me conduct my research and finish up the last stages of my dissertation while still under contract. I also want to thank my husband for willingly taking over some of my duties as Academic Director of the SIT Study Abroad Program in order to allow me time to complete my dissertation work. I also want to thank the students and local staff of the SIT Study Abroad Program for their understanding in allowing me to put aside time for conducting interviews and writing my chapters while they carried out their Independent Study Projects (ISP).
Maps and Geographical Coordinates

Key:
- site or archaeological, museum or other evidence for image(s) of Durga
- modern city that is also the site of archaeological, museum or other evidence
- ▲ mountain peak
- ★ modern city

Italic font is used for the names of rivers, mountain ranges and mountain peaks.

Map 1: India

Coordinates for important sites of evidence
- Harappa: 72° 52’ East 30° 38’ North
- Mohenjo-daro: 68° 20’ East 27° 19’45” North
- New Delhi (National Museum): 77° 19’09” East 28° 36’57” North
- Jaipur area (folk image of the goddess Durga): 75° 48’ East 26° 54’ North
- Mathura (Museum): 77° 40’41” East 27° 20’27” North
- Kolkata (papier-mache images of the goddess Durga in pandal constructed for Durga Puja): 88° 33’21” East 22° 32’32” North
Map 2: Indonesia

Map 3: Java
Map 4: Central Java

Coordinates for important sites of evidence

a) Important historical and geographical locations

- Candi Borobudur: East 110° 26’32” South 7° 32’35”
- Dieng plateau: East 109° 53’11” South 7° 12’39”
- Mount Lawu: East 111° 11’31” South 7° 37’30”
- Mount Merapi: East 110° 26’32” South 7° 32’35”

b) Sites with images of the goddess Durga and related images

- Gedong Songo complex: East 110° 20’53” South 7° 11’07”
- Candi Prambanan: East 110° 29’28” South 7° 45’07”
- Candi Sambisari: East 110° 26’49” South 7° 45’45”
- Candi Sukuh: East 111° 7’53” South 7° 37’13”
Map 5: East Java

Coordinates for important sites of evidence

a) Important historical and geographical locations

- Mount Sumeru: East 112° 55’05” South 8° 06’41”

b) Sites with images of the goddess Durga and related images

- Candi Singhasari complex: East 112° 39’49” South 7° 53’19”
- Ardimulyo image of Camunda: East 112° 40’19” South 7° 52’14”
- Candi Tigawangi (Tegowangi): East 112° 09’40” South 744’05”
- Mojokerto (area of Majapahit capital and Trowulan Museum): East 112° 22’50” South 7° 33’27”
Map 6: Bali

Coordinates for important sites of evidence

c) Important historical and geographical locations

- Mount Agung: 115° 32’33.3” East 8° 22’6.22” South
- Mount Batur: 115° 22’37” East 8° 14’14” South
- Gilimanuk (modern harbor and Megalithic era burial site): 114° 26’26.47” East 8° 11’43” South
- Sembiran (archaeological remains from ca. 200 BCE—200CE): 115° 17’48” East 8° 6’6” South
- Trunyan village, eastern shore of Lake Batur (image of Da Tonta): 115° 25’19” East 8° 15’57.41” South
- Blanjong pillar, Sanur: 115° 14’24” East 8° 32’13.8” South

d) Sites with images of the goddess Durga and related images

- Durga image of Kutri, Buruan village: East 115° 17’46” South 8° 31’52”
- Bhairawa (Kebo Edan) image of Pejeng: East 115° 17’35” South 8° 32’52”
- Hariti image of Goa Gajah, Bedulu: East 115° 17’34” South 8° 31’25”
- Pura Ped, Sampalan, Nusa Penida: 115° 27’22” East 8° 40’41” South
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A Note on Spelling

Since this dissertation focuses on two distinct geographical areas (India and Indonesia), each with its own cultural traditions, that are closely related through a history of cultural contact the need arises in this dissertation for a way of representing words from two very different sound systems, on the one hand the sound systems of the Indo-Aryan languages of India and the on the other Austronesian languages of Java and Bali. This comes out mainly in the citation of textual sources from the two traditions, but is also reflected in the pronunciation of key terms by Indian and Indonesian scholars and laypersons I interviewed while completing the fieldwork for this dissertation. The main point here is that the spellings of the names of Hindu deities in India different from the spellings of these names in Indonesia. For example, the name of god Shiva in India is pronounced as Siwa in Indonesia, while the Indian name of the god Vishnu is pronounced as Wisnu in Java and Bali. For the sake of consistency I have decided to use the forms of the names of Indian terms that are most commonly used in general works on India whenever I was discussing Indian materials, and the spelling that reflects the Indonesian pronunciation of those names whenever I was discussing developments in Java and Bali. The most important sound changes are summarized below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indian spelling</th>
<th>Indonesian spelling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sh or Sh</td>
<td>s or S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v or V</td>
<td>w or W</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I have followed the work of Helen Creese (2004) in not using a complex system of diacritic marks for recording the special pronunciation and spelling of words originating in Sanskrit, or based on Sanskrit. I should note here that Balinese experts in traditional religious lore and literature do, in fact, use a system of spelling that does reflect the more complex spelling of Sanskrit originals. However, when reading from their palm leaf manuscripts they use the pronunciation of these words that is used by other speakers of Balinese and reflects the simpler sound-system of Balinese in comparison to Sanskrit. I
have thus continued to use a simpler form of spelling for Balinese words that in a more technical study would be given with diacritic marks.

A second problem of spelling comes up that relates to the Indonesian spelling reformation of 1972. After this system was introduced words that were in the past spelled with the characters \textbf{dj}, \textbf{tj}, \textbf{j}, and \textbf{oe} now become \textbf{j}, \textbf{c}, \textbf{y}, and \textbf{u} respectively. In most cases I have used the more modern spelling of words. However, in a few cases I have retained different spellings to highlight differences of historical time period. Thus I have used \textbf{oe} in spelling the name of Indonesia’s first president “Soekarno” and \textbf{u} in the spelling “Suharto” because they were politically active in different time periods, before and after the new spelling system was introduced in Indonesia.
# Glossary of Non-English terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>abangan</td>
<td>Javanese term for nominally Muslim Javanese, strongly influenced by Hindu-Buddhist and animist religious ideas; derived from <em>abang</em>, “red” the original associations of the term with a “mixed” form of Islam were unfortunately identified with “red” for Communist during the tragedy of 1965-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABRI</td>
<td><em>Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia</em>, “Indonesian Armed Forces”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adat</td>
<td>customary law; the term gained popularity in Indonesia after it was introduced in the Dutch colonial period as a way of lessening the burdens of the colonial administration by drawing a distinction between <em>Staatsrecht</em>, “state law” and <em>Adatrecht</em>, “traditional law”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aisyah</td>
<td>women’s branch of <em>Muhammadyah</em>, a reformist Islamic association founded in the early 20th century by Ahmad Dahlan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aksi sepihak</td>
<td>one-sided action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ansor</td>
<td>the youth organisation of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), an Islamic association representing the traditionalist, syncretic form of Islam popular in Java</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arjuna</td>
<td>the third brother of the five Pandava brothers, a warrior prince in the <em>Mahabharata</em> epic, noted for his skills in mediation, combat and love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avatara</td>
<td>the ten manifestations of the god Vishnu who descend into the world to preserve it from destruction during each successive era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bapak</td>
<td>literally means “father”, a respectful term to address older men or men of high status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barisan Srikandi</td>
<td><em>Srikandi</em> Troops, a women’s brigade set up by the Japanese during the occupation of Indonesia of 1942-45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>berdikari</td>
<td>self-reliance, one of the principles of the fledgling Indonesian state espoused by President Soekarno</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BPS</td>
<td><em>Badan Pendukung Soekarno</em>, “Body for Supporting Soekarno and Soekarnoism”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BTI  *Barisan Tani Indonesia*, “Indonesian Farmers’ Front”, a Soekarno era organization promoted by President Soekarno as part of his plan to develop a “fifth force” to offset the power of the Armed Forces

BU  *Budi Utomo*, “Noble Endeavour”, a liberal educational organisation with a mildly nationalist agenda set up in 1908 by the noted Javanese intellectuals Hos Cokroaminoto

Bupati  Indonesian regent during the colonial period and the head of a regency (*kabupaten*) in the present context of Indonesian political life

cabang  local branch of an organization

CGMI  *Central Gerakan Mahasiswa Indonesia*, an Indonesian students’ union active during the Soekarno era

CIA  Central Intelligence Agency of the United States

dalang  puppeteer in the shadow puppet theatre (*wayang*)
daerah  region, used in names of the regional level of an organization

DI  *Darul Islam*, “House of Islam”, a movement which fought for the establishment of an Islamic state, especially prominent in the 1950s, eventually suppressed by Soekarno, who feared that a strong Islamic party would represent a threat to the state

DPA  *Dewan Pertimbangan Agung*, “Supreme Advisory Council”, an important advisory council to Soekarno during the Old Order

DGI  *Dewan Gereja Indonesia*, “Indonesian Council of Churches”

DPD  *Dewan Pimpinan Daerah*, “Regional Executive Leadership”, a Soekarno period legislative body appointed by the President that has been replaced by the DPRD (see below)

DPP  *Dewan Pimpinan Pusat*, “Central/National Executive Leadership”, a Soekarno period legislative body appointed by the President that has been replaced by the DPR (see further below)

DPR  *Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat*, “People’s Representative Council”, the elected legislative branch of the Indonesian Parliament
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DPRD</td>
<td><em>Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah</em>, “Regional People’s Representative Council”, the provincial level of the elected legislative branch of the Indonesian Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPR-GR</td>
<td><em>Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Gotong-Royong</em>, “Representative Council of the People-Mutual Assistance”, a government organization promoted by Soekarno during the period of his Guided Democracy (<em>Demokrasi Terpimpin</em>), 1959-1965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dharma Pertiwi</td>
<td>the official New Order organization of wives of military men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dharma Wanita</td>
<td>the official New Order official organization of the wives of civil servants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwikora</td>
<td><em>Dwi Komando Rakyat</em>, “Two Commands of the People”, an ideological stance developed by Soekarno in support of the military campaign in northern Kalimantan (Borneo) conducted against British military outposts that he suspected of being used as the launching point for a re-colonization of the fledgling Republic of Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDR</td>
<td><em>Front Demokrasi Rakyat</em>, “Democratic People’s Front’”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fujinkai</td>
<td>a women’s organization set up by the Japanese during the occupation of 1942-45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.30.S/PKI</td>
<td><em>Gerakan 30 September/Indonesian Communist Party</em>, “30th September Movement/Communist Party”, the name given to the so-called ‘mass movement’ that General Suharto claimed had planned the abduction and murder of six generals on the night of 30 September 1965; more recent studies indicate that the abductions were planned by a small force put together by the Special Committee of the PKI that failed in its objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ganefo</td>
<td>“Games of the New Emerging Forces”, a term coined by Soekarno to refer to the leaders of Southeast Asian countries that he considered to be in league with their former colonial leaders and to be working towards a “neo-canonicalization” of Southeast Asia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAPI</td>
<td><em>Gabungan Politik Indonesia</em>, “Indonesian Political Federation”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garuda</td>
<td>a mythical bird, a national symbol of the Republic of Indonesia and the vehicle of the god Vishnu/Wisnu in Hindu’s mythology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerindo</td>
<td><em>Gerakan Rakyat Indonesia</em>, “Indonesian Peoples’ Movement”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gerwindo   Gerakan Wanita Indonesia, “Indonesian Women’s Movement”, initiated in the late colonial period and active during the struggle for Independence (1945-49)

Gerwani   Gerakan Wanita Indonesia, “Indonesian Women’s Movement”, initiated in 1954 by veterans of earlier women’s organizations of the late colonial period and period of the struggle for independence; brutally suppressed during the founding of the New Order (1966-1998)

Gerwis   Gerakan Wanita Indonesia Sedar, “Movement of Conscious Indonesian Women”

Gestok   Gerakan Satu Oktober, “Movement of 1 October 1965”, a term used by Soekarno to emphasize his perspective on the tragedy of the killing of the six generals and to oppose the more sinister term G.30.S/PKI used by Suharto and his RPKAD, the Command for the Restorations of Law and Order to describe the same events

Gestapu   Gerakan September Tigapuluh, “Movement of 30 September 1965”, an alternative name given to the events of 30 September 1965 by Suharto and his RPKAD, the Command for the Restorations of Law and Order that was consciously made similar to the Nazi term Gestapo in order to highlight ‘sinister’ aspects of the so-called ‘Movement of 30 September’

Gotong-royong traditional system of mutual cooperation, put forward as a guiding principle of Indonesian social life by President Soekarno

GOW   Gabungan Organisasi Wanita, “Federation of Women’s Organizations”

GWS   Gerakan Wanita Sosialis, “Socialist Women’s Movement”

homa   rites of the fire ritual originally carried out by the nomadic Indo-Aryans who entered the Gangetic plain of India during the 2nd millennium BCE; eventually spread throughout India and as far as insular Southeast Asia

Ibu   literally means “mother”, a respectful term of address for women

IPPI   Ikatan Pemuda Pelajar Indonesia, “Association of Students and Youth of Indonesia”

Istri Indonesia   “Indonesian Wives”, a New Order organization for women; istrigoes back to Sanskrit stri, meaning “woman, female” and at times
can still mean “women” in Indonesia; it is more common, however, in the meaning “wife”

*Istri Sedar*  “Conscious Wives”, a women organization from Bandung established in 1930

*kain*  a piece of material approximately one meter in length, designed to be worn wrapped around the waist on formal occasions

*kabaya*  traditional blouse worn by women, often made of sheer fabric with elaborate embroidery of the neckline and sleeves

*kakawin*  Old Javanese literary works written in the Old Javanese (or Kawi) language, that use Sanskrit meters and are similar in many ways to the “court-epics” (*kavya*) of India

*kabir*  *kapitalis birokrat*, “bureaucratic capitalist”, a Soekarno era term used to refer to the army personnel in Jakarta

*KAMI*  *Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Indonesia*, “Indonesian Students’ Action Front”

*Kecamatan*  sub-district in the administrative system of the Republic of Indonesia

*KPI*  *Kongres Perempuan Indonesia*, “Indonesian Women’s Congress”

*KOSTRAD*  *Komando Cadangan Strategi Angkatan Darat*, “Army Strategic Reserve Corps”

*Kowani*  *Kongres Wanita Indonesia*, “Indonesian Women’s Congress”, a coalition formed in 1944, which included Perwari, the *Persatuan Perkumpulan Istri Indonesia* and the *Persatuan Wanita Kristen Indonesia* (see further below)

*Kyai*  Islamic religious teacher, generally holding very influential in their communities

*linga*  an idealized phallic shape, usually of carved stone, that represents the pure potentiality of the male aspect of the godhead

*Laswi*  *Laskyar Wanita Indonesia*, a coalition of women’s guerrilla groups fighting against the Dutch during the struggle for Independence (1945-49)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition/Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lekra</td>
<td><em>Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakyat</em>, “Institute for People’s Culture”, a Soekarno era organization of writers, artists and journalists loosely affiliated with the PKI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubang Buaya</td>
<td>“Crocodile Hole”, a well in the field by that name that was in use as a training ground by a militia composed mainly of members of the <em>Pemuda Rakyat</em>; used to dispose of the bodies of the six generals murdered on the night of 30 September 1965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipol</td>
<td><em>Manifesto Politik</em>, “Political Manifesto”, a statement of ideological principles promulgated by Soekarno</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>masyarakat</td>
<td>“society”, a term that often appears in the name of Indonesian political, Social or religious organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masyumi</td>
<td><em>Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia</em>, “Consultative Council of Indonesian Muslims”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muhammadyah</td>
<td>reformist Islamic organization, founded by Ahmad Dahlan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murba</td>
<td>“Proletarian”, name of a small Trotskyist party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslimat</td>
<td>women’s branch of the Islamic organizations <em>Masyumi</em> and NU (<em>Nahdlatul Ulama</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>musyawarah-mufakat</td>
<td>“deliberation (musyarawah) until consensus (mufakat) is reached”, an important phrase in the fourth of the Pancasila, a set of five founding principles of the Republic of Indonesia (see further below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Napol</td>
<td><em>narapidana politik</em>, “convicted political prisoner”, a New Order term for survivors of the killings of 1965-66 who were subsequently imprisoned and later released</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasakom</td>
<td><em>Nasionalisme Agama Komunisme</em>, “Nationalism Religion Communism”, an ideological doctrine promulgated by President Soekarno as early as 1926 with the aim of bringing about a unity of nationalist, religious and communist sectors of Indonesian society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nefo</td>
<td>“New Emerging Forces”, one of a set of terms developed by Soekarno to highlight positive aspects of the non-aligned nations of Asia and Africa that he characterized as a new political block in opposition to what he termed the forces of neo-colonialism and imperialism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nekolim  “Neo-Koloniaalisme dan Imperialisme, “Neo-Colonialism and Imperialism’, a term developed by Soekarno as a negative term in contrast to his term Nefo (see above), used to support his campaign of populism in the early 1960s

NU  Nahdlatul Ulama, “Council of Islamic Scholars”, Indonesia’s largest Islamic organization, largely favouring the syncretic Javanese form of Islam; during the Soekarno era it was also a political party, but was compelled to forgo political activity under the New Order

Nyai  concubine, originally a Balinese term for you (female), the term became popular in 19th century Java to refer to the indigenous wives of men of the Dutch colonial administration or armed services

Oldefo  Old Established Forces, a term developed by Soekarno as a contrast to the more positive term Nefo and often identified with the negative term Nekolim

OPM  Organisasi Papua Merdeka, “Organization for an Independent Papua”

Ormas  Organisasi Massa, “mass organization” a general term in use throughout the history of modern Indonesia

Panca Dharma Wanita  Five Women’s Duties: to be companions to their husbands, to produce children, to educate them and to contribute to the management of the household. Only in the fifth place are women seen to have duties as citizens.

Panca Makara  The central ritual act in left-hand Tantra is the use of the five forbidden ritual ‘implements’ in panca tattva “five essential element” rituals, generally more known as the panca makara, that is: matsya, mudra, mada, mantra, and maituna: meat, parched grain, liquor, chanting of sacred syllables and sexual intercourse

Pancasila  The founding ideology of the Indonesian state, first promulgated by President Soekarno and Vice President Mohammed Hatta in Year. Panca and sila (shila) are Sanskrit terms for “five” and “virtue” or “principle” respectively, so Pancasila can be understood to mean “Five Pillars of Correct Conduct. These are:
1. Belief in One Supreme God (Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa)
2. Just and Civilized Humanity
3. National Unity
4. Democracy led by the inner wisdom of unanimity arising out of deliberations among duly elected representatives of the people
5. Social justice for the whole of the Indonesian people

PARI

Partai Republik Indonesia, “Indonesian Republican Party”, a nationalist party of the late colonial era that later became the PNI.

pengkhianat

“traitor”, a term that is especially important in modern Indonesian History due to its use to describe members of Gerwani or suspected of being “communist sympathizers” during the period of mass killings beginning in late 1965

Permesta

Perjuangan Semesta Alam, “the Universal Struggle”, the uprising based in Sulawesi in protest to the increasing Javanization and centralization of the Indonesian government under Soekarno.

Perwani

Persatuan Wanita Negara Indonesia, “The Union of Indonesian Women”

Perwari

Persatuan Wanita Republik Indonesia, “The Union of the Women of the Indonesian Republic”

PKK

Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga, “Guidance in Family Welfare”, an organisation for women founded during the New Order with a brief to provide guidance to women in home economics and the care and education of children; it is coordinated by the Ministry of Women’s Affairs in contemporary Indonesia

PKI

Partai Komunis Indonesia, “Indonesian Communist Party”

PNI

Partai Nasional Indonesia, “Indonesian Nationalist Party”

PPI

Pemuda Putri Indonesia, “Young Women of Indonesia”, left-wing women’s guerrilla group fighting against the Dutch in the struggle for Independence (1945-49); the term pemuda, “youth, youths” has carried with it revolutionary connotations ever since the era of nationalism and the struggle for Independence

PPI

Perikatan Perempuan Indonesia, “Union of the Indonesian Women”

PPII

Persatuan Perkumpulan Istri Indonesia, “Union of the Federation of Indonesian Women”

PR

Pemuda Rakyat, “Youth of the People”
PRRI  
*Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia*, “Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia”, name chosen by the leaders of an uprising against the government or Soekarno, based in the Minangkabau highland area of central, west Sumatra

PSI  
*Partai Sosialis Indonesia*, “Indonesian Socialist Party”

Peta  
*Pembela Tanah Air*, “Defenders of the Homeland”

raga  
melodic pattern in the Indian system of music (Sangit)

RPKAD  
*Resimen Para Komando Angkatan Darat*, “Army Para-commando Regiment”, a branch of the Armed Forces organized by Suharto and his allied commanders in late 1965 with the purpose of organizing the tracking down and elimination or imprisonment of all known members of the PKI, Gerwani, Lekra and other so-called ‘communist sympathizers’

shakti  
In India the term stands for the female, or “active” energy of the godhead; in the Balinese (and Javanese) context *sakti* refers to superhuman powers that can be gained through special yogic and ritual techniques

Setra Gandamayu  
the name of a mythological graveyard set aside for those who die; *ganda* (Sanskrit *gandha*) means “sweetly aromatic”; the scent of fresh corpses in the Setra Gandamayu is said in Balinese folklore to make it particularly attractive to the goddess Durga

SOBSI  
*Sentral Organisasi Buruh Seluruh Indonesia*, “All Indonesia Central Labour Organization”

SUAD  
*Staf Umum Angkatan Darat*, General Staff of the (Indonesian) Army

tameng  
literally “shield”, this was the name given to the volunteer executioners who were unofficially enlisted by the RPKAD (*Resimen Para Komando Angkatan Darat*) to find and ‘eliminate’ members of the PKI, Gerwani and suspected ‘communist sympathizers’ beginning in late 1965-early 1966

tenget  
spiritually powerful and dangerous (Balinese)

yajna  
general name Hindu for rituals other than the fire oblation (*homa*). In the Balinese context, there are five forms for *yadnya* that need to be performed during our life time. See Monier-Williams (1981:
723) under bali for a reference to the Indian origins of the panca-yadnya system practiced in Bali

*yoni* a stone “trough”, generally used as the basis for a *linga* (see above) that represents the female element in Indian metaphysics of the Shaivite schools
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Introduction: the Power of Myth and the Power of Media

The main argument developed in this thesis is that in comparison with images of the goddess Durga in India, which have remained stable over a very long historical period, focussing on her benevolent aspects as a protective warrior goddess, images of the same goddess have gone through a process of demonization in Java and Bali that can be linked to historical and social factors and processes. After devoting six chapters to the study of these historical processes, I then turn to history of the Indonesian Women’s Movement (Gerwani) that was active between 1950 and 1965 when it was brutally suppressed during the founding of the New Order government of Indonesia’s second president, Suharto.

The main difficulty of dealing with this subject is that it might be very easy to assume that the processes of demonization in a long-term process of myth-making had similar intentions as those that led to the destruction of Gerwani in modern times. I want to stress here that the demonization of images of women in mythology does not seem to have been directly motivated by a desire to suppress the rights of women, since we also find very positive images of female rulers and ascetics during the same period when demonic images of the goddess Durga were developed in the visual and literary arts. I argue that demonic images of the goddess Durga were developed in response to internal and external threats to the Majapahit kingdom of East Java (1293-c.1527 CE) and to concerns about the liminal period between the decease and apotheosis of royal figures like the Rajapatni, a woman of extraordinary political and spiritual influence in 14th century East Java. However, even in this development, and especially in the later development of a completely demonized image of the goddess Durga and her main devotee (Rangda) in the tale of Calon Arang, there is a strong tendency for images of women to take a demonic form that must be exorcized through the power of a male authority figure. While the tale of Calon Arang is preserved especially in the performing arts of contemporary Bali, it is well known in much of Indonesia. For this reason, I claim in this dissertation that its lurid depictions of erotically charged

\[1\] See Fontein (1990:160) Plate 24.
women worshipping Durga in the graveyard while seeking her patronage and assistance in bringing death and pestilence to the kingdom of Airlangga are part of the background of fears about the power of uncontrolled women that was used by the founders of the New Order to develop black propaganda that was spread throughout the mass media in late 1965 in order to discredit the women’s movement and allow for its completed destruction through extra-judicial executions and imprisonment of the survivors of these executions.

The demonization of images of women in Indonesia has gone through a long complex process stretching over many hundreds of years. Based on the examination of textual and visual evidence, we can see that the most effective way to demonize the image of women has been by accusing them of being morally loose, sexually uncontrolled and operating outside the customary norms of society. Textual evidence for the demonization of images of women in mythology can be traced in the form of literary works like the Sudamala, Andha Bhuwana and Calon Arang and in temple reliefs of stories like the Sudamala tale represented at sites like Candi Tigawangi and Candi Sukuh. The modern, mass media side of this picture can be traced in newspapers, magazines and the dioramas and reliefs of public monuments that began to be produced during the Dutch colonial period, and became especially prominent during the founding of the New Order in 1965-66.

While I do not want to over-emphasize the demonization of women in myths developed in the East Javanese period, there is no doubt that these stories led to a negative view of the role of female figures in mythology. The following story from the kidung Sudamala (produced c.1365-1406 CE) gives us a good example of the demonization of the image of a female deity in the mythology of East Java:

The three great deities Sang Hyang Tunggal, Sang Hyang Asihprana and Sang Hyang Wisesa once gathered together in the dwelling place of Bhatara Guru, the Supreme Deity. They were discussing the misdeed of Sri Uma, wife of Bhatara Guru, whom they heard had “shared her beetle-nut quid and face-powder” with Sang Hyang Brahma, that is she had committed adultery
with Lord Brahma. Bhatara Guru was furious upon hearing that news, and so cursed Uma into becoming Durga, a terrifying demoness. Uma then transformed into a demonic figure with long dishevelled hair; her eyes were like twin suns; her mouth was like a cavern with protruding fangs; her two nostrils were like the holes of twin wells and her entire skin was covered with spots and blemishes.

The mythological demonization illustrated in stories like that of the transformation of Uma into Durga (which has no counterpart in the Indian tradition) has had a continuing negative impact on how women have been perceived in Indonesian society, perhaps especially in Java and Bali. During the colonial period in Indonesia, Raden Adjeng Kartini (1879-1904) became famous for her advocacy for women’s emancipation and equality in education. She herself wished to get an education equal to that available to men and was supported to some extent by her father and husband, yet she found it very difficult to overcome the stumbling blocks of a society that continued to frame women within a tight, domestic circle that had been crystallized by the ancient traditions of Java. Kartini was even accused of being a coquette when she wanted to break the chain of tradition in order to seek a higher education in Holland. Hildred Geertz (1964:17) in her introduction to the translation of the *Letters of a Javanese Princess* by A.L. Symmers, points out the following unfortunate results of a visit by the liberal Dutchman van Kol to her home in Jepara:

The first indirect result of his visit was notoriety. He had been accompanied by the editor of the newspaper, *De Locomotief*, who published an account of his trip to Jepara. This was the first time Kartini’s name had appeared in print, an event which her father had successfully prevented till then. The forces of reaction, both Javanese and in Dutch circles were mobilized

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2 David Shulman (1985:304) notes that the close relationship of South Indian kings with the goddess can easily lead to the idea that the goddess is “fickle” or even fond of adultery. He points out that:

No less ambiguous is the king’s intimate relation with the goddess, either in her form as Sri, ‘royal splendor’- a notoriously fickle figure-or as the warrior maiden Durga or Durga-Laksmi.
against her and a whispering campaign began. She was accused of being a coquette, of wanting a Dutch husband, even wanting to be sexually promiscuous, and the pressures on her family to marry her off intensified. Her father became very cool to her.

While the results of the fear of the potential “danger” of women outside the domestic circle is well-illustrated in the story of Kartini, it did not have nearly the disastrous results as the campaign of black propaganda that was directed against the women of Gerwani in late 1965. In this campaign “legends” of the sexual perversion and moral depravity of the women of Gerwani that had no basis in fact were developed and broadcast through state-controlled mass media. These included the national radio broadcasting network (RRI) and the two main newspapers of the Armed Forces; Berita Yudha and Angkatan Bersendjata. This modern form of demonization resulted either in the direct loss of life or imprisonment for much of the adult lives of women whose main “crime” had been to work in the social services and educational efforts that were a prominent part of the activities of the women’s movement during the post-Independence period.3

The form taken by this modern mass media form of myth-making is reflected in tales of the conduct of the Pemuda Rakyat and Gerwani in a series of articles that appeared in the English language edition of the state news agency Antara on 30 November 1965 and in the armed forces newspaper Angkatan Bersendjata on 13 December 1965. A recent study characterizes these aspects of modern myth-making as follows. It is remarkable that the so-called “ orgy” of the women of Gerwani is said to have been attended by Aidit, the chairman of the Communist Party, even though eyewitness accounts of the events of 1965 have shown that he had to be awakened from his sleep to be told of the news of the failed coup attempt, and not long afterwards fled to Central Java after realizing that he and his party

3 Particularly important articles building a modern myth about the participation of the women of Gerwani in the murder of six generals on the night of 30 September 1965 appeared in the October issue of Berita Yudha, 9 October and the 11 October issue of Harian Angkatan Bersendjata, 11 October 1965 (See Gerakan 30 September: Antara Fakta dan Rekayasa, 1999:89).
would take all blame for the murder of six generals on the fateful night of 30 September 1965 (*Gerakan 30 September: Antara Fakta dan Rekayasa*, 1999:89):

[T]he accounts of the atrocities committed at Halim have undergone considerable elaboration, in which the strongest emphasis has been on unholy rites and sexual orgies preliminary to the slayings: thus the Gerwani were accused of giving themselves indiscriminately to Air Force officers and to Pemuda Rakyat in a ritual orgy presided over by Aidit, the principal feature of which was a “Dance of the Fragrant Flowers” performed by naked Gerwani girls.

In a sense we can group together the demonization of women in the mythology of the East Javanese period (c.930-1527 CE) and in the black propaganda of the founding of the New Order (1965-66) by understanding that folklore, literary tales and temple reliefs all represent ancient forms of “mass media” that had more local effects than the modern mass media that were open to the use of the New Order in their campaign to destroy the Communist Party, Gerwani and a great many teachers and intellectuals who were judged “guilty by association” with these official organizations. In both cases the most effective way to create demonic images of women has been by suggesting that women will engage in sexually uncontrolled and violent behaviour when not “kept in place” in the domestic sphere, under the guidance of male authority figures. This theme is less prominent in the tale of *Sudamala*, but comes out strongly in the *Tantu Panggelaran* tale, and is reflected in modern times in the reliefs of the Pancasila Sakti monument in Jakarta, where President Suharto is shown sheltering behind him the gentle nursing mothers of his idealized domestic world from the “horrors” of the orgy of sexually charged violence “perpetrated” by members of Gerwani and the Pemuda Rakyat at the Lubang Buaya field, East Jakarta.

In mythological terms the first phase of development of accusations that women morally loose and adulterous can be traced to the composition of the *kidung Sudamala* in circa 1365 CE during the East Javanese period, where the local Javanese poets depicted the beautiful goddess Uma as committing adultery with
Lord Brahma. Uma is then depicted as being cursed to take on a demonic form as Durga and live in a graveyard for twelve years until her husband, Shiva, the most powerful male figure in East Javanese religion, carried out her exorcism and allowed her to return to her benign and benevolent form as the gentle goddess Uma. This ancient pattern of controlling women through libelling and labelling women as uncontrolled demonic figures has continued to be a theme throughout the history of Indonesia, reaching its most terrifying fulfilment in the black propaganda that led to the brutal murders and imprisonment of the women of Gerwani in modern times.

A rationale for studying the topic of transformations of images of the goddess Durga

I believe that my study of transformations of the goddess Durga from a beautiful warrior goddess in India into a demonic goddess in Java and Bali can be an important contribution to both Indian and Indonesian readers because it shows different perceptions of the goddess Durga after her long journey from mainland India to Java and Bali. I hope that by reading my work, the readers will be able to gain a wider and deeper knowledge about the origin and development of images of Durga. For my fellow Indonesians, especially the women of Bali, I would like to introduce the reality around images of Durga, showing that she was not originally the terrifying goddess that we see reflected in images of the present time. For Indian readers of this work, I hope to provide an understanding of the historical background that lies behind the very different ways that we Indonesians perceive the goddess Durga, especially in Java and Bali.

My study about the goddess Durga is not only about the ancient myths of the birth and development of the goddess Durga and her eventual transformation in Javanese and Balinese images into a demonic deity, but also about conceptual links to the modern myth of the demonization of the Gerwani, which during the Old Order period of Indonesia’s first president Soekarno was the most progressive women’s organization in Indonesia, devoted to carrying out positive work in social welfare and education for women. Both Durga and Gerwani were very attractive in the
beginning of their careers in Indonesia, but were either gradually or suddenly transformed into an ugly, demonic form through a process of myth-making or black propaganda that was largely controlled by male authority figures.

The goddess Durga was accused of committing adultery with the God Brahma in tales like the *Sudamala* story, and in the palm leaf manuscript *Andha Bhuvana* with a handsome shepherd named Rare Angon who was in actual fact her husband, the great deity Shiva, or Bhatara Guru. Gerwani members were accused of having a sex orgy with PKI members at the Lubang Buaya field of Jakarta at the very moment that they were “sexually mutilating and murdering” the generals who had been kidnapped on the night of 30 September 1965. These myths were not spread through literary documents or temple reliefs but more immediately, and with a much more disastrous effect, by mass media like the daily newspaper *Angkatan Bersendjata*. In subsequent years they were memorialized further in the history text books for the national curriculums for Indonesian students and in the government sponsored film entitled *Pengkhianatan G.30.S/PKI* (The Treachery of the 30 September Movement/Indonesian Communist Party) directed by Arifin C. Noer, one of Indonesia’s earliest and greatest cinematographers.

**Review of the Literature**

The study of the development of images of Durga in Indonesia has involved several disciplines, including archaeology, art history and the history of literature. Because my dissertation is also concerned with the demonization of images of women in the modern mass media my review of the literature also includes references to works on modern history.

Both Indonesian and Western scholars have worked on the study of the goddess Durga from the point of view of archaeology and art history. The study of Durga in these disciplines is a very rich topic because of the wealth of archaeological remains in the form of images of Durga Mahisasuramardini statues found in Java and Bali that represent a historical range between the 8th and 15th centuries CE.
Many of those statues have been moved from their original places, but there are some still *in situ* in their original locations, usually in the northern cella (or niche of the carved exterior) of Hindu temples of Java like those at Candi Prambanan or the smaller temples of Gedong Songo. Colonial period scholars like J. Knebel (1903, 1906) and J. Boeles (1941) and researchers from the post-Independence period of Indonesia like Ratnaesih Maulana (1979) have done intensive research on the iconography of free-standing images of Durga Mahisasuramardini in Indonesia.

In addition to the free-standing statues of Durga Mahisasuramardini, there are also some reliefs found in the Hindu temple complex established during the East Javanese period (c.930-1527 CE) where Durga was depicted as a demonic goddess. The bas-reliefs of these Hindu temples of East Javanese period have been intensively studied by van Stein Callenfels (1925) and Satyawati Sulaeman (1981). These two scholars not only worked on the images of Durga in the reliefs but also they tried to connect the whole story of the reliefs with Old Javanese texts of the *kidung* genre, especially the *Sudamala*.

Shifting to works that have been written from the perspective of comparative religion, we can refer to works of R. Goris (1931) and H. Overbeck (1939), who focussed on the role played by the worship of Durga in the religious life in Java and Bali during the Majapahit period (1293-1527 CE), and the relationship between the worship of Durga and the Bhairava form of Tantrism which they believe flourished in Java, especially during the East Javanese period, and had a powerful effect on religious practices in the Pejeng-Bedulu area of southern Bali. However, these two scholars are not entirely clear on which Durga they mean to refer to in their studies, whether Durga Mahisasuramardini or the demonic form of Durga that developed in the *Sudamala* tale, and later the *Calon Arang* plays.

The Indonesian scholar who has most recently devoted a major work to the study of the goddess Durga is Hariani Santiko (1987), who earned her doctorate at the University of Indonesia in Jakarta for her work entitled *Kedudukan Bhatari Durga di Jawa Pada Abad X-XV Masehi*, “The Position of the Goddess Durga in Java
during the $10^{th}$-$14^{th}$ centuries CE”. In her thesis, Santiko tried to respond to three major problems related to the development of images of Durga in Java. First, why did images of Durga Mahisasuramardini take on a demonic form during their later development in East Java? Second, what were the conceptions of worshipping Durga in Java? And third, what was the relationship between the iconography of the goddess Durga and the Old Javanese texts that include scenes featuring Durga?

Since Santiko is the scholar who has most recently worked on the problem of Durga in Java, I will describe her work at length. Santiko (1987) classified her archaeological findings into two major groups based on the date and the geographical sites: Group I consists of statues found in West and Central Java which represent the beginning of the Hindu-Buddhist period in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago ($8^{th}$-$9^{th}$ or $10^{th}$ centuries CE), while Group II consists of those statues produced during the East Javanese period ($c.10^{th}$-$15^{th}$ centuries CE). However, this classification is not entirely clear-cut, because sometimes there were statues representing the end of the Hindu-Buddhist period in Central Java, rather than in East Java.

Santiko also elaborated upon the invocations of the goddess Durga found in the Old Javanese inscriptions, especially in the curse part of the inscriptions. Durga was the only female deity among the series of Hindu deities invoked in the curse sections of the inscriptions, where she is asked to bring down severe punishment on all those who violate the conditions of the *sima*, which can be described as lands granted to religious communities with a guarantee of partial or complete relief from the taxes normally due to the king. Santiko has given us a complete list of the inscriptions where the name of Durga is invoked to safe-guard the eternal validity of the conditions of the grant for the *sima*. However, we should note that there are only two inscriptions that explicitly mention the worship for Durga in her *krura* or terrifying form. These were the Camundi inscription of Argo Mulyo, dated 1292 CE and the Trailokyapuri (or Jiu) II inscription dated 1486 CE. Both these inscriptions were issued during the East Javanese period ($c.930$-$1527$ CE).
Santiko then continued her work on the goddess Durga by looking at the relationship of images of Durga with literary representations in Old Javanese works of the *kakawin*, *gancaran* (prose) and *kidung* genres. Santiko first focuses on works in *kakawin* form, where she notes that Durga is described in the *kakawin Ghatotkacasraya* as a goddess who accepts human sacrifice, but is benevolent towards her devotees, while in the *kakawin Sutasoma*, Durga is depicted as a warrior goddess who protects her devotees, regardless of whether they are on the side of the hero Sutasoma, or the antagonist, the man-eating king Porusada. The *Ghatotkacasraya* was composed during the Kadiri period in East Javanese history (c.1042-1222 CE) by Mpu Panuluh, while the *Sutasoma* was composed by Mpu Tantular during the reign of Hayam Wuruk (1351-1389 CE), who ruled the Majapahit kingdom of East Java during what is considered by many historians to have been its “golden age”.

In her study of Old Javanese language works in prose form (*gancaran*), Santiko has looked at the *Calon Arang* story based on the translation by Poerbatjaraka in 1926. This important tale about an angry widow who attempts to destroy the kingdom of Airlangga by transforming herself into Rangda, the terrifying devotee of Durga, still plays an important role in Balinese ritual and performing arts.

Santiko has also looked at the tale of the curse of Bhatara Guru that led to the demonic form of Durga as recorded in the *Tantu Panggelaran*, a work that according to Pigeaud (1924:46-51) and Santiko (1987:233) was composed between 1500-1635 CE. Finally, Santiko (1987:241) looks at the *Koravaasrama* a late composition believed to have been completed before 1636 CE which was published in a critical edition of Swellengrebel in 1936. The *Koravaasrama* is a work of cosmogony and cosmology based on the tale of the revival of the forces of the Korava faction after their death during the *Bharatayuddha*, the Great War between the five Pandava brothers with their 100 cousins the Korava.

In the *kidung* genre, works composed in “Middle Javanese” language in long, complex metres of Javanese origin, Santiko has analyzed the *kidung Sudamala* and *kidung Sri Tanjung*. According to Zoetmulder (1974:433-434) *kidung Sudamala*
should be considered, perhaps composed near the end of the Majapahit period. However, the unfinished series of reliefs of the *Sudamala* story found at Candi Tegawangi is believed to have been completed prior to the catastrophic *Paregreg* war of 1406 CE. The *kidung* work *Sri Tanjung* was probably composed at nearly the same time as the *Sudamala*. According to Prijono (1938:10) the story of *Sri Tanjung* has a very close relation with the *Sudamala*, an opinion that Santiko (1987:254) tells us was first put forward by H. N. van der Tuuk, who believed that the *Sri Tanjung* was a continuation of the *Sudamala* story.

After reviewing Javanese literary works featuring the goddess Durga, Santiko went on to look at how the goddess was portrayed in works of the Indian textual tradition. She found the clearest references to the worship of Durga in the epic *Mahabharata* and in the *Harivamsa Purana*. She has extensively described the hymns to Durga from the *Bhisa Parvan* and *Virata Parvan* books of the *Mahabharata* (Santiko 1987:265-266), and cites Payne (1933:39) who pointed out that the hymn to Durga in the *Mahabharata* is very similar to the hymn to Durga found in the *Devi Mahatmya* section of the *Markandeya Purana*. Santiko thus follows Payne, who concluded that the hymns to Durga in the *Mahabharata* were a later interpolation inspired by the *Devi Mahatmya* that were added to the *Mahabharata* sometime in the 3rd - 4th centuries CE.

My review of Santiko’s work gave me inspiration to continue the study of “the journey of Durga” by looking more deeply into parts of the story that were not fully developed by Santiko herself. By consulting with Professor Santiko in 2002, I learned that she felt that her study could be extended to include a focus on the development of images of Durga in Bali, and she suggested that I take on that task. I also decided that I needed to study the texts of the *kakawin* and *kidung* genres and the evidence of the inscriptions in order to gain first-hand knowledge of the perspectives these textual traditions took on the role of the goddess.

Outside of the works of Knebel (1903,1906), Boeles (1941,1979), van Stein Callenfels (1925), Sulaeman (1981), Goris (1931), Overbeck (1939) and Santiko
When my research reached a point where I became interested in the parallels between the demonization of images of Durga in Javanese and Balinese mythology and the mass media campaign of late 1965 that led to the destruction of the Indonesian Women’s Movement (Gerwani), I found that I needed to consult both survivors of the events of 1965-1966 and to take advantage of secondary resources in English and Indonesian languages in order to learn more about what is known about the tragic events following the “coup attempt” of 30 September 1965.

Many scholars, both Indonesian and Western have worked intensively on analyzing the tragic events of 30 September 1965, and their aftermath. It is sometimes difficult to judge the reliability of sources since from the Indonesian side the perspective of writers very much depends on their political stance and their understanding of the events leading up to the tragedy of 30 September 1965. Some writers think of themselves as having been potential victims of a coup and massacre planned by the Communist Party (PKI) and “foiled” by the forces of General Suharto, while other writers are (or were) survivors of the brutal crackdown on intellectuals, teachers and artists considered to be Communist “sympathizers” by political parties like the PNI (Indonesian Nationalist Party) or religious organizations like NU (Nahdlatul Ulama). Those who think of themselves as having been “potential victims of the PKI” write the “truth” from their side, while survivors of the brutality encouraged by the government during the founding of the New Order (March 1966 to May 1998) write the “truth” from their side.

The testimony of Lajumono (1999:87) about the events of 1964 at Jengkol, Adanadan and Plemahan gives us an example of writing typical of people who saw the PKI and Gerwani as dangerous forces dedicated to the destruction of traditional values. Lajumono testifies: “I saw those women being naked without any clothes at all, lining up and they once mocked us by bending their naked body showing their
bottom toward us. It was really an immoral view. I know that they were Gerwani members”.

A completely different picture comes out in the confession Siti Arifah, who was one of the volunteers for the Pemuda Rakyat (Indonesian Youth League) who were camping at the Lubang Buaya field in September 1965 and subsequently (falsely) identified as members of a coalition of Gerwani and Pemuda forces dedicated to supporting the “coup” of the PKI. Siti Arifah, who was 16 years old at the time of her arrest and imprisonment, gave the following account of the events following the “coup attempt” of 30 September: “I witnessed the soldiers kill the Generals and ran home afterwards. I was arrested at nine o’clock in the morning and put in prison for two weeks. I was beaten and interrogated. They forced us to undress and to dance naked in front of them while they took pictures” (Wieringa, 2002:296).

How much “truth” do we know from the testimony and confessions of persons killed or imprisoned in 1965-66, from interviews or from recordings of oral history? We may never know the full truth because the events of late 1965 are still shrouded by mystery, sometimes as a simple result of the fallibility of human memory, sometimes the result of conscious attempts to cover up the true nature of events in order to protect people who may have been involved either in the “coup attempt” or the genocide that followed.

There are still many controversies surrounding the events of September-October 1965. The version of events that has been accepted as official for teaching history in Indonesian schools has been that of Nugroho Notosusanto and Ismail Saleh (1967). However, many scholars disagree with this government version of history, especially its treatment of the tragic mass killings of 1965-66. Benedict R. Anderson and Ruth McVey (1971) were among the first Western scholars who offered another version of the events of September-October 1965 which was in contrast to the government version. This resulted in the banning of Anderson’s entry to Indonesia all throughout the remainder of the period of rule of President

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4 My own translation from the Indonesian text.
Suharto’s era. A more recent study by the Yogyakarta-based Centre for Information Analysis (1999) presented nearly the same view of events as that first put forward by Anderson and McVey. This suggests that much of what was presented as “historical” during the period of Suharto’s rule was designed to support the government version of events, since accounts that presented a more sympathetic view of the suffering began to surface immediately after the fall of Suharto (1998), and revived more careful analyses like that of Anderson and McVey (1971).

Other more recent works by Indonesian authors have presented a more balanced view of historical events than was possible during the New Order period (1966-1998). These include the works of historians like Asvi Warman Adam (1998) and Dr. Pj Suwarno (1998) who are objective in their analysis of the tragic events of September-October 1965. As historians who try to present their findings from a neutral perspective, they have suggested that the Indonesian people should learn from their history and not repeat the same mistakes which have been made in the past. One of the latest and most up-to-date works on the events of 1965-66, written by Canadian political scientist John Roosa (2006), has been translated into Indonesian (2008) as Dalih Pembunuhan di Jawa dan Bali, (“Pretext for the Mass Murders in Java and Bali”), thus bringing to the forefront a view of the events of 1965-66 which is beginning to have an effect on the thinking of a younger generation of Indonesians. In Roosa’s analysis the “coup attempt” of 30 September 1965 was indeed designed by the Special Committee of the Communist Party, but almost immediately went wrong and led to the murder of six generals, but not in the lurid and gory circumstances described in publications of the Armed Forces that began to circulate very soon after the collapse of the conspiracy. Roosa believes that these events were magnified and embellished upon to provide the pretext for a brutal crackdown on intellectuals, artists, teachers and members of the Women’s Movement and thus to provide a rationale for a complete revamping of the political climate of Indonesia.

New Order period publications are important for this study not so much because of what they tell us about Indonesian history, but because of what they do not mention. During the New Order regime, the Department of Information Republic of Indonesia (Departemen Penerangan RI), published a booklet in 1968 titled (in translation) *Women’s Movement in Indonesia: a Chronological Survey*. This book presents one version of the women’s movement in Indonesia, beginning with the story of Raden Adjeng Kartini, and focussing on her struggle to achieve equal rights for women in education and the ability to form organizations devoted to their welfare. But the organizations this book focuses on are mainly those created under the New Order, including Dharma Wanita, an organization for women that was designed for the “wives of men in the Indonesian civil service” and emphasizing the role of first lady Tien Suharto in fostering organizations for women like the PKK (*Pendidikan Kesejahteraan Keluarga*, “[Organization for] Education in Family Welfare”). This organization is devoted to providing instruction to women in home economics and education of children, but its effectiveness in bettering the lives of women seems to be doubted by many Indonesian women, who often jokingly refer to PKK as meaning *perempuan kurang kerja*, “women with no jobs”! The Indonesian women and organizations that are presented as models for women in this book are those that have been idealized by the New Order regime. Tien Suharto, the first lady of Indonesia under the New Order regime, receives prominent attention but progressive left-wing women’s organization like Gerwani that made great strides in the service of women during the first 15 years of an independent Indonesia receive no mention at all, apparently because they do not fit the passive model of “motherly” Indonesian women favoured by Suharto. Even Herlina, a woman who rose to fame as a para-trooper during the period of Soekarno, received no credit for her role in defence of the country, even though she was considered an outstanding heroine during the Old Order period of Soekarno.

Since my work in Chapter Seven focuses on the birth and development of the Women’s Movement of Indonesia (Gerwani) and attempts to draw parallels between the destruction of Gerwani and the demonization of images of Durga in Java and Bali, I will review the work of Saskia Wieringa (1999,2002) at some length. Her work has been published in both English and Indonesian, as *Sexual*...
Politics in Indonesia (2002) and Penghancuran Gerakan Perempuan di Indonesia (1999), which can be translated as the Destruction of the Women’s Movement in Indonesia. Wieringa is the first scholar who found the courage to carry out research on Gerwani. She carried out her research in Sumatra and Java by collecting documents and by interviewing survivors of the destruction of Gerwani, as well as persons opposed to Gerwani who were involved in its brutal suppression. This subject is difficult to research. This is not just because of the policies and ideology of the New Order, which made great efforts to portray Gerwani members as enemies of the state, as atheists who were morally loose and the murderers of the generals killed during the failed coup attempt of September 1965. It is also due to the fact that several founding members of Gerwani had close associations with members of the PKI, or Communist Party, which during the period of Soekarno’s era of “Guided Democracy” (1959-1965) were in an intense and bitter conflict with nationalist parties like the PNI, Army and Islamic groups like the Nahdlatul Ulama. This conflict was at its most intense during 1965, and caused many supporters of the PNI and similar parties and organizations to fear for their lives. As a result many felt justified in later taking an active role in the brutal suppression of the PKI and Gerwani, but were left with feelings of shame or guilt that made it very difficult for them to speak of their experiences.

Wieringa was the first scholar who was able to find ways to give voice to survivors of the suppression of Gerwani, and also to persons on the other side of the conflict. She first evaluated the role of women’s organizations during the struggle for Independence (1945-49) and how this led to the founding of Gerwani in the spirit of revolutionary fervour that was generated by the struggle to achieve freedom from Dutch colonialism. She then went on to examine how the leadership of Gerwani were able to work the political space of the first decade of independence, and how they manoeuvred between the various political actors who were important in the events of 1950-1965. She wanted to evaluate the history of Gerwani not only from the point of view of outsiders who had a vested interest in painting Gerwani in a negative light, but also from the point of view of members of the organization who survived the executions and imprisonment that were the fate of many Gerwani members beginning in early 1966. She also carefully traced the New Order
development of a mythology of moral depravity and sexual perversion that was linked to the entirely untrue accusation that Gerwani members had sexually mutilated the generals who were murdered at the Lubang Buaya field, Jakarta.

From the black propaganda spread through mass media during the early New Order period, Gerwani members were completely marginalized by the society, they had once served until the months following the failed “coup attempt” of 1965. It was only after the fall of Suharto in May 1998 that people in Indonesia began to speak up about the other side of the official version of the Movement of 30 September 1965. Those who survived the mass-killings conducted by the opponents of the PKI in most cases spent many years in jail from having been accused of having some connection with the Communist party. After being released from their long suffering in jail, they still had to face a larger “prison” because they had to carry a special identity card containing the sign ET, meaning Eks-Tapol, or “ex-political prisoner” which discredited them in terms of occupational and educational possibilities and reduced their role in society to that of second class citizens. Wieringa traced many examples of lives that had been destroyed by the suppression of Gerwani and the PKI, and inspired me to conduct interviews with survivors of this period whom I was able to meet in Jakarta, Yogyakarta and Bali during the latter part of my dissertation research.

Wieringa did not try to develop her work by connecting the events of the destruction of the lives the Gerwani members with the more ancient development of a mythology that cast an unfavourable light on images of women, and which might be able to be used as an important reference in studies of the broader theme of the demonization of images of women in Indonesia. Some scholars like Anderson and McVey (1971) have related the late September movement with events that took place during the Majapahit period by quoting lines from the famous chronicle Nagarakertagama composed by Mpu Prapanca in 1365 CE, but they were interested mainly in the way that crowd scenes are reported in the Majapahit chronicles. Hughes (1967:27) in his work titled Indonesian Upheaval paid his attention to the fact that the troops which were assigned to set the coup in motion were given code names like Pasopati, Cakrabirawa and Bhima Sakti that
derived from ancient names of characters and concepts recorded in the Javanese shadow plays (wayang), thus highlighting Soekarno’s love of using the story of the conflict between the Pandava and Korava factions that is preserved in the shadow plays from the Indian epic Mahabharata to illustrate the struggle that he saw as necessary in order to make Indonesia into the new society that he envisioned. This work is important because it shows that the mythological background of Javanese and Balinese beliefs was very strong in the public consciousness in the period of Soekarno, and could be used to make political statements.

Slamet Sutrisno (2003:51-62) in his work titled Kontroversi dan Rekonstruksi Sejarah (Controversy and the Reconstruction of History) gives us an example of an Indonesian writer who continues to invoke the myths and semi-historical events of the past to explain contemporary events. In this work, he compares Suharto with the famous Ken Angrok (Arok), who founded the Singasari dynasty in 1222 CE. Both characters are depicted by Sutrisno as the sons of farmers who gained their power in the government by carrying out a series of murders (Ken Angrok as depicted in the 16th century historical work Pararaton) or a military coup (Suharto) just as Ken Angrok is said to have killed Tunggul Ametung, the legitimate ruler of Tumapel, using a magically powerful keris blade made by Mpu Gandring. Suharto is portrayed as having seized power from Soekarno by forcing him to sign the famous document (now missing) titled Super Semar (Surat Perintah Sebelas Maret) or the “Legislative Order of 11 March” in 1966. Works like that of Sutrisno illustrate the continuing power of mythic themes to serve as tools of interpretation, or - in the case of the myth of the sexual deviance of Gerwani members - to serve as political tools and the instruments of destruction.

In the last chapter of my study, I attempt to find the link or parallel between myths that concern demonization of the image of the goddess Durga with the mass media campaign that led to the destruction of Gerwani during the transition from the Old Order of Soekarno to the New Order of Suharto. In this effort the work of Wieringa (2002) has been most important, but I have also found very helpful the other works I have reviewed more briefly above.
Methodology and Sources

Since my study is concerned with transformations of representations of the goddess Durga between India, Java and Bali, I have used a comparative methodology for this work, based largely on gathering information from primary and secondary sources in India and Indonesia. My main goal in using a comparative methodology was to compare the images, perceptions and modes of worship of the goddess Durga in India and in Indonesia. In addition to gathering textual information and information from interviews, I also gained first-hand information through photographic documentation and through participant-observation of rituals and performances that I was able to attend in several areas of India, Java and Bali.

Hinduism refers to a religious mainstream which spread over a large territory marked by significant ethnic and cultural diversity. Scholars working in the discipline of Comparative Religion like Eliade (1975) attempted to find broad, cross-cultural parallels and unities in religion, especially in myths. I am interested in the possibility of larger cultural patterns, but in this work have chosen to take a more historical approach, seeking in this way to arrive at an understanding of the specific case of transformations of images of the goddess Durga before attempting to relate this pattern of development to more universal or broader themes. The Hinduism that spread over the archipelago during the first millennium was amalgamated with local traditions and cults, which coined a unique type of Hinduism. For example; the famous Hindu epics, the Ramayana and Mahabharata were adopted into literary works in the Old Javanese language; however, there were many indigenous developments at work in this process, leading to works like the Sudamala, which reflect local socio-cultural beliefs and practices and have little to do with what we find in mainland India. My work thus is more closely focussed on historical issues rather than those of comparative religion. Nonetheless, I hope that my findings will be useful for scholars and students of Comparative Religion.

I conducted my research in India first in 2002-2003 and returned for a second and third round of fieldwork in 2005 and 2007. I was able to work with a field assistant for some of this work and at other times carried out my work alone, especially
when it was concerned mainly with photographic documentation or gathering textual information. My primary sources included photographic records of images of the goddess Durga that I found in situ in local temples where images of Durga (under various names) often serve to protect the lands of village, tribal or clan groups or as pilgrimage sites for villagers seeking protection from sickness, crop failure and similar problems. I also collected photographic records of images of Durga that once served as the tutelary deities of ancient kingdoms or powerful families and are now housed in public museums. Finally, I collected many photographs of images of Durga installed in secular places like markets, shops and public buses or heavy goods carriers, whose drivers often favour pictures of Durga or other deities as decoration (and a source of protection) for their vehicles.

In order to gain further knowledge about how Durga is worshipped in India, I participated in a number of religious ceremonies performed to venerate the goddess in several areas of northern India. I found that Indian devotees worship the goddess Durga under a great many different names, including Sitala, Kali Ma, Badrakali and Ambika depending on the purpose of the worship, and the particular place that is considered under the protection of the goddess in one of her local forms. While I was in India in 2002, I was fortunate to have an opportunity to attend a special ceremony performed for the goddess known as Durga Puja or Navaratri (“nine nights”), which is celebrated all over India sometime in September-October, the exact time being determined by the calculation of lunar and solar cycles of the Indian astrological system. The most elaborate celebrations for Navaratri are performed in Kolkata and Varanasi; therefore in early October 2002, I visited those two places assisted by Kashika Singh, a close friend whom I had come to know as an expert Hindi language instructor. We journeyed first to Kolkata, then to Varanasi, to observe the full process of the Navaratri ceremonies there, to gain insight from the devotees and record the visual evidence of the images and the pandals, the temporary shrines erected for the worship of Durga together with other female deities during the Durga Puja. To record my finding about the goddess Durga, I equipped myself with a still camera and a video camera, thus gathering information that I was later able to put to use in presentations of my work and as illustrations for my dissertation.
In addition to conducting personal observation about the goddess Durga, I also conducted both formal and informal interviews with people in India from all walks of life, male and female. I did not formulate specific questions for my informal interviews but simply asked people to talk about what they think and know about the goddess Durga. In conducting informal interviews, I worked alone recording my conversations and taking field notes on the information that I was seeking. However, for getting more complex information about Durga, I hired an Indian assistant to help me to carry out more formal interviews aimed at gaining a deeper understanding. From experience working with students in Indonesia, I had learned about what is sometimes called the “courtesy bias” in Asian cultures. Because India is similar to Indonesia in this way, but not exactly, I thought it would be important to know more about Indian forms of courtesy and appropriate behaviour before conducting formal interviews. For the formal interviews, I composed my questions and discussed whether they were appropriate or not with my assistant. I used a tape recorder while conducting the formal interviews and later asked my instructor in Hindi language to work with me on translation into English, because my Hindi was not strong enough to make it possible for me to understand more complex discussions.

For my observation in the museums of India, I focused on images of the goddess Durga in the many forms taken over the history of the kingdoms of India. However, I did not limit myself to images of the goddess Durga, but also paid attention to images of other deities (especially Shiva, Ganesha and Agastya) who played important roles in the Javanese Hindu pantheon. I made notes on prominent details and the iconography of the images; however, since my study is mainly from an historical perspective, I did not record the sizes of the images, as I might have done if writing from the perspective of art history.

For conducting research in Bali, I had to think first of my role as a researcher and how it fits with my religious practices and those of my family and village. Since I am a Hindu Balinese, I am among the majority of Balinese who believe in the power of the unseen spirits including the power of the goddess Durga, therefore,
before carrying out further research I began by making two pilgrimages, which in Rajasthan, the area of India where I was based in 2002-2003 are called *jatra* and *yatra*. A *jatra* is a visit to a local temple. In this case, I visited the Pura Dalem of my home village, which we believe is the sacred place for worshipping Siwa-Durga. A *yatra* is a pilgrimage that requires a visit to a temple or other sacred area at some distance from our home village. For this purpose, I visited the Pura Dalem Ped, a temple famous as being sacred to Durga that is located on the island of Nusa Penida, located about 20 kilometers off the coast of southeast Bali. The main point for carrying out *jatra* and *yatra* was to ask for the blessing of the goddess and for “permission” from the goddess Durga to mention her name many times during the process of my writing and presentations. The goddess Durga is so feared in Bali that many people are afraid to even mention her name, and may suspect us of wanting to learn to practice black magic if we mention her name too often. For this reason, I only felt safe and secure for doing research in Bali on the goddess Durga after I had completed the pilgrimages and prayers that we Balinese believe are essential to providing a safe situation. This also helped me in my interviews and research since I felt more at ease and was able to explain to people that my study of images of Durga was a research project, not connected with any desire to gain magical power, and conducted only after asking “permission” from the goddess. As in the case of my work in India, I conducted interviews mainly on an informal basis, discussing beliefs and religious practices that concern the goddess Durga with people from all walks of life, male and female, and people of both high caste and commoners. For documentation of my work, I took many photographs of images of the goddess Durga found both in the ancient temples and modern temples with the hope of being able to trace the development of images of the goddess Durga from ancient times to modern times.

For deepening my knowledge about Balinese beliefs about Durga, I read transcriptions of many *lontar* (palm-leaf) manuscripts that have a connection with the goddess Durga in her various roles in the Balinese community. Those transcriptions of *lontar* manuscripts and many of the originals are available for public use in the *Pusat Dokumentasi Kebudayaan Bali*, the Centre for Documentation of Balinese Culture that is located in the Renon district of Denpasar.
Bali. I also spent some time at the library of the Faculty of Letters of Udayana University in Denpasar, which has a smaller, but very important collection of palm-leaf manuscripts and transcriptions of many of these texts.

In Java, I conducted research several times for periods of several weeks each, ranging from the year 2003 through 2008. At the commencement of my research in Java, I mainly visited museums and Hindu temple complexes and talked to people informally at these locations, concentrating at that stage on gathering photographic evidence of the goddess Durga and other deities and sages of the Javanese Hindu pantheon. For this part of my research, I visited the National Museum in Jakarta, the Museum of the Candi Prambanan temple complex in Central Java and the Trowulan in East Java that is in the area that was once the capital of the Majapahit dynasty (c.1293-1527 CE). At this stage of my work, I visited the temple complexes at Candi Prambanan, Candi Sambisari and the Gedong Songo complex in Central Java.

During the second round of my field work in Java (2004-5), I began my work by conducting formal interviews with several scholars from Gadjah Mada University, following up with informal interviews with visitors to the nearby Prambanan temple complex where an important image of Durga Mahisasuramardini is installed in the northern niche of the Candi Siwa shrine at that complex. The point of interviewing the visitors was to find out from them what they knew about that free-standing statue of Durga there, and the local stories about a princess called Loro Jonggrang that have developed around the image of Durga at that site. During this phase of my research, I was also able to make two trips to East Java where I collected photographic evidence at Candi Tigawangi, Candi Singasari, Candi Jawi and Candi Sukuh. Candi Tigawangi, located in the Kediri area of East Java, is especially a site where the goddess Durga plays an important role in the relief series illustrating the “folktale” that is recorded in Javanese literature in the kidung Sudamala. The same tale is also recorded in the reliefs of Candi Sukuh, a temple located high on the slopes of Mount Lawu. Candi Singasari, located north of the city of Malang, and once the capital of the Singasari dynasty (1222-1292 CE) is important as an East Javanese site that retains the form of the Javanese pantheon
represented by earlier sites of Central Java like Prambanan, Candi Sambisari and the small temples of the Gedong Songo complex, located near Ambarawa in northern Central Java.

For the final chapter of my dissertation, which is about the convergence of ancient and modern myth making in the establishment of the New Order ideology, I had to carry out my field work by interviewing survivors of the tragic mass killings of late 1965 and 1966 that followed the abortive “coup attempt” of 30 September 1965. In addition to interviewing survivors of the Indonesian Women’s Movement (Gerwani), I also gathered photographic evidence from museums and monuments like the Pancasila Sakti monument in Jakarta, where myths about the role of the women of Gerwani in the murder of six major generals are presented in visual form. I carried out my field work for this part of my study in Java and Bali in 2007-2008 in order to gain more information on the tragic killings and imprisonments of 1965-66 through interviews and photographic documentation and secondary resources.

I conducted my field work in Bali by travelling with an assistant to several areas that were prominent as sites of mass killings during the tragic events of 1965-66. I interviewed both male and female survivors, but concentrated on women who had been members of Gerwani. I was able to interview and become friends with one of the most prominent Gerwani leaders of Bali, and to share in her life, which happily has become much easier in the last decade as Indonesians begin to be more sensitive to the sufferings of survivors of the terrible events of the mid-1960s. In conducting my field interviews for this part of my dissertation, I was assisted by Isaac Holub, a student from NYU (New York University) who attended the SIT Study Abroad Program in Bali/Indonesia in Spring 2008 and very kindly took time at the end of his study to work with me on filmed documentation of my interviews.

For my fieldwork in Java on the events of 1965, I visited the Museum Pengkhianatan G.30.S/PKI and Pancasila Sakti monument at Lubang Buaya in the Jakarta area several times, making notes and collecting photographic documentation of the visual tableau of the Museum Pengkhianatan and reliefs of
the Pancasila Sakti monument. That latter provide visual evidence of the
demonization of images of the women of Gerwani that was an important part of the
black propaganda that was developed during the early years of the New Order. For
my interviews with survivors living in Jakarta, I was once again assisted by Isaac
Holub. This was also the case in Yogyakarta, Central Java, where I interviewed
several survivors and their relatives. During this part of my fieldwork, I was very
fortunate to gain an opportunity to join a monthly meeting of Kiper (Kiprah
Perempuan), and in this way to learn first-hand the goals and directions of the
brave women of this organization, whose members were survivors of the mass
killings of 1965-66.

By combining visual and textual evidence on images of the goddess Durga in India,
Java and Bali and by augmenting this evidence with information gathered from
interviews, I was able to compose my dissertation from a comparative perspective,
basing my work mainly on a historical perspective, but also including information
from the fields of art history, archaeology and anthropology.

**Outline of Chapters**

Chapter One concentrates on the evolution of the worship of the “great goddess” in
India, where I trace a line of development from the Palaeolithic age to the Indus
Valley civilization, claiming that worship of the mother goddess was an important
element of the Indus Valley civilization (c.3000–1500 BCE). I also draw attention
to a famous seal showing a man sitting in a yogic posture which many scholars feel
represents another important aspect of Indus Valley religion that gained later
prominence in the post-Vedic age in the worship of the god Shiva, especially his
phallic aspect as the linga.

Following Zimmer (1955), I claim that these elements of the Indus Valley religion
were temporarily displaced by the worship of the nature gods of the Vedic
pantheon during the Vedic period (c.1500-800 BCE). In the subsequent Epic period
(c.200 BCE-200 CE) and Puranic period (c.200-800 CE), the worship of the
goddess originally gained prominence in the Puranic period in connection with the cult of Shiva.

In Chapter One, I pay special attention to the *Markandeya Purana*, especially cantos 81-93, which over the centuries have gained the status of a separate text called the *Devi Mahatmya*, especially the connection of the *Markandeya Purana* and *Devi Mahatmya* with the region of the Vindhya hills and the Brahmanical clan (*gotra*) of the Bhargavas. These elements of the *Markandeya Purana* are significant in my study of the “journey of the goddess to Java and Bali” because of the importance of the legendary sage Agastya, who is also closely associated with the area of the Vindhya and was incorporated into the Central Javanese pantheon alongside Ganesha, Shiva and the goddess Durga Mahisasuramardini, whose worship is the main focus of the *Devi Mahatmya*.

I attempt some speculation on why the goddess has so many names in the *Devi Mahatmya* and why she is always portrayed as a beautiful young goddess who incorporates the powers (*shakti*) of all the male deities. In the first case, I link many names of the goddess to the efforts of the Brahmanical authors of the Puranas to draw many local goddesses into the mainstream or “great tradition” form of Hinduism.

I also discuss Kersenboom’s work (1987) on the “ever-auspicious” (*nitya-sumanggali*) nature of women who were dedicated as representatives of the goddess at many South Indian shrines in the pre-Independence era, and I discuss Doniger’s work (1980) which contrasts “motherly” and “milk-withholding” forms of the goddess in Indian mythology and religion.

Chapter Two is about the Goddess Durga in Java, where two forms of representation of the goddess were developed, especially after the shift of power from Central Java to East Java in circa 930 CE. The two forms taken by representations of the goddess Durga in East Java can be looked at from the standpoint of anthropological, political and social aspects of the life of the East Javanese aristocracy.
The oldest representatives of the iconography of Durga found in the Central Java area are from the early 9th century CE, and the latest images found in the East Java area are dated in the late 15th century CE, thus during the reign of the Majapahit Empire (c.1293-1527 CE). In addition to free-standing statues of Durga Mahisasuramardini from the East Javanese period, images of Durga are also found in the form of bas-reliefs from a number of Hindu temples. In later developments, especially during the East Javanese period, there were two styles of representation of the goddess Durga. One is the representation of Durga Mahisasuramardini as a warrior goddess who slays the buffalo-demon (mahisa-asura), and the other represents Durga in a demonic form. This demonic form of Durga is depicted in both literary works and visual works during the East Javanese period, and can be considered a radical transformation of Indian images of Durga.

In the development of Durga images in Java there was an intertwining of two forms of Durga, and a transition between the more auspicious forms of the warrior-goddess Durga Mahisasuramardini into a demonic form, which I believe was first triggered by the role of Durga as a protector of the sanctity of lands donated to religious institutions by royal donors. In this context, Durga appears as an important female deity in the curse part of the inscriptions. I believe that this transition is also reflected in several literary works in kakawin form.

The transition from one form of representation of Durga to another seems to have happened after the shift of economic and political power from Central Java to East Java in circa 930 CE. During the central Javanese period, the role of the goddess Durga was predominantly as a warrior goddess who protected the rulers and their realm from evil-doers. In her role as a protector, the goddess Durga was often invoked in the curse sections of inscriptions for protecting “freehold lands” (simā) from trespassers against the sanctity of these lands that were typically donated to religious communities for the upkeep of shrines, monastic communities and centres of Buddhist or Hindu learning. In the curse sections of the inscriptions the goddess Durga, along with several male deities, was implored to bring down deadly punishment on all those who dared to violate the conditions of the simā. In
addition to the role of the goddess Durga in protecting the *sima*, which appears to have triggered the transformation of her images into a demonic form during the East Javanese period, there was also strong influence in East Java of the ideology and philosophy of Tantrism of both Hindu and Buddhist types. This might have contributed to a radical transformation of the goddess Durga, both in visual art and textual forms.

In Chapter Three, I connect the transformation of images of Durga in the reliefs of Candi Tigawangi to religious and political concerns of the court of Majapahit. Many scholars, both Indonesian and Western, have written about the Majapahit Empire from the point of view of political and cultural history. However, few of these scholars have attempted to link what we know about the complex history of the Majapahit dynasty to religious beliefs and practices. Since we know that the kinship system of the Majapahit royalty was quite complex, and we know from their inscriptions and other sources that priests and intellectuals of Majapahit placed great emphasis on the almost magical role played by the royal family, I intend here to look closely at connections between the kinship system of the Majapahit court with religious practices and political events. I believe these are reflected in the demonization of Durga in the images of Candi Tigawangi and the development of the *Sudamala* story.

While the narrative reliefs containing depictions of Durga at Panataran remain to be identified, the depictions of Durga at Candi Tigawangi have been positively identified as belonging to the *Sudamala* story. These reliefs, and the *Sudamala* story itself, are very important for my work, since in my view they represent a point at which demonic images of Durga emerged in connection with specific historical and socio-cultural conditions that developed during the Majapahit period.

In this chapter, I focus on a theme that I believe was very important for the Majapahit nobility as it is reflected in narrative reliefs of Candi Tigawangi, a temple located near Pare in East Java, in the old principality of Daha-Kediri. The theme that I focus on in relation to these reliefs, and the literary evidence of the *kidung Sudamala*, is the historical background of the Majapahit court, with special
emphasis on the post-mortem *sraddha* rites of Rajapatni, grandmother of the renowned Hayam Wuruk, who brought Majapahit to the height of its power in the mid-fourteenth century. I claim here that we can find a reflection of these *sraddha* rites in the narrative reliefs of Candi Tigawangi, where we find the first evidence for an important tale about a demonic form of the goddess Durga.

I believe that the prominence of the *Sudamala* tale at Tigawangi (c.1388 CE) and Sukuh (1416-1459 CE) represents a central political and religious concern of the Majapahit nobility in the late 14th and 15th centuries CE. My interpretation of these reliefs is thus in sharp contrast with the theories of Santiko (1987) and Sedyawati (1985), who believe that the transformation of images of Durga from a warrior goddess protecting the realm to a demonic form is based on “folk” interpretations of court culture. In my view, it is not likely that a shrine like Tigawangi, that was meant to memorialize a royal patron in the form of a deity, would be illustrated with reliefs that reflected the values of “folk culture”. I believe instead that artistic works like the reliefs of Candi Tigawangi reflect important concerns of the Majapahit royalty.

In Chapter Four, I examine the development of images of Durga in Bali from an historical perspective. First, I compare the image of Durga at Kutri produced in the 11th century CE with the evidence of several versions of the *Calon Arang* tale. In this *Calon Arang* story first written down in the mid 16th century CE, we can see a development that is similar to the East Javanese case, but leads to an even more clearly demonic form of the goddess. In contemporary Bali, where the *Calon Arang* tale plays a very important part in dramatic plays usually staged during temple anniversaries of the Pura Dalem, the demonic images of Durga presented in this play mean that we Balinese are very frightened of Durga, and view her as the patron of “black magic” (*pangiwa*). In this chapter, I trace the development of images of Durga in Bali, and attempt to show how Balinese society has arrived at this particular way of looking at Durga.

Very few scholars have as yet focused on the roles the goddess Durga plays within the social context of Balinese society - how and why people worship Durga, and
the effect social phenomena have had on how people see the goddess Durga. In India, the multiple and complex roles of Durga are reflected in the many epithets and forms of Durga found associated with both local temples and large pilgrimage sites. However, in Bali this complexity has merged into a single goddess who is famous for her terrifying form. In fact there are many echoes of Indian forms of the goddess Durga in Bali. For example, one of her important Indian manifestations as Sitala, the goddess who causes and can cure smallpox, is reflected in the Balinese belief that it is Durga who causes smallpox. This belief is found in the Balinese text Tutur Andha Bhuwana.

Stutterheim (1924:149) was among the first Western scholars to point out that the Hindu-Javanese goddess Durga Mahisasuramardini developed in Bali into the form of Durga-Kalika, the notorious goddess of the graveyard; however, he did not say precisely when this happened or how. But it is also true that Durga in her original role as a warrior goddess or the destroyer of enemies has been perpetuated in Balinese society. During the pre-modern period when Bali was ruled by regional kings, the goddess Durga was worshipped with Tantric rituals aimed at protecting the kingdom and destroying the enemies of the kings. This is mentioned in the literary work Ki Balian Batur (Sangra, 1989). This practice seems to be reflected in present day Bali when the goddess is worshipped to destroy personal enemies by using destructive, left-hand magical power (pangiwa). This kind of power can only be gained with the blessing of the goddess Durga, or to be more exact, Bhatari ri Dalem, the goddess of the Pura Dalem, the temple of death and purification of the dead.

It is also in the Pura Dalem that we find images of Rangda, a witch-like figure considered to be the loyal devotee of the goddess Durga. This has often led to the mistaken belief that Rangda and Durga are identical. In Bali, in order to gain Durga’s grace and blessing for this kind of effort people are advised to go to the graveyard to worship Durga, choosing an auspicious night, making specific offerings and reciting specific mantras. Many of these practices are clearly mentioned in the Calon Arang, but there are also other texts called Desti or Aji
Pangleyakan that deal specifically with this information. They must be kept very secret and are believed to be spiritually dangerous (Balinese: tenget, pingit).6

Chapter Five is about the minor role of the goddess Durga as a creator and preserver. In this chapter, I have tried to capture some of the ambiguities that surround the goddess Durga as she is known in Bali. I have shown that she not only plays a destructive role, but is also active in creative and protective roles which echo her original roles as narrated in the Puranic literature of the Devi Mahatmya section of the Markandeya Purana. However, the roles of Durga in creation and preservation have gradually been marginalized as the male deities Brahma and Vishnu have gained ascendancy in Balinese religious practices, with the result that in contemporary perceptions the major role of the god Shiva as a dissolver has been taken over by the goddess Durga by being the patroness of black magic (pangiwa), which is described in the following chapter.

In Chapter Six, I try to describe the major role of the goddess Durga as a dissolver. The role of the goddess as a destroyer is most strongly accentuated in the Balinese case. While her spouse, Lord Shiva, is said in contemporary Bali to be the destroyer, Durga is actually more famous for her destructive nature than her spouse. It is important to remember here that the Barong, who opposes Rangda in performances of the Calon Arang play, takes the form of a Chinese-lion that many scholars believe represents the protective aspect of Shiva. This protective aspect of the god Shiva (Siwa in Balinese) comes out in the Sudamala tale when he blesses Sadewa with the ability to overcome the black magic of Durga.

This chapter also describes the difference between the goddess Durga and the witch Rangda because there is some confusion in Bali about the identity of the goddess Durga. Many people think Durga and Rangda are identical, but the textual and performance sources show us that Rangda is a mythical devotee of the goddess

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6 This secrecy and inaccessibility seems to correspond to the original meaning of Durga in India where the word dur-ga means “difficult of access, hard to overcome, hard to approach, hard to achieve” (Zoetmulder, 1982:436).
Durga, who is the antagonist in the tale of *Calon Arang* or *Rangda ing Dirah* and in performances based on this legend.

It is a common belief in Bali that there is a connection between the historical Queen Mahendradatta, who ruled in the late 10\(^{th}\) and early 11\(^{th}\) centuries CE with her husband Udayana, and the mythical Rangda of the *Calon Arang* tale. This suggests that powerful women of Bali have commonly met with resistance in their lives. At the same time, there is a general fear in the Balinese patriarchal society that women who are widows, or have not produced a male heir, are likely to study and master black magic in order to seek revenge on society. At one time the wives of the warrior caste (*Ksatriya*) were required to throw themselves on the funeral pyre of their husbands, and so protect their families from the danger that could arise from the state of being a widow. The tradition of works like the *Sudamala*, *Calon Arang* and *Kunti Yadnya* suggests that women are feared for the destructive power they might bring upon their neighbours if they are not “protected” by the rules and regulations of the patriarchal society.

In Chapter Seven of this dissertation, I focus on the history of the development of the Gerwani (*Gerakan Wanita Indonesia*), the Indonesian Women’s Movement and its eventual suppression at the beginning of the New Order in a violent campaign of executions and imprisonments that destroyed the lives of many innocent women. I attempt to trace links between this modern demonization of images of women through a mass media campaign of black propaganda and the more long-term processes of demonization that are reflected in the mythical tales of the East Javanese period, including the *Sudamala*, *Rare Angon* and *Calon Arang* tales. I conclude that it is very important for the women of Indonesia to understand the mythological background that allowed the architects of the New Order to create a modern myth designed to prevent women from operating effectively outside the sphere of domestic activities and the control of male authority figures.
Chapter 1

Tracing the Ancient Roots of the Goddess

This chapter will describe the ancient roots of the worship of the mother goddess, which for South Asia can be traced very far back to the Indus Valley civilization (c.3000-1500 BCE), and in more general terms even further back to the Palaeolithic era of southern Europe. In general figurines and cave paintings of the Palaeolithic period suggest that women were worshipped from ancient times as a symbol of prosperity and fertility (O’Flaherty, 1975:238). As Mookerjee (1988:16) points out that the goddess figurines discovered at various archaeological sites at Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa shows that the pre-Vedic, non-Aryan religion and belief were a female oriented. Images of this mother goddess may have been worshipped as a family goddess, or as community goddess. While the existing remains of these images are largely of stone, it seems likely that images made of less durable materials like clay and wood were more common in ancient times.

Scholars working on the artistic and cultural traditions of India have suggested that the worship of upright stones and ring-stones that is a prominent feature of “folk religion” in rural India harks back to the Indus valley civilization of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa (Craven, 1976:5). These relatively simple symbols were incorporated into the sophisticated imagery of the linga-yoni during the Puranic period (c.200-900 CE), first as a prominent feature in the worship of Shiva, later as the primary symbol of the Shiva-Shakti, or Shakta, form of Hinduism. In this imagery, upright stones have evolved into the linga, an idealized phallic shape that represents the pure potentiality of the male aspect of the godhead, while the ring-stones have evolved into a distinctive trough-like shape surrounding the linga, which represents the female element, or yoni. In ancient South Asia the linga-yoni symbolized cosmic creation, and remains prominent in the offering of ritual oblations, which are poured over the linga and collected in the yoni. Many scholars (Hawkes, 1973; Kulke and Rothermund, 1986) feel that the linga-yoni represents an evolution of ancient themes in the religion of the Indus valley that were temporarily displaced by the fire rituals of the Indo-Aryans, but ultimately returned to South Asia as a major theme of religious practice, and in time
found their way to the very centre of the ancient Hindu cultures of the southeast Asian mainland and the archipelago.

When the Indo-Aryans came into India by way of northwest India, they brought with them a new pastoral way of life, complete with its own cultural practices and social order and a religion that was carefully preserved in the hymns and ritual handbooks of the Vedas. During the Indo-Aryans period, worship of the mother goddess seems to have been temporarily set aside, since the Aryans mainly worshipped male deities associated with nature and the prosperity of their all-important herds of cattle, rather than the mother goddess, who appears to have been more important to the settled agricultural society of the Indus valley civilization.

However, elements of the ancient worship of the mother goddess appear to live on in the Vedic tradition, where the mother goddess was worshipped in several forms, including Prthivi or Bhudevi, the goddess of the earth, Aditi, a cosmic mother goddess credited with a major role in the creation of the gods and demons, and Ushas, the goddess of the dawn.

During the Puranic period (c.200-900 CE), religious elements that are commonly associated with the Indus valley civilization or the village traditions of India appear to have returned to prominence. During this period many new gods and goddesses were incorporated into the Hindu pantheon (O’Flaherty, 1975:238); Mookerjee, 1988:16). This is reflected both in the rich sculptural traditions that reached a high-point of development in the Gupta period, and through textual incorporation into encyclopaedic collections of mythological and ritual lore by the Brahmanical authors of the Purana. This appears to have served the pragmatic purpose of adjusting the more narrow view of the Vedic religion to the needs of a broader social and geographical base, and embracing more local cults that were originally outside the Vedic religion.

As commonly known there are three major sects in the Indian sub-continent. These are the Vaishnava, Shaiva and Shakta cults (also known as Vaishnavites, Shaivites and Shaktas). Followers of the Vaishnava orders glorify Vishnu and his ten manifestations or *avatara*; the Shaiva cults glorify Shiva as the highest god; while the
Shakta glorifies the supreme goddess or Mahadevi as the highest deity. During the formative era of the Puranic period the goddess was understood as the “female energy” or shakti of one of the male deities of the “three manifestations of godhead” or trimurti. As Sarasvati, goddess of wisdom, speech and music, she was considered the consort of Brahma, the creator; as Laksmi, goddess of prosperity, she was considered the consort of Vishnu, the preserver; and as Sati, Parvati or Durga (among other names and manifestations, she was worshipped as the consort of Shiva, the mediating god who is responsible for both creation and destruction in the Puranic myths recounting his exploits. In the later Puranic period (c.600-900 CE) these three female “powers” of the male deities emerged as a single, independent female deity, the centre of worship for the Shakta cults, who reinterpreted her connection with the trimurti in terms of her “empowering energy” in the form of Maha-Sarasvati, Maha-Laksmi, and Maha-Kali, in each case the prefix maha- “great” pointing to her new status as central figure in the Shakta form of worship.

While worship of the goddess played a much less important role than that of the male deities during the Vedic period, we do find Vedic hymns dedicated to Prthivi, Aditi and Ushas as well as to Vak, the “voice” of the gods whose worship later evolved into the worship of Vak-Sarasvati as the wife of Brahma, the creator. During the Puranic period, however, the goddess assumed greater importance, first as the “energy” (shakti) of each of the gods of the trimurti, later as the “all-empowering energy” (mahashakti) of all the gods in the Shakta form of worship. This special attention to the goddess comes out first in the seminal text Devi Mahatmya, an important section of the Markandeya Purana, which many scholars feel is a somewhat later interpolation into the Markandeya Purana, during a period (c.600 CE) when local cults of the goddess had attained such popularity that they could no longer be ignored by Brahmin redactors of the Purana.

As Kinsley (1996:11) has pointed out, the Devi Mahatmya depicts the goddess as possessing three transcendent aspects: the power of illusion and redemption from it (maya), earthiness and materiality (prakriti) and power or energy (shakti). Coburn (1996:9) further explains that these three aspects of the goddess represent the integration of earlier religious themes into a single, over-arching theology of the
divine feminine by “theologian(s) who… combined and reshaped earlier formulations to make them serve the cause of a single, supreme Goddess”.

In this chapter, I will focus on the evolution of the worship of the supreme goddess as the consort of Shiva, with lesser reference to the later development of the cult of the goddess as the independent centre of her own cult. This is because the worship of the goddess as Durga, the warrior form of the consort of Shiva, plays a prominent role in the Hindu pantheon that came to Indonesia. In the next chapter, I will look at evidence for the role of Durga in this pantheon in the archaeological and textual evidence of the Central Javanese (c.700-930 CE) and East Javanese periods (c.930-1527 CE) in Javanese history.

Even today the worship of the consort of Shiva as Durga Mahisasuramardini, “Durga, the Slayer of the Buffalo Demon” plays a prominent role in the religious practices of contemporary India, while in Indonesia images of Durga Mahisasuramardini provide a link both between South Asia and the archipelago, and among the cultural manifestations of Central Java, East Java and Bali. Thus in this chapter, I will discuss in detail the evolution of the worship of Durga in India, with special reference to the Devi Mahatmya, the section of Markandeya Purana (c.600 CE).

**Indus Valley Civilization: Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa (c. 3000-1500 BCE)**

The study of ancient India has usually centred mainly on the culture of the Indo-European, or Aryan, pastoral settlers who brought their sacred books, the Vedas and their Vedic rituals to India. However, studies of archaeological sites like the ancient cities of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa reveal another side of ancient Indian culture which some scholars feel had a strong influence on the later emergence of the worship of local deities like the Mother Goddess (Craven, 1976:19).

Before the nomadic Indo-Europeans came to India (c.2000 BCE) Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa flourished in the Indus Valley. Archaeologists assume these urban centres were populated by indigenous ethnic groups that today we call the Dravidians, whose languages form a distinct group outside the domain of the Indo-European languages
From the remains at Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa archaeologists have learned that the pre-Aryan civilization of India had reached a very high level of advancement. This is evident from the arrangement of their household and public compounds, and the material they used for buildings. It is also clear that they were very concerned about maintaining a healthy environment, which can be seen from the arrangement of facilities for carrying wastewater away from the household, and providing fresh water for daily needs. From the use of red-brick as a building material, we can tell that the Dravidians had one step higher civilization than the Mesopotamian or the Greek, because in those civilizations fired red-brick was not used for household compounds, but only for certain important buildings (Zimmer, 1955:20; Craven, 1976:10; Watson, 1979:23).

There are numerous small images made of clay or limestone found in the dwellings. These images apparently served for worship at the family altars, which indicates some kind of household cult. The use of small images in the ancient Indus valley cult suggests similar practices known from the Hindu religion of today, in which small images of clay, wood, or bronze are used for family worship. These small cult images were not known to the Aryans, which means that the practice of using the images for family worship must have been an element of the pre-Aryan tradition (Coomaraswamy, 1965:6; Craven, 1976:14).

