CHAPTER - IV

SAPTAMĀTRIKAS IN THE TEMPLE
ART OF ÂNDHRADĒŚA

(Early Chāḷukya to Nolamba - A.D. 6th to 10th Century)
Historical Background:

The rule of the Early Chālukyas (6th to 8th Century A.D.), with their capital at Bādāmi (ancient Vatapi), which began in A.D 543, forms an important landmark in the political and cultural history of Karnataka and Andhradesa. Pulakēśi-I (A.D.535/543-566), the founder of the Chālukya dynasty, first fortified the hills at Bādāmi Kīrttivarma-I (A.D 566-598), son of Pulakēśi-I, ruled from A.D. 566; during his period the authority of the Chālukyas was acknowledged by the Kadambas and Nalas. The extension of Chālukya power into the Bellary, Kurnool region after the vanquishing of the Nalas marks the beginning of Chālukya influence in Andhradesa. The western part of Andhradesa became part of the Chālukya Empire since the period of Kīrttivarma-I.

During the reign of Pulakēśi-II, Kīrttivarma's son (A.D 608/9 - 642) the Chālukyas first attained imperial status. From the Aihole inscription of Pulakēśi, it is known that he subdued south Kōsala, Kalinga and further south; the Dūrjayas and Vishnukundis in Andhradesa were vanquished. Pulakēśi then invaded the Pallava dominions and put pressure on Mahendravarama-I, resulting in an extension of Chālukya authority over Nellore, Guntur, Cuddapah, Chittoor and Anantapur districts of present Andhra Pradesh. The death of Pulakēśi-II occurred around A.D.642, followed by anarchy and the loss of southern Chālukya territories, especially in the Cuddapah, Chittoor and Kurnool regions. This interregnum in Chālukya rule ended in A.D 654/5 when Vikramāditya-I, son of Pulakēśi-II, succeeded, with the help of Gaṅga Durvinīta (his paternal grandfaher) to drive the Pallavas from the Bādāmi region and ascended the throne. In
the early years of Vikramāditya's reign, he again established Chālukya authority over Kurnool, Cuddapah, Anantapur and Nellore region. His inscriptions from Amudālapādu, Talamanči and Turimēla attest to his control of this region. From the time of Pulākēśi-II (A.D. 610-642), the Chālukyas showed preference for Saivism. Pulakesi-II's son and successor, Vikramāditya-I took Sivamandaladikṣa from Sudarsanaācārya. This event is recorded by the Āmudālapādu (Mahabubnagar) inscription.

Vinayāditya (A.D 681-696), who succeeded Vikramāditya in A.D 681, had a peaceful and prosperous reign. Vijayāditya (A.D 696 - 733), the son and successor of Vinayāditya, ascended the throne in A.D 696. He associated his son, Vikramāditya-II, in administration of his empire throughout his long rule. Paṭṭadakal in his reign received greater patronage than did Bādāmi and the Vijayēswara temple was erected there by Vijayāditya. An inscription at Ālampur, Mahābubnagar district, dated A.D. 718 records his stay. Vikramāditya-II (A.D 733 - 745) succeeded his father in A.D. 733. He contained an Arab invasion on the north. In A.D 741/2, his son Kīrttivarma-II invaded the Pallava kingdom. From a Chālukya inscription at Paṭṭadakal, it seems that Kīrttivarma may have conquered Kāṇchi thrice.

During the reign of Kīrttivarma-II (A.D745-757), the last Chālukya king, his vassals became strong. Rāṣṭrakūṭa Governor Daṇṭidurga already held the Ellora region in A.D. 742 and slowly undermined Kīrttivarma's authority over all the northern provinces. Around A.D. 752, Daṇṭidurga conquered Bādāmi and proclaimed himself sovereign ruler. Kīrttivarma continued to rule for a few years, from his own territory. His reign ended with defeat by Rāṣṭrakūṭa King Krishṇa - I in A.D. 757. With it ended the first Early Chālukya empire.
Temple - building in the Early Chalukyan period was due both to the systematic organization of religious sects and to a general theistic attitude of the community. Temples built during this period are seen in Andhra Pradesh at places like Alamāpura, Kūdaveli, Pānyam, Satyavolu, Mahānandī, Kadamarakālva etc. The Early Chalukyas of Bādāmi heralded a composite architecture which is a harmonious blend of Northern and Southern style. They have left behind a complex of temples at Alamāpura on the left bank of Tungabhadra in Mahabūbnagar district of Andhra Pradesh. These temples were profusely decorated with sculpture and carvings of elegant beauty. Alamāpura seems to have developed into a great centre of Śaivism under the patronage of these Early Chalukyas.

The nine temples at Alamāpura are dedicated to the worship of Lord Siva. But each of them is named after Brahma. The Nava Brahma temples, (Viśva-Brahma, Garuḍa-Brahma, Padma-Brahma, Tāraka-Brahma, Bāla-Brahma, Svarga-Brahma, Ārka-Brahma, Kumāra-Brahma, Vīra-Brahma) as the group is called, were built by the Early Chalukyas of Bādāmi. The Padma-Brahma is partly in ruins. Its sanctum is bigger than any other in Alamāpura. There are small shrines near the mandapa. Near by there are separate images of the Saptamātrikas, or the Seven Mothers. South of the Bāla-Brahma is the Garuḍa-Brahma. The Seven Mothers appear together in a single stone in the maṇḍapa. The principal image of Śūryanārāyaṇa in the Śūryanārāyaṇa temple at Alamāpura besides the icons of Paraśurāma, Saptamātrikas and Gaṇapati are fine art pieces.

