

Deva (Hinduism)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Deva (देव in Devanagari script) is the Sanskrit word for deity. Its related feminine term is *devi*. In modern Hinduism, it can be loosely interpreted as any benevolent supernatural being. The devas in Hinduism, also called **Suras**, are often juxtaposed to the Asuras, their half brothers.^[1] Devas are also the maintainers of the realms as ordained by the Trimurti. They are often warring with their equally powerful counterparts, the Asuras.

Contents

- 1 Etymology
- 2 Vedas
- 3 Upanishads
- 4 Puranas
- 5 Classical Hinduism
- 6 See also
- 7 References
- 8 External links



The male Lokapala devas, the guardians of the directions, on the wall of Shiva temple, Prambanan

Etymology

The Sanskrit *deva-* derives from Indo-Iranian **dev-* which in turn descends from the Proto-Indo-European (PIE) word, **deiwos*, originally an adjective meaning "celestial" or "shining", which is a PIE (not synchronic Sanskrit) vrddhi derivative from the root **diw* meaning "to shine", especially as the day-lit sky. The feminine form of PIE **deiwos* is PIE **deiwih₂*, which descends into Indic languages as *devi*, in that context meaning "female deity".

Also deriving from PIE **deiwos*, and thus cognates of *deva*, are Lithuanian Dievas (Latvian Dievs, Prussian Deivas), Germanic Tiwaz (seen in English "Tuesday") and the related Old Norse Tivar (gods), and Latin *deus* "god" and *divus* "divine", from which the English words "divine", "deity", French "dieu", Portuguese "deus", Spanish "dios" and Italian "dio", also "Zeys/*Ζεύς*" - "*Dias/Δίας*", the Greek father of the gods, are derived.

Related but distinct is the PIE proper name **Dyeus* which while from the same root, may originally have referred to the "heavenly shining father", and hence to "Father Sky", the chief God of the Indo-European pantheon, continued in Sanskrit Dyaus. The bode of the Devas is Dyuloka.

Vedas

The Vedas, the earliest comprehensive literature, contain mantras for pleasing the devas to obtain blessings. The Rig Veda, the earliest of the four, enumerates up to 33 devas.

Some devas represent the forces of nature and some represent moral values (such as the Adityas/asuras, Varuna, and Mitra). The main devas addressed in the Rig Veda are Indra, Agni (fire) and Soma, the latter two representing modes of sacrifice, called yagna. The post-Rig vedic Aitareya Brahmana in its opening stanza suggests a hierarchy among devas.^[2] Many of the deities taken together are worshiped as the Vishvedevas, the "all-deities". Varuna has the dual epithet of deva and asura.

Savitṛa, Vishnu, Rudra are Gods and (later given the exclusive epithet of Shiva, "auspicious one"), Prajapati (later identified with **Brahmā**), and devis (female deities) such as Ushas (dawn), Prithvi (earth) and Sarasvati.

Upanishads

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says there are 33 devas in the celestial world, in terms of performance of yagnas. They are eight Vasus, eleven Rudras, twelve Adityas, Indra, and Prajapati, these groups, however, are mentioned already in the Rigved.

In Sanskrit:

स होवाच महिमान एवैषामेते त्रयस्त्रिंशत्त्वेव देवा इति कतमे ते त्रयस्त्रिंशदित्यष्टौ वसव एकादश रुद्रा
द्वादशादित्यास्त एकत्रिंशदिन्द्रश्चैव प्रजापतिश्च त्रयस्त्रिंशाविति॥ (बृहदारण्यक ६.९)

Puranas

As per Puranas, Brahma had ten sons: Marici, Atri, Angira, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Vasistha, Daksa, Narada.^[3] Marici had a son called Kasyapa.^[4] Kasyapa had thirteen wives: Aditi, Diti, Danu, Kadru etc.^[5] The sons of Aditi are called Adityas,^[6] the sons of Diti are called Daityas,^[7] and the sons of Danu are called Danavas.^[8] Bṛhaspati (Jupiter, son of Angiras) is a guru of devas (vedic gods). Shukracharya (Venus, son of Bhrgu) is a guru of asuras (vedic demons) or/and Danavas.

Classical Hinduism

Nature Devas are responsible for elements or objects such as fire, air, rain and trees - most of them assumed a minor role in the later religion. Certain other deities rose into prominence. These higher Devas control much more intricate tasks governing the functioning of the cosmos and the evolution of creation. **Mahadevas**, such as Lord Ganesha, have such tremendous tasks under their diligence that they are sometimes called themselves Gods under the Supreme One God. The Trimurti is composed of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. (Note: *Mahadeva* generally refers to Shiva)

There are also many other lesser celestial beings in Hinduism, such as the Gandharvas (male celestial musicians) and the Apsaras (female celestial dancers). The musicians and dancers are married to each other.

Vayu, the Lord of the wind, is an example of an important Deva. Also, Death is personified as the Dev Yama. Devas, in Hinduism, are celestial beings that control forces of nature such as fire, air, wind, etc.

See also

- Deva (Buddhism)
- Hindu deities
- Vishvadevas
- Maruts
- Deva Soye
- Divinity
- Daeva
- Jinn

References

- ↑ Encyclopaedia Britannica (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/40167/asura/40167rellinks/Related-Links>)
- ↑ *agnir vai devānām avamo vishṇuḥ paramas, tadantareṇa sarvā anyā devtā* - "Agni is the lowest and Vishnu is the highest among Devas. All other deities occupy positions that are in between." 1.1.1
- ↑ Bhagavata Purana 3.12.21-22
- ↑ Bhagavata Purana 4.1.13
- ↑ Bhagavata Purana 6.6.24-26
- ↑ Bhagavata Purana 8.13.6
- ↑ Bhagavata Purana 6.18.11
- ↑ Bhagavata Purana 5.24.30

External links

- www.shaivam.org (<http://www.shaivam.org/shpvediy.htm>)
- Different Devs Explained (<http://www.veda.harekrsna.cz/encyclopedia/demigods.htm>)
- Who were the devs (<http://ancientindians.wordpress.com/who-were-the-devas/>)

Retrieved from "[http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Deva_\(Hinduism\)&oldid=613828398](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Deva_(Hinduism)&oldid=613828398)"

Categories: Hindu gods

-
- This page was last modified on 21 June 2014 at 16:37.
 - Text is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License; additional terms may apply. By using this site, you agree to the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy. Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization.