In the archaeological excavations of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa, archaeologists have also unearthed terracotta seals, most often decorated with animal figures. On the back of each of those seals we find a brief inscription using language that till this time has never been deciphered (Hawkes, 1973:292,306; Watson, 1979:26; Kinsley, 1982:10). These seals can be compared to those discovered at Mesopotamian sites, which are dated to c.3000-1500 BCE, so it is probable that the seals from the Indus valley are from roughly the same period. As these seals tell us the quality of the art of the pre-Aryans was very high, and with this we find more evidence that the pre-Aryans inhabitants of the Indus valley area must have been highly civilized (Zimmer, 1955:4, Hawkes, 1973:293). Zimmer (1955:4) has also given detailed descriptions of the

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7 This is not to mention “tribal” languages of the Munda and Toda groups that survive in modern India, and were likely also present in ancient India before the arrival of the Indo-Europeans.
terracotta seals of the Indus valley. He points out that the terracotta seals featured animal figures like elephants, cows, goats, pigs, dogs and horses. From the animal figures on the seals scholars have learned that those animals had been domesticated by the pre-Aryans. Of special interest are the domesticated cattle with long horns illustrated in the seals, since these indicate an exceptionally long history of cattle-breeding in India. Among the wild animals found on the seals were the tiger and the rhinoceros (Hawkes, 1973:296; Craven, 1976:15). The figures of elephants on the seals suggest that the pre-Aryans used elephants as a vehicle for war.

Besides seals, jewellery made from gold and silver has also been found at Indus valley sites. This usually took the form of necklaces, bracelets, girdles and earrings. These ancient styles of jewellery in later Indian developments became characteristic of the Indian style of bodily ornamentation (Hawkes, 1973:297; Craven, 1976:20). Finds of tools like knives made of flaked chert and stone maces suggest that Indus valley civilization had just emerged from the Neolithic period. We also find pottery in many shapes and forms, including children’s toys like small wagons, and small animals with moveable heads, apparently operated by strings.

The most striking objects unearthed from the ancient Indus valley sites are its terracotta female figurines (Kinsley, 1982:10). Those female figurines are presumed to have been images of household deities. Based on a plate from Zimmer (1955:A8) we can see that those female figurines were elaborately decorated. The figurines suggest that they were very similar to figurines of the Mother Goddess, which were very common in Mesopotamia and in the ancient lands of the Mediterranean area (Usha Dev, 1987:3). The Mother Goddess cult was characteristic of the Neolithic civilization in the Near East, Mesopotamia, Palestine, Egypt, Syria and south-eastern Europe. As a “Mother” she was universally the symbol of the giver of life and prosperity and the creator of the living creatures of the universe. The most ancient figures of the Mother Goddess were found in southern Europe (c.40,000–20,000 BCE). These figures almost always depicted the object of worship as a woman who is naked or half-naked, with pronounced breasts and abdomen, both features clearly related to the importance of female fertility in ancient religious beliefs and practices (Usha Dev, 1987:2).
Among the most interesting seals from Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa are one on which we find engraved an ithyphallic figure, which is seated like a yogi and has two large horns. He is naked, sits with his heels pressed close together as if in a yogic pose, has faces pointing in three directions (forward, left and right) and has an erect phallus. The figure on this seal also wears many bracelets on his arms and a great fan-shape headdress. He is seen sitting on an altar surrounded by antelopes, an elephant, a tiger, a rhino and a buffalo. The figure can be interpreted as a “Lord of Beasts” and in this form has been connected by many scholars with Shiva-Pasupati, “Shiva as the Lord of Beasts”. Sometimes scholars also refer to this figure as Vanaspati, “the Lord of the

The most ancient record of the worship of the phallus (linga) from the Aryan society is in Rig Veda 7.21.5, where the conquered peoples are called “those whose god is the phallus (sisnadevah)” (Zimmer, 1955:24; Craven, 1976:9). This verse of the Rig Veda reads as follows:

\[\text{na yatava Indra jujuvar-no na vandana shavistha vedyabhih} \]
\[\text{sa shardharyo visunasya jantor-ma sisnadevah api gurrtam nah} ||\]

H.H. Wilson (in Prakash Arya, 2001:204) translates this line as follows:

Let not the Raksasas, Indra, do us harm; let not the evil spirits do harm to our progeny; most powerful (Indra); let the sovereign lord, (Indra), exert himself (in the restraint) of disorderly beings, so that the unchaste may not disturb our rite (emphasis mine)

As Prakash Arya (2001:204) tells us the interpretation of sisnadevah as “the unchaste” is based on the reading of the early Vedic commentator Yaska (IV.19), the author of Nirukta, who explains the phrase as follows:

\[\text{Sisnadevah, abrahamacarya ityartha} \]
\[\text{“the meaning of sisnadevah is those who do not keep the vow of chastity (appropriate to the first or student stage of life)”}\]

However, Prakash Arya (2001:204) also tells us that sisnadevah may also “have the senses of those who hold the linga for a deity”, and this is the interpretation also taken by Zimmer (1955:24). From this I believe that we can understand that worship of a Shiva-like deity had its roots in the Indus valley civilization. Both the ithyphallic “Lord of Beasts” from the famous terracotta Indus valley seal and the evidence of Rig Veda 7.21.5 support this view.

In the Indus valley the Mother Goddess as the symbol of the progenitor appears to have been linked with the male god, their union representing the continuation of life

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8 In Bali Vanaspati is written and pronounced Banaspati, and is a figure of great significance in Balinese beliefs. The Barong, a mythical figure represented by a mask and costume very similar to a “Chinese lion” is believed to represent Banaspati Raja, a “Lord of Beasts” who dwells in the forest.
that keeps the universe in a perfect cycle. This union of the Mother Goddess and the male God was symbolized simply by an upright, oblong stone as the male aspect and a stone ring form as the female aspect. In later traditions these developed into the linga-yoni that symbolizes the union of Shiva and Shakti (Coomaraswamy, 1965:5).

The linga is the symbol of Shiva, whereas the yoni is the symbol of a Mother Goddess who assumed many names and forms in later periods, especially during and after the period of composition of the Purana.

It is assumed that pre-Aryans society believed in the supernatural power of natural features like rivers, mountains, wells and the plants which fulfilled their daily survival needs. A very important element of the ancient “Dravidian” form of religion is the worship of trees (Coomaraswamy, 1965:41). It appears that in the Indus valley period people believed that when there was a tree there must be a water source underneath. The worship of trees later emerged within Buddhist doctrine as the symbol of the Bodhi Tree (ficus religiosa), or “tree of enlightenment” (bodhi). Buddha conveyed his teaching to his devotees under the Bodhi Tree and it was under this tree that Buddha reached the highest wisdom. In Bali this reverence for trees lives on in religious practices and belief. For example, every 210 days we give offerings in the form of sweet rice porridge to trees as the symbol of our respect for giving us life. And some trees are considered sacred because it is believed that unseen spirits dwell in these trees. A similar respect for trees is also found in many “folk” aspects of Indian religion, and quite often in connection with worship of female deities.9 Ann Grodzins Gold (2003) has pointed out that the worship of female deities in the area of Ghatiyali, Rajasthan ensures the protection of trees in groves associated with her shrines much more effectively than the government forestry department.10 The villagers of

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9 Kashika Singh (personal communication, 21 February 2003) says that both the peepul and neem trees are very auspicious trees, which are considered the abodes of female deities. The neem tree is often considered the dwelling place for the goddess Sitala, the goddess of smallpox. In the past (when smallpox was still epidemic in India) people would bring their children to a neem tree with offerings of flowers, sweets and incense to pray for the goddess to heal the children. If their children are cured in return they will bring some clothes to the tree and hang them there. The peepul tree is worshiped especially by women who make a vow to the goddess, promising to make particular offerings in return for the boon of obtaining children, or a good husband, or to be cured from some disease.

10 Ann Grodzins Gold, lecture for the SIT (School for International Training) Study Abroad, North India Program, Jaipur, India, 14 February 2003.
Ghatiyali believe that the trees are protected by the goddess in her form as a warrior goddess who rides a lion. Just as a lion protects the forests from the intrusions of outsiders, so the goddess protects forest groves under her protection. Gold (2003) further notes that villagers do not call their local female deity Durga, but simply call her Mataji, “respected mother”.

Figure 1.2: A local goddess as the protector of a sacred grove (Rajasthan)

What is surprising in the Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa cities is the fact that scholars did not find any specific sites which might be used as the sacred place for worship. This is contrary to what archaeologists found at the ruins in the Mesopotamian area where structures are found that suggest to us that that place must have been used for performing worship of specific deities. However, in the case of the Indus valley civilization, in the centre of the cities we find walled compounds containing large bathing pools, sunk below the level of the floor of the compounds which Kulke and Rothermund (1986) called it a “Great Bath”. The outer surrounding walls of this building were quite thick, with two large entrances in the south side and one smaller door in the north. There was another small door in the east side. A row of chambers ran along the east wall, with a large well midway from which the pool could be filled (Zimmer, 1955:21; Craven, 1976:11-12; Kulke and Rothermund, 1986:19).
Scholars reason that these bathing sites must have been sacred places, and they remind us of the sacred bathing places used by Hindus today throughout India, which are a common destination for pilgrimages (Craven, 1976:12; Kinsley, 1982:3). The bathing places like the one of the Indus valley are presumed to have had a magical power that could cure people from diseases, cleanse people’s sins and wash away evils and suffering (Zimmer, 1955:21; Kinsley, 1982:118). Holy bathing places are also very common in Bali. Each temple has a sacred bathing place called beji. The beji is used as the place for purification for the deities during the temple festival. In addition to that the sacred bathing places like Tirta Empul in Tampaksiring, Bali are believed to have a magical power to cure people from sicknesses caused by black-magic.

Figure 1.3: the beji of Tirtha Empul, Tampak Siring, Bali

Zimmer (1955:70) tells us that the way the pre-Aryans performed their religious rites is in the fashion that is today called puja that is pouring milk or tossing flowers or sacred grains at the images or other sacred objects. Tossing flowers is a gesture characteristic of the pre-Aryans rites. The offerings of puja came back in style for the early Buddhists and still constituted a basic form of worship for modern Hindus. Puja

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11 A beji is a sacred place located near the temples or a holy place in certain tenget (magically powerful and/or dangerous) spots on the river. Sometimes the beji is a natural spring where the devotees should bathe before worshipping in the temple.
offerings in modern India consist of flowers, rice, fruits, milk, water and oil which are sprinkled or poured over the sacred objects (Kinsley, 1982:105-107).

The Indo-Aryan Civilization

The nomadic Aryans who entered India c.2000 BCE did not adopt the religious patterns of the Indus valley civilization, but rather brought with them into India their own beliefs and their holy book called the Veda. The Vedas consists of four major sections. These are the Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda and Atharva Veda (Craven, 1976:30; Kinsley, 1982:11). They are largely prayers associated with the priestly fire ritual. These holy books were standardized in the period 1200-800 BCE when the Vedic recitation, used for the all-important fire ritual of the Aryans, was analyzed in terms of separate words, which became the basis for an elaborate system of memorization by which the Vedas were preserved by the Brahmin caste of the Aryan society. Appended to the four collections are prose commentaries known as Brahmanas which contain detailed discussions on the various elements and connotations of Vedic ritual. Another form of commentary on the Vedas is found in the Upanishads, which take the form of esoteric philosophical dialogues treating the realization of the transcendent Self (atman). These works are further removed from the Vedic tradition and may have been influenced by the surviving Dravidian style of yogic techniques practiced by the so-called “forest philosophers” (Zimmer, 1955:5; Kulke and Rothermund, 1986:34).

The Vedas used a language called Sanskrit, which has similar characteristics to the Greek, Italic, Celtic, Germanic and Slavic languages (Craven, 1976:30). When European scholars discovered this fact in the eighteenth century of the Common Era, this became the basis for the study of comparative linguistics, and the realization that Sanskrit was among the Indo-European group of languages. The Aryans were thus speakers of a language from a completely different group than the pre-Aryans, whose languages survive in modern India in the large family of languages called Dravidian and several groups of tribal languages like Toda and Munda (Spear, 1961:13; Wolpert, 1977:8).
The Aryans focus their rites on the fire ritual, which is called *homa*. Fire was very important for the Aryans, and so the Vedic ritual focuses on sacrificial rituals to the fire. Because the Aryans were a nomadic society and their religious beliefs were not focused on local deities who represented fixed elements of the natural, agricultural or social landscape, therefore they did not attach to a specific place to do the fire ritual. They believed in the power of natural phenomena, which they associated with specific deities. Thus, Indra represents rain and thunder, Agni fire, Ushas dawn, Vayu wind, Surya the sun and Vak, the ability to speak well. They worshipped these deities by performing oblations to the sacred fire accompanied by the recitation of appropriate hymns from the Rig Veda, and gestures and ritual actions prescribed in the other Vedas. They believed that by giving sacrificial offerings to the deities using the fire god (Agni) as a messenger, they could reach the other deities who lived in their abode above the sky. Through its smoke, fire relates the offerings to the other deities. In return the deities above will bless human society with prosperity, victory and a happy life for both the worshippers and their cattle (Kulke and Rothermund, 1986:36).

Since the Aryans were nomadic, herding their cattle from one place to another, the fact that their fire oblation (*homa*) did not require a specific, fixed place for its performance was a distinct advantage. However, the design of the sacred altar was based on elaborate mathematical calculations that have inspired an interest in modern India in what is called “Vedic mathematics”. The priests who performed the rituals were members of what became in time the *brahmana* or priests of the Brahmin caste, who used the books of the Veda as their guide to the correct performance of ritual. The Aryans believed that the Brahmins could see the gods using their spiritual power, and that is the reason why only the Brahmins had the authority to conduct the Vedic ritual. During the ritual the Brahmin recited the hymns from the Rig Veda. The ritual they perform which was called *homa*, but is sometimes known by the more general name for ritual, that is *yajna* (Coomaraswamy, 1965:5).

The arrival of the nomadic Aryans (c.2000 BCE) brought with it a new tradition and new civilization in India (Coomaraswamy, 1965:5). Gradually the mixture of the two civilizations, the pre-Aryans and the Indo-European gave birth to the tradition we now speak of as Hinduism. Zimmer (1955:4) has carefully described the complex
interaction of Aryans and pre-Aryans civilization that gave rise to this new cultural formation:

The Aryan feudal warriors and chieftains and their priests developed in India a historical structure of prodigious vitality. Their religion, based on the holy revelations preserved in the Vedas, and their social order, expressed in the caste system, supplied the framework for a powerful and unique civilization. The priests (Brahmins) and the chieftains (ksatriya) made of themselves a new Indian aristocracy and in the course of the subsequent centuries their fruitful religious insights and philosophical ideas, coalescing gradually with the complex heritage of the earlier, largely the conquered races, moulded, through a series of creative transformations, that subtle and multifold, extraordinarily flexible spiritual tradition known as Hindu (Zimmer, 1955:4).

The Aryans not only introduced their holy books, the Vedas, and the Vedic rituals, but also brought with them the social order or caste system based on the occupations of persons and a hierarchy of occupations based on the idea of purity and impurity. The general division can be classified as follows. The Brahmins are the persons who are expert in the Vedas, the Ksatriya are the persons who are expert in government and war. The ones who are expert in trading are called Vaisya and those who have skill in cultivating the lands are classified as Sudra (Watson, 1979:31; Kinsley, 1982:16). This idealized system later was complicated by the notion of the impurity of occupations that have to do with the slaughter of animals. This led to the development of the “untouchable” (acuta) castes, which were considered outside the idealized system of four major occupations (catur-warna).

The Indus valley civilization embraced many elements and symbols that emerged in the religious texts of India after the Vedic period. Those ancient elements seemed to have temporarily disappeared with the arrival of the Aryans, but it is likely that they continued to exist at the “folk” level but were not referred to in texts of the Vedic tradition (Watson, 1979:31). But they re-emerged and flourished during the Maurya dynasty (321-184 BCE). This can be seen from the presence of numerous deities whose images are sculpted on the gates and on the pillars of the railings, where they serve as guardians of the sanctuary (Zimmer, 1955:6).
Mesopotamian influence on the Indus valley civilization came about through the movement of sea merchants who sailed from the mouth of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers and entered India through its north-western coast (Craven, 1976:12). The coming of the Aryans to India and their spread throughout north-western India may have disturbed this long relationship. But gradually the relation between the civilizations of the Tigris and Euphrates and the Indus Valley re-emerged during the rise of the Persian civilization that developed rapidly c.550-500 BCE. When the Persian kingdom fell to the forces of Alexander the Great (330 BCE), a gap in political power in north-western India emerged that appears to have made possible the rapid emergence of a new kingdom in north India under the Maurya dynasty (321-184 BCE). One of the most important kings of the Maurya dynasty was Asoka (274-237 BCE). Asoka was a Hindu king but he converted to Buddhism; this can be presumed both from the wording of inscriptions found on the “Asokan pillars” as well as from the archaeological finds in the form of Buddhist monuments called *stupa*. Several of *stupas* set up during the reign of Asoka were regarded as his personal foundation like the Great Stupa at Sanchi amongst others (Watson, 1979:51).

Epic and didactic works initiated in the Mauryan period are very important for my study because these ancient works had great influence on the civilization, traditions and religion of the Indonesian archipelago (Rawson, 1972:84). To the present day, the great epics of the Mahabharata and Ramayana are the most popular surviving representatives of the ancient literatures of Java, Bali and Sunda (West Java). Even Muslim performance artists of Java and Sunda who perform arts like the shadow theatre (*wayang*) and dance dramas (*wayang wong*) are very fond of those two epics. The *Manavadharmasastra*, *Arthasastra* and commentaries on works like the *Yogasutra* have been used as models of the Old Javanese didactic works that form part of the heritage of both Bali and Java.\(^\text{14}\)

\(^{12}\) Kulke and Rothermund (1986) provided different option for the reign of Asoka, they mentioned that the Maurya Empire under Ashoka was in circa 268-233 BCE.

\(^{13}\) From the Asoka’s century forth, Buddhism spread throughout Asia, including Indonesia (Zimmer, 1955:5)

\(^{14}\) Old Javanese texts like *Nitisastra* (Poerbatjaraka, 1926) and *Slokantara* (Sharada Rani, 1957) have clear connections with works like the *Manavadharmasastra* and *Arthasastra*. Traces of the *Yogasutra*
During the Maurya dynasty (321-184 BCE), many important didactic and literary works in Sanskrit were initiated (Watson, 1979:44, 47; Kinsley, 1982:5). As J.N. Mohanty (1996:182) tells us:

The Maurya period brought a strong centralized state to India for the first time, and a new self-confidence characterized the beginnings of the period. This seems to have been the period in which the epics *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* were initiated, though their composition went on through several centuries before they took the forms they now have. Manu, a legendary lawgiver, codified the *Dharmasastra*; Kautilya, a minister of Candragupta Maurya, systemized the science of political economy (*Arthasastra*), and Patanjali, an ancient author(s), composed *Yogasutras*.

**The Origin of the Mother Goddess**

I have mentioned above that the worship of the Mother Goddess commenced in the Palaeolithic era (c.20,000 BCE), which is known from evidence unearthed in southern Europe (Zimmer, 1955:18). Based on a plate from the work of Zimmer (1955:A9 a-c) we can see that the female figurines from the Palaeolithic period depicted the goddess as a naked woman with large breasts, hips and abdomen, suggesting both fertility and advanced pregnancy. The appearance of the female in these figurines emphasized the role of mother as life producer, source of fertility and the continuity of the life cycle through her intimate role in producing new creatures.

Female figurines found in Egypt from as early as c.3500 BCE depict this “Mother Goddess” as half-naked with a similar prominence of breasts, abdomen and hips, but not as prominent as those of the figurines of Palaeolithic Europe (see Mookerjee, 1988). There has also been a shift in some of these figurines from simple depiction of a very fertile woman, to depiction of the woman in her role as a mother. Wolpert (1977:10) points out that the Mother Goddess figurines excavated from the Indus can be found in texts like *Purwa Bhumi Tuwa* and *Sundari Gading*, composed in Bali in a mixture of Old Javanese and Balinese.
valley suggest that those figurines are the origin of the most popular form of the goddess worship in contemporary India. In one figure illustrated by Zimmer (1995, plate A9 d, e) we see a figurine of the “Mother Goddess” shown as a mother carrying a baby on her back, with the baby’s left hand touching the breast of the mother.

Female figurines of Mesopotamia for the period c.3000 BCE reveal that the “Mother Goddess” has been depicted a little bit more elaborately. Her lower body is covered to the feet with a long, flowing garment. She wears a girdle around her waist, her hair is tied in a bun on top of her head, and her hands are held together on her stomach above the navel and just below her breasts (Zimmer, 1955: plate A9 f).

During the Indus valley civilization (c.3000-1500 BCE) the “mother goddess” was portrayed even more elaborately. Figurines from the Indus valley wear ornaments like necklaces and earrings, while the hair is tied on top into a bun (see Zimmer, 1955: plate A8). Her girdles are more elaborate, appearing to be made of three strands tied in the front with a large clasp. She also wears elaborate necklaces. In these images of female deities the beauty of the female is emphasized by showing an appropriate proportion among the body parts, and through the elaborate ornamentation described above. It seems that the role of the female in these figurines emphasizes not solely the role of the woman as progenitor but also as a symbol of beauty.

**Resurrection of the Mother Goddess in the Vedic Tradition**

As we have seen from the archaeological excavations at the Indus valley sites, scholars believe that the pre-Aryan inhabitants of the Indus valley were worshippers of a female deity, whom we might call the “Mother Goddess” (O’Flaherty, 1975:238). Zimmer (1955:22) summarizes this view as follows:

> The most ancient representations of the worshipping of the deity in the Indian civilization are the early Indus Valley female figurine who was later worshipped as the Mother Goddess, the Mother of the Universe, the Goddess of Earth, the Goddess Padma-Laksmi (patroness of fertility, riches, and prosperity), or simply Devi, “The Goddess”.
On the other hand, the nomadic Aryans who brought with them a new civilization were worshippers of male deities (Manna, 1993:65). The way of life and activities of the Aryan tribes who moved from one place to another depended more on the power of men than on women. They did not become attached to particular locations, as was surely the case with the inhabitants of the Indus valley. It is accepted by scholars that the Aryans were a patriarchal society, and this may have been a factor in their worship of mainly male deities in their Vedic rituals. As we know from the hymns of the Rig Veda the Aryans worshipped the beauty and most striking phenomena of nature, like rain, fire, air, thunder which they considered as male gods. But some natural phenomena like dawn (Ushas), Vak (the ability to speak well), Aditi (the mother of the universe), Sarasvati (the Goddess of learning), Prthivi (Mother Earth) were represented as female deities (Manna, 1993:3 and Kinsley, 1986:1-17).

In time the Aryans changed their way of life from a predominantly pastoral form into a society based on an economy of horticulture, agriculture and settled pastoralism (rather than nomadic pastoralism). During this period it seems likely that the Aryans began to adopt the ancient tradition of worship of the mother goddess. It seems that women and the earth may have had an equal role in the ancient agricultural-pastoral communities of the Gangetic plain, and that women began to play a much stronger role in agricultural work and economic activities. In the Vedic tradition the Mother Goddess of the pre-Aryans can be equated with the goddess Prthivi.

In the Indian mythology the goddess Prthivi or Mother Earth together with the god Dyaus as Father Sky are treated as a divine pair who is the mother and father of all living things. The goddess Prthivi is usually invoked together with the Father Heaven for the successful crops, food and riches (Manna, 1993:4).\textsuperscript{15}

The most prominent goddess among the Vedic deities was the goddess of Dawn, Ushas. The goddess Ushas is portrayed as a beautiful maiden, who brings light to the universe and is followed by the sun (Surya). Every morning she wakes up the entire living world from their sleep, except those who sleep in death, and she thus sets all

\textsuperscript{15} In Bali we worship \textit{Ibu Pertiwi} ("Mother Earth") and \textit{Bapa Akasa} ("Father Sky") as representations of the divine couple.
life in motion. She is praised to drive away the oppressive darkness, and she is asked to chase away the demons of the night (Kinsley, 1986:7; Spear, 1961:33-34; Guleri, 1990:11-19). There are some beautiful hymns of the Rig Veda VII.77.1 devoted to especially to Ushas:

Like a youthful maiden, Dawn shines brightly forth,
Stirring to motion every living creature.
Divine Fire was kindled for the use of men;
Dawn created light, driving away the dark (Le Mee, 1975:70).

It is very interesting to note here that among the Vedic deities the goddess Vak receives special attention from those who do the ritual. The goddess Vak whose name means “speech” shows herself or emerges through right speech. She is like the other Vedic goddesses in that she is benign and benevolent. She bestows special richness and skill in speaking the truth with words upon people who perform rituals correctly by speaking in faultless, metrical Sanskrit (Kinsley, 1986:12). The most remarkable hymns in praise of the goddess Vak are described beautifully in the tenth mandala of the Rig Veda (Rig Veda, X.125), which is well-known as the Devi Sukta hymn (Manna, 1993:69; Sharma, 2000: iii; Kinsley, 1986:7-8).

The following are two verses of the Devi Sukta hymn as translated by Le Mee (1975, 159-160):

I am the Queen, gatherer of abundance,
Knowing and wise, always supreme in worship.
Divine powers appointed me in all places,
I have many homes, I entered many forms.

Through my power, the man of judgment may eat
And whoever breathes or hears the spoken Word;

Unknowingly they all abide in me.
In truth, I speak: hear, O holy tradition! (Rig Veda, X.125:3-4).
In the development of later Hinduism the proponents of Brahmanism tried to adjust their textual tradition to the cultural practices and beliefs of the mixed agricultural and pastoral communities of the Gangetic plain. They initiated a new kind of deity based on combinations of the Vedic and pre-Vedic deities, whose existence must never have died out during the Vedic period even though they were not represented in the “textual” tradition of Brahmanism.\textsuperscript{16} Within Brahmanism, as it developed in the age of composition of the epics and Puranas, came the emergence of new deities, who became the predominant deities of India down to the present. The main gods of the Vedic pantheon (including Indra, Vayu, Agni, Varuna, Yama, Kuvera and Surya) and several goddesses (Vak, Aditi and Ushas) survived the Vedic period, but for later Hinduism the new deities who emerged following the Vedic period were much more popular. Each of these deities was associated with a major cult and with the creation of one or more “books of ancient lore” (Purana) that glorified one of the new deities and explained how their worship fit into the overall pattern of post-Vedic religious life (Chakravarti, 1940:71). According to J.N. Mohanty (1996:182), Brahmanism went through major changes in the Mauryan period (231-185 BCE), which ushered in a new style of Hinduism:

Brahmanism tried to adjust itself to the new communities and cultures that were admitted into its fold: new gods – or rather, old Vedic gods that had been rejuvenated – were worshipped: the Hindu trinity of Brahma (the creator), Vishnu (the preserver), and Shiva (the destroyer) came into being; and the Pasupata (Saivite), Bhagavata (Vaisnavite), and the Tantra (esoteric, meditative) system were initiated during this period.

Within Hinduism there were three main sects that emerged during this Brahmanical period; they were the Shaivite sect which glorifies Shiva as the main deity, the Vaishnava sect which glorifies Vishnu as the main deity and the Shakta sect which glorifies the goddess (Shakti, Mahadevi) with various names as the main deity (Chakravarti, 1940:77; Kinsley, 1982:18). As I have mentioned above many scholars (Manna, 1993:3; Kinsley, 1986:1-17) believe that the female deity is rooted in the

\textsuperscript{16} I have used “textual” in quotation marks here since for much of the first millennium BCE the Brahmanical tradition was passed down in the form of memorized texts which were only later written down.
pre-Vedic age, where she took the form of a “Mother Goddess”. During the Vedic tradition the Mother Goddess took different forms and names (including the “cosmic mother” Aditi and Prthivi, the mother earth). In the post-Vedic period the goddess was celebrated as the Supreme Being and in many cases considered as superior to the male gods. This concept of the goddess has been textualized in some Puranas, and is also found in some parts of the epics. Several Puranas, including Vamana (450-900 CE) and Matsya Purana (250-500 CE), praise the goddess as a separate deity, but the goddess is not the central deity of these Puranas. Some later Puranas, especially the Devi Bhagavata Purana (850-1350 CE), are devoted exclusively to the goddess in the context of the Vaishnava cult. Of the earlier Puranas, the goddess is most prominent in the Markandeya Purana (250 CE), where the supreme goddess is described as playing an important role in giving shelter to the main gods and saving them from the affliction of the demons (O’Flaherty, 1975:17).

Post-Vedic Goddesses in the Epic and Puranic Literature

The ancient literature of India was not written until very late in the development of Brahmanical civilization. We can say that the Vedic literature and its descendants up through the period of the epics (c.600-200 BCE) was an oral tradition. But it was a very special kind of oral tradition, since the people of India from very ancient times developed special techniques in order to memorize the important “texts” of their tradition (Craven, 1976:31). The epics and Puranic literatures probably started being composed during the period 600-200 BCE, but it has been agreed by scholars that the writing of Puranas flourished most during the Gupta Period (c.320-650 CE). During what might be called the “epic period” (c.600-200 BCE) India’s two great epics Ramayana and Mahabharata were composed (Craven, 1976:31; Kinsley, 1982:14). While Indian legend attributes the composition of the entire eighteen volumes of the Mahabharata to a single author, scholarly studies suggest that it was composed by numerous “singers” of epic literature who might be compared to the “bards” of medieval Europe. On the other hand, scholars believe that much of the Ramayana was composed by a single author, Valmiki, whose pleasant style of composition is said to be the source of the later kavya literature. In the Mahabharata the characteristics and

17 The approximate dates of the Puranas see O’Flaherty (1975:17-18).
the aspects of the Mother Goddess have changed and she is referred to with new names, usually identifying her as a consort of one of the male gods. We find in the epic names like Laksmi, consort of Vishnu, Parvati, consort of Shiva in addition to older identifications like Indrani, the consort of Indra already known from the Veda.

The goddess Durga is also mentioned in the *Mahabharata*; it is said that she is even worshipped by other gods for the welfare of the three worlds (*Bhur, Bhuvah* and *Svah*).\(^{18}\) She is said to dwell in the Vindhya mountains and is delighted by offerings of flesh, liquor and sacrificial victims (Guleri, 1990:174; Usha Dev, 1993:6). The *Harivamsa* (c.100-300 CE), a later work based on the *Mahabharata*, also describes the Devi as taking the Vindhya as her permanent abode, but also being fond of dwelling in places like the tops of mountains, banks of the rivers and caves.\(^{19}\) She is delighted with offerings of flesh and liquor (Usha Dev, 1993:6 and Brown, 1990:2). This later literature reveals the increasing importance of female deities in Brahmanical devotional life.

In the *Ramayana* of Valmiki (written sometime between 200 BCE and 200 CE), Rama and Sita are considered manifestations of the god Vishnu and his consort goddess Sri-Laksmi. As late as the fourteenth century CE, Rama is praised as the supreme manifestation of the divine. In North India today millions of Hindus worship him and his wife, Sita as the divine couple (Kinsley, 1982:25). People consider Sita as a role model for an ideal wife (Kinsley, 1993:65). In later development both Lord Rama, the hero of the epic, and his enemy and rival Ravana, king of Langka, are described as worshipping the goddess Durga before going off to the battle-field.\(^{20}\)

Purana in Sanskrit means “old, ancient, or primeval”. Thus, Puranas signify a group of sacred works containing ancient happenings. Puranic works originated in an

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\(^{18}\) *Bhur* or *Patala* is the nether region, *Bhuvah* or *Martya* is the earth, and *Svah* or *Svarga* is heaven (the realm of gods and goddesses).

\(^{19}\) In Nusa Penida, a small island across from Bali, there is a cave temple called Goa Hyang Giriputri, especially dedicated to worship the goddess Giriputri, the consort of Shiva in benevolent form.

\(^{20}\) Personal observation in October 2002 during the Durga Puja in Calcutta where in one *pandal* there were two panels depicting the worship of Durga. One panel was a depiction of Rama worshipping Durga and another panel was depicting Ravana worshipping Durga before leaving for the war.
ancient “oral bardic” and priestly culture, which continued to interact with the oral traditions although the Puranas reached the tradition of writing (Kinsley, 1982:18; Brown, 1990:3).

According to Rao (1993:87), Brown (1990:21) and Swami Jagadiswarananda (1953:1) the Puranas can be characterized by five distinguishing marks or *panca-laksana*. These *laksana* are:

- ancient lore about cosmogony or creation (*sarga*).
- genealogies of gods and important patriarchs (*vamsa*).
- the destruction and renovation of the worlds, including Puranic chronology (*pratisarga*).
- the reigns of the Manus, the law-givers who are said to be the founding patriarchs in each successive age of the Puranic chronology (*manvantara*).21
- history of important dynasties from the “solar” and “lunar” lineages in the present age (*vamsanucarita*).

Besides the five major features, the Puranas also describe religious beliefs and practices, philosophy, and many miscellaneous matters, including, for example, sections on grammar and prosody, astrology and other ancient sciences. The ancient lore of the Puranas is illustrated and explained comprehensively by tales, legends, old songs and myths. In this way the Puranas vividly describe their subject matter, and thus differ from the Vedic literature that contains solely and strictly Brahmanical thought and teaching on religious matters (Brown, 1990:4). O’Flaherty (1975:43) describes the Puranas as follows:

The Puranas reintroduce into Epic mythology some of the ritual and philosophical undercurrents of the Brahmana texts as well as new devotional ideas associated with the great sectarian deities - Vishnu, Shiva, and Shakti. Cosmogony and cosmology are developed at great length in the Puranas (O’Flaherty, 1975:43).

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21 One cycle of creation is divided into fourteen *manvantaras*. The period ruled over by one Manu is called a Manvantara. There are fourteen Manus as follows: Svayambhuva, Svarocisa, Uttama, Tamasa, Raivata, Caksusa, Valvasvata, Savarni, Daksha-savarni, Brahma-savarni, Dharma-savarni, Rudra-savarni, Deva-savarni, and Indra-savarni (Swami Jagadiswarananda, 1953:1 [in Hindi script]).
The Puranic composers are termed Pauranikas (Brown, 1990:4). According to Indian legend, Hari or Vishnu, took form as the great sage Vyasa and reduced the huge text of the original Purana (which was only one) into eighteen separate works with a total of four hundred thousand *slokas* (Rao, 1993:87 and Brown, 1990:4). Those eighteen major Purana are called Maha-Purana, and in addition there are also lesser Purana, called Upa-Purana. These “lesser Purana” include several later Purana, like the *Kalika Purana*, *Devi-Bhagavata Purana* and *Devi Purana*, which are very important for the study of the development of the Shakta religion, which centres on the worship of the Great Goddess, or *Maha-Devi*. Each Purana is constructed as a discourse spoken or conveyed by an authorized person to someone (or to a group of people) in a question-answer form. Most of these discourses are in prose form. However, myths and legends in the Purana are more often composed in the form of narrative stories. In this case shorter metres of the *sloka* or *anustubh*, variety are used to provide the flow of the story, thus illustrating the close connection of this aspect of the Puranic literature with the epics, which are almost completely composed in *anustubh* metre.\(^\text{22}\)

The following are the Puranas that the most often mentioned considered as the Maha-Puras: the *Brahma, Padma, Vishnu, Siva, Bhagavata, Naradiya, Markandeya, Agni, Bhavisya, Brahmandaivarta, Linga, Varaha, Skanda, Vamana, Kurma, Matsya, Garuda*, and *Brahmanda*. The number of Puranas is always given as eighteen, but sometimes a different list of the Puranas is found. For example, the *Vayu Purana* is sometimes listed among the Maha-Puras, but more often is omitted from the list; however in this case the content of the *Vayu* is still present, because the *Vayu* and *Brahmanda Purana* were originally a single work. The Puranic literature was (and remains) popular within society at all levels, because the language and content of the Puranas is simpler and more accessible to everyone than works of the Vedic tradition, which often are written in a subtle, suggestive style that is difficult to interpret, even by modern textual experts. The Puranas distribute knowledge to people of all strata through interesting myths and legends.

\(^{22}\) *Anustubhs (slokas)* are stanzas of two lines consist of sixteen syllables each line written in Sanskrit language (Sarkar, 2000:52).
I have mentioned above that Indian legend tells us that the Puranas were originally composed by the legendary Vyasa. According to this view the Puranas are the explanatory literature of the Vedas and the real meaning of the Vedas is to be interpreted in the light of this literature. But in later development, the Puranas not only explained the Vedic literature, but went into their own direction, reflecting religious developments that had begun to replace the Vedic pantheon with representatives of the popular tradition, like Vishnu, Shiva and later, Durga and other forms of the great goddess.

While most of the Maha-Purana are devoted largely to the praise of male deities like Vishnu, Brahma and Shiva, Puranic literature from several of the Maha-Purana, including the *Vamana, Varaha, Kurma* and *Skanda Purana*, include a few chapters that are richly endowed with references to the worship of the female aspect of male gods in the form of their “female energy” or *shakti*. In these passages we find praises and formulas for the worship of the Goddess in many different forms (Usha Dev, 1987:9-10). *Shakti* came to be understood as “divine energy or power” or the “primal energy” usually depicted as the female consort of a male god. However, in due time the worship of the female shakti element gave birth to a new form of religious expression called Shakta, a word meaning “worshipper of Shakti” (Mookerjee, 1988: 11).

The praise and worship of the goddess as Shakti was mentioned in some of the Maha-Puranas, but only in a few chapters. In *Vishnu Purana*, for example, the goddess is perceived as Vaisnavi, the consort of Vishnu. The *Kalika Purana, Maha-Bhagavata Purana* and the *Devi-Bhagavata Purana* deal extensively with the life of two incarnations of the great goddess, Devi whose stories have had a profound influence on the development of the Shakta form of religion, and have also continued to play a very important role in the Shaiva sect of Hinduism. These legends deal with the life of Sati, daughter of Daksa, the mythological representative of the Vedic Brahmins in Puranic literature, and with her reincarnation as Parvati, the daughter of Himalaya, who is ultimately united with her cosmic husband Shiva.

The Puranas that deal with the worship and praise to the great goddess are called the *Shakta Puranas*. The *Shakta Puranas* record many legends and myths, which are
aimed at helping people to understand the deeds of the Supreme Goddess in her different manifestations (Coomaraswamy, 1967:390). The myths from the Shakta Puranas are considered to be the origin of the worship of the Devi, the great Shakti of the god Shiva. One of the most important aspects of this legend is the story of the incarnation of the goddess as Sati, the first wife of the supreme deity Shiva (Coomaraswamy, 1967:287-291). This myth is especially important for its connection with the “sacred geography” of India, which for worshippers of the Shakta form of Hinduism is centred around the “Sati Pitha” pilgrimage sites. This myth represents an important background or counterpart to the myth of the Durga Mahisasuramardini.

One of the Maha-Puranas that first elaborately celebrated the deeds of the Supreme Goddess was the *Markandeya Purana*. Since the *Markadeya Purana* is the earliest complete textual source for the worship of the goddess in India. I will therefore describe the *Markandeya Purana* in detail in the following section of this chapter.

**The Markandeya Purana**

The *Markandeya Purana* (c.250 CE) was a literary creation produced during the powerful religious movement of the Gupta Period (320-650 CE). According to Agrawala (1963:vi) and Lorenzen (1972: 174), there were five principal religious movements during the Gupta Age:

1. The Vedic tradition, based on the Veda and its commentaries, along with later Vedic works like the *Brahmanas, Aranyakas* and *Upanishads*
2. Samkhya, a dualistic philosophy based on a rigid separation of nature (*prakriti*) and "spirit" (*purusa*); nature (or matter) gives rise to both physical and mental aspects of existence, including “consciousness” (*buddhi*) and is conditioned by the constant interaction of the “three qualities” or *gunas* (*sattvam, rajas and tamas*)
3. Yoga, a tradition closely allied with Samkhya, but concentrating on the physical and mental disciplines leading to release from the bonds of nature (*prakriti*) and union with the Absolute (*purusa*)
4. Pasupata Shaivism, the earliest school of Shaivism, whose philosophical system was based on Samkhya
5. The early Vaishnava tradition of the Pancharatra Bhagavatas

All five of these religious movements appear to be represented in the *Markandeya Purana*. Pargiter (1904:xv-xvi) draws special attention to the importance of the Vedic deities Indra, Surya and Agni in the *Markandeya Purana* and from this assumes that the *Markandeya Purana* must have been among the earliest Puranas. Another evidence of an early date is the importance of Brahma, whom Pargiter (1904:xvi) describes as “the earliest post-Vedic god”. But references to Shiva and Vishnu are also abundant throughout the *Markandeya Purana*. In the Devi Mahatmya section of the *Markandeya Purana* (Section Four, Cantos 81-93) we find references both to the *trimurti* (“three manifestations”, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva) of the post-Vedic pantheon, and to the “three qualities” (*triguna*) of the Samkhya philosophy.

The composition of the *Markandeya Purana* consists of 137 cantos. As Pargiter (1904:iv) and Agrawala (1963:iv-v) mention, these 137 cantos can be divided into five distinct parts. They are as follows:

1. Cantos 1-9, in which Jaimini poses four questions relating to the narrative of the epic *Mahabharata*, to the sage Markandeya, who refers him to four wise birds dwelling in the Vindhya mountains who answer his questions.

2. Cantos 10-44, in which the dialogue between Jaimini and the four wise birds symbolizing the four Vedas is continued; the fact that the birds attribute the stories and teachings propounded in this section to Sumati, a Brahmin of the Bhargava clan, lends support to Pargiter’s claim (1904:iv-v) that the first and second sections of the *Markandeya Purana* represent later interpolations, perhaps added by Brahmins of the Bhargava clan, who are well-known for their role as redactors of the *Mahabharata*; the contents of this section include lengthy stories on the lives of Alarka and Dattatreya (an incarnation of Vishnu) that are used to illustrate various aspects of the “four stages of life” (*catur-asrama*) according to Brahmanical teachings.

3. Cantos 45-80, which Pargiter (1904:iv-v) and Agrawala (1963:iv-v) consider the original core text of the *Markandeya Purana*; in these chapters the narration is...
attributed directly to the sage Markandeya and his disciple Kraustuki; the contents of this section recount familiar aspects of Puranic lore, including the Creation, Puranic geography, and the succession of ages, each one headed by its own “founding father” (Manu), who propounds the religious and social laws of the era under his guidance.

4. Cantos 81-93, which Pargiter (1904:ix-x) and others consider a later interpolation, is a text complete unto itself known as the Devi Mahatmya or “Glorification of the Goddess”; this text has become famous in India as an independent text, to the extent that its origin in the Markandeya Purana is often forgotten; as Pargiter (1904:x-xii) points out, similarities between this text and the worship of the goddess Camunda in the fourth act of Bhavabhuti’s play Malatimadhava suggest both an association of the Devi Mahatmya with the region of ancient Ujjain, and the possibility that the Devi Mahatmya was in existence by the end of the seventh century CE, when Bhavabhuti composed his play (Pargiter, 1904:xi-xii and xx)23

5. Cantos 94-136, in which Markandeya and Kraustuki continue their discourse on the Puranic ages and the genealogies of the Manus for each age.

As noted above Pargiter (1904:vi) has shown that only the third and fifth sections of the Markandeya Purana (Cantos 45-80 and 94-136) are original, so it is only in these sections that Markandeya is the direct narrator. In Pargiter’s view the first and second sections of the Purana (Cantos 1-9 and 10-44) were composed later and then added to the original core of the Purana. Pargiter says that this is also true of the fourth part of the Purana (Cantos 81-93), the Devi Mahatmya, which has gained the status of an independent text in its own right, because it is the earliest complete text of the tradition of worship of the goddess. I will focus in this chapter on the fourth part of the Markandeya Purana, the Devi Mahatmya.

The role of Brahmins of the Bhargava clan is a prominent feature of the *Markandeya Purana*. In Canto 45 the sage Cyavana is described as a sage who learned the Purana at the feet of Bhrgu, the legendary founder of the Bhargava clan. Cyavana is then said to have taught the Purana to the other sages, including Daksa, from whom Markandeya learned the Purana. Cyavana, along with other members of the Bhargava lineage (descendants of Bhrgu) is associated with the west of India, the region around the mouths of the Narmada and Tapti rivers. This suggests that the Purana must have been composed in the region of the Bhargavas, which in ancient times spread along the valleys of the Narmada and Tapti rivers (Pargiter, 1904:viii).

This region is also the region of the Vindhya mountains, which are described in the first section of the *Markandeya Purana* (Cantos 1-9 and 10-44) as the place where the wise birds instruct Jaimini, again suggesting that the Vindhya mountains were the original place of the Purana. The wise birds are said to have dwelt on the slope of the Vindhyas in a cave, where the water was very sacred and which was sprinkled with drops of water from the Narmada River (Pargiter, 1904: ix). Pargiter thus concludes that the Narmada and Tapti valleys and the Vindhya mountains are the original place of the Purana. This area is outside the original “central lands” (*Madhya-desa*) of Brahmanical culture, but well within the area that became famous in Gupta times as an area noted for its reverence for the goddess.

This location of the *Markandeya Purana* in the area of the Vindhyas, and the special connection of the *Markandeya Purana* with the Bhargava clan may be important for the study of how Hinduism came to Java and Bali. As I will explain in another chapter, the Hinduism of the Central Javanese period (c.700-930 CE) is closely associated with the sage Agastya, who is said to have “chopped off the tops of the Vindhya mountains” on his trip from North to South India, and later to have “drunk up the water of the ocean” off the coast of South India (Poerbatjaraka, 1992). The sages Bhrgu and Markandeya are also very important in Java and Bali, and are still remembered as very important sages in modern Bali. Some Indian scholars feel that the journey of Agastya may represent the movement of Sankritic culture southward

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24 My grandfather is a temple priest who likes narrating the stories of both epics *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. He often mentioned the name of Bhagavan Bhregu if he told the story of *Mahabharata*.
from the old “central lands”, while Indonesian scholars like Poerbatjaraka (1926, 1992) feel that the importance of Agastya in Java and Bali suggests a further movement of Sanskritic culture to the archipelago by way of South India.

The *Devi Mahatmya* (the fourth section of the *Markandeya Purana*, Cantos 81-93) is a poem complete in itself. Based on the subject matter of the text, and the character attributed to the goddess, it was obvious that this poem is the product of a later age than the original portions of the *Markandeya Purana*. This literary work contains a collection of hymns that praise the goddess in her three different forms (Maha-Laksmi, Maha-Kali and Maha-Sarasvati). Some of the hymns express deep religious feeling, enthusiastic adoration and spiritual meditation. But some hymns describe the violent battles between the supreme goddess and the demons, which to commentators like Pargiter (1904:vi) suggest “the sanguinary features of popular religion”

The *Devi Mahatmya* must have originated in some place dedicated to the goddess in her terrible form. Pargiter (1904:ix) suggests that the cave sprinkled by the holy water of the Narmada river described as the dwelling place of the “four wise birds” in the first section of the *Markandeya Purana* suggests the modern town of Mandhata, known in ancient times as Mahismati, and well known as a famous place of pilgrimage to a source of pure water (*tirtha*). Both Shiva and his consort in their most terrible forms were worshipped in Mandhata. Pargiter thus assumes that the area around Mandhata may have been the original geographical source of the *Markandeya Purana*.

The region of Narmada valley was also closely connected with the legend of the city of Tripura or the Three Cities (*Bhur, Bhuvah* and *Svah*) and the demon Mahisa, both important in the narrative of the *Devi Mahatmya*. As Pargiter points out (1904:xiii) these legendary elements of the *Devi Mahatmya* very likely live on in the modern place names of Tewar derived from Tripura and Mahesar [Mysore of modern India] derived from Mahisa, which are also located in the region of the Vindhyas and the Narmada valley (Nagaraja Rao, 2004).25

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25 Personal communication with Professor Dr Nagaraja Rao conducted at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in January 2004.
The Vindhya mountains have been closely associated with the goddess Durga even from the time of the Mahabharata, where she is described as dwelling eternally in the Vindhya mountains and very fond of consuming intoxicating liquor and the meat of cattle (Virata Parva, vi.195). Many scholars thus conclude that the origin of the birthplace of the Devi Mahatmya was the region of Western India. While the Markandeya Purana mentions sites like Pragjyotisa and Kamarupa (located in present day Assam, but once a part of the ancient territory of Bengal) that later became intimately associated with the worship of the goddess, these references are part of sections of the Markandeya Purana devoted to “Puranic geography” and clearly predate the era when worship of Kali and other “dark” forms of the goddess gained enormous prominence in Northern India, especially Bengal, where the great festival of Durga Puja marks the climax of the sacred year (Pargiter, 1904:viii-xii).

Some scholars have argued about the date of Markandeya Purana, but most agree at least that this Purana was composed during the Gupta Age (320-650 CE). According to Pargiter (1904: xx) the latest part of the Purana, that is the Devi Mahatmya (Cantos 81-93) was probably completed between the 5th and 6th centuries CE, whereas the original core of the Purana, the third and fifth parts, were likely composed between the second and third centuries CE, or even earlier. He then assumes that the first and second sections of the Markandeya Purana must have been composed sometime between those two periods, thus probably sometime in the fourth century CE (Pargiter, 1904:xx).

The Devi Mahatmya, the Glorification of the Goddess

In the following section I will discuss the Devi Mahatmya in detail, because this is the first and strongest textual basis for the worship of Mahadevi, the Supreme Goddess, whose popularity in the form of the warrior goddess Durga spread throughout India in the centuries following the composition of the Devi Mahatmya, and almost simultaneously reached the Malay-Indonesian archipelago. Zimmer (1955:91) translates Devi Mahatmya as “The Description of the Great (maha) Self (atman) of the Goddess (devi)”. This work consists of praises of Mahadevi in various forms and commemorates her victory over the demons that had brought chaos to the order of the three worlds. These Sanskrit verses are the most popular for the worshippers of the
Shakta cult and are read continuously at many Hindu shrines for the entire nine days during the Durga Puja festival.

The *Devi Mahatmya* is sometimes called the *Durga Saptasati*, “Seven Hundred Verses on Durga” or simply, the *Candi*, one of the names of the goddess in her “hot” or “dangerous” form. While the *Devi Mahatmya* was originally a section of the *Markandeya Purana*, it quickly became known as an independent text, whose 700 verses are still chanted as a main part of the Durga Puja, or Navaratri, festivals. In the *Devi Mahatmya* the divine mother is depicted vividly in the forms of Maha-Kali, Maha-Laksmi and Maha-Sarasvati, each one of these forms of the goddess relating to one of the male deities of the *trimurti* (three manifestations of the Godhead). Mahakali corresponds to Durga, the warrior form of the goddess Parvati, consort of Shiva, while Mahalaksmi corresponds to Laksmi, consort of Vishnu and Mahasarasvati to Sarasvati, consort of Brahma (Agrawala, 1963).

The *Devi Mahatmya* covers Cantos 81 to 93 of the *Markandeya Purana*, which are completely devoted to the glory of the Supreme Goddess. In these verses she takes over several aspects of the Godhead that in earlier eras were associated with Samkhya philosophy or the male deities of the *trimurti*. For example, she is described as the Divine Mother of the three *gunas* of Samkhya philosophy, with Mahasarasvati representing the “refined quality” (*sattvam*), Mahakali the “passionate quality” (*rajas*) and Mahalaksmi representing the “quality of inertia” (*tamas*), or earthly quality (Guleri, 1990: 145). In this way the basically inert qualities of the principle of nature (*prakriti*) are understood by followers of the goddess as being enlivened by the energy of the goddess, and actively propelling the worshipper toward union with the divine. In the *Devi Mahatmya*, the goddess is also described in terms that in earlier Puranas were attributed to the male deities of the *trimurti*. She thus is described as having the role of the creator, the preserver and the dissolver of this universe:

> her absolute superiority to the historically most prominent male deities of the time, including the holy triumvirate (*trimurti*) of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva—responsible for the creation, preservation, and destruction of the universe according to earlier, masculine conceptions of how the world works— is simply affirmed with little ado…(Brown, 1990:2).
By you this universe is borne, by you this world is created. By you it is protected, O Goddess and you always consume it at the end. You are always of the form of the whole world, at the time of creation you are of the form of the creative force, at the time of sustaining the world you are the form of the protective power, and at the time of the dissolution of the world, you are the form of the destructive power… (Devi Mahatmya, 1:75-77).

From the point of view of the Devi Mahatmya, Mahadevi is superior to the male deities. She is the sole deity who can bring the universe into perfect balance and restore it to a peaceful state after conquering the demons and rescuing the universe from chaos.

The Devi Mahatmya consists of thirteen Cantos, which take the form of a dialogue between the great teacher (guru) Markandeya and his disciple Kraustuki. Markandeya first describes the birth of Savarni, the illustrious son of the sun god, Surya, who had become the Manu (“founding father”) of the eighth human age (Manvantara) by the grace of the divine mother in her form as Mahamaya, “the Great Illusion”. In his former incarnation, Savarni was the King Suratha, who is described as a very protective king who cared for his subjects just as if they were his own children. He was also a great hero who defeated the Cholas, but then was betrayed by his own powerful, vicious and evil-disposed ministers. Because of that King Suratha left his kingdom on horseback for a dense forest, under the pretext of hunting. While in the forest he saw the hermitage of the sage Medhas, who lived in the deep forest with his disciples. The king spent some time there in the hermitage to learn how to overcome attachment to the sense objects, which in the Samkhya and Yoga philosophies are considered the source of human bondage and suffering.

At the same time, there was also a very rich merchant, the Vaisya caste named Samadhi who had been abandoned by his greedy wife and sons. He also left his home in order to seek spiritual refuge in the forest. There in the forest he also came upon Medhas’s hermitage and met King Suratha. Since both of them had encountered the same fate of being betrayed by their trusted and beloved family members or advisors, they both studied from Medhas about how to overcome worldly attachments.
As part of Medhas’ instruction to King Suratha and the merchant, he relates to them Markandeya’s teaching on the victory of the goddess over the demons. The myths that Markandeya relates are from the major part of the *Devi Mahatmya*, each of them being the story of a particular event in the goddess’ conquest of the demons. Her exploits are described as so central to the restoration of peace and harmony to the universe that the gods themselves praise her as being the supreme deity. The introductory tale of King Suratha, the merchant and the sage Medhas form a part of the first Canto of the *Devi Mahatmya*, while the narrative that Medhas attributes to Markandeya takes up the remainder of the first Canto and additional twelve Cantos. Each episode of the myth of the goddess and her struggle with the demons thus takes up a single Canto of the work.

**An Overview of the *Devi Mahatmya***

In this section, I will give a brief overview of the *Devi Mahatmya*, except Cantos Two and Three which is myth about the birth of the goddess Durga Mahisasuramardini. I will give a more detailed narration of these two cantos in the following section of this chapter since these two cantos of the *Devi Mahatmya* are of primary importance to my study. The overall narrative of the *Devi Mahatmya* is also important to my study since it provides many insights into Indian representations of the supreme goddess that will be relevant in later chapters when I look at contemporary understanding of the goddess in India, Java and Bali. Thus in this section I will give a brief overview of Cantos One and Four through Fourteen of the *Devi Mahatmya*; a more detailed description of the entire *Devi Mahatmya* can be found in Mookerjee (1988).

Canto One introduces the *Devi Mahatmya* with a retelling of the story of the slaying of the demons Madhu and Kaitabha, which was originally a myth that was very popular in Puranas that are focused on the worship of Vishnu. In this story two demons, Madhu and Kaitabha, are born from the dirt of the ears of the god Vishnu as he slumbers in his Yoganidra, or cosmic sleep that represents the period of cosmic activity when the drama of human life is enacted as the dream of Vishnu. In the *Devi Mahatmya* this myth is reinterpreted as resulting from the “cosmic illusion” (*mahamaya*) of the goddess, who initially causes Vishnu to enter his non-active state,
and then awakens him so that he can slay Madhu and Kaitabha. The “cosmic illusion” of the goddess is also invoked as the cause of the overthow of the demons, for in this form she enters into them and causes them to delude themselves into thinking that they are invulnerable.

Canto Four of the *Devi Mahatmya* consists of praises of the goddess by Lord Indra and other deities following her victory over the “buffalo demon” (*Mahisasura*). She is characterized, for example, as the *Sabda Brahman*, “creative principle of sound” of the Vedas and compared to a boat that takes people across the difficult ocean of worldly existence.

Canto Five of the *Devi Mahatmya* describes the conversation of the goddess with the messengers of the demons Sumbha and Nisumbha, who have been threatening the gods and are about to take over their celestial realm. When they approach her saying that their lords Sumbha and Nisumbha want to propose marriage to her, she mocks them and says that only he who can defeat her in battle is fit to be her husband.

In Canto Six of the *Devi Mahatmya*, Dhumralocana, the general of the demon armies of Sumbha and Nisumbha becomes enraged at the refusal of the goddess to marry his lords. In the ensuing battle between Dhumralocana and the goddess she reduces him to ashes by merely uttering the mystic syllable *hum*, while her lion-mount demoralizes his army with its ferocious attacks.

Canto Seven of the *Devi Mahatmya* describes the battle of the goddess with Canda and Munda, the messengers of Sumbha and Nisumbha. In this battle the rage of the goddess is so all-consuming that the terrifying goddess Kali springs fully armed from her forehead. Wearing her terrible necklace and skirt of freshly-severed heads, this awe-inspiring goddess consumes the armies of Canda and Munda and then beheads them both. When she returns to the goddess (called Candika in this section of the *Devi Mahatmya*) with the heads of Canda and Munda to be used as offerings at her shrine, the goddess gives her the new name “Camunda”. Images of Camunda show her as an emaciated and terrifying goddess wearing garlands of skulls and carrying a sword with which she beheads the enemies of the gods, which are also the fitting sacrifices to be made at her shrine.
In Canto Eight of the *Devi Mahatmya* the demon Sumbha once again sends his armies to attack the goddess. Once again the goddess Kali must emerge from the goddess in order to counter the attack of one of Sumbha’s generals. In this case her opponent is Raktabija “Demon Drop-of-Blood” whose power is instantly reproduced from every drop of his spilled blood. Because of this unique demonic quality the entire pantheon of the gods contribute their “power” (*shakti*) and characteristic weapon to the goddess (Candika), who then manifests as Kali, who is able to defeat the demon by entirely swallowing him up, complete with every drop of blood that falls from his body.\(^{26}\)

Cantos Nine and Ten of the *Devi Mahatmya* describe the battle of the goddess with the brothers Sumbha and Nisumbha, and the ultimate victory of the goddess. Of special note in these cantos is the complaint that Sumbha makes to the goddess, saying that she is cowardly and must fight with the assistance of the “Seven Mothers” while he fights alone. She replies that in fact she is all alone in the battle, and in the world, for the “Seven Mothers” are in reality merely a portion of her cosmic power, her own body.

Canto Eleven of the *Devi Mahatmya* consists of the “Hymn to Narayani”, offered to the goddess by the other deities upon her defeat of Sumbha and Nisumbha. Narayana is another name for the Puranic deity Vishnu, so in this hymn the goddess is once again characterized as the deity who encompasses the creative and sustaining power of Vishnu and is ultimately the source of his creative energy.

Canto Twelve of the *Devi Mahatmya* is another set of hymns to the goddess, said to have been first sung by the god Indra and other deities in honour of the goddess. This section of the *Devi Mahatmya* is directly connected with ritual practices, for it is said in this chapter that whoever recites these hymns during the festival of the “Nine

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\(^{26}\) An important aspect of this Canto is the appearance of the “Seven Mothers” (*sapta matrika*) who fight alongside Kali in her struggle with Raktabija and his armies. These “seven mothers” are named Brahmani, Mahesvari, Kaumari, Vaishnavi, Varahi, Narasimhi and Aindri. The seven gods from whom they emerge are: Brahma, Shiva, Skanda (Kumara), Vishnu, Varaha (Vishnu’s boar incarnation), Narasimha (Vishnu’s man-lion incarnation), and Indra. The “seven mothers” thus encompass the “powers” (*shakti*) of some of the most important male deities of the Puranas.
Nights of the Goddess” *(Navaratri)* will be delivered from all troubles and will be blessed with riches, grain and children.

Chapter Thirteen of the *Devi Mahatmya* returns the narrative to the original story of Suratha and the merchant and describes the boons that the goddess personally bestows upon them after engaging in yogic concentration and worship of the goddess on the banks of a sacred river, and making offerings to her, including portions of their own flesh. Once again the narrative at this point is connected with the ritual and yogic practices that are recommended for all devotees who would seek the assistance of the goddess.

As we can see from this outline most of the episodes of the *Devi Mahatmya* deal directly with her battles with the demons, while a few represent transitional phases in the story (Canto Five), or particular hymns or eulogies (Cantos Four, Eleven and Twelve). The final Canto, which relates how King Suratha and the merchant obtained the blessings and boons of the goddess after completely hearing her story and meditating on the bank of the river in Medhas hermitage, can easily be seen as a reminder of the merit that later worshippers could gain by repeating the *Devi Mahatmya*, or listening to its complete recitation, especially during particular religious festivals like Durga Puja.

**The Myth of the Durga Mahisasuramardini, the Slayer of the Buffalo Demon**

For the study of the “journey of the goddess” from India to Indonesia, Cantos Two and Three of the *Devi Mahatmya* are particularly important which is about the birth of the goddess Durga Mahisasuramardini. This is because her victory over Mahisasura, the “buffalo demon” resulted in her being granted the epithet Mahisasuramardini, “Slayer of the Buffalo Demon”. This image came to Indonesia at a relatively early date and was well established in the Hindu pantheon of Central Java by the ninth century CE. Although other images of the goddess, in the form of Mahadevi or Sri-Laksmi have been found among the archaeological remains of the Central and East Javanese periods (c.600-930 CE and 930-1527 CE respectively), the number and importance of images of Durga Mahisasuramardini is much greater, especially in
Java. For this reason, I will concentrate in the next section on the myth of Durga Mahisasuramardini as related in Cantos Two and Three of the *Devi Mahatmya*.

In Bali there are a few surviving images of Durga Mahisasuramardini being found in various parts of Bali, but it is believed to be the oldest and the largest of the image is today housed in a separate “hill-shrine” in the Pura Dalem Kutri temple, in Buruan the Gianyar district. In Bali the myth of the goddess Durga has been transformed into another form due to local traditions which are strongly influenced by a pattern marginalizing women by understanding them as the source of black magic, with the terrifying demonic Durga as their patron. I will discuss this pattern further in a later chapter.

In order to get a better idea of the significance of the myth of Durga we can first look at the meaning of her name. Both in India and Indonesia the study of the “mystical aspects” of names is very important. For Western philologists this kind of explanation is called “folk etymologizing”. From the Indian and Indonesian point of view, however, this “looking for deeper meanings in words” is an ancient and common practice. In ancient India texts like the *Nirukta* of Yaska explain the sacred words of the Veda in this way, while Javanese still speak of *jarwa dhosok*, “forced words” and say that understanding meaning through “forcing words” is an important part of understanding traditional myths and customs.

Zimmer (1955:91) tells us that the word Durga can mean “she who is difficult (*dur*) to go against (*ga*)”, therefore Durga means “the unassailable, unconquerable one”. Thus we can understand Durga Mahisasuramardini as meaning “the unconquerable goddess (*durga*), who crushed (*mardini*) the demon (*asura*) in the form of a buffalo (*mahisa*)”. The image of Durga Mahisasuramardini is depicted in celebrated and wondrous form because she is understood as the goddess who rescued the three worlds (*triloka, tripura*) from the tyranny of the buffalo-demon Mahisa.

The word “Durga” itself has a few meanings. Durga is only one of the names of the great goddess (*Mahadevi*) as the consort of the god Shiva. The consort of Shiva can be benign and benevolent, but also malignant and malevolent. Sometimes she is
represented as an independent goddess, sometimes as a caring mother. Zimmer (1955:91) describes the basic character of the goddess as follows:

For the mother of the world is unyielding and unattainable by force; she manifests her favors only when pleased by some act of complete surrender.

According to Sharma (2000:iv), the word Durga can be explained as consisting of the following root syllables: da- implies the destruction of the demons; u- denotes the act of undoing obstacles; ra means the act of dispelling diseases; ga- means that which wipes out all evils; while the suffix –aa (long –a) implies the rooting out of fear and the destruction of enemies. In this form, the goddess Durga, who is involved in such acts of salvation and the destruction of evils, is stated to be the energy or shakti of the god Shiva as narrated below:

…O Goddess, you are Durga, the boat that takes men across the difficult ocean of worldly existence, devoid attachments. You are Shri who has invariably taken her abode in the heart of Vishnu. You are indeed Gauri who has established herself with Shiva (Devi Mahatmya, canto 4:11).

A Summary of the myth of Durga Mahisasuramardini, based on Cantos Two and Three of the Devi Mahatmya

In order to fully understand the character of the goddess Durga Mahisasuramardini, which had a profound influence on the culture of Java and Bali, we also need to understand the mythology associated with her worship. As mentioned above the first and most authoritative source of this mythology is the “Devi Mahatmya” section of the Markandeya Purana. The story of Durga Mahisasuramardini is itself narrated in Cantos Two and Three of the Devi Mahatmya. Due to the importance of this myth, I will give a complete summary of Cantos Two and Three of the Devi Mahatmya based on Agrawala (1963) as follows:

In ancient times a terrible war broke out between Lord Indra, king of the gods, and Mahisasura, the “buffalo demon” who led the troops of the demons. The war went on for a full hundred years, but finally the gods led by Lord Indra were defeated by the demons under the leadership of Mahisasura. With the
defeat of the gods, the demons took over heaven and the gods were forced to wander the earth like ordinary mortals. Mahisasura considered himself a god and reigned supreme in heaven. The defeated troops of Indra now went to seek assistance from the great gods Shiva and Vishnu, with Brahma as their leader. Brahma related all that happened to the gods to Shiva and Vishnu.

Hearing Lord Brahma’s tale, both Shiva and Vishnu were enraged and immediately a brilliant light emerged from their foreheads, also from the head of Lord Brahma. An intense light also shot out from the body of Lord Indra and all the other deities. All these intensely glowing lights united, and rose up tall as a mountain to fill the entire world, including the Three Worlds (bhur, bhuvah, svah), “the underworld, mortal world and heaven”. Finally a beautiful goddess emerged from this pure, intense light of the gods.

The body of this goddess was made up from the pure light that had emerged from the gods. From Shiva’s light her face, her hair from the light of Yama, her neck from Vishnu’s light, and her twin breasts from the Moon God. Lord Indra’s light formed her waist, while the light of Varuna was her hips and thighs, the light of Brahma her feet, the light of Surya her toes and the light of the Vasus her fingers. Lord Kubera, god of wealth, formed her nose and the creator, Prajapati, her teeth. Her three eyes arose from the light of Agni, god of fire, while the remainder of her body was composed of the light of the other deities.

All the gods now gazed on this goddess who had taken a full and perfect form made of their light. Each one of the gods now gave her a weapon. Shiva gave her his trident (trishula), Vishnu his spinning discus (cakra), Varuna, his conch-shell that gives the call to battle. Agni gave her a spear, while the Marutas, swift as the wind, gave her a bow along with a quiver full of sharp arrows. Lord Indra gave her his thunderbolt weapon and also the bell of his majestic steed Airavata. Yama, god of death, gave her the staff of death, while Varuna, lord of the sea, gave her a magic noose, and Brahma, lord of life gave her a rosary of precious stones and a water-pot. Surya, god of the sun, poured
out his light on every pore of her body, while, Kala, god of time, gave her a flawless sword and a shield.

The celestial sea of milk gave the goddess a necklace, a set of fine clothes that never decayed through the passing seasons, a diadem, ear-rings and arm-bands, a half-moon brooch, bracelets, shining ankle-bracelets and rings for each of her fingers. Visvakarman, the smith of the gods, gave her a war-axe and many other weapons and impenetrable armour. The sea granted her lotuses that served as her helmet and as a breastplate. The Himalaya Mountains gave her many other ornaments and a lion as her mount. Lord Kubera gave her a cup of wine that was forever full, while the god Shesa, lord of the serpent world, gave her a serpent bearing jewels in its crest as a necklace.

As all the gods paid homage to her, the goddess roared ferociously while she laughed in a threatening and challenging tone. Her roar made the entire universe quake, causing earthquakes on earth, while the sea seethed and mountains shook violently. “Victory is in your hands, oh goddess,” shouted all the gods as they paid homage to the goddess who rides a lion. All the gods and sages bowed deeply with respect. Hearing the thunderous sound that was coming from the troops of the gods, the buffalo demon was infuriated. “Hey, what’s that sound?” he shouted while impatiently rushing toward the source of the sound with his troops in overwhelming numbers. At last he saw the goddess whose light was spreading throughout the entire universe. The earth was folded under where her foot touched it; her crown scraped at the floor of heaven, abode of the gods while the underworld trembled from the twang of her bow. The goddess stood majestic with her light spreading throughout the three worlds.

Now a great battle erupted between the goddess and the troops of the demons. The battle raged furiously, the demon troops numbering in the tens of thousands, with Mahisasura surrounded by his cavalry and troops of elephants. The demons attacked the goddess with spears, javelins, arrows, maces, swords, great battle-axes, war-nets and many other weapons. At first they
attacked the gods with swords and rained down all kinds of weapons, but the goddess Candika (one of the names of the goddess), easily parried their attacks and froze them in their tracks. All the gods and celestial sages rained down praises and showers of flower blossoms.

The lion that was the mount of the goddess shook his mane roaming about and breaking up the battle array of the demons. Then the goddess began to slay the demons in the thousands, stabbing them with her trident, her sword, her spear and her javelins. All the demons that did not die immediately were frozen in their tracks by the spell of the bell of Airavata. In short, the demon army was shattered, while remnants of the demon troops who had been beheaded wandered the battlefield seeking to renew their combat with her.

Seeing his troops defeated, Ciksura, the general of the demons, was furious and without hesitation entered the battlefield to engage the goddess in single-handed combat. He rained down arrows on the goddess as if there were a thunderstorm on Mount Meru. But the goddess had no difficulty shattering his arrows slaying his horse. He then drew his sword and rushed at the goddess, but before he could reach her, she had already broken his sword. His face red with fury, Ciksura now grasped a war-spear and hurled it toward the goddess Bhadrakali (another name for Candika, the goddess in her “warrior” form).

Ciksura unsheathed his sword and attacked the goddess furiously, but before he could reach her the goddess had already broken his sword. His eyes blazed red with fury as he grasped his spear and hurled it at the goddess Bhadrakali, but as soon as she saw that spear hurling toward her the goddess parried the blow with her own spear, which shattered Ciksura’s spear, breaking it into a thousand pieces. In the end Mahisasura’s general died a pitiful death at the hands of the goddess.

At the death of Ciksura, Camara – another of Mahisasura’s great generals – mounted his horse and in a wild fury attacked the goddess with his spear. The goddess Ambika hurled her own spear while screaming and shattered Camara’s spear. Seeing his spear shattered, Camara picked up its pieces and
flung them violently at the goddess. But the goddess easily parried the remnants of Camara’s spear with her arrows.

The lion-mount of the goddess, who had been preoccupied destroying the enemies of the gods, now leapt forward and pounced on the chest of Camara. After a brief struggle he leapt high in the air and as he fell struck off the head of Camara with one swift swipe of his terrible claws. Now that all of Mahisasura’s crack troops had been defeated by the goddess he took the form of a giant buffalo and began to strike fear and trembling into the hearts of the troops of the goddess. He paralyzed some with blows of his snout, trampled others underfoot, swept others from the world of the living with his tail and gored others with his terrifying horns. Seeing that the troops of the goddess were under pressure, Mahisasura turned toward the lion-mount of the goddess and with furious speed and full of base passion pressed the attack. Seeing that her lion was threatened, the goddess flew into a rage.

The fearless buffalo demon now pawed the ground with his hooves so hard that the earth split wide open. At the same time he began to uproot mountains with his horns and snorted wildly while shaking his tail wildly, so hard that it caused the waters of the ocean to froth and overflow. His wildly shaking horns scraped the heavens and broke the clouds above the mortal world into tiny pieces. Mountains that he had uprooted now rained down on the earth like a terrible hurricane.

As she beheld the fury of the buffalo demon, the goddess Candika unleashed her own fury in order to destroy Mahisa. Flinging her lasso she ensnared the buffalo demon there on the field of that terrible battle. The buffalo demon immediately transformed into a lion, but the goddess without hesitation beheaded it. Mahisasura then changed into a man with a sword in his hand, but quick as lightning the goddess destroyed his sword and shield and lopped off his head. Finally Mahisasura changed himself into a huge elephant, which snatched up the goddess’ lion-mount with his trunk and began to drag her mount toward his terrible tusks. But even as this was happening, the goddess struck off the trunk of the elephant.
Mahisasura then changed back into his buffalo-demon form and began to shake the Three Worlds and everything in them with terrible violence. The goddess now drank deeply of the nectar of the gods until she was deeply intoxicated. Then she began to laugh with a terrifying sound, while her eyes turned bright red from fury. Mahisasura, who was also drunk on his power and courage, began to uproot mountains with his horns and fling them at the goddess Candika. But with a rain of arrows the goddess parried every blow. While her face glowed brightly from the intoxication of the nectar of the gods, she challenged Mahisasura in a wild, chaotic voice: “You stupid fool. Your roar was loud while I drank the wine of the gods, but in a few short moments the gods will all be roaring with exultation on this very spot!”

No sooner had she said this than the goddess had leapt from her mount and landed on Mahisasura and pressed him to the ground with her foot. As she brandished her spear and began to thrust it into his body, half of his body turned into a human being that began to emerge from the snout of the buffalo-demon. Now the buffalo demon had finally been mastered by the courage and bravery of the goddess. Finally she grasped his head and beheaded him with her terrifying sword.

The remaining demons screamed in fear and fled in all directions, while the joy and exultation of the gods overflowed at the victory of the goddess. All the gods and sages in heaven bowed low to the goddess, while the Gandharva and Apsara hosts sang and danced in ecstasy.

**Iconography of Durga Mahisasuramardini**

Another very important aspect of the study of the worship of Durga is the question of representations of her iconography and visual form. In general, the iconography of Durga Mahisasuramardini can be summarized as follows (based on Usha Dev, 1987:60):

Durga is a very beautiful young goddess who has black, matted hair and a half moon on her head. She has three eyes. She looks very young; her face
resembles the full moon and her complexion is like heated gold. She is standing in the “thrice-bent” \textit{(tribhanga)} pose. Her teeth are sharp and beautiful. She has ten arms, which are soft as lotus stalks. In her right hands she is carrying a trident, a sword, a disc, sharp arrows and a lance, whereas in her left hands she is carrying a \textit{khetaka} (a type of dagger), a bow, a noose, a hook, and a bell or an axe. There are some variations on the weapons that she carries, and the number of her arms can also vary. At her feet lies a buffalo with its severed head, and a demon coming out with a sword in his hand from the neck or mouth of the buffalo. The goddess with her spear pierces the heart of the demon and his limbs are smeared with blood.

In commenting on the iconography of the Durga Mahisasuramardini as found in the ancient sculptural traditions of India, Agrawala (1963:vii) points out that there are clear differences between the iconography of the Durga Mahisasuramardini as represented in the Kushana period (c.70-480 CE) with the iconography of Durga Mahisasuramardini as represented in the Gupta period, the period of the composition of the \textit{Devi Mahatmya}. As Agrawala notes textual evidence on the iconography of Durga Mahisasuramardini as found in the \textit{Devi Mahatmya} reveals that in the Gupta period the buffalo-demon Mahisasura is understood as emerging in human form from the severed neck of the buffalo at the point the goddess pierces the demon with her spear. The following verses from the translation of Swami Jagadiswarananda (1953:50) of the \textit{Devi Mahatmya} give a good description of this climactic moment in the struggle of the goddess and the buffalo-demon:

\begin{quote}
[the goddess] jumped [from her lion] and landed… on that great demon, pressed him on the neck with her foot and struck him with her spear. And thereupon, caught up under her foot, Mahisasura half issued forth in his real form (human form) from his own buffalo mouth, being completely overcome by the valour of the Goddess (\textit{Devi Mahatmya}, 2:39-40).
\end{quote}

This form of representation of the goddess is also found in Gupta period sculpture (see Zimmer, Vol. I, text 1955, Pl. B4a). On the other hand, in representations of the same story found for the Kushana period or pre-\textit{Devi Mahatmya} period, in the Mathura style of sculpture, the demon Mahisasura is shown as a buffalo being
trampled by the goddess, with no sign of a human form emerging from the throat of

In the following chapter, I will look more closely at how images of Durga
Mahisasuramardini found in Java and Bali relate to Indian images, paying special
attention to the differences between Kushana and Gupta period representations, but
also to the history of the development of images of Durga Mahisasuramardini found
in South India. As I will explain in Chapter Two, most scholars (Poerbatjaraka, 1997;
Sarkar, 2001) trace direct Indian influences on Indonesian sculpture to the style
developed by the ancient South Indian Pallava dynasty. This is also interesting for my
study, since the movement of the sage Agastya, who is very important in the pantheon
of central Java, is said to have been from North India via the Vindhyas (the ancient
“abode” of worship of the goddess) to South India. This cultural movement probably
took place during the early Pallava period (c.400-500 CE) and appears to have been
followed soon afterwards with the movement of Agastya and Durga to the Indonesian
archipelago (c.700-900 CE).

Analysis and Interpretation

After tracing the origin of the most popular goddesses of the Puranic period
(especially Durga Mahisasuramardini) from the pre-Aryan civilization through the
Vedic period to the Puranic period, there are three questions that come to mind. They
are as follows:

1. Why is the goddess extolled in the *Devi Mahatmya* given so many
different names?
2. Why is the *Devi Mahatmya* interpolated in the *Markandeya Purana*?
3. Why is the goddess represented in particular as a young woman of great
beauty, with few of the motherly features often found in more recent
representations?

To answer the first two questions, I will briefly talk about the iconographic evidence
that demonstrates the popularity of the goddess before the *Devi Mahatmya* was
composed. According to Agrawala (1963:vii), the iconography of Durga
Mahisasuramardini in the Devi Mahatmya is closer to Gupta period representation than earlier Kushana period representation in the style of the Mathura region. As I have noted above the essential difference between Kushana and Gupta period representations is the absence of the male figure emerging from the neck of the buffalo demon in the earlier Kushana period representation. Since most scholars agree that the Devi Mahatmya is a product of the Gupta period the similarity of the iconography of the Devi Mahatmya and the Gupta period sculptures is not surprising. But this fact sheds light on two important aspects of my study:

- The Devi Mahatmya was composed at a time when the myth of Durga Mahisasuramardini was well established; I believe that we can assume from this that the name of Durga Mahisasuramardini was already well known in India by the time of the composition of the Devi Mahatmya.
- As I will explain in a later chapter Javanese and Balinese representations of Durga Mahisasuramardini reflect pre-Gupta representations, where the emerging head of a man has not yet become a typical feature of iconography of Durga Mahisasuramardini. However, there are some iconographies found in Java depicting the characteristics of the narration told in the Devi Mahatmya, where a demon emerged from the severed head of the buffalo demon.27

If the name Durga Mahisasuramardini was already popular by the time of the Devi Mahatmya, how can we explain the many names of the goddess in the Devi Mahatmya? The first thing we need to note is that the worship of the goddess was rooted in local, indigenous beliefs and practices that were being drawn into Brahmanism through the process of composing Puranas. A particularly strong association of worship of the goddess with the area of the Vindhya hills is known from ancient times. This association is still celebrated through worship of the goddess as Vindhyavasini (“She Who Dwells in the Vindhyas”) in the temple complex with that name located near the village of Vindhyacal, which Humes (1998:49) tells us “sits midway between Allahabad and Banares where the Vindhya mountain range touches the southern shores of the holy Ganges”. The association of the goddess with

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27 Hariani Santiko (1987) has worked intensively on the iconography of Durga Mahisasuramardini. Santiko has listed in detail the characteristics of the images of Durga Mahisasuramardini from the archaeological points of views.
specific places (and powers) is a tendency that is still very strong in modern India. In a lecture (14 February 2003), Ann Grodzins Gold has spoken of the way that goddesses are “embedded in the landscape” in a way that is uncommon for male deities. In working on origin stories of goddesses in rural Rajasthan, she found that many goddesses are described as “protecting” the sacred groves where their shrines are located, while in other cases the particular power of a goddess from one site can be “transferred” to another site, sometimes by bringing an appropriate stone, or even handful of soil, from the “mother” site to a new site, called a dham.28 Gold points out that while most South Indian villages are “protected” by a single goddess, often with a unique local name, in Rajasthan multiple shrines to the goddess can be found around some villages. She has recorded origin stories for nine shrines to the goddess located in and around the village of Ghatiyali and notes that “none take the name Durga, perhaps for fear that this warrior goddess is too powerful to be named directly”.29

We can see in this close connection of shrines of the goddess with particular places and powers a clear difference with shrines of the male deities of the Puranic pantheon. While Shiva may at times be called Mahadeva or Sankara, and Vishnu might be called Vasudeva, or Madhusudana, these names are common epithets and in general do not relate the deity to a specific place.30 Given that names of the goddess are commonly tied to specific places, we can see why the Brahmanical composer of a Purana like the Markandeya Purana would want to incorporate the names of local versions of the goddess into their textual glorification of the goddess. By invoking the names of many local versions of the goddess, and linking them all to a “super-myth”

28 Thus the local goddess of the Ghatiyali area called Parlamata is credited with being able to heal children’s diseases, because her shrine is a dham of the shrine to the goddess at Indraghar which is famous for the same power (personal communication, February 2003).

29 Also in Bali we do not mention the name of Durga directly. We try to create other names like Ratu Ayu, Ida Bhatari, or Ayu Mas, which seem gentler.

30 To be more accurate perhaps I should say that the tendency to associate a deity with particular places is not unknown in the Shaiva form of worship. Pargiter (1904:xi), for example, mentions the names of several ancient shrines of the goddess where she is known especially for her connection with Shiva. These are all located in the Vindhya mountains, and include the shrine to Omkara at Mandhata, to Mahakala at Ujjain, to Tryambaka at Nasik, to Ghrnesvara at Ellora, to Naganath east of Ahmadnagar, and to Bhima-shankar at the source of the river Bhima. Since the worship of the goddess as a separate deity is closely connected to her importance in the cult of Shiva I think we can assume that the tendency to associate the deity with a particular place exists in the case of Shiva, but has always been strongest in the case of worship of the goddess.
of the transcendent goddess, they could greatly enlarge their sphere of influence and ensure the need for their ritual services at the indigenous, local level of belief. Village level of worship of the goddess remained intact all throughout the post-Vedic period, and continued to grow in strength in classical times, as we know from both visual representations of the goddess, and textual works like the *Devi Mahatmya*. As Agrawala (1963:iii) points out:

The author of the *Devi Mahatmya* seems to have been gifted with a rare faculty of synthesis and a deep insight into the manifold forms of the cult of the Mother Goddess prevailing in different parts of the country, which he has assimilated with a broad sympathy and woven the multifarious strands into a finely embroidered fabric of great beauty and variety.

This “rare faculty of synthesis” allowed the author(s) of the *Markandeya Purana* to embrace indigenous forms of worship that in the past may have been on the periphery of Brahmanism, but now were of such importance that Brahmanism might not survive without incorporating them into its body of myths and rituals. I believe that the interpolation of the *Devi Mahatmya* in the *Markandeya Purana* was aimed at maintaining and spreading the power of Brahmanical teaching.

In answer to my third question on why the goddess in the *Devi Mahatmya* is depicted as young and beautiful, I will first discuss the South Indian institution of the *devadasi*. In her insightful study of this socio-cultural institution, Kersenboom (1987) tells us that there were many types of *devadasi* in pre-modern South India, but essentially they were women dedicated to temples of local goddesses. They were very important “actresses” in rituals enacted on a seasonal basis, which allowed the community to share in the benign, prosperity-giving power of the goddess and be protected from her “hot” or dangerous side.

As Kersenboom (1987:203-204) tells us:

The concept of the ambivalent Divine that is eternal, omnipresent, expressing itself incessantly in the dynamic tension of creation and destruction, of balance and imbalance, of auspicious and inauspicious, gave rise to the need for efficient specialists who could control any critical accumulation or eruption of dynamic force (page 203).
Throughout history, the ambivalent dynamism of the Divine has been felt, and although man could not construct an exact pattern of dynamic change, he distinguished diagnostic features (laksanas) of the two basic forces, and sought to regulate their cause and effect for the benefit of mankind (page 203).

The basic opposition, which causes this dynamism, is the tension between the dynamic, female principle (Shakti) and the inert, abstract male principle (Shiva). The dynamic principle can be both destructive and protective. An excess of dynamism destroys, whereas it creates, nourishes, and protects when properly harmonized with the male principle. This idea is expressed in the various characteristic types of goddesses: the single, ascetic goddess is labile and dangerous, whereas the married goddess is the prototype of benign, fertile protection (page 204).

As the sudden eruption of dynamism was related to the temper of the goddess, a method was devised to control this danger from within: a female ritualist was created, whose female power (shakti) was ritually merged with that of the great goddess (Shakti). She should be ever-benign and protective of her fellow human beings. The traditional view holds that all women share, by their very nature, the power of the goddess. A regular progress is imagined in the degrees of auspiciousness of varying status of women: at the top of the scale is married women whose husband is alive and who has borne several children; she is called su-mangali ‘auspicious female’ (page 204).

One important detail of the “eternally-auspicious” devadasi of South India was that, since they were “married” to an immortal deity they never had to give up their toe rings, which must be relinquished by a widow upon death husband. This detail is also important in the Devi Mahatmya because the goddess is described as being given abundance of fine clothing and jewellery from the gods, but no one gave her toe-rings. This suggests that the goddess of the Devi Mahatmya shares with the devadasi the characteristic of being “ever auspicious” (nitya-sumangali), in this case because she is beyond marriage, in a state of eternal youth, beauty, and power.
Doniger (1980) offers a more radical interpretation of the different forms of the goddess. To summarize briefly some points from her very difficult analysis, there are two basic types of female deity. One is the motherly type, who in giving milk gives life and prosperity. Another is the “milk-withholding” type, who retains her milk (like yogis who retain their semen) in order to increase her power. This “milk-withholding” type of goddess can manifest “gently” as a youthful, warrior goddess like Durga Mahisasuramardini of the Devi Mahatmya, or can turn violent and uncontrolled, becoming a “devouring mother” type of goddess like Kali, who is so important in later Tantrism.

While Doniger (1980) and Kersenboom (1987) differ very much in how they analyze myths and social practices involving the goddess, both agree that the goddess represents ambivalent forces. On the one hand, as the auspicious wife (sumangali) she represents the matronly giver of life and prosperity that is most prominent in the goddess Laksmi/Shri, wife of Vishnu. On the other hand, representations of the goddess in unmarried form range from erotically-charged descriptions like those of the Devi Mahatmya and Devi Bhagavata Purana, to depictions of the goddess as a “devouring mother” that are prominent in later Tantrism. As I will discuss in later chapters, the development of the Durga legend in Java and Bali seems to follow a movement from the Devi Mahatmya type of representation toward the “devouring mother” type of representation that is prominent in the Balinese Rangda. In India itself later representations of Durga often seem to accentuate matronly qualities of the goddess, while a separate deity (Kali) emerges to represent the “devouring mother” aspect of the goddess.

Conclusions

In this chapter, I have concentrated on the evolution of the worship of the “great goddess” in India. I have traced a line of development from the Palaeolithic age to the Indus Valley civilization, claiming that worship of the mother goddess was an important element of the Indus Valley civilization. I have also drawn attention to a famous seal showing a man sitting in a yogic posture which many scholars feel represents another important aspect of Indus Valley religion that gained later
prominence in the post-Vedic age in the worship of the god Shiva, especially his phallic aspect as the linga.

Following Zimmer (1955) I have claimed that these elements of the Indus Valley religion were temporarily displaced by the worship of the nature gods of the Vedic pantheon during the Vedic period (c.1500-800 BCE). In the subsequent Epic and Puranic periods (c.200 BCE-200 CE and c.200 CE–800 CE respectively), the worship of the goddess originally gained prominence in the Puranic period in connection with the cult of Shiva. In the myth of the self-immolation of the goddess Sati and the violent grief of her husband Shiva many scholars see a resurgence of indigenous religious patterns and a partial rejection of the Vedic form of religion.