The Saptamātrikas were the tutelary deities of the Early Chalukyas and they were held in deep veneration in the Chalukya region. The copper plates of the early Chalukyas of Bādāmi state that they were nourished by the Seven Mothers. The expression that is invariably met with in the
invocatory verses of Chālukyan grants is "Saptalokamātrbhih Sapta - Mātrbhih - Abhivardhitūnām - Kārttikēya - Pariraksana - Prāpta - Kalyāṇa - Parampanām". In this Saptalokamātrbhi is at times interpreted as the Seven Mothers of Mankind, but D.C Sircar points out that the real meaning appears to be the 'Mother of the Seven Worlds'. The Chālukya veneration of the Mātrikas sufficiently indicated in their inscriptions has found plastic expressions in Āndhradēśa in their temples at Yellēswaram, Ālampūr Tripurāntakam Dāmagatla, Rāmēśwaram, Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, Guṇḍlūru, Nāndikōṭkūr, Takkaśila, Chēzerla etc. The Saptamātrika panels in these places indicate that the Saptamātrika cult seems to have made greater headway in Āndhradēśa only during the rule of the Early Chālukyas of Bādāmi.

ICONOGRAPHICAL FEATURES OF SAPTAMĀTRIKAS IN THE EARLY CHĀLUKYA ART:

On the basis of mode of representation, the sculptural panels and loose stone images of Saptamātrikas of the Early Chālukya Art can be classified into the following categories:

1. Saptamātrikas with two arms, without weapons and vāhanas.
2. Saptamātrikas with two arms, with weapons and vāhanas.
3. Saptamātrikas with two and four arms and riding on the vāhanas.
4. Saptamātrikas with two and four arms and with Viśravabhadra and Gaṇēśa.
5. Saptamātrikas without associate deities, Viśravabhadra and Gaṇēśa.

1. Saptamātrikas with two arms, without weapons and vāhanas

The earliest extant sculptural relief of Saptamātrikas in Āndhradēśa is the Early Chālukya panel from Yellēswaram, now preserved in the State Museum at Hyderabad. This panel shows two armed female figures of divine mothers seated in a row. The seven Mothers are Brāhmaṇī, Mahēśwari, Kaumārī, Vaishnavi, Varāhi, Indrāṇi and Chāmuṇḍa. The arms of each figure are
devoid of weapons and rest simply on the lap. There are no vāhanas or any other distinctive marks to separate them from each other. This panel represents the earliest iconography of Saptamātrikas which existed at the beginning of the rule (A.D. 6th Century) of the Early Chālukyas of Bādāmi in Āndhradeśa.¹⁴

Another stone slab (plate 1) of the Early Chālukya period from the Siva temple at Dāmagāṭha, Kurnool district, represents the mātrikas as seated in ardhaparyāṅka pose (Fig.I.4) with only two arms, carrying a round object in the right arm and keeping the left arm in abhayamudra. All the mātrikas wear makuta, kuṇḍalas, necklace, yajñopavīta, armlets and kankānas. The vāhanas as in the Yellēśwaram panel are absent in this panel. The iconographic features suggest that this panel belongs to the Early Chālukya period and may be dated to 6th century A.D.

2. Saptamātrikas with two arms, with weapons and vāhanas

Still another stone slab (108.5 x 32 cms) of the Early Chālukya period is found preserved in the Archaeological Museum at Guntur (plate 2). This panel represents from left to right - Brāhmaṇi, Kaumāri, Maheśwari, Vaishṇavi, Indraṇi, Varāhi and Chāmuṇḍa. The mātrikas are depicted as seated in ardhaparyāṅka pose (Fig.I.3) with two arms, holding appropriate weapon in the right arm and resting the left arm on the left thigh. Their respective vāhanas which are partly damaged are carved on the pedestal. The mātrikas wear karandaṃmakuta(Fig.II.10), kuṇḍalas and other ornaments. A new feature to be noted in this panel is that the vāhanas and weapons begin to appear and these are absent in the above described two panels. This is one of the new developments which we can see in the Early Chalukya Art of Āndhradeśa. This panel may be dated to A.D. 7th century.
3. Saptamātrikas with two and four arms and riding on the vāhanas