Devi

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Devī (Devanagari: **देवी**) is the Sanskrit root-word of Divine, its related masculine term is Deva.^[1] Devi is synonymous with Shakti, the female aspect of the divine, as conceptualized by the Shakta tradition of Hinduism. She is the female counterpart without whom the male aspect, which represents consciousness or discrimination, remains impotent and void. Goddess worship is an integral part of Hinduism.

Devi is, quintessentially, the core form of every Hindu Goddess. As the female manifestation of the supreme lord, she is also called Prakriti, as she balances out the male aspect of the divine addressed Purusha.^[2]

Devi or Durga is the supreme Being in the Shaktism tradition of Hinduism, while in the Smartha tradition, she is one of the five primary forms of God.^{[3][4]} In other Hindu traditions of Shaivism and Vaishnavism, Devi embodies the active energy and power of male deities (Purushas), such as Vishnu in Vaishnavism or Shiva in Shaivism. Vishnu's shakti counterpart is called Lakshmi, with Parvati being the female shakti of Shiva.

Contents

- 1 Origins
 - 1.1 Indus Valley
 - 1.2 Vedic period
- 2 Manifestations
 - 2.1 Mahadevi
 - 2.2 Durga
 - 2.3 Saraswati
 - 2.4 Shri-Lakshmi
 - 2.5 Parvati
 - 2.6 Kali
 - 2.7 Mahavidya
 - 2.8 Navadurga
- 3 Other aspects
 - 3.1 Soundarya Lahari
 - 3.2 Sita
 - 3.3 Radha
 - 3.4 Matrikas
- 4 Shakti Peethas
- 5 See also
- 6 References
- 7 Further reading

- 8 External links

Origins

Indus Valley

The Indus Valley Civilization, with its neighboring cultures of Zhob and Kulli regions in Balochistan, have yielded data on prehistoric religious practices on the Indian subcontinent dating back to 3000 BC. Some scholars suggest that the Indus Valley culture has a cult of the Great Mother or the Divine Mother, similar to such cults in Persia (Anahita), Asia Minor and the Mediterranean; and some have even speculated that this may be the earliest form of Shaktism.

Vedic period

The Vedic literature describes a number of significant goddesses including Ushas, Prithivi, Aditi, Saraswati, Vac, Nirrti, Ratri, Aranyani; and a number of minor ones, including Puramdhi, Parendi, Raka, Dhisana, – hardly mentioned about a dozen times in the Rig Veda, and they all are associated with bounties and riches. Few others like Ila, Bharati, Mahi, Hotra are invoked and summoned through hymns to take their share during certain rituals.

According to the Vedas, Shakti is claimed to be Maya or illusion that casts a veil over Brahman, the Ultimate reality. Shakti and Brahman are inseparable entities that lie in a single body which reaffirms the claim that Shakti and Shiva coexist.

Manifestations

Devi or the divine feminine is an equal counterpart to the divine masculine, and hence manifests herself as the Trinity herself - the Creator (Durga or the Divine Mother), Preserver (Lakshmi, Parvati and Saraswati) and Destroyer (Mahishasura-Mardini, Kali and Smashanakali).

Mahadevi

Many texts, myths and rituals concerning goddesses subsume them all under one great female being, named generally as Mahadevi or Devi. Early Hindu traditions as reflected in the Vedas speak of discrete goddesses like Parvati and Lakshmi. Later, there emerged a tendency to relate all goddesses to one ultimate goddess, the best example of such texts being the Devi Mahatamaya. Another important feature of Mahadevi mythology and theology is the insistence that assumes both benign and terrible aspects of Mahadevi.

Durga

Source: Nepal Art Gallery.

In the Hindu pantheon, Durga is one of the most popular goddesses, and her creation takes place in the context of a cosmic crisis. The asuras were on the ascent, and they had become a threat to cosmic stability. The male gods were unable to contain and subdue them. A number of male gods having failed to subdue the demons led by Mahishasura, assembled into a conclave and emitted their energies together which took the form of the

warrior goddess, Durga, that is, the invincible.

Vedic literature does not have any particular goddess matching the concept of Durga though it has references to certain goddesses as slayers of demons. *Taitriya-aranyaka* mentions Durga, but not in a manner comparable to Durga of later Hinduism. Around the 4th century AD, images of Durga slaying *Mahishasura* begin to become common in many palaces in the Indian subcontinent.

The theology underlying Durga's emergence and exploits are revealed in *Devi Mahatmyam*, the most famous text extolling her exploits, and is described: *"Though she is eternal, the goddess becomes manifest over and over again to protect the world"*. This makes her on par with various Avatars of Vishnu.

One of the most famous festivals associated with her is Durga Puja celebrated in the month of Ashvin (September–October), and is also called the Navaratri festival.

Saraswati

Saraswati, the flowing one, is one of the most celebrated goddesses from the Vedic period through current times. She has been repeatedly mentioned in the Rig Veda, and has been identified with the Saraswati River. Over a period of time, in later Hinduism, her connection with a river decreased considerably, and she is no longer a goddess who embodies sacrality of a river, but has acquired her independent history and attributes.

She is the goddess of speech and learning, and is the creator of Sanskrit, the language of the Vedas. She is the consort of Brahma, the creator and member of the Hindu Trinity. She is equally revered by Hindus, Jains and the Buddhists. Her iconography depicts her association with art, science and culture, which is dramatically different from some other major goddesses who are identified with fertility, wealth, and battles. She is shown as having four arms, and the most common items held by her in her hands are a book, a vina (lute), a mala, and a water pot. The book signified art, science and learning; the vina associates her with music and performing arts; and the prayer beads and water pot signify her association with religious rites. She is worshipped on the fifth day of the spring according to Hindu calendar, called the Basant Panchami.

Shri-Lakshmi

Shri, commonly known as Lakshmi and also called Shri Lakshmi, is one of the most popular and widely worshipped Devi in Hindu tradition since pre-Buddhist period. Her name is the basis for "Lady Luck (Lakshmi)" in the Christian West and her form of rising from water is depicted as Venus. She has a considerable body of mythology and history. The earliest legend states that Shri is born as a result of austerities of Prajapati, and she represents ten qualities and objects, namely, food, royal power, universal sovereignty, knowledge, power, holy luster, kingdom, fortune, bounteousness, and beauty.