I have paid special attention to the Markandeya Purana, especially cantos 81-93, which over the centuries have gained the status of a separate text called the Devi Mahatmya. I have drawn attention to the special connection of the Markandeya Purana and Devi Mahatmya with the region of the Vindhya hills and the Brahmanical clan (gotra) of the Bhargavas. These elements of the Markandeya Purana will be important in my study of the “journey of the goddess to Java and Bali” because of the importance of the legendary sage Agastya, who is also closely associated with the area of the Vindhyas and was incorporated into the Central Javanese pantheon alongside the goddess Durga Mahisasuramardini, whose worship is the main focus of the Devi Mahatmya.

I have also attempted some speculation on why the goddess has so many names in the Devi Mahatmya and why she is always portrayed as a beautiful young goddess who incorporates the powers (shakti) of all the male deities. In the first case I link many names of the goddess to the efforts of the Brahmanical authors of the Puranas to draw many local goddesses into the mainstream or “great tradition” form of Hinduism. This will also be important in a later chapter when I discuss the local character of worship of the goddess in contemporary India. In seeking to explain the useful nature of the goddess I have discussed Kersenboom’s work (1987) on the “ever-auspicious” (nitya-sumanggali) nature of women who were dedicated as representatives of the goddess at many South Indian shrines in the pre-Independence era. I have also discussed Doniger’s work (1980) which contrasts “motherly” and “milk-withholding” forms of
the goddess in Indian mythology and religion. These theoretical perspectives will be important to me when I look at the transformation of images of the goddess in Java and Bali, where it appears that the goddess has an “ever-auspicious” nature in the pantheon of Central Java, but has more similarities with the dangerous and frightening “milk-withholding” form of the goddess in Bali.
Chapter 2
The Goddess Durga in Java: Two Forms of Representation

There can be little doubt that religious patterns from India played a very important role in influencing the local people of the Malay-Indonesian archipelago, who adopted Hindu and Buddhist beliefs and practices and incorporated them into indigenous religious systems that are generally understood in terms of animism. There are many forms of evidence found in the archipelago, both visual and written, which indicate the importance of the worship of Hindu deities. The goddess Durga, for an example, is one of the Hindu deities that were brought to Java by religious pilgrims and priests seeking a fertile new ground for their sectarian practices. They installed images of Durga in the northern niches of the temples of Central Java as part of a unique “Javanese pantheon”. Here images of Durga were worshipped by the Javanese rulers and their subjects, largely with the aim of achieving security for their kingdoms, invoking her qualities as a warrior as a way of providing spiritual protection from their enemies.

While there is a great deal of archaeological evidence testifying to the presence of Durga Mahisasuramardini (“Durga Slaying the Buffalo Demon”) in Java, our knowledge of the role played by images of Durga during the Central Javanese period (c.700-930 CE) is limited due to the small quantity of written evidence for that period. The situation is better for the East Javanese period (c.930-1527 CE), for which we have evidence from inscriptions as well as literary and didactic works in the Old Javanese language that can be used along with archaeological evidence to gain a better idea of how images of Durga were understood in that era.

The oldest representatives of the iconography of Durga found in the West and Central Java area range from the early 5th to 9th centuries CE, and the latest images found in the East Java area are dated in the late 15th century CE, thus during the Majapahit Empire (c.1293-1527 CE). In addition to free-standing statues of Durga Mahisasuramardini from the East Javanese period (c.930-1527 CE), images of Durga are also found in the form of bas-reliefs from a number of Hindu temples. In later developments, especially during the East Javanese period, there were two styles of
representation of the goddess Durga. One is the representation of Durga Mahisasuramardini as a warrior goddess who slew the buffalo-demon and the other represents Durga in a demonic form. This demonic form of Durga is depicted in both literary and visual works during the East Javanese period, and can be considered a radical transformation of Indian images of Durga, though not without some antecedents in India.

In this chapter, I concentrate on free-standing images of Durga Mahisasuramardini found in Central and East Java, and on related evidence from inscriptions. In the development of Durga images in Java there was an intertwining of two forms of Durga, and a transition between the more auspicious forms of the warrior-goddess Durga Mahisasuramardini into a demonic form, which I believe was first triggered by the role of Durga as a protector of the sanctity of lands donated to religious institutions by royal donors. In this context Durga appears as an important female deity in the curse part of the inscriptions. I believe that this transition is also reflected in several kakawin, literary works written in the “Old Javanese” language that use Sanskrit metres, and are similar in many ways to the “court-epics” (kavya) of India, which appear first in the Javanese inscriptions in the late eighth century (Zoetmulder, 1974: 24). However, the kakawin have a “Javanese flavour” and often develop themes drawn from the Indian epics, Ramayana and Mahabharata, in ways that reflect Javanese values and ideas.  

The transition from one form of representation of Durga to another seems to have happened after a shift of economic and political power from Central Java to East Java, c.930 CE. During the Central Javanese period, the role of the goddess Durga was predominantly as a warrior goddess who protected the rulers and their realm from evil-doers. In her role as a protector, the goddess Durga was often invoked in the curse sections of inscriptions for protecting “freehold lands” (simā) from trespassers against the sanctity of these lands, that were typically donated to religious communities for the upkeep of shrines, monastic communities and centres of Buddhist

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31 According to Zoetmulder (1974:24) the Old Javanese of the 9th century CE is the oldest form of the Javanese language for which we have records; in the course of time this language underwent many changes so that in time the language of literary works written in Old Javanese was different from spoken Javanese.
or Hindu learning. In the curse sections of the inscriptions the goddess Durga, along with several male deities, was implored to bring down deadly punishment on all those who dared to violate the conditions of the sima. In addition to the role of the goddess Durga in protecting the sima, that appears to have triggered the transformation of her images into a demonic form during the East Javanese period, there was also strong influence in East Java from the ideology and philosophy of Tantrism of both Hindu and Buddhist types which might have contributed to a radical transformation of the goddess Durga both in visual art and textual forms. Goudriaan (1979:24) has pointed out that the magical lore which is presented in Tantric literature of late Vedic texts and references to sorcery executed by Brahmans and unorthodox monks in the Hindu and Buddhist literature have been preserved in Bali, which probably has caused Durga to be considered the patron of sorcery in Bali.

Study of the goddess Durga in the archipelago is not a new topic; there are many scholars, both Indonesian and Western, who have written extensively about representations of Durga found in Java and Bali. Knebel (1903, 1906), Boeles (1941), Ratnaesih Maulana (1979) and Hariani Santiko (1987) have made elaborate studies of the imagery of Durga from the iconographic point of view, while van Stein Callenfels (1925) and Satyawati Sulaeman (1978) have worked on the representation of Durga in temple reliefs found in East Java. The latter two scholars studied not only the reliefs of Durga in themselves, but also the connection between East Javanese reliefs depicting Durga and literary works.

This study traces the connection between the two forms taken by representations of the goddess Durga in East Java in terms of anthropological, political and social aspects of the life of the East Javanese aristocracy. Therefore, it is necessary to provide an overview of the historical background of Hinduism in the archipelago, and the position of Durga in the context of the evolution of the Javano-Balinese forms of Hinduism.

The beginnings of Hinduism in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago

Hindu and Buddhist priests who travelled to the archipelago during the 1st millennium CE introduced Indian religious and cultural elements, perhaps most important the art
of writing (Schrieke, 1957 Vol. II:308; Miksic, 1990:19). Zimmer (1955:104) tells us that the first wave of migration seems to have been into the western part of Java (contemporary Sunda) during the 6th century CE, while a second wave that took place during the 7th and 8th centuries CE was concentrated in Central Java and further east. However, the oldest surviving evidence of writing in the archipelago are the inscriptions in Kutai of east Kalimantan, dated by Vogel (1918:167), de Casparis (1949, 2001:46), Schrieke (1957 Vol. III:308), Sarkar (2001: 52), and van Naerssen (1977:18) as between 350-400 CE. These inscriptions record the gift of cattle to a community of Brahmins at a series of seven “sacrificial posts” called *yupa*. The reigning king in the inscriptions is referred to with Indian names, as Mulavarman the son of Asvavarman and the grandson of Kundunga (Bondan et al, 1982:1, van Naerssen, 1977:20; and H.B. Sarkar, 2001:52). The inscriptions are written in Sanskrit language and the “Pallava” script, named after the South Indian dynasty which issued inscriptions in this type of writing. As shown by J.P. Vogel (1918), this Pallava script originated in India but was further developed in Southeast Asia before it reappeared in South India about 700 CE. This shows that Hindu culture was actively developing during this period in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago (Damais, 1995:7).

The evidence of the Kutai inscriptions is followed by evidence from West Java in the form of the inscriptions of King Purnavarwan, who founded a state called Tarumanagara, the earliest known kingdom in Java during the 5th century CE (van Naerssen, 1977:24; Chhabhra, 1965:26; Miksic, 1990:19). Archaeological evidence shows that its capital was located somewhere in the area of Jakarta, Banten and Bogor in West Java. The name of King Purnavarman is recorded on a number of inscribed stones, one of which was found in the middle of a stream-bed. The king’s footprints were engraved on a boulder, and may indicate conquest or occupation of the area. In the text of the inscription, King Purnavarman compares his footprints to those of the Hindu god Vishnu (de Casparis, 2001:46; van Naerssen, 1977:23-24; Bambang Soemadio, 1996:46; Damais, 1995:7; Fontein, 1990:25). It is well known from

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32 According to the Kutai inscriptions King Mulavarman performed a ritual called *bahu-suvarnaka* ("gold in great measure") and gave away 20,000 head of cattle to the Brahmins of his realm in the sacred ground of *Vaprakesvara*. The Brahmins who participated in that religious ceremony immortalized the occasion by setting up records on the sacrificial pillars. The records were written in Sanskrit language in *anushtubh* and *arya* metres (Sarkar, 2001:52). *Anushtubhs* (*slokas*, stanzas of two lines of sixteen syllables each).
Javanese sources that the ruler was considered one of Vishnu’s incarnations, and was regarded not just as the saviour of the world, but also as the world-sustainer (Schrieke, 1957:76).

Archaeological evidence for Hinduism in Java from as early as the 5th century CE is corroborated by the annals of the Chinese sage, Fa-Hsien [Faxian], who started his journey from China to visit the holy places of Buddhism in India by land, with the second purpose of collecting holy manuscripts. On his return to China by ship, he passed through Sri Lanka, but then had to stop in Java in 414 CE to wait for the “trade winds” to blow in the right direction. He wrote that, “heresies and Brahmanism were flourishing, while the Faith of Buddha was in a very unsatisfactory condition” (Vogel, 1918:183; Bondan et al, 1982:11; H.B Sarkar, 2001:35; Fontein, 1990:25). From what is mentioned in Fa-Hsien’s book, we know that the trade route between China, India and Indonesia must have been well established by the 5th century CE.

While earlier scholars talked of Indian “immigration” to the archipelago in terms of massive movements of “colonists” (Miksic, 1990:20), J.C. van Leur (1967) and F.D.K. Bosch (1961) showed in an important article that Hinduism and Buddhism were not introduced into Indonesia by traders, conquerors or settlers but rather by religious persons who were closely allied in that period with the merchant class (Bosch, 1961:11):

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33 Buddhism originated in India more than a thousand years before the construction of Borobudur. Siddharta Gautama, later known as Buddha or “the Awakened One” was born at the foot of the Himalaya Mountains around 500 BCE. He was member of the Sakya ethnic group or lineage; thus he is often called Sakyamuni, “Jewel of the Sakya People” (Miksic, 1990:18).

34 The “trade winds” were a very important influence on the culture of the Indonesian archipelago. During the Asian winter (December-April) cold, heavy air is pushed outward from India and the Asian mainland toward the warmer south. This current of air is made to “bend” to the east close to the equator by the “Coriolis effect”. This creates a “seasonal wind” (Persian: mausam “monsoon”) that allowed sailors to sail from India and the Persian Gulf toward the archipelago during the months of December through April or May. The reverse current happens during the winter of the southern hemisphere, when cold, heavy air from Australia and the Antarctica is pushed over the archipelago. This current is then “bent” to the west by the Coriolis effect. This is the “returning monsoon” that allowed sailors to sail back from the archipelago toward India and the Persian Gulf. This same “cycle of winds” was also important for the large Chinese ships that carried trade goods between the archipelago and China. It seems that Fa-Hsien was forced to stop over in Java to await the December-April “monsoon” that would allow him to return to China with Chinese merchants from the Hokkien coast.
In Hindu-Indonesian civilization, we meet with elements of a theoretical and scholastic character, elements which remind us of the manuscript, the code of law, the recluse’s cell, the monastery, and which undoubtedly are just as incompatible with an environment of warriors or traders as they are in harmony with an intellectual sphere: with the classes of scribes, scholastics, initiates in the holy scriptures and legal sciences.

In this passage Bosch suggests that the most important source of Indian influence in the archipelago were the “scribes, scholastics” and priests who came over the ocean from India with traders seeking wealth. There are many illustrations of trading ships among the bas-reliefs of Borobudur built between 750 CE and 850 CE, a famous Buddhist temple of central Java.35

Many Indian cultural elements were introduced by priests and other religious persons who travelled to the archipelago during the first millennium CE. Edi Sedyawati (2001:50) summarizes the main aspects of Indian influence as follows:

Cultural and religious circumstances, the introduction of Sanskrit for writing, and the adoption of Buddhist and Hindu mythology were not the domain of traders. It is more likely that the princes who ruled small Indonesian kingdoms were influenced by priests and Brahmins from India. These priests would have been responsible for introducing a religion that allowed the king to identify himself with a deity or bodhisattva, reinforcing his temporal power. More abstract cultural elements also played a role, such as the concept of the cakravatin (universal ruler), warna or social class, the existence of a supreme supernatural power, rasa in aesthetics, and all the detailed artistic renderings of those concepts. Kingdoms that adopted Indic concepts of kingship were found in Kalimantan, Java, Sumatra and Bali.

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35 Borobudur was not built and designed as a copy of some foreign monument, but was a blend of Indian and local elements, like the terraced pyramids still found on the slopes of some Javanese mountains like Mount Penanggungan. This combination created a new kind of sanctuary with distinctively Javanese features.
From a few literary works and the archaeological and inscriptional evidence, we know that the earliest Hindu kings of the Mataram kingdom of Central Java ruled between the 8th and 10th centuries CE under the Sanjaya dynasty (c.700 CE-930 CE). During the same period a dynasty calling themselves the Shailendra ("Lords of Mountain") came to power. Monuments like Borobudur, built during the early 9th century CE by the Shailendra dynasty, are evidence of the high state of the development of Buddhism during this period. The Shailendra kings adopted Mahayana Buddhist teachings predominantly in its esoteric Tantric form known as Vajrayana (van Naerssen, 1977:38). In 832 CE Java’s supreme ruler, Rakai Pikatan, who was a Hindu king, married Sri Kahulunan, a Buddhist, who was also the Shailendra crown princess, therefore merging the Shailendra and Sanjaya families through marriage (van Naerssen, 1977:48; Miksic, 1990:24, 2000:56). Not long afterward all traces of the Shailendra disappear from Java, and it is known from the famous Nalanda inscription c.850 CE and local legends that some conflict led Balaputra, a Shailendran prince to retreat from Java in c.850 CE to his homeland in Sumatra (Jordaan, 2003:11). However, the Sanjaya were also great patrons of religious architecture, and Sanjaya dynasty patrons completed work on Borobudur after the Shailendra king Balaputra left central Java to return to their Sriwijayan homeland in southern Sumatra.

36 A version of Mahayana Buddhism sometimes called esoteric Buddhism began to appear c. 600 CE (Miksic, 1990:18). In Tibet this form of Buddhism is called Vajrayana, while in Japan it is called Shingon.
At the same time that they supported the construction of monuments like Candi Borobudur, and perhaps in response to the glory of Borobudur itself, the rulers of the Sanjaya dynasty sponsored building of the famous Hindu temple complex known as Candi Prambanan, which appears to be described in the Shivagrha inscription of 856 CE and may also be described in verses 42 to 59 of the eigth canto of the *kakawin Ramayana* (Old Javanese *Ramayana*).  

![Candi Prambanan](image)

**Figure 2.2: Candi Prambanan, a Hindu monument of Central Java sponsored by the Sanjaya dynasty, completed c.856 CE**

From the archaeological evidence of sites like Candi Borobudur and Candi Prambanan, Santiko (1987) has claimed that Shaktism, the sect that glorifies the Supreme goddess as the highest deity, never developed in Java as it did in India. In India, the devotees of the Shakta can venerate the goddess in special temples dedicated to her worship, while in Indonesia there is no any special temple dedicated to worship the goddess. These temples (108 temples) are often termed *Shakti pitha*, indicating that they represent spots where part of the body of the goddess in her incarnation as Sati fell when the gods were forced to dismember her corpse as the supreme deity, Shiva, carried it on his shoulders in a terrifying fury after her self-immolation when her father, Daksa, refused to honour Shiva. The most famous sacred

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37 See Aichele (1969) for his study of the possibility that the temple described in the Shivagrha inscription of 856CE is the Prambanan complex, and that both are also described in OJR 8.42-59.
sites of Shaktism include the Kali-ghat temple in Calcutta, the Durga temples along the Ganges River in Varanasi, and the Kamakhya shrine near Gauhati in Assam which is believed to be the place where Sati’s generative organ fell (Goudriaan, 1979:38). Devotees of the goddess often recite special hymns to the goddess like the Gayatri Durga or the Devi Mahatmya section of the Markandeya Purana, an important hymn of the Shakta cult also called the Durga-sapta-sati. It is recited during the elaborate ceremonies for the goddess known as Durga Puja which are performed on an annual basis, typically held for a nine-day period in September-October (hence its other name, Navaratri, “the Nine Nights”).

Whether or not the Shakta cult was ever important in Indonesia, we know from the studies of scholars like Miksic (1991) that the status of women was very high under the rule of the Shailendra and Sanjaya dynasties, and that this high status was reflected in religious developments during the period. Two of the most prominent examples are the dedication of the temple complex at Candi Kalasan to Devi Tara, a female bodhisattva and the importance of the image of Durga Mahisasuramardini in Candi Shiva of the Prambanan temple complex (Fontein, 1990:27).

If the Shakta cult or Shaktism did not make its way to Java, then why did the concept of Durga play such an important role in Javanese tradition? What was the particular form of Hinduism that first came to Java, and why did Durga play such a prominent role in this form of Hinduism? These are hard questions to answer. However, since the goddess Durga is one of the manifestations of Shiva’s consort, it seems likely that we can get a better idea of the role of Durga in the evolution of Javanese and Balinese religious ideas if we look at the development of Shaivism in Java. I believe that Durga attained a prominent position in Java through incorporation of her images into the Shaivite pantheon of Central Java. Brook (1990) has pointed out that Shaktism, which has both Tantric and non-Tantric formulations, is so closely related to Shaiva traditions that it is not unusual to find Shaktas referring to themselves as Shaivas. Tantrics who consider themselves followers of the goddess, and seek union with her, and thus may be characterized as Shaktas “may appear to be religious chameleons, changing colour to suit their particular contexts; this should not be construed as a lack of theological centeredness” (Brook, 1990:74). Goudriaan (1979:7,11) has pointed out that the worship of Shakti might also be incorporated within the fold of another
denomination (Shaivism, Vaishnavism or Jainism) and thus not be classed as Shaktism in the strict sense of the word.

The beginnings of Shaivism in Java: The Canggal Inscription (c.732 CE)

In Chapter One of my doctoral dissertation I traced the development of the worship of the goddess in the Puranic period, especially as found in the “Devi Mahatmya” section of the Markandeya Purana. In the Devi Mahatmya worship of the goddess begins to be independent from the male deities of the godhead (Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva). Before Shaktism reached its heyday in India the goddess had been important in the Vaishnava sect as Narayani, Mahamaya or Laksmi, whereas in the Shaiva sect she was best known as Sati, Parvati, Durga, Candi or Camunda, to mention only a few epithets of the goddess who is considered the eternal consort of Shiva. The goddess is also worshipped in the form of Sarasvati, the consort of Brahma, by both Shaiva and Vaishnava devotees and in this form even found a place in Tibetan Buddhism, since Sarasvati is the goddess of knowledge and learning in general, and so not linked to a specific form of religious expression.38

It was during the later Puranic period (c.600-900 CE) that the Shakta cult, which centred on the worship of the Supreme goddess emerged. It developed its own distinct textual tradition in works like the Devi Bhagavata Purana, Devi Purana and Kalika Purana to mention only a few of the most important texts of Shaktism. During what might be termed the Tantric period, which flourished in India beginning in the 7th century CE, there were numerous doctrinal works written by Shakta scholars and devotees that eulogized the great goddess as the Supreme Deity. The most important among the Shakta Tantric texts seem to be Kubjikamata, Yoginitantra, Shaktisangamatantra, Pingalamata, and Laksmitantra (Goudriaan, 1979:11). Pingalamata is believed to be the composition of Srikantha, a Brahmin who resided in a village near Prayaga. This work is often referred to in the Old Javanese and Balinese literature (Hooykaas, 1974:131; Goudriaan, 1979:26).

38 Personal communication with Dr Dan Martin at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel in December 2003.
While images of Durga Mahisasuramardini are prominent in both the Central and East Javanese periods (c.700-930 CE and 930-1527 CE respectively), there seems to be little evidence that the goddess was worshipped in a cult separate from the cult of Shiva. Therefore, this chapter I attempt to describe how the worship of Durga fits into the cult of Shiva in Java and Bali.

The early prominence of Shaivism in Java was announced very clearly in the elegant Sanskrit inscription of Sanjaya found at Candi Canggal (732 CE) on the top of Gunung Wukir in Central Java. This inscription contains a hymn of praise for a ruler named Sanjaya as the founder of the dynasty (Miksic, 2000:56; Schrieke, 1957 Vol. II:287; van Naerssen, 1977:46; Sarkar, 2001:33).39 The Canggal inscription describes the dedication of a Shiva-linga that Sarkar (1971:16) describes as “a palladium of the dynasty”. In Sarkar’s translation (1971:19) we can see how important this event was for the dynasty since the date of the event is given almost down to the hour:

When the year of the Saka king that is brought to numbers with four, five and six (654) was passed, on Monday, the thirteenth day of the bright half of the month… in (the month) of Karttika, while the lagna stood under Kumbha… the king (who is) the illustrious Sanjaya, for obtaining tranquillity, established on the hill a linga with all auspicious marks.

In Chapter One of my dissertation I called attention to the engraved footprints of king Purnavarman, who ruled a territory in western Java called Tarumanagara (c.5th century CE) and issued an inscription which mentions that Purnavarman is “like Vishnu in this world”. This is the first of many cases where a king is compared to Vishnu. In later developments it became well-known dogma to the Javanese that the rulers were conceived as reincarnations of Vishnu as saviour as well as sustainer of the realm (Schrieke, 1957; Zoetmulder, 1974). Zoetmulder (1974) explains that the worship of Vishnu in Java was almost always connected with the royal family. He

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39 The same thing happened in Kamboja (Cambodia) when Jayavarman II established a linga in 802 CE at the commencement of his reign. The erection of this linga is attested by the inscription of Sdok Kak Thom (Sastri, 1978:157; Goudriaan, 1979:22). The linga is considered by many Hindu commentators to represent the dynamic energy of the god Shiva, which can be likened to the phallus in male representations, while the yoni represents the female aspect of fertility, which aligns in human terms with the vulva.
based his arguments on the literary works which almost always mentioned that kings are reincarnations of Vishnu who are born to save the world from evil doers or other disasters. This seems to have been consciously incorporated into the cult of Shiva by the priests who guided Hindu aspects of religion in Java.

As in the case of the inscription of Purnavarman of Western Java (450 CE), which refers to the king’s divine footprints, the Canggal inscription (732 CE) refers to the king’s divine footprints, but here they are compared to Shiva in his “three-eyed” form (Sarkar, 1971:19):

May that irreproachable beautiful pair of feet-lotuses of the three-eyed one (Shiva)... grant you perpetual bliss...

From this it is clear that the Shaiva sect was most important to the dynasty of Sanjaya, which was the same dynasty that later constructed the great Hindu temple complex at Prambanan. Similar evidence of the importance of Shaivism for the Sanjaya dynasty is found in the important remains of the Dieng plateau and the hillside complex of Gedong Songo, located about 70 kilometres north of the site of the great Buddhist shrine of Candi Borobudur. Many of the shrines at Dieng and Gedong Songo take the form of a single spire enclosing a cella, that often shows sign of having been used for worship of a Shiva-linga, thus again illustrating the Shaivite orientation of Hinduism during the Sanjaya dynasty (Dumarcay and Miksic, 2000:60-61).

The Candi Prambanan complex as a source of data on early Javanese Hinduism

There are numerous religious sanctuaries devoted to the worship of Hindu and Buddhist deities and bodhisattvas found in the Central Java area. The dates of these

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40 King Airlangga the founder of the East Javanese Kadiri-Jenggala dynasty, for example, was deified as Vishnu on Garuda at the royal baths of Jalatunda. But in later developments, when the Shaivite (Saiwa) and Buddhist (Sogata) religious groups were nearly equal in terms of royal patronage, Javanese kings were usually deified as Shiva and Buddha in different shrines.

41 There has been a great deal of study on Shaivism in Java conducted by scholars like Krom (1923), Goris (1926), Ziesseniss (1939), Harun Hadiwijono (1967), Zoetmulder (1965) and Haryati Soebadio (1971), while Hooykaas (1971) has produced several volumes on Shaivism in Java, sometimes collaborating with Goudrian, whose works on Indian Tantrism are well-known for their scholarly approach.
temples cover a period of roughly two centuries between circa 700 CE to 900 CE (Chutiwongs, 2003:70). Schrieke (1957: Vol. II, 288) wrote:

During the period of two centuries - roughly between 700 and 900 CE - Central Java (Mataram, Kedu, and neighbouring regions) was marked by enormous cultural activity and splendour to which countless remains of sacred structures large and small bear witness.

The great Hindu temple complex of Candi Prambanan was built under the royal sponsorship of the Sanjaya dynasty when the two major dynasties of Central Java - Sanjaya and Shailendra - had already merged through marriage (832 CE). During this era the Sanjaya dynasty under Rakai Pikatan reached the pinnacle of achievement in the construction of Hindu temple complexes with the erection of the vast Shaivite complex at Prambanan in Central Java, which was consecrated in 856 CE (Miksic, 2000:56).

The Prambanan temple complex is clearly a place of worship for the Hindu Shaivite sect, as can be seen from the central placement of the shrine to Shiva and its greater size and elaborate decoration. There are three prominent temples at the Prambanan temple complex. These are Candi Brahma in the south, Candi Shiva in the middle and Candi Vishnu in the north, with Candi Shiva is the largest and highest. The distinctive height of Candi Shiva appears to reflect the idea that the god Shiva is thought to reside on top of Mount Kailasa, identified with one of the highest peaks of the Himalaya (de Casparis, 1992:285). Thus, the shrine of Shiva should be in accordance with his mythological abode and should take the highest and most central position at the Candi Prambanan complex.

At Prambanan we find a pantheon of Hindu deities that have been Javanized. We can say this because the exact pantheon of Prambanan is never found in other countries of Asia or in India. Sedyawati (2001:80) describes the typical Javanese pantheon as found at Prambanan as follows:

Shiva and his three emanations (Durga, Ganesha and Agastya) formed a long-lasting unit in Java. This is an example of Javanizing process; this
combination is not significant in India. The provision of a separate temple for Brahma is another point at which Javanese Hinduism had a different emphasis from the Indian model.

Figure 2.3: The Shaivite “pantheon” of Candi Prambanan

This composition of three particular deities in specific relation to Shiva as principal god was an ancient Indonesian re-interpretation of the Hindu pantheon, and has continued to be applied as the primary style of both Central and East Javanese temples.

Figure 2.4: Candi Sambisari, another Shaivite temple complex of Central Java

Among the temples in Central Java that followed the typical composition of three deities grouped around Shiva, the oldest include several shrines in the Gedong Songo
complex and Candi Sambisari, a small Shaivite temple complex located near Prambanan which was completely covered with volcanic debris. It was rediscovered by accident in 1976 by a farmer ploughing in his field whose plough hit the top part of the spire of the central shrine (Fontein, 1990:42). In East Java, the central temples of the complexes at Candi Singasari and Candi Jawi are among intact remains that testify to the continuing use of the composition of the Shaivite pantheon typical of the Candis of Central Java.

In India, each of the three deities of the Puranic godheads (Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva) is often represented along with his consort, often referred to as the Shakti, or “divine energy” of the god. Sarasvati, the goddess of learning, music and fluent speech, is considered the consort of Brahma, the creator. Laskmi or Sri, the goddess of prosperity, is worshipped as the consort of Vishnu, the preserver. However, the consorts of Brahma and Vishnu are not represented directly at Prambanan. This honour is reserved for Durga, the great goddess who is the consort of the supreme deity Shiva.

The Pantheon of Candi Shiva of Prambanan and other Shaivite Shrines

The Candi Shiva of the Prambanan temple complex provides evidence of a very important arrangement of deities that is typical of the “Central Javanese Shaivite pantheon”. As noted above, Sedyawati (2001:80) tells us that “Shiva and his three emanations (Durga, Ganesha and Agastya) formed a long-lasting unit in Java”. Here I would like to discuss only the image of Durga Mahisasuramardini at the Candi Prambanan.

The Shiva shrine (Candi Shiva) at Candi Prambanan is laid out in a cruciform pattern where each of the deities at Prambanan is provided with a separate cella. The most prominent cella of Candi Shiva is the sanctuary on the eastern side, which houses a monumental image of Shiva as Mahadeva. This image faces the sunrise, and is
located at the cardinal direction that is still considered the “entrance point” of the mandala-like arrangement of deities in the Balinese Nawasanga arrangement.42

If we go outside of the cella of Shiva and turn to our right, we can walk along the single gallery of the temple in the auspicious pradaksina or clockwise direction. The outer walls of the gallery are famous for their reliefs illustrating the Ramayana of Valmiki, while the walls of the temple spire itself are covered with images of meditating figures that may represent royal figures, priests and sages who are said to inhabit the slopes of the mythical Mount Meru (Fontein, 1990:39).

Going ninety degrees clockwise around the circle of the gallery we first come to the cella of the sage Agastya, located on the southern side of the temple. A further movement of ninety degrees brings us to the cella of Ganesha on the west side of the temple, and finally on the north side the cella housing an image of Durga Mahisasuramardini carved from black andesite, a very hard stone that can be polished to a high lustre that is available in the hills ranging the Kedu plain.

The image of Durga Mahisasuramardini in the north cella

According to Nagaswamy (1982:120) an image of Durga can be made either with four arms or eight arms or more. The four-armed image is called the Saumyamurti (the benign form), while the image of Durga is portrayed with eight arms if she is to be propitiated for a victory over enemies, in which case she should carry a bow, sword, discus, arrow, shaft, pestle and shield. Images of Durga Mahisasuramardini, once installed with proper rituals, are believed to possess special powers that make these images into a powerful source of royal legitimacy (Schnepel, 2001:151). The image can be used as a personal tutelary deity, the deity of a family, and or the deity of divine patronage for a kingdom. In these functions, the goddess offers privilege, protection and blessings for royal patrons (Schnepel, 2001:149; Nagaswamy,

42 Nawasanga in the Balinese context is a group of deities, one for each of the eight compass points and the centre. Each direction has a special god, special colour, and specific weapon. The god Shiva located in the centre, which is sometimes further divided into upper, middle and lower centre, with Shiva, Sadashiva and Paramashiva of the Shaivite Tantric system assigned to these three levels of the centre.
Durga is one of the most important aspects of Shakti, she is worshipped either independently in a special temple dedicated to the goddess or as a secondary deity whereby she is worshipped together with other deities in Shiva temples (Nagaswamy, 1982:114, 117).

Figure 2.5: The image of Durga Mahisasurmardini of the northern niche of Candi Prambanan

We see the image of Durga Mahisasurmardini in the Prambanan temple complex it is clear that Durga was worshipped as a secondary deity where the image of Durga is installed together with Ganesha and Agastya as part of the pantheon that has Shiva-Mahadeva as its central image.

At Prambanan the image of Durga is eight-armed, and is shown standing in *pratyalidha* posture, with her right foot placed slightly in front of the left and both

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43 Representations of Durga as a state deity go back to at least the 1st century BCE, as we know from a golden coin issued by an unknown Indo-Seythian king (Banerjee cited by Nagaswamy 1982:16).
knees slightly bowed. This posture is usually associated with depictions of powerful warriors or warrior-deities.

Her left hands hold:
- a conch (*shanka*)
- a battle shield
- a bow
- the curly hair of a complete dwarf-like human
- the tip of the tail of the buffalo

Her four right hands hold:
- a discus (*cakra*)
- a dagger (*kethaka*)
- an arrow
- of the buffalo demon (*mahisa*)

The goddess Durga is portrayed as a beautiful maiden with full breasts and a slim, but voluptuous body. She is bedecked with ornaments; she has a bracelet on each of her wrists and anklets around each of her ankles. She wears an ornate girdle strung with precious stones, pendulous ear-rings and large necklaces like those still popular in contemporary India.

The overall impression of the image of Durga at Prambanan suggests more the idea of a calm deity who sustains the world than a warrior goddess who destroys her enemies. The expression on her face is calm, her half-open eyes suggesting that she is in a state of deep meditation. Her hair is bound up in the crown-like form called *jatamukuta* that is characteristic of ascetics who devote themselves to attaining the favour of the god Shiva. She is standing elegantly with her legs half-spread and planted firmly on the back of the buffalo demon that lies prostrate on the ground, while the dwarf-like human shape that represents the final shape of the buffalo demon has completely emerged from the body of the buffalo. There is no sign of a fierce battle between the goddess and the demon, but rather the goddess holds the dwarf by his hair to symbolize her complete victory. The image of the Durga Mahisasuramardini at Prambanan thus represents the moment of absolute victory of the goddess. The goddess is shown grasping the curly hair of this dwarf-like demon, whose bulging eyes, moustache, exaggerated nose and fangs all accentuate his demonic character. In his right hand this dwarf holds a mace that shows that he has resisted the power of the goddess to the last, but in the end was no match for her supreme power (*Shakti*).
In general there is an evolution of Durga images in India from the Kushana type, that shows Durga astride a buffalo, and the Gupta and post-Gupta types, where we find the image of the buffalo with severed head and a dwarf-like male figure emerging from the severed neck of the demon. These Gupta and post-Gupta images correspond to the description of Durga in the “Devi Mahatmya” of the Markandeya Purana, a work of religious literature dating from the 6th century CE, that is during the late Gupta period. Since the archipelago underwent Pallava influence from early times, it is significant to compare the characteristics of the images of Durga Mahisasuramardini of the Pallava period with those found in Java. One especially important example of images of the goddess Durga from the Pallava period is an image of the goddess Candi which is believed to be a work of the 8th century CE. In this depiction the goddess’ left hand holds a demon that is sculpted to resemble a child (Nagaswamy, 1982:157). As we can see from the image of Durga at Prambanan, this fascinating depiction of the demon in a child-like form became a central characteristic of Javanese images of Durga.

From this it seems certain the Durga Mahisasuramardini of Candi Prambanan was influenced by Gupta models that were further transformed through evolution in Pallava hands. Zimmer (1955:100) and Sarkar (2001:44-45) corroborate this, with Zimmer telling us that:

The monuments of Java and Cambodia, at the first stages, are reflections, in the main, of the Gupta and Pallava forms; for apparently, the stream of settlers from the Indian mainland to these islands came largely from the Pallava sphere, and they laid the foundations, first of a Hindu and then of a Buddhist civilization.

According to Nagaswamy (1982:177), images of the goddess Durga are found occupying the northern niche in ninety percent of the temples surveyed in his study. Durga is also worshipped for different reasons by members of different castes. She was worshipped by Brahmins to obtain Brahminhood that is the full realization of the religious and spiritual knowledge that is the “caste duty” of the Brahmins. On the other hand she was worshipped by ksatriyas (rulers) for the sake of conquering enemies and founding a stable realm. In order to gain victory a king can worship the
goddess by performing the *abhicara*, or *krura karma* ("cruel action") ritual, a ritual to obtain worldly effect by destroying one’s enemies (Snellgrove, 1959:38; Goudriaan, 1979:35; Gupta, 1979:159; Nagaswamy, 1982:121).

Durga was closely associated with Shiva and Ganesha in the pantheon of Prambanan and other temples of central Java. As Weatherbee (2000:351) points out:

> The typical *mandala* of the early classical Shaivite temples had a Shiva-*Linga* or Mahadeva in the central chamber. Ganesha was placed on the west or east rear wall, depending on the orientation of the structure. Bhatara Guru (Agastya) was in the south. Durga stood in the north, the image is Durga Mahisasuramardini “Slayer of the Mahisa demon”.44

The first written sources that give us information about the typical arrangement of the Shaivite pantheon of Central Java are found in later literary works from the Kadiri period of East Java, and from texts composed in the late Majapahit period or even later. Those include the *kakawin Smaradahana* composed by Mpu Darmaja (Zoetmulder, 1974:291; Poerbatjaraka, 1931:11-12) and the *Tantu Panggelaran*, a composition dated c.1500 CE (Pigeaud, 1924:96-97). While the evidence of the *Tantu Panggelaran* is the latest in historical sequence it is the text that gives us the clearest idea of the continuing understanding of the typical Shaivite pantheon that first appeared in Java in the Central Javanese period. The *Tantu Panggelaran* tells us that Mahameru is the abode of Shiva or Bhatara Guru, who is guarded on the east side by *Sang Hyang Gana* (Ganesha), on the south by *Resi Anggasti* (Agastya) and on the north by *Bhatari Gori* (Durga) (Chutiwongs, 2003:74).

**The Role of the goddess Durga in the Central Javanese Inscriptions**

There are some inscriptions that shed light on the role of the goddess Durga. In these inscriptions she is quite often the only female deity mentioned in a list of deities who

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44 Poerbatjaraka (1926) was very careful in his doctoral thesis for the University of Leiden to explain that images of Agastya in Java have been wrongly identified with the later East Javanese form of Shiva called Bhatara Guru, whose origin may be related to the idea of “Shiva as teacher” (*Shiva-daksinamurti*). However, many art historians still refer to images of Agastya as images of Agastya or Bhatara Guru.
are otherwise male. Thus, these inscriptions are the first known written evidence for the role of the goddess Durga in Javanese religion. From what is described in the inscriptions we can assume that Durga must have played an important role for those who issued the inscriptions. One of the most common types of inscription found in Central and East Java is a legal document issued under the order of a king or his relatives to grant a piece of land (sima, perdikan) to those who had rendered significant services to the king or to a priest of the community of priests for the upkeep of holy sanctums (Boechari, 1977:94-105; van Naerssen, 1977:25, 40; Gary Tubb, 2004). These sima lands were almost entirely dedicated in some way to providing for spiritual or religious services, and often included detailed regulations on exemptions from taxes that should be enjoyed within the “freehold” lands.

In quite a few inscriptions, Durga is included in a list of deities who were invoked in a special “curse” (sapatha) part of the inscription. These “curse” sections of the inscriptions were designed to prevent any future change to the terms of the grant, and to ensure that it remained within the family or religious establishment of the original grantees for generation after generation. Granting a piece of land to someone was considered as an auspicious event; for that reason, in order to legalize the ownership of the land, people needed a legal document in the form of an inscription, usually written on copper-plate or stone, a ceremony and witnesses to the dedication. According to Timbul Haryono (1980:35-54), at the end of the ceremony of legalizing the new status of the land, there was a special curse ceremony conducted by officials called the Sang Makudur and Sang Vadihati. The purpose of the curse was to protect the ownership of the land by invoking unseen (niskala) spiritual powers that would guard against violation of the status of the land by trespassers or other unauthorized persons by calling down terrible punishments on the violators. These could include

45 According to Dr Gary Tubb (personal communication in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem on 22 April 2004), in the Indian context the free-tax land is called agrahara also used for the religious sanctuary sponsored by the rulers. Dr Gary Tubb is a Professor of Religion at the Columbia University, New York.

46 Sang Makudur is the person who acts in establishing a sima, invoking the gods and uttering a curse on trespassers (Zoetmulder and Robson, 1982:910). Sang Vadihati is another official who is found to play a prominent role in rituals connected with the foundation of sima lands (See Zoetmulder and Robson, 1982:2165).
being attacked by tigers, struck by lightning or being attacked by strange diseases for many generations to come.47

The “curse ceremony” must have been an important aspect of protecting the status of the land, judging from the lavish attention paid to the ritual in the inscriptions. The ritual was conducted by the Sang Makudur and Sang Vadihati by worshipping the Sang Hyang Watu Teas, or “Sacred Border-Stone” located at a corner of the witana (great wall) surrounding the area of the sima.48 Then Makudur severed the head of a chicken using the Watu Kulumpang as a base, and then also broke an egg over the stone, while uttering the curse formula protecting the sima from trespassers in the future.49 A long list of Hindu deities, supernatural spirits, and the ancestors were invoked to witness the change of legal status of the lands of the sima as well as to threaten severe punishments to the trespassers of the sima (Timbul Haryono, 1980:35-54; Santiko, 1987:95).

The first known inscriptions that contain prominent formulae were the stone inscription of T(e)rui T(e)pussan II (Candi Petung II) (D 39 in the Museum Nasional collection) issued by Sri Kahulunnan in the Saka year 764 or 842 CE (de Casparis I, 1960:7; Sarkar I, 1971:102-115). In general the inscriptions of this type issued during the Central Javanese period were short and concise. However, epigraphists have learned that these inscriptions were all later copies of earlier inscriptions, so it is quite possible they were made longer and more elaborate when they were re-issued by later kings (Sarkar I, 1971:76-99, 133-162, 250-261). Although several inscriptions from as early as 842 CE have been found in Central Java emphasizing the curse section, it is only with the inscription of Sangguran (or Batu Minto inscription), a huge stone

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47 In rural India, just as in Bali, people are more afraid of the power of the unseen spirits (niskala) than of dangerous forces in this world (sekala). Anna Grodzins Gold (personal communication in 2003) and in her work on religious factors in attitudes toward the environment in Rajasthan, points out that many forest groves have been protected from deforestation by the presence of shrines of Durga, who is said to cause terrible punishments to befall anyone who dares cut down trees in groves surrounding her temples.


49 *Watu kulumpang* is another sacred stone which plays an important role in the ritual of protecting a sima (Zoetmulder and Robson, 1982:919). It seems that the Sang Hyang Teas is set up when the lands of the sima are first set out, and the *watu kulumpang* is important as a spot for the ritual of the curse, and offerings to the chthonic spirits residing in the land of the sima.
inscription issued by Sri Maharaja Rakai Pangkaja Dyah Wawa in 928 CE, that we find a curse section of significant length and detail. In the curse part of the Batu Minto inscription, the name of Durgadevi is quite prominent (OJO XXXI; Sarkar II, 1972:227-248; Sarkar, 2001:193, van Naerssen, 1977:55).

It seems that there were specific patterns or formulae that were used in composing inscriptions, especially in the curse parts. Santiko (1987:101-104) has summarized these patterns as follows:

The first part hailed the Hindu deities, the *raksasa*, *yaksa*, *pisacas*, unseen spirits, supernatural powers, and the ancestors.

The second part was about prohibitions against violating the *sima* described in the *prasasti*; in this part we also find mentioned the types of people who might not enter the *sima*.

The last part of the inscription describes the form of punishments that will befall all those who violate the conditions protecting the sanctuary.

It is important here to draw attention to the form of punishments that will befall those who violate the conditions of the protection of the sanctuary, because it seems that this is a turning point in the history of the evolution of images of Durga in Central and East Java, when Durga came to be conceived of as taking two different forms. One was a warrior goddess who continued to be represented as Durga Mahisasuramardini, and the other was a demonic goddess. The latter form of Durga gained increasing

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50 The Minto Stone inscription is now housed in Minto House in Scotland (Sarkar, 2001:193). The inscription is written in Old Javanese language. For details of the inscription see Sarkar (2001:193-207).

51 For details on the first and second parts of the curse sections of the Old Javanese inscriptions see Santiko (1987:104-144) and Sarkar (2001:205).

52 *Raksasas*, *yaksas* and *pisacas* are three types of demonic or non-human beings.

53 Santiko uses the term *prasasti* in the Indonesian sense, to refer to any formal inscription, whether ancient or modern. In Sanskrit an inscription is referred to as a *prashasti* only if it consists of a poetic composition (*prashasti*) eulogizing the ruler who issued the inscription.
prominence during the late East Javanese period and is the predominant form of representations of Durga in Bali even to the present day.

According to the Batu Minto inscription there are three types of punishment that can befall trespassers of the sima. First, those who violated the conditions of the protection of the sanctuary must be punished by being attacked and mutilated by various types of demons and are said to be liable to the attack of Durgadevi.54 The second type of punishment is the threat that trespassers will be consumed by wild animals or struck by lightning, or that they will drown in the ocean depths or fall into a deep ravine. The third type of punishment is that those who violate the sima will suffer some incurable diseases throughout endless reincarnations (Santiko, 1987:144; Sarkar, 2001:205-206). Sarkar (2001:206) translates the section of the Sangguran or the Batu Minto inscription relating to punishments of those who violate the sima as follows:

[W]hoever disturbs the village of Sangguran... may he be brought to destruction! Moreover when (he disturbs) the boundaries of sang hyang watu sima, as the result of his deeds, may he be killed by you! He may be killed by all gods in such a way that he may not (find time to) turn behind, he may not (find time to) look behind: he may be pushed on the front side, struck on the left side, in his mouth may be struck, his forehead may be battered, his belly may be ripped open, his intestines may be rooted out, his entrails may be drawn out, his heart may be plucked out, his flesh may be eaten up, his blood may be drunk up, then he may be trampled upon, lastly he may be killed. If he goes to the forest, he may be eaten up by the tiger, bitten by the snake (and) whirled round and round by the angers of gods! If he goes to the fields, he may be struck by lightning, torn into pieces by the raksasa(s)...

The curse section of inscriptions thus made it very clear how terrifying the punishment could be for those who dared to violate the sima. In Javanese belief,

54 The five deified sages of the Javanese “Resi-sect”, called the pancakusika in the inscriptions, are also invoked to punish trespassers of the sanctuary. The history of the Resi-sect, and its relationship to Indian forms of asceticism and philosophy like the Pasupata, Yoga and Samkhya systems, is a complex subject that has not been studied deeply by western or Indonesian scholars.
curses pronounced in a ceremonial way are more effective than a written, legal
document not accompanied by an invocation of the unseen spirits. The curse sections
of the copper-plate and stone inscriptions of Java thus record the actual words
pronounced in the “curse ritual” performed by the Makudur and Wadihat, recording
for all time the very powerful curses pronounced during the actual ritual of protection
of the sima. Since Durga was the only female deity invoked in the curse part of the
inscriptions, therefore she was conceived as the sole goddess with a unique ability to
devour the persons who violate the sima. This particular conception of the goddess
became clear in the East Javanese literary work kakawin Ghatotkacasraya. The curse
part of the sima inscription continued to be incorporated into other inscriptions of the
East Javanese period.

**The Shift of Political Power from Central Java to East Java**

When and how did the Javanese capital shift from Central Java to East Java? From the
written evidence found in Central Java, van Naerssen (1977:55) has pointed out that
on 14 February 928 CE King Wawa’s realm still embraced both Central and East
Java. Schrieke (1957, Vol. II:287-288) and Bernet Kempers (1991:37) have further
pointed out that the reign of Balitung, who issued inscriptions between 898 and 910
CE which refer to sites in both Central and East Java, represents a period of transition
from Central Java to East Java. But it seems that after 2 August 928 CE the centre of
the administration was exclusively in East Java. The first king who ruled in East Java
was Sri Maharaja Rakai Hino Pu Sindok Sri Isanawikrama Dharmotunggadewa, who
is usually referred to in histories of ancient Java as Pu Sindok, or Mpu Sindok.

Several hypotheses have been put forward to explain the shift to East Java. Van
Naerssen (1977:58) pointed out that the main factor for the power shift was a massive
volcanic eruption, which not only caused significant physical damage, but also was
interpreted by the Javanese as being caused by angry or evil unseen spirits and this
brought about a desire to shift the capital. According to Schrieke (1957), another
possible reason for the shift was the heavy burden of forced labour required for the
building of huge monuments like Borobudur and Prambanan within the relatively
short time span of two centuries, which caused many subjects to migrate to eastern
Javanese regions beyond the grip of the rulers. Since the rulers could not have
maintained their courts without the support of labour from the peasantry, they had to move their capital to East Java. However, van Naerssen (1977:58) looks at the shift of the capital to East Java from the economic point of view, and his view seems very sensible. As international sea trade became a larger factor in Javanese economic life in the late 9th and early 10th centuries CE, it seemed that the rulers of Mataram needed either to expand their kingdom to gain access to more favourable ports along the northern coast of Java, or shift their capital. Thus, the Brantas river valley of East Java offered the perfect solution to their economic problems, since it was a navigable river that could connect the kind of inland site favoured by the Javanese kings with coastal cities with easy access to international shipping and trade.

Van Naerssen (1977:59) concluded his arguments about the transfer of the royal court-city (*kraton*) to East Java by proposing two interrelated factors. Firstly, he proposed that the extravagance of temple-building in Central Java, which was not only a matter of religious zeal, but also a reflection of the wealth and status of the nobility, had victimized the peasantry and caused an unstable political situation in Central Java. Secondly, East Java offered a more favourable geographical situation which could supply both the agricultural surplus needed to support a large population and provide access to commercial activities through international sea trade. However, Krom (1923:83) and Schrieke (1957:292) also call attention to an inscription of King Airlangga dated 1041 CE that suggests that the shift of power from Central to East Java was caused by natural disasters like volcanic eruptions, floods, epidemics and battles with foreign invaders.

After the shift of power, there was a strong influence of the ideology and philosophy of Tantrism of both Hindu and Buddhist types which might have contributed to a radical transformation of the goddess Durga both in visual art and textual forms during the East Javanese period.

**Tantric Influence in East Java: Defining and Classifying Tantrism**

Tantrism is a vast and complicated subject, but it seems necessary to provide a measure of concise, simplified information about Tantrism as the background for my discussion of Tantric elements in the imagery of Candi Singasari, and the role played
by images of the goddess Durga in the Tantrism of the late Singasari period under Kertanegara.

Goudriaan (1979:6) has said that Tantrism stands for a collection of practices and symbols of ritualistic, sometimes yogic or magical character (including “Tantric means” like mantra, yantra, mudra, nyasa) whose aim is to provide the practitioner with a more immediate means of salvation than was possible through the older, more ritualistic practices of Brahmanism. Within Tantrism mantra means repetition of sacred syllables with the aim of leading to a state of union with a chosen deity. Yantra are similar aids to meditation, but in this case in the form of visual symbols and diagrams that are said to embody the powers of the deities that the practitioner seeks to merge with in the Tantric meditation. Mudra are gestures of the hands with a similar esoteric meaning, and a similar role in the ritualistic aspects of Tantric meditation. Nyasa refers to the “placement” of the powers of certain deities in specific areas of the body, through a combination of elements of mantra, mudra and meditative techniques like dharana, “fixation of consciousness” on an object, and dhyana, merging of the consciousness with an object used as a focus of meditation, and the overcoming of the distinction between subject and object (Kinsley, 1982:60).

Like the Puranas, Tantra theoretically also discusses five different subjects: the creation and destruction of the universe, the worship of gods and goddesses, the attainment of supernatural power, and the union with the Supreme Being. In addition to the five main subjects it also discusses a wide variety of related subjects dealing with miscellaneous scientific, religious, medical matters. In reality the contents of Tantra are almost entirely magical and mystical. The supernatural and magical power may be gained by the repetitive recital of the magical and mystical syllables: om, am, hrim, krim, hum. The use of mantras that consist of certain mystical and secret letters and syllables, the employment of the magical diagram (yantra), sacred circles (like shri cakra), spells, charms, and amulets (kavacha), symbolic movements and symbolic hand-gestures (mudra) are basic characteristics of Tantric teaching (Hoens, 1979:101-111; Kinsley, 1982:60). Unlike the Vedas, which are very strict in terms of social regulations and rules on selective access to certain rituals, the Tantras are very open in their sympathies; they do not make any discrimination in terms of gender, social status or caste.
The Tantras are distinct in the Indian textual traditions in that they give prominence to the role of women and do not ordinarily consider them subordinate to men. A basic distinction is made in the Tantric traditions between “right hand Tantras” whose rituals share much with the orthodox Vedic tradition, but emphasize the role of the senses in achieving spiritual advancement, and “left hand Tantras” that are often associated with antinomian practices. White (2000:23) has pointed out that the central ritual act in left-hand Tantras is the use of five forbidden substances called the panca tattva, “five essences” or panca makara, “five words starting with ma-s”. Kinsley (1982:60-62) points out that these rituals made use matsya (meat), mudra (parched grains), mada (liquor), mantra (chanting of special Tantric mantras), and maithuna (sexual intercourse with a specially sanctified partner). These “five ma-s” in their specific Tantric form were considered “forbidden substances” of the orthodox, Vedic tradition whose use would help participants in Tantric rituals to overcome the duality inherent in socially constructed ideas of purity.

According to Tantra, the human body is a miniature cosmos, and thus just as much a possible “abode of the gods” as the external, material cosmos. An essential feature of all Tantrism is thus the idea that the worshipper may become one with the deity and take on his or her powers. According to the Kalika Purana, this essential doctrine can be simply stated as follows: Devah bhuta devam yajate which means “One who worships a deity should become a deity”.

Based on Goudriaan (1979:7-9) and Brooks (1990:55-90) we can summarize the most important characteristics of the Tantric sadhana (“spiritual discipline”) to support this study as follows:

1. Tantrism involves elaborate speculations on the nature of sound, especially as it is embodied in mantra and in addition to the use of mantras and images of divinities in ritual worship. Tantrics also include in their worship other symbolic elements, especially diagrammatical representations known as yantra and mandala. While yantra are exclusively used by Hindu Tantrics, and mandalas are normally associated with Buddhist Tantrism, it is not always possible to make a sharp distinction in the use of the term mandala.
2. Tantra is not only secret (*rahasya*) in the sense that spiritual teachers (*guru*) restrict its most spiritually efficacious teachings to those they deem qualified, but it is also expeditious and dangerous, a “lightning-bolt vehicle” (*vajrayana*), as Buddhists call it, not easily controlled or mastered.

3. Many Tantrics use conventionally prohibited substances in ritual, such as liquor and meat, and engage in antinomian practices for spiritual and material ends, including sexual intercourse outside the socially conventional boundaries of marriage. Tantrics often deliberately violate the conventional canons of Brahmanical Hindu Dharma. The Tantrics’ use of the *panca makara* is particularly controversial among high-caste Hindus who are vegetarians and view marriage as a solemn vow that cannot be contravened for any reason whatsoever.

This type of Tantrism also includes erotic forms of meditation including *kamakaladhyana* or meditation on the “aspect of desire”, usually identified with the female sexual organ. These substances and practices/activities are by no means universally accepted and approved by all Tantrics (Brooks, 1990:69). Critically considered, the antinomian elements of Hindu Tantrism distinguish it objectively from non-Tantric Hinduism. A Tantric can be suspected of being dangerous, powerful, and “radical” (Brooks, 1990:70; Yael Bentor, personal communication, 2004; Badri, personal communication, 2003).

4. Perhaps Tantrism’s most distinctive feature, though not as often cited as the controversial use of intoxicants, sex, and other sensual aids, is that caste and gender are not important criteria for determining Tantric qualifications for different types of practice. Tantric criteria for qualification have to do with an individual’s moral, intellectual, and personal qualities.

During the East Javanese period both the Shaivite and Buddhist cults became strongly influenced by Tantric concepts and practices that aimed at spiritual salvation through magical or ritual means. *Nagarakertagama* 43.3 mentions that King Kertanegara applied the *Ganacakra* form of Tantric ritual meditation, and had also mastered the six-fold strategy (*sadguna*) against enemies (Robson, 1995:56; Pigeaud, 1960 Vol. 2, 1965).
According to Fontein (1990:50) there is too little information on the practice of Ganacakra ritual as practiced in East Java and their connection with the Tantric cult of Bhairava to be certain about what form exactly these rituals took. According to Tibetan Buddhist sources, the practice of the Ganacakra in ancient times was connected to certain mandalas that involved both male and female devotees who took ritual positions at the eight compass points and so symbolized the deities of the mandala. However, at the present time the term ganacakra refers to a gathering of lay persons and monks at the monastery to make offerings which consist of edible foods. After these offerings are blessed, the food is consumed by the community of monks and lay persons (Dr Yael Bentor, 2004).55

According to Bosch (1961) and Soebadio (1971) numerous sects were present in Java and Bali in the first millennium CE. These included Shaivite sects like the Pasupata, Bhairava, Kapalika and Shaiva-Siddhanta. The presence of the Bhairava sect is well attested from both archaeological and textual evidence. One particularly important piece of evidence is the configuration of deities at Candi Singasari in East Java, a temple that was important during the Singasari dynasty (c.1222-1292 CE). While several of the statues from the Candi Singasari complex were taken to Leiden during the colonial period, scholars have shown that the original set of deities in the central shrine was like that of the Shiva shrine at Prambanan. Thus we find an image of Agastya in the southern cella, Ganesha in the western cella and Durga in the northern cella. However, the central image of Shiva has been replaced with a massive statue of Shiva in his violent, terrifying form as Bhairava, who is shown naked, draped with a necklace of human skulls, dancing ecstatically while holding a skull cup and ritual dagger in his hands (Muljana, 1983:93; Fontein, 1990:50) as shown in the four images of Figure 2.6.56

In the Pejeng-Bedahulu area of central, southern Bali there are also important images that Bernet Kempers (1991:135-143) describes as reflecting the importance of the cult

55 Personal communication (2004) conducted at the Hebrew University Jerusalem, Israel.

56 During the Old Order, Soekarno adopted this name Bhairava to name his personal guard as Pasukan Tjakrabirawa (the Cakra Bhairava troops), which had a major role in the “coup” of late September 1965.
of Bhairava in Bali during the same period. These include the Pura Kebo Edan (the Mad Bull), Pura Samuan Tiga and Pura Puser ing Jagat (Navel of the World).

Textual evidence for the Bhairava sect during the Majapahit kingdom can be found in the *Tantu Panggelaran* text. This text narrates the stories of three Bherawapaksa priests who are said to belong to the *Bherawa-paksa*, or “Bhairava sect”. They are named Mahampu Palyat, Mpu Barang, and Mpu Waluhbang. These powerful sages are said to live in the Kalyasem cemetery of Mount Hyang, where they meditate in a horrible fashion, each night eating human corpses and using human skulls as the bowls for their sacrificial food and drink (Pigeaud, 1924:104-105, 112-113, 121 cited by Hariani Santiko, 1995:65; Fontein, 1990:50).

Lorenzen (1972), who has made a careful study of the “left-hand” sects of Shaivism called *Kapalikas and Kalamukhas*, suggests that the *Kapalikas* were the same as worshippers of Bhairava. In Javanese legends we do not find direct references to *Kapalikas*, but in the *Tantu Panggelaran* we find an important myth about how Shiva cut off the fifth head of Brahma in order to save his son, Ganesha, from losing a life-and-death game of riddles with Brahma. In India this myth is said to account for the fact that the *Kapalikas* always carry a human skull (*kapala*) (Dyczkowski, 1988:26). The presence of this legend in the *Tantu Panggelaran* suggests, as does the direct reference to sages of the *Bherawapaksa* (also called the *Bherawa-Shiva-paksa*) in the
same text, that the Kapalikas and followers of the Bhairava-paksa were also considered identical in Java.

That the practices followed by Mahampu Palyat in the Tantu Panggelaran are nearly identical with those of the Indian Kapalikas is brought out in a description of the Indian Kapalikas cited by Dyczkowski (1988:26):

My charming ornaments are made from garlands of human skulls,” says Kapalika, “I dwell in the cremation ground and eat my food from human skull. I view the world alternately as separate from God (Isvara) and one with Him, through the eyes that are made clear with the ointment of yoga… We (Kapalikas) offer oblations of human flesh mixed with brain, entrails and marrow. We break our fast by drinking liquor (sura) from the skull of Brahmin. At that time the God Mahabhairava should be worshipped with offerings of awe-inspiring human sacrifices from whose severed throats blood flows in currents.

From the above description given by Dyczkowski, we can see that there is a very close correspondence between Indian ideas about Bhairava and the iconographical evidence of the image of Shiva of Candi Singasari in his terrifying form known as Bhairava. Candi Singasari is located in the sub-village of Candirenggo in Singasari village, located near the city of Malang, East Java. The image of Bhairava which is now housed at Leiden (inv. No. 1403-1680) has a ferocious countenance, bulging eyes, a widely smiling mouth and protruding fangs. He sits on a jackal, a creature that belongs to the cremation ground, wielding his characteristic trident (trishula) and hourglass drum (damaru), together with a large sacrificial knife and a skull cup. He is naked, his genitals are portrayed very prominently, and he wears only a garland of severed heads, and a string of bells tied around his waist. Skulls occur in profusion on his diadem, earrings and armlets, while there are eight large skulls under his feet (see Fontein 1990:163).

57 A small Bhairava image is one of the images also incorporated in the Camundi statue and inscription issued by Kertanegara in 1292 CE, together with other small images that flanked the image of Camundi. That small image corresponds in most details to the large Bhairava of Leiden. The Camundi inscription will be discussed in the following section of this chapter.
The images of Ganesha, Agastya and Durga Mahisasuramardini were also found at the site. The images of Ganesha and Agastya are still in situ, while the image of Durga is now also in Leiden (Leiden Museum, inv. no. 1403-1622). This standard pantheon is the continuation of the pantheon of Central Javanese candis but the East Javanese typical traits have incorporated Tantric elements into the representations of the deities. Each of the images has skull(s) as their prominent feature. The image of Ganesha is depicted seated with his right knee raised on a low seat lined with skulls. His sitting position suggests alertness instead of his usually calm and static dignity. Chutiwongs (2001:75) has pointed out that shrines dedicated to Ganesha can be found everywhere in Hindu and Buddhist countries, since he is venerated and loved by all as the generous bestower of wealth and success. In this image, Ganesha wears a militant jacket; skull ornaments, originating in the iconography of Shiva have become profusely multiplied, reflecting the aggressive side of Ganesha’s personality as well as “the basic trends in Tantric philosophy that regard death as nothing but the blessed annihilation of the earthly matters” (Chutiwongs, 2003:75).

The iconographical representation of the goddess Durga of Candi Singasari features a prominent skull ornament in her crown. Following the standard pantheon applied in the Shaivite temples of Central Java, the image of Durga Mahisasuramardini of Candi Singasari also occupied the north chamber of the shrine. Zimmer (1955:103-5), Fontein (1990:158), and Chutiwongs (2001:75) have elaborately described the image of Durga Mahisasuramardini at Candi Singasari. Zimmer (1955:103-5) has pointed out that the “Durga Leiden” is the finest representation of Durga in the Javanese arts from any period. The main characteristics of the image of Durga Mahisasuramardini of the East Javanese period, especially during the Singasari period, are the serene and dreamy expression, which stands in sharp contrast to the dynamic movement of the body, but synchronizes well with the postures of her hand that seems to rest gently on her enemy’s head (mahisa), as if to bless or to comfort instead of crushing him. Her dreamy expression appears to have been a locally developed feature that characterizes the main group of the sculptures of Candi Singasari. She stands with her legs wide apart, her feet firmly planted on the back of the buffalo; she has eight hands, which are mostly damaged, but her lower right hand holds the tip of the buffalo’s tail. Her two left hands hold a shield and the head of the demon that shows a plump, boyish
figure of sizable proportion. The goddess wears rich batik garments which feature elegant, repetitive design. Not only does the goddess wear batik garments, but the buffalo demon also is fitted out with rich trappings decorated with cross bands so that at first glance people might think that the buffalo is the vehicle of the goddess (see the following figure and Fontein, 1990:158).

The image of Agastya occupied the southern chamber of the shrine, and so also follows the standard of the Central Javanese pantheon. However, his headdress has undergone some changes compared to the image at Prambanan. In Central Java the sage wears the *jatamukuta* associated with ascetics devoted to Shiva in the Indian tradition, whereas in the East Javanese period the sage wears a turban-like headdress which is also found very prominently on priestly figures in narrative reliefs of East Java, and in the *ketu* headdresses of priests depicted in the *wayang* style of painting from Bali.
The Position of the goddess Durga during the East Javanese Period

For the East Javanese period, there are numerous forms of evidence, from both textual and visual sources, that can provide information on the role of the goddess Durga. In addition to the evidence of written inscriptions, information on the role of the goddess in East Java can be gained from a variety of literary forms, including works in the *kakawin*, *gancaran* (prose) and *kidung* genres, while evidence in the visual arts can be found in the form of free-standing statues and bas-reliefs at a number of temple sites in East Java. While the written evidence does not deal directly with conceptions or the iconography of Durga or the mode of worship of Durga, descriptions of Durga and her role in a number of narratives sheds very interesting light on the increasingly ambivalent nature of representations of Durga in the East Javanese period. Because of the complexity of historical and religious issues that have to do with this change in perceptions of Durga in East Java, it necessary to review the work of earlier scholars, which can provide information on the emergence of the demonic form of Durga during the Majapahit period (c. 1293-1527 CE).

The Terep Inscription (1032 CE) of King Airlangga

There are a number of inscriptions issued during the pre-Majapahit period of East Javanese history that mention the name of Durga, or another manifestation of Durga, either explicitly or implicitly. Those inscriptions clearly describe the role of the goddess in granting victory to the king or strengthening the political position of the king.

The first inscription of this type is one that mentions Durga implicitly, using the term *Bhattari Arcarupa*. This is the Terep inscription issued in 1032 CE by King Airlangga, which mentions the king’s worship of the goddess in the form of a statue (*Bhattari Arcarupa*) in the Terep hermitage. Santiko (1997:216) has suggested that this *Bhattari Arcarupa* can be identified as the goddess Durga, but she did not give further information on the basis of this identification. It seems probable that her assumption is connected in some way with the marriage of Airlangga’s father, Udayana (Sang Ratu Maruhani Sri Dharmodayana Varmadeva) with Mahendradatta, the granddaughter of King Sindok, who was deified as Durga Mahisasuramardini in
the Pura Kedarman of Kutri in the Gianyar district of Bali. Written evidence attesting to the identification of the *Bhatari Arcarupa* as Durga Mahisasuramardini can be found in the Tengkulak inscription dated 8 February 1024 CE. The contents of this inscription mention that a King Marakata was the son of Udayana and Gunapriyadharmapatni that is Mahendradatta, and is known better to history as Anak Wungsu, that is “the youngest son”. King Marakata was known to have reigned in Bali while his brother Airlangga reigned in East Java, the homeland of their mother, Gunapriyadharmapatni, who was also known as Mahendradatta. According to Goris (1926: 31) the Tengkulak A charter mentions that *paduka haji Anak Wungsu nira kalih bhatari lumah i Burwan bhatara lumah i Banyuaka*, which means “his majesty the king Anak Wungsu together with the goddess (= his mother, Mahendradatta) were apotheosized in Burwan (= Kutri), while the deity (= his father, Udayana) was apotheosized in Banuaka”. Bernet Kempers (1991:39) based his identification of the statue of Durga Mahisasuramardini still extant in Kutri, Bali partly on this section of the Tengkulak A charter, and the identification is also supported by local legend and belief.

Schrieke (1957, Vol. II:288) gives us more information on account of the chaotic situation in the beginning of the East Javanese period. According to an important inscription issued in 1041 CE by King Airlangga known as the Calcutta Stone, political conditions in Java at the end of the 10th century were on the brink of destruction. As Schrieke tells us:

[A]t the time of the “destruction” [*pralaya*] of the island of Java in the year 938 Saka [1016 CE]…the ruler of Wurawari, when he came out from Luaram…

the whole of Java was at that time like one great sea, many highly prominent persons were killed in battle; foremost to die at that time was His Majesty the Emperor of Blessed Memory, who lies buried in the sanctuary at Wwatan, in the month of Caitra of the 939 Saka year [1017 CE].

From other passages in Airlangga’s inscription of 1041 CE it is clear that a great war happened between the ruler of East Java and the invader king of Wurawari, though we
do not know exactly where Wurawari was. Airlangga was not yet sixteen years old at that time of the “great destruction” (pralaya) by the forces of Wurawari. But from the Calcutta Stone we know that he fled with his loyal servant, Narottama [Dharmamurti Narottamadanasura], who thereafter enjoyed the King’s affection to the last day of his life. According to Sarkar (2001:221) the struggle of Airlangga to regain the throne is clearly reflected in the narrative sections of the Calcutta Stone inscription. From the inscription of Terep we learn that he took refuge at that time with the ascetics of Wanagiri, and that during this period he gained the power of achieving victory through worshipping the Bhatari Arcarupa. The close identification of his mother with the image of Durga at Kutri, Bali supports the idea that Airlangga and his family held Durga in high esteem as the granter of victory over one’s enemies. Thus at the beginning of the East Javanese period we find Durga in her traditional form as a warrior-goddess who gives victory to the royal family prominent among the founding family of the first East Javanese kingdom.

The Camundi inscription (1292 CE) of Kertanegara

The second inscription that describes the prominent role of the goddess Durga as a granter of victory for the nobility of East Java is the Camundi statue inscription issued in 17 April of the Saka year 1214, or 1292 CE, by King Kertanegara, the last ruler of the Singasari dynasty, who ruled from 1268 CE through 1292 CE. This statue with its inscription detailing Kertanegara’s instructions on worshipping the goddess Camundi is now kept in the Trawulan museum of Mojokerto, East Java. Damais (1995:68-75) has made the most recent and thorough study of this badly damaged inscription. As he points out, it is engraved on the back of the statue in Old Javanese language using nagari script, while the name of the goddess, Camundi can be identified as a Javanese variant on Camunda, a form of Durga who is prominent in Shakta and Tantric forms of Indian Hinduism.

The image of the goddess Camundi in this statue is placed in the middle of a set of four smaller images. Camundi is flanked on the right by an image of Ganesha to the bottom right of the goddess, while the image on the top right is broken off. The goddess is flanked on the left by a naked Bhairava, whose image is the same size as Ganesha’s image at the bottom right. On the top left side there is an image of a
goddess riding a fish. Camundi herself is portrayed as having eight arms, while she sits in a lotus seat upon two corpses. According to Nagaswamy (1982:126) the visage of the goddess Camunda should be portrayed in a fierce form, and she should be seated on a “corpse-seat” (*pretsana*). Because of extensive damage to the face of the statue of Camundi from East Java it is not possible to tell whether her expression is fierce or not, but it seems likely that it was originally portrayed in the manner appropriate for Camunda/Camundi. The weapons and other symbols held by Camundi in this statue are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>left hand</th>
<th>right hand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>kapala</em> (a skull)</td>
<td>damaged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the head of the corpse upon which she sits</td>
<td>arrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>dhanu</em> (bow)</td>
<td><em>khadga</em> (sword)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>nagapasa</em> (noose)</td>
<td>damage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Damais (1995:77) the content of the inscription records a vow of the king Kertanegara in connection to his foreign policy. A transliteration of the inscription based on the reading of Damais and cited by Slamet Muljana (1983:95) and Santiko (1987:166) is as follows:
Hail to Camundi!

1) Hail to the Saka year 12(1)4
2) In the month of Caitra, the 14th day of the waning moon, [(on the day) tunglai vagai]58
3) ...in the wuku Julungpujut,59 (when the) grahacara stands in the east (pascimastha grhacara), (and the) naksatra is the Ashvin-s, (and the) deity is ...
4) (and the) mandala (is) mahendra, (while the) yoga is priti, (the) muhurtta (is) vaivajra (and the) karana (is) sakuni...
5) ...(and the _____ ? is) sarasi // at that time an image of her reverence (paduka) has been installed
6) because of the satisfaction of the great king at his complete victory (digvijaya) over the entire world, extending throughout the entire archipelago (dwipantara)...
7) May it be auspicious!

58 Tunglai or tungleh is one of the days of the Javano-Balinese six-day week (tungleh, aryang, urukung, paniron, was, maulu). Vagai or Wage is one of the days of the Javano-Balinese five-day week (Umanis, pahing, pon, wage, kliwon).

59 Julung (wangi) re Pujut are wuku names, that is the names of specific weeks in the Javano-Balinese ritual calendar of 30 wuku-weeks, or 210 days. In contemporary Bali the choice of wuku is still an important part of finding the auspicious time for performing rituals.
From the contents of this inscription it seems clear that the installation of the image of the goddess Camunda was undertaken to fulfil a vow taken by Kertanegara to repay the goddess for her support in his efforts to unite Java and the greater Malay-Indonesian archipelago under his sovereignty. If we look more closely at what is known of the expansionist foreign policy of Kertanegara and his ambition to control other principalities in the archipelago beyond East Java, we will find that a major part of his policy was conducted with the unseen forces (*niskala*) in mind, and for that reason he took great care to install images of Aksobhya and Camundi to ensure his “victory” in the unseen worlds that the Javanese have long-believed co-exist alongside the visible world of mundane politics.\(^{60}\)

Camundi is a Javanese variant of the name Camunda, a terrifying manifestation of Durga as the warrior goddess. Damais (1995:72) has identified Camundi as a variant name of the goddess Durga known from South Indian sources, whereas the form Camunda is better known in North India. Furthermore he claims that in Tamil, Malayalam and Kannada only the form Camundi is well-known. Professor Nagaraja Rao, a scholar of Sanskrit from Mysore in Kannada state, has corroborated the fact that the name Camundi is identical to Camunda, while Professor David Shulman has also told me that there is no difference between Camundi and Camunda.\(^{61}\) In Mysore there is a temple on a hill above the city called Camundesvari that is dedicated to the goddess Durga in her form as Camunda. As Goswami (1975:1) notes, another temple dedicated to Camundi, called the Camundibetta temple, is situated adjacent to the Camundesvari temple of Mysore. According to Nagaraja Rao, not far from the Camundi temple of Mysore there is also a temple dedicated to Mahisa, and the name Mysore itself is simply a colloquial form of the name Mahisasura.\(^{62}\)

The short inscription engraved in the back of the Camundi statue of Kertanegara does not provide details on how the goddess Camundi was worshipped by Kertanegara, but

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\(^{60}\) See Ricklefs (1997) for a study of the importance of “unseen worlds” in the political and literary life of eighteenth century Java.

\(^{61}\) Personal communication with Professor David Shulman, conducted at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem on 13 January 2004.

\(^{62}\) Personal communication with Professor Nagaraja Rao conducted at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in December 2003.
the careful choice of auspicious days for the installation of the image, and its dedication in honor of the king’s victory over the “entire archipelago” tell us that Camundi must have played an important role in the religious aspects of Kertanegara’s rule. While there are no known textual sources from Java that tell us what form of offerings may have been made to an image of Camundi in Java, we can perhaps surmise that they are similar to the sacrificial offerings described in a literary depiction of the worship of the goddess Camunda found in the 7th or 8th century CE Sanskrit play *Malatimadhava*, composed by the great Indian poet and playwright, Bhavabhuti. In Act V of the *Malatimadhava*, Bhavabhuti describes the attempt to offer the heroine of the play, Malati, as a human sacrifice to Camunda by a *kapalika* priest named Aghoraghanta, assisted by his disciple Kapalachandra. The place of this offering was to be the Karala temple, located in a spacious cemetery, while the purpose of the human offering was to fulfill the vow of Aghoraghanta to make such a sacrifice so that his mantras would be efficacious and he could attain superhuman powers (Kale, 1997:48; Gary Tubb, 2004).63

According to Hariani Santiko (1987, 1997:216) Camundi was worshipped in a Tantric rite called *vasikarana* which aimed to defeat enemies through the use of black magic. Goudriaan (1979:35) has pointed out that persons of royal rank could be brought under control by means of magical acts like *vasikarana* “subjugation”. He further described these elements of magical lore as being systematized in Tantrism into the *satkarmani* “Six Acts (of magic)”. The purpose of the *satkarmani* was to present rulers with powerful means of strengthening their political position and of safeguarding the economic productivity of the country, through rituals for *santi* (“peace”) and *pusti* (“prosperity”). The Hindu Tantric sadhana *satkarmani* or the Six Acts (of magic) as described by Goudriaan are as follows:

1. *Santi* “pacification”, the counteracting of all kind of dangers; this heading includes *pusti*, the promotion of welfare

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63 Personal communication with Professor Gary Tubb in January 2004 at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
2. **Vasikarana** “subjugation”, bringing others (gods, kings, women) under one’s control; this includes **akarsana** “attraction” for instance of an ideal female partner for Tantric rituals or physical enjoyment

3. **Stambhana** “immobilization”, i.e. causing a victim to lose the faculty of moving; prevention of miscarriage may also fall under this heading

4. **Vidvesana**, causing victims to come into conflict with each other

5. **Uccatana**, driving a victim from his home, position or mental equilibrium

6. **Marana** “liquidation”, which may in practice be restricted to **vyadhi-karana** “making sick” in cases where the intended victim makes a timely compliance with the executor’s desire; the reverse is called **mrtyumjaya** “conquering death”, i.e. curing sickness (Goudriaan, 1979:35; Santiko, 1997:218; Gupta, 1979:159).

Kertanegara’s devotion to the practices of Buddhist and Hindu Tantrism is also well-known from the *Nagarakertagama* 43.3, where we are told that Kertanegara held fast to all the esoteric practices (*kriya* and *prayogakriya*) and that he kept the essence of the *Subhuti Tantra* in his heart. Furthermore he is said to have practised *puja*, *yoga* and *samadhi* (ritual worship, yoga and spiritual concentration) as he strove for the orderliness of the world (Pigeaud, 1960 Vol. III:49).

Lokesh Chandra (1995:148-159) has made a study of the importance of the Buddhist “meditation-bodhisattva” (*dhyani-buddha*) for Kertanegara. He calls attention to the Jaka Dolog inscription issued by Kertanegara in 1289 CE, which records the installation of an image of Aksobhya at Wurare (a cremation ground on the northern slope of the sacred mountain Penanggungan), that is now housed at Simpang in the city of Surabaya (Poerbatjaraka, 1922:32). Lokesh Chandra notes that Kertanegara was deeply devoted to Aksobhya as a Tantric deity that he could unite with in order to gain control over unseen forces. He proposes that Kertanegara took a special interest in Aksobhya in order to counteract the power of Kublai Khan, who had become an adept in the Tantric practice of identification with a deity or bodhisattva (*sadhana*) when he was initiated (*abhiseka*) into the practice of the Hevajra Tantra in 1264 CE.

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64 Acts of magic like those described in the Indian *satkarmani* system are still important in Bali, but only certain people will be brave enough to carry out these rituals, and will always do so in secret, since most people are very afraid of the power of the black arts.
and again in 1269 CE, as a prelude to his further conquests on the Asian mainland (Snellgrove, 1959:10). To counteract Kublai Khan’s mastery of the Hevajra Tantra, which in Vajrayana practice as known from Tibetan and Mongolian sources is a “Mother Tantra”, Kertanegara empowered himself through initiation into the Tantric practice of Maha-Aksobhya, that is into one of the most powerful of the “Father Tantras”. Following Lokesh Chandra’s line of study we can conclude that Kertanegara’s efforts to secure the safety of his kingdom included his focus on esoteric rites aimed at gaining supernatural powers that could forestall overt, political aggression. To complete his mastery of niskala or supernatural powers, in addition to the installation of an image of the Buddhist Tantric figure Aksobhya in 1289 CE, he followed this in 1292 CE with his installation of an image of the most powerful of the goddesses of the Hindu Tantras, Camundi, the fearsome form of the warrior goddess Durga. By installing the image of Camundi, he must have been consciously seeking to incorporate the two most powerful supernatural forces at his disposal, one representing the “Father Tantras” of the Buddhists, one the “Mother Tantras” of Hinduism, each complementing the other and providing a “marriage” of unseen (niskala) forces designed to protect his kingdom from external aggression of both physical and supernatural kinds.

Sanjukta Gupta (1979:134) has suggested that the preferred sites for performing Tantric rituals (puja) are cremation grounds and that rituals connected with left-hand practices like purascarana and abhicara (krura karma) or the “cruel actions” which might collectively be translated as black magic, must be performed outside the home. The worship of Aksobhya by Kertanegara seems to represent the Tantric mode of worship for the sake of attaining power over enemies, since it was conducted on the site of a cemetery/burning ground. Kertanegara’s image of Mahakksobhya was installed in Wurare, the site of the Lemah Tulis cemetery, where the legendary sage Mpu Bharadah was said to have practiced Buddhist Tantric rites during the reign of Airlangga. It seems very likely that Camundi was worshipped in a similar “left-hand” form of ritual, whose aim was to ensure the destruction of one’s enemies and power over the realm. In this sense we can see that Kertanegara’s worship of Camundi was essentially identical with the worship of Durga as a warrior-goddess who protects the realm, as known from Central Javanese images and the inscriptions of Airlangga.
The Petak and Trilokyapuri Inscriptions of 1486 CE

According to Noorduyn (1978:244) and Muljana (1983:260) an important set of four charters was issued late in the Majapahit period, in 1486 CE. These four charters are the charters of Petak, Jiyu I, Jiyu II and Jiyu III (Trilokyapuri). For this study, what is interesting from the Trilokyapuri (Jiyu III) charter is the record of the worship of the goddess Durga in a religious domain dedicated to the holy sage Bharadhwaja and the god Rama, an incarnation of Vishnu. The Trilokyapuri inscription describes the goddess Durga as receiving a “great ritual worship” (*puja-agung*) every year, but not only that, instructions are given that a ritual for the goddess Durga should be performed every month by the “grand court-minister” (*mahamantri*), who at the time of the inscription appears to have been the person named Mahawirottama Pu Waha (Noorduyn, 1978 cited by Santiko, 1987:184-186).

Basing my argument on the contents of the Trilokyapuri and Petak inscriptions, two major reasons can be put forward for the prominent worship of the goddess Durga as a warrior-goddess who protects the realm during the reign of the Girindrawardhana line of kings who held power in the later Majapahit period.

The first major reason is the continuing belief that worships of the goddess Durga as a warrior goddess can ensure the victory of the king over his enemies. The continuing importance of this belief is attested by the Petak inscription of 1486 CE issued by Girindrawardhana Dyah Ranawijaya in gratitude for the assistance of the goddess Durga in ensuring his victory over “the Majapahit”. The Petak Charter describes a successful rebellion that had taken place against the Majapahit forces (*yuddha lawan ing Majapahit*) and King Girindrawardhana’s favourable attitude toward those who had successfully launched the attack. The attack against Majapahit is described as having been conducted by “the lord who resides in Jinggan” (*sang munggw ing Jinggan*). From this we can conclude either that King Girindrawardhana resided in Jinggan while attacking the Majapahit court, or that he supported the forces of a

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65 The Petak inscription (OJO, XCI) is also called the Padukuhan Duku inscription.
Prince of Jinggan who had attacked the “Majapahit”, which could in this context refer to older centres of Majapahit power in Kadiri-Daha or Jenggala-Kahuripan.

Noorduyn (1978:248) has a very interesting point of view on the contents of the Trilokyaapuri inscription. He points out that the charter is, in fact, a confirmation by King Girindrawardhana of a grant by the Keling prince Dyah Wijayakusuma to the court priest Brahmaraja Ganggadhara because the priest had “promoted (by magical power) the world conquest of he who resided in Jinggan when engaged in a war against Majapahit” (amrih kadigwijayan ira sang munggw ing Jinggan duk ayunayunan yuddha lawan ing Majapahit). Taking the prominent place of the worship of Durga in the sanctuary of Trilokyaapuri into account, we must assume that the court priest Ganggadhara, when using his magical power, must have invoked the warrior goddess Durga to grant victory to the Lord of Jinggan, and that this provides further evidence on the continuing role of Durga as a warrior-goddess who protects the realm well into the last decades of Hindu-Javanese rule in East Java. In this sense the Petak and Trilokyaapuri inscriptions can be compared to the Camundi inscription issued in 1292 CE by Kertanegara, who installed an image of the warrior goddess Durga in her terrifying form of Camundi after his successful expeditions to bring the entire archipelago (dwipantara) under his rule.

The second reason for the importance of the worship of the goddess Durga in a Vaishnavite sanctuary may be that Durga was perceived as the goddess whose role is to protect the sima (tax-free lands granted by a king or other patron) from trespassers, equal to the role played by Lord Vishnu in protecting the universe both its moving and unmoving objects.

The transitional portrayal of the goddess Durga in kakawin works: the Ghatotkacasraya, Sumanasantaka and Sutasoma

Kakawin are literary works written in the Old Javanese language (also known as kawi) using Indian quantitative meters (ganavrtta). The aesthetics of kakawin are related to
the Indian *kavya*, while the themes of *kakawin* are generally drawn from the Indian epics, but given a Javanese interpretation and development.⁶⁶

**The *kakawin* Ghatotkacasraya**

The *kakawin* *Ghatotkacasraya* is described by Zoetmulder as having been composed by Mpu Panuluh during the reign of King Kertajaya (1194-1205 CE) in the Kadiri kingdom of East Java (Zoetmulder, 1974:277).⁶⁷ While religious references in the text are mainly Shaivite, the main characters are all nobility who are connected in many ways with Vishnu, thus reflecting the Javanese association of royal families with Vishnu. It seems possible that there is some connection of the *Ghatotkacasraya* story with the story of a crown prince named Candrapida in the great, prose work *Kadambari* composed by Bana Bhatta in circa ⁷th century CE. In this classic Indian tale the crown prince Candrapida was in love with Kadambari, but he had to leave his kingdom and Kadambari behind without bidding her farewell due to his duty as a future king. Kadambari was deeply sad from thinking that she had been deserted by Candrapida. While in the forest, Candrapida met a Dravidian ascetic who was a passionate devotee of the goddess Durga. The descriptions of the dwelling place of the goddess Durga in *Ghatotkacasraya* and *Kadambari* are amazingly similar, while the theme of lovers separated by kingly duty is also found quite often in Old Javanese literature. While the tale of Abhimanyu, the youthful hero of the *Ghatotkacasraya*, differs from that of Candapida, his quest to win the hand of Ksiti Sundari, the daughter of Kresna and Rukmini, takes a similar romantic form (Zoetmulder, 1974: 263-269).

For my work, the tale of Abhimanyu in the *Ghatotkacasraya* is most important because of its depiction of a number of encounters with Durga during Abhimanyu’s quest to win the hand in marriage of Ksiti Sundari. In this work Durga is described in a number of cantos (canto 25, 30, 31 and 32), where she plays a very important role in several episodes that have to do with the initial separation of Abhimanyu from Ksiti Sundari and their ultimate reunion. The parts of the story that concern Abhimanyu and

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⁶⁶ Personal communication, Thomas M. Hunter, 19 March 2004 at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

⁶⁷ While in *Nagarakertagama* 40. 3, the King Kertajaya’s reign was between 1194-1222 CE.
Durga can be summarized as follows, based on the longer summary given by Zoetmulder (1974:263-266):

When the Pandavas were exiled in the forest for twelve years, Abhimanyu and his mother Subhadra were left behind in Dwaravati. When the Pandavas returned to their kingdom Abhimanyu had become a young and handsome man whom many women desired. At the same time, Ksiti Sundari, the daughter of Kresna and Rukmini had also become a masterpiece of gods’ creation in terms of beauty. Although they lived in the same kingdom they never met each other. Ksiti Sundari knew about Abhimanyu from her servant, but she did not have the power to meet him in person. Then she proposed to her parents that they go on a pleasure outing in the country side in order to see the beauty of her father’s kingdom. During that journey to observe the beauties of the hills and seashore she found an opportunity to meet with Abhimanyu in person. After meeting for the first time Ksiti Sundari and Abhimanyu were overtaken by deep feelings of love and affection.