There is another very interesting panel in the courtyard of the Rāmeśwara temple at Rāmeśwaram near Proddutūru, Cuddapah district. In this panel the Mātrikas depicted from left to right are Brāhmaṇi (plate 3), Mahēśwari, Vaishṇavi (plate 4), Kaumāri, Varāhi (plate 5), Indrāṇi, and Chāmuṇḍa (plate 6). An interesting feature noticeable in this panel is that the mātrikas are represented as riding on their vāhanas namely, Brāhmaṇi on swan, Mahēśwari on bull, Vaishṇavi on gurūḍa, Kaumāri on peacock, Varāhi on eagle, Indrāṇi on an elephant and Chāmuṇḍa on an owl. Another interesting feature of this panel is that Mahēśwari and Chāmuṇḍa have four arms while the rest have only two arms. This panel shows the transition stage in the depiction of the Mātrikas from simple to the developed form. Brāhmaṇi has three faces. In the left arm she holds an aṃśatāla (Fig.IV.2b) and the content in the right arm is chopped off. Mahēśwari has four arms holding trisūla (Fig IV.5d) and dāmara (?) in upper right and upper left arms. The lower right arm is resting upon the right thigh and the lower left arm is holding a knife. Vaishṇavi holds cakra and śaṅka (Fig.IV.10b) in right and left arms respectively. Kaumāri holds sakti in her left arm and the right arm rests upon the right thigh. Varāhi holds śaṅka in left arm and the right arm rests upon the right thigh. Indrāṇi holds paraśu (Fig.V.13) in her left arm and the right arm rests upon the right thigh. Chāmuṇḍa has four arms holding skull-cup (Fig.V.24) and paraśu (?) in upper right and upper left arms, long trisūla and mūṣala in lower right and lower left arms. All of them excepting Chāmuṇḍa wear makuṭa, necklace, kuṇḍalas, girdle, armlets, kāṅkānas and ardhōrūka. Chamunda has kapālamāla, kapāla-girdle, pendulous breasts and sunken belly. The mātrikas are carved on a slab of red sand stone and on the basis of iconographical features, this panel may be dated to A.D.7\textsuperscript{th}-8\textsuperscript{th} century. The
convention of carving the Mātrikas between Virabhadra and Gañēśa as required in Mayamata is absent in all the above described panels of the Early Chāluḥyka period.

4. Saptamātrikas with two and four arms and withVirabhadra and Gañēśa

Next stage in the depiction of the Mātrika figures in the Early Chāluḥyka Art is furnished by the fragmentary relief in which the divine mothers are flanked by Gañēśa. The beginning part of the panel is broken and as a result the figure of other associate deity Virabhadra is missing. This relief (plate 7) from the Archaeological Museum of Nāgarjunakoṇḍa, Guntur district, represents from left to right - Brāhmaṇi, Kaumāri, Mahēśwari, Vaishṇavi, Varāhi, Indrāṇi, Chāmuṇḍa and Gañēśa with his vāhana rat carved under the pedestal. Of the seven mātrikas only Mahēśwari and Chāmuṇḍa have four arms while the rest have only two arms. The upper arms of Mahēśwari and Chāmuṇḍa carry damaṇu (Fig.V.22a) and trisūla (Fig.IV.5c). The lower arms of these two goddesses and the two arms of the other goddesses hold a round object (vijāpuraka ?). Excepting Chāmuṇḍa, the mātrikas wear karaṇḍamakuta (Fig.II.9) and a necklace. Chāmuṇḍa has dishevelled hair, pendulous breasts and an ornament in the neck. The respective vāhanas of the mātrikas are found carved underneath the pedestal. This panel betrays the characteristics of the Early Chāluḥyka style and may be dated to A.D.7th century.

There is another very interesting panel (plate 8) in the Government Museum at Ālampūr which shows the Mātrikas in a somewhat developed form. It represents the seven mothers with haloed heads and flanked on either side by the associate deities, Virabhadra and Gañēśa. The Saptamātrikas are shown seated in ardhaparyāṅka posture (Fig.I.3) with two arms holding their appropriate weapons. The first figure Virabhadra has two arms holding a vīna. His vehicle is
a bull. Next is Brāhmaṇī with swan as her vehicle. The third is Mahēśwari with the bull as her vehicle. The fourth is Kaumāri with a peacock as her vehicle. The fifth is Vaishṇavi with a duck as her vehicle. The sixth is Varāhi. Her vehicle is buffalo. The seventh is Indrāṇi. Her vehicle is an elephant. The eighth is Chāmuṇḍa. Her vehicle is fox. The last of the group is Gaṇēśa with four arms, holding ānkuśa, pāśa in the upper arms and mōdaka and broken tusk in the lower arms. He has a mouse as his vehicle. All the figures wear makūta, kuṇḍalas, armlets and anklets. This panel is carved on slate of red sandstone measuring 63 x 2.33 metres. This panel as its features indicate, may be dated to the 7th-8th century A.D.

A panel (135 x 20 cms) with a row of nine figures (plate 9) with the two associate deities Viṅgabhadra and Gaṇēśa is to be found in the Agastyēśwara temple at Guṇḍlūru, Cuddapah district. They are all four armed, excepting Viṅgabhadra who has only two arms and seated in the ardha-pārīyānka pose. Their respective vāhanas have been carved below the pedestal. Their upper arms display some of the appropriate weapons and attributes and the lower right arms are held in abhaya and lower left arms are resting on the left thigh. The mātrikas including Chāmuṇḍa wear makūta (Fig.II.10) and other ornaments. Stylistically, this panel is datable to A.D. 7th-8th century.

Two panels of the Mātrikas have been discovered at Tripurāntakam in Kurnool district. They are now on display in the Government Museum at Madras. The first panel is an unusual example of five Mātrikas in the company of Viṅgabhadra and Gaṇēśa. All the goddesses have four arms of which the lower arms are in abhaya and varada attitudes, in their upper right arms they hold a flag-staff on which is perched a bird while their upper left arms carry a rosary. It is to
be noted that the iconographic characterization of these goddesses is similar. The mounts (vāhanas) of the Mātrikas are also similar and their identity has not been made out, though they look like a goat. This panel appears to be the product of 7th - 8th century A.D.