Durga killing the demon Mahishasura

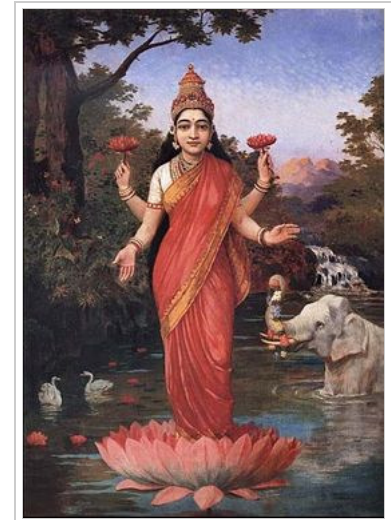


An image of goddess Saraswati

Shri appears in several Vedic hymns, and Shri is indicative of several positive attributes including beauty, glory, power, capability, and higher rank. In later Vedic literature, Shri signified the ruling power and the majesty of kings. Shri-Sukt, a hymn appended to the Rig Veda, is a famous Vedic chant, extolling Shri, and presents a detailed account of her, both conceptually and visually. The hymn also associates her with lotus and elephant – an association, which has not changed in subsequent history.

By the late epic period (400 AD), Lakshmi became associated with Vishnu, and emerged as his wife or consort, and acquired - in addition to her earlier attributes - characteristics of a model wife.

She is worshiped on Diwali, a new moon night, to symbolize that her presence is enough to dispel all the darkness from the hearts of her devotees.^[5]



Lakshmi

Parvati



Parvati suckling baby Ganesha. Watercolor on paper (ca. 1820)

Parvati is the daughter of the mountains (the Himalayas), and manifests the aspect of the goddess as the wife of Shiva. She is generally considered a benign goddess. She is one of the principal deities of Shaktism and sometimes considered the essence of Shakti herself, i.e. Adi-shakti. She has been identified as a reincarnation of Dakshayani or Sati, Shiva's first wife, who destroyed her by self-immolation because her father, Daksha, had insulted Shiva. Parvati, when depicted alongside Shiva, appears with two arms, but when alone, she is shown having four arms, and riding a tiger or lion. She is also known by a number of other names, including *Durga* (Goddess Beyond reach)*Ambika* (mother), *Gauri* (golden), *Shyama* (dark complexioned), *Bhavani* (Mother of Universe) *Bhairavi* (awesome) and *Kali* (black-colored or Goddess of Time). She is also identified as Mahadevi.

In classical Hindu mythology, the *raison d'être* of Parvati, and before that of Sati, is to lure Shiva into marriage and thus into a wider circle of worldly affairs. With the plays of Kalidas (5th-6th centuries) and the Puranas (4th through the 13th centuries) the myths of Sati, Parvati and Shiva acquired comprehensive details.

Kali

Kali is one of the most significant divinities, and many texts and contexts treat Kali as an independent deity, not directly associated with a male god. In case she is associated with a male god, it is invariably Shiva. In this aspect, she represents the omnipotent Shakti of Shiva. She holds both the creative and destructive power of time.

The earliest reference to Kali in Hindu tradition date back to the 6th century, and locate her in the battle fields fighting asuras. Her temples are recommended to be built away from human habitations. Vana Bhatta's 7th century drama *Kadambari* features a goddess named Chandi, an epithet of both Kali and Durga.

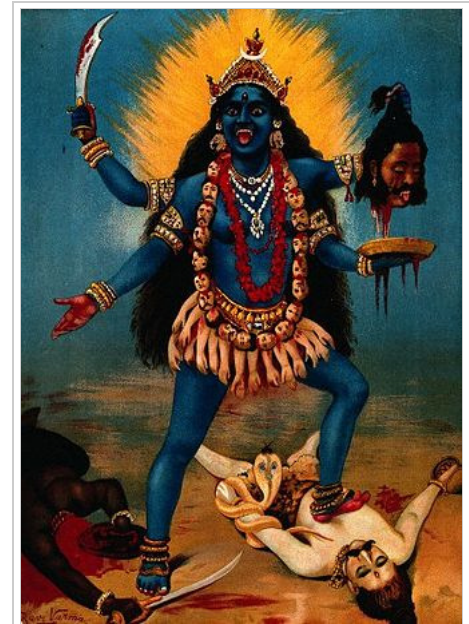
Kali's most famous appearance in battle contexts are found in the text *Devi Mahatmya* when during the battle with asuras, Durga becomes angry. Her face turns pitch dark, and suddenly Kali springs forth from Durga's forehead. She is black, wears a garland of human heads, is clothed in a tiger skin, and wields a staff topped by a human skull. She destroys the asuras. Later, Durga seeks her assistance once more to annihilate Raktabija.

Kali's mythology recounts several such appearances, mostly in terrible aspects.

Mahavidya

Mahavidyas, that is, the supreme knowledge, revelations and manifestations, refer to a group of ten goddesses. They constitute an important aspect of Mahadevi theology, which emphasizes that the Devi has a tendency to manifest and display herself in a variety of forms and aspects. Mahavidyas find no mention in the earliest Hindu texts, but appeared relatively late in Hindu tradition. Seven of them represent creative forces embodied in Kali, and the remaining three embody her destructive nature and aspects. In the context of Hindu mythology, the origin of the ten Mahavidyas takes place in the story of Sati and Shiva.

Ten Mahavidyas are: Kali, Tara, Chinnamasta, Bhuvaneshvari, Bagla, Dhumavati, Kamla, Matangi, Sodasi, and Bhairavi.



Goddess Kali

Navadurga

Navadurga (Devanagari: नवदुर्गा), which literally means *nine Durgas*, constitute, according to Hindu mythology, the manifestation of Durga in nine different forms. Navadurga are famously worshipped during the Autumn Navaratri or the Nine days, initiating the devotees into a period of festivities according to Hindu calendar.

Other aspects

Soundarya Lahari

The Soundarya Lahari is a hymn of 100 verses composed in Sanskrit. It was written in honor of the goddess Devi. This hymn is frequently referred to as "The Flood of Beauty" or "The Flood of Bliss". The Soundarya Lahari is very well established in the context of the Tantra that is difficult to interpret. It provides an appropriate approach to view of the tantra. The link between material and spiritual being is often affiliated with a center of power known a Chakra which is usually located in the human body. However, in the Soundarya Lahari they are analogous with the divine and human worlds which are a part of Devi. Although the Soundarya Lahari aims at eliminating transgressive practices, it doesn't go into great detail what the actual transgressive actions are. There are no offenses to the dharma that are actual described. The description of Devi is even limited, with no mention of her sexual organs. Her breasts are vividly described, but this is only to hint at her role as a maternal figure.