After returning to the palace, Abhimanyu feeling insecure about gaining Ksiti Sundari’s affection, decided to enlist the aid of a more powerful ally and endeavoured by practicing yoga and *samadhi*, to make contact with Kama, the god of love. During his night-time meditation in a garden, Kama appeared in front of Abhimanyu together with his consort Ratih, united together in *ardhanareswari* form and seated together on a lotus-seat. After being assured that his plans would succeed, Abhimanyu worshipped the god Kama [the right part of the body] but neglected to worship Ratih [the left part of the body]. Infuriated by what she felt to be a terrible insult, Ratih assumed her *trivikrama* form, whose features were those of Durga, and put a curse on Abhimanyu that he would be separated from his beloved and pursued by misfortune. He then implored her to take back the curse, and her anger vanished. She then told him that the curse would be effective only for a short time.

Meanwhile a wedding had been arranged for Ksiti Sundari with Laksanakumara, the son of Duryodhana of the Korawas, even though Kresna
secretly opposed the marriage. Learning this fact, Abhimanyu fled to the forest followed by his loyal servant, Jurudyah. Wandering through the forest he reached a holy bathing-place which Jurudyah told him was a place famous among those who seek divine favour. There Abhimanyu performed *samadhi* in order to invoke Rudra’s help. Overcome by exhaustion he fell asleep.

It so happened that the demon Karalavaktra was passing there on his night time wandering through the woods. When he saw human beings trespassing on his domain, he attacked Abhimanyu, but received such a beating that he cried out for mercy. On hearing that Karalavaktra was a servant of the goddess Durga, who had been sent out to look for prey, either animal or human, which was to be brought for her to devour, Abhimanyu persuaded him to accept him as a prospective victim. Together they went to the abode of the goddess, (which is described in terms that seem strikingly similar to the description of the shrine of Durga worshipped by the “Dravidian ascetic” of the *Kadambari* of Bana). She appeared, frightening to behold, her hands outstretched to seize him, but halted when she heard his mantras and hymn of praise to her. She listened to him worshipping her and praising her as the goddess who was one with the Supreme Being, and was merciful and generous to her devotees, but terrifying to her enemies. Following this she bestowed her favour on Abhimanyu and told him that he would be successful in gaining the hand of Ksiti Sundari in marriage.

For my study, the most important aspect of the appearances of Durga in the *Ghatotkacasraya* is that in both cases she takes a “*triwikrama*” form, once when she manifests as the angry side of Ratih, when offended by Abhimanyu (Canto 25.1-9), and once when as Durga herself she is about to accept Abhimanyu’s offering of his own body to her as a sacrifice. The first “*triwikrama*” manifestation of Durga is described as follows in Canto 25. 5 of the *Ghatotkacasraya*:

\[
\text{Na ling hyang Smara tan dwa sok sukha sira ng Parthatmajanganjali} \\
\text{Ndatar sembah i padapang kaja bhatari kewalapelawa} \\
\text{Tan dwa krodha sira n triwikrama karesres krura Durgakrti} \\
\text{Angkrik sahasa katara n panapathe mangdhik sawet ning geleng.}
\]
Thus spoke the Love God; overwhelmed by happiness Abhimanyu immediately bowed with a gesture of respectful acceptance,
But, as if merely indifferent, he offered no gesture of respect to the lotus-seat of the goddess,
Bursting into a rage she took on her terrifying *triwikrama* form as the pitiless goddess Durga,
Screaming in shrill and terrifying voice, she angrily reviled him.68

Here we must examine more closely the Old Javanese concept of “*triwikrama*”. In Indian religious texts, the “three steps”, or *triwikrama*, was an action exclusively associated with Vishnu. O’Flaherty (1975:176) points out that in the Vedas the *triwikrama* is understood as the daily three “steps” taken by Vishnu as he follows the sun’s movement each day: first from the sunrise in the east to the zenith at noon, then from the zenith at noon to the western horizon at dusk, then back to the east for sunrise in the morning. In the Puranic literature, the term *triwikrama* is associated with Vishnu’s “incarnation” (*avatar*) as Vamana, the dwarf-incarnation, who overcame the demon Bali, the grandson of Hiranyakasipu. Due to his extraordinary practice of austerities, Vishnu had been forced to grant Bali mastery of the world. In order to trick Bali, Vishnu takes the form of a dwarf and asks Bali to grant him a mere three steps of land for himself. Underestimating Vishnu’s power as Vamana, the dwarf, Bali agreed to his request. Then Vishnu took a gigantic form and in “three giant steps” (*triwikrama*), he stepped through the three worlds (*bhur, bhuvah* and *svah*) and came back face to face with Bali, having reclaimed the entire universe. Thus, Vishnu conquered the three worlds (O’Flaherty, 1975:178-179).

While it is clear that the gigantic form taken by gods and demigods in Old Javanese literary works like *Ghatotkacasraya, Hariwangsa*, and *Bhomantaka* is based on the *triwikrama* aspect of the Vamana story, it is not always Vishnu who takes this form in the *kakawin* works. In the *Hariwangsa* and *Bhomantaka*, not only Kresna takes this form, but so do Arjuna and Bhoma, the earth-demon. In the *Sutasoma*, the Ganesha-like demon Gajamukha takes this form, while in the *Ghatotkacasraya* Durga and

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68 I am indebted to Thomas M. Hunter for the translation of this passage.
Ratih both take a triwikrama form. In a Javanese context, triwikrama forms of gods or demigods are depicted in terrifying shape with many demonic, fanged heads and arms and carrying many different kinds of weapons. But the most astonishing difference from the Indian tradition is the appearances of goddesses in triwikrama form in the kakawin. For example, Durga took her triwikrama form in Ghatotkacasraya canto 30.8 because she was elated to see Abhimanyu offer himself as a prospective victim, whereas in Canto 25 the goddess Ratih takes on a triwikrama form of Durga because she was insulted by Abhimanyu.

It seems that in the Javanese tradition, the association between Durga and Vishnu emerged during the Central Javanese period, where the image of Durga in the Candi Shiva of Prambanan carries weapons that are normally part of the iconography of Vishnu. While the Javanese triwikrama form of gods or demigods may originally have had its roots in the story of the dwarf incarnation of Vishnu, the appearance of triwikrama forms of gods and heroes in the kakawin is too widespread to be able to claim an exclusive identification with Vishnu. In the case of the triwikrama form of Durga known from the Ghatotkacasraya, I believe we must look instead to the important role played by Durga in the curse sections of the Javanese sima charters. The characteristics of a terrifying goddess who can punish evil-doers comes out strongly in Canto 30.8 of the Ghatotkacasraya, where Durga takes on a gigantic form when she sees her servant Karalavaktra bringing a human offering for her. She is portrayed there as having a huge body with three heads; her body fills the entire world; she has eight arms, striped breasts, bulging eyes, sharp pointed fangs, huge nostrils and dishevelled hair. This demonic depiction of the goddess Durga seems to be a consequence of the understanding of the goddess Durga as a deity who has the authority to punish human beings who violate the conditions of the sima by devouring them.

But even in this form, the description of Durga in the Ghatotkacasraya still brings with it echoes of her older role as a warrior-goddess who protects the realm. In Abhimanyu’s hymn to the goddess in the Ghatotkacasraya he worships her “as the goddess who is one with the Supreme Being, who is merciful and generous to her devotees, but terrifying to her enemies”, thus echoing the typical praise of Vishnu as the deity who brings prosperity to the world. Durga’s role as a protector of the sima is
also depicted clearly in *Ghatotkacasraya* 29.1-15 since in this case Abhimanyu himself has inadvertently trespassed on the domain of the goddess Durga, therefore automatically coming to the attention of her servant Karalavaktra, who has the right to punish him by offering him to the goddess Durga. In the *kakawin* it is said that the servant of Durga is only looking for those who cause troubles (*vang ing marusuh*), again accentuating the connection of Durga with protection of *sima* lands.

Another interesting aspect of *Ghatotkacasraya*, Canto 30.6 is the description of the dwelling place of the goddess Durga as being in the high mountains, and appearing like a paradise full of shining jewels, featuring a beautiful palace with diamond gates, but whose beauty contrasts with the blood and scattered skeletons of human beings visible everywhere in the abode of the goddess, and the terrifying demons that cause Abhimanyu’s hair to stand on end. The description in the *Ghatotkacasraya* of the dwelling place of the goddess Durga in the mountains in an abode full of human skeletons is reflected in later literary developments like the *kakawin Sutasoma*, a Buddhist work by Mpu Tantular composed during the late 14th century CE under Majapahit patronage. The *kakawin Sutasoma* describes a visit of the Buddhist Prince Sutasoma with a terrifying goddess variously termed Bhairavi and Widyutkarali, who can clearly be understood as Hindu and Buddhist forms of the goddess Durga. This meeting, too, takes place in a burning ground which is described in terms very similar to those of the *Ghatotkacasraya*.

**The *kakawin Sumanasantaka***

The *kakawin Sumanasantaka* was composed by Mpu Monaguna during the Kadiri period (c.1050-1222 CE) under the royal patronage of Warsajaya (Jayawarsa). Zoetmulder (1974:305-306) has pointed out that the prince Warsajaya was not a ruler of Kadiri, but was a prince who took a deep interest in literature and learning and so was also known as Sastraprabhu, as attested by the charter of Sirah Keting (1204 CE).

The story of the *kakawin Sumanasantaka*, which is based on Cantos V–VIII of the *Raghuvaṃsa* of Kalidasa, is about Harini, a heavenly nymph who is cursed to become a mortal after the failure of her attempt to seduce the powerful ascetic Trnawindu on behalf of Lord Indra. When Harini pleads with Trnawindu to save her, he agrees that
she will incarnate as Indumati, the daughter of the ruler of Widarbha. Her celestial lover will be reborn in the world as Prince Aja, in the lineage of Raghu, and they will lead a happy life after their marriage until a *sumanasa* flower will fall from Indra’s heaven, strike her on the chest and bring about her death and return to her celestial abode in the heaven of Indra (Zoetmulder, 1974:305-306).

The presence of the goddess Durga in this *kakawin* is in a section where Indumati and her maidservant engage in a contest to see who can most cleverly defend in poetic lines the goddess. While Indumati’s nursemaid cleverly defends her chosen deity, Shri, by describing her as the goddess of the beauties of the seashore, Indumati counters by describing Durga as residing in the high mountains, the abode of Shiva, and sharing with Shiva the power to control the three worlds.

**The *kakawin* Sutasoma**

The *kakawin* Sutasoma was composed by Mpu Tantular between 1365 CE and 1389 CE, during the reign of king Hayam Wuruk (Rajasanagara) when the Majapahit Empire was in its heyday. The king’s name is mentioned at the end of the work where “the poet praised him for causing all evil doers to hide” (Zoetmulder, 1974:342). Zoetmulder has called this work a “Buddhist *kakawin*”, and several scholars have suggested that it was composed by Mpu Tantular in order to provide the model of a new kind of prince, who would embody the vow of a *bodhisattva*, working for the benefit of all beings, and ever willing to sacrifice himself. It has been suggested that Tantular was concerned that the earlier, Hindu models of kinship focused too much on the role of the king as a warrior and protector of the kingdom against evildoers, and that this was leading to strife in the Majapahit world.

The Sutasoma is famous in Indonesia because of its attempt to explain the equality between the Shaiva and Bauddha (Buddhist) forms of religion, though clearly Tantular favours the Buddhist approach. In fact the Indonesian national motto “unity in diversity” (*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*) was taken from this work by the first Indonesian president, Soekarno, to describe the ideal harmony that should exist in the multi-ethnicity of the newly independent nation of Indonesia. What is interesting in this story is that the goddess Durga-Bhairavi is compelled to bow down and praise
Sutasoma as an incarnation of the Buddha after he merges with the highest form of Buddha-knowledge through a special meditation technique. The relevant section of the *Sutasoma* relating to the appearance of the goddess (Verses 9.1-12.4) has been summarized by Zoetmulder (1974:331) as follows:

Having reached a village at the foot of the mountains, the prince (Sutasoma) discontinues his journey. When the sun has set he enters a cemetery… to worship the goddess Bhairavi in a sanctuary especially dedicated to her. After a spell of meditative yoga, during which certain supernatural phenomena prove his bodhisattva status, Sri Widyutkarali (apparently another name for Bhairavi-Durga) appears in a terrifying form, bows down respectfully before him and praises him as a Buddha incarnation who has subdued all passions and whose heart is ceaselessly filled with compassion. She (Bhairavi-Durga) teaches him a mantra, called *Mahahrdayadharani*, by which every kind of evil and all hostile powers can be destroyed and mankind will obtain freedom from illness and misfortune. After indicating the way to the hermitage of Bhatara Guru on mount Sumeru she vanishes.

While the description of Durga as bowing down to Sutasoma in this passage can be understood as related to Mpu Tantular’s desire to spread the doctrine of the *bodhisattva*, she is also described as being able to take on a terrifying form and bestow the powerful Buddhist mantra *Mahahrdayadharani*. Durga’s terrifying form is described in Canto 133:1-3 of the *Sutasoma* as follows:

Standing firmly and courageously Sri Dasabahu was elated to see his powerful enemies,
Releasing arrows, *bajra* and other sharp pointed missiles from their bows in greater and greater numbers,
Concentrating deeply for a moment he attentively practiced the yoga of protection and “recollection of the magical power (*maya*) of Durga”,
As the illustrious king did so the goddess Maha-Bhairavi emerged from his meditation //1//
Immediately she shrieked as the demon forces beheld her with her four powerful arms,
Upon the destruction of the weapons of the enemies they swiftly returned to her tongue where they immediately disappeared,
Because she indeed was in the past the source and the origin of all those furious and angry demons,
That was why all the demons were in disarray; none of those arrogant demons could oppose her, and were so burnt to ash by her fury //2//

Lord Porusada was startled at the disappearance of those arrows in the form of demons,
Immediately he pronounced powerful mantras in praise of Durga which were able to eliminate the magical power (maya) of Bhatari Nini,
She became tranquil and benevolent again; shortly thereafter all the demons attacked again,
And all of the troops of the Hastina released their extremely terrifying arrows//3// 69

In the above verses Sri Dasabahu is described as practicing the “yoga of protection” and “recollection of the magical power of Durga”. Here again we find Durga invoked as a goddess who protects those who worship her, who is feared by one’s enemies and brings the promise of victory. At the same time she is the creator and source of all the demons and their weapons, and can absorb them again into her tongue at will.

While Porusada is at first startled at the power of Durga-Bhairavi, by pronouncing powerful mantras in praise of Durga he pacifies her and she returns to her benevolent form. Being thus satisfied by his devotions she grants her devotee (Porusada) the power to create demon troops to attack the forces of Hastina led by Dasabahu. Since both Dasabahu and Porusada please Durga-Bhairavi in this passage by meditating on her and reciting mantras for her, she cannot take one side in the battle between Porusada and Dasabahu, but must share her benevolence equally with her devotees.

69 Personal communication, Thomas M. Hunter, 23 March 2004.
an ability to absorb demons and their weapons that is strongly reminiscent of Puranic
depictions of Durga Mahisasuratamardini. This is perhaps a reflection of Tantular’s
wide knowledge, for in many of his works he displays an unusually extensive
knowledge of both Puranic lore and the Buddhist philosophy as known through Old
Javanese textual sources.

Conclusion

In the Central Javanese period the worship of the goddess Durga was incorporated
into a Shaivite pantheon that can be studied through the typical layout of Shaivite
shrines of Central Java, where Durga is nearly always placed in a position to the north
of the main cella in sanctuaries devoted to Lord Shiva.

In the East Javanese period Durga continued to be worshipped as a warrior-goddess
who could protect the realm. This comes out clearly in inscriptions of Airlangga,
Kertanegara, Ranawijaya and Wijayakusuma. These aspects of Durga are also known
from literary sources like the *Sutasoma*, where it is clear that Durga can grant victory
to her devotees; even if they oppose each other in battle, if they worship her in the
proper way she grants protection and power in battle to both. However, there are some
distinctively Tantric characteristics of East Javanese representations that stand in
sharp contrast to similar images of Central Java. This is especially true of images
produced during the reign of Kertanegara, the last king of Singasari. In works like the
*Sumanasatanka* we find Durga described as the warrior form of the gentle goddess,
Uma, who resides in the Himalaya mountains with her husband, Lord Shiva, and
shares with him the attribute of being a “supreme monarch” (*prabhu*) with power over
the three worlds.

At the same time, as a consequence of the role of Durga as fierce protector of *sima*
lands and the inscriptions testifying to the terms of the land-grant, and punisher of all
those who dare violate the *sima* or trespass on *sima* lands without being authorized by
the inscription, Durga began to take on a demonic form during the East Javanese
period that accentuated terrifying and blood-thirsty aspects that are reminiscent of
some Indian representations of the goddess, but in the Javanese case played a special role in the protection of *simā* lands that is not known from the Indian case.\textsuperscript{70}

\textsuperscript{70} In Chapter Three, I focus on representations of the goddess Durga in narrative bas-reliefs of East Java and in literary texts like the *kidung Sudamala* where we find a further development of the more demonic aspects of the goddess.
Chapter 3
The Transformation of Durga in the Reliefs of Candi Tigawangi

Introduction: Textual and visual reflections of Majapahit religious and political concerns

Many scholars, both Indonesian and Western, have written about the Majapahit Empire from the point of view of political and cultural history. However, few of these scholars have attempted to link what we know about the complex history of the Majapahit dynasty to religious beliefs and practices in anthropological terms. Since we know that the kinship system of the Majapahit royalty was quite complex, and we know from their inscriptions and other sources that priests and intellectuals of Majapahit placed great emphasis on the kinship relationships of the royal family, I intend here to look closely at connections between the complex royal kinship system of the Majapahit court and religious practices and political events.

I believe that the complex relationships of political, kinship and religious practices that were characteristic of classical Javanese culture are clearly reflected in the narrative reliefs we find among the archaeological remains of Javanese temples, especially during the East Javanese period (c.930-1527 CE). As Schrieke (1957, Vol. II:403) has noted:

[A]n explanation of the presence of certain relief sequences on Hindu-Javanese temples should perhaps take into account the possibility that some of the tales illustrated may contain allusions to events from the lives of rulers.

As Schrieke suggests, it is possible that the narrative reliefs on Hindu-Javanese temples may at times reflect events from the lives of the nobility, or at least important themes that may be closely related to historical events. There are three East Javanese temples at which we can find narrative reliefs that depict Durga both in a demonic and frightening form, and in her serene, auspicious form as Uma. These are Candi Panataran, Candi Tigawangi and Candi Sukuh.
Candi Panataran, known as Candi Palah in the *Nagarakertagama*, was an important state temple of Majapahit. From inscriptive evidence we know that construction was ongoing at this site from at least Saka 1297 or 1375 CE and continued on well into the fifteenth century (Satyawati Sulaeman, 1981:2; Santiko, 1987:91). Three relief panels are located on the walls of the second “*pendopo* terrace” at Panataran, and include depictions of the goddess Durga. However, since scholars have not been able to identify the story that is illustrated in this series of reliefs it is uncertain what the exact meaning of the reliefs might be. It is clear, however, that the reliefs involve a male devotee worshipping Durga. In one relief the devotee is being disturbed by demons in a graveyard, while in another Durga is depicted as a demoness with a tall body and dishevelled curly hair. She is standing in the *pratyaidha* posture, with her left leg sharply extended and her right-hand pointing at the male devotee with a gesture of anger and defiance. In this relief the figure of Durga is very similar to the depiction of Durga at Candi Tigawangi, and appears to represent one important conception of the nature of Durga during the Majapahit period (Santiko, 1987:91).

While the narrative reliefs containing depictions of Durga at Panataran remain to be identified, the depictions of Durga at Candi Tigawangi have been positively identified as belonging to the *Sudamala* story. These reliefs, and the *Sudamala* story itself, are very important for my work, since in my view they represent a point at which demonic images of Durga have emerged in connection with specific historical and socio-cultural conditions that developed during the Majapahit period. Therefore, the discussion in this chapter will concentrate on the *Sudamala* reliefs of Candi Tigawangi.

Reliefs that include depictions of Durga in a demonic form are also found at Candi Sukuh, a temple in use during the mid-fifteenth century located on the western slopes of Mount Lawu, on the borderland between East and Central Java. Of six narrative relief panels found at Candi Sukuh, at least two have been identified as belonging to the *Sudamala* tale, while there is some controversy surrounding a third panel that several scholars (Noorduyn, 1978:216; van Stein Callenfels, 1925:137; Padmapuspita, 1975:21) have identified as Bhima slaying the demon Kalantaka, or Kalanjaya. Santiko (1987:86-87) also accept the fact that the Bhima relief of Candi Sukuh as part of the *Sudamala* story. The first panel shows Sahadewa (or Sadewa) being tied to a
tree and threatened by demons in a graveyard, thus suggesting a thematic connection with the Durga reliefs at Candi Panataran, while a second panel shows Sadewa worshipping the goddess in her auspicious, calm form as Uma.\footnote{I have used the spelling Sadewa in this chapter, rather than Sahadewa, as that is the Javanized spelling used in the kidung Sudamala. The Indian spelling Sadewa is found in the Old Javanese parwa literature that translates many of the books of the Mahabharata. Nakula and Sadewa are the twin sons of Pandu and Dewi Madri, who died from the curse of a sage who said they would die if they ever made love. After the death of Pandu and Dewi Madri, Sadewa and Nakula were adopted by Dewi Kunti.}

According to van Stein Callenfels (1925:133) those panels were originally used as part of the decoration of the bathing place (patirthan, patirtan) located on the grounds of the temple complex, but they have now been placed to the left side of the uppermost terrace of the site, close to the entryway to the main shrine.\footnote{There is a sacred water source, or beji, in Tampak Siring temple of Gianyar district in Bali called the “Sudamala waterspout” (pancoran Sudamala). This waterspout is believed to have the magical power to purify people who perform a special ceremony that includes ritually bathing in the fresh spring-water flowing out of the waterspout. The Old Javanese word patirthan (Balinese: patirtan) is still used in Bali as a synonym for beji.} The “Bhima relief” at Candi Sukuh is inscribed with a date in the Saka era using Old Javanese script, which has been read by several scholars (Muusses, 1923, 1924; Crucq, 1930:264-266; Stutterheim, 1935; and Padmapuspita, 1965) as Saka 1361 or 1439 CE (cf. Noorduyn, 1978:261). The unusual shape of Candi Sukuh, which takes the form of a stepped-pyramid, has led many scholars to claim that it represents a resurgence of pre-Hindu cultural forms.

In my view there are several reasons to accept the Bhima relief at Sukuh as part of the Sudamala story. One important element in the Sudamala story is the struggle of the twins Nakula and Sadewa, with two demons called Kalanjana and Kalantaka. In the kidung version of this tale, and in the narrative reliefs of Candi Tigawangi, it is the twins who struggle with Kalanjana and Kalantaka, eventually conquering them. However, in present day Bali, in the wayang (shadow puppet) story of Kalanjana and Kalantaka, titled Kuntisraya or Kuntiyadnya, “the Ritual of Kunti”, it is only Bhima who can defeat these two demons. This suggests that at some point Bhima’s role in the Sudamala story became more prominent than in the literary version we know from the kidung Sudamala. The fact that Bhima does not play a role in the Sudamala reliefs at Candi Tigawangi has been taken by some writers as evidence that a relief panel
found at Candi Sukuh showing Bhima defeating an unidentified enemy must not be part of the *Sudamala* relief series at Sukuh.

Figure 3.1: Candi Sukuh, Mount Lawu, East Java

However, the Balinese evidence suggests that Bhima did in fact become important in the *Sudamala* story at some point in the later Javano-Balinese tradition. Thus we cannot discount the possibility that the relief of Bhima at Sukuh may be part of the *Sudamala* series there. Noorduyn (1978:261) and Padmapuspita (1965:21) both accept this relief as part of the *Sudamala* story, suggesting that the inclusion of Bhima, strongest of the five Pandava brothers, may have a purpose that can be related to historical factors that developed in Java during the fifteenth century.

Figure 3.2: A relief panel of Candi Sukuh showing Bhima defeating an unidentified enemy
This chapter is intended to focus on a number of themes that I believe were very important for the Majapahit nobility as they are reflected in narrative reliefs of Candi Tigawangi. This is a temple located near Pare Kediri in East Java, in the old principality of Daha-Kediri. This suggests that it was a temple especially important for the “Eastern court” of the Majapahit, who were the rulers in the principality of Daha-Kediri. The story of *Sudamala* is engraved in the bas relief in the wall of the body of the candi which can be seen by moving counter clockwise starting from the entrance step in the west side.

![Figure 3.3: Candi Tigawangi of Pare, East Java featuring bas reliefs of the *Sudamala* story](image)

According to *Nagarakertagama* (82.2), the construction on this temple began at the order of Bhre Matahun (Watsari) between 1385-1388 CE (Bernet Kempers, 1959:95), and it may have been in use as late as 1416 CE. The themes in relation to these reliefs, and the literary evidence of the *kidung Sudamala*, are the following:

1. The historical background of the Majapahit court, with special emphasis on the post-mortem *sraddha* rites of Rajapatni, grandmother of the renowned Rajasanagara, who brought Majapahit to the height of its power in the mid-fourteenth century. I will claim here that we can find a reflection of these *sraddha* rites in the narrative reliefs of Candi Tigawangi, where we find the
first evidence for an important tale about a demonic form of the goddess Durga.

2. The historical and anthropological background of schismatic elements in East Javanese political organization, that in earlier centuries led to the partition of the kingdom, and during the Majapahit era led to an unstable distribution of political power that several times resulted in open revolt and civil war (paregreg).

3. The reflection of these political difficulties in the Sudamala reliefs of Candi Tigawangi. This tale draws on the background of the Mahabharata as known in Javanese sources, but develops new themes that I believe reflect political and kinship tensions in the Majapahit court.

4. Fundamental external threats faced by Majapahit as represented in the reliefs of Candi Tigawangi by two demons named Kalanjana and Kalantaka.

5. A royal wedding represented in the reliefs of Candi Tigawangi by the wedding of two of the famous Pandava brothers of the Mahabharata, Nakula and Sadewa, who are known in the kidung Sudamala as Sakula and Sadewa.

Since my thesis is about the transformation of the image of the goddess Durga from a beautiful warrior goddess into a demonic image during the East Javanese period, as reflected in the reliefs of Candi Tigawangi, therefore, I will only concentrate on the interlink between the sraddha rite of the Rajapatni with the story of Sudamala, as one of the factors in the demonization of the image of the goddess Durga.

De Casparis (1992:276) has pointed out that it is hard to separate religion from other fields of socio-economic and cultural life, and that this may be particularly so for the cultures of the archipelago, where religion and daily life have been closely interwoven for hundreds of years:

To study religion one has, as it were, to detach from their social and political contexts those elements that we subsume under religion. These include, for example, various rituals and other forms of the worship of God, of deities or superhuman spirits and powers, as reflected in art and architecture, in literature and inscriptions.
I believe that the prominence of the *Sudamala* tale at Tigawangi (c.1388 CE) and Sukuh (1416-1459 CE) represents central political and religious concerns of the Majapahit nobility in the late 14\textsuperscript{th} and 15\textsuperscript{th} centuries. My interpretation of these reliefs is thus in sharp contrast with the theories of Santiko (1987) and Sedyawati (1985), who believe that the transformation of images of Durga from a warrior goddess protecting the realm to a demonic form is based on “folk” interpretations of court culture. In my view, it is not likely that a shrine like Tigawangi, that was meant to memorialize a royal patron in the form of a deity, would be illustrated with reliefs that reflected the values of “folk culture”. I believe instead that artistic works like the reliefs of Candi Tigawangi reflect important concerns of the Majapahit royalty. In this chapter, I will thus seek to follow de Casparis’ advice by studying the connections between religion, politics and society as they are reflected in the *Sudamala* story as we know it from narrative reliefs and literary sources of East Java.

**Historical background: East Java in the fourteenth century**

In order to provide background for my claim that the presence of a demonic form of Durga at Candi Tigawangi can be connected to the *sraddha* rites of the Rajapatni, I would like to introduce the historical background of Majapahit during the 13\textsuperscript{th} and 14\textsuperscript{th} centuries CE.

Majapahit reached a peak of power and cultural influence in the mid-fourteenth century. As Noorduyn (1978:207) tells us:

> If the name Majapahit evokes a picture of a powerful empire politically and culturally dominating the whole of the Indonesian Archipelago, it is invariably the image of Majapahit as it flourished in the fourteenth century that presents itself to the mind, Majapahit as it was in the time of its great king Hayam Wuruk (1350-1389 CE) and his still greater minister Gajah Mada (d.1364 CE), in the time of famous poets Prapanca and Tantular, and of the sculptors of such reliefs as have been preserved on the Surawana, Tigawangi and Kedaton temples.
The Majapahit dynasties begins in 1292 CE, the year that Kertanegara of Singasari was assassinated by Jayakatwang, who had ruled in 1194-1222 CE during the Kediri period circa 1005-1222 CE (Zoetmulder, 1974:277). This brought to a temporary end a period of political consolidation in East Java and expansion of East Javanese maritime power as far as the coastal areas of Malaysia and Sumatra under Kertanegara (Schrieke, 1957 Vol. III:22; Soekmono, 1990:80).

Upon the death of Kertanegara in 1292 CE, Raden Wijaya, the son-in-law of Kertanegara became the first king of Majapahit. According to the Kudadu inscription, dated 1294 CE, as well as the Pararaton and the Nagarakertagama (45.1), Raden Wijaya was consecrated in 1294 CE as the king of Majapahit, taking the “consecration-name” (abhiseka-nama) Kertarajasa Jayawardhana.

The Nagarakertagama (46.1-4) tell us that Raden Wijaya married four daughters of Kertanegara, thus continuing the royal line of Singasari in a new dynasty that took the name of his royal place of residence (Majapahit). Each of these princesses had both a “birth-name” (garbha-prasuti-nama) and a “royal-consecration-name” (abhiseka-nama). The names of these princesses all contain important religious and mythological words, thus accentuating the close connections between the political organization of Majapahit and the religious foundations of Majapahit culture. These four princesses also represented the four sacred directions, and in effect formed a royal “mandala of power” around the king. Their names according to Nagarakertagama (56.1) were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birth-name</th>
<th>Consecration-name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tribhuwana (“she who is the three worlds”)</td>
<td>Shri Parameshwari (“glorious transcendent goddess”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyah Duhita (“royal maiden”)</td>
<td>Mahadewi (“great goddess”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jayendradewi (“victorious goddess”)</td>
<td>Prajnaparamita (“goddess of transcendent [Buddhist] wisdom”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gayatri (“goddess of the Vedic mantras”)</td>
<td>Rajapatni (“king’s consort”)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While Gayatri was the youngest princess, her consecration-name as *Rajapatni* ("king’s consort"), tells us that she was formally recognized as Kertarajasa’s principal wife.\(^{73}\)

The religious character of the marriages of Raden Wijaya is attested by the inscriptions of Penanggungan (1296 CE) and Balawi (1305 CE). In the Balawi inscription it is said that the relationship between Raden Wijaya and the daughters of Kertanegara was like that of Shiva with his consort Uma. Marriages that combined religious themes with strategies of political alliance were a part of the kinship patterns of Majapahit, thus continuing a pattern that was especially favoured by Kertanegara during the preceding Singasari dynasty (Van Naerssen, 1977:32,68; Muljana, 1983:131).

In *Nagarakertagama* (47.3), it is stated that Raden Wijaya died in 1309 CE and was deified as a Jina, or Bodhisattva, in Antahpura and as Harihara (half Shiva and half Vishnu) in Simping. From this we can say that his reign in Majapahit was from 1293 CE to 1309 CE, and can also understand that both Buddhist and Hindu religious orders played an important role in the religious politics of the Majapahit court.\(^{74}\) After

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\(^{73}\) See Pigeaud (1960: Vol. III:52).

\(^{74}\) King Wisnuwardhana, Kertanegara’s father was memorialized as Shiva at Waleri and at Jajaghu (Jago) as Amoghapasa, in the form of a central image surrounded by twelve deities, thus fully constituting the Amoghapasa mandala of thirteen deities. Kertanegara was enshrined as Shiva at Candi
the death of Raden Wijaya in 1309 CE, Jayanagara ascended to Majapahit throne when he was 15 years old, serving as paramount king of the Majapahit, whereas his two half-sisters ruled in the older chief principalities of Kediri-Daha and Kahuripan-Janggala. While Jayanagara was born from Dara Petak, who was not the principal queen of Raden Wijaya, he was the only direct male descendant of Raden Wijaya, and so had the primary right to claim the throne.

Jayanagara died in 1328 CE, not only leaving the throne of Majapahit empty, but also producing a political vacuum, as there was no male heir closes enough to the royal core-line to make an absolute right to claim the throne. Rajapatni, as the primary queen and widow of Raden Wijaya, had the strongest claim to the throne, and for a brief period in 1328-1329 CE, she took the power of state into her own hands (Schrieke, 1957, Vol. III:23). However, in 1329 CE she refused to continue to rule the kingdom, preferring to become a bhiksuni, or Buddhist nun, and dedicate herself to the spiritual welfare of the state through striving to become a bodhisattva. In this case, Rajapatni delegated her rights to her oldest daughter Tribhuwanatunggadewi who married to Kertawardhana (Schrieke 1957, Vol. III:22).

The fortunes of Majapahit under Tribhuwanatunggadewi were greatly advanced through the aggressive and able military and political strategies of Gajah Mada. Nagarakertagama (49.3 and 71.1a) mentions that the Sadeng and Keta revolts against Majapahit in 1331 CE were easily quelled because of the intelligent tactics of Gajah Mada. Then in 1334 CE, he was officially inaugurated as chief minister (maha-patih). Gajah Mada completely dedicated himself to the service of Tribhuwana, the queen regent of Majapahit, and was able to expand the area of Majapahit territory in the archipelago to an extent never dreamed of during earlier periods of East Javanese history.

According to the Nagarakertagama (1.4) an event of great importance for the Majapahit dynasty occurred in 1334 CE with the birth of Dyah Hayam Wuruk to the royal couple Tribhuwana and Kertawardhana, who was appointed crown-prince Jajawa (Jawi), with an image of Aksobhya in his crown (Nagarakertagama 56.2; Chandra, 1995:159; Kempers, 1959:85).
(yuwaraja) as the ruler of Janggala-Kahuripan. His mother continued to reign as his regent until he came of age. His royal consecration-name was Sri Rajasanagara (Muljana, 1983:165, Pigeaud, 1960 Vol. III:4).

In 1350 CE, upon the death of Rajapatni, Hayam Wuruk officially ascended the throne of Majapahit at the age of 16 years. It was under Hayam Wuruk that Majapahit reached its golden age, greatly aided in this enterprise by Gajah Mada, who continued to serve Hayam Wuruk as his prime minister until his death in 1364 CE. As the Nagarakertagama tells us, Gajah Mada played an important role in the carrying out of the elaborate sraddha rites for the Rajapatni, which were performed under Hayam Wuruk’s direction in 1362 CE, which is twelve years after her death in 1350 CE.

The Interlink between the Sraddha rites for the Rajapatni and the Sudamala story

Before describing further the sraddha rites of the Rajapatni and my claim that they are reflected in the narrative reliefs depicting the Sudamala story at Candi Tigawangi, here will be discussed the meaning of the sraddha rites in an Indian context.

According to Monier-William (1981:1097-1098), the Sanskrit word sraddha refers to:

- a ceremony in honour and for the benefit of dead relatives observed with great strictness at various fixed periods and occasions of rejoicing as well as mourning by surviving relatives. Sraddha is not a funeral ceremony but a supplement to such a ceremony; it is an act of reverential homage to a deceased person by relatives and it is moreover supposed to supply the dead with strengthening nutriment after the performance of the previous funeral ceremonies has endowed them with ethereal bodies. Indeed, until those funeral-rites have been performed, and until the succeeding first sraddha has been celebrated the deceased relative is a preta or restless, wandering ghost, it is only until the first sraddha has taken place that she/he attains a position among Pitris or Divine Fathers in their blissful abode called Pitr-loka.
This definition of the *sraddha* ceremony has been confirmed by H.V. Nagaraja Rao of the University of Mysore.\(^{75}\) According to Professor Nagaraja Rao, the soul of the dead who does not receive a proper *sraddha* ceremony will wander about on the earth and inflict troubles on living beings, not just her/his own relatives but also other people within her/his society. Professor Rao also said that in the Indian context, *sraddha* rite is performed every year as the ritual for feeding the dead soul. The *atma* (soul) of the deceased will take the form of a terrifying ghost called a *bhuta* or *preta*. Only annual performance of the *sraddha* rituals by a male descendant of the deceased can ensure that the deceased does not take again the form of a wandering, hungry ghost, a *bhuta* or *preta*. Chong Guan (1990:80) and Kinsley (1982:108) have also pointed out that one who has not been cremated, or has been cremated but not purified through the proper rituals, will float in the nether world as *pirata*. Robson (1995:129) also confirms these meanings of the *sraddha* rites in the Indonesian context.

While there are some differences between Indian and Indonesian versions of the *sraddha* ritual, I believe that the authors of the *Sudamala* and the creators of the *Sudamala* reliefs at Candi Tigawangi were familiar with the Javanese meaning and consequences of the royal *sraddha* ceremony, and that the element of a twelve-year period of impurity between the death of a royal person and the completion of the *sraddha* rituals had a profound influence on the composition of the *Sudamala* story. Before attempting to connect the *Sudamala* reliefs and tale with the *sraddha* ceremony, I would like to introduce the story of *Sudamala* as it is found in the *kidung Sudamala*, a literary work that appears to have first been composed in Java during the 14th century. Later recensions of the text are known from as late as the 17th century, while the tale remains a popular “plot” (*lelampahan*) in the *wayang* or shadow theatre of Java and Bali, where it is the basis of an important exorcistic ritual associated with the birth of twins.\(^{76}\)

**The Tale of Sudamala in literary and visual representation**

\(^{75}\) Professor H.V. Nagaraja Rao, personal communication on the 6th of January 2004 at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

\(^{76}\) See Stephan C. Headley (1991) in “Javanese Exorcisms of Evil: Betwixt India and Java”.
According to Van Stein Callenfels (1925:115-139) and Santiko (1987:78) the *kidung Sudamala* was composed in the Javano-Balinese *tengahan* meters using the language that is known as Middle Javanese.

According to Zoetmulder and Robson (1982) etymologically the word *sudamala* consists of *suda* (Sanskrit: *shuddha*) meaning “pure, clean, clear, bright; faultless, free from passion” and *mala* (Sanskrit: *mala*) meaning “dirt, filth, impurity (physical and moral; stain, defect, sin)”. Hooykaas (1978:21) suggests the Javano-Balinese understanding of this word when he translates *sudamala* as “freed from stain or spell”. In this sense *sudamala* is often connected with the Javanese word *ruwat*, “ritual purification” and indeed in contemporary Bali performances of a shadow play version of the *Sudamala* story are closely connected with certain kinds of ritual purification.

Hariani Santiko (1980) tells us that in later developments in Java *ruwat* was performed for persons who have been cursed for doing certain deeds including the twin-birth. The purpose of *ruwat* was to purify those persons from the power of spells or a curse. In Bali, the word *lukat* is equivalent to Javanese *ruwat*. This word also means “to purify a person from impurity (*mala* or *leteh* to cite the more usual Balinese word)”. In both Indian and Javano-Balinese contexts death is considered impure, and for that reason the living relatives need to perform the ritual called *sraddha* to purify both the “soul” or *atma* of the deceased and the living environment of the deceased from the effects caused by the “wandering ghost” (*preta*) or “impure soul”, that is the state of the deceased prior to completion of the *sraddha* rites. In Bali, the immediate family members of the deceased are considered in a state of ritual impurity, called *sebel*, for a fixed period after the death of a relative, while the entire village is also *sebel* for a somewhat shorter period of time, for three days. During this period the family and village are considered to be in a dangerous, impure state and so cannot carry out any other rituals, including temple festivals, rituals in the family shrine and other rituals for deities and ancestors. However, certain life-cycle rituals like weddings and tooth-filing are themselves considered impure. This is especially true of the tooth-filing ceremony,\(^77\) which can be said to have a very high liminal

\(^77\) Every Hindu Balinese must undergo a life-cycle ceremony called tooth-filing (*mesangih*; *mepandes*, *metatah*: common and refined Balinese language respectively). Tooth-filing is a complex ritual that deserves more than a cursory treatment. To summarize briefly, the tooth-filing ceremony has both
quality. First of all they mark a major change in the life-cycle and, second, connect them intimately to death. Therefore the day of the final rites of cremation (Balinese: ngaben) is a preferred time for performing tooth-filing. From the evidence of the Nagarakertagama we know that the sraddha rituals were an extremely important aspect of Javanese ritual, at least during the East Javanese period. I believe that we can assume that the period of twelve years between the death of a member of the royal family and performance of the sraddha rites was thus considered a period of impurity that left the royal family exposed to danger from unseen (niskala) forces until the sraddha rites had been successfully completed.

The following is the Sudamala story as told in the kidung Sudamala in terms of the reliefs at Candi Tigawangi. Not all of the scenes are illustrated at Tigawangi, but the major elements of the story are represented at Tigawangi in a vivid and elegant style.

**Episode 1:** The three great deities Sang Hyang Tunggal, Sang Hyang Asihprana and Sang Hyang Wisesa once gathered together in the dwelling place of Bhatara Guru, the Supreme Deity. They were discussing the misdeed of Sri Uma, wife of Bhatara Guru, whom they heard had “shared her beetle-nut quid and face-powder” with Sang Hyang Brahma, that is she had committed adultery with Lord Brahma. Bhatara Guru was furious upon hearing that news, and so cursed Uma into becoming Durga, a terrifying demoness. Uma then transformed into a demonic figure with long dishevelled hair; her eyes were like twin suns; her mouth was like a cavern with protruding fangs; her two nostrils were like the holes of twin wells and her entire skin was covered with spots and blemishes.

symbolic and purificatory components. On the physical and symbolic side, the tooth-filing ceremony is aimed at reducing the length of the canines and incisors (Balinese: caling). Human teeth that are said to represent the animal nature in human beings, due to their resemblance to the fangs of carnivorous animals and the bhuta-kala (demonic spirits). The tooth-filing ceremony is said to help individuals overcome the sad-ripu, or “six enemies” that present hindrances to spiritual development. These are kama, lobha, krodha, mada, moha and matsarya (lust, greed, anger, drunkenness, spiritual confusion and envy), a set of terms well known in the religious literature of the Indian subcontinent.

78 David Shulman (1985:304) notes that the close relationship of South Indian kings with the goddess can easily lead to the idea that the goddess is “fickle” or even fond of adultery. He points out that:

No less ambiguous is the king’s intimate relation with the goddess, either in her form as Sri, ‘royal splendor’ - a notoriously fickle figure - or as the warrior maiden Durga or Durga-Laksmi.
In that form she was called Ra Nini and sentenced to reside in a cremation ground called Setra Gandamayu. She must dwell in that cemetery for twelve years together with her followers until the time comes when Bhatara Guru himself would exorcize her with the assistance of Sadewa, one of the twin sons of Pandu and Madri, and half-brother to Yudhisthira, Arjuna and Bhima, the other members of the famous “five Pandawa brothers” who are the heroes of the Indian and Indonesian versions of the Mahabharata.

It is said that there were also two celestial beings named Citranggada and Citrasena who committed the misdeed of flying above the head of Bhatara Guru while he was with his consort, (H)uma in their bathing place. They too were cursed by Bhatara Guru to become twin demons, named Kalanjaya and Kalantaka (“Victory of Time/Death” and “End of Time”) and sentenced to serve the Korava, the evil cousins of the five Pandawa brothers for a period of twelve years, identical to the period of Uma’s punishment to take the form of Ra Nini. They are told to reside with Ra Nini in the Setra Gandamayu cremation grounds.

**Episode 2:** Kunti, the mother of the Pandawa brothers, heard the news about those two powerful demons and grew worried about the safety of her sons. Without the
knowledge or permission of her sons, Kunti planned to pay homage to Ra Nini at her shrine (kahyangan) in the cremation ground of Setra Gandamayu. She entered the cremation grounds and worshipped Durga or Ra Nini. The terrible goddess then appeared to Kunti and she implored her to help her sons to destroy those two demons. But her request was refused by Ra Nini because those two demons were none other than Ra Nini’s own sons.

**Episode 3:** However, Ra Nini said that she would fulfil Kunti’s desire if she was willing to sacrifice a “red-goat”, that is, a human being. She specifically asked that the victim be Sadewa because Sadewa was a “hot person” who jeopardized every person who was close to him, because he was the second-born of a pair of twins.79 First, Kunti refused Ra Nini’s request because Sadewa was not her biological son, and instead she offered her own sons, Yudhisthira, Bhima and Arjuna as a sacrifice to Ra Nini/Durga. But then Kalika, a loyal disciple of Ra Nini, “entered” (or “possessed”) Kunti, and so she immediately came under Ra Nini’s power and went home to bring Sadewa back as a sacrifice to Ra Nini.

![Figure 3.5: Dewi Kunti, mother of the five Pandawa brothers, pays homage to Ra Nini Durga (Candi Tigawangi)](image)

79 In a later chapter, I will discuss the way that plays like Sudamala and similar tales like the Javanese Murwakala and Balinese Sapu Leger (and Sudamala) are used as a main element of rituals aimed at purifying several kinds of ritual impurity. One of these is the birth of twins, which is often “treated” in Java and Bali through performance of a wayang play like the Sudamala story.
Episode 4: When they arrived at the Setra Gandamayu, Kunti tied Sadewa to a *randu* tree, a large, tall tree with flowers red as blood that is closely associated in Java and Bali with cemeteries and cremation grounds. Sadewa was assaulted and tempted by many types of ghosts and demons of the cremation ground. When Ra Nini/Durga saw Sadewa she was ecstatic and immediately tried to eat him, but she found she could not do so. Then Ra Nini/Durga took out her long sword and tried to kill Sadewa, but still in vain. Ra Nini/Durga could not consume Sadewa because Bhatara Guru had given him the power to be invulnerable.
Episode 5: Durga then asked Sadewa to exorcize her, so that she could return to her form as Uma, but Sadewa refused, explaining that he lacked the ability to do so. Then Bhatara Guru “entered” Sadewa’s body in order to exorcize Durga. After being exorcized by Bhatara Guru through Sadewa, Ra Nini/Durga turned back into the goddess Uma. To show her appreciation to Sadewa, Durga/Uma blessed him in two ways. First, she gave him the name “Sudamala” that means “purified or released (suda, shuddha) from sin or stain (mala)”. Second, she advised Sadewa to go to a hermitage in Prangalas to propose marriage to the daughter of the sage Tambrapetra.

Figure 3.8: The demonic Ra Nini Durga has been transformed into her benign form as Uma and is now worshipped by Sadewa (Candi Tigawangi)

Episode 6: The Sudamala story continues with the wedding of Sadewa and his twin brother Nakula with the two daughters of Tambrapetra. This is followed by the war that Nakula and Sadewa wage on the twin demons Kalanjaya and Kalantaka which comes to a climax with the death of the demons, who are then also released from the curse and assume their original form as two celestial beings.80

80 My sources for this synopsis are van Stein Callenfels (1925:10-25), Santiko (1987:79-80) and Padmapuspita (1977:64-110), as well as the oral tradition of Bali. The Sudamala story is very popular in Bali to this present day. Narrative reliefs of the Sudamala story can be found in quite a few villages, where they are engraved on the outer walls of the Pura Dalem, the temple that protects villages from the dangerous influences of the cremation ground and cemetery. As I have noted above, the Sudamala story is also important in wayang plays performed as part of the rituals exorcizing the dangerous power of children born as twins.
In following sections of this chapter, I will seek to demonstrate how the *Sudamala* tale reflects important events and beliefs of the Majapahit nobility and how these are echoed in the *Sudamala* reliefs of Candi Tigawangi.

**The Reliefs of *Sudamala* tale at Candi Tigawangi**

The tale of the *kidung Sudamala* is found engraved in stone reliefs of at least two East Javanese temples, Candi Sukuh, located high on the western slopes of Mount Lawu, and on the sides of Candi Tigawangi located in Pare, near the ancient capital of the Kediri-Daha principality of East Java. According to *Nagarakertagama* (82.2d), Candi Tigawangi was built by Bhre Matahun, ruler of the principality of Matahun (or Watsari). Pigeaud (1960, Vol. IV:264-265) has pointed out that the evidence of the Pararaton shows that Candi Tigawangi was the site where Bhre Matahun’s remains were deposited after his death in Saka 1310, or 1388 CE. Bernet Kempers (1959:95) estimated that at least the first phase of construction at Candi Tigawangi was carried out between 1385-1388 CE. In an article by Crucq (1933:155-158) we find a description of a small stone slab found at Candi Tigawangi that contains a mystical diagram in the form of a turtle. In the centre of the mystical diagram are found five numbers that have been identified as referring to the fourth day of the fourth Javanese week in the year 1337 Saka or 1415 CE. From this evidence we know that activity at Candi Tigawangi was ongoing until at least this year. Crucq also tells as (1933:157) that in this year the Chinese annals report the arrival of a delegation sent by Wikramawardhana who is referred to there as Hyang Wisesa, a term that indicates his high status in the religious politics of the Majapahit.

Hariani Santiko (1987) has described in detail the story of the *Sudamala* depicted in the reliefs of Candi Tigawangi from the iconographical and mythological point of view. I would like to concentrate on the narrative reliefs of Tigawangi from the point of view of history and anthropology, looking at the narratives as reflections of patterns of social and political life, and religious practices during the Majapahit period (c.13th - 15th centuries CE).
Bernet Kempers (1959) has pointed out that the narrative reliefs of Candi Tigawangi were left unfinished, as there are still a number of panels that are empty or only contain the first stages of relief carving. The reliefs of Tigawangi do not represent the entire narrative of the *Sudamala* story as we know it from the *kidung Sudamala* story, but rather seem only to represent the most crucial scenes of the story that reflect events in the social, political and religious life of the Majapahit realm. There are several major events from the history of the Majapahit dynasty that can be connected with the reliefs of Tigawangi. Those are:

- the performance of the *sraddha* rites of the Rajapatni; I will claim that the Ra Nini/Durga sequence of events in the narrative reliefs of Candi Tigawangi is connected with this event of 1362 CE at the royal court of Majapahit
- internal conflicts among the Majapahit nobility that led to the partition of the kingdom, or to a state of revolt and civil war; these themes can be connected with the elements of the *Sudamala* story that are most closely related to the Indian and Javano-Balinese *Mahabharata*, the most famous epic of civil war in the world of ancient Java
- royal marriages aimed at overcoming internal conflicts in Majapahit, represented in the *Sudamala* tale by the wedding of Nakula and Sadewa with the daughters of the sage Tambrapetra
- external threats to Majapahit power represented by the conflict of Sadewa and Nakula with two demons Kalanjana and Kalantaka

After introducing the historical background of the Rajapatni and other major figures in the political setup of fourteenth century East Java and the textual background of the *Sudamala* story, and mentioning the visual representations of the *Sudamala* story at Candi Sukuh and Candi Tigawangi, I would like to turn now to a detailed look at the narrative reliefs of Tigawangi, connecting each relief with an event in Majapahit history according to historical themes that I believe are reflected in the reliefs.

**The *Sraddha* rites of the Rajapatni and the demonic form of Durga in the *Sudamala* reliefs of Candi Tigawangi**
I have mentioned earlier that the *sraddha* rites of the Rajapatni were performed twelve years after her death. She died in 1350 CE; thus her *sraddha* rites were conducted in 1362 CE during the reign of her grandson, Hayam Wuruk. This is confirmed by Cantos 53-57 of the *Nagarakertagama*. In the same work (*Nagarakertagama* 53.2c) we find that the exact date for the rituals is given as falling in the Saka year 1284, or 1362 CE (Pigeaud, 1960 Vol. I:48; Robson, 1995:130). We know from inscriptional evidence from East Java that this twelve-year time-lag between the death of a royal figure and performance of the *sraddha* rites was the normal practice in East Java, although we do not know as yet whether this was the case in the Central Javanese period (c.700-930 CE), and the practice does not seem to be reflected in *sraddha* rituals as we know them from India. It is possible that this long time-lag was designed at least partly to ensure that royal architects and builders had enough time to complete the stone monuments and images that were designed to become the “places of embodiment” (*pratistha, adisthana*, and *dharma*) of royal patrons after completion of the post-mortem rites of purification (Guan, 1990:83).

However, we know that the image that was to be the post-mortem embodiment of the Rajapatni (as *Prajnaparamita*) was dedicated and installed at Bayalangu (or Bhayalango in *Nagarakertagama* 74.4) one year after her death. It thus seems that we still need to find a more convincing reason for the twelve-year time-lag between cremation and *sraddha* rite for the Majapahit nobility.

The first thing I would like to note is the identification of the Rajapatni as the goddess *Bhatari Paramabhagavati* in the description of the *sraddha* rites given in the *Nagarakertagama*. By showing that this term has Shaiva, Vaishnava and Buddhist connotations, I will suggest that the Rajapatni came to be understood as embodying the protective powers of both Shaiva and Buddhist aspects of the supreme goddess (or ancestor). Since we know that many members of the Majapahit royalty are described in inscriptions and literary sources as being deified separately in Buddhist and Shaiva shrines, the identification of the Rajapatni as a goddess who is known in both Buddhist and Shaiva doctrines follows a well-known pattern of religious practice during the East Javanese period.

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81 Noorduyn (1978:252) points out that in India, too, several successive *sraddha* rituals may be held in succeeding years, but the twelve-year-interval seems to be a special development of the Hindu-Javanese.
Nagarakertagama (2.1) mentions that the Rajapatni was an embodiment of bhatari parama-bhagawati (Pigeaud, 1960, Vol. I:4):

\[ \text{ndan sang sri rajapatni prakasita matamaha sri narendra,} \]
\[ \text{sang lwir pawak bhatari paramabhagavati catraning rat wisesa,} \]

Now the honoured illustrious Rajapatni, the renowned, was the grandmother of the illustrious Prince.

She was as if the embodiment of the goddess, the transcendent Bhagawati, the sunshade that shelters the entire world, supreme in power.

While later evidence from the Nagarakertagama (67.2) suggests that the term parama-bhagawati has a largely Buddhist meaning for Mpu Prapanca, a Buddhist monk who completed the composition of the Nagarakertagama in 1365 CE, we should not rule out the possibility that he uses the term Bhagawati intentionally to suggest both Shaivite and Buddhist aspects of a supreme goddess. Pigeaud and Ricklefs (1960, Vol. IV:211; Ricklefs, 1984:145) both tell us that Bhagavati, a name very often given to Uma-Durga, was perceived as the Shaivite High Goddess during the Majapahit period, while Zoetmulder and Robson (1982:1281) define the Sanskrit and Old Javanese term Parama-bhagawati as meaning “the supreme adorable one… Durga”. I would like to underline the presence of the term Bhagawati in the Nagarakertagama with reference to the Rajapatni, because I believe it can be shown that this term represents both Hindu and Buddhist representations of the supreme goddess.

A manuscript of the Buddhist text, Prajnaparamita-hridayam, or “Heart Sutra of Transcendent Wisdom” dated 868 CE and found in Tun-huang, China, is said to be “the world’s oldest extent printed book” (Goodrich, 1963:141). In this manuscript, the term Bhagawati is used in combination with the name of the Buddhist goddess of transcendent wisdom, Prajnaparamita, in the invocation that precedes the narration of the sutra. This term is identical with the term found almost seven hundred years later for the Rajapatni in the Nagarakertagama:
Om namo Bhagavatyai Arya-Prajnaparamitayai
Om. Homage to the Goddess, the Noble Perfection of Wisdom. 82

Here the term Bhagawati is identified with the goddess of transcendent wisdom or Prajnaparamita; in just the same way that term is used in the Nagarakertagama (Robson, 1984:98). Since it is possible to make a stanza praising the goddess of transcendent wisdom without using the term Bhagawati, I believe that including the term Bhagawati helped to link this specifically Buddhist deity with older, popular forms of the goddess. 83

In the Hindu sense (whether in Shaivite or Vaishnavite terms), the goddess Bhagawati is associated with Durga, as Zoetmulder (1982) tells us is the case for ancient Java. 84

David Shulman also explains that in many parts of South India, especially Kerala, Bhagawati is a general term for any goddess, and that there are many temples dedicated to local goddesses who are often referred to simply as Bhagawati. 85

Sarah Caldwell (1999) has also described the role of the goddess Bhagawati in the South Indian context. She tells us that Bhagawati (‘The Goddess’) is a deity encompassing a variety of divine personalities ranging from the benign to the ferocious. Bhagawati is conceived of as primarily benevolent and all-powerful, and is important both as a legendary protectress and a deity of the land:

82 See Conze (1958:77). I have slightly changed his translation.

83 In a Buddhist context figures like Vairocana, Lokapala or Padmapani (all popular in ancient Java) appear very similar to deities worshipped at Hindu shrines. However, they really represent bodhisattvas who embody the Buddha-wisdom. The worship of Tara as a female bodhisattva became very important in Nepal and Tibet, and is mentioned in inscriptions and texts of Central and East Java. However, from evidence like the magnificent East Javanese sculpture of Prajnaparamita now housed in the National Museum in Jakarta and the textual evidence of the Nag, it seems that worship of Prajnaparamita was most important in East Java.

84 According to Nagaswamy (1982:121) the Bhrigu-samhita, a Vaisnhavite text, mentions that after conducting the “five rites of purification” (panca suddhi, which included bhut- suddhi, atma-suddhi, dravy- suddhi, bimmb- suddhi and mantr- suddhi), the goddess Durga as Bhagavati was invoked with the verse:

Ayata Bhagavati Devi, dhvajini hamsa (simha), vahini senavaruddhini Durge.

85 Personal communication with Professor David Shulman on the 13th of January 2004 at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
For communities dwelling in the hills, she is the spirit of the mountains; for lowland agriculturists, she is the paddy and earth from which it grows; for toddy-tappers, the graceful coconut palm is her form.

Caldwell also tells us that Bhagawati became the predominant deity of the martial class of temple patrons of South India. Each king had his own local installation of the goddess, who was considered to be a tutelary, matrilineal ancestor and protectress of the royal family’s personal political interests. Propitiation of one’s own local Bhagawati ensured the power and success of the kingdom and its dependants (Caldwell, 1999:14).

In the Javanese context the goddess Bhagawati was considered to have both benevolent and malevolent aspects. The Rajapatni’s embodiment as the Bhatari Parama-Bhagawati was conceived of as the embodiment of the benevolent protectress of the Majapahit court and kingdom. This comes out very strongly in the description of her transformation into the “swah element” or “heaven/celestial element” at the climax of the sraddha rites described in Nagarakertagama (64.5). In this section of the Nagarakertagama we find a complex set of rituals that included construction of a Buddhist mandala on the grounds of the ritual area, and the temporary transfer of the “swah-element” of the Rajapatni into a special “flower-body-offering” (puspa-sarira). The final objective is realized when the “swah-element” of the Rajapatni obtains final release and becomes an embodiment of the goddess of transcendent wisdom (Prajnaparamita), who will from then on protect the kingdom.

While some scholars have called the “swah-element” the “soul” of the Rajapatni, if we remember that Javanese and Balinese Hindus understand the “three worlds” to consist of bhur-bhuwah-swah, and that swah/swaha means the world of space, or the celestial world of gods and ancestors, then we can understand how important the sraddha rites of the Rajapatni were for Majapahit. When the “swah-element” of the Rajapatni merged with the spiritual world above the human world, she could then provide the divine protection that ensured the safety of the realm. As Schrieke
concluded, “[t]he Rajapatni embodied the tradition of the realm of Kertanegara: she was the symbol of the unity of the realm” (Schrieke, 1957 Vol. II:320).

It is also significant that the Rajapatni is referred to in the *Nagarakertagama* as *mahamata*, the “grand-mother” of Hayam Wuruk. I believe Mpu Prapanca chose this Sanskritized word as a replacement for a Javanese term for grandmother like Ra Nini, which we find indeed to be the name given to Durga in the *kidung Sudamala*. Mpu Prapanca wanted his work to represent the “highest” aspect of court culture, which we know from inscriptions and literary works of that period meant “more Sanskritic”.

While *kidung* were also composed for courtly audiences, they used language that scholars believe was closer to the language of everyday speech. In Old Javanese (as well as in “High Balinese”) the word *nini* means “grandmother”, while *ra* was a very common Old Javanese marker of respect that was used in titles of gods, nobility and priests. So, Ra Nini can be translated “Honoured Grandmother”, a term very similar to Prapanca’s term “grand-mother” (*maha-mata*) in the *Nagarakertagama*. These uses of Ra Nini all seem to refer to a benevolent goddess or special kind of human being. Yet in the *kidung Sudamala*, we find that Ra Nini refers to the goddess Durga, the malevolent form of the goddess Uma when she is cursed to a wretched existence in the cremation grounds for a period of twelve years. I believe that this identification of the goddess as Ra Nini is a key to the secret of the meaning of the reliefs of Candi Tigawangi.

If we put together now everything we know so far about the uses of the term Ra Nini, the identification of the Rajapatni as a *Bhagawati* and a “respected grand-mother” (*maha-mata*) and the extraordinary attention paid to the *sraddha* rites of the Rajapatni in the *Nagarakertagama*, I believe we can understand that Ra Nini in the *Sudamala* story represents the Rajapatni before the completion of the *sraddha* ceremonies. In Bali it has been a belief for countless generations that the “soul” (or *atma*) of a deceased person becomes a *bhuta*, or *preta*, that is a dangerous “hungry ghost” until the completion of the cremation rites. In Balinese this state of the deceased person is termed *pirata* (probably from Sanskrit: *preta*). When the proper cremation ceremonies have been performed the deceased person is said to *newata* (“becomes a deity/ancestor”) and to be become a *pitara*, or sacred ancestor. Stone (1997:94) tells us that this belief is also held among the Nepalese Hindu community. They believe
that the atma of the deceased becomes a bhuta or preta before the proper performance of the first sraddha ceremony.

There is another important Balinese ceremony that is practiced in an especially elaborate way by members of the higher castes. In this ceremony the atma of the person who has been cremated is “placed” in a special effigy called sekah that is then cremated in a special “second cremation” called mukur or ngasti. The most significant aspect of this ceremony for my study is that this ceremony was traditionally held twelve-days after the cremation, and so is often referred to as nge-roras-in, “to perform (a ceremony) on the twelfth day”. There are many parallels between the way this ceremony is performed and the sraddha rites of the Rajapatni as recorded in the Nagarakertagama. It is especially important that the outcome is the same: after the ashes from the second cremation are emptied into the sea or a sacred place along a river, the atma of the deceased becomes an “ancestor” (Ida Betara/Betari) who can protect and guide the family from that time on.

In the Sudamala story we find that Durga/Ra Nini makes the same progression from a liminal, dangerous and demonic state to a (restored) holy state. I believe that when we look at other aspects of the Sudamala story as depicted at Candi Tigawangi we will see that this transformation of Ra Nini had a special meaning for the nobility of Majapahit and that this is why this legend was so important in the reliefs of Candi Tigawangi, and later Candi Sukuh.

The twelve-year span of time between the decease of an important member of the Majapahit royalty and the performance of the sraddha rites was considered a dangerous liminal state for the kingdom, in much the same way that the period between the decease of a relative and the performance of the cremation and other post-mortem ceremonies is in contemporary Bali.

We do not yet know exactly why the period of twelve years was chosen for the time-span between a royal death and performance of the sraddha rites. However, it is clear that the idea of a twelve-year liminal period played a very important role in Javanese society. This comes out in the Javanization of the Indian epic Mahabharata. In the Indian original of this great epic, the Pandava brothers are exiled from their kingdom
for a period of thirteen years. However, in the Old Javanese literary work *Ghatotkacasraya*, canto 2.1 it is stated very clearly that the Pandava should be exiled to the forest for a period of *twelve years*, after which they will be allowed to return to their court-city of Indraprasta:

> Manganti dwadasa warsa na samaya ring ramya muwah ring puri

[There they were] to await the allotted span of twelve years before having the pleasure of returning to their court.

The twelve-year span of exile of the Pandava brothers is also well-known from the tradition of Balinese shadow-plays. It is also surely significant that the Balinese ritual of *mukur*, or *ngasti* – a “second cremation” that guarantees the release of the “soul” (*atma*) of the deceased into the world of the ancestors, is normally performed *twelve-days* after the cremation of the physical remains, and so is often referred to as the ceremony of *ngerorasin*, “performing the twelve-day (ceremony)”.

**The Transformation of Ra Nini and the Role of Bhatara Guru**

While in *Nagarakertagama* (2.1) it is mentioned that the Rajapatni was the embodiment of the *Parama-Bhagawati*, in *Nagarakertagama* (67.1) we find a more complete description of the characteristics of the *Bhagawati*. Here we find that all of the king’s activities, the feasts, performances, honouring of the “*swah*-element” of the deceased, drawing of the *mandala* were all performed for the pleasure of the Rajapatni, just as a similar combination of rituals, feasts and entertainments is said to “entertain” the “visiting deities/ancestors” to a Balinese temple festival or household.

Furthermore we find that the ultimate goal of the “pleasure of the Rajapatni” is the auspicious state of her grandson’s rule over the realm:

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86 The *kakawin Ghatotkacasraya* was composed by Mpu Panuluh during the reign of Kertajaya (c.1194-1205 CE or 1222 CE in *Nagarakertagama*), a king of Kediri.

87 In Bali, nowadays, *ngerorasin* or *mukur* is carried out immediately after the cremation (*ngaben*) rites to minimize the cost and time needed for the ritual or can be followed by a tooth-filing ceremony of the family.
May it have for result Her favour for the prosperity of the Illustrious Prince’s reign! The honoured Illustrious Rajasanagara (Hayam Wuruk) may be vanquishing his enemies, with for limit Moon and Sun! (Pigeaud, Vol. III, 1960:78).

The “entertaining” of the Rajapatni at her sraddha rites may also be understood as a source of “strengthening” her “swah-element”. Here we find reflected another meaning of sraddha important in the Indian context:

[sraddha]… is not a funeral ceremony but a supplement to such a ceremony; it is an act of reverential homage to a deceased person by relatives and it is moreover supposed to supply the dead with strengthening nutriment after the performance of the previous funeral ceremonies has endowed him/her with ethereal body (Monier-Williams, 1981:1097-1098).

In the description of the sraddha of the Rajapatni found in the Nagarakertagama we find that these rites ensured her release from her “gross-body” (sthula-sarira) and release into the form of an “ethereal-body” (parama-sarira). We can also view this as a transformation from the form of a “hungry-ghost” (preta) to a “deified ancestor” (pitra, pitara). This transformation directly corresponds to transformation of Ra Nini in the Sudamala. After she is exorcized by Sadewa, Ra Nini is released from the ‘sin’ that caused her to take on the gross, demonic form of Durga, and she is transformed into the benevolent form of Uma, the supreme goddess, wife of Shiva/Bhatara Guru.

In order to understand how dramatic this transformation is compare Figure 3.9, showing the demonic form of Durga at Tigawangi, with Figure 3.10, illustrating the form taken by Durga/Ra Nini when she is transformed back into her original form as Uma.
First, we should note that the demonic form of Durga at Tigawangi is depicted as wearing royal garments, thus accentuating her identity with the royal family. Furthermore she wears a crown on her forehead, which serves to make her dishevelled hair appear somewhat neater, while she also wears large ear-rings, bracelets, a prominent necklace, and the *upavita* cord of the Brahmin caste, an element of iconography that identifies her as one of the most sacred deities. On the other hand, her posture is threatening, as she stands with her legs apart, her left-hand pointing at Kunti, her right hand placed on her hip – all elements of a threatening posture in the shadow-plays of Java and Bali. This posture is the same *pratyalidha* posture that is found in the relief of the goddess Durga on the “second pendopo terrace” of Candi Panataran, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter.

Apart from her aggressive stance, Durga’s demonic characteristics in this relief can be seen from her dishevelled hair, the demonic aspect of her face and the large size of her body, when compared to the diminutive Kunti, or indeed to Kalika her loyal servant, who is shown in a modest Kunti, or indeed to Kalika her loyal servant, who is shown in a modest garment, her hair pulled back into a bun, and her neckline decorated not with a necklace, but with a length of cloth draped over her shoulders, scarf-fashion.88

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88 According to Nagaswamy (1982:137) Kalika was adored in India by the *sudra*, or “commoner” castes. If we compare the depiction of Kalika at Tigawangi with characters from the shadow-theater of...
In the Tigawangi relief depicting Durga/Ra Nini after her exorcism and return to the form of Uma, she is shown in the form of an auspicious four-armed deity wearing elaborate garments that accentuate her royal/divine status. She wears a crown and her head is framed by a halo (sirascakra). Her right (forward) hand is held above the left in abhaya (“fear not”) mudra, while her-left hand is in varada (“giving”) mudra. Unfortunately the condition of the reliefs does not allow identification of what she is holding in her two rear hands. Her countenance appears tranquil and loving. In my view it is very important to note here that in both her Durga/Ra Nini and Uma forms, the goddess at Candi Tigawangi can be identified with royalty and the priestly caste through her clothing and other aspects of iconography. This means that in her demonic form Durga/Ra Nini-Uma does not lose her status as a figure of central importance in the symbolism of the Majapahit “poetics of polity”. 89

The Balawi charter (1305 CE) informed us that the union of Raden Wijaya with the daughters of Kertanegara was like the union of Shiva and Uma. We can see that the Sudamala reliefs of Tigawangi represent another important aspect of the combination of political and mystical ideas that was prominent in East Java. As Schrieke (1957, Vol. III:314) tells us, Hayam Wuruk was said to be an incarnation of Bhatara Guru, a fact well-attested in the Nag, where terms like Bhatara Natha and Bhatara Girinatha can be understood as synonyms for Bhatara Guru:

- saksat janma Bhatara Natha, “clearly he [Hayam Wuruk] is Bhatara Natha” (Nagarakertagama 1.3c)

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89 The phrase “poetics of polity” comes from Pollock (1996). In my understanding this term is very useful to describe a political system of the Javanese court. Politics is not simply about the way power is organized, but also has an aesthetic element. As Geertz (1975) first pointed out state ritual conducted by the Brahman priest is a kind of theater in which nobility play the role of incarnate divinities. State rituals ensure the continued connection of the mundane political world with its divine prototype. Even to this day traditional Javanese believe that rulers can be successful only as long as their rule reflects the divine order. Majapahit royal names and the kinship-based network of political power are clear signs that the Majapahit political system can be described by the term “poetics of polity”. 

Bali, she can be likened to the condong, a female attendant of commoner origins who is the constant companion of a heroine from among the nobility.
nahan hinganira n Bhatara Girinatha sakala matemah prabhuttama, “thus was the extent to which Bhatara Girinatha incarnated as the supreme king in the visible world” (Nagarakertagama 1.5a)

singgih Sri Girinathamurti makajanma ri sira, “truly Sri Girinathamurti had taken birth in him” (Nagarakertagama 92.2b)

Bhatara Giripaty amurti ri sira n wisesaprabhu, “Bhatara Giripaty took a visible form in he, who was a uniquely powerful king” (Nagarakertagama 51.6)

The name Bhatara Guru was also given to Ken Angrok, the founder of the Singasari dynasty, and direct ancestor of the core-line of Majapahit in an inscription commemorating his victory over Kediri in 1222 CE. This initiated an identification of the East Javanese kings of the Singasari and Majapahit dynasties with the god Bhatara Guru, who represents on one hand a Javanized form of the god Shiva, and on the other, the “lord of the mountains” who was considered the divine ancestor of all East Javanese kings (Soepomo, 1972). From the Indian side we can see how the figure of Shiva as a divine teacher became increasingly prominent in Tantrism, where the role of the guru in passing on secret knowledge to his/her followers is the most important aspect of initiation, and where sacred texts of the tradition (agama) take the form of a “conversation” between Lord Shiva and his divine consort, Parvati or Uma. Shiva is also known as Girinatha, “Lord of the Mountains”, in India since he is said to dwell on Mount Kailasa, a prominent Himalayan peak, and also because his spouse Uma/Parvati is also well-known as Giriputri, “daughter of the (Himalaya) mountains”.

In Java the role of Shiva as the divine teacher, and his identification with high mountains, appear to have coalesced with indigenous beliefs that identify the volcanic peaks of the Javanese heartland as the home of the sacred ancestors of the Javanese people, and especially of the ancestors of the Javanese kings. This comes out clearly in the repeated identification of Hayam Wuruk with the “god of the mountains” in the Nagarakertagama.

In this sense the role of Bhatara Guru in providing the all-important assistance to Sadewa that allows him to exorcise Durga/Ra Nini can be understood in historical
perspective. Just as Durga/Ra Nini may represent the Rajapatni in an inauspicious and dangerous state prior to the completion of the sraddha rites, Bhatara Guru may represent Hayam Wuruk, who took major responsibility for the completion of the sraddha rites for the Rajapatni in 1362 CE. The completion of the sraddha rites of the Rajapatni thus can be understood in their mythological aspect as representing the completion of an important “life-cycle” by the royal representatives of the ancestors of the Javanese nobility and the Javanese people of the Majapahit realm.

The transfiguration of Ra Nini/Durga into the goddess Durga at Tigawangi can be associated with the events reported in Nagarakertagama (67.1-2) where the offerings and rituals performed in a Buddhist manner ensure that the Rajapatni is transformed into the goddess Prajnaparamita and returns to the Mahabuddhaloka (“Abode of the Great Buddha”) after her soul has been purified through an elaborate sraddha rite. 90

I have given a great deal of attention above to the identification of Ra Nini/Durga of the Sudamala story with the preta (“hungry ghost”) form of the deceased Rajapatni before completion of her sraddha rites.91 At Tigawangi this liminal period of twelve years – which must have been a time of great anxiety for the nobility of the Majapahit – is mirrored in the fact that Ra Nini/Durga must reside in the cremation grounds of Gandamayu for twelve years before she can be exorcised by Sadewa, who – like Hayam Wuruk in the Majapahit court– is identified closely with Bhatara Guru in the Sudamala story. According to Nagaswamy (1982:83), in India Bhatara Guru is always believed to act through human means. In the Javanese case Bhatara Guru’s assuming the form of Sadewa in the tale of Sudamala can be understood as a reflection of the central role played by Hayam Wuruk in the historical and ritual event of the sraddha rites of the Rajapatni.


91 It is interesting to note that, according to Brakel (1997:257), the goddess Durga still received special offerings as late as 1983 in rituals performed by the Islamic, hereditary rulers of Central Java. During the ritual there are incantations and prayers for well-being addressed to Durga. One of the incantations mentions the changhangan, a word for local spirits of the island of Java that can be traced back to the Old Javanese phrase dang hyang used to name or address important local spirits. The opening verse of the ritual text emphasizes its usefulness as a charm, and states that these charms are addressed to the worship of the “goddess Durga from Majapahit”.
Conclusion

After describing the complexities of kinship, politics, religious practices and belief systems of Majapahit in relation to visual evidence found in East Java, I have reached the conclusion that a monument like Candi Tigawangi and its bas-reliefs can tell us a great deal about events that happened prior to, or during, the period of the establishment of the monument. The bas-reliefs of Candi Tigawangi, for example, can give us a picture of the socio-political condition, the religious practices and beliefs of the period and at the same time attest the richness of literary works and the visual arts of the Majapahit era. The *kidung Sudamala* is evidence of the creative role of “local genius” in the composition of a new story by adapting and adopting elements of the famous Indian epic, the *Mahabharata*, and so presenting important elements of local life and traditions.

Candi Tigawangi, which has reliefs narrating the tale of *Sudamala*, reflects the richness of the cultural traditions of East Java at the beginning of the fifteenth century, and demonstrates to the complexity of socio-political life at that time. For the present work the reliefs at Candi Tigawangi are a crucial work of art in that the *Sudamala* tale reflects the demonization of the image of the goddess Durga through the curse of her husband, the god Shiva, and the importance played by this male figure of authority in bringing her back to an auspicious state as the gentle and nurturing goddess Uma.

As we will see in later chapters, the themes of demonization and the need for male authority figures to restore women/goddesses to an auspicious, domesticated form played an important role in the founding of the New Order regime (1966-1998) and continue to have a profound effect on how women are represented and treated in society.
Chapter 4
The Goddess Durga in Bali: Historical Perspectives

We have seen that images of the goddess Durga went through a radical transformation during the history of Central and East Javanese culture. I have tried to show that historical, religious and cultural factors were important factors in the development of a more demonic image of Durga that we see in works like *kakawin Ghatotkacasraya* and *kidung Sudamala* and the reliefs of Candi Tigawangi. In the case of Bali, if we compare the image of Durga Mahisasuramardini at Kutri, produced in circa the 11th century CE with the evidence of several versions of the *Calon Arang*, first written down in the mid 16th century CE, we can see a development that is similar to the East Javanese case, but leads to an even more clearly demonic form of the goddess. In contemporary Bali this means that Balinese are very frightened of Durga, and view her as the patron of “black magic” (*pangiwa*). This chapter will first trace the development of images of Durga in Bali, and then attempt to show how Balinese society has arrived at this particular way of looking at Durga.

Attempting to work on the study of Durga in Bali is dangerous for a Balinese, since the belief in magical power of people who worship her is still very strong in Bali. It has also made it very difficult for Western scholars to learn about Durga, since this always means learning more about Balinese magic. Western scholars like Hooykaas (1978) and Barbara Lovric (1987) have attempted to carry out in-depth studies on Balinese magic. Hooykaas concentrated on the poem *geguritan Basur*, which deals extensively with magical beliefs, while Lovric concentrated on the relationship of the black arts to beliefs around the causes and cures of sickness, and what she called “morbidity.” She chose to make her study in the coastal village of Sanur, which she labelled a “hot earth village” because it is believed by many Balinese to be a centre for the black arts.

Hooykaas and Lovric both pointed out that there are many of difficulties in getting access to the secret teachings on the remains of the Balinese Tantric lore that have

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92 When people in Bali ask me about the topic of my dissertation, and I told them that I work on the goddess Durga of India and Bali, people just assume that I am practicing “black magic”. My older relatives were so worried that I might be in trouble for studying the goddess Durga.
become a main part of Balinese magical practices. In addition to that, they found that it is difficult to collect data from persons who are said to be able to practice destructive magic. Although western scholars like Lovric and Hooykaas finally succeeded in gaining a certain amount of information on Balinese magic, in my view they did not really succeed in understanding what Balinese believe about the metaphysical or unseen world (niskala) and how it is related to the real world. Perhaps this is because it is so difficult to learn about these things by asking questions about magic. Most Balinese people do not want to talk about magic, or if they do, they would only do so if they were sure you wanted to practice magic seriously and were willing to become their student (sisya). As Gupta (2000:473) has pointed out for Tantric initiation: “the practitioner (sadhaka) must have been properly initiated by a competent teacher”. This is not an easy thing to do since it means once you have been initiated, you have to be completely loyal to the teacher and to serve them for many years before even getting a chance to learn what their secrets are. Other approaches to learning about the unseen world are often more effective. Hildred Geertz (2004), for example, has recently published a book *The Life of a Balinese Temple* that contains a great deal of valuable information and thinking about the unseen world which is based on her study on the art and rituals of an important temple in the Pura Desa of Batuan village.

Both Hooykaas (1978) and Lovric (1987) concluded that a really thorough study of Balinese magic would have to be written from the inside. Hooykaas (1978:106), for example, said: “The world of learning is looking forward to a revealing book on Balinese magic, this time written from the inside.”

There are a few Balinese scholars who have worked on the subject of Balinese magic from various points of view, producing published volumes in Indonesian language. Nala (1997) has produced a work titled *Usada Bali*, which examines the medical lore called *usada* that is recorded in ancient palm-leaf manuscripts (lontar, rontal). There is a great deal of useful information in this work on medical beliefs and practices, and an attempt to show how the Balinese system relates to the Indian system of traditional medicine called *Ayur Veda*. Some of these beliefs have to do with magic, especially the “right-hand” type (penengen) that is used to protect people from sickness or the attacks of sorcerers (pengiwa), the “left-hand” type. Karji (1999) has written a work
titled *Ilmu Hitam* (“Black Knowledge”), which emphasizes events that are said to be examples of the effects of black magic. However, he does not provide any textual sources and his ethnographic work is limited to discussions of “common beliefs” held by Balinese.

Poerbatjaraka (1926) worked extensively on the *Calon Arang* producing a careful translation of the *kidung* version of the tale into Dutch language with a commentary and notes.93 According to Poerbatjaraka (1926:110-180, Santiko, 1987:221) the text as we know it must have originated from an earlier and more concise version that was enlarged at a later date. Suastika (1997) has produced a doctoral dissertation on the literary forms of the *Calon Arang dalam Tradisi Bali*, showing that this story of a powerful and dangerous witch was immortalized in a corpus of works taking the general name *Calon Arang*. These are important works for scholars interested in the history of the text. Suastika’s work is valuable particularly because he has focused his attention on analysis of the process of adaptation that has led to a “Balinized text”. This, however, implies that the *Calon Arang* was originally produced in Java. While the historical setting of the story of *Calon Arang* is in East Java during the reign of Airlangga (c.1019-1045 CE), this does not necessarily mean that the *Calon Arang* originated in Java. This chapter will show that this work was produced in Bali.

None of these scholars have as yet focused on the roles the goddess Durga plays within the social context of Balinese society - how and why people worship Durga, and the effect social phenomena have had on how people see the goddess Durga. We have seen that Durga has always been regarded as an ambivalent deity, and this has been incorporated into local belief and traditions in many ways, both in Indonesia as well as in India. In India the multiple and complex roles of Durga are reflected in the many epithets and forms of Durga found associated with both local temples and large pilgrimage sites. However, in Bali this complexity has merged into a single goddess who is famous for her terrifying form, Bhatari Durga. In fact there are many echoes of Indian forms of the goddess Durga in Bali. Ventakaraman (2000:109) has pointed out that one of important Indian manifestations of Durga is as Sitala, the goddess who

93 Poerbatjaraka’s work on the *Calon Arang* was translated and published in 1975 by Suwito Santoso under the same title.
causes – and can cure – smallpox. This manifestation is reflected in the Balinese belief that it is Durga who causes smallpox according to the *lontar Andha Bhuwana*. Terrifying forms of the goddess, as Kali or Bhadrakali, are also found in Balinese versions of Sanskrit hymns to the goddess that is part of the sacred lore of the Brahmin caste of Bali. Among the many hymns collected by Goudriaan and Hooykaas (1971) we find one called “*Astaka-Mantra*”. The second part of this hymn is set in the Indian *sragdhara*, meter of four lines of 21 syllables of fixed quantity, so from this we can tell that it is among the classical works of Indian Hinduism that are kept alive by the high priests (*pedanda*) of Bali. It addresses the goddess as Kali, Bhadrakali, Kalaratri, Camunda and other forms of the terrifying goddess well known in India, especially in Tantric sources (Goudriaan and Hooykaas, 1971:196-207).

Stutterheim (1924:149) was one among the first Western scholars to point out that the Hindu-Javanese goddess Durga Mahisasuramardini developed in Bali into the form of Durga-Kalika, the notorious goddess of the graveyard; however, he did not say precisely when this happened or how. But it is also true that Durga in her original role as a warrior goddess or the destroyer of enemies has been perpetuated in Balinese society. During the pre-modern period when Bali was ruled by regional kings, the goddess Durga was worshipped with Tantric rituals aimed at protecting the kingdom and destroying the enemies of the kings. This is mentioned in the literary work *Ki Balian Batur* (Sanggra, 1989). This practice seems to be reflected in present day Bali when the goddess Durga is worshipped to destroy personal enemies by using destructive, left-hand magical power (*pangiwa*). This kind of power can only be gained with the blessing of the goddess Durga, or to be more exact, *Bhatari ri Dalem*, the goddess of the Pura Dalem, the temple of death and purification of the dead.

The statements of Hooykaas and Lovric have challenged me to attempt to give some idea of how “insiders” see the world of Balinese magic, and how Balinese understand the role of the goddess Durga. Of course, there are many limitations on how much I can reveal about the Balinese world of magic. My own knowledge may only represent a scratch on the surface of the deep world of Balinese mysticism. And even if an “insider” might be able to gain easier access to ideas about *pangiwa*, it would still be very difficult to reveal these things because of the very strong Balinese belief that revealing the sacred and secret lore to those who are uninitiated is very dangerous,
both for revealers and the receivers of the knowledge. That is why many Balinese works on mystical lore end with the phrase aywa wera, which means “do not reveal (it)”\(^9\). This notion of the dangers of magical lore is clearly related to similar Indian prohibitions on revealing the secret practices of Tantra. As Gupta (2000:473) has pointed out: “There are four important constituents in such esoteric Tantric worship which are the preliminaries, invocation, ritual service and conclusion. One of several preliminaries constituent is to ensure the ritual security because the Tantric esoteric practices are considered to be full of dangers”.

In order to provide a firm basis for my discussion in this chapter, I will begin with a brief review of the historical background of Bali before and after the influence of Hindu-Buddhism directly or indirectly from Java. Bali was first “Javanized” through the royal marriage of the Balinese prince Udayana (Sang Ratu Maruhani Sri Dharmmodayana Warmmadewa) with the Javanese princess Mahendradatta (Sang Ratu Luhur Sri Gunapriyadharmmapatni), who was a granddaughter of the East Javanese king Sindok, and apparently had a higher status than that of Udayana (Bernet Kempers, 1991:38). A second wave of “Javanization” was initiated by King Kertanegara of East Java with a successful raid on Bali in 1284 CE, but only became a reality when Bali was subjugated in 1343 CE by Gajah Mada, the powerful prime minister of the Queen Regent of the Majapahit dynasty, Tribhuwana (Tribhuwanawijayottunggadewi) and king Hayam Wuruk.

Due to the “third wave” of Javanese influence in Bali, the transformation of the warrior goddess Durga Mahisasuramardini into a demonic form during the Majapahit period probably had a powerful effect on Bali. For example, we find among the lore of the Balinese high priests a hymn (stuti, stava) called the Durga-Stava, in which Durga is worshipped in demonic form as the Bhatari ri Dalem, “The Goddess Who resides in the Pura Dalem” (Goudriaan and Hooykaas, 1971:191). And it is exactly in the Pura Dalem where we typically find reliefs of the Sudamala story that are closely

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\(^9\) This attitude of “not revealing all” seems to be reflected in the Indian tradition. In the introduction to a recent scholarly work on mantra (Alper 1989:1-2) emphasized so much concern on the danger of the misused of the mantra. He refers to an English translation of Mahidhara’s sixteenth-century treatise on the science of mantra (mantra-sastra), the Mantramahodadh, published 1984 where the publishers warn that “…they disclaim responsibility - ethically and legally - for consequences that ensue when mantra are used unsuccessfully or irresponsibly”.

parallel to the visual evidence for this story found in the reliefs of Candi Tigawangi and Candi Sukuh in East Java. As I have shown in Chapter Three of this work, the demonic form of Durga depicted in the Sudamala is only a temporary state, since after twelve years she can be transformed back into her original form as the beautiful goddess Uma or Giriputri, the gentle and auspicious wife of Shiva. It is also in the Pura Dalem that we find images of Rangda, a witch-like figure considered to be the loyal devotee of the goddess Durga. This has often led to the mistaken belief that Rangda and Durga are identical.95

As it has been described earlier that ancient rituals used to ensure the victory of a king over his enemies have taken form in modern Bali in the belief that the goddess Durga can be invoked secretly and individually in her role as a crusher of enemies with the purpose of gaining her assistance in making “left-hand” magical attacks on enemies. Gupta (2000:471) has stated that in left-hand path of Tantrism, the goddess must be worshipped with antinomian practices for the purpose of attacks on personal enemies. In Bali, in order to gain Durga’s grace and blessing for this kind of effort, people are advised to go to the graveyard to worship Durga; choosing an auspicious night, making specific offerings and reciting specific mantras.96 Many of these practices are clearly mentioned in the Calon Arang, but there are also other texts, that deal specifically with this information called Desti or Aji Pangleyakan. They must be kept very secret and are believed to be spiritually dangerous (Balinese: tenget, pingit).97

Historical Background: Bali before the Inscriptional Record

Before the period beginning 882 CE when the inscriptional record gives evidence of a Hindu-Buddhist socio-cultural system in Bali, it is believed that the Balinese already

95 According to Ida Bagus Anom, a mask maker, puppeteer, and dancer, the differences between the physical appearance of the goddess Durga and Rangda images are the goddess Durga has white mask, sharp straight fangs, and white hair while Rangda has black hair, bent-fangs and black mask (personal communication, September 2008).