There is a rectangular stone slab of Saptamātrikas in the Penna river bed at Nanganūrupalle near Pradooṭūru in Cuddapah district. This panel (plate 10) shows the divine mothers flanked on either side by the attendant deities, Vīrabhadra and Gaṇeśa. The mātrikas depicted from left to right in between Vīrabhadra and Gaṇeśa are Brāhmaṇi, Mahēśwari, Kaumāri, Vaishṇavi, Varāhi, Indrāṇi and Chāmuṇḍa. All the mātrikas are carved alike and have certain common characteristic features. They are all seated in ardha-paryāṅkasāṇa (Fig. I.3) with four arms and with a prabā or halo surrounding the head of each deity. All of them excepting Chāmuṇḍa, wear karandamakuta and the vāhanas carved on the pedestal. The mātrikas hold aksamāla in the lower right arm, excepting Varāhi and Indrāṇi while the content in the lower right of these goddesses is indistinct. The lower left arm of all the mātrikas is resting on the left thigh. Brāhmaṇi is a three faced deity. Her upper right arm carries a round object (vijapūraka) and the upper left a kalaśa. Mahēśwari is holding nāga (?) and lily bud in the upper right and the upper left arms respectively. Kaumāri holds a lily bud in her upper right and a cock in upper left arm. Vaishṇavi holds a lily bud in her upper two arms. Varāhi has a boar's face. Her upper arms hold a hāla and a lily bud. Indrāṇi has a lily bud in her upper two arms. Chāmuṇḍa holds damaru and khaḍga in her upper right and upper left arms respectively. The mātrikas wear kūṇḍalas necklace, yajñopavīta, udarabandha, kāṅkaṇas and ardhoruka. Stylistically, this panel seems to belong to the Early Chāluṣkya period and may be dated to A.D. 7th/8th century.
5. Saptamātrikas without associate deities, Viřabhadra and Gaṇēśa

The second panel at Tripurāṇthakam is a complete set of seven goddesses but without Viřabhadra and Gaṇēśa. In the order from proper right, the panel has a three faced Brāhmaṇī with pāsa and kuṇḍika, Mahēśvari with trisūla and paraśu, Kaumāri with bow and arrow, Vaishnāvi with sāṇka and cakra, Varāhi with khadga and indistinct object; the attributes of Indrāṇi and Chāmuṇḍa are much worn out and details are lost. Their lower arms are placed respectively on their thighs. Their vāhanas are shown in their āsanās. The iconography of the images and their style and stance bear out the Chālukya characteristics. This panel may be dated on stylistic grounds to about the eighth century A.D.

A slab of Saptamātrikas probably of the 8th century is found in the Śiva temple at Nandikoṭkūr, Kurnool district. The seven divine mothers depicted from left to right are Brāhmaṇī, Vaishnāvi, Kaumāri, Mahēśvari, Varāhi, Indrāṇi and Chāmuṇḍa. The attendant deities, Viřabhadra and Gaṇēśa are absent in this panel. The divine mothers are seated in ardhaparyāṇka pose with four arms and with their respective vāhanas carved below the pedestal. The mātrikas hold appropriate weapons in the upper arms and keep the lower right arms in abhaya-mudra and the lower left arms on their left thigh. The mātrikas including Chāmuṇḍa, wear makuṭa and other ornaments.

Of approximately the same period, there is yet another Saptamātrika panel found in the Śiva temple at Takkaśila, Alainpur taluk, Mahabūnagar district. In this slab the mātrikas depicted from left to right are Brāhmaṇī, Mahēśvari, Kaumāri, Vaishnāvi, Varāhi, Indrāṇi and Chāmuṇḍa. The divine mothers are seated in ardhaparyāṇka pose with four arms, carrying their appropriate
weapons in the upper arms and the lower arms are fully broken. Their faces are also fully
damaged, but their vāhanas excepting, Chāmuṇḍa are clearly visible. They wear hāra,
yajñōpavīta, udarabanḍha and pūrnöruka.

6. **Loose stone images of Saptamāтриkas**

Separate reliefs or loose stone sculptures are also met with in the Early Chālkukya Art. The
Government Museum at Ālampūr is in possession of a group of loose sculptures of the Māтриkas.
The loose stone sculptures represent Brāhmaṇi, Mahēswari, Kaumāri, Vaishnāvi, Varāhi and
Chāmuṇḍa. The sculpture of Indrāṇi is missing. The figure of Brāhmaṇi (plate 11) is shown in
ardhaparyāṅka pose (Fig.I.4) with three faces and four arms holding aksamāla (Fig.IV.2b) in
upper right and pāśa (?) in upper left and fruit (?), (vījapūraka) in the lower right and
kamandalu (Fig.V.3c) in the lower left arm. Her vāhana swan is found below her right leg. She
wears jaṭāmakuṭa (Fig.II.15) and yajñōpavīta. Mahēswari (plate 12) is seated on a bull in
ardhaparyāṅka pose (Fig.I.3) with the left leg folded and right leg pendant. She has four arms
and holds sūtra (?) in upper right, trisūla (Fig.IV.5c) in upper left arm, fruit (?) (vījapūraka)
in lower right and the lower left arm rests upon her left knee. She is adorned with jaṭāmakuṭa
(Fig.II.12), kuṇḍalas, hāra (Fig.III.3), kaṅkaṇas and kaṭimēkhalā. A human figure is also
shown on the padapīṭha. Sitting in ardhaparyāṅka posture (Fig.I.3), Kaumāri (plate 13) is two
handed, holding sakti and vijapūraka in left and right arms respectively. She wears jaṭāmakuṭa
(Fig.II.12), kuṇḍalas, hāra, kaṅkaṇas and girdle. Her vāhana duck is shown on the padapīṭha
near the leg. Vaishnāvi (plate 14) is on her vehicle garuda in ardhaparyāṅka posture (Fig.I.3)
with four arms. She holds cakra and śaṅka (Fig.IV.10b) in upper right and upper left arms
respectively. The lower right arm holds vijapūraka and the lower left arm rests upon the left
thigh She is decorated with ornaments like *makuṭa, kuṇḍalas, hāra, kaṅkaṇas* and armlets.