The hymn's main purpose is to provide a respectable approach to the tantra through Devi.^[6]

Sita

Sita is one of the most popular divinities of Hinduism. Currently, Sita is associated with Rama (an Avatar of Vishnu) as his wife, and she receives worship along with her husband Rama. She is one of the many incarnations of Lakshmi.

A female divinity called Sita was known before the Ramayana of Valmiki. Sita literally means “furrow”, that is, the line made while plowing the land, and in Vedic period, she was one of the goddesses associated with fertility. The *Kausik-sutra* and the *Paraskara-sutra* associates her repeatedly as the wife of Parjanya (a god

associated with rains) and Indra. She is one of the Panchkanyas that are worshipped(remembered) daily in the morning period to banish sins out of life due to her chastity and devotion towards her husband. It is said she is shakti or prakriti of Rama as told in Ram Raksha Stotram.

She emerged as a significant divinity with Valmiki's Ramayana, written sometime between 200 BC and 200 AD, and various vernacular renditions of the same, with slightly modified contents, over next several centuries. These texts extol Rama and Sita as the divine couple, and countless mythology, legend, and folklores revolve around them. Sita is always represented in association with Rama, her husband, and Rama is central to her life and existence. She has the dominant role of all Hindu mythological tradition as far as the portrayal of ideal woman and ideal wife is concerned. She represents wifely devotion, forbearance and chastity. She overshadows several other divine Hindu wives including Parvati and Lakshmi, and other similar devoted wives of Hindu mythology like Savitri and Damayanti.

Her current history states that she emerged from the earth when king Janaka was plowing the field during a ritual to invoke rains. She was married to Rama, was abducted by Ravana, reclaimed by Rama, and then banished out of his kingdom. In the forests, in an ashram of Valmiki, she raised her two sons, Kusha and Lava, who engaged the royal forces of Rama and inflicted heavy damage. Rama himself comes to fight with them, when Valmiki told him that they were his own sons. Rama requests Sita to come back, but remembering the injustices meted out to her, she called her mother Earth to receive her back, the ground opens up and she returned to where she had originally emerged.

Radha

Radha, which means prosperity and success, is one of the Gopis of Vrindavan, and is a central figure of Vaishnava theology. Early literature speaks of a favourite Gopi of Krishna, but her details emerge clearly centuries later. Jayadeva's *Gitagovinda* (12th century) presents a full depiction of Radha and her association with Krishna.

In fact, Radha is the original manifestation of Param(Adi) Shakti, i.e. Parvati (in sagun-i.e. benevolent-form), which is the supreme energy in the Hindu religion. She is same as mother Sita is who worshiped Goddess Gauri, whose partial incarnations are Lakshmi, Durga and Saraswati. In order to please Parasiva, one has to first please Adi parashakti. So In order to please Krishna, one has to call Radha first. In Devi Bhagavata, it is mentioned that she is the one who fulfills all the desires of all creatures by simply crying while remembering her and She is the partial expansion of Parvati, actual source all energies.

Traditionally, Radha's love for Krishna is likened to human soul's yearning for God, and she is regarded as an ultimate model for devotees. Her role is also to be an intermediary between man and God.

Matrikas

Matrikas, that is, the mothers, are a band of divinities, which always appear in a group. They are Brahmani, Vaishnavi, Maheshvari, Indrani, Kaumari, Varahi and Chamunda or Narasimhi.

Shakti Peethas

Another important aspects of the Female divine are the various Shakti Peethas spread all across the nation, where over 51 body parts of Devi Sati, first wife of Lord Shiva fell after being broken apart by the Sudarshana Chakra of Lord Vishnu.

Goddess Sati had earlier performed self-immolation at the ceremonial feast of her father king Daksha and an enraged and inconsolable Lord Shiva was wandering all over the Creation, with her dead body, threatening its very existence. Each point on the earth where her body parts fell is now venerated as a Shakti Peetha - the seat of Shakti or female power.

See also

- Hindu deities
- Mantra
- Shaktism
- Diva, a modern English term

References

- ↑ Pattanaik, Devdutt. *The Mother Goddess: An Introduction*. ISBN 81-87111-45-3.
- ↑ Devi (<http://www.studentorg.umd.edu/desi/article32.htm>)
- ↑ "Dancing with Siva, Mandala 2: Hinduism" (http://www.himalayanacademy.com/resources/books/dws/dws_mandala-02.html). Himalayanacademy.com. 2004-12-01. Retrieved 2012-06-18.
- ↑ Flood, Gavin D. (1996), *An Introduction to Hinduism* (<http://books.google.com/books?id=KpIWhKnYmF0C&pg=PA82>), Cambridge University Press, p. 17, ISBN 978-0-521-43878-0
- ↑ Hindu Goddesses (<http://www.iloveindia.com/spirituality/goddesses/index.html>)
- ↑ Clooney, S.J.; Francis, X. (1 Mar 2008). "Encountering The (Divine) Mother In Hindu And Christian Hymns.". *Religion & The Arts*. 1-3 **12**: 230–243. doi:10.1163/156852908X271042 (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1163%2F156852908X271042>).

Further reading

- Aurobindo, Sri. *The Mother*. ISBN 0-941524-79-5.
- Kinsley, David. *Hindu Goddesses: Vision of the Divine Feminine in the Hindu Religious Traditions* (<http://books.google.com/books?id=hgTOZEyrVtIC>). Motilal Banarsidass, New Delhi, India. ISBN 81-208-0379-5.
- Pintchman, Tracy (1994). *The Rise of the Goddess in the Hindu Tradition* (<http://books.google.com/books?id=XK7-r4hlcRYC>). SUNY Press, New York, USA. ISBN 0-7914-2112-0.
- Sen, Ramprasad (1720–1781). *Grace and Mercy in Her Wild Hair: Selected Poems to the Mother Goddess*. ISBN 0-934252-94-7.
- Wangu, Madhu Bazaz (2003). *Images of Indian Goddesses: Myths, Meanings, and Models* (<http://books.google.com/books?id=3SScwifhldQC>). Abhinav Publications, New Delhi, India. ISBN 81-7017-416-3.

External links

- **Devi: The Great Goddess, An Exhibit** (<http://www.asia.si.edu/devi/index.htm>) Smithsonian
- **Hindu Goddess worship** (<http://www.hindunet.org/god/Goddesses/index.htm>)
- **Shrimad Devi Bhagavatam** (<http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/db/index.htm>) Translation by Swami Vijñanananda
- **Devi, a Proto-Indo-European Goddess** (<http://piereligion.org/devi.html>)

Retrieved from "<http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Devi&oldid=616832095>"

Categories: [Hindu goddesses](#) | [Mother goddesses](#) | [Names of God in Hinduism](#)

- This page was last modified on 13 July 2014 at 21:31.
- Text is available under the [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License](#); additional terms may apply. By using this site, you agree to the [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy](#). Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the [Wikimedia Foundation, Inc.](#), a non-profit organization.