96 Pan Rintug, the priest of Pura Dalem (the temple of Siwa-Durga) in Kumkeladi Tabanan (Personal communication, October 2002).

97 This secrecy and inaccessibility seems to correspond to the original meaning of Durga in India where the word dur-ga means “difficult of access, hard to overcome, hard to approach, hard to achieve” (Zoetmulder, 1982:436).
had their own social system, traditions and beliefs. Bernet Kempers (1991:9-31), Ardika (1995:1-9) and other scholars have based their assumptions about this prehistoric stage of Balinese culture largely on the archaeological remains found at coastal sites like Gilimanuk on the extreme western tip of Bali and Sembiran on the northeast coast. Those two ports appear to have played an important role in the trade that connected villages of the hinterlands with coastal merchants who had access to an ancient international trade system connecting the archipelago with India and the Middle East, the Southeast Asian mainland and China. The antiquity of this trade system can be judged from evidence like the Dongson drum housed in a special pavilion in the Pura Panataran Sasih of Pejeng village, and a fragment of a mould of a smaller Dongson drum found in the nearby village of Manuaba. Since Dongson culture spread from sites in northern Vietnam and southern China between circa 1500 CE and the turn of the first millennium, we can see that Bali was already part of an ancient trading network from a very early date. Findings reported by Ardika and Bellwood (1995:8) at the Sembiran site give hard evidence for a trade in pottery with sites like Arikameddu in south-eastern India, which is known to have been active circa 200 BCE–200 CE.  

An important aspect of the finds at sites like Gilimanuk is the discovery of sarcophagi of varying sizes, which are often found to contain valuable objects made of stone, metal or glass. Alongside these sarcophagi burials archaeologists have also found remains of ordinary burial sites, which are believed to have been used for the common people. From this, scholars conclude that the sarcophagi represent the burial sites of higher-ranking members of a hierarchical society (Ardika, 2007).  

It is possible that some pre-Hindu social practices can be understood through an examination of the socio-cultural structures of a series of highland and coastal villages which are often referred to as the Bali Aga. The people of these villages also share other traditions that differ from those of the Javanized Balinese who are known by some scholars as Wong Majapahit (Bernet Kempers, 1991:34). The Bali Aga people, for example, do not have a caste-system, and do not practice cremation. In one
village, the famous Trunyan on the eastern shore of Lake Batur, the Bali Aga people practice exposure burial; while in other villages, burial is the usual way of treating the dead. We do not know exactly what form this system of social rank took in prehistoric Bali, but it is possible that it is reflected in the ranking systems of Bali Aga villages, where status is ranked by age and the highest rank is reserved for the oldest members of the village council. These elders are often given titles like jero kabayan (“headman”) or jero bau (“shoulders”) showing that they are highest in social rank (Riana, 1995:3, Ardana, 2007).100

But it is not completely correct to isolate the culture of the “original Balinese” (Bali Aga) from mainstream Balinese culture since a number of Hindu elements common in mainstream villages are also found in Bali Aga villages. For example, one ancient god of the Bali Aga people is called Bhatara Da Tonta (“the Lord Who Appears”). A colossal statue of this pre-Hindu deity is located in Trunyan. Yet, in an early inscription we find that the reigning king has issued a decree providing tax relief for the village that took charge of the sanctuary of this deity and detailing the Indian-style festivities to be carried out in honour of the god in the month of magha maha nawami (van Stain Callenfels, 1926:20-26 and Titib, personal communication, 17 April 2009).

Historical Background: Bali during the early inscriptive period

According to Geertz (1975:9) Bali was one of the islands of the Indonesian archipelago that was last to fall to colonialism, and prior to that was able to resist foreign domination except during the period between 1343 CE and the fall of the Majapahit (c.1527 CE), when it was under the indirect rule of the Majapahit. Part of the reason for this, may be that it has few harbours whose depth could support a major international sea trade of the kind found in Sumatra and Java during the pre-modern period. Yet through its minor harbours on the north coast and Benoa on the south, Bali has had a long history of contact with the outside world.

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100 I Made Ardana, the chief of the Bali Aga village in Sukawana, Kintamani, Bangli (personal communication, November, 2007).
The penetration of foreign culture into the archipelago in the beginning of the first century of the Common Era influenced Bali both directly and indirectly (Geertz, 1975:9; Ardika, 1995:2). The penetration of foreign culture and religion especially from India must have brought some important changes to local beliefs, so that it is difficult today to know exactly which beliefs and practices were pre-Hindu and which developed through interaction with Indian ideas. The amalgamation of foreign and local traditions has resulted in a unique Balinese Hindu religion. The most profound influence on the culture of Bali was from its neighbouring island, Java, but there is also evidence of direct influence from India. According to Goris (1954:131), the oldest images and the oldest inscriptions (882-915 CE) found in Bali suggest the direct influence of India. Here we find the use of Sanskrit language written in Indian script (Devanagari), Buddhist religious formulas, and inscriptive evidence of Brahmanical rites (cited by Swellengrebel, 1984:18).

**Javanese influences on Bali**

There is no evidence in the earliest inscriptions written in Old Balinese language for the worship of the goddess Durga, although we do find references to Hindu deities like Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva and Ganesha and there are also frequent references to the Buddha. A dramatic change appears in the Balinese inscriptions beginning in the early tenth century when the language of the inscriptions begins to shift from Old Balinese to Old Javanese (Stutterheim, 1936:129; Bernet Kempers, 1991:36). At this point we also begin to find references to the goddess Durga in curse formulae for the founding of *sima* (“freehold”) lands, exactly like those found in the Javanese inscriptions. The influence of Java on the culture of Bali is very significant for this study because it brings with it a series of historical and mythological events that have had a profound influence on Balinese culture. Therefore, I will attempt to carefully describe the historical sequence connected with the shift to a Javanized form of government and religion in the tenth and eleventh centuries, and a later “second wave” of Javanese influence that began with the subjugation of Bali by Majapahit dynasty of Java in 1343 CE when the Javanese prime minister Gadjah Mada is credited with bringing Bali under Javanese control.

**The Influence of the Javanese Kediri dynasty (1042-1222 CE)**
According to Damais (1956:51), before the royal union (989-1011 CE) between the Javanese princess Mahendradatta and the Balinese prince Udayana, Bali was already governed by the Warmadewa dynasty (Stutterheim, 1936:129; Bernet Kempers, 1991:36). This is based on the evidence of the bilingual Blanjong pillar of Sanur. Since Udayana’s royal name includes Warmadewa, we assume that Udayana was scion of this dynasty. However, a major change occurred with the marriage of Udayana and Mahendradatta. First of all, the language of the inscriptions shifted from Old Balinese to Old Javanese; and, second the name of Mahendradatta gained great prominence and remained prominent in the inscriptions of both Udayana and his son Anak Wungsu. In general, there appears to have been relative equality between men and women of the early Balinese nobility before the influence of Javanese. Many statues of royal couples found today in the Pura Puncak Penulisan temple of the Kintamani region show the king and queen standing next to each other, portrayed in exactly the same proportions. However, we do not find the names of women of royalty recorded in any Balinese inscriptions; yet with the appearance of Mahendradatta not only do we find her name recorded, but we find it given a more prominent position than that of her husband Udayana. Scholars have presumed that is because she was a direct descendant of Sindok, a powerful king of Java in the 10th century CE, who very likely had a high ritual status (Bernet Kempers, 1991:36).

The shift of language in the inscriptions and prominent name that was given to Mahendradatta, both suggests that the queen had a higher ritual status than her husband. As Damais (1956:52) has argued it is also possible that Bali was a vassal kingdom of Java. The mention of the queen as Sang Ratu Luhur Sri Gunapriyadharmmapatni and the king as Sang Ratu Maruhani Sri Dharmmodayana Warmadewa in every inscription issued by the couple strengthens the evidence of her higher status, since the additional honorific title, *luhur* “ancestor/ancestral/high-status” and *sri* “glorious/glory of the ruler” are given with the name of Mahendradatta, but not with that of Udayana. It seems likely that Balinese royalty of this dynasty were considered to have semi-divine status, and inscriptive evidence suggests that they were considered divine after their death. In a pattern that is familiar from later evidence like Majapahit document *Nagarakertagama*, upon the completion of the sraddha rites royal figures were considered to merge with the stone temple...
(candi) erected in their honour. Bernet Kempers (1991:43) describes a similar pattern for Bali, but in this case the free-standing temples of Java were represented in Bali by relief sculptures of candi cut directly into the stone of rocky hillsides like those of Gunung Kawi, in Gianyar regency.

![Figure 4.1: Gunung Kawi complex of Gianyar Regency, Bali](image)

One important evidence for this period is the twenty-seven inscriptions issued by Anak Wungsu, the youngest son of Mahendradatta and Udayana, issued between the years 1050-1070 CE. Many of these inscriptions refer to Anak Wungsu’s parents with terms bhatara (male) and bhatari (female), which today mean “deity” or “deified ancestor” (Bernet Kempers, 1991:43). Two of these inscriptions record the actual historical events refer to the royal parents of Anak Wungsu in terms of the places where they were apotheosized, presumably in rock-cut candi like those of Gunung Kawi. The copperplate of Gurun Pai, found in Pandak Bandung in the district of Tabanan issued in 1071 CE (cf. van Stein Callenfels, 1926:14) refers to the royal parents in this fashion (Paduka Haji Anak Wungsu nira kalih Bhatari Sang Lumah i Burwan [mwang] Bhatara [sang] lumah i Banyu Wka). This is also the case for the

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101 For example, in Nagarakertagama 40.5 mentions that in 1227 CE Ken Arok the first king of Singasari was enshrined in a double temple at Kagenengan, as a Shaiva and a Buddhist (Robson, 1995:53).

102 According to Ardana (1989:11) the later chronicle Babad Pasek also mentions the name of the queen first before the king in phrases like “...nguni duk pamadegan Cri Gunapriyadharmapatni...”
charter of Tengkulak (A) recorded by Goris (1962:31) where Anak Wungsu refers to his parents by the places where they were apotheosized:

\[ \text{paduka haji Anak Wungsu nira kalih bhatari lumah i Burwan bhatara lumah i Banyuaka} \]

his majesty the king Anak Wungsu together with the goddess apotheosized in Burwanan and the deity who was apotheosized in Banuaka [Banyu Wka or Banyuaka].

In addition to their importance as evidence of the custom of referring to deceased royal ancestors in terms of the places where they are apotheosized, these inscriptions are crucial for this study since they refer to the place of apotheosis of Mahendradatta, mother of Anak Wungsu, as \textit{bhatari lumah i Burwan}.

The undated copperplate of Paguyangan, in the district of Badung (cf. Callenfels, 1926:19) is also important in this way because it refers to Mahendradatta as \textit{sanghyang candi i burwan}, which can mean either “the deity (sang-hyang) of the candi (rock-cut temple) of Burwan” or “the reverend Candi of Burwan”. In the later case we can understand Candi as one of the epithets of the goddess Durga, well-known in Indian sources like the \textit{Devi Mahatmya} (Gupta, 2000:465). These three references to Mahendradatta as the deity who is apotheosized in Buruan were used by Bernet Kempers (1991:39) to identify an important statue of Durga Mahisasuramardini that can be seen in the village of Kutri in the district of Buruan or Burwan, Gianyar. As Bernet Kempers has noted, this identification of the statue of Durga at Buruan with Mahendradatta is also supported by local legend and belief. This point is of great importance for this study; for it is here that the later mythology of Bali begins to diverge in a very significant way from the historical and archaeological record.

\textit{Udayana Warmadewa,...”}. Atmojo (1977:15) has also pointed out that the mother (\textit{bhatari}) of Anak Wungsu is mentioned first before his father, thus clearly indicating that Mahendradatta was of a higher rank than Dharmodayana (Udayana).
From the historical point of view the marriage of Udayana and Mahendradatta brought with it radical changes to Balinese culture. These are reflected in the shift of language in the inscriptions, and also in the growing importance during this period of the founding of sima through royal grants, which were “protected” in the inscriptions with the same kinds of curse formulae invoking Durga that are found in the Javanese case. This marriage also brought with it the founding of an important royal line that remained powerful as late as the twelfth century (c.1178-1181 CE) Jayapangus reissued many of the charters first written during the reign of Anak Wungsu (Goris, 1931). And - perhaps for the first time in the Balinese history – it brought with it a period when a woman held more political power than her husband.

Zoetmulder (1974:19) pointed out that the most famous of the children of Mahendradatta and Udayana was Airlangga, who was born on Bali c.1001 CE, and went on to regain power in East Java in a long struggle that began shortly after he visited Java in connection with a wedding ceremony. Perhaps this was his own marriage, perhaps that of a close relative, in any case he was invited by an older family member, also known as Dharmawangsa whose consecration name was Dharmawangsateguhanantawikramottunggadewa. As Bernet Kempers (1991:41) tells us:

shortly after the marriage feast, in 1017, a serious ‘calamity’… ended the reign of Dharmawangsa and made Airlangga retreat for some into the mountains… After returning, he became king (1019) of a comparatively small East Java district which he gradually enlarged through 15 years of struggle.

This Dharmawangsa was apparently, then, the same Dharmawangsa Teguh who Supomo (1997:225) always writes about as he sponsored translation and a month long reading of several prose renderings (parwa) from Sanskrit to Old Javanese. As

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103 There are at least two persons known as Dharmawangsa in East Javanese and Balinese history. One is Dharmawangsateguhanantawikramottunggadewa, or Dharmawangsa Teguh, the older relative of Mahendradatta, who ruled in East Java in the late tenth century, and sponsored a famous reading of the Parwa literature in Old Javanese. Another is Paduka Haji Sri Dharmawangsa-wardhana-marakata-pangkaja-asthanotunggadewa, or simply Marakata, one of the sons of Mahendradatta and Udayana.

104 For many years the date of this “calamity” (pralaya) was read as 1006 CE, but the correct date was given by Damais (1952). This has led to a more correct understanding of the events reported in the famous Calcutta stone, dated 1041 CE, which provides important details of the life of Airlangga and his parents.
Zoetmulder (1974:9-12) has pointed out, the golden age of the literary works was during the Kediri period. There were many literary works being produced at that time. For instance, the famous _Bharatayuddha, Arjunawiwaha, and Ghatotkacasraya_ were composed during that period. Dharmawangsa Teguh seemed to be very fond of literary works wherein Supomo (1997:219) shows the importance of the literary works during the reign of Dharmawangsa Teguh, a tenth century ruler of an East Javanese kingdom. Supomo wrote:

> There are a number of events which are of great significance to the Javanese people, but as far as its literary history concerned none is more important than the one that took place at the _kraton_ of King Dharmawangsa Teguh…. For “one month minus one evening” people gathered at the court to hear the first reading of what was apparently the first completed Old Javanese prose rendering (_parwa_) of the fourth book of the _Mahabharata_, the _Wirataparwa_.

Another famous son of Mahendradatta and Udayana was Dharmawangsa Marakata. Callenfels (1926:31) gives his consecration name as recorded in the inscription of Buwahan (Canto 1:3, 4 I) as Paduka Haji Sri Dharmmawangsa-wariddhana-marakata-pangkaja-sihanotunggadewa, who seems to have been born in 995 CE. Dharmawangsa Marakata ruled for only a short time (1022-1026 CE) before he was succeeded by his younger brother who is known to history as Anak Wungsu.\(^{105}\) As noted above twenty seven inscriptions were issued during his reign including several referring to his mother as the goddess apotheosized in Burwan, which Bernet Kempers (1991:39) believes refers to the free-standing statue of Durga Mahisasuramardini at Kutri in the village of Buruan, of Gianyar regency.

The image of Durga Mahisasuramardini at Kutri stands 2.2 meters high. It portrays the goddess as having six arms; her right arms are carrying an arrow, a javelin, and a flaming disc, while her left arms are carrying a winged and flaming conch, a bow, and a shield. Parts of the statue are damaged, so that it is hard to judge her expression. She is standing on a buffalo with her legs spread apart, her left leg on the head of the buffalo while her right leg rests on the back of the buffalo. There is no image of a

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\(^{105}\) The years of Dharmawangsa’s reign are based on inscriptions issued in his name between 1022-26 CE cf. Bernet Kempers (1991:40).
dwarf-like figure, as is common in images of Durga Mahisasuramardini in Java. Her head is framed by a halo to show that she is a divine being. Her body is slim and has a youthful appearance (Bernet Kempers, 1991:159-160). The depiction of the goddess Durga here is similar to portrayals of the goddess Durga Mahisasuramardini during the Central Javanese and East Javanese periods, before the evolution of the demonic figures found in reliefs of the later Majapahit like those of Candi Tigawangi and Sukuh.

Figure 4.2: The image of Durga Mahisasuramardini at Kutri, Buruan, Bali

The image of Durga Mahisasuramardini at Kutri is very important for this study because of the later development of an important corpus of literary works known as the *Calon Arang*. The prose form of this work was composed in the mid 16th century during the “golden age” associated with the reign of Balinese king Dalem Waturenggong circa 1460-1550 CE (Nala, 1997:22; Suastika, 1997:42). In later centuries the metrical *kidung* and *geguritan* forms of the *Calon Arang* were
composed. The most important point is that the Calon Arang story concerns a struggle between Airlangga and a witch-like character named Rangda ing Dirah who is believed to be the cause of a “calamity” in his kingdom. Several scholars, including Goris (1956-57) have argued that Rangda ing Dirah can be identified with Mahendradatta, who caused the “calamity” of the kingdom and thus also with the statue of Durga Mahisasuramardini at Kutri. However, Bernet Kempers (1991:39) argues against this theory. He has stated that it is impossible that a queen would have been immortalized with a beautiful statue of Durga Mahisasuramardini if she had been expelled from the kingdom for exceptional wickedness, as we are told of Rangda ing Dirah in the Calon Arang tale.

The Calon Arang tale represents an important juncture of historical and mythological points of view. From the inscriptions we know that Mahendradatta had a high ritual status in the royal religion of eleventh century Bali, but that this form of belief represented something new and unfamiliar to the Balinese society of that period. The Calon Arang tale, written in Bali in the sixteenth century (c.1540 CE), but set in East Java during the reign of Airlangga (1019-1045 CE) seems to reflect Balinese ideas about magic and politics that may be based on local beliefs about the potential danger of powerful women. It is tempting to think that the later demonization of powerful women in the Calon Arang may in some way reflect local fears that first arose during the reign of Mahendradatta, a powerful queen of Bali who was a native of East Java. From the point of view of the royal politics of the eleventh century the identification of Mahendradatta with the image of Durga Mahisasuramardini at Kutri/Buruan can be seen as reflecting the idea of a sacred warrior goddess who gives protection to the court, in just the same way as the Durga Mahisasuramardini in the northern cella of Prambanan in Central Java (c.856 CE). Yet the Calon Arang myth suggests that, historical events like the catastrophe that befell East Java in 1017 CE might have been interpreted in the popular imagination as signs of the evil effects of magic practiced by powerful women. There is no doubt that in later Balinese belief Durga has been identified with Rangda. As I will attempt to show later in this study, it may be that East Javanese tales like the Sudamala had an effect on how Durga was later perceived in Bali, since shadow play performances of the Sudamala also play an important role in Balinese rituals aimed at purification, especially in the case of the birth of male-female twins. But it is not impossible that the Balinese transformation of images of
Durga into the form of Rangda in Bali may in some way reflect local reactions to the
momentous changes that occurred in Bali through the marriage of Udayana and
Mahendradatta.

The Subjugation of Bali under King Kertanegara of Singasari in 1284 CE

We know from *Nagarakertagama* 42.1 that Bali was attacked in 1284 CE by
Kertanegara, and that the campaign resulted in the subjugation of Bali and the capture
of its queen, “who was duly brought as a captive before the King” (Robson, 1995:55).
The political domination of Bali by East Java appears to have lapsed after a short
time, perhaps during the chaotic years 1292-1294 CE, the years of the murder of
Kertanegara by Jayakatwang and the subsequent restoration of Kertanegara’s line by
his son-in-law, Raden Wijaya, the first king of the Majapahit dynasty.

However, an important set of archaeological remains in the Pejeng-Bedahulu region
of south-central Bali suggests that religious ideas closely associated with Kertanegara
had a profound influence on Bali, although it is difficult to say whether this occurred
between the years 1284-1292 CE when parts of Bali may have been under direct
Singasari rule, or over a longer period of time when Singasari and early Majapahit
influences may have influenced Bali.

Kertanegara’s activities as a Tantric Buddhist are well-documented in
*Nagarakertagama* (42.1-3 and 43.1-6) and in the Joko Dolog inscription of 1289 CE.
In Chapter Three, I have described how Kertanegara went through Buddhist ritual
consecrations that identified him with Maha-Aksobhya, the central figure in a Tantric
Buddhist initiation of the “Father Tantra” type, and I have pointed out that these
initiations seem to have been part of his efforts to combine political and spiritual
powers in order to limit the political expansion of Kublai Khan into the archipelago.
Since Kublai Khan was well-known to have been initiated as Vairocana in the
“Mother Tantra” initiation of the Hevajratantra, it would have been natural for
Kertanegara to strengthen his aura of spiritual power by identifying himself with
Aksobhya. In Chapter Three, I also reviewed the important evidence of the statue and
inscription of the Hindu Tantric deity, Camundi, one of the epithets of the goddess
Durga. The inscription on the reverse of this image tells us that Kertanegara promoted
the worship of this terrifying, Tantric form of the warrior goddess. It seems very likely that his reasons for promoting her worship were similar to his motives in seeking initiation as Aksobhya, but in this case invoking the goddess as one of the most powerful protectors of the realm. We know that images of Durga Mahisasuramardini were very popular all throughout the East Javanese period, thus continuing the pattern of invoking Durga as defender of the realm that goes back to the Hindu pantheon of Prambanan.

Beyond the evidence of the Camundi inscription most of the evidence on Kertanegara’s religious activities focuses on his role as a Buddhist. Since the *Nagarakertagama* was written by a Buddhist, and with a Buddhist perspective, and the Joko Dolog inscription also stresses his activities as a Buddhist it is natural to suppose that Kertanegara favoured Buddhism. Yet *Nagarakertagama* 43.5 tells us that upon his death in 1292 CE Kertanegara was “released in the realm of Siwa and Buddha” and enshrined in the area of Singasari as “a Siwa-Buddha statue of imposing fineness” (Robson, 1995:56).

There is also a large amount of visual evidence that suggests that Kertanegara paid equal attention to rituals and devotion involving the deities of Tantric Hinduism. In addition to the Camundi image, we can also point to a series of images found in, or around the central, “temple tower” of the Candi Singasari complex, which we know was an important state temple during the Singasari and Majapahit periods. These include a series of images that suggest that Candi Singasari represents a Tantric development of the Hindu pantheon of Prambanan, with the orientation of the temple towards the West (rather than the East) suggesting that the temple was used in post-mortem ceremonies of the East Javanese type (just as was Candi Jago for Kertanegara’s father, Vishnuvarddhana). One of the most renowned statues of this group is an image of Durga Mahisasuramardini (Zimmer, 1955:103-5, Fontein, 1990:25), and the group also includes a statue of the Shaivite sage Agastya as well as an image of Ganesha, whose lotus-seat of skulls and a fierce, Kala-like image on the

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106 Nihom (1988, *JAOS* 106:485-501), “The Identification and Original Site of a Cult Statue on East Java, the Joko Dolog”, has proposed that certain words from the Joko Dolog inscription can be interpreted to show that the initiation described in the text combined Buddhist, Shaivite and Vaishnavite features. However, Lokesh Chandra (1995) proposes a more straightforward reading of the text and concludes that it deals only with Kertanegara’s activities as a Buddhist.
reverse, strongly suggest Tantric rites conducted in the setting of a cremation ground. Perhaps most important for my study is an image found near the central “temple tower” that represents Bhairava, the “death-conquering” form of Shiva that is very important in Hindu Tantrism. Chutiwongs (2003) has made a careful study of the imagery of Singasari, concluding that this figure should be included with the others originally found within the “temple tower”, and that together the group represents a “ritual circle of Siwa” (2003:8). While the Bhairava statue of Singasari was originally discovered outside the “tower temple” at Singasari, Chutiwongs suggests that it must have once been the central image of a single ritual group:

Many speculations have been made as to the original location of this statue, and of the role it would have played at Singhasari. The image itself reveals the same monumental style and a dynamic but static quality, which characterize the group belonging to the Tower temple. We believe that it indeed formed part of the same group, and it should have played the central role as the leader or lord of the whole assembly or ritual circle (Chutiwongs, 2003:9).

Chutiwongs furthermore asserts that this statue could indeed represent Kertanegara himself, in the form he would have taken as part of a Hindu Tantric initiation similar to his Buddhist consecration as Aksobhya:

It is not beyond the range of possibility that this Siwa statue of Singhasari portrays Kertanegara himself, who had been an initiate of the Bhairava cult, and must have had himself consecrated as Siwa in the same way that he underwent the Buddha consecration in the cemetery of Wurare in 1289 (Chutiwongs, 2003:9).

The importance of initiation as Bhairava in Kertanegara’s combination of political power with ritual consecrations also comes out in the career of Adityavarman, a Sumatran prince who was born and raised in the court of Majapahit in the period just after the death of Kertanegara. Adityavarman may have spent as many as thirty years

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in East Java before returning to Sumatra to rule over the kingdom of Jambi-Dharmasraya at the height of its power. Kertanegara had sealed his earlier alliance with the kingdom of Jambi with the gift of a replica of the central imagery of Candi Jago to the reigning king, who preceded Adityavarman as ruler in Sumatra. In his turn Adityavarman renovated Candi Singasari in 1343 CE and left an inscription commemorating this act of devotion to the temple where Kertanegara’s father, Vishnuvardhana had been apotheosized. In 1347 CE Adityavarman was reigning in Sumatra and erected a colossal image of Bhairava at Padang Roco. Miksic (2000:61) believes that the size and northern location and orientation of this statue reflect political purposes like those of Kertanegara. However, at this point in Sumatran history it appears that Adityavarman was concerned both about possible threats from Yuan China, and from the rising power of the Islamic trading states of the northern tip of Sumatra (Aceh) and the Malay Peninsula.

When we turn back to the Balinese case, it is tempting to think that the imagery of statuary found in the Pejeng-Bedahulu may also reflect Kertanegara’s use of Tantric initiations for political purposes. There is no written evidence found in Bali which can be used to describe the political and socio-cultural situation around the time of the subjugation of Bali by Singasari. However, archaeological evidence for Tantrism can be attested by the massive statue of Bhairava at the Pura Kebo Edan temple located in the Pejeng area of Gianyar district (Bernet Kempers, 1991:135-137). The exact date of the statue has not been identified but it corresponds to the style of statue found in East Java of the 13th-14th centuries CE (Bernet Kempers 1991:139).

This gigantic statue is often referred to locally as Bhima since he wears a head-dress as supit urang or “lobster claw” head-dress, which is the typical head dress of Bhima in imagery of East Java, and in imagery of the Balinese wayang (shadow theatre) which survives to this day. Bhima is the second of the five Pandava brothers, and very famous for his immense physical power. As Stutterheim (1956) has pointed out in the East Javanese period a cult of Bhima developed which had a great deal to do with the combination of physical and spiritual power.
The typical form of Bhima in the East Javanese cult of supernatural power can be found in massive figures of Bhima visible in reliefs at Candi Sukuh, located on the slopes of Mount Lawu, on the border of East Java and Central Java. This site, and several related sites like Candi Ceto, are very different in character from temples of East Java located closer to the centre of Singasari and Majapahit political power, and are famous for erotic imagery and associations with the cult of supernatural power.

We do not know whether the statue at Kebo Edan temple in Bali is meant to represent Bhima, or a combination of some elements of the imagery of Bhima with the imagery of Bhairava. Since the statue is shown standing on a prostrate corpse, with snakes
wrapped around his ankles, this strongly suggests elements of “left-hand Tantrism”,
which placed great stress on overcoming the power of death by performing rituals of
consecration in the graveyard or cremation ground. In India that most prominent
visual features of the Bhairava sect emphasize imagery that suggests the cremation
ground, including human skulls, and corpses incorporated into the iconography of
Bhairava, or his consort Bhairavi (Dyczkowski, 1988: 26). Based on the presence of
these attributes borne by the figure at the Pura Kebo Edan temple, we might identify
the figure as the form of Bhairava.

However, the exact identification of this statue is not yet certain as several other
elements suggest a comparison to the Bhima cult. We know from other evidence of
the Pejeng-Bedahulu area from this period that the practice of using penis inserts was
associated with sexual prowess and immense physical power. Several standing images
of linga which clearly show penis inserts have been found, and this is also true of the
statue at Kebo Edan temple. The large, dangling penis of this statue is shown
protruding from between the folds of his loin-cloth, and there is clear evidence of a
hole that is placed exactly where penis inserts are found in other images of the area. If
we compare the linga of the Pejeng-Bedahulu area with an important inscribed linga
found at Candi Sukuh (now housed in Museum Nasional Jakarta) that also bears
several penis-inserts shaped like small, meat balls, this reinforces the idea that these
penis-inserts have some relationship with the cult of Bhima, which was important for
the imagery of Candi Sukuh.

Another important feature of the “Bhairava” image at Pura Kebo Edan in Bali is that
this gigantic figure (over 3.5 meters in height) appears to be wearing a mask. This can
be seen clearly from the presence of ribbons stretching from the “face” of the image
to the back of the head, where a knot can be seen out against the massive curly hair of
the image. This statue recalls the terrifying form of Shiva as found in India and Nepal.
Here the names of these terrifying images are particularly important, since they
include Ugra, Bhairava, and Bhima, names that are also known from textual sources
like the Sanskrit Brahma Purana (Bernet Kempers, 1991:140). This suggests that
it is not at all surprising if the cults of Bhairava and Bhima merged in Bali and Java
during the East Javanese period. Imagery like the colossal statue of Pura Kebo Edan
thus suggests that the cult of Bhairava (and the “Bhairavi” form of Durga) may have had a strong influence on Bali during the period of Kertanegara.¹⁰⁸

The lingering importance of “left-hand” elements of the Bhairava form of Tantrism in Bali can still be seen from the fact that some pedanda Siwa (Shaivite high priests) who have reached a high level of spiritual ability are said to be able to mabharawa, “to take on terrible or demonic powers”. Lovric (1986:73) has noted that this suggests the influence the highest and most difficult path in Tantrism.

As I have noted in Chapter Three, one of the most important sources textual evidence for the Bhairava sect during the Majapahit period can be found in the Tantu Panggelaran, a work likely composed in the early sixteenth century, but still strongly connected to the mythological and theological concerns popular during the Singasari and Majapahit periods. At one point this text narrates the story of three priests who are said to belong to the Bherawa-paksa, or “Bhairava sect”. These three powerful sages are said to live in the Kalyasem cemetery of Mount Hyang, where they meditate in a horrible fashion, each night eating human corpses and using human skulls as the bowls for their sacrificial food and drink (see Santiko, 1992).

In images of Bhairava from the visual arts, we often find symbols featuring of destructive elements like knives, snakes, skull bowls, corpses, or other aspects of burial and burning ground (Bernet Kempers, 1991:141). For other examples of images related to violent aspects of a Shaivite deity we can look at the image of Camundi of Singasari now housed in Trowulan Museum, or the image of Bhairava originally found at Candi Singasari, now housed in Leiden. We can also look to the Bhairava of Padang Loco in Sumatra, which is now housed in the National Museum Jakarta. These figures are all visually related to the Bhairava image at the Pura Kebo Edan temple of Bali. Taken together these images suggest that the spread of Bhairava imagery throughout East Java and as far as Sumatra to the West, and Bali to the East,

¹⁰⁸ There are some other evidences found in Bali about the existence of the Bhairava cult. For example, according to Pan Rintug, the priest of Pura Dalem (personal communication, 2006), both Bhima (Pandava) and Duryodhana (Korava) worship Bhairavi (Sang Hyang Berawi) before going to battle known as Bharatayuddha to get blessing from the goddess Durga in the form of Bhairavi. Duryodhana covered the area of his genital, while Bhima was naked while Bhairavi granted them power, therefore Bhima cannot be defeated while Duryodhana has his weakness around his crotch.
may have occurred in the late Singasari period due to Kertanegara’s desire to create a strong system of “magical defence” in the archipelago. Local variations in particular aspects of this imagery may reflect a combination of the idea of consecration into the higher forms of “left-hand Tantrism” with more indigenous beliefs in the possibility of achieving immense physical and spiritual power through practices that were also associated with sexual prowess.

Since the image at Pura Kebo Edan temple is wearing a mask, this suggests that the practices of the cult which produced this statue were very secret and only certain initiated disciples were permitted to receive the revelation of the real magical power represented by masked face of the image (Bernet Kempers, 1991:141). Some Balinese texts also provide information about the presence of the Bhairava or Bhima cult in Bali, and these sources may go back to the period when the image at Pura Kebo Edan was produced. For example, in Hooykaas (1978) we find a special mantra known as Bhima Rampag which is used to counteract the black magic. The text Aji Pangleyan also provides information about the Bhairava or the Bhima cult. Aji Pangleyan is a text written in Balinese language dealing extensively with the practices of both black and white magic. The text is supplemented with magical drawing for certain purposes. At the end of the text we find instructions on invoking Bhima by using mantras and the amustikarana mudra. This gesture is produced by putting together the left and right thumbs and placing the right index finger over them, then holding the fist-like position of the hands thus created in front of the chest. This mudra is believed to ward off any dangers caused by black magic. This is among the many remnants of Tantric lore found in Balinese texts that suggests that the cult of Bhairava-Bhima has a long history in Bali, which may have begun as part of Kertanegara’s policy of providing magical protection for his realm through the use of Tantric rituals and imagery.

The conquest of Bali by Majapahit in 1343 CE

The dynamic and aggressive foreign policy of King Kertanegara of Singasari to unite the archipelago was continued by his daughter, queen Tribhuwana (Tribhuwanawijayottunggadewi). While ruling the Majapahit Empire in 1329-1350 CE, with the able assistance of the powerful prime minister (Patih) Gadjah Mada, Tribhuwana expanded Majapahit territories to include much of the archipelago.
According to *Nagarakertagama* 49.4, in 1343 CE the great Majapahit general Gadjah Mada succeeded in conquering Bali which at that time was ruled by King Asta Sura Ratna Bumi Banten (Suhardana, 2001:21). As several scholars have shown, this is proven by the edict of Patapan Langgaran (or Langgahan) dated 1337 CE, which mentions Asta Sura Ratna Bumi Banten as an independent king (Goris, 1952:44; Atmojo 1977:12; Bernet Kempers, 1991:34). It is interesting to note that *Nagarakertagama* 14.c also mentions Goa Gajah (called Lwa Gajah in the text) as an important Buddhist sanctuary, presided over by several important Buddhist officials. By comparing Buddhist and Shaiva imagery that survives at the Goa Gajah site and other nearby sites in the Pejeng-Bedahulu region we can surmise that Bali shared with East Java many similarities in religion, including the basic division between Shaivite and Buddhist forms of religion.

How much did Majapahit actually influence Bali? To seek the answer to this question, we can begin with the evidence of the court chronicle *Nagarakretagama* (79.3a – c):

> the island of Bali is firmly following all customs of Java-land, the honoured Buddhist adhyaksas (bishops) have their places in Bedahulu and Lwa Gajah.

From statements like these it seems clear that the Balinese royalty and their subjects very quickly adopted the customs of Majapahit. Today there are few Balinese who doubt the enormous influence of Majapahit on various aspects of present day Balinese custom. For example, in terms of religious practice, we still find evidence of the *tripaksa*, or “three denominations” which are mentioned so often in East Javanese prose and poetic works. Hefner (1986) points out that the *Resi* group, known as the *Rsi Bhujangga* in contemporary Bali, appear to have lost the equal status they enjoyed during the Majapahit period; they continue to perform religious functions alongside the high priests called *Pedanda Siwa* and *Pedanda Boda*, who clearly represent the other two major sects of the East Javanese period. In *Nagarakertagama* 8.4 we find mention of the *Saiwa*, *Sogata* and *Resi* priests performing an important ritual within the Majapahit royal city. Through a long process of development in Bali, the priests of these Majapahit religious orders are known as the *Tri Sadaka* or “Three Spiritual Adept” and are known as representing the *Siwa*, *Buda* and *Resi Bhujangga* orders. While the *Resi Bhujangga* lost their equal status sometime during the long period
between the fall of Majapahit and the beginning of the colonial era on Bali, the *Tri Sadaka* still play a very important role in great rituals conducted at Pura Besakih, including *Eka Dasa Rudra* and *Panca Wali Krama*, and it is not possible to complete these important ceremonies without the presence of representatives of each of the *Tri Sadaka*.

As I have noted earlier in this chapter, it is believed that Bali had its own ways of performing post-mortem rituals long before the influence of Javanese forms of Hinduism and Buddhism (Ardika, 1995). The finding of sarcophagi burials in certain areas of coastal Bali shows that Balinese did not cremate their dead in the late prehistoric period, but placed them within sculpted sarcophagi, whose shape and size, and the ornaments and implements found inside the sarcophagus might reflect differences in the social rank of the deceased (Ardika, 1995:3; Tainter, 1978:125; Brown, 1981:28). These earlier customs of Bali seem to have been preserved among Bali Aga villages, where people do not follow the custom of cremating their dead that is believed to have been introduced into Bali during the Majapahit period. Another important aspect of Majapahit post-mortem ceremony is the unique twelve year cycle of the *sraddha* rite, in which the relatives of the deceased conduct a second ritual, among the nobility including apotheosis of the deceased in a mortuary image. It seems that when this *sraddha* rite was introduced into Bali, it was gradually altered to fit Balinese circumstances; for today we find that the “second cremation” (*ngasti, mukur*), which is clearly a form of the *sraddha* rite, is conducted twelve days after the cremation of the physical remains of the deceased.\(^{109}\) The physical cremation is called *ngaben* or in “refined Balinese language” *palebon*.

The goal of Balinese post-mortem ceremonies corresponds to the objective of the *sraddha* in the Indian and ancient Javanese sense, where the soul of the deceased needs to be purified in order that it can return to the abode of the deities, and/or ancestors. In the ancient Javanese context, and today among Balinese as well as Javanese who cling to the customs of the *kejawen* form of Javanese religion, impurity (*mala*) is associated not only with the soul of the unpurified dead, but also with other

\(^{109}\) In recent times the high cost of rituals has meant that it is now considered acceptable to carry out this “second cremation” which involves the cremation of a small, symbolic effigy of the deceased, on the same day as the cremation proper.
kinds of impurities, including the impurity of birth, especially when it involves the birth of twins of opposite gender. Those impurities need a special exorcistic treatment called *meruwat* (Javanese) or *melukat* (Balinese), which often involves the performance of special shadow plays. In Java this type of play involves the story of the birth of Kala, the all-consuming son of Shiva and Durga, while in Bali there are two important shadow plays used for these rituals. It is very significant from this study that a shadow play plot (*lelampahan*) based on the *Sudamala* tale is chosen for rituals aimed at purifying a family where twin children of opposite gender have been born (Nartha, 2007).

Hindu societies in both India and Bali believe that the “souls” of those who are not purified through cremation and *sraddha* rituals will wander about as “hungry ghosts” (*pirata*) who will disturb the peace of living families. As I have claimed in an earlier chapter, the concern of the Majapahit family over the proper performance of the *sraddha* rite of the Rajapatni, and the dangerous liminal period between her death and the rituals sponsored by King Hayam Wuruk, may have stimulated a transformation of images of the warrior goddess that found its expression in literary works like the *kidung Sudamala*, and in the visual art of the *Sudamala* reliefs of Candi Tigawangi. Similarly, in Bali we find that reliefs of the *Sudamala* story are commonly found on the outer walls of the Pura Dalem, the temple of death and purification of the dead, which is believed to be the dwelling place of *Bhatari ri Dalem*, “the goddess of the Pura Dalem”, or Durga. See figure below [the goddess Durga in a demonic form]. The “goddess of the Pura Dalem” and Ra Nini Bhagavati, who is said in several literary works to dwell in the Gandamayu graveyard and cremation ground, all reflect the transformation of the goddess Durga from a warrior goddess to a demonic and ambivalent goddess that first developed during the Majapahit period in East Java.

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110 Pak Wayan Nartha, the puppeteer from Sukawati village (personal communication, September 2007).
Another important aspect of Balinese society that is often said to be based on Majapahit models is the caste system. This system is quite different in practice from the Indian caste system, which today is based largely on groups called *jati* that were traditionally defined through a mixture of endogamy and occupation. The Balinese system is closer to the ancient *warna* system of India, based on a division of caste skills and occupations among four groups: Brahmana (priests, scholars), Ksatriya (warriors, nobility), Wesya (merchants) and Sudra (workers, agricultural workers). However, according to Geertz and Geertz (1975:6), in Bali the first three groups form their own insider group called the *triwangsa* (“three nobilities) or *wong jero* (“insiders”) and are opposed to the *sudra*, or *wong jaba* (“outsiders”). Geertz and Geertz (1975) thus describe the Balinese system in terms of “gentry” and “commoners” and note that there are very large differences in the way that social structures are organized among these two groups. The Balinese caste system is believed to have been strongly influenced by Majapahit customs, partly because the idea of caste is not found among the Bali Aga, or Bali Mula villages (Bernet...
Kempers, 1991:34). Also, since the Balinese caste system is not based on the principle of purity versus pollution, the idea of “untouchability” never developed in Bali.

We also find that the architectural styles of Majapahit seem to have been preserved in Bali. The typical Candi Bentar, or “split gate” that separates the sacred inner spaces of the temple (jeroan) from the outside world (jaba) can easily be seen in the massive brick gates at sites like the entryway to the Majapahit royal city located just outside the city of Trowulan in East Java, while another type of gate, the closed Candi Kurung, that separates the “middle inner space” (jaba tengah) of the temple from the forecourt, is also well-known in Majapahit sites. There is also a special shrine called the Maospahit found in many temples that is decorated with the wooden-head of a deer. This shrine is said to be dedicated to the Lord of Majapahit, and to this day is particularly associated with the clan temples (Sanggah Gede or Kawitan) that Geertz and Geertz (1975:4) refer to as “dadia temples”. The shrine usually faces west, in the direction of Majapahit in East Java.

Figure 4.5: A Balinese shrine featuring the wooden head of a deer that represents the Majapahit Empire of ancient East Java

There are also a few larger temples built from red brick, which are built in a style that is very reminiscent of Majapahit styles of architecture, and are named with Balinese
variants on the word Majapahit like Maospahit or Maspahit (Bernet Kempers, 1991:34). Two of these are located in the area of Denpasar, one in Grenceng very close to the heart of downtown Denpasar, and another is found further east in the Tonja district of Denpasar.

But perhaps the strongest evidence of Majapahit influence on Bali is to be found in traditional literature, for Bali has preserved an enormous number of literary, religious and technical documents that were originally produced in East Java. Literary works in written form have flourished in the archipelago since the coming of Indian influence. The most prominent influence was marked by the early and lasting popularity of the great epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, which are still popular to the present day, both in Java and Bali. Parts of these two great epics were translated directly into the Old Javanese language. The Old Javanese *Parwa* were based on the *Mahabharata*, and the *kakawin Ramayana*, or Old Javanese *Ramayana*, as based on one of the hundreds of Indian versions of that story, the *Bhattikavya* of the poet Bhatti (Hunter, personal communication, 2006). Perhaps an even more important role for these two great Indian epics has been as a source of thematic material for a great number of works that are found in literary, storytelling and performance genres of Java and Bali.

The *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* epics written in Sanskrit language appear to have been brought to Indonesia by Indian Brahmins, who often travelled to the archipelago with sea-going merchants during a period when both Buddhism and Hinduism were spreading rapidly across mainland and coastal Southeast Asia. From the beginnings the Indian influence during the first millennium CE, Sanskrit played a significant role in many areas of Southeast Asia as the official court language, and was especially important in issuing inscriptions. For instance, the establishment of a *linga* as the palladium of the Sanjaya dynasty in 732 CE was written in elegant, metrical Sanskrit language (Miksic, 2000:56; Schrieke, 1957 Vol.II:287; van Naerssen, 1977:46; Sarkar, 2001:33;). However, in later developments Old Javanese replaced Sanskrit language for the writing of inscriptions and a beautiful poetic literature developed, mostly written in the *kakawin* form. This Old Javanese language must have had a very

111 Zoetmulder (1974:5) has pointed out that the oldest known inscription that used Old Javanese language was the Sukabumi inscription, dated 804 CE.
long development, as it shows very clearly the influence of Sanskrit not only in the use of many loan words, but also the influence of Indian methods of teaching about religious and literary themes.

The golden age of literary works in Old Javanese was in East Java during the Kediri, Singasari and Majapahit periods (Zoetmulder, 1974:10). Many literary works in *kakawin* form were composed during this period. The first major *kakawin* produced during this period was the *Arjunawiwaha*, a tale about Arjuna’s meditation, his temptation by the celestial nymphs, his valiant struggle with the god Shiva disguised as a mountain tribesman, and his eventual attainment of the *Pasupati* weapon as a gift from Shiva. This work is still very popular in Bali today. Since the title of this work translates as “the marriage of Arjuna” scholars like Poerbatjaraka have suggested that this work was composed to celebrate the wedding of Airlangga, who is described in the work itself as the patron of its author, Mpu Kanwa (Soepomo, 2006).

Another *kakawin* that is very important for this study is the court chronicle *Nagarakertagama*, composed by Mpu Prapanca in 1365 CE under the patronage of the famous king Hayam Wuruk (Rajasanagara). This *kakawin* is unique because it deals with historical and geographical details of the Majapahit kingdom, rather than with mythological themes. Another famous author who worked under the patronage of King Hayam Wuruk was Mpu Tantular who composed two major court epics, the *Arjunawijaya* and the *Sutasoma*. The *Sutasoma* is significant to this work since several passages deal with the hero’s worship of the goddess Durga-Bhairavi in the form of Sri Widyutkarali. The goddess Durga-Bhairavi is depicted in the *Sutasoma* as a terrifying goddess who dwells in the cemetery/cremation ground. Because of the deep devotion that Sutasoma shows towards her, Durga blesses him with a mantra called *Mahahrdayadharanī*, which had the power to destroy all evil and hostile powers. The text suggests that through use of this mantra human beings can obtain freedom from all illness and misfortune (Zoetmulder, 1974:331).

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112 See Chapter Three for a review of some of these *kakawin* works.

113 Professor Dr Soepomo, a professor of Australia National University (personal communication, 2006 in Bali).
It appears that the *Siwaratrikalpa* of Mpu Tanakung, produced during the reign of King Suraprabawa (c.1473 CE), was among the last works completed under Majapahit patronage. According to Zoetmulder (1974:367) this was among the last works that included the name of the author and the date of the composition within the text. During the period of the decline and fall of the Majapahit (c.1478-1527 CE) it seems that literary activities in Old Javanese shifted to Bali.114

The influence of Majapahit on Bali in the field of literature is very important for this study, for it is very likely that images of the goddess Durga developed in works like the *kakawin Ghatotkacasraya*, and especially the *kidung Sudamala*, had a profound effect on Balinese conceptions of the goddess. As I have mentioned a shadow play plot based on the *kidung Sudamala* plays an important role in rituals aimed at eliminating the state of impurity (*sebel*) caused by the birth of twins of opposite genders, while the depiction of the same story on the walls of many Pura Dalem underlines the important role this story plays in Balinese ideas about the purification of the dead. In the following chapter, I will look closely at Balinese myths and literary works about the goddess Durga that further illustrate the influence of Majapahit ways of thinking that originally came to Bali through Majapahit literary sources.

**The Goddess Durga: Mythological and Literary Perspectives**

It is too often assumed that the goddess Durga in Bali has only negative characteristics, for example, as the queen of all practitioners of black magic (*ratuning leyak kabeh*). In my view, the role of Durga in Bali is not as simple as it seems; however, the conception of her role as the queen of black magic has left some confusion so that many people still perceive the witchlike figure of *Rangda* as similar to the goddess Durga. Here, I intend to show that representations of the goddess

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114 One of the characteristics of Balinese literary works written in Old Javanese is that they rarely, if ever, contained information about the author or date of the original composition. Therefore, it is hard to give them a place in some chronological scheme. Zoetmulder (1974:367) has pointed out: “most of the [anonymous and undated] literary works were probably written in Bali”. On the other hand, Balinese copyists work carefully to include details of dating and personal references in the colophons of their *lontar* manuscripts. This means we can learn much about the history of the manuscripts in Bali but very little about their authorship. One exception is the case of Ida Pedanda Made Sidemen, a Brahmin priest whose remarkable life-span began in the late nineteenth century CE and ended in the year 1985. He composed literary works in both Old Javanese and Middle Javanese language. He often included his name and the date of his works in riddle or chronogram form.
Durga are not the same as those for Rangda, and that the goddess has multiple roles in Balinese religion and society, including positive aspects as a progenitor and protector, as well as negative aspects that grow out of her role as a destroyer.

To begin with, the ancient Mother Goddess who was worshipped as the symbol of fertility in the late Palaeolithic period and survived throughout the Vedic period in India to emerge supreme in the Shakta cults of the later Puranic period, has found a place in Bali as Ibu Pertiwi (Pretiwi), the “Mother Earth”. Francine Brinkgreve (1997:227-251) has done extensive research resulting in a paper titled “Offerings to Durga and Pretiwi in Bali”, where she has contrasted the two goddesses Durga and Pretiwi as the two prominent goddesses who are respectively the symbols of destruction and fertility. In Balinese myth as narrated in the Purwa Bhumi Kamulan, it was the goddess Uma who assumed the form of Pretiwi. The worship of the goddess as the great mother has had a long history in India, which can be traced back to the most ancient pre-Aryan period of Indian civilization (c.2500 BCE). When the Indo-Aryans introduced the Vedic tradition, based largely on the importance of the fire ritual and its liturgy (the Rig Veda), they also introduced their deities, who were connected with natural phenomena like rain, wind, water, cloud, sky, and light, which were believed to be the sources of prosperity and the protectors of the cattle and people of a pastoral society (Craven, 1976:30; Kinsley, 1982:11). During this period there were only a few goddesses like Dawn (Usha) or Speech (Vak) who had the privilege to be included in the Vedic worship. Yet during the Puranic period the role of the ancient mother goddess returned with great force, so that by the fifth century CE the goddess was as the centre of important sectarian developments like Shaktism, and was highly honoured in all the mainstream traditions.

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115 In Besakih the “Mother Temple” of Bali, there is a special shrine dedicated to Dewi Pertiwi, the Earth Goddess which is called Pura Manik Mas. This temple is considered the sacred place for Dewi Pertiwi who is also called Sang Hyang Giri Putri (the consort of Shiva). The festival of the Pura Manik Mas falls every Tumpek Uduh or every Saturday Kliwon of wuku Wariga. Pertiwi is also one of the five gross elements of the panca mahabhuta (akasa, wayu, teja, apah and pertiwi).

116 In Bali, there are several shrines called Paibon (Balinese: Pa-ibu-an, where ibu means mother) dedicated to the Mother Goddess.
of Hindu belief. In *Ibu Pertiwi* of Bali we find one among many living examples of the continuing importance of the mother goddess in Hinduism.\(^\text{117}\)

As I have noted earlier the assimilation of the goddess into the Hindu pantheon took place long after Vishnu and Shiva were accepted into the pantheon. O’Flaherty (1975:238) has pointed out that there were two phases of the assimilation of the goddess into the Hindu pantheon. The first phase occurred when the gods of the Indo-Aryans were given wives who were considered to be the primordial energy (*shakti*) of the gods. In this phase the wives of gods were characterized as similar to the gods themselves. For example, Sri (or Laksmi),\(^\text{118}\) the wife of Vishnu, the god of preservation, has a benign character in her role as nurturer of all living beings. On the other hand, Shiva, who is depicted as the god of dissolution, has Durga as a wife who shares these features; she is found with many epithets according to her many manifestations, but always assumes the same role as her husband, as a dissolver of illusion, and of life itself at the end of each cosmic or individual cycle of life.

The second phase of the assimilation of the goddess into the orthodox pantheon occurred when feminine elements “which had been gaining momentum outside orthodox Hinduism for many centuries…emerged as supreme powers in their own right” (O’Flaherty, 1975:238). At this point, earlier myths about the goddess were “retold in a new light, with the Goddess using the gods to serve her higher purposes” (O’Flaherty, 1975:238). As Durga, the wife of Shiva, the great goddess shares Shiva’s role as a dissolver but in later development she plays a more prominent role as the destroyer of the enemies of gods. From the Puranic account of her noble deed in

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\(^{117}\) The concept of *Ibu Pertiwi* in Bali who provides life for all the living beings can be traced to the text of the *Devi Mahatmya* where the great goddess “I shall maintain the whole world with life-sustaining vegetables, born out of my own (cosmic) body, …I shall be fame on earth then as Sakambhari”. Growing plants from the earth in Bali is symbolized by the *boma* (*bauma* means something born from earth), high-relief of intricate design of flowers coming out from the *boma’s* demonic mouth (H. Geertz, 2004:127).

\(^{118}\) In Bali, the consort of Vishnu, Bhatari Sri, is prominently referred to as the goddess of rice. The Balinese personify the rice as a goddess, which experiences a life cycle as a female human being. The rice is given offerings since the farmers started to plough the rice field, seeding, planting, harvesting and the most important ritual while the rice is still in the rice field is called *mebyukukung*, the ritual for the rice while she is considered to have morning sickness. We bring offerings to the rice field in the form of sour food because in general a craving Balinese woman will be very fond of sour things when she is pregnant. But in some texts like the *Cepa Kala* and *Kala Purana*, the goddess Sri (Bhatari Sri or Sang Hyang Dewi Sri) is perceived as the wife of Shiva (Hoooykaas, 1973:166, 174).
defeating Mahisasura, one of the greatest enemies of the gods, the goddess became famous as Durga Mahisasuramardini or “The Slayer of the Buffalo Demon”. This development, during the medieval Puranic period, of images of the goddess as a warrior, either riding a tiger carrying weapons in her hands, or in the form of Durga Mahisasuramardini in the act of slaying the buffalo demon, has remained prominent to the present day in Indian representations of Durga. As I have explained in an earlier chapter, images of the goddess as Mahisasuramardini gained the greatest prominence in ancient Java. Her violent deed in defeating the buffalo demon was hardly ever shown in the iconography, so that we find only a few representations of Durga that actually depicted the violent battle between the goddess and the demon. In the majority of free-standing statues we find that Durga is shown standing atop the buffalo-demon whom she has recently slain, and in many of these depictions we also find a representation of the dwarf-like form that Mahisa has taken in his final attempt to escape the wrath of the goddess. There are only a few images being found in Java to date that shows the actual moment of Durga slaying the buffalo-demon as he emerges from the neck of the slain buffalo that echoes the forms of the iconography in India (Santiko, 1987).

If we look at both textual evidence and the role of the goddess Durga in rituals practised in Bali we find that the goddess has played multiple roles. I have found that her multiple and complex roles in Bali can be conveniently classified in a way that is closely parallel to the classification of roles of the goddess in the Shakta cult of India. In the work on the development of the iconography of Durga in Java, Santiko (1987: 286; Usha Dev, 1987: 1) has drawn attention to these three aspects of the role of the goddess, pointing out that Shakta devotees conceive of the supreme goddess as Shakti, the Mother of the World (Jagadamba), whose roles are to create, preserve and destroy the world at the end of a cosmic or human cycle. These three roles come out in Devi Purana, Kalika Purana, Maha-Bhagavata Purana, the Devi Bhagavata Purana and the Markandeya Purana especially in the section known as the Devi Mahatmya canto XII: 39, which very clearly stated:

She indeed takes the form of the great destroyer at the end of time. She, the unborn, indeed becomes this creation (at the time proper for re-creation). She
herself, the eternal Being, sustains the beings at (another) time (Jagadiswarananda, 1953) [emphasis mine].

However, even given her autonomous role in these three aspects of the cosmic cycle, we should not forget that the goddess is forever associated with the supreme god Shiva, both in India and in the Javano-Balinese tradition. The two are often depicted in androgynous form as Ardhana
tarisvari, two deities-in-one body, wherein the image of the goddess occupies the left half of the body while Shiva occupies the right half. References to Shiva-Uma as Ardhana
tarisvari in Javanese and Balinese texts are quite numerous, and can be found in texts important to this study like the kidung Sudamala (van Stein Callenfels, 1925; Padmapuspita, 1975) and Purva Bhumi Kamulan (Hooykaas, 1975).

In one palm-leaf manuscript titled Kramaning Caru, which includes a description of how to correctly perform the various types and levels of rituals aimed at propitiating demonic spirits (bhuta-kala), we find complete instructions on the exact type of offerings that must be prepared, the type and colour of animals that are to be sacrificed, and the precise assignment of directions where offerings are to be placed on the ground. Based on my own observations of caru rituals, there is a very important offering called the banten dewa-dewi ("offering in the form of the god and goddess") that takes an androgynous form, which in textual sources is referred to with the term ardhanarisvari. The banten dewa-dewi is placed in a temporary shrine made of bamboo and given special recognition. I believe that this is because of the recognition (which is supported in textual sources) that only the androgynous form of Shiva-Uma has sufficient power to exorcise the bhutas, and effect their transformation into deities.

During the Puranic period, there was a development from a general worship of the Vedic gods and goddesses into the growth of many individual cults, each with its own

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119 O'Flaherty (1980:283) defines an androgy as “a creature simultaneously male and female in physical form”.

120 See Stephen (2005) for a recent study of the importance of transformation between divine and demonic elements of the cosmos that is particularly important in Balinese caru rituals.
rituals, textual traditions and focus on a particular deity or set of deities. Each sect glorified a different deity as the highest tutelary god or goddess of a social group, who shared the same beliefs and defined themselves partly in terms of their worship of a shared image, and their participation in shared rituals and related social and textual activities. Shaivite sects, for example, glorify Shiva as the highest God, while Shakta sects glorify his consort, the great goddess Durga, as the highest deity. However, in each of these cases gods and goddesses from other sects or orientations were very often included as subsidiary deities in the worship of the main deities of the Puranic sects. For example, during the Durga-puja in India which happens in the beginning of October for nine days, the three major goddesses- Sarasvati, Durga Mahisasuramardini and Laksmi- have to be present as the main images to be worshipped inside each pandal.\(^\text{121}\)

![Figure 4.6: The three major goddesses (Sarasvati, Durga Mahisasuramardini [centre] and Laksmi) as represented in a pandal constructed in Kolkata for the Durga Puja festival of 2002](image)

A similar pattern emerged in Java during the 8\(^{th}\) century CE; in the Shaivite temples there are only the three godheads- Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva - having the honour to

\(^{121}\) *Pandal* is a temporary building built by a group of artists dedicated for the worship of the goddess Durga Mahisasuramardini during the Durga Puja ritual, which is twice a year, but the *pandals* are only made during the bigger ritual, which falls in October (personal observation in Calcutta and Varanasi, October 2002).
occupy the shrines, while the consorts of the gods are eliminated except that the goddess Durga as Durga Mahisasuramardini shares the honour with other deities in the standard pantheon which developed in Java. The standard pantheon is having the image of Shiva as Mahadewa as the main deity, accompanied by images of the brahmanical sage Agastya and of Ganesha and Durga Mahisasuramardini (Sedyawati, 2001:80). This standard pantheon continued to be incorporated in Balinese tradition and religious practices in the form of the mantra to ward pests off the rice, as found in the usada text titled Cukil Daki, where Durga was invoked to eliminate the pest of the rice because Durga was the origin and the source of all diseases, therefore she should be the one who also cure them (Atmaja, 2005).

In the later Shakta tradition of India the goddess is described as having superseded the three cosmic gods: Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva (Gupta, 2000:466). By contrast there is no evidence so far known from the Javano-Balinese tradition to indicate that the goddess was ever considered superior to the three cosmic gods. Santiko (1987) has claimed that there is no evidence for the existence of Shaktism in Indonesia, although there is one candi in Central Java, Candi Kalasan, dedicated to the Buddhist goddess Tara. However we did not know if Shaktism also developed in Buddhism, so the existence of a cult of Tara cannot be taken as evidence for Shaktism in Indonesia. In my view, Shaktism did not penetrate the Indonesian sphere as an independent cult, but rather came to the archipelago along with the Shaivite sect. Bhachan Kumar (2005:3) pointed out in his paper that an “epigraphical record of A.D. 913 of the King Daksottama [the successor of king Balitung of the Sanjaya dynasty] mentions a syllable of mantra i.e. ‘Om Namo Rudradurggebhyah Swaha’, the verse pay homage to both Shiva and Durga”. Since Shaivism had a strong influence on the culture of both Java and Bali, the goddess Durga has therefore played very important roles in both religious practices and religious doctrines in her role as the wife of Shiva. This is brought out by the existence of a few minor texts of the later Balinese tradition,

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122 In the Indonesian context, the first known written textual evidence about the role of the goddess Durga as the mahasakti whose role- equal to Bhatara Guru in creating, preserving and dissolving- found in the kakawin Ghatotkacasraya canto 31.2a, 3a, 4b, however her role has never been superseded the trimurti like in the Indian context (Santiko, 1987:216).

123 The important role of the goddess as wife of an important deity is a reflection of social phenomena in Indonesia in general, where the wife of an important person automatically will become important.
which describe the role of the goddess Durga as equal to the role of the three cosmic deities Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.

As I have proposed above the triple aspect of the goddess Durga that was important during the period when Shaktism was very influential in India is also reflected in the Balinese context, where representations in textual, mythical and iconographic form can be related to the three roles played by the gods Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva in the cosmic cycle. Those roles are represented as follows in the Balinese tradition:

- as a creator who is important in the “origin” (utpatti) of the world; we find this role prominent in texts like the Lontar Andha Bhuvana, Purvaka Bhumi (Purwa Bhumi Kamulan/Tua), Canting Kuning, Sundari Gading and Tantu Panggelaran.
- as a protector and preserver who is important in the “preservation of life” (sthiti); we find this role described in the ancient Balinese inscriptions (prasasti), in lontar texts like the Kalimasada-Kalimasadi and Tattwa Kala and in the form of mantras preserved by High Priests of both the Pedanda Boda and Pedanda Siwa type.
- as a destroyer who is important in the “dissolution” (pralina) of the world; in this form Durga is represented in dramatic or literary works like the Calon Arang and geguritan Basur, or in works on pangiwa (“black magic”) like Aji Pangleyakan.

There are many literary works found in Bali written in the Sanskrit, Old Javanese, Middle Javanese and Balinese languages. Many of these works contain important information on the role of the goddess Durga in Bali. From these works we can understand the important role played by the goddess Durga in Bali while at the same time we can see that the goddess has never been perceived as higher than the other main deities. Thus it is important that we make a survey here of Balinese literary genres and literary works that deal with images of the goddess Durga. In portraying the three roles (creator, preserver and dissolver) of the goddess, I will provide information from various genres of traditional Balinese literature. In general the literary works of Bali can be classified in two categories of literary work, depending
on whether they are in prose or poetic form. However, this simple classification does not provide a clear cut way of identifying literary perspectives on the role of the goddess because sometimes the same myth of the goddess will be related in both prose and poetic form, and in different genres.

Under the term genres I include the following:

a. prose genres

- *prasasti* (inscriptional records), which are usually written in Sanskrit, Old Javanese or Old Balinese language.
- *mantra* (magico-religious utterances, usually of Indian origin) and *saha*\(^{124}\) (magico-religious utterances of local, Balinese or Javanese origin).
- other didactic and narrative forms of literature in the form of puppet-shadow performance.

b. poetic genres

- *kakawin*, court epics written in Old Javanese language using Indian meters; the language of these works is called *Kawi* (“poetic language”) in Bali.
- *kidung*, court epics written in Middle Javanese or Balinese language using “*kidung*” meters of Javano-Balinese origin.
- *geguritan*, written in Balinese language using Balinese meters called *pupuh* (these are similar in form to the *Macapatan* meters of Java).

Basing my study on the evidence of these literary genres, I will propose that myths of the goddess Durga in Bali describe her in three primary roles, as a creator (*utpatti*), preserver (*sthiti*) and dissolver (*pralina*). In this way, the Balinese case seems to mirror the development of images of the goddess in the Puranic period in India, when these three roles – usually associated with the three cosmic gods in the Balinese terminology called *trimurti* (Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva) - were associated with the goddess, especially in Shaktism. In describing the roles of the goddess Durga, I will support each argument with textual evidence from the various genres chosen as

\(^{124}\) According to Hooykaas (1975:58) the quatrain or *saha* is a form of pre-Hindu mantra and its existence made it easy to assimilate with the Sanskrit meter called *sloka*.
sources of evidence. In each case, I will first describe and define the myth, then show why it is significant in the literary works studied, and finally how it is employed in the literary works to project socio-religious perceptions about the gods and goddesses as unseen participants in the life of ordinary Balinese.

**Mythological Background: Definition and Application**

Myths are not used when historiography and rational explanation fail but are part of what many scholars now refer to as mythological thinking, a way of looking at the world “that for many pre-modern societies explained the world in ways that we now expect of science” (O’Flaherty, 1980:4). Myths can explain many different things about the events and patterns of complex societies. According to O’Flaherty (1980:4):

> Myths are about so many things - about life, art and the universe and the imagination - almost *everything* in the realms of the natural sciences, humanities, and social sciences is relevant to the study of myths.

Myths can be used to describe natural phenomena, which are difficult to explain through rational thought, to contextualize religious beliefs and thoughts in narrative form. Myths also can be used to provide a basis for the worship of metaphysical beings who may be understood as benign gods and goddesses who provide protective force in contrast with the malignant demons and demonesses who threaten the human or metaphysical world with their destructive force. Myths are also used to provide a cosmogony that describes the primordial creation of the universe and the creation of its living beings. In Hindu myths, natural phenomena are often personified as metaphysical beings that are the sources of life, the preservers of life, and at the same time the source of the ultimate destruction of life. Perhaps because Bali is a volcanic island that is always susceptible to the terror of sudden seismic movements, and has a climate that is good for agriculture but also very challenging in terms of community and individual health, Balinese tend to fear the destructive aspects of nature; metaphysical spirits are shown great respect in Bali and are constantly propitiated in order that they will not show their destructive side and bring destruction to the living
beings of the island.\textsuperscript{125} Hildred Geertz (2004:73) believed that “all Balinese rituals are at base propitiations of potentially destructive spiritual beings; these propitiations are followed by rituals of gratitude to the beings and forces that have accepted propitiations are willing to desist from hurting their people and to actively protect them”.

What are the major sources of the Hindu myths? O’Flaherty (1975) has worked extensively on the Hindu myths of India. As she points out:

The major sources of Hindu mythology in the ancient and medieval periods are series of texts composed in Sanskrit, an Indo-European language closely related to Greek and Latin. The earliest source—and indeed, the earliest known Indo-European document—is the \textit{Rig Veda}, a collection of more than a thousand sacrificial hymns dedicated to a pantheon of gods and handed down orally for many centuries before they were consigned to writing (O’Flaherty, 1975:14-15).

O’Flaherty (1975) has described the major mythological sources of India chronologically starting from the most ancient myths found in the \textit{Vedas, Brahmanas}\textsuperscript{126} and \textit{Upanishads}.\textsuperscript{127} She has then studied the role of myth in the Epics (\textit{Mahabharata} and \textit{Ramayana}) before moving on to the later sources from the eighteen major \textit{Puranas}. It is believed that the Epics and Puranas, and the later Indian court epics called \textit{kavya}, were the major sources of the Hindu mythology that penetrated the Malay-Indonesian archipelago during the first millennium and first half

\textsuperscript{125} One of the most elaborate rituals to placate the demonic spirits, which is held every year of the Saka year, is called \textit{Tawur Agung}. The \textit{tawur agung} is performed one day before the Balinese New Year called \textit{Nyepi} (a day of silence) by offering raw meat in the form of \textit{caru}. The \textit{caru} ritual is performed by every Balinese in their household compound, in the village temples, in the crossroads and the offerings are laid on the ground, never on the shrines. The \textit{caru} offerings are made from chicken, ducks, cow meats, or sometimes even red-brownish dog.

\textsuperscript{126} The \textit{Brahmanas} are a series of texts which deal at great length with the question of cosmogony, utilizing the various strands of Rig Veda belief (O’Flaherty, 1975:28).

\textsuperscript{127} \textit{Upanishads} were texts developed from the Vedic tradition but largely reshaped with the intention of exploring the meaning of the earlier tradition in terms of philosophical knowledge. Etymologically, the word \textit{upanishad} consists of the word \textit{upa} “near”, \textit{ni} “down” and \textit{shad}, “sit”). Therefore \textit{upanishad}s means the act of sitting near a spiritual preceptor to gain philosophical knowledge. The composition of the \textit{Upanisads} is estimated as having occurred between 800-200 BCE; they were composed partly in prose form and partly in verse (O’Flaherty, 1975: 28).
of the second millennium CE. However, in the Javano-Balinese traditions there is a great deal of evidence to show that indigenous thoughts and ideas were an important part of the composition of myths that combined Indian themes with local beliefs and traditions, or show the influence of local political, economic and cultural formations. The amalgamation of Indian sources with various elements of local thought has produced unique myths in Java and Bali, which sometimes reveal distinct features not found in the original Indian myths or elsewhere, or would even be unrecognisable in their country of origin. For example, the *kidung Sudamala* is about the accusation of Uma of having a sexual affair with the god Brahma, her commission of adultery having caused her to be cursed by Shiva and take on a demonic form as Durga who has to dwell at the *Gandamayu* graveyard. The demonic Durga would be able to assume her original beautiful form as Uma only after being exorcized by Sahadewa (Sadewa), the youngest of the twin brothers who are counted among the five, heroic Pandava brothers who are the heroes of the *Mahabharata*. While the Pandava are enormously popular in India, this type of myth like the *Sudamala* is simply not found there, at least as far as we know to date (Rao and Shulman, 2004; Thirupathy, 2007).

The major sources of Hindu mythology in the Javano-Balinese tradition, based on my survey and research, are found in several texts written in Old, Middle and Balinese languages. Those myths also deal extensively with birth and death in a wider sense. The birth of the universe and its moving and unmoving creatures, the origin of evils and diseases, the births of the gods and goddesses, the birth of sages and the births of the demons or even the existence of places and mountains of Java and Bali are all found in these myths from the Javano-Balinese tradition.

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128 In Bali, we differentiate the graveyard for the burial of children, young people, who died before they were married and the burial for older people. The *Setra Gandamayu* refers to the graveyard for the young people, or in common language it is called *sema pabjangan* (Balinese: *bajang*, means young).

129 Dr Nagaraja Rao and Dr David Shulman (personal communication, 2004) at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in Jerusalem, Dr Thirupathy (personal communication, 2007) at the Gandhi National Centre for Arts in New Delhi.
As noted above, ancient Hindu myths can be looked at chronologically in terms of the Vedic, Upanishadic, Epic and Puranic periods of textual production. According to O’Flaherty (1975) Vedic mythology as known from the sacrificial hymns of the Rig Veda eulogize a pantheon of gods of natural phenomena who are praised and invoked in a vast collection of hymns which were handed down orally for many centuries before the introduction of writing into ancient society. Epic mythology in the broadest sense is about the fight between good (dharma) and evil (adharma),130 which often takes the form of tales about the “human incarnations” (avatara) of Vishnu who come into the world to rescue human life at times of great peril. For example, in the Mahabharata lord Vishnu is reincarnated as Krishna, the king of Dvarawati, in order to save the world from the evil forces of the Korava brothers, who are unjustly fighting against their cousins, the five Pandava brothers. In the Ramayana, Vishnu incarnates as Prince Rama of Ayodhya, who is born to save the world from the destruction of Ravana, the demon king of Lanka. Puranic mythology deals extensively with the deeds and exploits of the three highest gods: Brahma, Vishnu or Shiva. Usha Dev (1987: 9) pointed out that it is during this period that the cult of the great goddess Durga reached its peak of popularity, so that the tale of her epic victory over the buffalo-demon is narrated in several Puranas, both in the more orthodox group of eighteen “major” Puranas (Mahapuranas), like the Markandeya Purana and Skanda Purana, and in the so-called “minor Puranas” (upapurana) which often deal specifically with the goddess (Devi Purana and Kalika Purana).

In order to shed further light on how the goddess Durga is represented as playing a major role in creation (utpatti), preservation (sthiti) and dissolution (pralina), I will trace here the exploits of the supreme goddess as described in the Markandeya Purana, especially in the section known as the Devi Mahatmya, or “Glorification of the Goddess”. In verses I. 75-77 the great goddess is described as the supreme creator, protector and the dissolver of the universe:

By you this universe is borne, by you this world is created. By you it is protected, O Devi and you always consume it at the end. O you who are

130 Dharma designates social order, the social norm, and the ideal order of the world; on the other hand, adharma, the violation of dharma, is behaviour which contradicts the natural law of social order (O’Flaherty, 1975:42).
(always) of the form of the whole world, at the time of creation you are the form of the creative force, at the time of preservation you are the form of the protective power, and at the time of the dissolution of the world, you are the form of the destructive power (Jagadiswarananda, 1953).

The above statement has been rephrased by (Brown, 1990:2) as follows; where he further pointed out that the goddess is perceived to be superior to the godheads: Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva:

her absolute superiority to the historically most prominent male deities of the time, including the holy triumvirate (trimurti) of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva—responsible for the creation, preservation, and destruction of the universe according to earlier, masculine conceptions of how the world works—is simply affirmed with little ado.

In these verses, the goddess is depicted as playing the major role in the cosmic cycle, thus implicitly taking a position higher than the three cosmic gods: Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva in the cosmic drama of creation, preservation and dissolution of the universe. There is no single text like the Devi Mahatmya describing the superiority of the goddess Durga among the works of the Balinese religious tradition, but we do find ample references in several literary works found in both prose and poetic forms. It is also important to note here the ambivalent nature of the goddess in Indian representations, where she is described at times as the great goddess (devi) and at others as the great demoness (asuri), thus combining the powers of ultimate good and evil. This fits very well with Balinese perceptions about the ambivalent nature of deities and demons, each of them quite often understood as a transformation of the other effected through the proper observance—or lack of observance—of important rituals or rules of conduct in making contact with the unseen spiritual side of life. Thus in Bali the goddess Durga can easily be understood on the one hand as a benevolent goddess who protects living beings and on the other as the queen of black magic, who provides patronage for those who would commit destructive deeds, and in this form is known as the “queen of all those who practice magical transformations for evil purposes, or ratuning leyak kabeh”. Her ambivalent nature is described in a few lontar manuscripts, such as the lontar Usada Durga Kala canto 6.b. where the goddess Durga is said to have granted not only the power to be able to practise the
black magic but also she has granted the power to counteract and to demolish the power of the practitioners of black magic if they break the rule set by the goddess, which is not to kill innocent people (aywāmati-mati wong, ne tan padoṣā).

The idea of three major deities - Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva - clearly plays an important role in Balinese religious thinking. This may be because of the importance of Indian and Balinese emphasis on three major functions of the supreme deity, which are described in many texts of the Javano-Balinese tradition with the terms utpatti (“uprising, origin, birth”), sthiti (“preservation, continuation”) and pralina (“dissolution, final destruction”). These terms are traditionally associated with Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, or may be described as the three functions of a single deity, Ida Sang Hyang Widhi. In the Jnanasiddhanta, an important work from the Javano-Balinese tradition of works on the theory and practice of spiritual liberation, the three major deities are together called the tripurusa, and explicitly linked with three modes of cosmic activity, that is utpatti, sthiti and pralina (Soebadio, 1971: 42-45). In the poetic work kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha (“Marriage of Arjuna”), which was composed c. 1035 CE and so stands at the beginning of the East Javanese tradition of works in kakawin form, Shiva is praised by the hero Arjuna as being responsible for all three aspects of the divine process in a hymn he spontaneously composes upon realizing that he is in the presence of the divine:

\[
\text{utpatti-sthiti-pralina ning dadi kitata karana nika}
\]

you alone are the cause of the uprising, preservation and final dissolution of all beings

Conclusion

Bali has been influenced by Hinduism and Buddhism over a long historical period, both directly from India and by way of Java. Bali was first Javanized through a royal marriage (c.989 CE) and later through an invasion (1343 CE) of the forces of the Majapahit Empire of East Java, which caused important changes to the socio-cultural, political and religious practices and beliefs of the Balinese. Among the early changes were a shift to the use of the Old Javanese language for ritual, literary and courtly purposes and the appearance of the prominent figure of an outsider queen.
(Mahendradatta) which appears to have provoked resentments among the Balinese community who prior to this time appear to have been largely egalitarian in their social structure. The appearance of Mahendradatta on the historical scene, who as a descendant of Mpu Sindok had a higher ritual status than her husband, Udayana, appears to have triggered a gradual transformation of her image as a protective queen with Durga-like features into a demonic form that lived on in the form of the character Rangda of the *Calon Arang* plays.
Hinduism in Bali has developed into its own unique religion which has undergone an amalgamation between Indian Hindu elements with indigenous Balinese elements. In the present Balinese Hinduism, there are three main deities known as *trimurti*: Brahma is the creator, Vishnu is the preserver and Shiva is responsible for destruction of the universe when the time comes. Each village in Bali has three temples known as *Kahyangan Tiga* (Pura Desa, Puseh and Dalem) dedicated to the worship of *trimurti*: Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva respectively. Each of the male deities has a consort to assist them in their roles as creator, preserver and dissolver. Brahma who resides in Pura Desa has Sarasvati as his consort, Vishnu who resides in Pura Puseh has Dewi Sri, and Shiva with Bhatari Durga resides in Pura Dalem.

The three major roles of creation (*utpatti*), preservation (*sthiti*) and destruction (*pralina*) are played by Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva; however, from the point of view of the *Devi Mahatmya*, the great goddess is superior to the male deities. She is the sole deity who can bring the universe into perfect balance and restore it to a peaceful state after conquering the demons and rescuing the universe from chaos as narrated below:

> By you this universe is borne, by you this world is created. By you it is protected, O Goddess and you always consume it at the end. You are always of the form of the whole world, at the time of creation you are of the form of the creative force, at the time of sustaining the world you are the form of the protective power, and at the time of the dissolution of the world, you are the form of the destructive power… (*Devi Mahatmya*, 1:75-77).

The role of the goddess as Mahadevi as narrated in the *Devi Mahatmya* seems to be continued in the Malay-Indonesian tradition although those roles are only found in minor texts which are almost forgotten in this present day. In the following section, I would like to show that the role of the goddess Durga in Bali as a creator, preserver and dissolver reflects the roles of the Mahadevi that have been narrated in the *Devi*
Mahatmya. In the Balinese perception, the goddess Durga plays only minor roles in creation and preservation but a major role in destruction.

The role of goddess Durga in Creation (*utpatti*)

Each religion has a myth for describing the primeval creation. Many religions of the Near East portray God as creating the world and its contents through an act of “speaking” or “naming” the things of this world. In other cases God is portrayed as having created living beings from some elemental substance like clay, or through a division of His/Her body into sections that then become the parts of the universe. Hindu conceptions of cosmology have gone through a long process of evolution and development of the concept of creation, and many differing concepts of creation are found in the *Vedas*, *Brahmans*, *Upanishads*, *Epics* and *Puranas*. However, the most common concept of religious belief is that the world is created from the body of a single deity, and that the universe is thus self-generated from the primordial deity. O’Flaherty (1975:25) has pointed out that the earliest Indian conceptions appear to have to do with the idea of separation of the parts of the universe from a primordial state of chaos:

The most basic form of Vedic cosmogony is implicit in many early hymns, though never explicitly described: it is the formation of distinct elements out of the primeval cosmic flux, the evolution of order out of chaos, the propping apart of heaven and earth. This concept of creation as separation remains at the heart of much of later Hindu mythology (as well as Hindu social thought) and forms the animating spark of the conflict between gods and non-gods (demons or human beings).

In later Puranic concepts, the idea of the self-generation of the universe from the body of the “cosmic Man” emerges, which holds that the primordial god created other beings from His very own limbs. After an initial act of separation of himself, the primeval Man is then said to continue creation through incest with one of his own children, or with a second being created from one of his limbs. This idea of a primeval incest seems likely to have been adopted by Javano-Balinese artists in composing myths about cosmogony and creation (see Hooykaas, 1975). The idea of a primeval
incest, a logical development from the idea of a single, primeval being from whose body all things are created, appeared implicitly in the Vedic myths, but without any clear mention of who the father and daughter figures in the myth may have been. However, by the time of the Brahmanas the incestuous father had been identified as Prajapati, the Creator, who in many versions of the legend is said to create living beings through incest with his daughter, the lovely Ushas, goddess of the dawn (O’Flaherty, 1975:25). The responsibility of Prajapati for the creation of the world has taken a curious turn in Bali, where the Indian word Prajapati was re-interpreted or re-etymologised as Mrajapati, which to the Balinese means “the Lord of Death”. This appears to have occurred because of the extremely common Austronesian word pati, meaning “death, to die”, a meaning very different from pati in Indian languages, where it means “lord” or “husband”. It is possible that Balinese in the past understood the element mraja- as originating in a form like ma-raja “to rule” and that the word mraja-pati was thus interpreted as meaning “to rule/be the ruler over death”. In this case a Balinese understanding of the etymology of the name of a Creator God (Prajapati) appears to have led to the association of that ancient deity with the realm of death (Hunter, personal communication, 2005). This may help to explain why in Bali we have a special shrine located right at the edge of the cremation ground and cemetery called the Pura Mrajapati, which is said to protect the village from the dangerous influences of those places of death and dissolution.

Returning to our consideration of the development of the idea of a god who creates the world, in the Upanishads, we find that the role of Prajapati began to be replaced by an emphasis on the Purusa, or Primeval Man, who is to some degree associated with the god Brahma. In a somewhat later period this Primeval Man takes on a mortal form as Manu, the “First Man” who is considered the progenitor of the human race. In some versions of this tale, the Sanskrit root pat, “to fall” is used to explain how Manu becomes the father of the human race. He is said to have felt alone in the world, so he created a woman, who caused him to fall down (pat) upon her, so that they united as “husband” (pat-i) and “wife” (pat-ni), so creating all living beings (O’Flaherty, 1975:34). In the Epics and Puranas there is a further development and the god Brahma takes over the primary role of the Supreme Creator, and so supersedes Prajapati.
The belief in Brahma as the Creator was frequently interpreted in Puranic period India in terms of the creation of the world as a cosmic illusion that “binds” human beings until they can find salvation through religious practices like asceticism. In one form, this takes the form of the idea that in this “dark age”, or Kali Yuga, Brahma creates the opposites – good and evil, darkness and light, truth and falsehood – which prevent people from seeing the underlying unity of all things. In another form, closely related to the ideas of the Classical Samkhya philosophy, the emphasis is shifted to Brahma’s role in the creation of the three gunas: sattva (goodness or light), rajas (passion or activity), and tamas (darkness or inertia) which are said to intertwine in all living beings to create particular personalities and forms of suffering that must be overcome to gain salvation and release from the cycle of life and death (Larson, 2001:154-206). This notion is in turn related to the idea that one’s past actions (karma) led to a certain arrangement of the three gunas that affects one’s birth in each subsequent incarnation, and continues to afflict one until liberation is achieved. In this conception, all the creations of Brahma have a distribution of the three gunas depending on their former karma (actions). Even gods and goddesses are powerless against their karma. For example, in Balinese myth the goddess Uma has to surrender to her cruel fate of being transformed into a demonic form as a result of having succumbed to committing adultery with a shepherd, who is in reality her divine spouse in disguise (as told in the lontar Tutur Andha Bhuwana) or with the god Brahma (as told in the kidung Sudamala). These beliefs in the negative aspects of the creation of the world appear to be reflected in the continuing Balinese belief in the power of the three gunas, the irresistible power of karma and in the concept of the “complementary opposites” (Balinese: rwa-bhinneda) that is a basic principle of

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131 In Hindu belief, there are four ages (yugas) named after the four throws of the dice: the first, the Krita Age, is the best (often it is called the Satya Age, the Age of Truth); second, the Treta Age, followed by the Dvapara Age, where people exchange appearance physically; and the last one the present day is called Kali Age, when the virtue is at its lowest ebb and the human life-span is the shortest. It is also believed that this is the most chaotic age among the four ages (O’Flaherty, 1975:43).

132 The three gunas are discussed at length in the Old Javanese kakawin Parthayajna. This work has not yet been translated into English, but has been studied extensively by Sukesi (1993) in her doctoral dissertation in Indonesian language.

133 Bhatara Guru [Shiva]’s appearance is described her as the same as the appearance of the goddess Durga.
existence that only can be overcome through achieving union with the “Divine Unity” 
(*Sang Hyang Tunggal*).

While the role of the goddess Durga as the Creator is not prominent in the minds of 
most Balinese, there are some texts that echo the distant role of the goddess as a 
progenitor that are reminiscent of traditions like the Shakta tradition of India. Her 
explicit role as the creator goddess in India is found in the *Devi Mahatmya*, Canto IV. 
7, where her role is described as follows:

> You are the origin of all the worlds! Though you are possessed of the three 
gunas, you are not known to have any of their attendant defects. You are 
incomprehensible even to Vishnu, Shiva, Brahma and others. You are the 
resort of all. This entire world is composed of an infinitesimal portion of 
yourself! You are verily the supreme primordial *Prakirti* untransformed.

A number of Javano-Balinese texts even describe the role of the goddess not only in 
terms of her creation of the world and its contents, but also as the progenitor of the 
three major religious sects of the ancient Javano-Balinese tradition, the *Saiva*, *Sogata* 
and *Resi*. Another related text describes the goddess Uma together with her spouse 
Bhatara Guru (Shiva as the Lord Teacher), as the progenitor of the Five Sages (*Panca 
Resi*) or of the Seven Sages (*Sapta Resi*).

To illustrate the role of the goddess as Creator - the creator of the world and its 
contents, the creator of the three major denominations, and the creator of diseases - I 
will draw on a number of texts. These are the *Tantu Panggelaran*, the *Purwa Bhumi 
Kamulan*, the *Tutur Andha Bhuwana* and the *Tattwa Kala*. Each of these texts shows 
the role of the goddess as the progenitor of aspects of the world. In the *Tantu 
Panggelaran* the goddess plays a role as the mother of the founders of the three 
denominations (*tripaksa*) of the ancient religion of East Java and Bali: the “Sages” 
(*wiku Resi*), the Shaivite (*wiku shewa*) and the Buddhists (*wiku boddha*) (Pigeaud, 
1924:79). In the corpus of texts known under the name *Purwa Bhumi Kamulan*, the 
goddess creates the world together with her consort Bhatara Guru, while in the *lontar 
Tutur Andha Bhuwana*, the goddess plays a role as the progenitor of the “tiny 
creatures” (*gumatat-gumatit*) who cause all kinds of diseases to humans and animals.
The Goddess as the Progenitor of the World

Hooykaas (1974) has worked intensively on the study of cosmogony and creation in the Balinese Hindu tradition. According to his survey, there are six manuscripts (*Purwa Bhumi Kamulan*, *Purwa Bhumi Tuwa*, *Tutur Sundari Gading*, *Sang Hyang Aji Tiga-Jnana*, *Purwaka Bhumi* and *Canting Kuning*), which he considered to be the best resources for understanding Balinese myths of cosmogony and creation. All of these texts deal in depth with myths concerning cosmogony and creation, while the size and the contents of each of the six are often quite different. Smith-Hefner (1990) has also worked on the Javano-Balinese myths of cosmogony and creation, in this case concentrating on a pre-Islamic text used by *dhukan*, the priests of the “Hindu-Javanese” communities of the Tengger, who inhabit the highlands of East Java in the areas closest to Mount Bromo. As we have noted earlier in this work, the supreme god who is generally considered the primordial Creator in the majority of Hindu myths of creation is Brahma; however, in the Javano-Balinese texts like those studied by Hooykaas and Smith-Hefner, the credit for creating the world and all of its contents is given to the goddess Uma and her spouse Bhatara Guru.