Boar faced Varāhi sculpture (plate 15) is shown in *ardhāparvāṅka* posture (Fig.I.3) with four arms. Her weapon in the upper right arm is an indistinct and shield (Fig.V.15) is in her upper left arm. She holds *khadga* (Fig.V.14b) in the lower right and the lower left arm rests on her left thigh. She is decorated with *makuṭa, cakrakuṇḍalas, hāra, kaṅkaṇas* and armlets. Her *vāhana* is completely worn out. Chāmuṇḍa (plate 16) is seated in *ardhāparvāṅka* pose (Fig.I.4) with the right leg folded and the left leg pendant. She has four arms and holds *trisūla* (Fig.IV.5b) in the upper right arm, *damaru* in the upper left, sword in the lower right and skull-cup (Fig.V.24) in the lower left arm. She has dishevelled hair, round bulging eyes and protruding side tusks. She wears *kapāla - yajñōpavitha*, armlets, *kaṅkaṇas* and anklets. Her *vāhana*, fox is shown at the pedestal. These sculptures of divine mothers are beautiful specimens of Early Chalukya Art showing details of modelling expressions, ornaments and various hair styles. Stylistically these sculptures may be dated to 8th century A.D.

There is another group of loose stone sculptures of Saptamātrikas from Chēzerla, Guntur district. They are depicted in *ardhāparvāṅka* posture. All the mātrikas have four arms, holding appropriate weapons in the upper arms and keeping the lower right arms in *abhaya-mudra* and the lower left arms resting on the left thigh. Due to their defaced condition the iconographic features are not clearly visible. Stylistically, these sculptures may be dated to A.D.8th century.
REFERENCES

1. Michael W. Meister, *Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture* (Delhi, 1988) p. 313

2. Rajendra Prasad, B., *Art of South India - Andhra pradesh* (Delhi, 1980), pp. 82-83


4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.


8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.


15. Mani, V.R. *Saptamātrikas in Indian Religion and Art* (New Delhi, 1995) pp. 64-65 (Figs. 17 and 18)
2. SAPTAMĀTRIKAS IN THE EASTERN CHĀLUKYA ART  
(A.D.7th to 11th Century)

Historical Background:

This dynasty was a branch of the Early Chālukyas of Bādāmi. In the early decades of seventh century, Early Chālukya Pulakēsi-II (A.D.608/9-642), the famous monarch of the Chālukya house of Bādāmi, invaded the east coast and conquered the Telugu districts of Ganjam, Vishakhapatnam, East and West Godavary, Krishna and Guntur early in his reign. He inflicted crushing defeats on the local rulers and annexed their territories. Pallava Mahēndravarma was also defeated and driven out of the Guntur district which was then under his rule. Pulakēsi was accompanied in this campaign by his younger brother and Yuvarāja, Kubja-Vishnuvardhana (A.D.624-642) who stayed back in the conquered region after the campaign was concluded. He consolidated these conquests and constitute them into a kingdom. He became the independent ruler of this kingdom, with the consent of his brother, in A.D.624. Vishnuvardhana thus became the founder of a new dynasty designated by historians as the Eastern Chālukyas. Despite many ups and downs, the Eastern Chālukyas survived until the 11th century A.D. Early references place the kingdom of Vēngi between the Mahēndra Mountains in Kalinga and the Mannēru river in Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh.

Twenty rulers of the dynasty ruled over the eastern costal Andhra during a long period spanning over nearly four centuries. Kubja Vishnuvardhana (A.D.624-641) had the title 'Vishamaśiddhi' which indicates his skill in military art and in besieging all the four varieties of forts - viz., water-fort, plain-fort, hill-fort and forest-fort (jala, sthala, giri and vana - durgas). Vishnuvardhana was a devotee of Vishnu but catholic in his approach to the worship of other
gods His wife, Ayyanadēvi, built a temple for Jains near Vijayawada. Vishnuvardhana was succeeded by his son, Jayasimha-I (A.D.641-773). His reign seems to have witnessed long wars, as can be inferred from the inscriptions. The inscriptions also show that his rule extended over the entire coastal area, from the present Visakhapatnam in the north to Nellore in the south.