देव

Definition from Wiktionary, the free dictionary

Contents

- 1 Hindi
 - 1.1 Etymology
 - 1.2 Noun
 - 1.2.1 Usage notes
 - 1.2.2 Synonyms
 - 1.2.3 Derived terms
 - 1.2.4 References
- 2 Rajasthani
 - 2.1 Etymology
 - 2.2 Noun
 - 2.2.1 Related terms
- 3 Sanskrit
 - 3.1 Etymology
 - 3.2 Adjective
 - 3.3 Noun
 - 3.3.1 Declension
 - 3.3.2 Descendants
 - 3.4 References

Hindi

Etymology

From Sanskrit देव (*deva*); from Proto-Indo-Iranian **devá-*, from Proto-Indo-European **deywós* (“god, the celestial one”); cognate with Avestan 𐬀𐬀𐬎𐬎𐬀𐬎𐬎𐬀 (*daēva*), Persian دیو (*dēv*), and Latin *deus*, *divus*. See daeva for more.

Noun

देव • (*dev*) *m* — Urdu spelling دیو

1. deity, god

See देवता for more information.

Usage notes

The use of देव is generally restricted to compound words and proper names (रामदेव, हरदेव, etc.)

Synonyms

- *(more common)* देवता (*devtā*)

Derived terms

- देवकन्या (*dev-kanyā*, “nymph, celestial maiden”)
- देवकार्य (*dev-kārya*, “religious rite for propitiating a deity”)

- **देवकुल** (*dev-kul*, “pantheon”)
- **देवगृह** (*dev-gṛh*, “temple, abode of a deity”)
- **देवत्रिय** (*dev-triya*, “the Holy Trinity of Vishnu, Brahma, and Shiva”)
- **देवदूत** (*dev-dūt*, “angel, divine messenger”)

References

- **देव** (<http://dsal.uchicago.edu/cgi-bin/philologic/search3advanced?dbname=bahri&query=देव&searchdomain=headwords&matchtype=exact&display=utf8>) in Bahri, Hardev (1989), *Learners' Hindi-English dictionary* (Delhi: Rajpal & Sons)

Rajasthani

Etymology

From Sanskrit **देव** (*deva*); from Proto-Indo-Iranian **devá-*, from Proto-Indo-European **deywós* (“god, the celestial one”); cognate with Avestan 𐬀𐬀𐬎𐬎𐬀 (*daēva*), Persian دیو (*dēv*), and Latin *deus*, *divus*. See daeva for more.

Noun

देव (dev) ?

- deity
- god

Related terms

- **देवरौ** (devrau)

Sanskrit

Etymology

From Proto-Indo-Iranian **devá-*, Proto-Indo-European **deywós* (“god, the celestial one”); cognate with Avestan 𐬀𐬀𐬎𐬎𐬀 (*daēva*), Persian دیو (*dēv*), and Latin *deus*, *divus*. See daeva for more.

Adjective

देव (devá) *m*

- heavenly, divine, also said of terrestrial things of high excellence (Rigvedic)

Noun

देव (devá) *m*

- deity, god, the gods as the heavenly or shining ones, often reckoned as numbering 33, either 11 for each of the 3 worlds, or or 8 vasus , 11 rudras , and 12 ādityas, to which the 2 aśvins must be added. (Rigvedic, also accented déva according to Panini 3.3.120);
- rarely also of evil demons (Atharvaveda, Taittiriya Samhita)
- Name of Indra as the god of the sky and giver of rain (Epics)
- the image of a god, an idol (Vishnu-Smriti)
- a god on earth or among men, either Brahman, priest or king , prince, as a title of honour, especially in the vocative "your majesty" or "your honour" (Rigvedic)
- Name of the number 33 (Gaṇitādhyāya)

7. as a given name, *Diminutive of* **देवदत्त** (*devadatta*) (Panini 5.3.83)

Declension

Masculine a-stem declension of देव [hide ▲]			
	Singular	Dual	Plural
<i>Nominative</i>	देवः (devaḥ)	देवौ (devau)	देवाः (devāḥ)
<i>Vocative</i>	देव (deva)	देवौ (devau)	देवाः (devāḥ)
<i>Accusative</i>	देवम् (devam)	देवौ (devau)	देवान् (devān)
<i>Instrumental</i>	देवेन (devena)	देवाभ्याम् (devābhyām)	देवैः (devaiḥ)
<i>Dative</i>	देवाय (devāya)	देवाभ्याम् (devābhyām)	देवेभ्यः (devebhyaḥ)
<i>Ablative</i>	देवात् (devāt)	देवाभ्याम् (devābhyām)	देवेभ्यः (devebhyaḥ)
<i>Genitive</i>	देवस्य (devasya)	देवयोः (devayoḥ)	देवानाम् (devānām)
<i>Locative</i>	देवे (deve)	देवयोः (devayoḥ)	देवेषु (deveṣu)

Descendants

- Hindi: देव
- Rajasthani: देव
- Tamil: தேவன் (tēvaṅ)
- Telugu: దేవుడు (dēvuḍu)

References

- Monier-Williams Sanskrit-English Dictionary, page 492 (<http://www.sanskrit-lexicon.uni-koeln.de/cgi-bin/serveimg.pl?file=/MWScan/MWScanjpg/mw0492-dRSTArIStA.jpg>)

Retrieved from "http://en.wiktionary.org/w/index.php?title=देव&oldid=26721738"

Categories: Hindi terms derived from Sanskrit | Hindi terms derived from Proto-Indo-Iranian | Hindi terms derived from Proto-Indo-European | Hindi lemmas | Hindi nouns | Hindi masculine nouns | Rajasthani terms derived from Sanskrit | Rajasthani terms derived from Proto-Indo-Iranian | Rajasthani terms derived from Proto-Indo-European | Rajasthani lemmas | Rajasthani nouns | raj:Hinduism | Sanskrit terms derived from Proto-Indo-Iranian | Sanskrit terms derived from Proto-Indo-European | Sanskrit lemmas | Sanskrit adjectives | Sanskrit nouns | Sanskrit masculine nouns | Sanskrit diminutive nouns

- This page was last modified on 20 May 2014, at 22:28.
- Text is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License; additional terms may apply. By using this site, you agree to the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy.