Based on Hooykaas (1974), we can summarize the myth of the primordial creation by the androgynous Uma-Shiva. There are some variations from one text to another, but in principle, the creation is performed either through divine incest or an act of self-creation. In the *Purwa Bhumi Kamulan*, which relates the tale of the creation of the Primordial World, the origin of Gods and Goddesses is in an act of self-generation by the supreme “Lord Void” (*Sang Hyang Sunya*). The story goes as follows:

Through self-generation the Sacred Lord Void (*Sang Hyang Sunya*) created six children who were born from the very parts of his body. The first child was a female whose name was Ni Canting Kuning, later called Bhatari Uma. She was born from the ankles of the god. Then five male children were born; they were Kursika (who is also Isvara), Garga (who is also Brahma), Maitri (who is also Mahadeva), Kurusya (who is also Vishnu) and Pratanjala (who is also Bhattara Shiva). The four male children did not obey their father’s command to create the world and its contents; therefore they were cursed to become four
demonic forms (*Catur Bhuta*) and to fly away to the four compass directions, where they will remain in demonic form to guard the four compass directions until after a long period of time they will be exorcized (*sinuddha-mala*) by Bhatari Uma and Bhatara Shiva. Hyang Widhi Wisesa (*Sang Hyang Sunya*) then told Bhatara Shiva and Uma to get married, to take on an androgynous form as *ardhanareswari* and thus to occupy the centre of the compass directions. This androgynous form of Shiva-Uma as *ardhanareswari* would be very important because only after being exorcized by the twin deity in the form of *ardhanarewari*, could the four demonic brothers be transformed into benign deities. In due time Bhatara Shiva and Uma carried out this exorcism of the four demonic brothers, so that they became a white deity in the east (Isvara), a red deity in the south (Brahma), a yellow deity in the west (Mahadeva), and a black deity in the north (Vishnu). Uma and Shiva became a deity mixing all four colours and occupied the centre in their *ardhanarewari* form. Sang Hyang Widhi Wisesa then commanded Bhatara Shiva to teach all the deities; therefore Bhatara Shiva was granted the new name Bhatara Guru, the Lord Teacher.

It was only the first child, Bhatari Uma (*Canting Kuning*) and the last child, Bhatara Shiva (Pratanjala), who obeyed the command of Lord Void to create the universe with its contents, and who then attained power equal to that of Sang Hyang Widhi Wisesa (“The Lord of the Special Power of Command” = Lord Void). Then Bhatari Uma ordered Pratanjala/Bhatara Guru/Bhatara Shiva to descend to the Middle World, where he first transformed himself into the king of turtles. The goddess Uma then descended to the Middle World as well, but since she saw nothing at all there in the Middle World, she and Bhatara Shiva began to create the entire contents of the universe. The first things they created were the Gangga River, the Earth (*Prthivi*), Sky (*Akasa*), Sun (*Surya*), Moon (*Wulan*), stars (*Lintang*), clouds (*Megha*), planets (*Tranggana*), Wind (*Bayu*). Following this they were entitled to create other aspects and divinities of the Middle World according to their wish. Because the Gangga River came forth from Uma’s sweat she is called Bhatari Gangga. Since her dried sweat became salty ocean (*samudra*), she is called Bhatari Samudra, while Bhatara Shiva was named Bhatara Baruna, Lord of the
Oceans. Gazing from the ocean, Uma’s body was seen as the Mother Earth; therefore she is called *Bhatari Prthivi* (Balinese: *Ibu Pertiwi*), “Earth Goddess”, while Bhatara Shiva became the Sky and was thus called *Bhatara Akasa*, Lord of the Sky. Following this the goddess Uma carried out extreme penance, and the whole universe became full of her creations. These included the *panca-maha-bhuta* (the five basic elements), which make up all living and non-living beings in the Middle World.

But then after the Triple World had been created, when Uma looked around she saw that everything in the world was composed of the colours white, red, yellow, black and when she looked at herself, she saw that she too had a colourful body, a mixture of white, red, yellow and black. Seeing this powerful and strange mixture of colours the goddess was startled and screamed in a voice like a roar of lion. Immediately she transformed into a terrifying form. Her teeth grew long and sharp, like tusks; her mouth was like a yawning abyss; her eyes shone like twins suns; her nostrils were deep and cavernous, and her hair was matted and unkempt. Her body was misshapen and huge, growing so large that it reached the limits of space and pierced the divine egg of the Universe. In this form, She is called *Bhatari Durga*. From this terrible goddess Durga there were born male and female beings that caused all kinds of troubles in the world. The goddess then went into the ocean, where she gave birth to all kinds of terrifying sea monsters; and fish of every strange and terrifying kind and shape: dugongs, sharks, sawfishes, gigantic eels and bladder fish.

Seeing the creation of the goddess Uma in the form of Durga, Bhatara Guru (Shiva) descended to the Middle World taking a terrifying form as the god Kala. The terrifying forms of Bhatari Durga and Bhatara Kala then carried out severe penances and there were born many kinds of terrible demons (*bhuta* and *kala*), each composed of a pair of the opposite genders (*lanang-wadon*). All the dangerous and terrifying demons in this world (*bhuta-bhuti, yaksa-yaksi, pisaca-pisaci*) emerged from this penance of the goddess Durga and the god Kala. In each place that Bhatara Kala then did penance he took on a new
form and name. For example, he is called Hyang Sankara when he dwells in the mountains, but Banaspati-Raja when he dwells in the forest.

When Bhatari Durga together with Bhatara Kala emerged from the depths of the ocean, they were wearing blood as their sacred ashes; Uma was smeared with blood, garlanded with human skulls, and human intestines were draped around her waist and over Her shoulders. She wore a scarf of red and black. Her followers were all the demonic forms taken by Bhatara Kala or given birth to by Uma and Kala. They escorted Her to the graveyard of infants (Setra Gandamayu) where She and Kala lived ever after, dwelling beneath an uncanny Kepuh tree and taking the form of Kala Dremba, who eats human beings.

According to the texts of the cosmogony and creation in the Balinese tradition, the goddess Uma (Canting Kuning) and Shiva (Pratanjala) must go through a transformation into a terrifying, demonic form when they take the role of the creators of powerful and terrifying beings who have the right to devour humans who transgress against the moral or ritual order of society. While taking on their roles as creator of the terrifying beings of the world, they have to assume their terrifying forms as Durga and Kala when they create demonic beings who bring illness and evil into the world, and resemble their divine parents in their demonic forms. According to Balinese Shaivite and Resi Bhujangga texts (Hooykaas, 1974:36-37, 64-65), Bhatari Durga can be described as follows:

She is huge in stature, her size, reaching nearly till to the top of the sky, radiating just like drop of dew; her teeth were like fangs, her eyes were are like twin suns and her nostrils like deep water wells. Her hair is matted and twisted, unkempt; her mouth opens like cavern while her voice sounds a million claps of thunder, so that the sky is choked-up by her voice. Bhatari Durga is her name, Kala’s spouse, who works evil when worshipped for that purpose.134

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134 It is very interesting to note that the goddess Durga was the terrifying form on the Narayana’s spouse, Sri Devi murty/jy/faksa-rupam, Sri Dewi who assumed the form of a demoness. As we know
We can see in this myth that the goddess – like her spouse Bhatara Guru – plays an ambiguous role in creation. On the one hand, she and her divine spouse, Bhatara Guru, must set right the world that is rendered impure by the refusal of their younger siblings to create the world. On the other hand, after having created the positive forces of the world, Uma and Bhatara Guru must take on demonic form in order to create the many evils that beset existence. Here the element of theodicy is strong, in a particularly Balinese form that insists that the divine progenitors of all that is in the world are not able to prevent the birth of evil, but must themselves take an active role in its birth and continued existence.

The goddess Durga as progenitor of the Resi, Shaivite and Buddhist sages

Scholars have long been aware of the tripartite division of religious doctrines in the East Javanese period, usually referred to as the *tripaksa*, “three orders” or “three denominations”. As we know from the *Desawarnana*, Canto 8.4 (Robson, 1995:29), this term did not refer simply to differences of doctrine, but also to divisions of places of residence and study for each of the *tripaksa*. From the *Desawarnana* it is also clear that the basic division was between the Buddhists, called the *sogata* or *boddhapaksa*, and between two forms of Shaivism, one usually referred to with the term *shaiva*, and another – the *Resi* group – who are referred to in *Desawarnana* 78.2d as a “branch of the Shaiwa” (*shewa-angkura*). Corroboration for a basic two-part division is found in the fact that in fifteenth century Majapahit there were two important officials who oversaw the activities of the *tripaksa*, known as the *boddhadhyaksa* (*Desawarnana* 75.2, 79.3) and the *shaiwadhyaksa* (*Desawarnana* 75.2). Evidence for this tripartite division of religious communities is also found in the Balinese inscriptions. These include a number of inscriptions issued during the reign of Jayapangus, including the copperplate of Desa Buwahan issued in 1181 CE (van Stein Callenfels, 1926:36) and the copperplate of Desa Selumbung, Karang Asem issued in 1328 CE (van Stein Callenfels, 1926:68). In these inscriptions we find mentioned three prominent religious authorities (*mpu-ngku*) who are the leaders of the three denominations - *saiwa sogata resi*, that is the Shivaite, Buddhist and Resi sect. Basing my survey on from Indian tradition, Narayana identifies as Vishnu whose consort is Dewi Sri or Laksmi (see Hooykaas, 1974: 35-36).
the collection of inscriptions issued during the reign of Udayana-Mahendradatta and their descendants as published by Goris (1952), I have found that the inscriptions frequently mention two denominations, the saiwasogata (or Shaivite and Buddhist sects), while those of the reign of Jayapangus also include mention of a third sect, which is the Resi sect.

The question of the origin of the five sages who are considered the divine ancestors of the Resi group is a difficult one. Let us begin to find an answer by asking who the progenitor of the sages is in Indian tradition. One of the Indian Puranic myths that narrate the story of the god Brahma as the progenitor of the sages is found in the Brahmanda Purana (O’Flaherty, 1975:51). According to this purana, there were eighteen sages born from different parts of Brahma’s body:

The sage Pulastya was born from his right ear and Pulaha from his left ear; Atri from his right nostril and Kratu from his left nostril. Arani was born from within his nose, the shining Angiras from within his mouth, Bhregu from his left side, and Daksa from his right side. From his shadow, the ascetic named Mud was born, and from his navel the sage with five tufts of hair on his head. From his breast was born the sage Vodhu, and from his neck Narada. Marici was born from his shoulder, and the sage named Darkness-within-the-waters from his throat. Vasistha was born from his tongue and Pracetas from his lower lip. From the left side of his stomach the ascetic named the Goose was born, and from the right side was born the Ascetic himself (O’Flaherty, 1975:51).

A number of these sages are still well known in Balinese society, including Bhregu, Daksa, Marici, Vasistha, and Narada. But both in Java and Bali, there is no myth being known so far about the birth of these sages. However, related Javano-Balinese myths, which tell the tale of Uma and Shiva as the progenitors of the sages, are found in numerous texts both in Java and Bali. These texts are generally concerned with cosmogony and the creation of the world and its contents, and include important lontar texts with titles like Purwa Bhumi Kamulan, Purwa Bhumi Tuwa, Tutur Sundari Gading, Sang Hyang Aji Tiga-Jnana and Canting Kuning (Hooykaas, 1974:9). In addition to these works, there is a text found in the Tengger region of highland East Java that is called Purwa Bumi Kamulane (Hefner, 1985 and Smith-
Hefner, 1990). Hefner (1985) has devoted some attention to a comparison of the role and social status of the Tengger priests called Resi Pujangga with the Balinese priests called Resi Bhujangga by comparing textual sources from Java and Bali. Smith-Hefner (1990) also has worked on the Tengger texts, in this case making a careful comparison of the Tengger text *Purwa Bumi Kamulan* with similar works from the Balinese tradition cited from the work of Hooykaas (1975). Hooykaas himself worked intensively on Balinese texts like the *Purwa Bhumi Kamulan*, providing transliterations of the texts, translations into English and comparison of the various textual sources.

One important Balinese myth that seems to echo the Indian legend of the birth of the sages from the body of Brahma is found in the story of birth of the five sages (*panca resi*) of the Resi sect as found in texts of the *Purwaka Bhumi* corpus which represent a major source of the litany of cosmogony and creation in the Javano-Balinese tradition. In this legend the five sages (*panca resi*) are said to have been born from the limbs of *Sang Hyang Sunya* (“The Sacred God Void”) or *Sang Hyang Widhi* (“The Sacred God Supreme Ordinance”). According to this legend the sage Kursika, a white male, was born from the god’s skin; Garga, a red male from the flesh; Maitri, a yellow male from the sinews; Kurusya, a black male from the bones; and Pratanjala, a person whose appearance mixed the five colours from the marrow of the bones of the god. In other texts of the corpus we find similar legends of the birth of founding figures of religious denominations from various parts of the deity. For example, Canting Kuning, who is regarded as one of the two children of the solar deity *Sang Hyang Sunya*, is said to have been a female child who emerged from the bones or ankles of the deity.

In the text, *Purwa Bhumi Kamulan*, the litany of the Balinese priests called Resi Bhujangga, it is said that the goddess Uma (Bhatari Uma) was born from the ankles of *Hyang Bhatara Guru* (Shiva), and that Bhatara Guru and Uma then committed incest in order to give birth to the world and its contents. According to this legend it was from this incestuous union of Uma and Shiva that the five sages were born.

In the *Purwaka Bhumi*, the primordial creation is carried out through the incestuous union of Canting Kuning and Pratanjala, who in this myth represent Uma and Shiva,
and are regarded as the children of Sang Hyang Sunya (Hooykaas, 1974:11-12). This concept of creation through self-generation and a subsequent incestuous union between the “children” of this self-generation clearly echoes ancient ideas of creation that hark back to the Vedic and early post-Vedic periods in India; for example, in the *Aitareya Brahmana*, the primeval incest is accomplished by Prajapati with his own self-begotten daughter, Usha, the goddess of dawn (O’Flaherty, 1975:29).

While in the Puranic myths of India, it is Brahma who plays the role of creator of the sages, in the Javano-Balinese tradition this role has been taken over by the goddess Uma-Durga. While remnants of the idea of creation through self-generation and incest are found in the *Purwa Bhumi Kamulan* and *Purwaka Bhumi*, a more prominent series of myths assigns the creation of the sages to an adulterous act that in several versions of the tale results from a trick played on the goddess Uma by her husband Shiva. In the case of the Javano-Balinese legends like that of the *Tantu Pangkanlaran* Uma-Durga is not characterized as the mother of a set of eighteen sages, but rather as the progenitor of the *tripaksa*, the three major sects of East Javanese religion during the Kediri, Singasari and Majapahit dynasties. The usual term for this collocation of two Shaivite sects and one Buddhist sect is *Resi-Sewa-Sogata*, which is well-known from many written works, including the *Nagarakertagama* (composed 1365 CE), an important source of historical information written during the reign of Hayam Wuruk (c.1350-1389 CE), but also containing historical information dating as far back as 1222, the year that Rajasanagara ascended the throne of Singasari. The *Tantu Pangkanlaran* itself is a work of the post-Majapahit period, whose oldest manuscript is dated in *candra-sangkala* form to the year 1557 Shaka, or 1635 CE (Manu Atmawijaya, personal communication, 2004). It was written in the Old Javanese language; a textual edition with translation and notes has been produced by Pigeaud (1924). In this text, the goddess Huma (Uma), a benign form of Durga, is portrayed as the progenitor of the *tripaksa*. The following summary is a translation of the transliteration of the *Tantu Pangkanlaran* by Pigeaud (1924:76-81):

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135 The story as narrated in the *Tantu Pangkanlaran* seems to have been further adapted in later texts like the *lontar Tutur Andha Bhuwana*, where the goddess is the progenitor of the chickenpox and other diseases.
The goddess Huma (Uma) was dwelling in heaven (swarga loka) but was sent to earth by her spouse, Bhatara Guru, with the errand of seeking the milk of a black cow as a result of a long series of events that had led to her husband’s wishing to conceal from her the fact that he had decapitated the fifth head of the god Brahma, and been cursed with having the head adhere to his left hand. Therefore she descended to the earth. In the meantime Bhatara Guru decided that he must test Uma’s loyalty to him. He himself descended to the earth, disguising himself as a handsome young cowherd, and transforming his usual mount, the white bull Nandi, into a black cow. When she happened to meet the young cowherd the goddess Uma asked if she could purchase some of the milk of his cow, but the young man said that he would not exchange the milk of his cow for worldly goods. He said he would only give the goddess milk if she were willing to have sexual intercourse with him. Since the goddess could not suppress her desire to get the milk for her divine husband, she agreed to have sexual intercourse, but not by the usual method. Instead she bent her calf at the knee into the shape of a vagina (dinengkulakenira). After Uma and the cowherd finished love-making her big toe (mpu-mpu) swelled up, as if pregnant, which caused her a great deal of pain. She then massaged her toe and several fluids emerged. First blood flowed from her swollen toe, then, amniotic fluid (pila-pilu), then a yellowish fluid (the vernix caseosa) and finally three children (raray katrini) and three placentas (ari-ari).

Seeing this Bhatari Uma became furious and immediately seized all her many weapons, since her nature was to bear the weapons of all the gods. Her intention was to kill her three children. But those children immediately worshipped her with the sembah gesture, calling her the Supreme Goddess (Parameswari) and asked her why she wanted to kill them. The anger of the goddess immediately receded and she then went on to consecrate the three children and assign them a place in the world. First she said, “O, my three children, you indeed emerged from my left big toe (mpu-mpu), so you shall be known in the world as the ancient known as Mpu, the reverend ancient Sages.

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136 A prior section of the Tantu Panggelaran which deals with the reasons why Bhatara Guru sent Uma on this strange mission appears to be an East Javanese version of the myth of Shiva’s cutting off the fifth head of Brahma, which in India is a founding myth of the Kapalika sect. There seems little doubt that the tale as found in the Tantu Panggelaran is directly related to the Kapalika story.
“Now you who are the oldest, I will consecrate (sangaskara) you first.137 You will be known as Kumara-gimbal (“the youth with matted locks”) since you were born by pulling you out (raray) by the hair (roma) of your pusehan (“crown of the head”). You will be the Wiku Resi, who performs all initial ceremonies (angeremban)”. 138

“You who are the middle son (raray panngah), I will consecrate you as Kumara-sidd (h) i. You will be known as the Wiku Sewa since you were born by breach-birth (?). When you were born, you paid homage (sewa) to the god Gana (Ganesha, son of Shiva). Therefore you will be known as Wiku Sewa (Shaivite). You will instruct human beings about the sacred syllables (aksara vijana, aksara vyanjana). You will be the main priests who are the “arms and legs of the world” (hasta-pada sari), so you will be called Bhujangga. Bhuja means “arms” and angga means, “body”. Your weapon will be Sang Hyang Mrsa, (“divine illusion”?). Be mindful of my favour to you!”

“You who are the youngest one (raray pamungsu), I will consecrate you as Kumara-raray. Since you looked down on my vagina with a great attention (samahita) when you were born, you will be known as wiku bodd(h)a in the

137 According to OJED [1659] sangaskara is derived from Sanskrit: samskara, which means “making perfect, making ready, making sacred; purification, consecration, installation, initiation, sanctifying (purificatory) ceremony (on entering a new status in life)”.

138 See OJED [124] for angerembh, which comes from the root word arembha, arambha: “(Sanskrit: arambha) to start, undertake, work for; make the necessary preparation for something, a particular category of wikus (who work on the ground?).” In Balinese ritual called Tawur Agung or Eka Dasa Rudra there are three priests must perform the proper ritual. Those three priests are called the Tri Sadaka. While two members of this Tri Sadaka are from the highest status-group on Bali, the High Priests of the Brahmana caste; the Resi Bhujangga or Senggahu, who performs the initial rituals on the ground, is considered to have a lower status. These rituals on the ground are said to “call together’ and then propitiate the bhuta kalas, the malignant spirits of the earth who might interrupt the later ceremonies aimed at the deities who have their places in the high mountains and sky. To this day, smaller initial offering are made to the bhuta kalas at the beginning of any ceremony, in a ritual step that is called me-byakala, or me-byayakala, a word that can be literally translated as “to pay off the bhuta kalas. Usually the offerings to the bhuta kalas are laid on the ground; therefore the priests who perform the ceremonies to the bhuta kalas at larger rituals must sit on the ground as well. These associations of the rituals of the Resi Bhujangga with the initiation of ceremonies, and with offerings (that often contain blood or meat) that are offered on the ground, to the chthonic spirits of the ground, seems to be the reason why the Resi Bhujangga are considered to have a lower status in Bali than the Pedanda Shiva and Pedanda Buddha.
world. In the future you will be incarnated as the Lord Buddha. Your weapon will be Sang Hyang Guduha, the sacred sash or rosary”.  

The special features of the story of the creation of the sages as found in the Tantu Panggelaran include adultery (Uma with her husband disguised as a cowherd), deceit (Bhatarar Guru’s tricking Uma to depart heaven to hide from her his decapitation of Brahma’s fifth head) and jealousy (Bhatarar Guru’s mistrust of Uma and his test of her loyalty). The pattern of negative and anti-social elements found in this tale may help to account for the fact that in works like the Tutur Andha Bhuwana similar mythic elements are used to account for the origin of evil and disease in the world.

The lontar manuscript Purwa Bhumi Kamulan, the litany of the Resi Bhujangga priests of Bali, is another related text that narrates the story of how Uma together with Shiva (Bhatarar Guru) became the progenitors of the “Five Sages” (Panca Resi), who are considered to be the founders of the Javano-Balinese Resi sect. I will summarize the myth of the origin of the five sages as found in the litany of the Resi Bhujangga to show how it compares with the Tantu Panggelaran myth of the birth of the “three orders” (tripaksa). The story goes as follows:

Bhatari Uma was born from the ankles of Bhatarar Guru. Then they united as husband and wife. They performed austerities together and from this five ascetics emerged. They were Kursika (who is equal to the god Isvara), Garga (equal to Brahma), Maitri (equal to Mahadeva), Kurusya (equal to Vishnu) and Pratanjala (equal to Bhatarar Shiva). The first four children did not obey the commands of Bhatarar Guru and were therefore cursed to take on demonic forms. Each of them flew away to one of the four compass directions. Kursika became an ogre who flew into the eastern direction; Garga became a tiger that flew to the south; Maitri became a snake that flew into the west, and Kurusya became a crocodile that flew into the north. Those four demons remained in demonic form, and in that form guarded the four compass directions until a time came when they were exorcized by Bhatari Uma and Bhatari Shiva in

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139 Each of the names of the founders of the three sects in this story is based on some form of pun. In this case the word samahita, which normally means “a great attention”, is a word that in Buddhist contexts refers specifically to the level of concentration that is known in the Hindu traditions going back to the Yoga tradition as samadhi. Thus the word samahita itself was probably intended to suggest the idea of the Buddhist sect among the tripaksa.
their androgynous form as Ardhanareswari. After being exorcized the four demons brothers transformed again into deities: a white deity, Isvara in the east, a red deity Brahma in the south, a yellow deity Mahadeva in the west, and a black deity Vishnu in the north. Uma and Shiva remained in the centre of the four directions in their Ardhanarewari form.140

The creation of the sages in the Purwa Bhumi Kamulan is through the brother-sister incest of Bhatara Guru and Bhatari Uma. We can understand this myth as an origin myth that provides a basis for the existence of the Resi Bhujangga, and at the same time a basis for the exorcistic rituals of the Resi Bhujangga, where the demonic animal-like forms of the deities can be transformed into divine beings that then provide protection for humankind.

The youngest son, who in the Purwa Bhumi Kamulan is known as Bhatara Shiva, or Pratanjala, together with the oldest daughter Bhatari Uma who obeyed the commands of Sang Hyang Widhi, received the blessing to take on an androgynous form as Ardhanareswari. In that form they have the power to exorcise the malevolent forms of the four other sages, who have scattered to the four directions, and bring them back into their original forms as deities who serve and protect human beings.

In larger scale exorcistic rituals like Tawur Agung or Eka Dasa Rudra,141 the Resi Bhujangga or Sengguhu play a special role in the performance of these rituals, in keeping with the myths found in their litanies, which portray the founding sages of their order as having a special ambivalent character that can only be made benign through exorcism ritual. This element of exorcism is found in the tale of Sadewa in the kidung Sudamala, reviewed in Chapter Four of this work. In this case, too, it is

140 Those four demons, along with the “purifying deities” of the centre, have become significant in Balinese philosophy as the basic elements of both microcosm and macrocosm, often termed the Panca Maha-Bhuta, or “Five Great Elementals” (Hooykaas, 1974:7-8). In a slightly modified form these demons are also found in the system of the Khanda Mpat, a series of four protective deities who are “born with” the person, but then “draw away” during the first six months of life, to take places at the cardinal points, where they can cause disease or other evils if not periodically “remembered” through the ceremonies conducted for the person’s 210-Balinese wukon birthday.

only through the presence of one of the divine couple, Bhatara Guru-Uma, that the exorcism can be completed (in that case through Sadewa’s being “entered” by Bhatara Guru).

The goddess Durga as the progenitor of diseases

In Balinese belief the gods and goddesses (*Ida Bhatara-Bhatari*) not only created the living beings of the earth, but also the evils that beset human beings. Some contemporary commentators say that the evils of this world were created to teach human beings to conduct their lives in a spirit of devotion to their creator, while others (Tonjaya, 1980:5, for example) say that evil forces are necessary in order to preserve the balance of birth (*utpatti*), life (*sthiti*) and death (*pralina*). In this view, if there were no evils to cause sickness and death (*pralina*) the world would grow completely full of living beings and disaster would result, while on the other hand if there were no new creation, the world would be empty and without purpose.\(^{142}\)

Given the close parallels between mythical accounts of the origin of evil in Indian and Balinese traditions, it is worth taking note here of O’Flaherty’s work on the “origin of evil in Hindu mythologies” which she describes under the term theodicy (1976:1)

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\(^{142}\) O’Flaherty (1973:255-292) has drawn attention to Indian myths that illustrate a fear of overpopulation which, as she says, “is manifest at a surprisingly early period… [when the] transition from rural to urban life… may have produced pockets of actual overpopulation” (1976:28), and this suggests a possible parallel with the Balinese case. However, it is not at all certain that Balinese myths actually refer to fears of overpopulation, and further research into the corpus of Balinese mythological works is needed to shed light on whether this theme represents a long-lasting concern of the Balinese, or is a product of more recent interpretive theories that stress the question of “balance”. Hildred Geertz (2004:38-40) has recently commented on the current preoccupation with “balance” among contemporary Balinese intellectuals, noting that by and large the contemporary commitment to the maintenance of an equilibrium among spiritual forces is bound up with the reformist ideas of the “Hindu Dharma movement” and a reinterpretation of older patterns of belief and practice in terms of “personal responsibility and internal control of one’s emotions and an individualized, devotional ritual” (2004:39). These more contemporary interpretations of religious doctrine may well have long-lasting consequences in Bali, but they can tell us very little about the corpus of myth that has been inherited from pre-modern Bali, when patterns of mythological thought were intimately connected with the concerns of a largely agrarian society and intellectual activity was largely restricted to gentry and priestly households with a decidedly traditionalist and conservative outlook.
Theodicy, the term used to designate the problem of evil and its attempted resolution, [is] derived from the Greek Theos, god, and dike, justice; …to signify the defence of the justice of God in face of the fact of evil.

In Balinese tradition, mythology plays an important part in explaining how sickness and other evils have come to exist in the world, while rituals and offerings of various kinds play a functional role in communicating between the human community and unseen (niskala) beings. O'Flaherty (1976:2) points out that these mythological solutions to the problem of evil can be accepted by members of a faith like Balinese Hinduism, even if they do not meet Western standards of logic:

When logic fails, and theodicy fails, irrational resolutions are offered by other modes of religious thought - notably mythology - and these, proving psychologically satisfactory, are acceptable to the members of that faith, however inadequate they may appear to professional philosophers.

One of the most prominent Balinese myths relating to the origin of evil is the tale of Uma and the cowherd, or the tale of Giriputri and the cowherd.143 This myth and its many forms, known in both Balinese and Javanese versions of the basic tale, provide a mythical account of the origin of evil that has enjoyed lasting popularity in the popular imagination. Perhaps this is because it has served at various times and places not only to provide an account of the origin of evil, but to provide a mythological basis for a complex pattern of prohibitions and injunctions aimed at ensuring a harmonious relationship between human individuals and the human community and the unseen niskala world that is assumed – even in our modern, technological age – to exist alongside the visible sekala world and to be the real cause of both human welfare and human suffering.

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143 Giriputri is the more commonly found name of the eternal spouse of Shiva in Bali. The spelling “Siwa” is more commonly found for Shiva in Balinese, and the epithet Bhatara Guru, which developed in the later East Java period (c.1000-1500 CE), is more commonly found than Bhatara Guru. The names of both deities are frequently found combined with the titles Bhatara or Bhatari, which can be traced back to Buddhist Sanskrit bhatara, which is also found in mixed Hindu-Buddhist contexts in Nepal. The use of these terms has been so common in the history of Javano-Balinese culture that the Balinese frequently term the deities/ancestors Ida Bhatara-Bhatari. The word hyang represents a similar case of a word that has served both as a title for divinities (in phrases like Sang Hyang Surya, Sang Hyang Shiva) and as a general term for a divinity (hyang) or group of divinities (para hyang).
Even today in Bali, every problem faced by an individual or a group of people is related back to nature of human interactions with the beings of the \textit{niskala} world. Although sometimes the cause of a problem may have a very clear and logical explanation, even so people think that any unfortunate accident or sickness must have something behind it that can only be cured through understanding its unseen cause. For example, if there is a sudden death in the family, either by accident, or without any obvious medical condition, the family and the society where that person lives will without doubt spend a great deal of time asking each other what the cause may have been, and very often will consult a “trance healer” (\textit{dasaran}) in the hope that they can find out what offence the deceased person or his/her family committed against some spirit in the unseen world, and what course of ritual action the family should undertake to correct their mistake. In most cases a suitable ritual “cure” for the difficulty can be found; however, there are also extreme cases, which are considered to reflect so dire a transgression that they prevent the seeking of a solution in the normal way. These include cases of \textit{salah pati}, or “incorrect death”, that is death before the full span of life resulting from falling out of a tree, being struck by lightning or drowning. These cases are considered to represent an extreme transgression against the \textit{niskala}, perhaps to be explained by resorting to the logic of the doctrine of \textit{karma} and thus beyond individual control, but in any case extreme enough to mean that the normal rites of cremation cannot be carried out and the bereaved family must accept burial of their loved one as the only possible form of post-mortem memorial possible in such an extreme case.

The tale of Uma and the cowherd appears to be one that can be classed among those studied by O’Flaherty (1976:139-173) that have to do with the transfer of evil from one or more of the gods to humankind. Perhaps most pertinent to the Balinese case is the series of tales that relates to the expiation of divine evil through distribution in the human world. Perhaps the earliest of these tales is that of the great horse sacrifice (\textit{asvamedha}) that the \textit{Mahabharata} tells us was held in order to distribute to the four corners of the earth Indra’s sin for having slain the Brahmin Vrtra, who had been withholding life-giving waters from the gods and humankind. Rudra’s slaying of Prajapati for having desired his own daughter, and the subsequent distribution of his seed throughout the world is another early legend of the transfer of evil, as is the
distribution of a destructive fever born from a drop of sweat that fell from Shiva’s forehead when he destroyed Daksa’s sacrifice.

In the tale of Uma and the cowherd we find that the theme of the transferral of evil from gods to humankind is combined with the theme of the dangerous seed of the supreme deity, and its effects on the mortal world. As a summary of the tale of Uma and the cowherd will show, the transfer of evil to the world in the Balinese myth is gendered as female; that is, the blame for the original transfer of evil falls on Uma/Durga, rather than on her divine spouse, Shiva/Bhatara Guru.

One source of understanding of the form taken by the Balinese myth of Uma and the cowherd may be the tendency noted by Zimmer (1972:189) to account for the evils of the world. As Zimmer notes, this form of violent projection is especially prominent in the case of myths about the transformation of Uma/Giriputri, the gentle consort of Shiva, into the violent goddess Durga:

The story of Kirttimukha shows that the violent emotions of a god can be projected or externalized in the shape of an autonomous monster. Such apparitions abound in the mythological annals of India. Shiva’s power of destruction is precipitated all around him in the hordes of his wrathful ‘hosts’… The fury of Devi, the supreme Goddess, may be projected as a ravenous lion or tiger. She [may appear] in the form of a black demoness, slavering over a battlefield in man-destroying wrath; this is a materialization of the exterminating aspect of the Mother of the World. In the same way, a curse can be personified.

In Javano-Balinese mythology the violent emotions of Shiva and Giriputri and the effects they have on the world are a main topic in literary texts and religious discourse aimed at explaining the origin of evil. Similar myths about the origin of Durga in the Javano-Balinese tradition go back at least to the time of composition of the Tantu Panggelaran, which is believed to have been composed in East Java in the sixteenth century. A typical Balinese form of the myth can be found in the Tutur Andha
Bhuwana where it is told in the form of a dialogue between “three magically powerful beings” (tripurusa sakti).

In this dialogue Sang Hyang Dharmasiddhi asks Sang Hyang Menget and Sang Hyang Tattwajnana about the origin of the smallpox, saying that he has heard that smallpox is as personification of the curse laid upon Uma by Shiva for her crime of being unfaithful. Sang Hyang Menget and Sang Hyang Tattwajnana then tell Sang Hyang Dharmasiddhi the following tale: 144

There was a mountain called Mahameru that was the sacred abode of Bhatara Guru and his consort Bhatari Giriputri. Once Giriputri experienced the craving for the milk of a cow, and she couldn’t restrain her desire. So, she asked permission from her husband to go to search for milk in the Middle World. After getting his permission she left for the earth, but after wandering around for a long time she still could not find any cows. Then, in order too test the faithfulness of his wife, Bhatara Guru decided to descend to the mortal world disguised as a cowherd and go to a place where the goddess was sure to find him. When the goddess Giriputri happened to come upon her disguised husband she was overjoyed to find a cowherd and his cow. She asked to buy the milk of the cowherd’s cow, offering many precious worldly things, but the cowherd each time refused her. Finally he said he would give her the milk if she were willing to have sexual intercourse with him. Since her desire to get the milk was so strong she agreed to do so, but first she moved her genitals to her leg. From her union with the cowherd, many small creatures were born from her limbs. She then got the milk she desired while the cowherd flew up into the sky as Bhatara Guru.

When Bhatara Guru got back to his home on Mahameru he told his son Gana (Ganesha) about what had happened in Middle Earth and he ordered Gana to use the lontar Wariga Tenung, a divinatory palm-leaf text (lontar) that teaches

144 The names of the tripurusa sakti in the Tantu Pangkanlan deities recall elements of Indian philosophy that have found their way through a long process of assimilation into the mythological framework of the Balinese system of belief. These are: Sang Hyang Dharmasiddhi, “The Sacred Lord Who is Powerful in Spiritual Law”, sang Hyang Menget, “The Lord of Sacred Recollection” and Sang Hyang Tattwajnana, “The Lord of the Knowledge of the True Elements of Being”.

about auspicious and inauspicious days, in order to divine his mother’s behaviour, then to confront her with what he knew about her unfaithful behaviour while in the Middle World. When the goddess Giriputri arrived on Mahameru, Gana asked her how she had gotten the milk she craved so strongly. First she lied, but since Shiva had told Gana to use the lontar to see into the true nature of things, he was able to reveal to her the truth about how she got the milk. At that the goddess became furious and burnt the lontar with her inner fire. Gana also got furious and cursed his mother to take a demonic form as Durga and to go and dwell in the cremation ground of the mortal beings of the Middle World.

When Bhatara Guru learned of Gana’s curse he gave his agreement, but he also blessed the goddess Durga with powerful servants in the form of 108 bhuta, or demonic spirit-demons. With their help the goddess spread smallpox and other beings throughout the Middle World. In addition Bhatara Guru granted to Durga the right to grant power to all those who want to practice the black arts. However, at the same time that Bhatara Guru gave these destructive powers to Durga and the bhuta-kala. He also created other deities who went into the world to act as the healers of the diseases caused by Durga and her 108 demonic assistants. Bhatara Guru also charged Bhatari Giriputri to be selective in afflicting diseases. Only those who do not make the proper caru offerings that contain some element of blood, and so satisfy the demonic attendants of Durga, are eligible to be struck with disease. At the same time, those who fall ill, and yet make the proper offerings of propitiation to Durga and her demonic assistants, should be also forgiven, and their afflictions lifted.

The most striking aspect of this myth for this work are the sections that concern the rituals and remedies used to heal people who are afflicted with various diseases by Kala and his bhuta assistants. These include descriptions of sacred phrases and syllables (mantra, bija-mantra), and of sacred written characters (modre) along with instructions on how to apply modre to afflicted or weakened parts of the body as well as explanations of which deities are invoked, or “placed” within the body through the
use of modre. This means that while Bhatari Durga is blamed for her role in the birth of Kala and the introduction of diseases and other evils into the world, proper invocation of her power in healing rituals also has the power to cure.

The power of the ambivalent goddess to cause diseases, but also to heal them, comes out very strongly in a Balinese practice involving the masks of Rangda and Barong that are identified with the Pura Dalem. Rangda is often understood as having gained her power through a divine gift (panugrahan) from Durga, and is for that reason often so closely identified with Durga that she is considered to be Durga. When it happens that there is an epidemic, or case of widespread sickness in a village (Balinese: merana, Indonesian: wabah) it is not at all uncommon for the masks of Rangda and Barong to be taken in procession through the village in the early part of the night. Each household in the village is visited. The women of the household usually bring out incense and segehan offerings, which might be considered “welcome offering to niskala beings”. The family is then blessed with Holy Water (tirtha) by the priest (pemangku) of the Pura Dalem, in the presence of the masks of Rangda and Barong and the procession then moves on to the next household. This brings out the apotraic qualities of the Barong and Rangda masks and once again underscores the power of the goddess to provide the cure to the diseases that come into the world through transference of the “evil” aspect of her nature to the human world.

The goddess Durga as a Protector and a Preserver of Life (sthiti)

In this section, I look at the role of the goddess Durga as the preserver of life. This aspect of representations of the goddess in Java and Bali comes out particularly

145 The birth of Kala in Javanese version is called Murwa-kala, “the Origin of Kala”. Balinese and Javanese versions of the birth of Kala have much in common, but there are also important differences. For example, the types of diseases that Kala can cause differ in the two traditions, while the Javanese list of those who can be “eaten” by Kala due to the circumstances of their birth is longer and more complex. These people, called wong sukertha, “fortunate persons”, in Javanese include not only children born in the Javano-Balinese wuku week “Wayang” (shadow-play), but the fifth brother or sister in a family, named Panca-Pandawa and Panca-Pandawi. As is the case in Bali a special shadow-play performance of the Murwa-kala should be performed for persons born under these conditions, in which case the dalang, or “shadow-play master” acts as an exorcist in the Javanese ritual of purification called ngruwat.

146 For segehan see OJED [1726] “segeh reception (especially hospitable reception of a guest)... pasegeh that with which one receives an honoured guest.” The older meanings of segeh can be seen in Balinese segehan, which might be termed “guest-offerings” for the chthonic spirits.
strongly in ancient rituals for the consecration of sima, tax-free lands dedicated to the support of religious institutions that invoked the goddess as a guardian of the sanctity of those lands. She was also invoked at these rituals to protect the inscriptions that guaranteed the perpetuity of the land granted by a royal figure or family to the sima. The role of the goddess as a preserver also comes out in representations of the goddess as a protectress of the lives and health of human beings that can still be found in Balinese practices today.

These two protective roles played by the goddess can be described as two different subjects:

1. as the protection of unmoving objects, in this case land that has been consecrated for a religious purpose, and
2. the protection of living beings by bestowing boons, or giving favour, to those who are willing and eligible to work as traditional healers (balian).

As I have mentioned in Chapter Three of this work, sima were lands that were given special exemptions from royal taxes so that those funds could be used to support a religious establishment, a kind of “colony” that often was a productive centre for arts like weaving, dyeing, sculpting and smiting in bronze, iron or precious metals as well as being associated with a particular place of worship and/or a place of religious study. These grants were awarded by kings, queens or other members of the court to religious persons who had given especially prominent prayer in conducting rituals and prayers aimed at maintaining the welfare of the kingdom and providing for the safety of the kingdom through regular ritual performances. Since the actual lands of sima, as well as the inscription recording the grant, were considered sacred, and could also be vulnerable to disputes over ownership of the grant, therefore the sima needed to be consecrated using a special ritual that invoked an elaborate set of Hindu deities to spiritually protect the sima from anyone who might violate the conditions of the sima laid down in the inscription that was a necessary part of the dedication of the sima. As Gold (personal communication, 2002) has pointed out in the case of Rajasthan, the protection of sacred lands through invocation of unseen forces generally has a more powerful affect on local populations than forest rangers or other secular guardians of the land. The invocation of the goddess to protect the world and its living beings has been textualized from at least the time of the composition of the Markandeya Purana
that is circa 6th century CE. In a section of this work titled the *Devi Mahatmya*, the goddess is worshipped in order that she will grant protection to the earth and its living beings:

> Protect the earth and us with those lovely forms of your moving about in the three worlds (*bhur*, *bhuvah* and *svah*), as also with your exceedingly terrible forms (*Devi Mahatmya*, VI:26).

In Indonesian representations of the goddess Durga, it is clear that the goddess almost always has an ambivalent appearance, on one side having a lovely form and on the other side a terrifying form. The late Y.B. Mangunwijaya (1991), an important contributor to modern Indonesian literature has used this ambivalent character of Durga as the theme of a remarkable novel titled *Durga Umayi* where the name Durga stands for the terrifying form of the female protagonist of the book and Umayi stands for her gentle form. This illustrates the enduring nature of Indonesian understanding of the goddess as a highly ambivalent deity. As Mangunwijaya describes the Javanese idea of Durga-Umayi, she is an ambivalent character, who in the form of Uma or Umayi, is a goddess of unbearable beauty and the idol for many people, and on the other hand, as Durga, she has a terrible form, and is the goddess of death who dwells in the graveyard. It has been common in Indonesian history to view the goddess Durga as a deity who should be worshipped to protect people by giving them the power to gain victory over their enemies. This aspect of the goddess puts the emphasis on her role as a warrior. But the goddess Durga is also commonly represented as a deity who is invoked by those who wish to destroy people.

Representations of this type are found as early as the *kakawin Sutasoma* (composed c. 1370 CE) and the *Calon Arang*, whose earliest versions date from the sixteenth century CE (Zoetmulder, 1994:329-341). In the *Sutasoma*, Canto 132.1-3 Durga’s terrifying form as Mahabhairavi/Bhatari Nini is described as being invoked by both sides in a battle, each of them seeking and gaining her assistance through the use of powerful mantra-s and hymns of praise:

> Standing firmly and courageously Sri Dasabahu was elated to see his powerful enemies,
Releasing arrows, *bajra* and other sharp pointed missiles from their bows in greater and greater numbers,

Concentrating deeply for a moment he attentively practiced the yoga of protection (*yogaraksa*) and the *Durgamayasmerti* “recollection of the magical power (*maya*) of Durga”,

As the illustrious king did so the goddess Mahabhairavi emerged from his meditation (132.1)

Immediately she shrieked as the demon forces beheld her with her four powerful arms,

Upon the destruction of the weapons of the enemies they swiftly returned to her tongue where they immediately disappeared,

Because she indeed was in the past the source and the origin of all those furious and angry demons,

That was why all the demons were in disarray; none of those arrogant demons could oppose her, and were so burnt to ash by her fury (132.2)

Lord Porusada was startled at the disappearance of those arrows in the form of demons,

Immediately he pronounced powerful mantras, the *Durgastuti*, in praise of Durga which were able to eliminate the magical power (*maya*) of Bhatari Nini,

She became tranquil and benevolent again; shortly thereafter all the demons attacked again,

And all of the troops of the Hastina released their extremely terrifying arrows (132.3).\(^147\)

In the above verses, Dasabahu is described as practicing the “yoga of protection” and “recollection of the magical power of Durga” in order to achieve the power needed to overcome his enemy, Porusada. Here, we find Durga invoked as a goddess who protects those who worship her, who is feared by one’s enemies and brings the promise of victory. At the same time, she is the creator and source of all the demons

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\(^{147}\) My translation, based on classroom notes from an informal seminar on Old Javanese with Alex Cherniak and Dr Tom Hunter, Jerusalem, April 2004. For other translation see Kate O’Brien (forthcoming, 2006:188).
and their weapons, and at will, can absorb them again into her tongue, since those weapons (and the names that make them powerful) originally emanated from her power of divine speech.

While Porusada is at first startled by the power of Durga-Bhairavi and the advantage in the battle they give to Dasabahu, by pronouncing powerful mantras in her praise, he is able to pacify her so that she returns to her benevolent form. Being thus satisfied by his devotions Durga-Bhairavi grants Porusada the power to create demons troops to attack the forces of Hastina led by Dasabahu. Since both Dasabahu and Porusada please Durga-Bhairavi in this passage by meditating on her and reciting mantras for her, she cannot take one side in the battle between Porusada and Dasabahu, but must share her benevolence equally with her devotees. Once again we see the protective, warrior-goddess aspect of Durga in this case, with an ability to absorb demons and their weapons that is strongly reminiscent of Puranic depictions of Durga Mahisasuramardini.

In addition to her role as the protector of the sima, the goddess Durga plays a very important role in preserving life and health of living beings. Here again we find her ambivalent character highlighted, for at the same time as being invoked to protect living beings she is perceived to be the origin of all evils and diseases. In this case her ambivalence serves a very important social function, for traditional healers are described in textual sources as being able to combat the effects of diseases and other evils by knowing their origin. One common form of mantra used by a healer while performing a ritual to ward off diseases often includes phrases like apan aku wruh ring pawruhan kita, “for I know what your knowledge is” or wruh aku sangken ta ngūnī, “I know about your ancient origin”. These formulae are found in magical texts like Aji Pangleyakan (Anon, 1999:18) as well as works devoted to both magical and healing arts like Cukil Daki (Jiwa Atmaja, 2002:92).

References to the roles of the goddess as the preserver of life are preserved in the form of mantras, magical drawing (rerajahan) and descriptive prose. In several traditional medical reference works in the form of palm-leaf manuscripts (lontar) called Usada, the goddess Durga is described in such works as descending to the mortal world to search for herbal remedies to heal her husband, Lord Shiva. For
example, in the text *Usada Bhudakecapi*, the goddess Durga is described as descending to earth to grant a traditional healer called Bhudakecapi a powerful form of knowledge that includes descriptions of the mythical origins of diseases, how they can be cured by knowing about their origins and by applying the proper medicines made from medicinal plants. In bestowing this boon to Bhudakecapi, the goddess Durga meets him in a graveyard/burning ground where she draws (*ngerajah*) a magical *bija mantra* (seed mantra) on his tongue, and powerful magical letters (*modre*) on each of his limbs. These are exactly the steps that are taken when someone is initiated into the study of sacred texts or sacred knowledge in the *pawintenan* ceremony, except that in this case they are transferred by the goddess to her human pupil in her favoured place of residence, the graveyard. In the *lontar* manuscript titled *Taru Pramana*, the goddess is described as descending to the mortal world to record all the plants that can be used as remedies. In this case, however, she finally has a fierce battle with Banaspati, the Lord of the Forest, who is a powerful protective figure in his form as one of the *Kanda Empat*, the four spiritual siblings who protect a person throughout their life. This tale is one form of the very important legend of the eternal struggle between Durga, in her form as the terrifying widow-witch, Rangda, and Banaspati, who takes the form of the Chinese-lion-like figure, Barong. The most popular form of this legend in the performing arts is a section of the *Sudamala* story that is used to induce trance among the followers of the Barong, who carry *keris* knives and vow to attack the Rangda during the confrontation of the Barong and Rangda. Since she is a divine figure, they cannot kill or wound her, so turn their knives on themselves, and very often fall into a deep trance. First made known to the outside world by anthropologists like Margaret Mead and Jane Belo, this ceremonial performance became a popular tourist attraction during the New Order period in Indonesian history (1966-1998).

The goddess Durga as a protector of sima lands and a granter of victory

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148 I still remember when my spiritual teacher accepted me as one of his pupils, during the initiation ceremony in a temple he draw sacred bija mantra on my tongue and in every limb of my body. Only after that initiation ritual, I could learn the sacred teaching from him (the highest spiritual guru) or from my relatives.
In Chapter Three, I mentioned the role of the goddess Durga as the protector of the sima in several Javanese inscriptions. Her role as a protector of the sima is also found in inscriptions of Bali which appear to follow the Javanese lead in this way. According to Goris (1954:131), the oldest images and inscriptions of Bali represent a period prior to heavy influence from Java. Inscriptions known from this period (roughly 882-915 CE) suggest a local development reacting to influences from India, quite likely by way of Srevijaya, which are largely in Old Balinese language written in scripts related to those of Java. At least one dual language inscription has also been found, the Blanjong pillar of Sanur which uses the Indian Nagari script for the Balinese section, and a local Balinese variant of “Standard Kawi” script for a Sanskrit translation of the information in the old Balinese section. The discovery of quite a few stupas from this period on Bali suggests connections with Srevijaya, which was Buddhist in its religion, but evidence of Brahmanical rites and references to Shaivite religious institutions show us that the religious culture of this period was mixed (Stutterheim 1936:128; De Casparis 1978:25). However, the mixed Buddhist and Hindu character of the evidence from this period may also be due, at least partly, to influence from the Shailendara line of Central Javanese rulers. Zimmer (1955:153) explains the existence of both Shaivite and Buddhist images from Bali belonging to this period as revealing characteristics of the art style of Central Java, and this would also fit with the palaeographic evidence. De Casparis (1978) has pointed out that the early Balinese inscriptions reflect the style of the Javanese scripts of the period of Kayuwangi and Balitung (c.855 to 908 CE) that is of the Central Javanese style before political power shifted to East Java (c.930 CE). Widnya (2001:5) and Titib (2005:3) speak of an Indian work titled Manjusri Milakalpa, which they suggest was composed c.700 CE. This work is said to directly mention Bali as an island influenced by Indian Hinduism. From the available evidence of the inscriptions and archaeological remains we can conclude that the Balinese community during that time embraced Shaivite and Buddhist forms of worship side by side.

As I have mentioned earlier in this chapter, there are several Balinese inscriptions that reflect strong Javanese influence in the formulation of sima privileges and in the curse sections of the inscriptions directed against evil-doers. It is in the curse formulation where we find the name of the goddess Durga (Durggadevi) being invoked together with other deities, demons, and unseen spirits (De Casparis, 1978:25). Examples of
inscriptions from the Old Balinese period that include invocations of the goddess include the Pura Batur copperplate of Desa Gobleg in Buleleng regency, and inscription II of the Pura Desa of Gobleg, Pura Desa II, issued in 983 CE by Sri Maharaja Sri Wijayamahadewi. In both these inscriptions we find that the goddess Durga is invoked in the curse formulation together with a larger set of Hindu deities, like those found in Old Javanese inscriptions. These two inscriptions were written in Old Balinese language and the “Standard Early Kawi” form of script, thus suggesting Javanese influence in the area of writing, as well as Javanese influence on the way curse formulations were written, but otherwise basis in local language and religious developments. Sri Maharaja Sri Wijayamahadewi was the daughter of Mpu Sindok who ruled Bali from Java just prior to the reign of Udayana and Mahendradatta (c.989-1011 CE), who brought about the shift to a more Javanized form of religion and government, and a shift in the language of the inscriptions from Old Balinese to Old Javanese (Damais, 1956:51; van Stein Callenfels, 1926:1-13). We can see from this that there was a gradual process of Javanization that went on in Bali all throughout the tenth century CE. At first this was mainly in the adoption of Javanese ways of writing and the inclusion of curse formulations in the inscriptions, but later included a shift to the use of Old Javanese language and more Javanized forms of religious practice.

The tradition of invoking the goddess Durga in curse formulations of the inscriptions continued during the reigns of the three sons of the royal couple, Mahendradatta and Udayana. Their oldest son, Airlangga attended a wedding ceremony held by his uncle Dharmawangsa Teguh in Java just before a “great catastrophe” (mahapralaya) in 1016 CE and went on to rule in East Java c.1019-1045 CE. According to Damais (1956:51) and Atmojo (1977:3), their second child, Marakata Dharmawangswawardhana reigned in Bali between 1022- 1043 CE, while their youngest son Anak Wungsu between 1049-1077 CE. Both Marakata and the Anak Wungsu issued inscriptions recording sima grants, which contain the invocation to a series of Hindu deities including the goddess Durga.

149 The full name of this ruler was Paduka Haji Sri Dharmmawangswawardhana Marakatapangkajastahottunggadewa, which is often shortened to Marakata.
It is interesting to note that in most of the inscriptions, especially in the curse formulations, it is only Hindu gods and the goddess Durga who are invoked to punish those who violate the condition of the *sima*, but there is no mention of the local gods who are still worshipped alongside gods and goddesses of Indian origin in contemporary Bali. Hildred Geertz (2004:80) has pointed out that the name of the god who is said to be worshipped in the main temple of the village of Batuan in a copperplate issued by Marakata in 944 Saka (1022 CE) was a local god, called *Bhatara i Baturan*, “the deity of the Baturan shrine. Even today *baturan* shrines, usually consisting of a large rock, or a table-like structure made from several large stones are understood to represent a very ancient holy presence in the land. As Geertz tells us the *Bhatara i Baturan* was not a Hindu deity, but rather a locality-bound deity. In the inscription a king with an Indic name (Dharmawangsawarddhana Marakata), who resided outside the village of Batuan itself, seems to invoke Durga and other Hindu deities as protectors of the shrine of the local deity as a way of ensuring that he and his court play a role in the socio-economic life of the village:

The external king invokes a series of Hindu deities (including the goddess Durga) to whom he and his holy men have access, but to whom the people of Batuan do not, asking his Indic gods to give spiritual protection to the village and its local god.

The traditions of invoking Indic deities to bring down punishments on those who violate the conditions of the *sima* are found in several inscriptions in Bali as a continuation of the Javanese tradition. However, local gods like the *Bhatara i Baturan* of Batuan are also mentioned as being given patronage by the royal line all throughout the early centuries of the Balinese dynasties influenced by Indian religious ideas. In addition to the evidence found in the Batuan inscription we find that the inscription of Trunyan issued in 1049 CE by Anak Wungsu describes his patronage of the local deity *Bhatara Da Tonta*. Ardika (2001:64) and Titib (2005:5) have pointed out that the earliest inscription that mentioned Trunyan dated 911 CE already referred to the repair of a sacred shrine dedicated to *Bhatara Da Tonta*, a name which clearly is not an Indic name. According to Ardika “the word *Da* is an honorific, while *Tonta* is the name of a deified local personage”. The colossal statue of *Da Tonta*, over four meters in height, is still housed today in a “*meru* shrine” of the Pura Desa of Trunyan, and is
also known locally as *Dewa Ratu Gede Pancering Jagat*, “the great god who is the centre of the world.” In addition to mentioning Bhatara Da Tonta, the copperplate of Trunyan also mentions the local deities in general, who are referred to as the *Bhatara di Turunyan*, “(local) deities of Trunyan” (van Stein Callenfels 1926:20). Similar examples are found in other inscriptions of the central Balinese highlands and north coast. A copperplate issued by Jayasakti in 1146 CE, for example, mentions a local god called *I Bhatara Puser*, “the god of the centre” (van Stein Callenfels 1926:34) while in an inscription of the Pura Desa Gobleg issued in 1115 CE by Sri Maharaja Sri Wijayamahadewi invokes a local deity named *Ida Hyang (danghyang) di Bukitunggal*, “the divine ancestor who dwells in Bukit Tunggal” (van Stein Callenfels 1926:1).

If we compare the inscriptions of Pura Desa Batuan and Pura Desa Trunyan with the copperplate of Pura Desa Gobleg we note that in each case a local deity (*bhatara i Baturan*) has come to be identified with the village ancestors, and is thus housed in the Pura Desa, one of the three village temples that (along with the Pura Puseh) has a special place in the worship of the ancestors of the village. In addition to the fact that in each case we find local names for these important gods, or sacred ancestors, in neither case do the visual and iconographic aspects of the statues of housed in the Pura Desa of Batuan and Trunyan reflect Indian or Indianized standards in the arts. Even so, the priests of the Pura Desa in Batuan insist that the figure housed in that shrine is an image of *Ida Bhatara Shiva* (See figure in Geertz, 2004:86). ¹⁵⁰ Hildred Geertz (2004:81), commenting on the work of Stutterheim (1929) points out that these figures of *bhatara* were not originally intended to represent Indic deities of the mythological type:

> Figures of this sort at the time of their making were not images of gods, but representations of dead kings, serving as a means of magic contact between the soul of the dead and the survivors

The non-Indic character of these “bhatara-images” comes out even more vividly in the image of Bhatara Da Tonta, which is so distant from anything found in India that

¹⁵⁰ Hildred Geertz (2004:86) provided this sketch of *Ida Bhatara Shiva* or *Ida Bhatara i Baturan* of Pura Desa Batuan in her work *The Life of a Balinese Temple.*
there is no question of identifying it with an Indic deity. Speaking on the general
caracter of Balinese religious art, Zimmer (1955:153) has said:

Before the Hindu influences reach their island [Bali], the culture of Balinese
seems to have been shaped predominantly by ancestor worship. The people’s
daily life was protected by the souls of departed ancestors who were supposed
to be dwelling in the mountains, at the sources of the rivers without whose
water no rice could be grown. Those ancestors had been the founders of the
village communities. They had established all the traditions and were in
control of the sources of magical life force without which no human welfare is
possible. Each village community, through its own ancestors, possessed its
own life-power, and so was an independent organism.

As Zimmer has noted Balinese communities in the past seem to have believed as
deply in the power of the ancestors as they do today. Thus, while the Parisada Hindu
Dharma, Bali’s modern consultative body on Hinduism teaches that the Indian gods
Vishnu and Brahma are to be worshipped in the Pura Puseh and Pura Desa,
respectively, these temples are also important as the places where the founding
ancestors of the village community are to be worshipped. I want to stress here that the
evidence of the ancient inscriptions and images of Batuan and Trunyan villages points
to their identification with the Pura Puseh and Pura Desa. I want to contrast these
associations with the status of the third of the Kahyangan Tiga, “the three sacred
village temples”. This is the Pura Dalem, a temple that is located in the inauspicious
southwest corner of the village and is concerned with the transformation of recently
deceased members of the community into ancestors, and accompanying purification
of the village. I believe that the lack of evidence for this form of temple in inscriptions
or visual images prior to the “second wave of Javanization” that began in 1343 CE
suggests that the practice of cremation and other rituals connected with the Pura
Dalem are an innovation that reflects the influence of the Javanese courts of the
Majapahit period.

If the Pura Desa was the temple where Balinese communities contacted and
worshipped their ancestors during the pre-Hindu and early Hindu-Buddhist periods in
Balinese history, and we view the presence of the Pura Dalem as an innovation, then
it is possible that this change was initiated by the “gentry title groups” (triwangsa), who trace their ancestry to the Javanese nobility of the Majapahit period and have historically had a strong commitment to the practice of elaborate cremations. One clue that supports this theory is the fact that the word dalem itself means “the inner part of the court household” (OJED 1972:352), and eventually also came to be part of the title for the highest ranking king of Bali, the Ida Dalem of Klungkung, “He Who is in the Dalem.” The Pura Dalem of a royal enclosure might then be the place where deceased kings and queens were transformed into royal ancestors. The prominent place of the goddess Durga in the Pura Dalem, where she is often called Bhatari ri Dalem, “the deity of the (Pura) Dalem”, can be understood in a more metaphysical sense as “the deity of the most inner place”. I believe that the presence of the goddess Durga in the Pura Dalem has a strong connection with the Javanese courtly cult, which introduced the sraddha rites like those carried out for the Rajapatni in 1365 CE into the Balinese picture. These rituals, which today are known as ngaben or palebon (for the physical act of cremation) and ngasti or mukur (for a second cremation of an effigy of the deceased) are often connected in Balinese thinking with the term sudamala, “to purify from stain”, which reminds us of the important kidung work by that name, which is also an important part of Balinese ritual performances like the Barong-Rangda play. The theological term for purification in general is sudamala, which means to spiritually purify any stain or impurity. Even today in Bali the souls of the dead are considered impure until they have been purified through the sraddha rites (cremation and subsequent rituals). Until that time they are considered to be “wandering ghosts” (preta), but after the performance of the cremation and related ceremonies the ‘soul’ (atma) of one’s departed relative becomes a pitara, or “deified ancestor”.

There are two important points I want to mention here. First, the performance of the cremation rites is compulsory for all Balinese from the “lowland” areas whose culture and history were strongly influenced by the Majapahit tradition, and so are sometimes called the Wong Majapahit, “people of the Majapahit”. However, these ceremonies are not required, and are not considered important, in the majority of the highland villages and villages of the north coast who practice the “Bali Mula, Bali Aga”, or “original Balinese” form of religion and social organization. We know from Balinese “historical” works like the kidung Pamancangah (Berg, 1929:10) that the Javanized
nobility who transformed Balinese culture following the conquest of Bali in 1343 CE by the Majapahit general, Gadjah Mada, had to conduct a long struggle with the “Bali Mula” villages early in their struggle to rule Bali, and we know from recent ethnographic studies that cremation, caste and presence of the “three village temples” (Kahyangan Tiga) are not a part of the religion and society of Bali Mula villages. However, they do place great importance on the shrine called the Bale Agung, which in the rest of Bali is another name for the Pura Desa. This again suggests that the presence of the Pura Dalem as a third member of a set of three village temples is a Majapahit period innovation. The second point I want to stress is that prior to economic changes in modern Bali, the “second cremation” or cremation of an effigy of the deceased that was a required part of the cycle of cremation ceremonies was always held twelve days after the physical cremation, and so was often called ngerorasa, “to perform (the ritual) of the twelve day.” If we remember that the sraddha rites for the Rajapati and other Majapahit nobility were always completed 12 years after the point of death and cremation, then we can see another strong relationship between the ancient Majapahit way of doing things, and the way of life that became important in Bali after the “second wave of Javanization”.

If we look at the many Balinese works that list persons who need to be “purified from stain”, that is given the sudamala rituals, we can see that it covers the entire range of religious forms except those of the Bali Mula. Works like the litany of the Resi Bhujangga, the Purva Bhumi Kamulan (Hooykaas, 1974:73), are reflected in similar works that are part of the sacred literature of the high priests (pedanda) of the Shaiva and Buddha orders of Bali, while long lists of persons who need to be exorcised for various reasons are found in palm-leaf manuscripts like the Kala Cepa and Kala Purana.

The goddess as a preserver of life: the patron of black and white magic practitioners

In addition to her role as the protector of unmoving objects like the sima and other sacred areas, the goddess Durga is also believed to be the protector of life in her more ambivalent role as the deity who can grant powerful (sakti) persons the ability to protect their village or kingdom by causing sickness or epidemics to enemies, or
conversely to heal people and communities who have been afflicted by diseases that in mythological thinking are believed to be caused by demonic troops (*bhuta-kala*) who serve Durga in her aspect as the progenitor of diseases. In the present day Balinese perception it is not the goddess Durga as the figure of the Rangda who protects people from all evils but it is the Barong as a representative of her husband Shiva. However, this aspect of the role of the goddess as protector of life comes out clearly in several physical forms:

1. the use of mantras that invoke protective aspects of the goddess
2. the use of magical drawings (*rerajahan*) worn as amulets (*pasikepan*), also invoking the protective powers of the goddess.
3. narratives of healing and protection found in *usada* manuscripts

I will briefly describe these three physical devices that are used to invoke the protective power of the goddess in her role as a protector of human life.

**Mantras to the goddess: definition and applications**

The use of mantra in Bali is very significant in the performance of many kinds of ritual. There have been many definitions of mantra offered by scholars in the past, but perhaps the most relevant definition to the Balinese case has been offered by Gonda in his discussion of post-Vedic cults (1975:271): 151

> the term mantra covers… all potent (so-called magical) forms of texts, words, sounds, letters, which bring good luck to those who know or ‘possess’ them and evil to their enemies.

However, this definition needs to be fine-tuned in terms of Balinese uses of mantra. While certain mantra are exclusively used by high priests (*pedanda*), other forms of mantra such as *saha* or *sesonteng* are more widely known and used by commoners. 152

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152 *Sesonteng* is the use of common language [high Balinese] by common people to eulogize gods or goddesses in a certain kind of ritual. The use of *sesonteng* gives us the impression that we are talking to persons of high rank.
In general the use of mantra in public rituals is aimed at bringing a state of auspiciousness to the entire congregation of persons attending the ritual, not just to “those who know or ‘possess’ them”. In terms of the question of causing “evil to their enemies” it is true that mantra are involved, but in contemporary times this use of mantra is exclusively in the domain of left-hand magic \((\text{pangiwa})\), and practitioners dare not reveal their use of mantra in this way. Mantras are considered sacred and also secret in Bali; therefore only certain people who have been initiated through an elaborate ritual called \textit{mawinten} to utter mantra are eligible to perform rituals, which include the citation of the mantra.\textsuperscript{153} Balinese strongly believe that mantras can be useful and beneficial if they are used for good purposes, but on other hand they can be evil in the hands of evil practitioners.

In \textit{Stuti and Stava}, an important collection of the hymns of the Balinese priests collected and edited by two Western scholars (Goudriaan and Hooykaas, 1971) we find a hymn to the goddess Durga, titled \textit{Durga-Stava}, that is addressed to the goddess Durga as the protector of human beings, in particular guarding them from the danger of wandering demons, and promising release from obstacles and faults. In this hymn the goddess Durga is invoked along with other goddesses of Indian origin: Uma, Gangga, Sarasvati and Narayani, who are collectively known as the \textit{catur-divya maha-sakti, catur-asrama bhatari}, that is the four great and glorious powers, the four stages of life of the great goddess in a classical hymn \((\text{stuti, stava})\) in Sanskrit that must represent a direct import from India, or a recombination of classical Indian sources completed in Java or Bali:

\begin{quote}
\textit{OM Giri-putri deva-devi, lokasraya maha-devi}
\textit{Uma Ganga Sarasvati, Gayatri Vaisnavi devi.}
\end{quote}

The daughter of the Mountain, Goddess of Gods,  
The Support of the Worlds, the Great Goddess;  
[Who is] Uma, Ganga and Sarasvati,  
the Gayatri and Vishnu’s wife, the Goddess.

\textsuperscript{153} \textit{Mawinten} is an initiation ritual for the priests or priestesses of lower caste or other spiritual persons in order that they can perform their duties in the society.
Catur-divya maha-sakti, catur-asrama Bhatari

Siva-jagat-pati-devi, Durga-ma-sarira-devi,

Fourfold divine, of great potency,
The Lady, [to be worshipped] in the four stages of life;
The Wife of Shiva the Lord of the World,
The Goddess Who is embodied as Durga.

Sarva-jagat-pranamyanam, jagad-vighna-vimurcanam
Durga bhu-cara-moksanam, sarva-duhkha-vimoksanam.

She should be honoured by the entire world,
She renders powerless the world’s obstacles;
Durga, who brings about safety from wandering demons,
Who brings release from obstacles and faults.

Anugrahamrta-bhumi, vighna-dosa-vinasanam
Sarva-papa-vinasanam, sarva-pataka-nasanam.

[By Her] grace, [She gives] Water of Life to the earth,
destroying obstacles and sins,
destroying all evils and all great sins.

OM Deva-devi maha-jnanam, suddha-vighna-bhvanesvari
sarva-jagat-pratisthanam, sarva-devanugrahakam.
The Goddess of Gods, of great wisdom,
The Lady of the World Who removes the obstacles;
The support for the entire world,
[Who combines in Herself] the grace of all the gods.154

In this classical hymn to the goddess used among the Balinese priesthood it is very clear that the goddess Durga is invoked to give safety to human beings from wandering demons. These qualities of the goddess hark back to the *Devi Mahatmya*, where the goddess is said to be the goddess who rules all the other deities and the bearer, of great wisdom, who removes all the obstacles and the calamities. A hymn like the *Durga Stava* of Bali is strongly reminiscent of the hymn offered by the other deities to the goddess Durga when they are described in the *Devi Mahatmya* as going to the highest peaks of the Himalayas, the abode of the goddess in her form as the power of illusion (*maya*) of the god Vishnu. In Canto Five of the *Devi Mahatmya* we find the following hymn offered to the goddess on this occasion:

Salutation to the Devi, to the Mahadevi. Salutation always to her who is ever auspicious, salutation to her who is the primordial cause and the sustaining power…. Salutation to her who is terrible, to her who is eternal. Salutation to Gauri, the supporter (of the universe).….Salutation always to Durga who takes one across difficulties, who is essence, who is the author of everything…

Again, in Canto Eleven, Verse 34 of the *Devi Mahatmya* we find that the goddess is extolled as the protector of human beings from fear of all enemies, both seen and unseen beings, also as the destroyer of all sins and calamities of the world:

O Devi, be pleased and protect us always from fear of foes, as you have done just now by slaughter of *asuras*. And destroy quickly the sins of all the worlds and the great calamities, which have sprung from the maturing of evil portents.

In hymns like the *Durga Stava*, each verse can be understood as a mantra that invokes the goddess as the protector of the universe, extolled by her human devotees not only for her protective power and ability to provide security, but also extolled by all the deities for her power to bring equilibrium to the realm of gods.

**Magical drawings (*rerajahan*) used as amulets**

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In addition to the form of mantra for obtaining protection from the goddess, the Balinese also protect themselves by using amulets (*pesikepan*) in the form of magical drawings called *rerajahan*. While written versions of short mantras are a major component of many of these diagrams, *rerajahan* quite often include an image of the goddess Durga which is usually inscribed on a piece of copperplate or sturdy paper and used as an amulet to protect people from evils spirits (Jaman, 1999:66). Many people believe that by carrying an image of Durga as an amulet and object of devotion, she will be placated and use her tremendous power to protect the wearer of the amulet.

Figure 5.1: a typical *rerajahan* featuring a drawing of the goddess Durga represented as Rangda, known in the *Calon Arang* story as Calon Arang, “the candidate for ‘hot’ magic”

This drawing suggests the form of the goddess Durga that goes back to her depiction as a powerful witch in the *Calon Arang* drama. In this form she is often invoked together with other persons who are legendary for their possession of *sakti*, the ability to contact metaphysical sources of power and to handle them for good or evil. These include Mpu Bharadah who is another important character in the *Calon Arang* legend,
as well as other figures like Shivagandhu and Kebo Saddha who can protect people from evil spirits. A typical invocation to Durga as “Calon Arang” can be found in the manuscript titled *Mantra Pangawisesan* (Anon, 1993:10):

*Ih Calonarang, manongos di tanggun kakulungane di duhur, hempu apang melah, sing ada anak bancari, eda bahange dini, hempu apang melah, poma poma poma*

Hail Calon Arang, who dwells in the upper part of the throat – may you protect it well, so that nobody who can injure it [the upper part of the throat], do not let them [evil spirit] be in that place, protect it well! Make it work, make it work, make it work!

In the *rerajahan* illustrated below, the goddess is depicted as having sagging breasts like those of an older woman, half-naked with a length of *kamben* cloth around knees. Here she is shown as a demonic, female figure whose weapon is a cuirass. Her chest and shoulders are covered only by a scarf as was the custom in pre-modern Bali.

Figure 5.2: The goddess Durga is depicted in demonic form in a *rerajahan* drawing
The fact that she is considered to be a royal figure can be seen from the jewels she is wearing, while her divinity is clear from the halo of flaming fire surrounds her. All of these aspects of the drawing relate this representation of the goddess to the powerful witch of the *Calon Arang* stories, and to the widow Rangda of the *Sudamala* and *Barong-Rangda* dramas. The written mantra quoted above shows that her powers can be invoked to protect spots on the body (like the throat) that are particularly vulnerable to magical attacks by enemies in the field of sorcery.

**Narratives of healing and protection in the *usada* manuscripts**

As I mentioned earlier in this Chapter that the goddess Durga is perceived by Balinese as the progenitor and creator of the diseases, but at the same time she is also believed to be the goddess who grants magical power (*kesidhian*) to her devotees to cure all the diseases that she has created. Her ambivalent nature as the creator and the curer of diseases is vividly described in the medicinal doctrines called the *lontar Usada*. The ambivalent nature of the goddess Durga shows that in one side she is a benign Supreme Being perceived as a beautiful goddess, while on the other side; she is depicted as a dreadful demonic figure, the witch-widow Rangda, and loyal devotee of the Balinese form of the goddess Durga.

When the goddess Durga is invoked in healing contexts this can be without reference to any textual sources. However, the existence of texts of the *usada* type that refer to Durga is an important evidence for her presence in the field of traditional healing. According to Nala (1997:1) the word *usada* is derived from the Sanskrit word *ausadhi* meaning plants that have medicinal efficacy, which is corroborated by Monier William (1981:236) where the word *ausadhi* means a herb, especially any medicinal herb. Nala also claims that the Balinese view of medicine can be traced back to the Vedic age of India, it was believed that both “diseases [and] blessings were… sent by supernatural beings”. In the Balinese *usada* texts (and to a certain extent in the other *lontar* manuscripts) we are presented with an entire pantheon of demons (*bhuta kala*) that bring about sickness and distress. That Balinese medicinal doctrines might be specifically traced to the *Atharva Veda* comes out in the similarity of Balinese beliefs to those pointed out by Zysk (1989:123) for that body of Indian medical and magical knowledge:
The cure for these diseases (external, internal and caused by poison) required an elaborate religious ritual in which remedies used both therapeutically and magically, were consecrated and demons expelled. The actions were performed to the accompaniment of mantras, which in large parts came from the Atharva Veda.

The perception of Balinese about the origin of diseases is quite unusual by modern standards, since many Balinese still believe that diseases are caused either by gods and goddess by demons or by leyaks, the terrifying emanations of the practitioners of black magic. It is often said that a particular disease has been caused by the anger of the god. If this is the case the Balinese term is kepongor, and the cure is simply to make offerings aimed at propitiating the angry deity, asking for forgiveness. The term for this plea for absolution is neduh meaning “to appease” or “to pacify”.

If diseases are believed to be caused by leyaks, the powerful and dangerous spirit-emanations of those who practice “left-hand magic” (pengiwa) then the family members of the person afflicted should take the patient to a traditional healer (balian). In order to restore the patient to a sound state of mind and body the balian will perform various magico-religious rites. The actions of the healer may include meditation and recitations of complex mantras or of more simple mantras called saha. These balian possess a special knowledge of the preparations needed to cure a person afflicted by a disease sent by a leyak, as well as special amulets (pica) that are believed to have been given to the healer through divine intervention, herbal remedies made from special medicinal plants, holy water and magical formulae in the form of drawings (rerajahan) that are used to protect the patient from further attacks by a leyak.

One of the myths important to balian usada is that tale of the mythical text lontar Kalimasada, which is a story of how the goddess Uma, the consort of Bhatara Shiva,

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156 According to Gonda (1963b) as cited by Alper (1989:3) the word mantra is a general name for formulas, verses or sequences of words in prose which contain praise..., are believed to have magical, religious, or spiritual efficiency, are recited, muttered or sung...in the Vedic text...According to Hooykaas (1974:58), the word saha refers to the quatrains in which the litany of the Balinese priests should rightly be constructed.
had to descend to the earth (madyapada) in order to seek medicine for the god Shiva when he was severely ill. Out of devotion to her husband, she then when to the earth and asked each kind of plant to tell her, what its efficacy is in the world of healing. Each of those plants then kindly gave the goddess Uma an answer on how they could be used as medicine. Some of them said that their bark was useful for making effective medicine, others their roots, their leaves, or their fruits. The names of all those medicinal plants, or parts of the plants were said to be recorded by the goddess in a palm-leaf manuscript called the lontar Kalimasada. This mythical text is believed by Balinese healers to be the ancestor of all their particular texts on medicinal practices, which include actual texts like the Taru Pramana and Kuranta Bolong. It is also remarkable that this text is known in the modern Javanese tradition, where it is said to have been created by the greatest of the nine Javanese Wali, Islamic holy men credited with propagating the teachings of the prophet in Java beginning in the sixteenth century. According to Javanese belief, Sunan Kalijaga showed that the title of the work Kalimasada was a corruption of the phrase Kalimat Syahadat, which represents the Islamic profession of faith, and is found as opening verses of the Al-Quran, which can be roughly translated: “there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his Prophet” (Irvine, 1996:21 cited by Smith, 2003:28; Nala, 1997:90). This interpretation allowed the Javanese to incorporate more ancient beliefs about the spirit world and traditional healing practices into an Islamic religious setting.

According to the version of this story recorded in the Kalimasada, while she was seeking the names and uses of medicinal plants of the “middle world”, the goddess Uma was forced to confront Kala Banaspati Raja, the Lord of all unseen spirits who dwell in large trees. This tale is important for the light it sheds on the origins of the

157 The exact etymology of the word Kalimasada is arguable. The element osada, or usada, clearly derives from Sanskrit osadha, a word meaning “medicinal herb” which is prominent in Indian texts on the medical arts. Kalima has variously been interpreted as deriving from Old Javanese kalima, meaning “five” or “the fifth” (Nala, 1997:89). Another interpretation has it that kalima(h)osadha derives from Sanskrit/Old Javanese word kali, meaning “evil, stain, sickness” and Sanskrit mahosadha, meaning “great medicine”. In this sense Kalimasada means the great medicine for curing sickness (Tonjaya, 1980:41-45). According to Tonjaya (1980: 41) another important palm-leaf text that treats the subject of the efficaciousness of the plants is called the lontar Tara Pramana.

158 According to Hooykaas (1978:64) and Soepomo (personal communication, 2003), the word Kalimasada consists of the word Kali-maha-ausadha meaning “the very efficacious remedy originating from the goddess Kali (Durga)”. 
famous trance-dance performances of the Barong-Rangda type, which clearly are involved in processes of community health (see Lovric, 1987). I will summarize this tale below, along with some comments on its meaning:

When the goddess Uma arrived at the Setra Gandamayu cemetery in the middle of the day (jegjeg ai, kali tepet), she questioned a kepuh tree, an enormous tree with bright blood-red flowers. She did not realize that the great being, Kala Banaspati Raja was soundly asleep under the tree. Hearing the noise made by the goddess and the tree that was responding to her question, Banaspati Raja was startled from his sleep and felt that he had a right to act upon his right to consume all persons wander about in dangerous places (like the cremation ground or cemetery) at the wrong time of the day. He attacked the goddess fiercely, but they were evenly matched opponents in terms of their “mystical power” (sakti). Since Banaspati Raja always appears in a demonic form, the goddess Uma is said to have felt that she must transform herself into her demonic form as Durga in order to counteract the power of Banaspati Raja. There is a contrast here between a deity (Uma, Durga) whose power comes from “above”, from the realm of the gods and ancestors, with the power of a local deity like Banaspati Raja, whose power is always identified with a particular place or locus, for example the kepuh tree of a cremation ground or cemetery. Thus, in the ensuing battle it was not possible for Banaspati Raja to completely overcome the prowess of the goddess. Banaspati Raja ran away from the goddess Durga. In seeing that the Lord of the Unseen spirits had been defeated by the goddess Durga, all of the unseen spirits tried to help their Lord to fight with the goddess, but when they

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159 According to Monier William (1981:236) the Balinese word Banaspati might be derived from the Sanskrit word Vanaspati meaning herbs and trees, thus the word Banaspati Raja of Balinese word means the Lord of Herbs and Trees.

160 Jegjeg ai or kali tepet are Balinese words meaning midday, when the sun is completely above our head. At that time, Balinese consider it very dangerous to go outside, especially to place like graveyards, rivers, forest or other places that are considered tenget, “spiritually dangerous”. Kepuh are very large tree that usually grows in the graveyards. They have flowers that are blood-red during the season of blossoming, at which point there are only flowers, but no leaves, thus giving the impression of a huge, bare tree covered with bloody flowers. These characteristics of the kepuh tree have made it an important symbol of the power of Durga and of the graveyard in general, and have made it possible for many large kepuh tree to avoid being cut down when they are found in the proximity of a graveyard, burning ground or the Pura Dalem of villages. There is no doubt that villagers would be terrified of the consequences that might come about from daring to cut down a kepuh tree.
approached the goddess they felt terrified and could not look at the goddess’s face. Finally, they stabbed themselves with their own keris knives. According to legend, this is the origin of the Keris and the Barong dance in Bali.

To the present day, in Bali people still use herbal medicine for certain kind of sickness, and there are still many texts in existence, like the Kalimasada, Kuranta Bolong or Taru Pramana, that detail the medicinal uses of natural ingredients, and give recipes for their combination in treating particular diseases. Zysk (1989:133) has pointed out that there are a few Vedic hymns, including Rig Veda 10.97 and Atharva Veda 8.7, that are devoted to the use of medicinal plants. He points out that these lines give important evidence for the ancient use of natural ingredients in the preparation of medicines:

in these hymns, the process of collection of the herbs is mentioned, their consecration detailed, and their uses prescribed. The comprehensive knowledge of plants, which the better Ayurvedic physicians still possess, derives directly from the early Atharvavedic medical tradition.

This ancient tradition of using natural sources as the basis of medicines is also found in the Balinese usada texts. The Balinese traditional medicines are most often found in the form of healing beverages called loloh, or medicinal pastes or unguents, called boreh that are applied to afflicted parts of the body. We also find the use of simbuh, chewed ingredients that are spat out on an afflicted part of the patient’s body, as well as usug, mashed ingredients that are rubbed on the body. Usug are similar to boreh but in this case the ingredients are ground until very fine and rubbed on the whole body or part of the body which is suffering from pain.

The following example taken from the lontar Kuranta Bolong describes the use of an ivory coconut in healing practices, and is given in the form taken as the “reply” of the ivory coconut to the question of the goddess Uma about its efficacy:

Titiang nyuh gading, titiang dados tamba panglukatan sekancan leteh, miwah titiang panumadian Sang Brahmana, manyusup nirmala, raginin sekar tunjung mwah sekar meduri, ring nyamuk titiang rajah mapinda Betara Ciwa,
yan ana janma kepongor dewa, wenang titiang nglukat; miwah sakit ila, sadurunge titiang nglukat tan sida waras tinambanan.

I am a young ivory-coconut, can be used to purify all spiritual impurity, because I am an incarnation of a Brahmin who has entered into a state of great holiness. I have to be combined with a lotus and meduri flower. A magical figure of Shiva must be drawn on my tip. If there is anybody who has been spiritually punished by the gods or goddesses or who has leprosy, I am the one who has the power to purify her/him. Without my help in exorcising someone they cannot be cured.

Further on in the same text, the young ivory-coconut is used as a dispenser of holy water (tirta panglukatan) that can purify people from all kinds of curses, diseases and other states of impurity. The text points out again how important it is that a magical figure of the god Shiva be drawn on the tip of the coconut. If look back to the story of Sudamala, where the goddess Durga has been cursed to become a demonic being who must reside in a graveyard for twelve years and only can be exorcized by Shiva through Sadewa, it seems that the role of the god Shiva has been immortalized as the purifier of all impurity, and that the fruit of the ivory coconut is especially important in providing a physical vehicle and symbol for the transformative powers credited to Shiva and Durga in their role as the divine source of both the afflictions of disease and impurity, and their cure.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have tried to capture some of the ambiguities that surround the goddess Durga as she is known in Bali. I have shown that she not only plays a destructive role, but is also active in creative and protective roles which echo her original roles as narrated in the Puranic literature of the Devi Mahatmya section of the Markandeya Purana. However, the roles of Durga in creation and preservation have gradually been marginalized as the male deities Brahma and Vishnu have gained ascendance in Balinese religious practices, with the result that in contemporary perceptions the major role of the goddess Durga is as a destroyer and patroness of black magic (pangiwa), which I will describe in the following chapter.
Chapter 6

The Role of the Goddess as a Destroyer (Pemralina)

In the previous chapter of this work, I have described the prominent role played by the goddess in Indian Puranic mythologies, the tales of the struggle of the goddess Durga with the buffalo demon, mahisa-asura, which led to her being immortalized as Durga Mahisasuramardini. There are several Puranas that illustrate the goddess Durga as the destroyer of the asura, the demonic enemies of gods. These include the Vayu Purana, Brahma Purana, Matsya Purana, Shiva Purana, Garuda Purana, Brahma Purana, Vamana Purana and the appendix of the Harivamsa Purana. Hariani Santiko (1987) has commented extensively on the role of the goddess Durga as the destroyer of enemies as found in Indian epic and Puranic sources, which also include the Bhisma Parva and Virata Parva sections of the epic Mahabharata. Shulman (1980) has surveyed later works of the Indian tradition, which represent the goddess Durga as the destroyer of enemies that are found in various versions of South Indian Purana composed around the 16th century CE. However, the most elaborate work that illustrates the glory of the goddess Durga is found in the Markandya Purana, especially in the section on the glorification of the goddess, the Devi Mahatmya, where the great goddess is exhorted by all deities to destroy the enemies of the three worlds. A typical line from the Devi Mahatmya underscores this important aspect of Durga as a destroyer of enemies:

O Queen of all, in this manner (as the boon-giver), you must destroy all our enemies and all afflictions in the three worlds (Devi Mahatmya XI:38-39)

The role of the goddess Durga as a deity who can provide valuable assistance in subjugating one’s enemies is still maintained in Bali to the present day in the form of black magic practices that are aimed at overcoming personal enemies, rather than enemies of the kingdom. In the ancient period, when monarchy was still the main form of government, the goddess must have been worshipped using Tantric rituals aimed at eliminating the enemies of the entire kingdom, who were also the enemies of a single person, that is the reigning monarch. During the colonial and independence periods in Bali, this role of the goddess appears to have gradually shifted to the domain of personal struggles for power in local arenas, thus finding an outlet in the
practices of “left-hand magic” that are associated with worship of the goddess Durga in Bali today.

In describing the role of the goddess Durga as the destroyer (pemralina) in Bali, I will base my classification on her role in literary works according to the genre of those works:

- In the forms of mantra as found in the Stuti and Stava, Cukil Daki, and Sapuh Jagat
- In the forms of geguritan as found in I Gede Basur and Ki Balian Batur
- In the forms of prose as found in the Calon Arang, Budha Kecapi and Kayuktian and the myth of Gede Mecaling
- In the shadow-puppet performances (wayang kulit)

The Goddess Durga as a destroyer described in the forms of mantra

There are numerous mantras described in the texts used as guidance for practicing black magic, especially in the lontar entitled Aji Pangleyakan,\(^{161}\) where these mantras are used to invoke the goddess Durga in order to destroy one’s enemies, whether individual or collective enemies. In this Aji Pangleyakan, the goddess Durga is worshipped in order to gain the power to cause various kinds of conflicts, diseases, and even the death of other people. This lontar describes in detail the offerings that need to be made, the best time to carry out rituals, the proper method for worship and the place where the rituals should be performed. The mantras texts like the Aji Pangleyakan are written in a mixture of Sanskrit, Old Javanese, Middle Javanese and Balinese and are memorized so that they can be uttered during rituals aimed at bringing harm to other people. The nature of such mantras is ambivalent, on the one hand they can bring destruction and on another protection. Most of the destructive mantras have a counterbalancing mantra that can be used to neutralize its power, or convert it into protective force. Despite their reputation for being destructive, many of these mantras are very similar, or even identical, with those found commonly in a wide variety of household and village rituals. In the Balinese context, the use of

\(^{161}\) The Aji Pangleyakan contains guidance on how to practice black magic, complete with descriptions of the proper offerings and the procedures for performing rituals of this type.
mantras is invariably associated with the making of offerings and dispensing of purifying holy water (tirtha) with particular mantras and ritual steps depending on the purposes of the ritual. Most of the textual sources of mantras are preserved in lontar manuscripts, which are kept in closed shrines (gedong) in one or more of the village temples, and they are given a special offering during special days like Sarasvati day, when rituals celebrated to venerate the goddess Sarasvati as the goddess of aesthetic beauty, knowledge and the arts. The importance of beauty in the Balinese religion and its strong connection with the goddess Sarasvati means that many lontar manuscripts begin with an invocation dedicated to the goddess Sarasvati that is aimed at ensuring the composer shows the proper respect and so can receive the blessings of knowledge.