As Jayasimha-I had no issues, his brother Indra Bhāṭāraka and his progeny became the rulers. Indra Bhāṭāraka ruled just for a week and was succeeded by his son, Vishnuvardhana-II (A.D.673-681). He was succeeded by Maṅgi Yuvarāja (A.D.681-705). His son Jayasimha-II ruled the country from A.D.705 to 717. There was a tussle for succession to the throne after Jayasimha's death. Jayasimha's brother, Kokkili Vikramāditya, succeeded him to the throne but his younger brother Vishnuvardhana-III usurped it.

During the rule of Vishnuvardhana-III (A.D.718-752) the sixth ruler of the dynasty, there was an attack on Vēṇgī by the Pallavas, in which Vishnuvardhana lost some territory in the south. During the reign of Vijayāditya-I (A.D.752-771), who succeeded Vishnuvardhana-III, the Eastern Chālukyas came into conflict with the Rāṣṭrakūtas who had rebelled against the Bādāmi Chāluakyas, overthrew them and founded a new dynasty. The Eastern Chālukyas could not naturally tolerate this and so a conflict ensured between them and the Rāṣṭrakūtas. The conflict continued for about two centuries. The Eastern Chālukyya rulers and the Rāṣṭrakūta rulers interfered in each other's affairs whenever there was a contest for succession to the throne.

Vijayādiya-I was succeeded by Vishnuvardhana-IV (A.D.771-806), whose rule lasted for a long, but uneventful period. During this period, the Rāṣṭrakūta empire had to pass through a
war of succession between the sons of king Krishna, Govinda-II and Dhruva. Dhruva emerged victorious in the final battle, he waged a war and subordinated the ruler of Vēṅgi, Vishnuvardhana-IV. The latter had to give his daughter in marriage to Dhruva.

Vishnuvardhana-IV was succeeded by his son Vijayāditya-II (A.D.806-846). Vijayāditya, by virtue of his conquests in various battles, earned the title 'Narendra Mrigarāja' (lion among the kings). He constructed as many Siva temples as the number of conquests he had to his credit. Slightly later inscriptions speak of 108 battles he fought and of 108 temples he founded that were dedicated to Siva Narēndreśvara (apparently named after his title Narēndramrigarāja).

Vishnuvardhana-V, who succeeded to the throne after the demise of his father Vishnuvardhana-IV in A.D.846, ruled only for a short period of two years. The next ruler was his son, Gunaga Vijayāditya, known as Vijayāditya-III (A.D.848-892). He carried on many a successful campaign against his enemies. He marched on upto Kanchi and extended the empire upto the city. His Addanki inscription gives details of his southern invasion. After the conquest, he was made the viceroy of the southern part of the kingdom with its capital at Kandukūru.

Though Gunaga Vijayāditya was successful in the campaigns on the southern and south-western borders of his kingdom, he met with a disaster in his wars with the Rashtrakūta ruler, Amōghavarsha, and therefore had to acknowledge the Rashtrakuta suzerainty. However, after Amōghavarsha’s death, Vijayāditya proclaimed his independence. Thereafter, the Chālukya ruler gained some more notable victories in his campaigns in Deccan and proclaimed himself as 'Dakshināpathapati'. He ruled for 44 years and passed away in 892 A.D. Gunaga was one of
the greatest of the Eastern Chalukya kings. Temples at Bicca\'olu and the founding of the township itself date from his time. ("Bicca\'olu" itself apparently is a corrupt form of 'Birud\'ankanapr\'ol' following another of his titles "Birud\'anka"). Though the Eastern Chalukyas were originally of Kannada stock, they adopted Telugu as their language and gave a fillip to it. Since the time of Gunaga, inscriptions show Telugu stanzas, culminating in the production of literary works, later on, in the 11th century A.D. under the patronage of the Eastern Chalukya king, R\'jar\'aja.

Gunaga Vijay\'aditya, having no issue, was succeeded by his brother's son, Chalukya B\'hima (A.D 892-921). The Rashtrakutas again attacked the V\'eni\'gi kingdom. The battles of Peruvang\'ur and Niravadyapura in the present West Godavari district were decided in favour of the Chalukyas. Chalukya B\'hima enjoyed peaceful years after these wars. He patronised letters and arts. He built two temples for Siva at Chalukya Bhimavaram and D\'akshar\'amam.

During the reign of the next five rulers, Vengi was a cockpit of wars for succession, internal quarrels and civil wars until Chalukya Bhima-II (A.D.934-945) asserted himself. He occupied the throne expelling the Rashtrakutas who tried to fish in the troubled waters of Vengi politics. The repeated efforts of the Rashtrakutas to occupy Vengi proved futile during his period. But they continued their efforts during the time of Amma-II, who ruled from 945 A.D. Ammar\'aja was the younger of Bhima's sons. Soon after the death of Chalukya B\'hima, the kingdom of Vengi passed to several rulers in succession until in A.D.973 the Telugu-Codas under ja\'ta Chola B\'hima overran Vengi but ruled there for only three years; the Chalukyas regained control through the help of the Colas of Tanj\'av\'ur. Only one royal name shines with some brilliance during this phase of
Vengi history that of Rājarāja Narēndra who ruled for 41 years (A.D. 1022-1061). In A.D 1075 the long rule of the Eastern Chālukyas came actually to an end and Vēngi became a part of the Chōla empire under Kulōttunga-I (A.D.1070-1122), a Vēngi prince and grandson of the Chola emperor Rājarāja the great.