देवी

Definition from Wiktionary, the free dictionary

Sanskrit

Noun

देवी (devī) *f*

1. female deity, goddess

Declension

Feminine ī-stem declension of देवी

[show ▼]

Retrieved from "http://en.wiktionary.org/w/index.php?title=देवी&oldid=18677526"

Categories: Sanskrit lemmas | Sanskrit nouns | Sanskrit feminine nouns

- This page was last modified on 31 October 2012, at 18:55.
- Text is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License; additional terms may apply. By using this site, you agree to the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy.

Devi

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Devī (Devanagari: देवी) is the Sanskrit root-word of Divine, its related masculine term is Deva.^[1] Devi is synonymous with Shakti, the female aspect of the divine, as conceptualized by the Shakta tradition of Hinduism. She is the female counterpart without whom the male aspect, which represents consciousness or discrimination, remains impotent and void. Goddess worship is an integral part of Hinduism.

Devi is, quintessentially, the core form of every Hindu Goddess. As the female manifestation of the supreme lord, she is also called Prakriti, as she balances out the male aspect of the divine addressed Purusha.^[2]

Devi or Durga is the supreme Being in the Shaktism tradition of Hinduism, while in the Smartha tradition, she is one of the five primary forms of God.^{[3][4]} In other Hindu traditions of Shaivism and Vaishnavism, Devi embodies the active energy and power of male deities (Purushas), such as Vishnu in Vaishnavism or Shiva in Shaivism. Vishnu's shakti counterpart is called Lakshmi, with Parvati being the female shakti of Shiva.

Contents

- 1 Origins
 - 1.1 Indus Valley
 - 1.2 Vedic period
- 2 Manifestations
 - 2.1 Mahadevi
 - 2.2 Durga
 - 2.3 Saraswati
 - 2.4 Shri-Lakshmi
 - 2.5 Parvati
 - 2.6 Kali
 - 2.7 Mahavidya
 - 2.8 Navadurga
- 3 Other aspects
 - 3.1 Soundarya Lahari
 - 3.2 Sita
 - 3.3 Radha
 - 3.4 Matrikas
- 4 Shakti Peethas
- 5 See also
- 6 References
- 7 Further reading

- 8 External links

Origins

Indus Valley

The Indus Valley Civilization, with its neighboring cultures of Zhob and Kulli regions in Balochistan, have yielded data on prehistoric religious practices on the Indian subcontinent dating back to 3000 BC. Some scholars suggest that the Indus Valley culture has a cult of the Great Mother or the Divine Mother, similar to such cults in Persia (Anahita), Asia Minor and the Mediterranean; and some have even speculated that this may be the earliest form of Shaktism.

Vedic period

The Vedic literature describes a number of significant goddesses including Ushas, Prithivi, Aditi, Saraswati, Vac, Nirrti, Ratri, Aranyani; and a number of minor ones, including Puramdhi, Parendi, Raka, Dhisana, – hardly mentioned about a dozen times in the Rig Veda, and they all are associated with bounties and riches. Few others like Ila, Bharati, Mahi, Hotra are invoked and summoned through hymns to take their share during certain rituals.

According to the Vedas, Shakti is claimed to be Maya or illusion that casts a veil over Brahman, the Ultimate reality. Shakti and Brahman are inseparable entities that lie in a single body which reaffirms the claim that Shakti and Shiva coexist.

Manifestations

Devi or the divine feminine is an equal counterpart to the divine masculine, and hence manifests herself as the Trinity herself - the Creator (Durga or the Divine Mother), Preserver (Lakshmi, Parvati and Saraswati) and Destroyer (Mahishasura-Mardini, Kali and Smashanakali).

Mahadevi

Many texts, myths and rituals concerning goddesses subsume them all under one great female being, named generally as Mahadevi or Devi. Early Hindu traditions as reflected in the Vedas speak of discrete goddesses like Parvati and Lakshmi. Later, there emerged a tendency to relate all goddesses to one ultimate goddess, the best example of such texts being the Devi Mahatamaya. Another important feature of Mahadevi mythology and theology is the insistence that assumes both benign and terrible aspects of Mahadevi.

Durga

Source: Nepal Art Gallery.

In the Hindu pantheon, Durga is one of the most popular goddesses, and her creation takes place in the context of a cosmic crisis. The asuras were on the ascent, and they had become a threat to cosmic stability. The male gods were unable to contain and subdue them. A number of male gods having failed to subdue the demons led by Mahishasura, assembled into a conclave and emitted their energies together which took the form of the

warrior goddess, Durga, that is, the invincible.

Vedic literature does not have any particular goddess matching the concept of Durga though it has references to certain goddesses as slayers of demons. *Taitriya-aranyaka* mentions Durga, but not in a manner comparable to Durga of later Hinduism. Around the 4th century AD, images of Durga slaying *Mahishasura* begin to become common in many palaces in the Indian subcontinent.

The theology underlying Durga's emergence and exploits are revealed in *Devi Mahatmyam*, the most famous text extolling her exploits, and is described: *"Though she is eternal, the goddess becomes manifest over and over again to protect the world"*. This makes her on par with various Avatars of Vishnu.

One of the most famous festivals associated with her is Durga Puja celebrated in the month of Ashvin (September–October), and is also called the Navaratri festival.

Saraswati

Saraswati, the flowing one, is one of the most celebrated goddesses from the Vedic period through current times. She has been repeatedly mentioned in the Rig Veda, and has been identified with the Saraswati River. Over a period of time, in later Hinduism, her connection with a river decreased considerably, and she is no longer a goddess who embodies sacrality of a river, but has acquired her independent history and attributes.

She is the goddess of speech and learning, and is the creator of Sanskrit, the language of the Vedas. She is the consort of Brahma, the creator and member of the Hindu Trinity. She is equally revered by Hindus, Jains and the Buddhists. Her iconography depicts her association with art, science and culture, which is dramatically different from some other major goddesses who are identified with fertility, wealth, and battles. She is shown as having four arms, and the most common items held by her in her hands are a book, a vina (lute), a mala, and a water pot. The book signified art, science and learning; the vina associates her with music and performing arts; and the prayer beads and water pot signify her association with religious rites. She is worshipped on the fifth day of the spring according to Hindu calendar, called the Basant Panchami.