In texts like the Aji Pangleyan there is a similar emphasis on the need to pay respect to the goddess, but in this case, it is to Durga in her most grotesque and terrifying form. This contrast of beauty and ugliness could be considered one of the sources of the power of figures like Rangda in the Calon Arang tale, who are powerful through transgression of the normal order of life.

It is very interesting to note that the standard pantheon of the images of Shiva, Agastya, Ganesha and Durga that is found in Central and East Javanese temple complexes ranging in age from c.700 to 1500 CE is preserved in Bali in the form of mantras. Even in works like the Tantu Panggelaran that may have been written as late as the sixteenth century, we find that the God Shiva or Bhatara Guru, carries out his meditation on the peak of Mount Mahameru, which can be identified with Mount Sumeru of present day East Java. The east side of his mountain home is then described as guarded by Sang Hyang Gana (Ganesha), the south side by Resi Anggasti (Agastya) and the north by Bhatari Gori (Durga), which correspond to the location of each image in the Hindu temple complex of Java (Pigeaud, 1924:96-97; Santiko, 1987:68; Chutiwongs, 2003:74). In Bali we find descriptions of this Javanese form of the Shaiva pantheon in literary works like the usada (“medical”) text Cukil Daki. This textual source contains mantra eulogizing the four deities of the ancient Javanese pantheon in order to protect rice fields from destruction caused by plagues (marana) or by insects or plant diseases (Atmaja, 2002:90-91).
In performing a ritual to ward off the pests that bring destruction to the rice fields, Balinese farmers always make sure their rituals are complete with the proper offerings and holy water needed to invoke gods and goddesses. The ritual itself is called *nangluk merana*, a Balinese phrase that means “to subdue enemies or plagues”. A *mantra* that can be recited from Canto 27a-b from the *lontar Cukil Daki* as part of this ritual reminds us of the continuing importance of the ancient Central Javanese pantheon in the ritual texts of Bali:

_Ongkara nama Siwaya, Angkara Sang Hyang Anggasti, anak ira Bhatara Guru, masalilahang ring kono wruh aku sangka ning nguni, saking Bhatari Durgga, sangkan ta nguni, malwar sakweh ing amighna ning sawah, lwar, lwar, lwar._

Om, hail to the god Shiva; Ang, hail to _Sang Hyang Anggasti_ (Agastya); hail to the son of Bhatara Guru (Ganesha). May you be pleased there in that place [the rice field]. Since I know your origin in the past, none other than the goddess Durga, therefore all of you plagues (*merana*) that trouble the rice field should go away - go away, go away, go away.

It is clear from the *mantra* above that the goddess Durga is considered to be the source or origin of diseases including plagues that affect wet rice fields. Notice that in transforming the chaotic state of nature into a normal situation, the person carrying out the ritual says that s/he “knows the origin” of the plague or disease, that is in the goddess Durga. It is believed that knowing and being able to name the origin of suffering gives the ritual practitioner power over the situation, and the ability to return things to an untroubled state. Stephen (2005:117) has called attention to the role that ritual plays in creating order, the opposite of the chaotic situation that brings diseases and epidemics:

> as the creative process degenerates into wild energy of Durga, Siwa Kala, and the counterbalancing function of human ritual that serves to return, or to reabsorb, the dangerous energy back to its pure origins

Lovric (1986:72) also points out that “any entity can have the power to cure or to cause it”. From the *mantra* given above, we can see that part of the power of the goddess Durga comes from the uncontrolled aspect of her creative power, her power
to create all kinds of living creatures, both benign and malignant. But this also means that proper ritual can cause the smallest living creatures, the causes of diseases and plagues, to be reabsorbed into Durga, so that once again there is equilibrium in the sphere of the world.

Other mantras which deal with the invocation to the goddess Durga to grant the annihilation of one’s enemies are found in hymns (stuti and stava) composed in Sanskrit, or a mixture of Sanskrit and Old Javanese. In these hymns, the goddess Durga is described as having a manifestation in five-headed form (Durga-murti panca-grivam). Goudriaan and Hooykaas (1971:150-151) describe the hymn as follows:

The hymn is in ten stanzas of Archipelago Sanskrit addressed the goddess in her terrible aspect, the honour should be to the Goddess Who destroys all enemies (passim), Who is identical with the all gods (7) and Who promotes the good of all beings (8).

A citation of the full Durga-Stava as given by Goudriaan and Hooykaas (1971:150-151) gives us a good idea of the classical Balinese point of view on her powers of destruction:

Durga-murti panca-grivam, kalika-vahana-divyam  
krura-rupam agni-jvalam, kala-murti Rudratmakam.

Durga’s manifestation is five-headed,  
with Kalika as her mount, divine  
of horrible shape, flaming like fire,  
a manifestation of Kala, of Rudra’s nature.

Sarva-bhuta-vipranatam, vanas-patim krura-rupam  
Bhairavi Durga-murtinam, sarva-satru-bhasmi-citam.

Respected by all beings,  
ruling the wood, of horrible shape;  
the Terrible Lady, a manifestation of Durga,  
reducing all enemies to ashes.
Kalantaka mṛtyu-jivam, kala-rudhira-prakasam
sarva-astra-tanpamyatam, sarva-satru-vipranatam.

[She is] Kala, the God of Death, bringing death and life,
conspicuous by blood like Kala;
all missiles……., respected by all enemies.

UM Vajra-danta maha-dasyam, krura-damstre prabhasvaram
ghora-rupam krura-vakttram, sarva-satru-andhakaram.

With teeth like thunderbolts, very…….,
with horrible fangs, illustrious;
of terrible shape, with horrible mouth,
blinding all enemies.

Agni-parvata-murtinam, 'prameya-urdha-akasam
surya-candre nilocanam, kesa-rupam kṛṣṇa-varnam.

Embodied in the Fire and in the mountains,
immeasurable, reaching upwards to the sky;
having Sun and Moon as her eyes,
her hair is of black colour.

Trangana-ratna-bhusanam, surya-sahasra-bhusanam
sarva-deva-pranamyam, sarva-satru-bhasmi-citam.

Adorned by the legions of stars as Her jewels,
having a thousand suns as Her ornaments;
being respected by all the gods,
reducing all enemies to ashes.

UM Namo 'stu te Bhagavati, Bhairavi kala-murtinam
sarva-deva-ma-sariram, sarva-satru-vinasayam.

Honour be to Thee, Venerable Lady,
Terrible Lady, manifested in Kala;
Who art embodied in all the gods,
Who destroyed all enemies.

Sarva-bhuta-prama-sukham, krurananda ghorantaram
asrame juga jagrestham, mamsa-mamse ripu-citram.

Thou presentest the supreme bliss to all beings,
but Thou also rejoicest in the horrible, the very terrible;
…………………………..in the waking state,
voracious, throwing down enemies.

UM Bhuta-mamse musti-jangyam, bhuta-drmbhana-traya
kalagnin ca navanam, bhuta-pita musti-vaham.

Devouring beings, welfare……………….,
damaging beings, nine…………..three……;
the fire which destroys the world, nine-headed,
yellow beings……..bringing welfare.

This hymn to the goddess reflects the idea of the power of chanting, hymns to the
goddess that is found in Puranic period texts of India like the Devi Mahatmya Canto
XII:18 tells the practitioner that the chanting of this hymn can “diminish most
effectively the power all of men of evil ways, verily demons, goblins and ogres”.

As it was mentioned earlier in this chapter, a passage glorifying the goddess Durga is
also found in the kakawin Sutasoma, composed c.1370 CE by Mpu Tantular
(Zoetmulder, 1974:329-341). In Canto 13, verses 1-3 Durga’s terrifying form as
Mahabhairavi or Bhatari Nini, is described as being invoked by both sides in a battle,
each of them seeking and gaining her assistance through the use of a powerful mantra
called the Durga-maya-smrti “recollection of the magical power (maya) of Durga”.

Another form of mantra that deals with the invocation of the goddess Durga is closer
to what we might term an invocation. Mantras in this form are found in lontar
manuscripts like Kaputusan Sapuh Jagat (Anon, 1989:3). This manuscript describes
the goddess as Bhatari Girinatha, who descends to the middle world as Bhatari Sapuh
Jagat, “the goddess who sweeps the world clean”, that is the destroyer of all evils and
all black magic practitioners (leyak). A lengthy passage in this text is meant to be recited by the practitioner as s/he concentrates on gaining the power latent in the invocation:

_Indep aku sarining Bhatari Girinatha, tedun ring madyapada, aran Bhatari Sapuh Jagat, kawisesaning Bhatari Durga, sapa wani ring aku, aku kamulaning wisesa sakti, aku kamulaning guna pangaruh leyak bhang leyak ireng manembah ring aku, leyak kuning leyak putih manembah ring aku, leyak katon leyak tan katon manembah ring aku, leyak amanca warna manembah ring aku [.....] bhuta kala dengen, sakweh-ing satru musuhku, padha bhakti ya sakrodha sih, apan maring marupa Durga, rupanku Bhatari Girinatha, anempurin padha punuh, luput aku sakaryaning satru hala, anglangsah, gangsah, jumneng Bhatara Surya, Bhatara Ratih, jumeneng Bhatara Vishnu, apa isin pasihe kangin, apa isin pasihe kawuh, apa isin pasihe kelod, apa isin pasihe kaja, jumneng Bhatara Eka, jumeneng Bhatara Tuduh, jumeneng Bhatara Guru, tka patuh tka patuh tka patuh_

My mind is the essence of _Bhatari Girinatha_ (“the goddess who is the consort of the lord of mountains”), who descends to the middle world and is known as _Bhatari Sapuh Jagat_ (the cleanser of the universe). Who dares to face me? I am the origin of all powerful magic. I am the origin of the quality of irresistible influence. Red and black _leyaks_ are worshipping me; white _leyak_ are worshipping me; visible and invisible _leyak_ are worshipping me; the _leyak_ of mixed four colours are worshipping me. [Demons in the form of] _bhuta kala, dengen_ and all my enemies are devoted to me; no matter how angry they are, they become compassionate, because my form is from Durga, my form is that of Bhatari Girinatha. [Whoever] wants to attack me will be destroyed; I am released from all dangers inflicted by my enemies; they are all tied up like plated coconut leaves. Please take your places Lord Surya (Sun), goddess Ratih (Moon), Lord Vishnu, and all the contents of the seas of the east, west, south and north. Please take your places, Lord Eka (One), Lord Tuduh (Destiny), Lord Guru (Holy Teacher). May all be subjugated, all subjugated, all subjugated!
This mantra dedicated to Durga as the spouse of Shiva (Girinatha, the Lord of the Mountain) and known as Bhatari Sapuh Jagat when she descends to this middle world, reveals the belief that it is possible to completely overcome one’s enemies by understanding Durga as the source of all powerful magic, and by identifying with her in this role. As the origin of all powerful magic, the goddess – and the practitioner of secret rituals aimed at uniting with her – can subdue all enemies. In this form, the goddess is understood as the queen of the leyak, who all serve her, and as being able to subdue the gods and other entities that occupy the four quarters of the world. By uniting with this powerful and all-pervading goddess through rituals accompanied by an incantation in this form, practitioners hope to gain the power to do ill to their enemies. Conversely, a traditional healer (balian) who believes their client is under black magic attack can cite a mantra or invocation of this type as a protective amulet.

The Goddess Durga as a destroyer described in the geguritan form

The role of the goddess Durga as a deity who can provide valuable assistance in subjugating one’s enemies is still maintained in present day Bali in the form of black magic practices used to subdue individual enemies. In order to bring about severe destruction to one’s enemies, the practitioner should have the power to transform her/his bodily shape into a demonic form, grotesque that is often tusked and flaming (H. Geertz (1995:4). There are numerous literary works, which deal with the transformation of bodily shape into demonic forms in order to bring about destruction. One of the most well known literary works that deal with this theme is the tale of Calon Arang, wherein a widow (Old Javanese: randa, rangda) is described as transforming herself into the terrifying demonic form known as Rangda, which gives her the power to inflict disaster to the entire kingdom of Airlangga. Another set of literary works that deal with the theme of black magic are two thematically related works, the tale of Ki Balian Batur and the tale of I Gede Basur, which have been immortalized in two works in metrical geguritan form that take the names of their main characters. These works describe the terrifying powers that are mastered and used for evil purposes, which share many characteristics with Rangda, and obtain their powers through similar ritual invocations of the “left-hand” (pangiwa) type. In these two works, geguritan Ki Balian Batur and geguritan Gede Basur, I have found support for my thesis that the taking on of a ferocious form is itself the very means
and source of the destruction that can be wrought by a “person of power” (anak sakti) who has attained superhuman abilities but uses them for destructive purposes. In both these works, the goddess Durga is worshipped by her devotees with the intention to destroy both personal and collective enemies through a transformation into a demonic terrifying form.

The geguritan Ki Balian Batur is semi-historical, in the sense that the basic tale is based on ancient chronicles like Usana Bali and Usana Jawa, and more recent works like the Babad Mengwi and Babad Timbul as well as the kidung Pamancangah (Berg, 1936, Sangra, 1997:2). This tale is set in the time of the power of the Mengwi kingdom before its fall at the end of the nineteenth century. A small social event is described that leads to a great battle of magical wills through worship of Durga in a cremation ground, and through transformations of the body into demonic figures that can cause destruction to enemies. The social event that caused this story was a case of slander, which caused the exile of a powerful traditional healer and his family, and subsequently a desperate battle between this family and the village they attack with their magical powers. I will summarize the plot of geguritan Ki Balian Batur in prose form. The story runs as follows:

Once there was a harmonious family who lived near a lake in the village of Karang Kedangkan. The father, Ki Balian Batur was a very devoted to Bhatari Danu, the goddess of the lake, and for this reason they were blessed to live happily. There were six children in the family with only one boy, the youngest child. Each of the children did their duty properly, and the family prospered. But nothing is eternal. One day, when the second daughter, Made Wali was selling food at the cook-fight area in the village of Cau, not far from their own village. Made Wali was a beautiful girl with attractive personality. Her food sold very quickly, and all was going well for Made, but then an ugly man who was very drunk came by Made’s stall and said that she must be selling human meat since her parents were famous as practitioners of the black magic. When they heard what he said, people who had eaten Made’s food become sick in the stomach and vomited. She tried to defend herself but nobody listened to her, though she took an oath that she was not doing any such thing. Though she wasn’t finished selling her food, she finally went home broken-hearted and locked herself in the room. When Ki Balian Batur found out that his family
had been slandered by a man from Cau he determined to destroy the village and all its inhabitants. He told his wife and his children to be ready to face their enemies. Ki Balian Batur protected his family by drawing magical syllables and diagrams (*rarajahan*) in their tongue, on every limb of their bodies and, most important, on the crown of their heads. He also gave each of his family members magical spells to protect themselves, but he reserved for his wife the most powerful spell of all, which is called *Aji Kalung Swetha* (“the teaching of the white necklace”), which is said to have the same power as that of *Calon Arang*. Now Ki Balian and his family were ready to put in practice the black magic spells they would use to destroy their enemies. On the darkest night of the moon, on the day Thursday *Kajeng-Kliwon*, Ki Balian Batur and his family went to the cremation ground to ask for the blessings of the goddess Durga. They were joined as well by 34 ‘disciples’ (*sisya*) of Ki Balian Batur, who were now also considered outcastes and exiles from their villages for being associated with a family who had been branded magicians and cannibals. During the rituals in the cremation ground Ki Balian Batur and his followers transformed themselves into the form of raging flames that rained down from the sky on the village of Cau. The very next day, on the morning after that magical attack, the village of Cau was afflicted by a plague that brought numerous deaths.

The elders from the Cau village then went to the Kawyapura, the capital of the kingdom of Mengwi and appeared in the hall of audience of Cokorda Sakti Blambangan to report the catastrophe that had befallen his people. Cokorda Sakti then asked his minister, De Bandesa Sukra, to counterattack the assault of Ki Balian Batur and his followers. The battle between Ki Balian Batur and the troop of Mengwi went on for many days and nights, become fiercer with each encounter. Finally, De Bendesa went to the house of Ki Balian Batur to tell him that for the good of the community he would have to kill Ki Balian Batur. At this, Ki Balian Batur took refuge with the goddess Durga, hoping that this would give him the power to annihilate the people of Mengwi. Then, every one of Ki Balian pupils transformed into a demonic figure, ready to bring about death and destruction. But De Bandesa used a powerful form of magical protection called *pangreb bwana* (“protector of the world”), which
destroyed the power and confidence of the followers of Ki Balian Batur so that they all met with their death through the powerful protective magic of De Bendesa. Then Biang Putu, the wife of Ki Balian Batur, became enraged and transformed herself into a Rangda with bulging eyes and flames emerging from every limb of her body. She shrieked at De Bendesa and attacked him fiercely. But De Bendesa counterattacked, using a very powerful *keris* knife, which made the Rangda run home to seek the help of Ki Balian. Ki Balian became furious and then transformed himself into a *garuda*, a powerful mythical bird.

The logic of the tale is very interesting because it does not follow the usual kind of development, where De Bendesa might simply defeat Ki Balian Batur with a greater form of power. However, in this Balinese tale it is only when Ki Balian Batur himself tells De Bendesa that he can only be killed with a certain heirloom that belongs to the king of Klungkung, who is often considered the king with the highest claim to magical power. This knowledge allows De Bendesa to eventually overpower and kill Ki Balian Batur, and then to bring about the reunification of the kingdoms of Mengwi and Klungkung.

I believe it will be useful to compare this summary of the *geguritan Ki Balian Batur* with a shorter summary of *geguritan I Gede Basur*, based on the translation and extensive commentary of Hooykaas (1978). While the two tales relate different stories, there are important similarities in the way magic is portrayed as a tool for overcoming one’s enemies, and in the role played by the worship of Durga:

There was a family with two young daughters, Ni Sukanti and Ni Rajasa. They lived happily until one day the mother of the girls suddenly died from a magical poison, leaving the girls to live alone with their father. When they reached maturity they became beautiful young women, and received numerous proposals of marriage, including one from I Wayan Tigaron, the son of the powerful and wealthy I Gede Basur, for the hand of the elder daughter, Ni Sukanti. But Ni Sukanti refused Basur’s proposal on behalf of his son, and chose instead to become the bride of Tirtha, a modest man, of modest means. Basur was very upset and went to the cremation ground to worship the goddess Durga in order to inflict sickness, or even death, on Sukanti. Basur’s
magic was very powerful, with the result that Sukanti nearly died. However, a
traditional healer, Kaki Baliyan helped rescue her from the magical sickness.
Kaki Baliyan knew who had made Sukanti sick, and so he uttered a mantra
designed to defeat Basur. In the end Basur admitted defeat and spared
Sukanti’s life. At almost the same time, a girl named Ni Garu who was
exceptionally ugly and unwanted tried to seduce Tigaron. She was on the point
of success when suddenly Tigaron’s father, Basur appeared in their midst
Basur was furious seeing Garu in his house with his son, and so humiliated Ni
Garu that she wet her pants. In shame and anger she ran away to the cremation
ground, where she wailed and cried, asking those who dwell in the cremation
ground to devour her. The goddess Durga then appeared in front of Garu and
saw that she was not afraid of the goddess. Garu asked the goddess to devour
her, but the goddess Durga refused, instead blessing Garu with a very
powerful form of magic, even stronger than Basur’s magic. The goddess then
instructed Garu to challenge Basur to a battle and to overwhelm him with her
magic power. Because of this blessing of the goddess, Garu was able to defeat
Basur. 162

Both geguritan Ki Balian Batur and geguritan I Gede Basur give great prominence to
the role of the goddess Durga in blessing her devotees with magical power that allows
them to conquer, defeat or kill their enemies. Descriptions of the modes of worship of
the goddess are nearly the same in both works, including the type of offerings made
and the time of day when rituals for magical power are performed (after sunset). It is
important to note that in both cases where Durga grants her power she acts in
response to the plea of someone who has a grievance or complaint, and responds only
to that fact in bestowing her power. Ki Balian Batur and his family and followers have
been wronged by slander, a very serious offense in many Indonesian societies, and so
in that sense have a justification in wanting to gain magical power. In geguritan I
Gede Basur, Basur feels wronged by Ni Sukanti’s rejection of his proposal that she
marry his son, Tigaron.

162 See Hooykaas (1978) for further details of the tale of I Gede Basur.
A comparison of key passages from *geguritan Ki Balian Batur* and *geguritan I Gede Basur* bring out the importance of the goddess in an attack on one’s enemies, regardless of the motivation for the attack. First we look at Canto 7.1 of *geguritan Ki Balian Batur*:

```
Sampun tutug sandikala
Ki Balian Batur ngastuti.
Ida Hyang Bhatari Durga.
Nunas kasidiane murub.
Mangda brasta sami pejah.
Wong Mengwi.
Dening purun nguragada.
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The dusk had come,
Ki Balian Batur paid homage,
To the Goddess Durga,
To ask for the blessing of a blazing power,
So that all his enemies would be annihilated,
The people of Mengwi,
Who had dared to bring trouble to his life.\(^{163}\)

If we compare this verse with parts of verses 50-51 of *I Gede Basur* which illustrate the ritual performed to gain the favour of the goddess Durga, we can see many similarities:

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Jani suba sande-kala,
I Gede Basur ya pedih,
Ka setrane ngaba canang,
Suba ya masanggah cukcuk,
Siyap biying banten nyahnyah,
Burat wangi,
Daluwang marajah Durga.
```

Now when the darkness of the evening came,
Gede Basur was still angry,
He went to the cremation ground carrying *canang* offerings,
And erected there a *sanggah cukcuk*,
[To which he offered] the meat of a red chicken, roasted [rice] offerings,
And fragrant ointment,
[Along with] a magical drawing of Durga on bark cloth.\(^{164}\)

\(^{163}\) Transliteration of Sangra (1997:29).

\(^{164}\) Transliteration and translation of Hooykaas (1978:49).
Both poems above tell us that the best time to worship the goddess Durga is after twilight, and at her dwelling place in the cremation ground. The purpose of the worship is to inflict sickness or even death on one’s enemy. This mode of worship is very secret and performed by individuals, thus in stark contrast to most Balinese rituals, which are almost always collective in some sense. The main purpose of such worship, for both men and women, is to seek kesaktian (“possession of great magical power”) from the unseen spirits, either from the goddess Durga, who is portrayed in textual sources on magic as residing in the Setra Gandamayu (“Fragrant Cremation ground”), or from Shiva, who in this context is understood as the “Five Great Creators” as (Panca Brahma) in the Pura Dalem, the temple of dissolution. There are various purposes for wishing to attain the power of sakti, and there are also various ways to reach the state of possessing such power (kesaktian). Some people seek kesaktian so that they can help people in dealing with sicknesses, whether mental or physical diseases, or caused by visible (sekala) or invisible (niskala) beings. As Lovric notes (1986:68) when such powers are sought for the purpose of healing the persons who are seeking the power are called balian, or traditional healers. On the other hand, those who seek kesaktian to destroy people are understood to be leyak, practitioners of left-hand magic (pangiwa), who seek power in order to harm people. Both of these forms of practitioner might worship the same deity (Durga), in much the same way, in order to gain power either to destroy human life, or to restore human lives to their proper, healthy state.

Hooykaas (1978) and Karji (1999) both list five types of practitioner of “left-hand” or “black” magic (pangiwa) including pengasren, pangeger, pangasih-asih, panangkep and pangleakan. As Hooykaas (1978:3) points out the most feared form of practice is that of pangleakan, the ability to transform oneself into a demonic or animal form (leak, leyak) using the magical practices known as aji ugi, or aji wegig. The practitioners of this kind of magic are said to be able to kill even people who are blameless and guilty of no wrong-doing (wenang amatimati wong tan padosa) such as we find in the Calon Arang tale, where the witch Rangda brings havoc and suffering to the entire land, with no regard for the guilt or innocence of anyone. However, it is also believed that black magic practitioners will try to find fault with their intended victim as this is claimed to make it easier for them to inflict disaster. Another common belief is that by “offering” victims (penyambleh) who are killed through the
practice of pungiwa, a practitioner can gain a “higher rank” in terms of ability to control supernatural power (sakti). This form of belief may well go back to sources in the Puranic period in India. The Kalika Purana, for example, states that the more a worshipper of Durga or Kali offers human victims, the higher their rank will be and the sooner they will gain the blessings of the goddess and success in all their endeavours. On the other hand, the idea that there must be some form of guilt attached to victims who are sacrificed to the goddess Durga is reflected in Old Javanese sources like the kakawin Ghatotkacasraya, where in Verses 29.1-15 it is said that Karalawaktra, the servant of Durga, seeks only those who cause trouble to human society (vang ing marusuh) to be used as offerings to the goddess Durga.

There are many lontar manuscripts that deal specifically with the subject of worshipping Durga to seek powerful magic. Among the most complete is the Aji Pangleyakan, which lays out detailed rules for attaining power from the goddess Durga by following rules and requirements including the proper time and place for worshipping the goddess, that is in the cremation ground, or burning ground, which is called the Setra Gandamayu in the text. It is significant that in this text the goddess Durga is to be invoked in her form as Ra Nini Batari Bhagavati, for the term Bhagavati calls to mind the name given to the Rajapatni after her apotheosis as the Buddhist goddess of wisdom (Prajnaparamita) during the sraddha rites of 1362 CE that are reported in detail in the Nagarakertagama or the Desawarnana (1365 CE) cantos 53-57 (Pigeaud, 1960 Vol. I:48 and Robson, 1995:130). At the same time, the term Ra Nini recalls the name given to Durga in the kidung Sudamala. It thus seems

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165 Penyambleh are usually considered offerings of sacrificial animals, which are used to placate demonic spirits. In public rituals like temple festivals, priests typically sacrifice the blood of live chickens, which is then spilled on a segehan offering laid on the ground at the place of ritual in order to please the chthonic spirit and ensure that they will not cause interruptions or misfortunes to the ritual. For larger rituals penyambleh offerings may consist of an uncastrated, male pig (celeng basur), while magical texts sometimes even speak of human sacrifices to Durga as the queen of demonic spirits.

166 For a discussion of Ghatotkacasraya 29.1-15 see Chapter Two above.

167 I have used the term “cremation ground” in this section to translate setra. In some Balinese communities a distinction is made between the setra, where the bodies of the deceased are cremated, and the sema, where they are buried, but for most communities the two terms are nearly synonymous, since there is no clear separation of space between the area where the deceased are cremated and the area where bodies that are temporarily buried due to a lack of funds for the cremation rituals or the availability of an auspicious day for cremation. Setra probably comes from the Sanskrit term ksetra, “field” while sema can perhaps be traced to shmasana, a Sanskrit term for a cremation ground.
that the textual and ritual practices of the Balinese “left hand path” (pengiwa) have retained strong traces of the process of demonization of the goddess Durga that I have claimed in Chapter Four of this work represents a turning point in the history of representations of the goddess in Java and Bali. Hooykaas (1978:30-31) quotes the following formula from a lontar manuscript titled Pangiwa, which is very similar to formulae found in the Aji Pangleyakan, and also the Belego Dawa, another lontar detailing the correct procedures to be followed by those who are willing to practice the black magic. In the text cited by Hooykaas, even the offerings are vividly described, and the correct procedures for following the “left hand path” are detailed:

\[\text{Yan ahyun angangge pangiwa, lamakane wenang sakti, sidi, mahawisesa, abresih apeningan mahening-hening.}\]

When one wishes to use black magic in order to obtain supernatural power and to succeed in sorcery, one should begin by cleansing oneself with the utmost care.

\[b. \text{Kala wengi mandewa-sraya rumuhun ring pangulu n setra, amedek Paduka Batari Durga, nunas panugrahan.}\]

b. During the night one should to the temple of the grave yard which located in the most elevated of the cemetery and turn oneself towards the eternal powers in the temple while invoking the goddess Durga to ask for blessing or favour.

c. \text{Srana: daksina 1, artanya 17,000, canang 11 tanding, katipat 2 kelan, arak, berem, injin, katur ka luhr}\]

c. Requisites: One should bring offerings consist of a daksina provided with 17,000 Chinese coins, eleven canang, two kelin katipat, arrack and rice wine made of black rice and steamed black-rice cake. These offerings should be offered to the Goddess.

d. \text{Wus mangkana, asila angarepi paryangan, amusti rangkep, teher agra-nasika, tan mari asep menyen astanggi; nirmalakena atinta.}\]
d. After that, one should sit on the ground in front of the sanctuary with the hands in the praying position and then concentrate. Without interrupting the concentration one should take care the aromatic materials are kept smouldering. While keeping one’s mind free from other thoughts one should utter this mantra.

e. Mantra: Om Ra Nini Batari Bagawati, turun ka Bali; ana wang mangkana; aminta kasih ring Paduka Batari, sira nunas turun ka mretya-pada.

e. Mantra: Om the Most Venerated Goddess Bhagawati, deign to descend to Bali. There is someone invoking Thy favour and asking that Thou descend to the world of mortals.


f. There is someone who asks for supernatural power; numerous people are asking Thee that Devine Teacher descend to the world of mortals.

g. Ana wang manusa angawe Batara kabe, turun ka Bali Sang Hyang Bagawati.

g. People are directing themselves to the Gods, so that the Goddess Bhagawati may descend to Bali.

h. Ana buta wilis, ana buta abang, [ana buta jenar], ana buta ireng, ana buta amanca-warna, mawak I Kalika, ya kautus antuk Batari Bagawati, teka welas-asih ring awak-sarira n ku-ne, pakulun Paduka Bagawati

h. There are dark-green bhuta, red ones, [yellow ones], black ones and bhuta of mixed of the five colours (amancawarna), which embodied in Kalika. May they be sent by the Goddess Bhagawati who will be gracious towards me; I am Thy obedient servant of Thou, Goddess Bhagawati.
i. Om Mam Am Om Mam, ana Paduka Guru, teka welas-asih, Bagawati manggih di gedong kunci manik, teka asih ring awak-sarira n ku. Telas,

i. Om Mam Am Om Mam, there is Bhatara Guru who has gracious heart; the Goddess Bhagawati comes and meets him at the closed-shrine of jewels, be gracious toward myself.

j. Duluran: canang tubungan, burat wangi lenga wangi, nyahnyah gagringsingan, geti-geti, byu mas.

j. That invocation must be completed with canang tubungan, burat wangi lenga wangi, nyahnyah gagringsingan (roasted rice with golden colour), geti-geti (roasted rice mixed with brown sugar to get the red colour), byu mas (type of a small banana fruit with golden colour).

Nala (1997) also gives a very clear description of the procedures for practicing black magic. Nala’s description of ritual practices is very close to the information found in textual sources like the Aji Pengleyakan, but is based on interviews with traditional healers so shows us that textual and ritual practices have not diverged greatly in the realm of magical practices. One important detail noted by Nala (1997:182) is that the best time to practice black magic is at midnight of the day kajeng kliwon, that is when the day kajeng of the Balinese three-day market week meets kliwon, one of the days of the Javano-Balinese five-day market week. This conjunction of days from the three and five-day week cycles, which reoccurs on a 15-day cycle, is considered a very powerful and dangerous day for all Balinese, and requires extra offerings placed around the house yard and in front of the main entranceway of every compound in order to protect the household from the possibility of magical attacks. This point is also brought out in geguritan Ki Balian Batur, verse 3. 15 (Sangra, 1997:12):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Ri kalaning peteng wulan} & \quad \text{When it is the darkest night of the lunar cycle} \\
\text{Kajeng Kliwon nemu Wraspati} & \quad \text{And the meeting point of Thursday with} \\
\text{Ki Balian Batur ring setra} & \quad \text{Ki Balian Batur was in the cemetery} \\
\text{Rabi oka sami dulur} & \quad \text{With his wife and all his children along}
\end{align*}
\]
Ngredana Bhatari Durga
Nunas mandi,
Kasidan kasama-sama
All worshipping the goddess Durga
Asking for power
And magical strength for each one of them.

Figure 6.1: The devotee of Durga (left) before taking on demonic form as Rangda (right)

Since this is a very secret practice, only a few people will ever talk about the more complete details, and then only to trusted persons who have been initiated by the same guru, or who are students of a guru who have demonstrated their absolute reliability and ability to keep their practices secret. This is believed to create a special group of people who all share the power of the magic bestowed on them under the guidance of their guru, and whose fates are then inextricably linked with that of their teacher. We find this reflected in the geguritan Ki Balian Batur where the defeat of Ki Balian Batur and his wife leads to the death of all their family and pupils.

The Goddess Durga as a destroyer described in prose form

There are a number of works in prose form that narrate myths concerning the role of the goddess Durga as the destroyer of the human through inflicting plagues and disease. Among the most famous works are the prose Calon Arang, which is considered the oldest textual version of the tale of the witch Rangda and her students
in black magic (*calon arang*). Other important prose works that relate myths of the goddess include *Bodha Kecapi* and *Usada Kayuktian*, and we also find myths common in the oral tradition like that of Ratu Gede Mecaling, a powerful deity who is said to reside on the island of Nusa Penida and periodically send plagues and other disasters to mainland Bali. In this section, however, I will concentrate on the prose *Calon Arang* since it most supports my intention to illustrate the role of the goddess as a destroyer, and has many similarities with the works described above that take a metrical or poetic form, and those that make extensive use of mantras and invocations that can be used in the practices aimed at securing the blessings of the goddess. The *Calon Arang* is also very interesting if we look at its connection with literary works of ancient India composed during the 8th or 9th centuries CE, especially in sections that deal with human sacrifices offered to the goddess Durga.

Poerbatjaraka (1926) made an important contribution to the study of the tale of Rangda with his intensive work on the prose *Calon Arang* as found in textual sources written in Balinese script and using a mixture of the Old Javanese and Middle Javanese literary language. More recently Suastika (1997) has contributed a volume on the textual history of the prose *Calon Arang* and its descendants in *kidung* and *geguritan* form. Speaking of the prose *Calon Arang* as found in a manuscript from the library of Leiden University used by Poerbatjaraka as the basis of his work (LOr 5387/5279) he says that “the oldest text of *Calon Arang* was written in a traditional Balinese literary style”, and goes on to say that it was composed in a priestly residence during the Gelgel period. According to Suastika (1997:42) this would place the origins of the prose *Calon Arang* during the reign of Waturenggong (c.1460-1550 CE). According to Poerbatjaraka (1926:110) and Santiko (1987:221) the language of the prose *Calon Arang* suggests that it must have been composed earlier than 16th century CE. However, neither of these authors was able to provide a colophon or other hard evidence for an earlier date for the prose *Calon Arang*. In later developments, several new versions of the *Calon Arang* tale were composed on Bali, including the *kidung* verse [LOr 4565] and a *geguritan* or *peparikan* version (Gedong Kirtya I.vd/1047), The *kidung Calon Arang* may have been composed as early as the

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168 Suastika (1997:6-7) has mentioned both foreign and local scholars who have worked on the tale of *Calon Arang* in various languages which include Dutch, Indonesian and Balinese.
period of unrest at the end of the seventeenth century that saw the shift of the capital from Gelgel to nearby Klungkung, while the geguritan Calon Arang was likely produced in 19th century Klungkung.

The prose Calon Arang is very important to my study because it illustrates the prominence of the goddess Durga as the “personal deity” (istadewata) for Randa ing Dirah, “the widow from Dirah”) who worships the goddess Bhagavati (Durga) in the cremation ground in order to gain the favour of Durga and the power of causing great destruction. This work has much in common with the Sudamala, in that the figure who is “possessed” or given blessings by the goddess Durga is considered to be in an impure state. In the Majapahit work Sudamala, Durga herself is in an impure state due to the curse of lord Shiva, and will remain that way for twelve years, a time period that is identical with the date of decease of one of the Majapahit royalty and the performance of the sraddha rites that are believed to liberate the soul (atma) of the deceased and allow them to enter into a pure state as divine ancestors of the living royal family. Many scholars believe this tale had an exorcistic function, since in the story the demonic and impure state of Durga needs to be exorcised (diruwat) in order to free from any kind of impurities. In the Calon Arang, Rangda of Dirah is in a state of impurity because of having killed so many of the populace of the kingdom of Airlangga through powerful black magic, and must also be exorcized, in this case by the powerful sage Mpu Bharadah. Basically, both the Sudamala and the Calon Arang deal with exorcistic acts, and both have been portrayed in that way in theatrical performances based on these textual sources. The main difference between the two works is that in the Sudamala, it is the divine being Durga in her liminal, impure form who is separated from her divine husband Shiva/Bhatara guru and can only be reunited through his exorcising her by (in turn) “possessing” Sadewa, one of the Pandava brothers. On the other hand, in the Calon Arang the demonic goddess Durga has been replaced by a powerful, mortal widow named Rangda of Dirah. In my opinion the character of Rangda in the Calon Arang reflects the liminal and dangerous state of the goddess Durga that was first developed in the Sudamala. I believe that the similarities between these two works, and their continuing popularity, mean that the relationship of the two works has a strong relation to the social life in Bali. In this chapter, I hope to sketch the historical basis of the Calon Arang tale, and go on in the
following chapter to attempt a study of how this important exorcistic drama is related to Balinese social life.

As I have mentioned earlier, the setting of the *Calon Arang* tale is East Java during the reign of Airlangga that is during the first half of the 11th century CE. This suggests that the story may have originated in East Java. While the character Rangda seems to be entirely fictional, or mythical, the story is given a historical setting during the reign of Airlangga, and may represent a distant reflection of events like the struggle for power over the kingdom of Daha/Kediri that occurred just after the abdication of Airlangga in 1042 CE (Boechari, 1967/8). Santiko (1987:221-227) has noted the story line of the *Calon Arang* can be divided into two parts:

1. the story of Rangda of Dirah and the struggle of Mpu Bharadah to overcome her magical power and to exorcise her
2. the division of the Airlangga’s kingdom into two parts, carried out by the legendary sage Bharadah after an unsuccessful attempt to convince the Balinese sage Mpu Kuturan to allow the second son of Airlangga to rule in Bali

The division of Airlangga’s kingdom suggests that the important role of the twins, Nakula and Sadewa, in the *Sudamala* tale reflects continuing fears about political struggle between Daha/Kediri and Janggala/Panjalu. The threat of disunity remained a problem well into the Majapahit period, leading in 1404-1406 CE to the civil war between Bhre Wirabhumi and the crown prince, Wikramawardana, known as the *Paregreg* (“time of turmoil”).

A summary of the prose *Calon Arang* may be able to give us a better understanding about the ideas behind the tale. The author of the *Calon Arang* has woven together historical and mythological events to create a picture of a world that seems very close to Balinese society, because of the way that the use of magical power to do evil is considered to cause a state of impurity that can only be “treated” through exorcistic rituals. It seems that the historical figure of King Airlangga and a calamity (*gerubug*) that befell his kingdom – either just prior to the beginning of his rule in 1017 CE, or at the end, c.1042 CE – has been combined in the *Calon Arang* with exorcistic elements that may have first been developed in the *kidung Sudamala*, and are still found as part
of the social phenomena of contemporary society. The impure, liminal state of the demonic goddess Durga of the *Sudamala* seems to be reflected in a similar state of Rangda or being a widow while she dwells at the graveyard separated from her husband, Shiva. It is very important to note here that the word *rangda* means “widow” and so immediately tells us that the literary character Rangda ing Dirah is a widow. As Lansing (1995: 4) has noted for the village of Pejeng in Bali, barren women and widows are greatly feared in Bali as potential practitioners of black magic, and so it is natural for the terrifying witch of the *Calon Arang* to take the form (and name) of a widow.

There may be another historical fact behind the development of the character Rangda in the *Calon Arang*. Many Balinese with an interest in traditional literature consider Rangda to reflect the figure of Mahendradatta, the higher status wife of king Udayana, and the mother of Airlangga. There does not seem to be any historical basis for this story, but it could well arise from the fact that Mahendradatta is believed to have been memorialized (and apotheosized) as the stone image of Durga Mahisasuramardini that is found today in a temple called the Pura Pedharman Bukit Kutri. This temple is located at the crest of a tall hill (*bukit*) that provides a broad view of the area of Buruan village in Gianyar district, Bali.

From the socio-political point of view, it seems possible that stories like that of the *Calon Arang* are meant to show the danger of a powerful woman in the socio-political sphere. We know that the fact that Mahendradatta was a direct descendant of Sindok, the paramount king of Java in the mid-tenth century, and so more powerful than her husband, Udayana, who is believed to have Balinese ancestry. We do not know whether this led to resentment among the Balinese during the reign of Mahendradatta and Udayana, but we can say that later representations of powerful female figures in dramatic and literary works seem to most emphasize the elements of impurity and danger. The *Calon Arang* mixes myth and historical sources and uses them as reflections of social life and religious practices, with a particular emphasis on the danger of a powerful woman in the socio-political sphere. These various aspects have resulted in the birth of the tale of *Calon Arang*, which is commonly understood in Bali as being based on real events that occurred during the reign of Airlangga. The *Calon Arang* story goes as follows:
Calon Arang or Rangda is a widow (rangda) from the Dirah (or Girah) district of the kingdom of Airlangga in East Java. She is said to be an expert in destructive, black magic, and for this reason many people fear her. She has a beautiful daughter named Ratna Manggali, whose beauty is well known all over the region. But nobody dares to propose marriage to her because they fear her mother, the powerful witch Calon Arang. Because of this, Calon Arang feels that she has been humiliated and rejected from normal society, and she becomes furious. She invites her seven students, named Mahisa-wadana, Lenda, Lendi, Larung, Guyang, Gandi and Weksirs to attack the kingdom of Airlangga through performing black magic rituals to invoke the goddess Durga in the cremation ground. Her objective in performing the worship of Durga is to ask the goddess to allow her to use her power to attack the kingdom of Airlangga by first bringing death and destruction through contagious diseases to the people on the outskirts of the kingdom. She gains the blessings of the goddess and is successful in fulfilling her desire to destroy parts of Airlangga’s kingdom. When he comes to know that parts of his kingdom have been destroyed by Rangda of Dirah, King Airlangga sends his troop to fight openly with her. During the combat Rangda uses her magical power to completely annihilate two of the fighters from Airlangga’s kingdom; both of them are turned into small piles of ash after being consumed by a magical fire emanating from the mouth, nose and ears of Rangda.

As is too often the nature of human beings, being blind from her anger and her greed to destroy the entire kingdom of Airlangga, Rangda goes for a second time to the cremation ground to invoke the goddess Durga, this time with a more elaborate offerings to the goddess, with the hope that she will be able to make a second attack on the kingdom of Airlangga, and this time rain down sickness and death on the entire kingdom. Ever gracious to a loyal devotee, the goddess Durga blesses Rangda, and tells her she whatever she likes. However, Durga also gives a strong warning to Rangda, telling her that she has gone too far with her second request. Meanwhile, King Airlangga was nearly out of his wits facing the disaster in his kingdom, and so assembles all of the priests of his kingdom, and asks them to mediate together to find a solution to the problem. From their meditation they realized that only the powerful sage Mpu
Bharadah, from the hermitage of Lemah Tulis, would be able to overcome Rangda. Mpu Bharadah knows that the secret of Rangda’s desperation is that she actually wishes for a normal life, and would like to find a suitable partner in marriage for her only daughter.¹⁶⁹ Realizing that this is the key to Rangda’s anger he sends his student Mpu Bahula to propose to Ratna Manggali by asking her mother (Rangda) for permission to marry her daughter. Rangda is delighted and for a time stops practicing destructive, black magic. During this period Bahula asks his wife to steal her mother’s secret book, so that it will be possible to learn the lore that Rangda has been using to gain magical power.

He takes the book to Mpu Bharadah, who realizes that, if used correctly, the information in the book can bring great worldly and spiritual rewards or even revival of people from newly death. More important for the story, it gives Mpu Bharadah the power to overcome Rangda, exorcise her impurity and (in the prose Calon Arang) to

¹⁶⁹ While this is not stated directly in the Calon Arang, we know from the society of Bali that a family without a male heir faces serious ritual problems, since only a male heir can perform the important post-mortem ceremonies that purify a family and ensure that deceased family members do not become demonic, but are purified and become family ancestors.
slay her and thus liberate her from the mortal impurity she would always share as someone who takes human life through magical practices (Santiko, 1987:222, Suastika, 1997:57-127).

The prose *Calon Arang* gives information on the ritual steps that need to be followed in the worship of the goddess, who is known in the text as Sri Bhagavati or Bhatari Durga. The first step is the reading of a text on magical practices, which undoubtedly contains *mantras* and invocations of the goddess Durga; then she and her disciples go to the cremation ground, where they dance in a wild frenzy aimed at raising up demonic forces and inspiring the goddess Durga herself to appear. Once the goddess appears, Rangda and her students worship her and ask her blessing in carrying out magical attacks. The first attack of Rangda on Airlangga’s kingdom as described in the prose *Calon Arang* can be summarized as follows:

“How painful it is that nobody wants to propose to my beautiful daughter. I will take out my sacred book and then go to pay homage at the “feet of the goddess” (*paduka Sri Bhagavati*). I will ask for her blessing so that I can bring destruction to all the people of the kingdom”, thought Rangda in Dirah. After reading her sacred book, Rangda then went to the cremation ground with seven of her favourite female disciples; Si Weksirsa, Mahisa-wadana, Si Lenda, Si Lendi, Si Guyang, Si Larung, and Si Gandi. After arriving in the cremation ground, they all dance wildly together. The goddess Durga (*paduka Batari Durga*) then appears with her numerous demonic followers. Rangda then worshipped the goddess with great fervour, who said to her disciple, “Hai, my dear daughter Calon Arang, what is your purpose in coming to me with all your disciples?” While continuing to worship the goddess, Rangda said, “My Lady, I have come to you to beg for a blessing so that I can destroy the kingdom, that’s my main aim in coming before you my Lady”. The goddess said, “My daughter, I give you permission to do so, but you should not destroy people inside the court. You should not kill, because it is a great sin to seek revenge!” Calon Arang agreed to the condition that she would not kill people inside the court circle. Then she took leave of the goddess and departed the cremation ground with light steps, followed by her disciples. Later at midnight, they all danced once again on the cremation ground, making a great sound with the clanging of *kamanak, kangsi* and other gongs and bells.
After dancing, they went back home to Dirah/Girah with a happy feeling. The next morning, many people in the surrounding villages fell sick and died, so many that dead bodies piled up everywhere.  

From the description above we know that the Rangda of Dirah destroyed her enemies through magical power used with the blessings of the goddess Durga-Bhagavati. The fact that the goddess grants her power does not mean that she does not know that it has evil consequences, for she reminds Rangda that it is sinful to do evil for the sake of seeking revenge. However, Rangda is blinded by her anger and ignores the caution of the goddess. In this description of the first worship to the goddess, the author does not describe the nature or extent of the offerings of Rangda and her followers to the goddess, but instead stresses their wild dancing and the loud, raucous music they make as an accompaniment to their dancing.

According to the prose Calon Arang, Rangda became very upset because the king sent his armies secretly to attack her while she was asleep. This gives the author of the prose Calon Arang a chance to describe a physical combat between Rangda and the forces of Airlangga. As the text tells us:

[The king’s men] arrived at the place of Calon Arang. They wanted to kill her while she and her followers were still asleep. When they arrived they saw no one awake, including Rangda, and they were able to tightly tie her hair. Then they unsheathed a powerful keris blade and prepared to stab the Rangda. But when they were about to stab her, their hands suddenly felt heavy and began trembling. At that moment Calon Arang was startled and woke up. A blazing fire immediately poured out of her nostrils, eyes, mouth and ears and

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170 My translation based on Suastika’s Indonesian translation and the Middle Javanese text of the prose the Calon Arang (LOr 5387/5279; Suastika, 1997:60-61).

171 A keris is a kind of sharp, stabbing sharp knife with a wavy blade, preferably made from meteoritic iron. There is an enormous lore connected with the making and possession of keris blades and entire kingdoms are said to have depended for their power on the royal family’s collection of important examples. Nowadays, keris blades are still important as symbol’s of masculine prowess and virility and are particularly important in rituals called ngurek (“stabbing oneself”) that involve a pledge to defend the “Chinese-lion” like figure Barong in a struggle with Rangda. Since Rangda represents Durga, and is thus invulnerable, the “followers” of the Barong turn their blades on themselves at the height of the ceremonies. The celebrations of this ritual at Pangrebongan temple in the Kesiman area of Denpasar and on the main street of the coastal village of Jimbaran are important examples of this ritual.
burnt to death two of the king’s warriors, while those who were still alive fled as fast as possible from the fire of Calon Arang. \(^{172}\)

After being attacked by the king’s men, Rangda became furious and decided that she would once again go to the cremation ground to seek the assistance of the goddess Durga-Bhagavati, this time to fulfil her desire to destroy the entire kingdom of Airlangga. For that purpose she chose the day *tumpek* (Saturday *Kliwon*) and the time of midnight for her approach to the goddess, and appeared before her this time with elaborate offerings that included human flesh that had been slaughtered as a sacrifice to the goddess Durga.

The texts that describe the mode of worship for the goddess Durga have not been found to date that contain information like that found in Puranic sources of India. However, in the *Calon Arang*, the author does describe the mode of worship involving offerings of the human flesh (Suastika 1997:62-63), and we also find later Balinese texts that deal with the offerings and rituals appropriate for worship of the goddess Durga. The texts not only describe the ingredients of the offerings, but also the purposes of the worship as well as magic drawings (*rerajahan*) and *mantras* that can be used on auspicious days to ensure the blessings of the goddess. These often repeat information like that given in the narrative of the prose *Calon Arang*, which describes Rangda/Calon Arang’s sacrifice to Durga as follows:

After apportioning the duties of her followers (*sisya*) according to the four compass directions, Calon Arang went to the centre of the cremation ground. She found there the fresh body of a young man who had died suddenly on the day *Tumpek* (Saturday *Kliwon*). She put that dead body in a standing position and tied it tightly to the trunk of *kepuh* tree. Then she revived the dead body by breathing into him the breath of life, while her students Si Weksirsa and Mahisa-wadana opened his eyes. At that moment the dead body came back to life and said, “who has brought me into life. I owe you a great debt, but I do not know how to repay you. I will devote myself to you. Please release me from this tree so that I can worship you and touch the dust of your feet”. Si

\(^{172}\) My translation based on Suastika’s Indonesian translation and the Middle Javanese text of the prose the *Calon Arang* (LOr 5387/5279 and Suastika, 1997:97).
Weksirsa replied, “you think that you will live for a long time, but at this very moment I am going to chop off your head with this sword”. The very next moment she chopped off his head. The fresh blood that sprayed from his neck which was used by Calon Arang to wash hair, and that is why her hair became dishevelled and full of dried blood. She used his intestines for her necklaces and then cooked the remaining parts of his body as an offering to the goddess Durga-Bhagavati and all the spirits who dwell in the cremation ground. The goddess Durga then appeared and asked Calon Arang about her purpose in worshipping her with such elaborate offerings. Calon Arang then asked the goddess for permission to cause the destruction of all the inhabitants of the kingdom without exception. The goddess agreed to her request, but added a strong warning, saying that what she hoped to do would be very dangerous.

In the narrative above, Calon Arang’s success in fulfilling her evil desire is based on her offering of human flesh from the body of dead man whom she has magically revived. This is one of the only textual sources that describe human sacrifices like those mentioned in Indian texts like the Kalika Purana. However, there are other texts, like the Durga Purana Tatwa, that mention human sacrifices implicitly. In this text a devotee of the goddess named Maya Krishna is said to have sacrificed several human victims as offerings to the goddess by magically causing them to fall sick and die. Furthermore, these victims had to include people from all four castes (Nala, 1977:181). In a recent geguritan version of an important religious text attributed to the late Ida Pedanda Made Sidemen of Sanur, his student Ida Pedanda Ketut Sidemen of Griya Taman in Sanur has described the traditional belief that someone who wants to master the “left-hand path” (pengiwa) in magical practices must first sacrifice their own child, husband or other beloved relatives (geguritan Purwa Agama, Canto 6, verse 15; Sidemen, 1988:4). Beliefs about the importance of sacrifice in the quest for magical power have a long history in India. Lorenzen (1972:16) has pointed out that the most archaic level of Tantric worship to the goddess is represented in the

173 My translation, based on Suastika’s Indonesian translation and the Middle Javanese text of the prose the Calon Arang (LOr 5387/5279 and Suastika, 1997:99).

174 The belief that the practitioners of the black magic have to sacrifice the loved ones from her own family members has caused feared and suspicion toward widows who might have sacrificed their husbands to the goddess Durga for gaining power in their families.
prose, literary work *Kadambari* composed by Banabhata in the 7th century CE. In this work, Durga (known here as Candika, another of her many names) is offered human flesh by people of the wild Sabara tribe. Usha Dev (1987:12) tells us of a similar scene in Dandin’s *Dasakumaracarita*, another literary work of the 7th century CE, which describes “the scene of the temple of Candika where the Sabaras… intended to sacrifice a boy”. However, the most elaborate Indian description of the role of sacrifice in seeking the favour of the goddess is found in the Sanskrit drama *Malatimadhava*, composed by the illustrious Bhavabhuti during the 8th century CE (c.725 CE). Lorenzen (1972:23) has pointed out that Bhavabhuti might have been inspired by Dandin’s work, replacing the sacrifice of a young prince with that of a young princess, and shifting the blame for the deed from the wild, Sabara people to a *siddha*, a practitioner of Tantric rites, who in this case has dedicated himself to winning the favour of Candika in order to achieve great magical power. Let us first look at a summary of the sacrificial scene from Dandin’s *Dasakumaracarita* (The Tale of Ten Princes):

Prince Mantragupta, one of the ten princes referred to in the title of the work, met an evil ascetic in a forest located near a cremation ground outside the capital of the country of Kalinga, in eastern India. The prince overheard a servant couple complaining that their master, an evil black magician (*dagdha-siddha*), kept them so busy that they had no time to enjoy each other’s company. In their distress they prayed for someone to appear who would create “an obstacle to the magical power of this vile wizard, their master. Prince Mantragupta followed them in order to discover who their master was and how he attained his magical powers (*siddhi*). After following them for a time the prince saw the magician (*siddha*). His body was decorated with ornaments made of pieces of human bones and was smeared with ashes. His hair, matted in ascetic fashion (*jata*), shone like lightning; and with his left hand he continually threw sesame and mustard seeds into a fire. The magician ordered his servant to fetch Kanaka-lekha, the daughter of the king Kalinga, so that he could use her as a sacrifice to further increase his magical power.

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175 See Chapter Three for a further discussion of the portrayal of the goddess in Bana’s *Kadambari*.

176 Bhavabhuti’s name means either “wealth of Shiva” or “ashes of Shiva” (Lorenzen 1972:50). He is considered by many scholars to have been a brilliant innovator in both the dramatic forms (*natya*) and courtly epics (*kavya*) of the Sanskrit tradition.
When the servant had done this, the magician attempted to decapitate the princess with sword. But at that very moment, Mantragupta rushed forth, seized the sword, and decapitated the magician instead.\textsuperscript{177}

When we look at a summary of the \textit{Malatimadhava}, it should become clear that there is a strong relationship between the sacrificial scenes in the two works. In both it is a young princess who is to be sacrificed, while the person who intends to carry out the sacrifice is an ascetic who practices extreme, antinomian forms of worship. If we compare the drama \textit{Malatimadhava} with the \textit{Calon Arang} tale, we also find several similarities between those two literary works. In the \textit{Calon Arang} story, the fresh body of a young man who was buried on an auspicious day (\textit{Tumpek}, or Saturday \textit{Kliwon}) is brought back to life for the purpose of obtaining fresh blood and cannot be rescued, since he was an outsider to Rangda’s circle of magical practitioners at the cremation ground. No matter how hard he begs for his life Calon Arang feels no remorse whatsoever in causing his death a second time, since the only thing on her mind was the destruction of Airlangga’s entire kingdom.

Bhavabhuti, a poet and dramatist whose name has lived on as one of the greats of the Indian tradition, lived during the reign of Yasovarman of Kanouj, which was a period of great glory and power that supported a sophisticated culture that admired and supported the creation of literary works and dramas in Sanskrit, as well as a number of other literary languages (Gary Tubb, 2004, Lorenzen, 1972:49, Usha Dev, 1987:13; Kale, 1997:35-50). In Acts IV and Act V of this work the heroine is nearly sacrificed as a human offering to Chamunda (a very terrifying form of the goddess Durga) by a practitioner of magical rites who is described as a member of the \textit{Kapalika} order. As Lorenzen tells us (1972) the \textit{Kapalika} practiced extreme forms of asceticism and anti-social behaviour that even as early as the time of Bhavabhuti led to their being considered a dangerous, and possibly cannibalistic form of ascetic. For this work what is most important, and very striking, is that the description of extreme modes of Tantric worship found in works like the \textit{Kadambari}, \textit{Dasakumaracarita} and \textit{Malatimadhava} are often strongly reminiscent of works of the Javanese and Balinese traditions like the \textit{Calon Arang}. While it may be that the authors of these works

\textsuperscript{177} My summary of this tale is based on Lorenzen (1972:23).
created imaginary versions of rituals involving human sacrifice, there are surprising similarities among them that the authors were responding to either a tradition of factual knowledge about rituals that must have always been conducted in conditions of great secrecy, or a tradition of beliefs about what might go on in such rituals. Since the *Malatimadhava* is very important as a comparison with the prose *Calon Arang*, I will summarize the *Malatimadhava* here, which goes as follow:

The heroin Malati is deeply in love with Madhava. But they cannot marry since the parents of Malati have arranged her marriage with another man. Two adherents of the Kapalika sect; Aghoraghanta and his female disciple Kapalakundala, want to take advantage of Malati’s broken heart, which makes her a more attractive sacrificial victim. While Malati is lamenting on the terrace of her father’s palace, Kapalakundala abducts her and brings her to her teacher Aghoraghanta, who is eagerly waiting Malati at the Karala temple, located in a spacious place near the cremation ground. Aghoraghanta has vowed to sacrifice a maiden to the goddess Chamunda, who is enshrined there, and intends to use Malati as the sacrifice that will make his ritual and mantras efficacious. At the same time, broken hearted from the brutal separation from his beloved Malati, Madhava has been wandering around the burning ground and cemetery nears the Karala temple. In the depths of despair Madhava has been selling fresh human flesh from the burning ground to the ghosts, goblins and other invisible spirits of the cemetery. While in the midst of doing so he hears the soft voice of a woman in the distance lamenting and calling out his name. The voice sounds very familiar, so he goes in search of its owner. He walks towards the temple of the goddess Chamunda and finds Malati dressed in the white clothes of a sacrificial victim and on the point of being beheaded by Aghoraghanta, who is standing with an executioner’s sword in hand in front of the image of the goddess Chamunda. Madhava and Aghoraghanta begin to battle with great ferocity. Meanwhile the temple has been surrounded by the troops of Malati’s father, who have been searching high and low for her. Madhava succeeds in killing Aghoraghanta, freeing Malati from danger,
while Kapalakundala manages to fly away to safety. Madhava now receives the blessings of Matali’s father and are joined in blissful marital union.178

While the Calon Arang story does not share the same romantic themes and the “happy ending” that was required in all Sanskrit dramas, if we look carefully we can see that the elimination of Rangda’s impure state leads to the “liberation” of her students from the evil and impurity that has befallen them through joining Rangda in her quest for the powers of black magic. Both works are thus more about release from danger, impurity and evil than they are about a “battle between good and evil”, and both provide insights into common beliefs about the use of human sacrifice to attain the highest degree of power in the magical arts.

The goddess Durga as a destroyer narrated in the wayang (puppet shadow) show

The shadow theatre (wayang) of the Javanese and Balinese traditions has a long history. The Old Balinese word parb-wayang found among a list of performers in the Bebetin inscription of 818 Shaka (896 CE) probably means “performer of wayang/shadow plays” (Goris, 1954: PB 002.ii.b.5). Javanese sources go back at least to the Arjunawiwaha, composed c.1035 CE during the reign of Airlangga. In this work (Canto V.9), there is a striking comparison of the world to the screen of a shadow play. Some scholars believe that the art of wayang may have first been developed by shamans as part of the worship of sacred ancestors. The ancestors were often personified in the forms of images made from rocks, which in later development developed further through the use of rawhide as the basic material for making shadow puppets. The penetration of Hindu religion and traditions into the archipelago brought with it the famous Indian epics Ramayana and Mahabharata, which quickly took root among the villages and courts of Java and Bali. After the influence of the Indian caste system, priests and other experts began to play separate roles in society. Before this time performers of shadow plays (dalang) and traditional healers (balian) may have been the same persons, who served like shamans in their communities. Thus in later development wayang is not performed by the shaman any longer, but instead is

178 I am indebted to Professor Gary Tubb of the Columbia University, New York for his kindly sharing with me this verbal summary of Bhavabhuti’s Malatimadhava, while I was in Israel in 2003.
performed by a *dalang*, whose main goal is to create an attractive performance, rather than having a religious purpose. However, in Balinese belief both the shamans (Balinese: *balian*) and puppet masters who have taken a special initiation can play a role in helping people recover from diseases which are believed to be caused by unseen, evil spirits.

In Bali, *wayang* figures are made from cow or buffalo hide as the basic material, and this has to be punched very carefully to create a design that makes a shadow of the character on the screen. Only certain people and families have the artistic talent to create *wayang* figures. There are about 175 characters in the box (*gedog*) used by the *dalang* to store his puppets. The carving of *wayang* puppets is very delicate and detailed and the artists must follow ancient rules and beliefs when they are carving. There are fixed patterns for creating each puppet and each character has its own distinctive visual traits. The most famous characters of the *wayang* are drawn from the two Indian great epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. One character can play double or even multi roles (like the *kayon*). For example, the character of lord Rama of the *Ramayana* can also be used for lord Krishna of the *Mahabharata* since they both are considered reincarnations of Vishnu. The *kayon*, a special puppet that the *dalang* uses to change scenes in the shadow plays, can also be used to depict a mountain, wind, fire or water. Many times the puppets for the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* can be used interchangeably.¹⁷⁹

*Wayang* has played important roles in Javano-Balinese societies for thousands of years. The social roles of the *wayang* are varied and depend on the demands of those who sponsor a performance. The *wayang* can be performed merely for entertainment or for special events. In Bali this includes marriages, tooth-filing, the three-month ceremony for babies among the “life cycle rituals” (*manusa yadnya*) as well as for festivals in the village temples. The *wayang* for entertainment is usually performed on a temporary raised stage built specially for the performance. The subject matter is taken either from the *Ramayana* or the *Mahabharata*. Plays can last for all night long, but in Bali today they are usually between three and four hours long. During the performance an expert *dalang* uses the comic characters to relay moral advice to the

¹⁷⁹ Dalang Pak Wayan Nartha at Sukawati village of Gianyar district (personal communication, 2006).
audience, or has them narrate current socio-political events being undergone by the regional and central governments of Indonesia. The clowns play an important role in translating the language of the refine characters, who speak Old Javanese language (*Kawi*), into the common Balinese language, which can easily be understood by everyone in the audience. Many jokes and comic skits are presented by the clowns to keep the audiences excited and awake before the climax of the show, when the side of justice (*dharma*) overcomes the side of evil (*adharma*).

Figure 6.3: Scene from a *wayang* (shadow play) performance, whose stories are is usually based on the *Ramayana* or *Mahabharata*.

When *wayang* is used for ritual purposes it often takes the forms of *wayang lemah*, which is performed during the day-time. The main purpose of the *wayang lemah* is to exorcize persons who are considered impure due to being born on a powerful day like *wuku wayang*, or being born as male-female twins. This type of wayang usually takes the *Sudamala* story as its basic plot. As I have mentioned earlier the *kidung Sudamala* is very concerned with exorcism and purification. In Balinese the word *sudamala* means “to free the stain”. This form of *wayang* does not need the usual screen and lamp for making shadows. Instead a white thread tied into two vertical *dadap* saplings is used to represent the screen.\(^{180}\)

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\(^{180}\) Dalang Nartha (personal communication, 2006).
The importance of the *Calon Arang* story comes out in the fact that there is a special kind of shadow plays called *Wayang Calonarang*. This form of play is considered very dangerous due to its associations with magic, and the *dalang* is said to have to be very brave to perform these plays, because a performance “invites” anyone in the area who may be secretly practicing black magic. This wayang is usually performed in the Pura Dalem (“temple of death or dissolution”), located near the cremation ground. During the show, the *dalang* will make a magical drawing of an invisible wall (*mandala*) with certain boundary lines leading to the four compass directions. This is intended to protect the audience from the attack of other black magic practitioners, who may be present when *dalang* calls out in a loud voice to invite all of the witches to test his magical power (*sakti*). As in the literary forms of the *Calon Arang* tale, the main theme of the plays is the struggle of Mpu Bharadah to make his “white magic” powerful enough to overcome the black magic of Rangda/Calon Arang. 181

To support my illustration of the role of the goddess Durga as a destroyer, I will discuss another wayang story here, the *Kunti Yadnya*, which subject matter is taken from a fragment of the *Mahabharata*.182 This story of *Kunti Yadnya* or “the ritual (*yadnya*) of Kunti” is unique because it incorporates a number of important aspects of Balinese life. These include ritual aspects like the importance of carrying out the purification rites for the souls of the deceased through the cremation rituals (*ngaben, palebon*) as well as socio-political aspects like conflicts between close relatives. We

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181 When I was a child, I had a chance to watch a *Calon Arang* wayang performance in my home village in a small farming area near the mountain of Batukaru. At that time, during the wayang show no body dared to stay at our houses and we all went to see the wayang show. It was a very terrifying scene when the *Calon Arang* went to the cremation ground to worship the goddess Durga. I was terrified therefore I did not move from my father’s lap. The lantern of the show was covered by a piece of the layers of banana trunk to create the mid-night scene and vaguely the demonic form of the goddess Durga emerged from behind the *kayon* figure followed by her demonic disciples. The *Dalang* with his loud voice invited all the black magic practitioners from my village and surrounding villages to attack him or to challenge his magical power. Since it was a very dangerous performance, the *Dalang* had to sacrifice the uncastrated black pig in the cremation ground before he performed his wayang. My father told me that if the inner power of the *Dalang* was not strong enough, he would get severely ill after the performance. But if the power of the *Dalang* is very strong, some people who practice the black magic from the villages would get sick or even died if the *Dalang* refused to heal her/him.

182 Kunti is the mother of the five Pandava brothers (*panca-Pandava*). Kunti was not able to bear the children of her husband Pandu, who had once mistakenly killed a pair of mating deer, who were actually a powerful *brahmana* ascetic and his wife. Therefore, to continue the royal, Kunti used a magical power granted by a Brahmin for her devotional to her as a young woman to call down celestial fathers [Lord Dharma, Bayu and Indra] for her sons Yudhisthira, Bhima and Arjuna respectively and for her co-wife Madri, who gave birth to the twins Nakula and Sadewa from their celestial father the twin gods Aswin.
also find details of traditional beliefs like the importance of making a loud sound with a conch-shell trumpet in order to get rid of demonic spirits, representations of the destructive nature of the goddess Durga, the reason for the existence of the three village temples (Puseh, Desa and Dalem) and their connection with the worship of the goddess Durga, who takes a different name in each of those temples (Dewi Seri, Dewi Sarasvati, Durga/Ida Betari di Dalem). All these aspects of Balinese society are intermingled in the wayang play Kunti Yadnya.

The following is a summary of the Kunti Yadnya as found in the Pakem Wayang Parwa Bali (1986/1987:14-16). The story goes as follows:

Dewi Kunti, the mother of the five Pandava brothers, is holding a meeting in Indraprastha, the capital of the ancient kingdom of the Pandava brothers. The meeting is attended by all the Pandava and Sri Krishna from Dwarawati. The main topic of the meeting is that the Queen mother (Dewi Kunti) would like to carry out a ritual (yadnya) to invite the soul of her deceased husband, King Pandu so that he can be properly installed in the Pemerajan Agung (family shrine of the nobility). She can only do this, however, after performing the correct post-mortem ceremonies (maligya, ngaben or sraddha) that will make it possible to shift Maharaja Pandu from hell (yamadiloka) to heaven (swargaloka). Dewi Kunti has intended to perform the ritual to invite the soul of Pandu to dwell in the family shrine, but since he was never properly cremated she has not been able to do so. Dewi Kunti has asked Sri Krishna to take the task of carrying out the yadnya, organizing the many things that must be done to complete the ritual. She also asked Bhima and Arjuna to be the guardians of the ritual, which was to be performed by a Brahmin priest

183 In this story it is said that the soul of king Pandu was embodied in the form of Bhuta Cuil prior to the performance of the maligya ritual on his behalf. This is a purification ritual for the recent dead (especially among the nobility) who are considered spiritually unclean prior to the completion of this ritual. The term maligya can thus be considered a Balinese synonym for the sraddha rites that were still known by that name during the Majapahit period (1292–c.1516 CE). The term maligya is used today in Bali rather than sraddha because in the Balinese context sraddha has come to mean “religious belief”. Contemporary Balinese speak of the panca sraddha which are: belief in Sang Hyang Widhi (God), belief in the atma (soul or eternal Self), belief in karma-phala (being subject to the fruits of one’s actions), belief in samsara (the cycle of reincarnation) and belief in moksa (final liberation). See Parisada Hindu Dharma (1978:14).
(pedanda) known to be kind-hearted and have a perfect knowledge of the Vedic rituals.

While the people of Indraprastha were busy preparing the ritual, King Duryodhana, a cousin of the Pandava brothers and their bitter rival, was busy seeking the most effective way to destroy the ritual of Kunti and the Pandava brothers. Duryodhana is always full of envy and jealousy in seeing the success of Pandava in governing their country and in achieving the prosperity of their people. King Duryodhana is far richer than Pandava in term of material wealth, whereas Pandava are richer in spiritual values and are famous for their pledge to speak and act in truth (dharma). Knowing that his people admired the Pandavas more than him, Duryodhana became worried that his people would betray him, go over to the Pandava side and take over his kingdom. For that reason Duryodhana asked for a help of Drona, his guru in the arts of war.

Duryodhana asked Drona to destroy the ritual of the Pandavas, but he refused to do so, instead advising Duryodhana that he should think of the Pandavas as his cousins, not his enemies, and that he should assist the Pandavas with the ritual of Kunti. Hearing this, Duryodhana became very offended and became furious, insulting Drona badly. Because of this Drona lost his sympathy for Duryodhana. However, in the end he cannot deny the wish of King Duryodhana and so gives him a mantra called the Durga Astawa, a hymn in praise of the goddess Bhatari Durga used to ask her blessings. Duryodhana was very happy to gain the blessings and advice of Drona, and was now sure he could destroy the ritual of the Pandavas.

One auspicious night, Duryodhana and his two comic followers, Delem and Sangut, set out from their capital, Astina, for the Setra Gandamayu, the “burning ground of fragrant corpses” Duryodhana intends to implore the goddess Durga to bless him with magical power (kesaktian), while his two clowns prepare the offerings on the northeast side of the temple.
Duryodhana then invokes the goddess Durga by performing a ritual, followed by the practice of yoga and *semadhi* ("spiritual concentration"). Duryodhana quickly succeeds in invoking the presence of Durga, but first her demonic servants, the *bhuta kalas*, taunt and harass Duryodhana in order to test his steadfastness. However, Duryodhana is not bothered by the temptation of the *bhuta kalas*, and so the goddess Durga, here called Gangga Gori, appears before Duryodhana and blesses him, giving him her permission to inflict trouble on the Pandavas. At the same time the goddess provides him with a demonic army which include powerful demons like Kala Berawa (Kala-Bhairava) and Kali Jyuti Srana who can easily destroy the ritual of the Pandavas.

At the peak of the preparations for carrying out the ritual, the world suddenly grows dark and many people of Indraprastha begin dying from a plague of dysentery. The people of Indraprastha are in a panic, terrified and full of grief. Sri Krishna, the king of Dwarawati, and a close ally of the Pandavas, then took out his *tenung*, a palm-leaf manuscript (lontar) that contains predictions of past, present and future events. He was accompanied by Twalen and Werdah, the two comic and loyal servants of the Pandavas Pandava’s loyal servants. Sri Krishna then gazed into his *homa* fire (fire of Vedic ritual) and could see two tall, black demons within the flames *homa* fire who had a terrifying and frightening appearance. On seeing these figures Sri Krishna came to know the origin two demonic beings; through his omniscient power he could see that it was actually the goddess Durga who was behind all of the trouble. After learning of the attack of the army of *bhuta-kalas*, immediately Bhima and Arjuna joined Sri Krishna and the forces of Dwarawati in a counterattack on the army of the demons. A fierce battle ensued between the demons and the Pandavas, and many demons were slain. Realizing that their army was being defeated by the Pandavas, the two demons, Kala Berawa and Kali Jyoti Srana, came to the front line of the battle, and succeeded in demoralizing the armies of the Pandavas and Lord Krishna. They retreated

184 The set of offerings in this case consists of *pras ajengan, sesantun lakar anggon Medewasraya, tebasan, segehan, sanggah cucuk suba tancepang icang di kaja kangin, … (Dharma Pewayangan, 1986/87:54)
and prayed for the help of the gods, since even their irresistible weapons were not able to defeat the demon forces. Suddenly from the sky, Krishna heard a voice telling him to sound his conch-shell trumpet called *Pancayadnya* (“Five Rituals”), while Arjuna should sound his trumpet Dewadatta (“given by the gods”). The *bhuta-kala* cannot be defeated by sharp weapons, but a loud musical sound is very dangerous for their ears. By sounding their trumpets Krishna and the Pandavas overcame the demons, who scattered and ran in every direction to find places of safety from the terrifying sounds that were afflicting their ears.185

After the army of demons was successfully expelled from Indraprastha, the city once again returned to a state of tranquillity and its inhabitants were now safe from any troubles caused by the *bhuta kala*. Now Lord Krishna took advantage of the secure situation to go to the abode of the god Shiva in Shivaloka, and to implore his assistance in defeating the goddess Durga. However, Shiva surprises Krishna by telling him that a million Krishna would not be able to defeat the goddess Durga because he and she are Shiva-Durga, one in form and inseparable. However, Hyang Shiva gives Krishna his walking-stick called Tebusala and says that he must use it to exorcise the goddess Durga. He adds the requirement that only Sadewa, the youngest of the five Pandava and the twin of Nakula, can use his Tebusala as a weapon because Sadewa and Nakula are the mortal forms of the two Ashvin, the charioteers of the sun-god (Surya) and the divine healers of the world of the immortals. Lord Krishna was very pleased and soon left for Indraprastha where he followed the advice of Lord Shiva and asked Sadewa to fling the Tebusala at the goddess Durga during the climax of the battle between the Pandavas and the demons. When she is struck by the Tebusala weapon Durga says she will die (to the mortal world) and will be transformed into several forms of flower or fruit:

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185 During large, exorcistic rituals of the *tawur agung* type, including *Eka Dasa Rudra* and *Panca Bali Krama* that are conducted at Besakih, the largest temple in Bali, the Rsi Bujangga use the sounds of traditional trumpets (*preret*), hour-glass drums (*damaru*) and sets of chiming bells (*genthorag*) to expel all chthonic spirits while the villagers use all manner of kitchen pots and pans to make noises designed to chase away the demons, at the same time making smaller sacrificial offerings called *caru*.
My blood will become marigold flowers,
My bones will become *tebu ratu* (a kind of sugarcane).\(^{186}\)
My faeces will become *buah tibah* (a seedy fruit with a distinctive, pungent odour)
While my milk will become *pisang saba* (a certain kind of banana)\(^{187}\)

The goddess Durga then told Sadewa that none of those flowers or fruits can be used as the ingredients for offerings because they will taint the purity of the ritual. Sadewa accepted the advice of Durga and then carefully aimed the Tebusala at the goddess Durga. Now she advised Sadewa that when people want to worship her, they will find her in the “Three Village Temples” (*Kahyangan Tiga*) with different names. She will be Mahadewa-Mahadewi if people worship her in the Pura Puseh; she will be Bogowati (Bhagawati) along with her spouse Sri Sedana when she is worshipped in the Pura Desa; and she will be Shiva-Durga if people worship her in the Pura Dalem. Sadewa then exorcized the goddess Durga by striking her with the *tebusala* sapling. At that very moment the terrifying form of the demonic goddess Durga was transformed into the beautiful and gentle goddess Uma/Parwati, spouse of Shiva. The goddess then blessed the ritual of Kunti and the Pandavas and ensured them that the kingdom of Indraprastha would be prosperous. She then returned to the abode of gods.\(^{188}\)

If we look at the content of the myth above, we can see that the idea of the tale is taken from the epic *Mahabharata*, especially the contrast of the character of the Pandavas and Duryodhana and his hundred brothers, the Korava. The Pandava

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\(^{186}\) This kind of sugarcane is only good to be used in the cremation ritual. Its special use is in the symbolic “grinding” of the bones of the cremated body before being placed inside a receptacle of ivory coconut and thrown into a nearby river or the ocean.

\(^{187}\) *Pisang saba* bananas are considered to be very nutritious food for babies. The ambivalent nature of the goddess Durga comes out strongly in the Balinese idea that this type of banana is the embodiment of the milk of the goddess Durga, and therefore very beneficial for babies. The leaves of the *pisang saba* are used as a base for the dead body when it is washed in the house-yard prior to cremation or temporary burial.

\(^{188}\) I have summarized the plot (*lelampahan*) of the *Kunti Yadnya* story based on translating narrative and dialogue sections of the play as recorded in a handbook of shadow theatre plays titled *Pakem Wayang Parwa Bali* (1986/1987).
brothers are often shown as defending dharma (truth, divine law) while the Korava often display traits like greed and jealousy that are part of the realm of adharma (evil, falsehood). The story of the Kunti Yadnya draws on many common themes in Balinese social and religious life. The most essential theme of the tale is the transformation of the benign goddess Uma into demonic form as Durga and the need for a purifying ritual that releases the goddess from her inauspicious state. The theme of exorcism in the Kunti Yadnya is very close to the form found in the kidung Sudamala, even involving Kunti and Sadewa as major characters. In both the Sudamala and the Kunti Yadnya, the role of the goddess Durga in granting victory is very prominent. In the Sudamala, Kunti worships Durga in order to ensure the victory of her sons over demonic enemies, but then is entranced by Durga and can only be saved when Durga is exorcised by Sadewa, whom she (Kunti) has offered to Durga as a sacrifice. The most striking element that relates the two works is the important role played by Sadewa in exorcizing the goddess. In the Sudamala, he is first offered as a sacrifice, but then is able to overcome and exorcize the goddess Durga with the assistance of Shiva/Bhatara Guru, who “possesses” Sadewa in order to exorcize his spouse Durga/Uma. In the Kunti Yadnya Sadewa is entrusted with the tebusala weapon granted by Lord Shiva that alone can overpower Durga, and receives special instructions on ritual matters by the goddess before she departs for the world of the immortals.

Conclusions

After describing the major role of the goddess Durga as a destroyer of life, I can draw a few conclusions:

1. The role of the goddess as a destroyer is most strongly accentuated in the Balinese case. While her spouse, Lord Siwa, is said in contemporary Bali to be the destroyer, Durga is actually more famous for her destructive nature than her spouse. It is important to remember here the Barong, who opposes Rangda in performances that grow out of the traditions of the Sudamala and Calon Arang, a Chinese-lion like figure that may represent the protective aspect of
Shiva that comes out in the literary works when he blesses Sadewa with the ability to overcome the black magic of Durga.

2. There is some confusion in Bali about the identity of the goddess Durga. Many people think of Durga and Rangda as identical, but the textual and performance sources show us that Rangda is a mythical devotee of the goddess Durga, who is the antagonist in the take of Calon Arang, or Rangda ing Dirah, and in performances based on this legend.

3. The importance of the Pura Dalem, or “temple of dissolution” in Bali may have developed at a later period in history than the Pura Puseh and Pura Desa. Based on my reading of the contents of the inscriptions of the Pura Desa of Batuan, of Gobleg and of Trunyan, which mention only the Pura Puseh and Pura Desa as the main village temples, I believe that the Pura Dalem entered Balinese life as gentry families who claimed Javanese descent introduced the sraddha rites into Balinese life. As these rituals became more common throughout Balinese villages dramatic forms like the Calon Arang performances and shadow plays based on themes like the Calon Arang story, the Sudamala story of the wayang tale of the ritual of Kunti.

4. Common beliefs about the similarity of Queen Mahendradatta and the mythical Calon Arang suggest that powerful women have commonly met with resistance in their lives. At the same time, there is a general fear in the Balinese patriarchal society that women like widows and women who have not born a male heir, are likely to study and master black magic in order to seek revenge on society. At one time the wives of the warrior caste (Ksatriya) were required to throw themselves on the funeral pyre of their husbands. The tradition of works like the Sudamala, Calon Arang and Kunti Yadnya suggests that women are feared for the destructive power they might bring upon their neighbours if they are not “protected” by the rules and regulations of the patriarchal society.

In the following chapter, I intend to focus on the ways that representations of the goddess Durga are related to the social life and practices. I also hope to show how
powerful, subconscious images of Rangda and her followers was used to marginalize women during the political events that brought down the Old Order (*Orde Lama*) of Soekarno.
Chapter 7
The Convergence of Ancient and Modern Forms of Myth-Making
in the Creation of New Order Ideology

This chapter traces the connection between the fate of the warrior goddess Durga and the fate of one of the women’s movements of Indonesia, the Gerwani (Gerakan Wanita Indonesia, “Women’s Movement of Indonesia”). Gerwani was an important movement that came to an unfortunate end following the so-called “coup of 1965”. We normally think of a subject like Gerwani as an “historical” issue that has little in common with myths like those that have grown up around the imagery of Durga. However, inspired by the detailed study of Saskia Wieringa in her book, Sexual Politics in Indonesia (2002), I have come to believe that much of what we learn in Indonesia about Gerwani is a type of mythology that is connected with political image-making ideology. Reading Saskia Wieringa’s work in both English and Indonesian languages, complemented with other articles related to the massacres of 1965-66 in Indonesia, it appears that there is a strong connection between those two subjects, the myth of the goddess Durga in the history of Java and Bali and the modern myths that Indonesian children are taught in school about the nature of Gerwani and the reasons it was violently suppressed in the early years of the New Order (1965/66-1998).

The question posed in this chapter is: how can there be a connection between an ancient myth and a modern historical event? To address that question, I will first briefly review my previous chapters about the journey of the goddess Durga from India to the archipelago, through the period when the image of the goddess was demonized during the East Javanese period (c.930-1527 CE) and finally moving on to the contemporary period, in which the demonized form of the goddess is still prominent in present day Bali. I will then detail the history of Gerwani and how myths that demonize women were open to manipulation by political actors during the crisis that led to the birth of the New Order or the Suharto regime (1966-1998). To support my theses in showing the connection of the two subjects I will use relevant secondary sources in the form of literary works that include both ancient prose and poetic works. I will supplement my secondary data by describing my field work in East Jakarta that focused on the Pancasila Sakti monument in the Lubang Buaya area as well as
information I gained from interviewing witnesses, survivors and one of the perpetrators of the mass killings that took place in Java and Bali during the transition period from the Old to the New Order. Since my work is about the demonization of the image of women in connection with the image of the goddess Durga, I will focus more on the so-called Gerwani survivors rather than male survivors of the tragic events of 1965; however I will occasionally draw on my interviews with male survivors if their stories are relevant to this study.

Mythic Transformations of an Indic Goddess: Durga in India, Java and Bali

Perhaps the most important difference between mythical transformations of representations of the goddess and parallels in political image-making is the factor of time. As I think will be clear from a brief summary of the earlier chapters of my work, mythic transformations take place over a long period of time and reflect slow processes of social and cultural change. This is not to say that there are no political factors in the origin and evolution of mythical stories and images. The development of mythical representations of the goddess Durga in Java and Bali is part of a history of over a thousand year’s duration. The political myths that demonized Gerwani, on the other hand, were created in a period of no more than twenty years following the events of 30 September 1965. Yet they seem to have a great deal in common with older myths that demonized images of the goddess Durga. I will try to show in this chapter that political image-making in the New Order drew on a tradition of depicting powerful women in negative terms, or in terms of fears that needed to be overcome through the actions of men with special powers to exorcize negative female elements from figures like Durga-Uma in the Sudamala tale or Rangda in the Calon Arang.

The goddess Durga was originally portrayed in India as a beautiful warrior goddess with many arms, each holding a weapon which was granted by the other gods during her creation as a special protective figure, who alone would be capable of defending the gods from their mortal enemies (Mookerjee, 1988:8). Descriptions of this form of Durga are found in sacred hymns of India like the Devi Mahatmya, an important subsection of the encyclopaedic Markandeya Purana (c. 6th century CE).
In the Malay-Indonesian archipelago images of Durga Mahisasuramardini went through a long process of evolution radical change, images of Durga came to depict her in demonic form during the East Javanese period (c.10th -15th centuries CE).

Based on the visual and textual evidence I have formed a working hypothesis on some of the factors that caused the radical transformation of images of the goddess Durga in Java and Bali:

- As a warrior goddess Durga may have been considered too provoking to mainstream Javanese and Balinese society, where women did not normally participate in armed struggle. However, Javanese shadow play stories of a female warrior, Dewi Srikandi, suggest that legends about Durga as a warrior have lived on in the popular imagination.

- Durga in some literary works is described as delighted to receive offerings of human flesh and blood. These depictions seem to reflect her role in the inscriptions as a deity who can bring about the death or destruction of those who transgress against the rules delimiting the existence of tax-transfer lands (sima).

- Religious beliefs about a liminal and dangerous period between decease of a family member (especially among noble families) and the performance of the post mortem ceremonies called sraddha may be related to demonic portrayals of Durga by way of exorcistic tales like the Sudamala. In this tale Durga is described as being an inauspicious transformation of the gentle goddess Uma, who must roam the world bringing misfortune to humanity for 12 years before being exorcized by her husband, Bhatara Guru.

- The further development of demonic images of Durga in Bali, especially in the exorcistic drama Calon Arang, where she is identified with her devotee, the terrifying Rangda, suggest patriarchal trends in Balinese society, where women who are not within the “protective circle” of the family because they are widows, or have failed to produce a male heir, are considered very prone
to performing black magic in order to counteract their lack of power and meaning within society. These aspects of representations of Durga/women seem to be the most open to political manipulation. I believe that this is what occurred when the women’s movement of the Gerwani organization were demonized in black propaganda created to draw attention away from the real facts of the tragic events following the so-called communist coup in 1965.

Now, I would like to introduce the historical background of the birth of Gerwani, which I will claim went through a process of political demonization that seems to reflect the long process of mythical demonization that affected representations of the goddess Durga in the Javanese and Balinese traditions.

**Historical Background of Gerwani**

Gerwani (Gerakan Wanita Indonesia), the Movement of the Indonesian Women, was one amongst many women’s organizations in Indonesia founded during the post-independence era by enthusiastic young women who had just participated in the success of the nationalist revolution. But Gerwani was not the first women’s organization of Indonesia. In addition to the women’s organizations that arose during the post-independence period, there were also several women’s organizations during the pre-independence period, which included the period of colonialism and the period of the nationalist struggle for independence. Doran (1986) has written an article on the *Women and Indonesian Nationalism*, which described the close relation between the nationalism and the movement for women’s emancipation.