Saivism was favoured in the Eastern Chālukyan period of Vēngidēśa. Among the Eastern Chālukyas, Vijayāditya-I (A.D.753-770) was the first to take the title 'Paramamahēśwara'. Most of his successors i.e., Vijayāditya-II, Chālukya Bhīma and AmmaRāja-II were Saivate and took the above title. The Panchārāmas, Biccavōlu, Vijayawada, Cēbrōlu, Srisailam and Agastyēśvaram (Mahaboobnagar) became sects of Saivism in Andhradesa. Radical Saivite sects like the Pāsupatas and Kālamukhas entered Andhradesa and received patronage from the Eastern Chālukyas. During the period from mid 7th to 11th century A.D. many temples dedicated Siva were constructed by the Eastern Chālukyas. Vijayāditya-II (A.D.808-847) built 108 temples of Siva whereas the temples of Panchārāmas are attributed to Chālukya Bhīma. The Eastern Chālukyan temples are found at Biccavōlu, Drākshārāma, Bhīmavaram, Sāmarlakōṭa, Elamañchili, Panchadārla (East Godavari District), Chēbrōlu, Pondugula, Tērāla, Amarāvati (Guntur District), Pālakollu (West Godavari District) and Ayyangāripalem. The worship of Saptamātrikas seems to be popular in this period as is seen from the sculptural panels and images of Saptamātrikas found all over the Vengi Kingdom.
ICONOGRAPHICAL FEATURES OF SAPTAMATRIKAS IN THE EASTERN CHALUKYA ART:

Saptamātrikas are found all over the Vēngi Kingdom especially in East and West Godavari, Krishna, Mahabubnagar, Kurnool and Prakasam districts, either separately or in a group. They can be divided into the following two broad categories:

1. Sculptural panels of Saptamātrikas with vāhanas, without attendant deities, Viṅrabhadra and Gaṅēsa.
2. Loose sculptures of Saptamātrikas.

1. Sculptural panels of Saptamātrikas with vāhanas, without attendant deities, Viṅrabhadra and Gaṅēsa

The Bhīmēśwara temple at Drākshārāma, East Godavari district which is ascribed to Chālukya Bhīma-I (A.D. 892-922) contains two fragmentary panels of the Saptamātrikas. The first fragmentary panel (plate 17) represents Brāhmaṇi, Mahēśwari, Kaumāri and Vaishṇavi. They are all four armed and seated in the ardhaparyānka posture (Fig. I.4). Brāhmaṇi holds aksamāla and kamandalu in the upper arms. Mahēśvari carries trisūla and nāga (Fig. V.23) (serpent) in her upper arms. The upper arms of Kaumāri hold sakti and spear. Vaishṇavi holds cakra and śāntaka in her upper two arms. The lower right arms of these four Mātrikas are in abhaya and the lower left arms are on the thigh. The vāhanas have been carved below the pedestal. In the second panel (plate 17) the iconographic features of Brāhmaṇi, Mahēśwari and Kaumāri closely resemble in all respects of the first panel. Artistically, these panels are datable to A.D.10th century.
Another Saptamātrika panel (135.5 x 25.5 cms) is found preserved in the Victoria Jubilee Museum of Vijayawada, Krishna district (plate 18). This panel shows the Mātrikas as seated in ardhaparyāṅkāsana (Fig.I.3) with four arms. Vāhanas are shown on the pādāpitha. Beginning from the left the Mātrikas have been depicted in the following order: Brāhmaṇi is a three faced deity. Her upper right arm carries kamanḍalu (?) and the upper left arm rosary (Fig.IV.2a). Her vehicle swan is carved on the pedestal. Mahēśwari is holding dāmaru (Fig.V.22b) in upper right and trisūla (Fig.IV.5a) in the upper left arm. Beneath her seat is a bull. Kaumāri is holding a bud (?) in her two upper arms. There is a peacock beneath her seat. Vaishēṇavi is holding cakra (Fig.IV.11b) in her upper right and sāṅka (Fig.IV.10b) in the upper left arm. Her vahana garuḍa is carved on the pedestal. Vārāhi with the face of a boar is holding a club (Fig.IV.12b) in the upper right arm and sāṅka in the upper left arm. There is a buffalo below her seat. Indrāni is holding vajra(?) in upper right and aṅkuṣa in the upper left arm. An elephant, her vehicle appears on the pedestal. Chāmuṇḍa, the seventh or the last figure of the Saptamātrika slab, is holding khaḍga (Fig.V.14a) in the upper right and dāmaru (?) in the upper left arm. Beneath her seat is a fox. The figure of Chāmuṇḍa is characterised by features like protruding long tongue, erected hair and withered belly. The lower right and lower left arms of all the goddesses are held in abhaya and varadamudra respectively and are in accordance with the Aṃśumadbhēdāgama. Excepting Chāmuṇḍa, the mātrikas wear funnel like makuṭa (Fig.II.10) and several other usual ornaments. This panel may be dated to A.D. 9th - 10th century.