Shri-Lakshmi

Shri, commonly known as Lakshmi and also called Shri Lakshmi, is one of the most popular and widely worshipped Devi in Hindu tradition since pre-Buddhist period. Her name is the basis for "Lady Luck (Lakshmi)" in the Christian West and her form of rising from water is depicted as Venus. She has a considerable body of mythology and history. The earliest legend states that Shri is born as a result of austerities of Prajapati, and she represents ten qualities and objects, namely, food, royal power, universal sovereignty, knowledge, power, holy luster, kingdom, fortune, bounteousness, and beauty.



Durga killing the demon Mahishasura

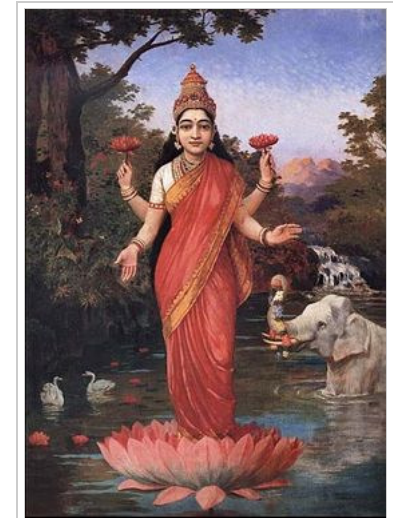


An image of goddess Saraswati

Shri appears in several Vedic hymns, and Shri is indicative of several positive attributes including beauty, glory, power, capability, and higher rank. In later Vedic literature, Shri signified the ruling power and the majesty of kings. Shri-Sukt, a hymn appended to the Rig Veda, is a famous Vedic chant, extolling Shri, and presents a detailed account of her, both conceptually and visually. The hymn also associates her with lotus and elephant – an association, which has not changed in subsequent history.

By the late epic period (400 AD), Lakshmi became associated with Vishnu, and emerged as his wife or consort, and acquired - in addition to her earlier attributes - characteristics of a model wife.

She is worshiped on Diwali, a new moon night, to symbolize that her presence is enough to dispel all the darkness from the hearts of her devotees.^[5]



Lakshmi

Parvati



Parvati suckling baby Ganesha. Watercolor on paper (ca. 1820)

Parvati is the daughter of the mountains (the Himalayas), and manifests the aspect of the goddess as the wife of Shiva. She is generally considered a benign goddess. She is one of the principal deities of Shaktism and sometimes considered the essence of Shakti herself, i.e. Adi-shakti. She has been identified as a reincarnation of Dakshayani or Sati, Shiva's first wife, who destroyed her by self-immolation because her father, Daksha, had insulted Shiva. Parvati, when depicted alongside Shiva, appears with two arms, but when alone, she is shown having four arms, and riding a tiger or lion. She is also known by a number of other names, including *Durga* (Goddess Beyond reach) *Ambika* (mother), *Gauri* (golden), *Shyama* (dark complexioned), *Bhavani* (Mother of Universe) *Bhairavi* (awesome) and *Kali* (black-colored or Goddess of Time). She is also identified as Mahadevi.

In classical Hindu mythology, the *raison d'être* of Parvati, and before that of Sati, is to lure Shiva into marriage and thus into a wider circle of worldly affairs. With the plays of Kalidas (5th-6th centuries) and the Puranas (4th through the 13th centuries) the myths of Sati, Parvati and Shiva acquired comprehensive details.

Kali

Kali is one of the most significant divinities, and many texts and contexts treat Kali as an independent deity, not directly associated with a male god. In case she is associated with a male god, it is invariably Shiva. In this aspect, she represents the omnipotent Shakti of Shiva. She holds both the creative and destructive power of time.

The earliest reference to Kali in Hindu tradition date back to the 6th century, and locate her in the battle fields fighting asuras. Her temples are recommended to be built away from human habitations. Vana Bhatta's 7th century drama *Kadambari* features a goddess named Chandi, an epithet of both Kali and Durga.

Kali's most famous appearance in battle contexts are found in the text *Devi Mahatmya* when during the battle with asuras, Durga becomes angry. Her face turns pitch dark, and suddenly Kali springs forth from Durga's forehead. She is black, wears a garland of human heads, is clothed in a tiger skin, and wields a staff topped by a human skull. She destroys the asuras. Later, Durga seeks her assistance once more to annihilate Raktabija.

Kali's mythology recounts several such appearances, mostly in terrible aspects.

Mahavidya

Mahavidyas, that is, the supreme knowledge, revelations and manifestations, refer to a group of ten goddesses. They constitute an important aspect of Mahadevi theology, which emphasizes that the Devi has a tendency to manifest and display herself in a variety of forms and aspects. Mahavidyas find no mention in the earliest Hindu texts, but appeared relatively late in Hindu tradition. Seven of them represent creative forces embodied in Kali, and the remaining three embody her destructive nature and aspects. In the context of Hindu mythology, the origin of the ten Mahavidyas takes place in the story of Sati and Shiva.

Ten Mahavidyas are: Kali, Tara, Chinnamasta, Bhuvaneshvari, Bagla, Dhumavati, Kamla, Matangi, Sodasi, and Bhairavi.



Goddess Kali

Navadurga

Navadurga (Devanagari: नवदुर्गा), which literally means *nine Durgas*, constitute, according to Hindu mythology, the manifestation of Durga in nine different forms. Navadurga are famously worshipped during the Autumn Navaratri or the Nine days, initiating the devotees into a period of festivities according to Hindu calendar.

Other aspects

Soundarya Lahari

The Soundarya Lahari is a hymn of 100 verses composed in Sanskrit. It was written in honor of the goddess Devi. This hymn is frequently referred to as "The Flood of Beauty" or "The Flood of Bliss". The Soundarya Lahari is very well established in the context of the Tantra that is difficult to interpret. It provides an appropriate approach to view of the tantra. The link between material and spiritual being is often affiliated with a center of power known a Chakra which is usually located in the human body. However, in the Soundarya Lahari they are analogous with the divine and human worlds which are a part of Devi. Although the Soundarya Lahari aims at eliminating transgressive practices, it doesn't go into great detail what the actual transgressive actions are. There are no offenses to the dharma that are actual described. The description of Devi is even limited, with no mention of her sexual organs. Her breasts are vividly described, but this is only to hint at her role as a maternal figure.

The hymn's main purpose is to provide a respectable approach to the tantra through Devi.^[6]

Sita

Sita is one of the most popular divinities of Hinduism. Currently, Sita is associated with Rama (an Avatar of Vishnu) as his wife, and she receives worship along with her husband Rama. She is one of the many incarnations of Lakshmi.