In this chapter, I will focus on only one period in the history of women’s movements in Indonesia, which is on the history and development of Gerwani, the left-wing organization because it was the destruction of Gerwani that was specifically used by Indonesian authority figures of the New Order as an important part of their state-building project. It is a great shame that the architects of the New Order (*Orde Baru*) chose to sacrifice an important women’s organization of the first decades of an independent Indonesia. Through the use of black propaganda aimed at discrediting women who took an active role in seeking to reform feudal elements that dominated much of Indonesia during the late colonial period, they closed the door on much that
could have been offered by the women of Indonesia in building a fair and just society. While claiming to represent the forces of social justice, the New Order left a blank space in place of the vigorous women’s organizations of the first decades of Indonesian independence. In this sense their role in uprooting Gerwani from a presence in Indonesian society as part of their state-building enterprise can be compared to the more lengthy social and historical processes that led eventually to demonic visions of Durga in the mythical life of Balinese society. Both have had a negative effect on the degree to which women can play active roles in their social contexts, and on the ways that women are “imagined” in national and local narratives.

Gerwani was born from an organization called Gerakan Wanita Sedar Indonesia (Gerwis), or “Movement of Conscious Indonesian Women”. Gerwis was initiated on 4 June 1950 in Semarang by six representatives of various organizations who wanted to have one women’s organization which could accommodate their aspirations in both the domestic and political spheres. Those six organizations were:

- *Rukun Putri Indonesia* (Rupindo), the “Association of Young Indonesian Women” from Semarang
- *Persatuan Wanita Sedar*, the “Federation of Conscious Women”, from Surabaya
- *Gerakan Wanita Indonesia* (Gerwindo), the “Movement of Indonesian Women”, from Kediri
- *Istri Sedar*, or “Conscious Women” from Bandung
- *Wanita Madura*, “Women of Madura” from Madura and
- *Perjuangan Putri Republik Indonesia* (PPRI), the “Struggle of the Daughters of the Indonesian Republic”. This was the women’s section of the *Barisan Pemberontak Republic Indonesia* (BPRI), or the “Front Line of the Rebellion of the Republic of Indonesia”, an all-Indonesian organization strongest in Java, led by the popular guerrilla fighter Bung Tomo.

The women who represented these six organizations came from a variety of socio-political backgrounds, but shared an interest in founding an organization that would have specific goals and being selective in recruiting their members. Several prominent women representative of the type of women who initiated Gerwis had been involved
in the nationalist struggles to free Indonesia from Dutch colonialism and later from the repressive regime of the Japanese wartime occupation. S.K. Trimurti, the prominent Fujinkai member during the Japanese occupation, for example, had served as the Minister of Labour for the Republican government of Soekarno (1945-49) and was thus the first female minister in Indonesian history, while Silawati Daud had served during the independence struggle as the Mayor of Makassar and was well-known for her confrontation of the notorious Captain Westerling (Wieringa, 2001:182). Other women who participated in the founding of Gerwis had occupied important positions in other parties or organizations. Sri Panggihan, for example, was a prominent PKI member even before the Madiun Affair in 1948, who went on to become one of the prominent leaders of Gerwis.

The first leader of Gerwis was Tris Metty, who had previously chaired the politically independent Rukun Putri Indonesia, the “Association of the Female Youth of Indonesia”. Tris Metty was also a member of Laskar Wanita of Central Java. But in 1951, during the preparatory session held in Yogyakarta for the first national congress, Tris Metty was pushed aside as chair of Gerwis and replaced by S.K. Trimurti. According to Wieringa (2002:183) this was because Tris Metty was a lesbian considered “too adventurous” to be the head of the organization.

As Wieringa (2002:142,185) points out, several leaders of Gerwis like Umi Sarjono, Suharti and Mudigdio (the mother-in-law of Aidit, chairman of the PKI) during the first years of the life of the organization belonged to, or were closely affiliated with, the PKI, the Communist Party of Indonesia. Although Gerwis insisted that the organization was non-political in orientation and was not affiliated to any political

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189 Captain Raymond Westerling was responsible for the killing of thousands of young republicans in South Sulawesi (Wieringa, 2001:182).

190 The Medium Affair was a revolt against the Indonesian government under Soekarno led by Muso the PKI leader in Madiun, East Java in 1948 (read McGregor, 2007:49-50 for a full account).

191 Laskar Wanita Indonesia (Laswi), the “Women’s guerrilla Force” was an armed group that fought against the Dutch during the Republican struggle of 1945-49 (Wieringa, 2002:x).

192 The first congress was held in December 1951 (Wieringa, 2002:142). Wieringa does not mention where the congress was held, but notes that they held their preparatory meeting in Yogyakarta.
Looking closely at the socio-political background of the founders of Gerwis, who by and large had gained their early experience in the nationalist struggle, it is not surprising that they wanted a women’s organization that was conscious of their rights as women and as partners in the revolution, and militant in their approach to achieving their objectives.

However, during their first congress in December 1951, a rift between two main factions began to appear that revolved around tensions about membership in the organization (Wieringa, 2002:142). One faction, that favoured a broader based membership in the organization, mooted the idea of a change of name to Gerakan Wanita Indonesia (Gerwani), the “Movement of Indonesian Women”, whose name itself implied a broader base for the organization. Another faction, which represented the more militant and left-leaning founders of the organization resisted what they called the “mass line” and supported a more sectarian membership that would serve as a guiding force in what they saw as the revolutionary commitments of Gerwis. Muninggar, one of the members of Gerwis who took this position, openly stated her disagreement with the change of name from Gerwis into Gerwani and opposed the development of what she termed a “mass line” in place of the “sectarian” organization that she saw as the rightful form for Gerwis:

We need a woman’s organization that will truly defend women’s rights… I do not agree to a change of name from Gerwis to Gerwani […] [we] need fully conscious women, not a mass line (Wieringa, 2002:184 cited Document XXII:2).

On the other hand, some Gerwis members wanted the membership of the organization to be less sectarian, and so favoured as wide as possible an expansion of membership that would embrace as many Indonesian women as possible and make them fully conscious of their rights. This position was described by S.K. Trimurti: “the most important thing in any case is to make women conscious of their rights” (Wieringa, 2002:147).
Despite disagreements within the leadership of Gerwis leaders by 1952 Gerwis had grown rapidly into a large and progressive organization. During this period many other smaller organizations merged with Gerwis and there was also a substantial increase in the number of individual women also joined the organization. When Gerwis was founded in 1950, the membership was a mere 500 women, but by 1954 - the year that Gerwis was officially changed into Gerwani - the number of members had risen to the remarkable figure of 80,000 (Wieringa, 2002:152). With this enormous rise in its membership Gerwani had become the largest women’s organization in Indonesia that was recognized internationally during the post-independence period. What made Gerwani more interesting compared to other women’s organizations was that it was only Gerwani members who were concerned to raise their voices in advocating the rights of oppressed people from all socio-economic levels. Most other women’s organizations were not interested in fighting on a daily basis for the rights of the victims of rape, polygyny, child marriages and forced marriages, and they also were not ready to fight for the sake of poor women at the village level (Doc. IX:1-2 cited by Wieringa, 2002:148). Therefore, it was not surprising if the numbers of the Gerwani rose rapidly in a short period of time.

The Membership of Gerwani

Why were so many women interested in becoming members of the Gerwani? To address this question, we can list a number of important factors:

- the organization did not set strict rules in recruiting women who were interested in becoming members, and in this way avoided questions about commitment to a particular ideology like the militantly socialist ideology espoused by the PKI and in part supported by the Old Order government of Soekarno

- their programs were socially oriented, responding to the needs of women in terms of occupational advancement, as well as the promise of abolition of practices like polygyny, forced marriages and child marriages that many women saw as an unpleasant and destructive heritage from the feudal past
The increase of membership of Gerwani was clearly tied to the loosening of strictures on who could become members, and for what reason. Wieringa (1999:303, basing her comments on Buku, 1958:312 ff) explains that:

- Membership of Gerwani was open to all Indonesian women as long as they were 16 years old, or younger but already married.
- Gerwani did not ask any women to fill in any form or sign any legal paper as a prerequisite to membership; this was highly advantageous in terms of a mass membership since many potential members were illiterate.
- Gerwani allowed members to have dual membership with other organizations, so did not limit their membership along sectarian lines.

What were the programs that attracted many Indonesian women to join Gerwani? The first that can be listed is the attractiveness of their programs to women who had fought alongside men during the Republican struggle of 1945-49. The ongoing commitment of Gerwis/Gerwani to put an end to all forms of colonialism and imperialism was especially attractive to women of this group, while a larger and more general group was attracted by the promise of Gerwani to put an end to the practices of feudalism that had been responsible for so many broken families in the past, and had put an unfair burden on women by allowing practices like polygyny that allowed men to start multiple families without the need to take full responsibility. Finally, the many progressive programs put forward by Gerwani in favour of changes to political, social and legal structures meant that the organization held out the hope of significant changes to Indonesian society that would bring direct benefits for women in the workplace and home.

**The account of one of the Gerwani Leaders**

Ibu Pasek, whose real name is Ni Ketut Kariasih, born in 1932 in Denpasar, Bali, informed me that Gerwani was a very interesting women’s organization. According to Bu Pasek the programs offered by Gerwani were very attractive not only for women
but also for men, especially poor farmers from the rural areas of Bali. As the deputy of Gerwani in Bali, Ibu Pasek was very active in implementing programs designed by Gerwani for establishing schools for children around her area in Denpasar. Being born in the city she had never worked in the rice-fields, and so became very enthusiastic when Gerwani planned to help poor farmers working in the rice fields in the Karangasem area of East Bali. She says that she tried very hard to put her feet in the shoes of the farmers. As she describes her experiences working in the rice-fields, she managed to follow along with the work of the men and women of the farming community she joined, but nearly fainted at one point from not having anything to drink while working under the hot sun in the mud and water of the fields.

In 1963 when Mount Agung, the highest mountain in Bali, erupted, Ibu Pasek and other Gerwani members went to the affected area to distribute aid in the form of food, clothing and materials for temporary shelter. She and the other Gerwani members could only reach the affected area by means of helicopter because there were no passable roads connecting the affected areas with Denpasar, where the relief effort was being coordinated. Moreover, since there were no suitable landing sites they had to drop the food supplies and other items from the helicopter. The food that was prepared in the Denpasar area was divided into small packages to facilitate carrying and distribution. Ibu Pasek was glowing with happiness when she talked about her experiences in helping under-privileged people. But her happiness as one of the leaders of Gerwani suddenly ended in tragedy when Gerwani was violently suppressed in the months following the killing of six popular generals and a lieutenant during the “abortive coup” of 30 September 1965, known in Indonesia mainly by its acronym G.30.S/PKI (Gerakan 30 September/Partai Komunis Indonesia), the Movement of 30 September/Communist Party of Indonesia. Another related name given to these events that is well known in Indonesia is Gestapu (from Gerakan September Tiga Puluh), a name that was designed to convey sinister connotations.

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193 Men who were attracted by the more militant approach of left-wing organizations towards the question of land reform usually joined the Barisan Tani Indonesia (BTI) or “Indonesian Farmers Front”, without necessarily adopting a leftist ideology, or even understanding its broader implications.

194 Knowing that Bu Pasek enjoyed visiting farming areas, I took her to my village in a rural area where she could recall her fond memories while visiting with the farmers and other villagers in the rice-field areas. She and her second husband, Pak Jendra, were very happy when they were gazing at the lush greenness of the rice-fields (personal communication, April-May 2008).
through its similarity to the Nazi term Gestapo that had entered the Indonesian consciousness through international news during the 1940s. After Gestapu, Ibu Pasek was jailed and received severe tortures when people interrogated her surrounding her involvement in the Gerwani organization (personal communication, 2007-2008).

The events of September 1965 marked a turning point for the women’s movement of Indonesia, which was brought to a sudden and violent halt prompted by black propaganda spread by the New Order, the new political regime initiated by Major General Suharto during the two years following the events of 1965. After first reviewing the history of the events of September 1965 we will return to look at what happened to Ibu Pasek and other Gerwani members who were labelled as affiliated with the Communist Party after the massacre in September 1965.

**Gestapu (Gerakan September Tiga Puluh): the 30 September Movement in 1965**

By 1965 the government of the Orde Lama, or “Old Order” of President Soekarno had reached a point of crisis. Following the internal rebellions in central Sumatra and Sulawesi of the mid-1950s, Soekarno had disbanded Parliament and established what he termed a Demokrasi Terpimpin, or Guided Democracy (1959-1965), which was unpopular with many elements of the armed forces and civil society. His famous ideology of Nasakom (Nasionalism, Agama, Komunis or “Nationalism, Religion and Communism”) had created further tension by attempting to bring together the dominant religion (Islam) and the doctrine of communism, which was generally believed to be atheist in its essential formulation. This led to deep suspicions that Soekarno was attempting to bring an end to religious aspects of Indonesian society by first forcing an alliance with the left, then turning on a weakened religious majority and bringing its power to an end. Soekarno’s isolationist policy in international affairs had further deepened the crisis by bringing Indonesia to the brink of financial collapse. His speech of August 1965, titled Tahun Vivere Periculosa, “the Year of Living Dangerously” must have been read by many as a sign that he was prepared to act on his left-leaning principles and align himself with the Communist Party to bring an end to all opposition to his rule, especially from the Army and religious majority of the civilian population.
There were also particular factors that led to the emergence of a very unstable political situation in August-September 1965. One of the main factors was the health of Soekarno who collapsed during his working day on 5 August 1965. His condition was diagnosed by a team of doctors from the Republic of China (RRT, Republic Rakyat Tjina) who had been called in by the Communist Party chief D.N. Aidit. Their conclusion was that Soekarno would either die or be paralyzed for the rest of his life (Nugroho Notosusanto and Saleh, 1967:7, The Centre for Information Analysis, 1999:4, McGregor, 2007:3). This brought up the important matter of the succession to the presidency after Soekarno passed away. There were two candidates most often mentioned as possible successors to Soekarno: General A. Yani and General A.H. Nasution, both major generals of the Army. Soekarno preferred General A. Yani, who was serving at the time as his Minister for Defence and Security and Chief of Staff of the armed forces, rather than General Nasution.

The main reason for Soekarno's confidence in Yani was his service in putting down the PRRI rebellion in Sumatra and Sulawesi in 1958, while Yani was strongly anti-communist (and so in that respect not aligned politically with Soekarno). Yani was a puritanical Islamic Javanese who displayed none of the forthright and assertive qualities of Nasution, who was a Batak from the Sumatran ethnic group famous for an out-spoken attitude. As a Javanese, A. Yani knew how to please the president by treating him as a father figure (bapak) and by showing his respect even at times when he might judge the President to be in the wrong, never openly contradicting him on matters of policy or ideology. While Nasution did not share these typically Javanese qualities he was also favoured by the president due to his loyalty and acumen as a military leader (Crouch, 1978:53).

Nasution, who survived the terrifying events of September 1965 and was a leading military figure throughout the New Order regime of Suharto, had lost favour with

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195 On 15 February 1958 a group of rebellious army officers concerned about centrist and absolutist tendencies in the government of Soekarno, set up a rival government known by its initials as the PRRI (Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia, or "Revolutionary Government of Indonesia). At their meeting in the city of Bukittingi in the Minangkabau area of western Sumatra, General Prawiranegara was chosen as President of the PRRI. Natsir and Harahap of the Masjumi party supported the PRRI, as did Djojohadikusumo of the nationalist PSI party. Permesta rebels in Sulawesi quickly joined forces with the PRRI, and both sides received covert support from the CIA. Soekarno demanded a firm response from his military commanders and was quickly successful in quelling the rebellions in both Sumatra and Sulawesi (Crouch, 1978:54).
President Soekarno as early as 1952, when he opposed Soekarno’s plan to demobilize the armed forces (Soetrisno, 2003:15). On 17 October 1952, he participated in a demonstration in front of the presidential palace that included the mustering of Army personnel, equipment and demonstrators. From this time forward Soekarno lost faith in Nasution, largely due to his feeling that Nasution had contradicted him publicly, a matter that held great weight in the Javanese circles that dominated the office of the presidency in both the Old Order and New Order regimes. The immediate result of this confrontation was that Nasution was dismissed from his command on 19 December 1952. However, Nasution regained his power in 1955 when he was reinstated as a major general and appointed Chief of Staff of the armed forces (Soetrisno, 2003:16 cited Cindy Adam, 1966:395, McGregor, 2007:54).

Another significant factor that may have helped to trigger the chaotic events of 1965 was an emerging confrontation between the Communist Party and right-wing forces among the armed forces, especially in the Army. Right-wing elements in the Army were strongly supported by conservative religious groups like NU (Nahdlatul Ulama), which were strongly anti-communist. At the same time the left-wing PKI (Communist Party) and its sympathizers did not want a candidate for the succession to be drawn from the Army since they had had a long and bitter history of rivalry, marked in recent memory by the massacre of PKI forces led by Muso at Madiun in 1948 by right-wing elements of the Army - this at the very time when both sides were fighting against the Dutch colonial forces during the revolution that eventually led to the independence of Indonesia in 1949.196

Tensions between the Army and the PKI were also high due to the perception of many officers that communist ideology was incompatible with the Pancasila, the ideological foundation of the Indonesian state first promulgated by Soekarno and his allies in June 1945. In common Indonesian perspective, the PKI was a party of atheists and so in direct contrast with the first of the five principles of the Pancasila, which clearly stated that the Indonesian state should be founded on “Belief in One God” (*Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*). However, despite significant opposition to its materialist principles, the PKI was fortunate to have gained the protection of President

196 For a recent review of the Madiun Affair of 1948 see McGregor (2007:49-50).
Soekarno, largely because he considered the PKI as his chief ally in providing a counter-balance to the power of the Army and the right-wing religious groups (Notosusanto and Saleh, 1967:4).

From early on during his presidency, the PKI had shown their support for Soekarno and had been enthusiastic supporters of his efforts to balance the growing power of the Army (Cribb, 1992:349). In return, the PKI gained much freedom to operate in Java, sometimes directly establishing left-wing organizations, at other times bringing affiliated organizations into their circle of influence. The growing power of the PKI might well have been considered a threat by the Army, especially when talk circulated about establishing a fifth force recruited from peasants, fishermen and other members of youth organizations in addition to the four military forces known as ABRI (Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia) that already existed: the Air Force (Angkatan Udara), Navy (Angkatan Laut), Army (Angkatan Darat) and Police (Angkatan Kepolisian).

By mid 1965, a rumour was spreading among the military and the political parties that a Council of Generals (Dewan Jenderal) backed by the CIA had been formed and that they would attempt a coup aimed at bringing down Soekarno and removing him from the presidency, which was considered by more conservative members of the Armed Forces to be leaning too much to the left in favour of the PKI (The Selected Document around the G.30.S compiled by Dinuth, 1997:20,158). The rumour spread that the coup attempt planned by the Council of Generals would be carried out on the 20th anniversary of Armed Force Day on 5 October 1965. In reaction to the “coup” rumour, the Presidential Guard of Soekarno and several left-wing parties and other loyal organizations established the Council of Revolution (Dewan Revolusi) chaired by Lieutenant Colonel Untung bin Syamsuri (Anderson and McVey, 1971:124-25; the Centre for Information Analysis, 1999:6, Crouch, 1978:97).197 The Untung group was supported by the Seventh (Diponegoro) Military Territorial Division based in

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197 It is important to note here that the members of the Indonesian Revolutionary Council were from various components of the government and civil society, which included a number of political parties and religious groups. Organizations with large male and female memberships were represented as well as organizations with a wide variety of ethnic groups among their members, including Chinese (Anderson and McVey, 1971:127-29, Dinuth, 1997:48-49 in the document “Decision No. 1 concerning the composition of the Indonesian Revolution Council”).
Semarang (Anderson and McVey, 1971:1) under the command of Brigadier General Surjosumpeno and also by a group of officers from the Air Force under the command of Air Marshal Omar Dhani based at Halim Perdanakusumah airfield in Jakarta (Notosusanto and Saleh, 1967: appendix D).

Another significant factor in triggering the events of late September 1965 was internal conflict within the Army. Bitter rivalries within the army had started from as early as the years of the Republican struggle against the Dutch (1945-49) when there had been no clear distinction between military and political functions among the nationalists. Eventually a policy of “dual function” (dwi-fungsi) was developed that could accommodate both the civil and military functions of the military, but during the earlier stages of the fledgling Indonesian state confusion around the role of the military had led to polarization among the officer corps. The political orientation of the officer corps had led many members of the Army to become actively involved in affairs of state, but this involvement in political affairs had weakened the hierarchical structure of the Army and sharpened rivalries between the group of officers who wanted the Army to concern itself only with its military functions and those who desired to be actively involved in political affairs. This conflict within the armed forces triggered a series of national crises like the rebellions in Sumatra and Sulawesi that enabled Army leaders from the winning side in these struggles to play important roles in the political sphere (Crouch, 1978:25-27).

As we know from an account of Omar Dhani quoted in a later report of the Centre for Information Analysis (1999:47), by the early 1960s a conflict had arisen within the Army itself which divided it into two factions (Crouch, 1978:29). One faction was the CIA-backed group of top ranking generals based in Jakarta, while the other faction was comprised largely of lower ranking officers from the Diponegoro divisions based in Semarang in Central Java. This has led to the assumption that the events of late September 1965 were largely the result of an internal struggle for power among Army officers of higher and lower rank based in Jakarta and Semarang respectively (Anderson and McVey, 1971:4-5; the account of Colonel Latief quoted by the Centre
The deep resentment of the group that led the abortive coup of 1965 was openly expressed in a “rumour mill” among army personnel. The accusations levelled against the generals - aside from the charge that they were working with the CIA - were oddly non-political: they were said to be living in great luxury, to neglect their subordinates, and to humiliate women. In the lead up to the events of 30 September there was little if any talk about workers and peasants, and almost nothing said about Soekarno’s confrontation with Malaysia. The main current of opinion among the armed forces was simply the expression of the sharp resentment of the “young officers” against their “corrupt superiors” (Anderson and McVey, 1971:28). The new SUAD (Staf Umum Angkatan Darat, the common officers of the army) underwent rapid Djakartinization, and was soon effectively absorbed into the Menteng elite. The most striking example was A. Yani himself, who rapidly developed into almost a caricature of the “corrupted” Diponegoro officer: highly intelligent, polyglot, immensely rich, with two wives, palatial homes and several cars, close to the Americans, shrewd, cynical, anti-communist and deft at political wheeling and dealing (Anderson and McVey, 1971:5).

But the most famous motive which has been popularized by the New Order of the Suharto regime was that 30 September 1965 was plotted by the PKI and its Special Bureau. This theory was widely circulated in Indonesia through legal education at all school levels in the forms of both visual and literary works. The New Order historian Nugroho Nitosusanto and Ismail Saleh published a book in 1968 in Jakarta under title Percobaan Kup Gerakan 30 September di Indonesia. In 1994 the Sekretariat Negara (the State Secretary) also published the White Book of the Treachery of the G.30.S/PKI, the Buku Putih Pengkhianatan G.30.S/PKI, which presented details about the events of late September 1965 according to the New Order version (The Centre

198 Colonel A. Latief was a commander of the First Infantry Brigade of the Jakarta garrison (Hughes, 1967:25 and Latief, 1998:1).

199 This account has corroborated by the confessions of Latief and Boengkoes which were denied by Hari Sabarno, the vice chairman of the DPR/MPR 1998-present, who said, “Don’t believe what Latief and Boengkoes said!” (Tabah, 2000:32-37).
for Information Analysis, 1999:119). It was the New Order historical version of the late September movement that has been taught to young generations through schools. The history has emphasized the cruelty of the PKI toward the generals. In addition to the history books, there were also some films produced to discredit the PKI and its sympathizers in Indonesia. To immortalize the cruel deeds of the PKI, the New Order government established a few museums and monuments in the Jakarta area where people could witness the official version of events visually through the diorama and reliefs engraved in the monument.

Key actors of the “Abortive Coup” of 30 September 1965

According to accounts by the New Order regime of Suharto, there were many personnel from a number of military divisions who were key actors in the events of 30 September 1965; some were important as initiators of the coup attempt and some were simply peons who were set in motion to carry out the kidnappings. What we do know is that on the night of Thursday Kliwon 30 September 1965 a group of conspirators led by Lieutenant Colonel Untung, military commander of the Tjakrabirawa division or Presidential Guard, attempted to kidnap seven generals who were believed to constitute the Council of Generals - Lieutenant General A. Yani, Major General Soeprapto, Major General S. Parman, Brigadier General Soetojo Siswomiharjo, Brigadier General D.I. Pandjaitan, Major General Harjono, and General Abdul Haris Nasution. General Nasution was able to escape from the raid by climbing over the wall of the Iraqi Embassy next to his house. However, his five-year-old daughter, Ade Irma Suryani Nasution, was shot and fatally wounded who finally died in the hospital a few days later. Also during the raid in the house of Nasution, Lieutenant Tendean who was staying there was mistakenly taken to the Lubang Buaya area and brutally abused because the raiders thought that he was General Nasution.

If we talk about the events of 30 September 1965, the first figure who is usually connected to the events is Lieutenant Colonel Untung Sutopo bin Syamsuri (Lt. Col. Untung), the military commander of the Tjakrabirawa division or Presidential Guard (Hughes, 1967:18, Wieringa, 2002:283). It is often stated in official versions of events that D.N. Aidit, the leader of the Communist Party, was also directly connected to the events, but more realistic accounts show that he had to be awakened when his aides
brought him news of the events and this throws doubt on the possibility of his direct involvement. The presence of Untung at Lubang Buaya during the night of the coup has long been held to strengthen the suspicion of his involvement with the coup group.

Untung had been chosen to be the leader in implementing the plans of Kamaruzzaman with the consideration that he had just recently been transferred to Jakarta to take over one of three elite battalions in the Tjakrabirawa Palace Guard (Anderson and McVey, 1971:2). That meant that Untung would have sufficient freedom around the presidential palace in Jakarta to assist his co-conspirators in Central Java by organizing a force “on the ground” in Jakarta for carrying out the planned kidnapping of the Council of Generals. Thus the conspirators among the Diponegoro division had “their man in Jakarta”, although Untung was by no means the “brains” or the “mastermind” of the affair, even given that he was in Jakarta (Anderson and McVey, 1971:2).200

In carrying out the “abortive coup”, the Untung group divided their responsibilities. The Pasopati division commanded by Doel Arief, First Lieutenant of the Infantry, had the responsibility of kidnapping the generals; the Bima Sakti division under the leadership of Infantry Captain Suradi was given the task of taking over the control room of Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI) and other telecommunications systems and the Ghatotkaca division under Air Major Gatot Sukresno had the responsibility to coordinate activities at the Lubang Buaya training ground and to recruit and train the volunteers who would provide back-up for the insurrection (Hughes, 1967:27, Notosusanto and Saleh, 1967:246, The Selected Document around G.30.S/PKI compiled by Dinuth, 1997:28).

According to the Centre for Information Analysis (1999:40), the abortive coup of September 1965 was designed largely by Syam Kamaruzzaman, whose real name was

200 Alex Dinuth in his book titled Dokumen Terpilih sekitar G.30.S/PKI, (Selected Document around the G.30.S/PKI; 1997:23) claims that it was D.N. Aidit who was the chief leader of the coup attempt, but few other accounts support this claim.
Syamsul Qamar Mubaidah. Syam was the head of the Special Bureau of the Communist Party (Biro Khusus PKI) and was in charge of training PKI sympathizers from among the army units and civil servants. According to the confession of Colonel Latief, the commander of the first infantry Brigade attached to the Jakarta military Command, as quoted in the Centre for Information Analysis (1999:42), Syam was also an intelligence agent for Tjakrabirawa, the Presidential Palace Guard, which meant that he had worked closely with Lieutenant Colonel (Lt. Col) Untung bin Syamsuri.

It is believed that Syam was a double-agent both for the PKI and other political parties or individuals since he had a wide network amongst the political figures. Syam was said to be the “encyclopaedia” for the PKI since he was close to the army especially Suharto, both during the pre- and post- “coup” periods. His closeness to Suharto might have given him special treatment while he was in jail and at the end he disappeared mysteriously (Hughes, 1967:25). Hunter (2008) points out that Syam might have been working for both the PKI and the right-wing group headed by Suharto. If that is the case, it would be fit well with the idea of the usual “CIA bag of tricks”, that is to find someone deep within an “enemy organization” who is willing to work to incite the “enemy group” to do something foolish that will bring about their downfall (personal communication, 20 August 2008).

As mentioned above, the Pasopati division commanded by First Infantry Lieutenant Doel Arief had the responsibility to kidnap the seven generals of the presumed “Council of Generals” (Hughes, 1967:27). In the original planning surrounding the kidnapping of the generals, there was no command or plot to kill them. According to the plan, they were to be kidnapped and taken to the presidential palace to be asked about the truth or falsity of the rumour that had been circulating about the formation of a Council of Generals whose aim was to remove Soekarno from office. But what happened in the implementation of the command in the field differed a great deal from the plan. What actually ensued was a series of chaotic events that to some minds suggest an intentional effort to create chaos and abort the original plan. For example,

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the command is said to have been that the generals should be arrested “alive” but the
plot was changed into “alive or dead” due to unexpected events during the abduction.
General A. Yani for example, did not obey the summons of the raiding party to go to
the presidential palace in a peaceful manner, but resisted, and was thus shot on the
spot (the Centre for Information Analysis, 1999:40).

Omar Dhani, the Air Vice Marshal of the Air Force, is also assumed to have been
involved in the events of 30 September 1965 due to his role in making use of the
Lubang Buaya area of the Air Force base at Halim Perdanakusumah airfield as a
training base for volunteers from the Pemuda Rakyat (Indonesian Youth), Gerwani
and other mass organizations in preparing for the “crush Malaysia” (Ganyang
Malaysia) campaign of Soekarno.202 These volunteers were to support the formation
of a “fifth force” composed of peasants and Pemuda Rakyat volunteers, who would be
trained to use firearms and follow military discipline in order to develop a
counterforce to the official armed forces (Anderson and McVey, 1971:67; The Centre
for Information Analysis, 1999:46, Wieringa, 2002:283). The main piece of evidence
used at the trial of Omar Dhani to show that he was involved in the so-called
“Movement of 30 September” was that his name appeared on the list of the Council of
Revolution as mentioned in their “Decision No. 1 concerning the composition of the
Indonesian Revolutionary Council” (Anderson and McVey, 1971:124 and Dinuth,
1997:48). However, in actual fact Omar Dhani’s role in the events of mid-1965 was
more general, as a facilitator for training of militant volunteers in the Lubang Buaya
area and as the mentor for the so-called the fifth force in instructing them in military
discipline and the use of firearms. This fifth force had been openly opposed by A.
Yani who considered it a threat to the safety and unity of the country and the state
ideology of Pancasila. Yani and his fellow officers considered the fifth force to be
nothing and to lead the country more and more towards communism (Dinuth,

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202 The “Ganyang Malaysia” campaign was the Indonesian project to crush Malaysia, which in the
Soekarnoist view has been used by British to establish a new colonial base during the 1960s. Soekarno
had long set his agenda as opposition to what he termed “Nekolim”, the “Forces of Neo-colonialism
and Imperialism” and had chosen the fledgling state of Malaysia as a target in this struggle. This led to
a series of military misadventures along the Malay-Indonesian border in northern Kalimantan (Borneo)
that did nothing positive on the military front and may have increased the opposition of the officer
corps to his presidency.
The fifth force volunteers who were trained at Lubang Buaya beginning on 5 July 1965 were under the command of Major Udara Suyono and assisted by Gatot Sukrisno and Major Udara Sukarto Kartono. Potential members of the fifth force were recruited from mass organizations all over Indonesia especially from Java, and included mass organizations like BTI (Barisan Tani Indonesia), PR (Pemuda Rakyat), Jamiatul Muslimin, Universitas Res Publika (now Tri Sakti University), SOBSI (Sentral Organisasi Buruh Seluruh Indonesia), and Gerwani (Dinuth, 1997:15). Each party selected its best members to be sent to Jakarta to participate in the training based in the Lubang Buaya area. During the lead up to the events of 30 September 1965 a group of volunteers from the “fifth force” in training at Lubang Buaya was chosen to be among the conspirators who were to capture the seven generals.

The remainder of the volunteers at Lubang Buaya, including Gerwani members, were ordered to be prepared and stand ready at the Lubang Buaya base to handle any urgent events that might come up on the night of the kidnappings and the following day. Hughes (1967:23) points out that at that time there were around 10,000 trained members of the youth organizations at Lubang Buaya, including Gerwani members. All were under the watchful eye of Major Sujono who is said to have trained these young people to kill with unquestioning obedience to their communist superiors. In early September 1965, Major Sujono had reported the training of between 3000 and 4000 volunteers at Lubang Buaya (Hughes, 1967:25).

The women from the Pemuda Rakyat (the Indonesian Youth) and Gerwani had indeed been assembled at the training camp at Lubang Buaya, but as an organization Gerwani was not involved in the coup. By 1965, Gerwani had become closely allied to the PKI but the leadership of Gerwani never openly declared that Gerwani was a PKI party. However, in the demonization of Gerwani that followed the kidnapping of the generals on 30 September 1965, Gerwani members were accused of torturing the captured generals, dancing naked in front of them, mutilating their genitalia and personally killing one of the generals (Wieringa, 2002:291).

The goddess Durga and Gerwani

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203 Major Sujono was the air force officer from Halim Perdanakusumah (Hughes, 1967:25).
In my view the goddess Durga and Gerwani have shared a similar fate at the hands of male authority figures; which both of them have been demonized. Images of the goddess Durga were demonized over a long period of time and in reaction to social pressures that made it seem reasonable to make women scapegoats of anxieties about the power of women when not restrained within the family. The entire Gerwani organization and its members were demonized during a political act of black propaganda that aimed at strengthening the image of Suharto as a benign male authority figure dedicated to saving the Indonesian state and the Pancasila from the danger of liberated women with a background in the struggle for independence who were now seeking an equal place for women in Indonesian society. Both the goddess Durga and Gerwani share the fate of being demonized at the hands of male authority figures; therefore I would like to compare the development of those two myths: one ancient and connected to social and cultural beliefs and practices that went through a long, slow evolution; the other modern and connected with black propaganda and the ideological needs of a modern totalitarian state.

In comparing the traditional myth of the goddess Durga and the New Order political myth of Gerwani, I want to call attention to the way that religious and cultural elements from the ancient Hindu-Buddhist traditions were used by both the Old Order (Orde Lama) and New Order (Orde Baru) regimes of Indonesia to give an aura of power and status to government and military institutions. Kahin (1996) points out that to get a better understanding of contemporary Indonesian society, its organization and social and political articulation, people should appreciate the “enduring and frequently manifest residuum of traditional, pre-Western culture in Indonesia”.

There are more than a few points where we can find evidence in Indonesia ranging from the use of terms drawn from the Sanskrit or Old Javanese languages to name important buildings, the tendency to use the names of Hindu deities for military divisions during the Old Order of President Soekarno, as well as the imitation of ancient styles in art in historical monuments to perpetuate political myths and symbols giving New Order interpretations to some founding events of the Suharto regime. Hughes (1967:27) also gave attention to the relation between modern political events in 1965 and old Indonesian traditions, especially in the code names of the military
divisions during the coup of late September 1965. Kahin (1996) wrote that “the most striking is the way in which persisting elements of old Javanese culture affect contemporary value”. Among names given to military divisions of the Orde Lama we find Tjakrabirawa, Pasopati, Ghatotkaca and Bhima Sakti, all names that connote great physical or magical power and remind us of Hindu-Buddhist traditions.

Another example of the use of ancient symbolism or language is the adoption of the phrase Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, usually translated “Unity in Diversity”, as the Indonesian national motto. The phrase Bhinneka Tunggal Ika is prominent in the national seal of Indonesia, where it is engraved clearly on a scroll held between the two feet of the mythical Garuda bird, who bears on his chest a “coat of arms” containing the five symbols of the state ideology of pancasila. The term pancasila “or five ethical principles” of the state ideology was formulated in 1945 by Soekarno. The “Garuda Pancasila seal” is usually found flanked by the photographs of the latest President on its right side and the current vice president on its left. This synthesis of ancient and modern symbols can be seen hanging in a prominent position on the front wall inside every government office, school classroom, embassy or other governmental office, whether within or outside the country.

One of the most prominent displays of the Garuda Pancasila seal can be found in the form of a sculptural display standing in front of the “Pancasila Sakti Monument” at Lubang Buaya, in East Jakarta. This display appears as the background of the sculpted images of seven generals who were killed during the abortive coup of 1965, allegedly at the Lubang Buaya (Crocodile Hole) site at dawn on 1 October 1965. This Pancasila Sakti monument was inaugurated by Suharto in 1 October 1981.

204 The First Battalion of the Tjakrabirawa Regiment was the Bodyguards to the President, with Lieutenant Colonel Untung as the commander.

205 The names of these military divisions are brought out prominently in the film Pengkhianatan G.30. S PKI (The Treachery of the 30th of September Movement) directed by Arifin C. Noer issued in 1984. This New Order version of the events of September-October 1965 was replaced in 2001 by a new film designed to give a more accurate picture of events under title, Penumpasan Pengkhianatan G. 30. S PKI (The Crushing of the Treachery of the 30th of September Movement). See the article by Katherine McGregor in Remembering the Past edited by Zurbuchen (2000:92) for a discussion of the new film and its relationship to the older film of Arifin C. Noer.

206 Because they took place on the morning of 1 October 1965, Soekarno referred to the events around the kidnapping and murder of the seven generals as Gestok, an acronym for Gerakan Satu Oktober, “the Movement of 1st October”. Suharto, the leader of the “Command for the Restoration of Law and
The series of reliefs presented at the Pancasila Sakti monument rely for their effectiveness on the long history of Indonesian visual art. Not only do the literary works of the Hindu-Buddha tradition play an important role to this present day in the way people think of events (especially by way of the shadow theatre), but also the reliefs of the Pancasila Sakti monument have a long history in Indonesian art that can be traced to the narrative reliefs of famous temples like Borobudur and Prambanan in Central Java, and Candi Jago and Panataran of East Java (McGregor, 2007:75).

Seeing the reliefs at the Pancasila Sakti monument at Lubang Buaya immediately reminds us of the very common way that scenes are set up in the performance of the shadow theatre (wayang) plays of Java and Bali. The screen is divided into two parts, the left and the right, with the characters on the left-hand side of the shadow-play master (dalang) representing the “forces of evil” and those on his right the “forces of good”. As McGregor (2007) points out “in the contemporary use of reliefs, [the use of] a form of ancient motif may also be part of an attempt to claim tradition”.

The layout of the reliefs at the Pancasila Sakti monument is clearly a reflection of the layout of the wayang based on the Mahabharata: the “evil” forces represented by the Korava are placed on the left-hand side of the puppeteer, while the “good” forces represented by the five Pandava brothers are placed on the right-hand side of the puppeteer. In the reliefs of the Pancasila Sakti monument, the evil forces represented by the PKI members and its affiliations are engraved in the left side of the reliefs with coarse and threatening features, while the forces of good are presented on the right side or the reliefs. Here Major General Suharto is depicted as a refined and benevolent character who belongs on the right-hand side of the dalang (personal observation, January 2008 and May 2008 and McGregor, 2007:75).

The climax of the scenes illustrated in the reliefs at the Pancasila Sakti Monument is in the third scene illustrating the conflict between the Army and the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) at Lubang Buaya. Here, exactly as in the case of the Javanese Order” (KopKamTib, Komando untuk Keamanan dan Ketertiban), on the other hand, referred to the events of this short period of time, and the “movement” that was said to be responsible for the kidnapping and murder of the generals with the term G.30.S/PKI, from Gerakan 30 September/PKI, or the Movement of the 30th of September/Communist Party of Indonesia or Gestapu.
shadow plays we see the climax of the play, where the two forces are in direct and open conflict, bringing chaos to the situation.

I believe there is a strong link between the fates of the Indonesian women’s movement, Gerwani, with the demonization of the image of the goddess Durga. I hope to show the similarities and contrasts between an important myth and a social and political organization, both of them deeply concerned with the role and fate of women.

Edi Sedyawati (1994:113) in her work on the Ganesa statuary of East Java suggested that, there were three phases of development of images of the goddess Durga:

- First, Durga as a warrior goddess known as Durga Mahisasuramardini
- Second, Durga as Mahasakti, a powerful goddess who plays a major role in creation of the universe
- Third, Durga as the frightening form of the wife of Shiva

To simplify matters I will develop my analysis based on the three images of the goddess Durga in Java as suggested by Sedyawati (1994), comparing each image with an analysis of some aspect of the women’s organizations of Indonesia in general, and with Gerwani in particular.

**The Negative Images of the Female Warriors: Durga and Gerwani**

In Chapter Two, I looked in detail at the earliest form of images of the goddess Durga in the archipelago, when the goddess originally was illustrated as a very beautiful warrior goddess who provided protection to the kingdoms of Java. Zimmer (1955:103-5) has pointed out that the “Durga of Leiden” is the finest representation of Durga in the Javanese arts from any period. The main characteristic of the image of Durga Mahisasuramardini of the East Javanese period, especially during the Singasari period, is the serene and dreamy expression, which stands in sharp contrast with the dynamic movement of the body, but synchronizes well with the postures of her hand that seems to rest gently on her enemy’s head (mahisa), as if to bless or to comfort instead of crushing him. Her dreamy expression appears to have been a locally
developed feature that characterizes the main group of the sculptures of Candi Singasari (see Fontein, 1990:158). However, this ancient image has changed into a demonic image to this present day.

The same as the militant aspect of the women of Gerwani in a diorama of the Pancasila Sakti monument shows them as military women who might have been considered heroic during the years of the struggle for independence (1945-49) and in that sense to share the militant aspect of Durga as a protective warrior goddess. But all this is turned around in the depictions of “Gerwani” women in the diorama of the Torture Chamber, or Kamar Penyikasaan, located next to the infamous Lubang Buaya well.

Figure 7.1: A wax-image of Gerwani woman in the ‘torture chamber’ from a tableau at the Pancasila Sakti monument, Jakarta

The military women in this diorama are portrayed wearing green military uniforms, their black hair loose except where tied around the forehead with a red ribbon, thus accentuating the “wild” and “Communist” (red) aspects of their militancy. They wear black military boots and each has a rifle hanging from her left shoulder. The right hand of one is raised in a fist which usually is common for those who yell, “Merdeka” or “Freedom” in the founding myths of the Indonesian state. The depiction of women of Gerwani as militant women is also illustrated in a bas relief of the monument itself,
which located nearby the Torture Chamber. There is one illustration engraved in the reliefs of the monument where a woman in military uniform stands proudly close to the opening of the Lubang Buaya well, looking on as her male comrades dump a dead body into the well (see Figure 7.3). She is depicted as a military woman who wears trousers, low-cut blouse which exposes her full breasts, loose hair, and a belt from which hangs an army knife with a strangely “sacrificial” look.

Figure 7.2: Pancasila Sakti monument relief (Jakarta): the climactic scene of “orgy and murder” at Lubang Buaya

She is standing with one leg touching the ground firmly while the other leg is crossed over the first in a relaxed position. Most revealing is the fact that she is shown with her arms akimbo, thus in the position that in the Javanese shadow plays is considered to be challenging and aggressive. There is a prominent sense of eroticism in this portrait that resembles that of the “Gerwani women” of the diorama, though their expressions are different. The combination of scenes combining sexuality and violence in the reliefs of the Pancasila Sakti monument comes out strongly in the following Figure 7.3.
What do these images try to imply? Are these caricatures of the militant women idealized by Soekarno as representatives of a revolutionary spirit that was to carry forward the original mission of social equality that enjoyed great popularity during the revolutionary period?

Saraswati Sunindyo (1998) in her article entitled “When the Earth is Female and Nation is Mother” describes a heroic woman named Herlina who was later given the name Srikandi Trikora by Soekarno in honour of having been among the first Indonesian paratroopers who parachuted into West Irian during the campaign to claim this territory for Indonesia from the Dutch, who had managed to retain their colonial presence in a territory Soekarno reasoned belonged to Indonesia.207

Herlina, or Srikandi Trikora, fit perfectly Soekarno’s idea of a “woman warrior”, fitting to take the name of the famous warrior wife of Arjuna.208 In press photographs

207 Indonesia took full control of West Irian from the transitional United Nations administration on 1 May 1963 (Crouch, 1978:54).

208 For a full account of Herlina or Srikandi Trikora see Herlina (1985) in Pending Emas: Bergerilya di Belantara Irian.
from 1963 she is shown as a woman of powerful appearance dressed in military uniform, with thick, flowing hair, a dark complexion and without make-up. She is not tall, but not too short either. In one famous portrait she is shown standing with her hands in her pockets, smiling. As Sunindyo notes “not only does she look powerful (in her military uniform, with a glimpse of war machinery in the background), but also sexy (her hair has been left to hang loosely)” (Sunindyo, 1998:9).

However, once the New Order felt that it had succeeded in domesticating images of women, it allowed militant images to re-emerge in limited contexts. As Saraswati Sunindyo (1998:12) has pointed out images of women in the armed forces began to appear that brought together martial and sensual elements. She cites a sub-heading “Our Women Defenders” in a state sponsored work titled *Indonesian Women Movement: A Chronological Survey of the Women Movement in Indonesia* (Department of Information Republic of Indonesia, 1968) and notes that in this section of the work a female Air Force pilot is portrayed standing next to her jet. As Sunindyo points out this portrayal of a female pilot is “a clearly sexualized image of how sexy a woman can be in military uniform”.

The positive portrayal of militant women during the Old Order regime of Soekarno, the subsequent demonization of these images at the beginning of the New Order, and finally the revival of portrayals of “women warriors” in ways that combine martial and “sexy” elements all point to the long life of images of Durga as a protective warrior that have lived on in the popular imagination long after the period when these images were part of a religion that enjoyed state patronage.

**The Demonization of images of women: Durga and Gerwani**

In my view, the most effective way to demonize the images of women is by accusing them of uncontrolled sexuality, as in the case of the tale of Sudamala, where Uma is cursed by her own husband to become a terrifying demon called Durga who has to reside in the Setra Gandamayu, the stinking cemetery of mortal beings, for a period of twelve years. Only after being exorcized by the god Shiva through taking his place in
the body of Sadewa can Durga be transformed into the submissive, gentle, benign wife of Shiva known in Java and Bali as Bhatari Uma.

It is important to note that depictions of the “adulterous” nature of Uma/Durga are not found in the Indian epic of the *Mahabharata*. In my view the “branch tales” of the *Mahabharata* found in the Javanese shadow plays and literary works like the *Sudamala* tale, where the goddess is accused of sexual and moral depravity, are connected with male desires to contain the power of women within the family and to underline the dangers that can befall society when the power of women is not controlled. Other ancient Javano-Balinese literary works whose narratives have demonized the image of women are the *Tutur Andha Bhuwana, Rare Angon, Korawa Asrama* and the most popular work of all, the *Calon Arang*, which even today is the source of one of the most popular performances of the Balinese “sacred theatre”.

The story of *Calon Arang* is different from the others because the setting of the story is the local East Javanese kingdom of the 11th century, famous for being ruled by Airlangga, who is remembered to this day as a “just king” who retired at the end of his life to seek spiritual release by meditating in a remote, wilderness area. This association with an historical period and place makes this tale seems “true to life” and seems to represent the true historical figures and events. The antagonist in this tale is *Rangda ing Dirah*, the widow of Dirah, who is depicted as an evil widow who practises black magic in order to bring about disaster for the whole kingdom of Airlangga. The tale takes its name from the “candidates for evil” (*calon arang*) because Rangda ing Dirah can turn her enemies into ash (*arang*) by using the fire from her inner power. Today it is not uncommon for intellectual and creative women of Indonesia to contest the traditional image of Rangda. The story of *Calon Arang* has been problematized by Toeti Heraty (2000), who criticizes the fact that in the tale images of women have been unjustly treated through a social construction dominated

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209 The story about the adulterous deed of Uma was a composition of the Javanese poets, because it is unknown in India. This is corroborated by several scholars of Indian studies. While visiting India in May 2007 in order to present a synopsis of my dissertation work at two venues in New Delhi I spoke with Dr Bhachchan Kumar and Dr Tirupathy (among others) about the story of *Sudamala* and found that none of them had ever heard of an Indian tale or myth relating the story of the adultery of the goddess. I also spoke with Professor Nagarajo Rao of Mysore on this point during a visit to Jerusalem in 2004.
by male authority figures. Heraty claims that the *Calon Arang* tale represents a case where women have been made the victims of a patriarchal community that marginalizes “wild” images of women, so that women who do not fit the “domestic” mode are ostracized from normal society, and in mythical narratives accused of causing disaster to the peaceful and secure state of the kingdom by means of black magic. The demonization of images of women in Indonesia has been an ongoing process with roots in the pre-modern period, and has continued as part of the cultural background that made possible the ultimate demonization - the terrifying portrayal of the women of Gerwani as sexually perverted murderers in the black propaganda of the New Order.

The dissemination of the oppressive effects of patriarchy seems to have begun even during the period of the Hindu and Buddhist kingdoms, a period when we know that women enjoyed a relatively high social status and were active in both political life and the court arts. The processes of demonization set in motion then have developed continuously until the present day in Indonesia. Women have been victimized for the sake of power, position and other political ambitions by those who are hungry for status. Seno Gumira Ajidharma (in Heraty, 2000:ix) has underlined these continuing effects of patriarchal views in the prologue to the work of Toety Heraty (2000:ix) mentioned earlier by linking them to the needs of the Indonesian state: “*Calon Arang* is sacrificed to strengthen the central power”. Toety Heraty (2000) herself speaks of “women as the victims of patriarchy” (*perempuan korban patriarki*).

A male-dominated, patriarchal society keeps women in a limited sphere defined by social norms that limit their power outside the domestic sphere. If women act outside of these norms, they can be labelled as “wild” or demonic figures. This is the sense in which images of the goddess Durga/Uma in the *Sudamala* tale, the witch Rangda in the *Calon Arang* tale and the women of Gerwani share a parallel fate. All of them represent ways that images of women have been demonized in order to serve the myth-making needs of a male-dominated society. While mythological demonization has negative impacts on women in general, the effects of black propaganda on the women of Gerwani were more disastrous. Through “legends” of their sexual perversion and moral depravity broadcast through state-controlled mass media, including the national radio broadcasting network (RRI) and newspapers (*Berita*...
Yudha and Angkatan Bersendjata), not only were the women of Gerwani demonized, but many lost their lives or were imprisoned for much of their adult life.\(^{210}\)

The newspapers of the Armed Forces, Berita Yudha and Angkatan Bersendjata, for example, had already reported in the first week of October 1965 that one of the Gerwani members named Djamilah, a widow of 17 years of age, had participated in mutilating the genitals of the generals after engaging in sexual intercourse with them, just prior to their murder and being thrown into the well of Lubang Buaya. The mass media always plays an important role in the dissemination of information meant to support government policies, whether positive or negative, since it reaches a wider sector of the community than can be reached through legislative means. Government control of the media during the early days of the New Order meant that Suharto and his allies found it relatively easy to portray Gerwani as a minority organization that leaned towards communism. The fact that the black propaganda of the New Order portrayed the women of Gerwani as morally depraved, sexually perverted and atheistic (because of being communist) meant that it had a powerful effect on the Islamic majority of Indonesia.

The role of the state-controlled media cannot be underestimated in generating myths that demonized women and “communists” in the months following the so-called coup of September 1965 leading to a terrifying massacre. Many people, especially pious Muslims and Hindus of Java and Bali had no time to digest the truth behind the news being broadcast by the state mass media, or to question the validity of reports of sexual misconduct and mutilation of the generals at Lubang Buaya. By January 1966 a campaign of mass extermination and imprisonment had begun and it was too late to question the truth behind New Order propaganda.

Wieringa (2002:294-301) points out that the political actors involved in the events of September-October 1965 had arrested a number of commercial sex workers and used them as actresses in the scenario they had composed to “explain” the events at Lubang Buaya. Wieringa’s report was corroborated for me by several Javanese and Balinese

women whom I interviewed in 2007–2008. These women are said to have been forced
to pose as commanded by New Order army officers so that it looked as if they were
involved in the killings at Lubang Buaya. This scenario was thus created by New
Order political actors to be used in building a base of accusation toward Gerwani.

“News” about the sexual brutality conducted by Gerwani members had the intended
result of triggering public anger. Fuel was added to the fire through media reports of
the free sexual behaviour that was said to go on between Gerwani members and
members of the military wing of the PKI (Communist Party), with special attention
given to the “ritual of fragrant flowers” (*upacara harum bunga*). These reports
included accounts that seem absurd to us today that speak of Gerwani members being
“inoculated” on their right buttocks with sexual stimulants, while their communist
male partners got their shots on the left buttock. Other lurid accounts speak of 200
women of the Gerwani having been “prepared” to satisfy the sexual needs of men of
the “communist” militia during military training at Lubang Buaya (Hughes, 1967:43-
55, the Centre for Information Analysis, 1999:87-115).

Gerwani members and the militia members being trained at Lubang Buaya were
accused by the New Order as the primary actors of the killings of the six generals and
a lieutenant during the coup in 1965. They were accused of being dangerous,
powerful and radical in both political and social ways since they were assumed to
have engaged in antinomian practices which included sexual intercourse outside the
socially conventional boundaries of marriage. Both pious Hindus and Muslims who
viewed marriage as a solemn vow that cannot be contravened for any reason
whatsoever would have been expected to condemn the “perverted sexual behaviour”
of the women of Gerwani and “communist party members”.

The authority figures of the New Order thus took advantage of popular fears about
uncontrolled female sexuality in order to demolish the women’s movement, which
they considered a threat to their political and moral power. New Order authority
figures spread false stories about the loose morals of the Gerwani members through
public mass media. As Ralph McGehee, who served as a CIA agent in Jakarta (1964-
1966) has pointed out, the news generated by the state-controlled mass media in 1965
proved to be a very effective way of triggering mass anger and setting the stage for
the genocidal campaign of 1966-67 (McGehee, 1999:90). In the events of 1965-67, we thus see a strong example of the terrifying effects of black propaganda: by building on a long tradition of anxiety about female sexuality, and the power of women outside the domestic realm, the state-controlled media were able to lay the groundwork for a very real campaign that led to the deaths of many innocent women, and the long imprisonment of many more women who were caught up in the flood of anger that was unleashed when these modern “women warriors” were portrayed as the modern incarnations of an evil widow like Rangda of the Calon Arang tale.

The Dance of Destruction: What is Tari Harum Bunga?

The film Pengkhianatan G.30.S/PKI (The Treachery of the 30 September Movement of the Communist Party of Indonesia) directed by Arifin C. Noer was first released in 1984. The depictions of the “torture” of the generals presented in this film shows members of Gerwani using razorblades to mutilate the faces of the generals - and in even more lurid detail - castrating them. These bloody cinematic scenes are reflected in the diorama of the Pancasila Sakti monument. The wild scenes in the film begin with men and women dancing and singing the famous song genjer-genjer, while others drag the bodies of the generals to be dumped into the Lubang Buaya well (McGregor, 2007:100).²¹¹

Anderson and McVey (1971), for example, cite several lines from Pigeaud’s translation of the Nagarakertagama to illustrate the ancient background of crowd scenes that New Order accounts hold took place at the Lubang Buaya training ground on the night of the abduction of the generals:

Crowded were the women, old and young, taking up their places, close packed, on the great open field…their hearts were excited and rejoicing, as though they were seeing such a thing for the first time. Not to be described was their conduct…(Anderson and McVey, 1971:21, citing Pigeaud’s translation [1960-63] of Nag 84.6d, 84.7a-b).

²¹¹ Genjer-genjer is a kind of weed that grows among the rice in the wet rice field and the genjer-genjer song was an ethnic song of East Java famous during 1960s.
The quotation above seems to fit well with the depiction of events as portrayed in Arifin C. Noer’s film. But this of course raises the question of whether the events portrayed in *Pengkhiantan G.30.S/PKI* ever actually took place, or became a part of the popular imagination partly through “reports” in the Press organs of the armed forces, partly through rumours that circulated after the exhuming of the bodies of the generals, which in both cases drew on a long tradition of portrayals of scenes of public rejoicing like those featured in the *Nagara Kertagama*.

Sylvia Tiwon (1996) develops a contrast between domesticated images of women like that of Raden Adjeng Kartini (her “models”) and images of women exhibiting uninhibited behaviour in public contexts (her “maniacs”). This is an important point since, as she points out (1996:62), “modern literature, this frenzied aspect of the female in a group has been largely phased out”. I agree with Tiwon in the basic contrast she draws between “wild women in a crowd” as known from the ancient literature and domesticated women, and in her emphasis on the importance of New Order images of domesticated women as the only proper role model for the women of Indonesia.

However, I disagree with some parts of her analysis of the processional scenes from the *kakawin* because I think she draws too sharp a contrast between the private and public behaviour of women of the ancient period when she develops her argument as follows:

> In traditional literature, when a woman is not depicted as an individual heroine, she is depicted as an entity lost with an unindividuated, unmistakably feminine crowd. In the crowd, the essential female forgets what are considered her “normal” roles: she leaves her husband, forgets her children, leaves her dressing rituals, and breaks free in wild abandon.”

Tiwon cites similar scenes of the uncontrolled behaviour of women in public settings from works of the Malay *hikayat* tradition, including the *Hikayat Andaken Penurat* (1996:61) and the *Hikayat Hang Tuah* (1996:62) and she goes on to show how a more negative, but related, picture of the behaviour of women in a “faceless crowd” was developed by the short-story writer Idrus in his famous work “Surabaya” (1996:62-63). It is also very important that she draws parallels with the portrayal of Gerwani in
“reports” on the events at Lubang Buaya (1996:64-66). She summarizes her view of how ancient images of women reacting wildly and happily to the appearance of the hero disappeared in modern times as follows:

Modern novels and short stories, with their focus on the individual, do not, on the whole, deal with the crowd, and thus, this aspect of female behaviour is more or less silenced (1996:62).

I would like to propose that there is another more important reason for the disappearance of images of ecstatic women in public contexts: this is, the demonization that took place in early New Order portrayals of the women of Gerwani, which I believe drew on negative images of women like the portrayal of Rangda and her pupils in black magic in the *Calon Arang* tale, and on more positive images of dancing women in popular performance dances like the *Tayuban* of Banyuwangi, the *Ronggeng* of East Java and the *Joged* of Bali.

It is very intriguing to consider the possible sources of the *tari harum bunga* that Arifin C. Noer’s film claims was performed at Lubang Buaya by the *Pemuda Rakyat* (Indonesian Revolutionary Youth), the *Barisan Tani Indonesia* (Indonesian Farmer’s Front) and the *Sentral Organisasi Buruh Seluruh Indonesia* (the All Indonesian Federation of Labour Unions) along with members of Gerwani. In the film they are shown dancing and celebrating during the “torture” and killing of the generals. In the film we see a combination of singing of a well-known song called *genjer-genjer* that imitates the proud crowing of roosters as a sign of the dawn with the yelling of the crowds saying *bunuh ... bunuh*, “kill ... kill.”

Anderson and McVey (1971: 86) relate this part of the hagiography of the New Order to a wider dimension by making a comparison with the “society of atheists” studied by Gibbon (1958) in his study of the *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1958:81-85,129).

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212 The Indonesian youth that participated in the military training at Lubang Buaya were in fact not only from the left-wing political parties as suggested in Noer’s film, but also from other youth organizations from the right-wing (Anderson and McVey, 1971:22).
They based their analysis of the origin of the “legendary” accounts of the conduct of the Pemuda Rakyat and Gerwani on a study of articles that appeared in the English language edition of the state news agency Antara on 30 November 1965 and in the armed forces newspaper Angkatan Bersenjata on 13 December 1965:

[T]he accounts of the atrocities committed at Halim have undergone considerable elaboration, in which the strongest emphasis has been on unholy rites and sexual orgies preliminary to the slayings: thus the Gerwani were accused of giving themselves indiscriminately to Air Force officers and to Pemuda Rakyat in a ritual orgy presided over by Aidit, the principal feature of which was a “Dance of the Fragrant Flowers” performed by naked Gerwani girls.

It is obvious that the “news coverage” by Antara and Angkatan Bersenjata, with its emphasis of the orgiastic and sadistic “actions” of the Pemuda Rakyat and Gerwani would have put them in a very difficult situation in the Indonesian community. Indeed, it led to a significant loss of life for both the Pemuda Rakyat and Gerwani members, and for those who survived social ostracism after their release many years later from prison. But the demonic images produced by the New Order government led not only to the suffering of the victims and their relatives; it also has created a clouded and obscure picture of the real facts that has caused many doubts and difficulties for those who want to know the real facts of the event. What surprised me most during my field work in Java and Bali was that when I asked men and women who had survived the mass killings of 1965-67 and endured years of imprisonment about the existence of the so-called tarian harum bunga, almost none of them even knew what it was. It seems from this that the “ecstatic dance” of the Pemuda Rakyat and Gerwani that was ‘performed’ during the murder of the generals is a modern legend, one that can be traced to historical sources like the news items of Antara and Angkatan Bersenjata and also to a long tradition of depictions of public scenes of ecstatic or erotic behaviour, some of them positive, some of them negative.

One of the best-known representations of the “dance of the fragrant flowers” in Indonesia is the relief showing this “event” that is among those featured at the Pancasila Sakti monument of Lubang Buaya. The following figure is the depiction of
the Gerwani women engraved in the relief of the Monument Pancasila Sakti, Lubang Buaya.

The expressions of the women are shown as very dreamy and unfocussed, as if they are under the influence of intoxicating drugs, and they are wearing garlands of flowers, a clear reference to the “dance of the fragrant flowers” that is mentioned in New Order press reports and histories as if it referred to a dance that combined terrifying elements of sadism and erotic ecstasy. It is clear from the way the reliefs are presented that we are also meant to notice the provocative appearance of the women and their facial expressions.

If we look for what Western critics following the tradition of Nietzsche and Foucault call a “genealogy” of the ideas presented in this relief, we might start at a distance, with the ancient links between Indian and Indonesian art that still influence Indonesian art and culture today. Here I see the strong possibility of a connection between the destructive dance of Shiva and developments like the dance scene of the
dance (Nataraja); he dances the dance of death (the Tandava)”. What is interesting between the tari harum bunga dance of the Pancasila Sakti monument and the tandava dance of Indian mythology is that in both cases the dancer(s) wear garlands of flowers as they dance. The ornament of Lord Shiva in the tandava dance is called vanamala, “forest garland”, which in some depictions is presented in a novel way by showing a row of flowers scattered on the shoulders of the deity (Siwaramamurti, 1974:63). Looking at an illustration of Shiva in his dance of destruction, one sees what seems to be a mirror image of the fragrant flowers worn by the woman in the relief of the Pancasila Sakti monument.

But how did this ancient element of Indian mythology find a place in the reliefs showing the sadistic and ecstatic dancing of the women of Gerwani in the reliefs of the Pancasila Sakti monument?

I believe there are two main sources for the imagery of the Pancasila Sakti monument. First, we can think of their languid, seductive poses as drawing from a long history of dances like the Tayuban, Ronggeng and Joged that feature beautiful, well-trained dancers who first perform in solo style then invite men from the audience to join them as partners on the dance floor. As Amrih Widodo (1996) has shown, there are conflicting points of view on whether these dances are “immoral” or not, there has been a tendency to suppress or marginalize these dances whenever there is a strong public push to “purify” society of “dangerous” elements. During periods when dances like Tayuban are under attack the fact that drinking of liquor is often a part of the “preparation” men make in order to muster the courage to appear on stage is highly accentuated. But it is more difficult and threatening for the dancers themselves that rumours often circulate claiming that Tayuban, Ronggeng or Joged dancers accept men into their rooms after the dancing hours are over and provide service to them as prostitutes. The question of whether this is true is a complex one, and depends on many socio-cultural factors that we cannot discuss further here. What is important for this study is the existence of several well-known traditions of dance that involve the public expression of sexuality, and that at various times in the history of modern Indonesian have given rise to fears about the possible “immorality” of the dance forms, and of the women who perform them. These elements of attraction generated by dances like Tayuban, and the fear that arises in pious minds when confronted with
such “earthy” aspects of Indonesian culture, could not have been unknown to the authorities who worked so hard during the founding decades of the New Order to produce press reports, histories and monuments that accentuate the strange combination of attractiveness and sadism that are projected in the relief of the “dance of the fragrant flowers” at the Pancasila Sakti monument.

A second, and possibly more influential, source of images of dancing women that combine elements of sexuality and fear is the dance of the disciples of the witch Rangda as presented in both the 16th century literary work *Calon Arang* and the dance dramas by this name that are frequently performed even today in Bali, especially in connection with temple ceremonies (*odalan*) at the Pura Dalem, sacred to Shiva and Durga and in many villages home to the masks of Barong and Rangda who represent these powerful deities in the performing arts. The *Calon Arang* performance takes its name from the “disciples” (*calon*) of Rangda who perform a special dance in the graveyard before killing a male victim. In the literary version of this story, the victim is portrayed as a recently deceased young man who has been temporarily revived by the power of Rangda and her disciples. When the victim-to-be has been brought to life Rangda and her disciples are shown to be filled with joy as they cut off the head of the young man, and consume drops of blood sprinkling from his decapitated head. The body of the young man is then made an offering to the goddess Durga in order to gain her blessing to destroy the kingdom of king Airlangga, who had insulted Rangda by refusing to allow his son to marry her daughter, Ratna Manggali (Suastika, 1997:99).

The following figure is taken from a dramatic performance of the *Calon Arang* that I observed in Apuan village Bali in 2008. Here we see the seven disciples of Rangda dancing in the graveyard with their hair loosened and flowing wildly under the watchful eye of their teacher. This is the form of the preparatory scene, prior to the revival of the male victim who will be offered to Durga. In order to give a sense of the frenzy of the sacrificial dance scene from the *Calon Arang* tale, I translate freely below from the Balinese text as cited in Suastika (1997:98-99) and the Indonesian text in Santoso (1975:26-7):

“Come on, ring your bells, let’s all dance! I want to see your dance one by one. When the time comes, we all will dance together”. Si Guyang dances by spreading wide her hands, moving as if out of breath, and stumbling where she
has difficulty flipping her skirts aside. Her eyes shift quickly from left and right. Si Larung dances like a tiger catching her prey, her eyes very red. She is naked with her loose hair covering her face. Si Gandi dances by leaping in the air with her loose hair covering the part of her face. Her eyes look like a frightening rosary. Si Lendi dances with loose hair, running now to one side, now to the other; her eyes shine like fire that is ready to burn everything in its path. Si Weksirsa dances naked with her hair loose, she moves by bending her body low, her eyes stare at things, without making any movement at all. Si Mahisawadana dances on one foot, after dancing on one foot she flips herself into the air with her tongue lolling and her hands extended like a tiger catching her prey.

Figure 7.5: Rangda (or Calon Arang) singing while watching her disciples dancing (dance drama of the Calon Arang) performed outside a Pura Dalem, Tabanan regency

Once Rangda is satisfied with the dancing skills or her disciples, they go to the cemetery and disinter the fresh corpse of a young man buried on Saturday Kliwon. Then they revive the corpse by giving him life breath using their magic power.

\[213\] Kliwon is one of the days of the five-day week (panca-wara) of the Javano-Balinese Wuku calendar. It is believed that Kliwon is the most auspicious day to perform rituals, as it is a very powerful day. However, it is considered dangerous and inauspicious to bury a body during Kliwon. It is important to note here that the coup of 30 September 1965 was conducted on Thursday Kliwon, a very powerful and auspicious day for both Javanese and Balinese. It is possible that the conspirators consciously chose this day to abduct the generals, believing that the magical powers of the day would aid them in their mission.
The dance of the seven disciples of Rangda also can be compared to folk dances of ancient India, like the dance of the *sapta matrika*, or “seven mothers”, which is said to represent the dance of Bhairava, the angry and destructive form of Shiva, with seven sisters who represent the wild and devouring forces of the forest areas of India. They are said to dance in a wild fashion before setting out to bring destruction to the enemies of the kingdom or village area under their protection (Siwaramamurti, 1974:84-85).

If we think back now on the way the “dance of the fragrant flowers” is presented in the reliefs of the Pancasila Sakti monument and the film *Pengkhiantan G.30.S/PKI* of Arifin C. Noer, I believe we cannot help but see a close relationship to the dance of the disciples of Rangda as performed in the *Calon Arang* performances. While these performances are most popular in Bali, there can be little doubt that they have been well known in Java for many generations. Toeti Heraty’s (2000) use of the *Calon Arang* tale to attack the patriarchal forces that she sees as destructive to the role of women in Indonesia is just one example of a very well-developed knowledge of the *Calon Arang* tale outside of Bali. I think there can be little doubt that the creators of the “legend of Lubang Buaya” were well aware of the latent fear that was associated in the minds of pious Indonesians with images of wild women acting outside the protective sphere of family life. Stories like the *Calon Arang* tale accentuate these terrifying and demonic aspects of the role of women as part of exorcistic rituals, but at the same time strengthen the power of male authority figures to marginalize and demonize images of women that threaten the patriarchal structure of society.

Both the *Calon Arang* tale and the real events that befell the women of Gerwani show us ways that women are marginalized by the patriarchal order. In one case - as is still the case in Bali today - women who fail to produce a male heir are considered to be dangerously susceptible to “worshipping Durga” and carrying out black magic like that represented in legends and performances by Rangda. In the other case, latent fears of the power of “wild women” made it possible for the New Order authorities to paint a completely negative picture of the women of Gerwani that led to the death and imprisonment of many innocent women and men who were portrayed as taking part in
the “orgy at Lubang Buaya” and “sadistic murder” of the generals. What is really terrifying here is that the New Order had to destroy the lives of many innocent people in order to erase from the public mind images of dynamic, revolutionary women and men that they saw as a threat to the state.

The Exorcism of Durga and the Control of Women in the New Order Regime

In Chapter Three of this work I described in detail the exorcistic tale of the Sudamala. In this tale a demonic form of the goddess Durga is exorcised through the medium of Sadewa, the youngest of the twin brothers Nakula and Sadewa, who are among the heroic five Pandawa brothers of the Mahabharata. In this tale the demonic form of Durga is transformed into her original form as the beautiful goddess Uma, or Parwati, by Sadewa after being “entered” by Shiva, the lord of gods. This exorcistic story is found both in the literary work in kidung form called Sudamala and in the visual arts in the reliefs of the early and mid-fourteenth century temples Candi Tigawangi and Candi Sukuh in East Java.

This exorcistic tale also represents an interesting parallel to the all-too-true tale of the fate of the women of Gerwani. In the first case, the supreme deity first curses his wife to take on a demonic form for twelve years, then brings her back to her natural, beautiful form by “entering” Sadewa when he is about to be sacrificed to the goddess Durga. In the second case, the women of Gerwani can be said to have been “purified” (di-ruwat) by a male authority figure who within thirsty two years of 1965 had become the most powerful single political figure in the history of Indonesia. While I am not implying that Suharto directly “borrowed” his role from a knowledge of the Sudamala tale, his commitment to the eradication of images of “wild (or revolutionary) women” and their replacement with images of domestic women as the sole official version of the role of women in the New Order is uncanny. If we compare the Sudamala reliefs of Candi Tigawangi with the reliefs of the Pancasila Sakti monument, we find some similarities in how women are depicted in the “wild” reliefs of the “dance of the fragrant flowers” and “sadistic murder of the generals” and the way they are portrayed as women under the protection of President Suharto and the New Order.
The depiction of women before the Suharto era shows them as wild, militant and morally loose as represented by the members of Gerwani. Those demonic images of women are then “exorcized” through the hand of the New Order and emerge in a subdued, domestic form in the reliefs showing women standing submissively behind an image of President Suharto that presents him as their protector, thus reflecting the image of Lord Shiva as the protector of Uma in the reliefs of Candi Tigawangi.

In the Pancasila Sakti monument, we can see women differently depicted before and after the beginning of Suharto regime. Suharto and his allies succeeded in controlling women during the New Order period by demolishing the image of Gerwani and creating images of submissive women through government organizations. The success of the New Order in demolishing both Gerwani and all images of dynamic, revolutionary women meant that following 1965 women were for several decades afraid to take an active role in the political arena for fear of being identified with the Gerwani, the “organization of prostitutes who killed the generals”. The scenes in the reliefs at the Pancasila Sakti monument that illustrate the submissive and dependent role of women after the climax of the conflict between the Army and the Indonesian Communist Party bring out this social transformation in stark detail; here, all the “evil potential” of unrestrained women has been exorcised (di-ruwat) leaving only images of women that have been “refined” to accentuate their role as submissive, obedient women (McGregor, 2007:80).
To close this section I would like to contrast the images of uncontrolled (revolutionary) women and submissive women as presented in the imagery of the Pancasila Sakti monument. In Figure 7.8, we see the “wild women of Gerwani” practicing the “dance of the fragrant flowers” while the generals are “tortured” and murdered.

![Figure 7.8: Pancasila Sakti Monument, Jakarta: uncontrolled, militant woman](image1)

While in Figure 7.9, we see the “refined” (submissive) images of women under the protection of Suharto. It is very sad that this “mythical rearrangement” of the role of Indonesian women resulted in the death and imprisonment of many innocent women.

![Figure 7.9 Pancasila Sakti monument, Jakarta: submissive, domestic women](image2)
It seems a very high price to pay simply to support a patriarchal view of society and eradicate the revolutionary images of women that had grown up quite naturally during the struggle for Indonesian independence.

**Conclusions: Can the deconstruction of New Order era mythologies lead to the empowerment of women outside the domestic realm?**

It is difficult to judge the degree to which modern political actors consciously used the ancient myth of Durga as the basis of a negative portrayal of women in building their state ideology. But if we compare the first episode of the *Sudamala* with the propaganda spread by the Suharto alliance about the role of Gerwani in the events of September 1965 we can see enough similarities to support the idea that the Suharto alliance found a myth about the dangers of uncontrolled female power to be a very effective way of demonizing women and destroying Gerwani.

In my opinion, Suharto, whether consciously or unconsciously, used the ancient myths of the demonization of women found in tales like that of the *Sudamala* and *Calon Arang* to produce a modern myth that supported the destruction of progressive women’s organizations like Gerwani by spreading black propaganda that played on the fears of pious Indonesians about the potential evil that could result when women were not “protected” within the sphere of domestic, family life. Labelling and libelling women as being morally loose and little more than prostitutes proved to be a very effective way to discredit and marginalize the women of Indonesia. In the year following the tragic events of 30 September 1965, Suharto was able to project an image of himself as the saviour of the country, partly through demonizing images of revolutionary women that were popular during the Old Order of Sukarno. He was very successful in his mission.

I believe that we can say that there has been a long history in Indonesia of demonization of images of women that has acted to support the power of male authority figures, first through the composition of myth during the ancient kingdoms and second through the black propaganda spread by the mass media during the modern era. Women who lived during the 1960s, especially those who experienced the torture and ill treatment that were all too often their fate if somehow connected to
Gerwani or similar organisations are still too traumatized to be willing and able to take part in the political process. However, after the fall of the New Order regime in May 1998, people in Indonesia are now more open to talking and speaking up about the unjust treatment they received during the Suharto era. Megawati Soekarnoputri succeeded in being chosen as Indonesia’s first female President, despite many obstacles that were put in her way by conservative religious opponents who could not accept the idea of a woman serving as their President.

Many obstacles remain. In modern Bali, it is still true that if a woman is successful in her life, whether in terms of financial or career success, many people will say, “bisa ngeliyak”, meaning that she can take on a powerful and dangerous magical body through the practice of black magic and the blessing of the goddess Durga. Being labelled as someone who can ngeliyak is a serious matter; one can easily be isolated by one’s fellow village members or even killed, if it is believed that disasters that befall neighbours or even family members are part of a woman’s “drive for power” through practising black magic. In cases like this the old trauma of what happened to the women of Gerwani can be reborn. Just as they were victimized by being considered the atheistic “murderers” of the generals, so women of Bali who achieve too high a degree of success can be accused of being able to ngeliyak, and so be exposed to great danger.

I hope that someday, after reading many books or articles written both by the survivors and the scholars who tried to tell the truth of 1965-66 or after seeing films about the real truth of the events, the younger generations in Indonesia will change their perception toward Gerwani, and even of the many people who wished for a more equal distribution of resources who were labelled as “communists” after 1965. I hope that my writing will contribute to opening up a new view for the people in Indonesia about the origin of the goddess Durga and the real facts of the lives and struggles of the members of Gerwani who were sacrificed simply to promote the image of women

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214 For example, Ngurah Karyadi (personal communication, April 2008) has told me that Dr Kartini, a scholar from the Faculty of Agriculture at Udayana University who discovered a way of using earth worms to produce organic fertilizer has been labelled “a Rangdą” due to her success in her chosen field of endeavour.
as submissive partners in family life, rather than as dynamic agents of positive change.
Conclusion

After writing this dissertation about the journey of the goddess Durga from India to Java and Bali, I have reached the stage where I can present some conclusions that I hope will be useful for the reader(s) and for future researchers in the field. Here are some of the main conclusions that can be drawn from my work:

1. The worship of the goddess Durga in present day India has a very long historical and mythological background. It originated from the worship of the goddess of fertility during the Indus valley civilization (c.3000-1500 BCE). This earlier worship of female deities went through a temporary period of inactivity after the coming of the nomadic Indo-Aryans to the Indian subcontinent by way of passages through the northwest mountain ranges. These Indo-Aryan nomads brought with them their own beliefs, traditions, social order and customs. The Indo-Aryans, who lived nomadically and depended very much on the bounty of nature to provide for their cattle, did not worship in a specific place like the settled, agricultural people of the Indus valley civilization. Thus, because the Indo-Aryans did not work directly on the land, they did not worship a goddess of fertility. The Indo-Aryans had their own holy scriptures called the *Catur-Veda*, “Four Books of Wisdom”. The portion of this large collection meant to be chanted by Brahmin priests during the religious performances was called the *Rig Veda*, while other works like the *Sama*, *Yajur* and *Atharva Veda*, were primarily guide books for medicine and the performance of ritual. The merger of the culture of the Indo-Aryans with the pre-existing culture of the local inhabitants of India coined a new type of tradition and culture, in which the ancient, local deities were incorporated into the Indo-Aryans’ form of worship. This led to the incorporation of local gods and goddesses into the Indo-Aryans’ pantheon, perhaps as a way of ensuring that the priesthood and warrior castes of their society gained power and influence over the local people, through incorporation of their local beliefs and deities into a single religious system. The three major deities who emerged from this combination of Indo-Aryans and Indus valley civilizations were Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. It seems very likely that their consorts, known later as their *shaktis*, or “powers”, were
developed from local goddesses. The most important of these goddesses in the “Great Tradition” of Indian Hinduism were Sarasvati, Laksmi and Durga, who even today are regarded as the spouses of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.

The worship of the goddesses flourished especially during the Puranic period, and led to a situation in which the shakti (“power”) element of the goddesses became very important so that they began to be worshipped independently. In this process, the goddess Durga, the consort of the god Shiva, gained the most prominence. In mythological terms belief in her great power was reflected in the tale of her ability to defeat the enemy of the gods, a buffalo demon named Mahisasura who could not be defeated by any of the male deities. Durga also was believed to be the most generous goddess in giving the blessing to the devotees. The goddess Durga as the Shakti of Shiva gained popularity throughout India, so that even today devotees can worship the goddess in special temples dedicated to the goddess, often taking local names and considered the special protectress of local lands and communities. Devotees quite often undertake long journeys to implore the favour of the goddess by visiting holy sites called Shakti Pitha. The Kali Ghat temple in Kolkata (Calcutta) and the Kamakhya temple in Gauhati are among the Shakti Pitha most commonly visited by Indian devotees of the goddess Durga.

In addition to the individual worship paid to the goddess Durga, there is also a special celebration called Durga Puja, or Navaratri (“Nine Sacred Nights”) held annually over a nine-day period of elaborate ceremony. For this festival devotees in cities like Kolkata, which are especially noted for their devotion to Durga, create pandals, temporary temples to worship the goddess Durga together with Sarasvati and Laksmi who flank a central image of Durga Mahisasuramardini. It is this positive form of the image of the goddess Durga that is still popular in modern India that first influenced beliefs about the goddess in the Malay-Indonesia archipelago during the coming of Indian religious and political ideas during the first millennium CE.

2. The worship of the goddess Durga in the archipelago, which was especially prominent in Java during the period of the “Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms”
(c. 800-1527 CE) did not gain as much popularity as it had enjoyed in India, because the goddess Durga came into the archipelago primarily in her role as the consort of Shiva. However, her early role in protecting the kingdom gained her a special place in the northern niche of temples featuring the Javanese Shaivite pantheon (cf. Weatherbee 2000). This protective aspect of the goddess also gained prominence through her invocation in the “curse sections” of the sima grants recording the donation of tax-free lands by members of the royal family to priests and their monasteries or other communities, aimed at ensuring the perpetual safety and tax-free status of the land-grant.

The presence of Durga in the archipelago seems to be closely related to the influences of Hinduism from the Shaivite sects, especially Hindu Tantrism as found in the traditions of the Shaivagama. At the same time that these religious beliefs influenced the religious practices of the archipelago the literary and performing arts were being strongly affected by study and translation of the two great Indian epics, the Ramayana and Mahabharata, which from a very early period have played an important role in indigenous life and creativity. Nearly seven hundred years after the time when these epics were first introduced (c.600-700 CE) creative writers composing in the kidung form developed tales like the Sudamala, whose characters are drawn from the Mahabharata epic. This creative work must have been composed with local social pressures in mind, since it develops a tale based on a demonic image of the goddess Durga, who is first cursed by Shiva to take on a demonic form for twelve years, then returned to her original, auspicious state through an exorcism that he performs. This kind of tale represents a development of what is often called “local genius”, since we cannot find any similar tale in India, whether in the Mahabharata itself or the many folk traditions that were based on the Ramayana or Mahabharata.

3. I have suggested a role played in the development of the Sudamala tale of fears for the safety of the kingdom during the liminal period of twelve years between the death of a royal figure and the performance of the sraddha rites that guaranteed their transformation into a deity and ancestor who could
protect the royal family; these concerns may have been most prominent during the period between the death of the queen-mother Rajapatni and her transformation in rituals of 1365 CE into a royal ancestor and the Buddhist goddess of wisdom, Prajnaparamita, that is described in the Desawarnana, or Nagarakertagama; the prominent role played by Kunti, queen mother of the Pandava brothers in the Sudamala story suggests that fears about the queen mother may have played a role in how it developed. Kunti is entered into by the loyal devotee of Durga in the tale and thus demands the sacrifice of one of her sons, Sadewa, of the twins Sadewa and Nakula, and must subsequently be exorcised by the god Shiva, who acts through Sadewa to save her, and then to transform Durga back into her auspicious form as Uma.

The demonization of images of the goddess Durga in Java was caused by a variety of factors. Her role in giving severe punishments to those who violate the conditions of the sima may represent the first step towards demonization, creating in the “cultural imagination” the idea that the goddess Durga must be a terrifying deity. This type of depiction is also represented in a literary work called kakawin Ghatotkacasraya where the dwelling place of the goddess Durga is characterized as full of skeletons and reeking with the smell of blood.

While the hero of the tale in this case is able to win the favour of Durga, and to avoid the terrible punishment she could easily bring down on those who opposed her, the overall picture of her image is terrifying, much like that of Durga of the sima inscriptions.

4. In further developments in the centuries following the composition of the Sudamala (c.late 14th or early 15th centuries CE) an even more demonic image of the goddess developed in the Calon Arang tale, where her image merged (or became confused) with the terrifying image of her devotee Rangda, an angry widow who seeks the aid of Durga in order to become an invulnerable witch who can bring down destruction on the kingdom of Airlangga. During this same period the tale of Rare Angon developed. Perhaps related to the tale of the cursing of Uma, the gentle wife of Shiva who took on a terrifying form after being accused of adultery with the cow shepherd, this tale takes the form of a similar curse on Uma. In this tale her husband (Shiva) first sends her to
the earth to get him “the milk of a white bull”, and masquerades as a cowherd to test her faithfulness. When she (partly) fails the test, he curses her to take on the terrifying form of Durga. Both of these images represent a final step towards the demonization of Durga that has led to her identification in contemporary Bali as a terrifying goddess who is the patroness of all those who wish to practice black magic.

5. I have put forward a number of speculations on some of the reasons why images of the goddess Durga were demonized in Java in Bali. These include the following:

- It may be that local legends that connect the ancient queen Mahendradatta with the figure Rangda of the Calon Arang tale reflect the fears of male authority figures in the court of Udayana (989-1011 CE), who did not like the fact that as an outsider to Bali, but the daughter of the powerful king Sindok of East Java, Mahendradatta had a higher spiritual and political status than her husband, Udayana. This may have led in time to legends and tales that found their way into the composition of the Calon Arang, which represented the goddess in a demonic form. In historical terms it was not demonic images of the goddess Durga that first influenced Bali. As we know from statues like that of Durga at the temple complex of Kutri, and from images at the Samuan Tiga complex, the installation of images of Durga Mahisasuramardini must have played a major role in providing a sense of security and safety to the ancient kingdoms. However, in present day Bali, laypersons no longer understand this protective role of Durga Mahisasuramardini since it is so different from what they have been raised to know about the goddess Durga. In the Balinese perception, Durga is the demonic goddess who dwells in the burning ground called Setra Gandamayu and consumes corpses as her food.

- The demonic depictions of the goddess Durga that developed in Bali have meant the marginalization of the role she plays as a creator and preserver as narrated in works like the Tantu Panggelaran, a work
believed to have been composed in Java in the 16th century. These depictions of Durga as a creator and preserver are also described in Balinese literary works like the *Purwa Bhumi Kamulan, Tutur Andha Bhuwana*, which describe the goddess Durga as the creator of the world, its great sages and its living beings. At the same time these works may have had an influence on the demonization of images of the goddess Durga, since she is described there also as both the creator of diseases, and the goddess who can cure and prevent diseases through knowledge of sacred formulae (*mantras*) and rituals that she originally gave to the ancient sages in order to provide the remedy for the diseases she had to bring into the world in her role as the creator. This means that Durga’s role in Balinese theodicies, attempts to explain the origin of human suffering, may have also been a factor in demonization of images of Durga.

- Today, it is still believed that some Balinese seek protection from the goddess Durga using practices that probably go back to the “left-hand” form of Indian Tantrism. This comes out in the idea in Bali that this kind of magical practice is a “left-hand” form of magic, or *pengiwaan*, a word based on *kiwa*, “left”. This kind of magic seems to be a modern descendant of Tantric rites practiced by the kings of Bali in the Pejeng-Bedulu area (c.1300-1400 CE) that were aimed at magically subjugating their enemies. This kind of magic is reflected in later Balinese literary works of the *geguritan* genre like *geguritan Ki Balian Batur* or *geguritan I Gede Basur*, as well as in written forms and performances of the tale of *Calon Arang*.

6. The demonization of the image of the goddess Durga in legends that found their way into literary works like the *Sudamala, Rare Angon*, and *Calon Arang* tale appear to have had a continuous effect on the communities of Bali, and are also well known in other areas of Indonesia, especially Java. Although perhaps without as great an influence as that experienced on Bali, I believe that this history of demonization has impacted on the progress of women even to this present time. This is especially evident in the way that images of cruel
and sexually free women were presented as “proof” of the involvement of the women of the progressive women’s organization Gerwani in the murder of six of Indonesia’s most prominent generals on 30 September 1965. Images of this type that were spread throughout Indonesia through the press in October-December 1965 must have played upon deep-seated fears of the “terrifying” power of women like the widow Rangda who are not kept “safe” within the domestic sphere as wives and mothers.

As a concerned Indonesian woman and member of a Balinese community, I thus close my dissertation with the hope that the younger generation will begin to understand that it is time to look more closely at negative images of women in mythology and to begin to come to terms with the legacy of pain and loss that resulted from the misuse of these negative images for political reasons in the destruction of the Indonesian women’s movement that was so prominent in the struggle for independence and social equality during the period of our first president, Soekarno.
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