A female divinity called Sita was known before the Ramayana of Valmiki. Sita literally means “furrow”, that is, the line made while plowing the land, and in Vedic period, she was one of the goddesses associated with fertility. The *Kausik-sutra* and the *Paraskara-sutra* associates her repeatedly as the wife of Parjanya (a god

associated with rains) and Indra. She is one of the Panchkanyas that are worshipped(remembered) daily in the morning period to banish sins out of life due to her chastity and devotion towards her husband. It is said she is shakti or prakriti of Rama as told in Ram Raksha Stotram.

She emerged as a significant divinity with Valmiki's Ramayana, written sometime between 200 BC and 200 AD, and various vernacular renditions of the same, with slightly modified contents, over next several centuries. These texts extol Rama and Sita as the divine couple, and countless mythology, legend, and folklores revolve around them. Sita is always represented in association with Rama, her husband, and Rama is central to her life and existence. She has the dominant role of all Hindu mythological tradition as far as the portrayal of ideal woman and ideal wife is concerned. She represents wifely devotion, forbearance and chastity. She overshadows several other divine Hindu wives including Parvati and Lakshmi, and other similar devoted wives of Hindu mythology like Savitri and Damayanti.

Her current history states that she emerged from the earth when king Janaka was plowing the field during a ritual to invoke rains. She was married to Rama, was abducted by Ravana, reclaimed by Rama, and then banished out of his kingdom. In the forests, in an ashram of Valmiki, she raised her two sons, Kusha and Lava, who engaged the royal forces of Rama and inflicted heavy damage. Rama himself comes to fight with them, when Valmiki told him that they were his own sons. Rama requests Sita to come back, but remembering the injustices meted out to her, she called her mother Earth to receive her back, the ground opens up and she returned to where she had originally emerged.

Radha

Radha, which means prosperity and success, is one of the Gopis of Vrindavan, and is a central figure of Vaishnava theology. Early literature speaks of a favourite Gopi of Krishna, but her details emerge clearly centuries later. Jayadeva's *Gitagovinda* (12th century) presents a full depiction of Radha and her association with Krishna.

In fact, Radha is the original manifestation of Param(Adi) Shakti, i.e. Parvati (in sagun-i.e. benevolent-form), which is the supreme energy in the Hindu religion. She is same as mother Sita is who worshiped Goddess Gauri, whose partial incarnations are Lakshmi, Durga and Saraswati. In order to please Parasiva, one has to first please Adi parashakti. So In order to please Krishna, one has to call Radha first. In Devi Bhagavata, it is mentioned that she is the one who fulfills all the desires of all creatures by simply crying while remembering her and She is the partial expansion of Parvati, actual source all energies.

Traditionally, Radha's love for Krishna is likened to human soul's yearning for God, and she is regarded as an ultimate model for devotees. Her role is also to be an intermediary between man and God.

Matrikas

Matrikas, that is, the mothers, are a band of divinities, which always appear in a group. They are Brahmani, Vaishnavi, Maheshvari, Indrani, Kaumari, Varahi and Chamunda or Narasimhi.

Shakti Peethas

Another important aspects of the Female divine are the various Shakti Peethas spread all across the nation, where over 51 body parts of Devi Sati, first wife of Lord Shiva fell after being broken apart by the Sudarshana Chakra of Lord Vishnu.

Goddess Sati had earlier performed self-immolation at the ceremonial feast of her father king Daksha and an enraged and inconsolable Lord Shiva was wandering all over the Creation, with her dead body, threatening its very existence. Each point on the earth where her body parts fell is now venerated as a Shakti Peetha - the seat of Shakti or female power.

See also

- Hindu deities
- Mantra
- Shaktism
- Diva, a modern English term

References

- ↑ Pattanaik, Devdutt. *The Mother Goddess: An Introduction*. ISBN 81-87111-45-3.
- ↑ Devi (<http://www.studentorg.umd.edu/desi/article32.htm>)
- ↑ "Dancing with Siva, Mandala 2: Hinduism" (http://www.himalayanacademy.com/resources/books/dws/dws_mandala-02.html). Himalayanacademy.com. 2004-12-01. Retrieved 2012-06-18.
- ↑ Flood, Gavin D. (1996), *An Introduction to Hinduism* (<http://books.google.com/books?id=KpIWhKnYmF0C&pg=PA82>), Cambridge University Press, p. 17, ISBN 978-0-521-43878-0
- ↑ Hindu Goddesses (<http://www.iloveindia.com/spirituality/goddesses/index.html>)
- ↑ Clooney, S.J.; Francis, X. (1 Mar 2008). "Encountering The (Divine) Mother In Hindu And Christian Hymns.". *Religion & The Arts*. 1-3 **12**: 230–243. doi:10.1163/156852908X271042 (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1163%2F156852908X271042>).

Further reading

- Aurobindo, Sri. *The Mother*. ISBN 0-941524-79-5.
- Kinsley, David. *Hindu Goddesses: Vision of the Divine Feminine in the Hindu Religious Traditions* (<http://books.google.com/books?id=hgTOZEyrVtIC>). Motilal Banarsidass, New Delhi, India. ISBN 81-208-0379-5.
- Pintchman, Tracy (1994). *The Rise of the Goddess in the Hindu Tradition* (<http://books.google.com/books?id=XK7-r4hlcRYC>). SUNY Press, New York, USA. ISBN 0-7914-2112-0.
- Sen, Ramprasad (1720–1781). *Grace and Mercy in Her Wild Hair: Selected Poems to the Mother Goddess*. ISBN 0-934252-94-7.
- Wangu, Madhu Bazaz (2003). *Images of Indian Goddesses: Myths, Meanings, and Models* (<http://books.google.com/books?id=3SScwifhldQC>). Abhinav Publications, New Delhi, India. ISBN 81-7017-416-3.

External links

- **Devi: The Great Goddess, An Exhibit** (<http://www.asia.si.edu/devi/index.htm>) Smithsonian
- **Hindu Goddess worship** (<http://www.hindunet.org/god/Goddesses/index.htm>)
- **Shrimad Devi Bhagavatam** (<http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/db/index.htm>) Translation by Swami Vijñanananda
- **Devi, a Proto-Indo-European Goddess** (<http://piereligion.org/devi.html>)

Retrieved from "<http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Devi&oldid=616832095>"

Categories: [Hindu goddesses](#) | [Mother goddesses](#) | [Names of God in Hinduism](#)

- This page was last modified on 13 July 2014 at 21:31.
- Text is available under the [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License](#); additional terms may apply. By using this site, you agree to the [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy](#). Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the [Wikimedia Foundation, Inc.](#), a non-profit organization.