In the Tanguturi Prakasam Archaeological Museum, Kanaparti, Prakasam district, there are two beautiful Saptamātrika panels. Of these, one panel is found infront of the museum and the other panel is found in the hall (plate 19&20) of the museum. In the panel found in the hall of
the Museum, all the mātrikas are represented as seated in ardhaparyāṅkāsana (Fig.1.3) and as having four arms. The mātrikas keep their lower right arms in abhaya (Fig.1.8) and the lower left arms in varada (Fig.1.7) as required in Amśumadbhedāgama and have prabhāmaṇḍala behind their heads. Brāhmaṇī, the first figure of the panel has three faces. She holds a kamandalu (Fig.IV.3a) in her upper left and the content in her upper right is indistinct. She wears karandamakuta, kūndalas, necklace (Fig.III.4), yajñōpavīta, armlets and kānikaṇas. Her vehicle swan is carved on the pedestal. Mahēśwari holds trīsula (Fig.IV.5a) in her upper right arm and flower (?) (Fig.V.27) in the upper left arm. She is decorated with karandamakuta (Fig.II.7), kūndalas, necklace (Fig.III.4), yajñōpavīta, armlets and kānikaṇas. Beneath her seat is a bull. Kaumārī holds spear (Fig.IV.6a) in the upper right and kukkuṭa in the upper left arm. She wears karandamakuta, kūndalas, necklace, yajñōpavīta, armlets and kānikaṇas. There is a peacock beneath her seat. Vaishnavi holds cakra (Fig.IV.11b) in upper right and śānka (Fig.IV 10c) in the upper left arm. She wears kiriṭamakuta, (Fig.II.6) kūndalas, necklace (Fig.III 4), yajñōpavīta, armlets and kānikaṇas. Her mount garuḍa is carved on the pedestal in aṇjali pose. Vāraṇi has boar's face which is slightly tilted to the left. Her upper right arm holds gada (Fig.IV.12b) and the upper left arm flame or agni(?). She is decked with karandamakuta (Fig.II 7), kūndalas, necklace, yajñōpavīta, armlets and kānikaṇas. There is a buffalo below her seat. Indrāni has sakti (Fig.IV.7b) in her upper right and ankuṣa (Fig.V.17b) in her upper left arm. She is adorned with karandamakuta (Fig.II.7), kūndalas, necklace (Fig.III.4), yajñōpavīta, armlets and kānikaṇas. An elephant, her vehicle appears on the pedestal. Chāmuṇḍa holds trīsula (Fig.IV.5b) in her upper right and the content in the upper left is broken. Her head is also broken. Her lower right arm holds a sword (Fig.V.14b) and the lower left arm
in varada. She wears kundalas, necklace of skulls, kapala-yajnopavita, armlets and kannakas. Beneath her seat is a fox. This panel appears to be the specimen of 8th century A.D.

The second stone slab (plate 21) of Saptamatrikas found in front of the Museum is a true copy of the panel described above. Though this panel is very closely akin to the first panel, there is one difference. The dissimilar feature to be noted in this panel is that the Matrikas keep their lower left arm on the left thigh instead of in abhayamudra.

The Papavinaseswara temple at Papanasam near Alampur, Mahabubnagar district, has two interesting Saptamatrika panels. In the first panel (plate 22 & 23), the matrikas are represented as seated in padmasana (Fig.I.2) with four arms and with their respective vahanas. In this panel, the matrikas hold appropriate weapons in the upper arms. Except Chamunda, the lower right arms of the Matrikas carry vijapuraka and the lower left arms rest on the bent left leg. Chamunda holds a knife in the lower right and skull-cup (Fig.V.25) in the lower left arm. She has matted locks of hair, a necklace of skulls and kucabandha. Other Matrikas wear makuta (Fig.II.4) and other ornaments. There is a prabhamaṇḍala behind the head of each Matrika. In the second panel (plate 24 & 25), all the seven mothers are shown seated (Fig.I.3) on a common seat with four arms, holding appropriate weapons. Except Chamunda, the rest of the mothers keep their lower right arms in abhaya (Fig.I.8) and the lower left arms on the thigh. Chamunda holds khaḍga (Fig.V.14b) and a skull-cup (Fig.V.25) in the lower right and left arms respectively. Brähmani has three heads and Chamunda has dishevelled hair. The Matrikas are decorated with tall makuta (Fig.II.3) as found in the Early Chalukya examples, kundalas, necklace and yajnopavita. Their lāñchanas i.e., swan, bull, peacock, garuda, buffalo, elephant and fox are
shown on their seats. All of them are provided with a prabāmanḍala behind their heads. Stylistically, these two Saptamātrika panels may be dated to A.D.9th and 10th centuries respectively.

Another Saptamātrika panel (plate 26) is in the Siva temple at Ganapuram, Nandyal taluk, Kurnool district. All the Mātrikas are four armed and are seated on a pedestal (Fig.I.4). Their upper and lower right arms hold the appropriate weapons and attributes. The lower left arms carry a fruit (vījapūraka). Their vehicles are carved on their seats. Brahmaṇi is shown with three faces. The head of Chāmuṇḍa is partly broken. She has pendulous breasts and kapāla-yajñopavīta The Mātrikas wear makuṭa and other usual ornaments. This panel may be dated to A.D 7th / 8th century.

2. Loose sculptures of Saptamātrikas

At Biccavolu, near Rajahmandry, East Godavari district there are a number of temples in fairly good state of preservation. Among the temples of this place, the Göliṅgēswara, Rājarājeśwara and Chandrasēkhara belong to the Gunaga Vijayāditya's regnal period (848-890). The Göliṅgēswara temple contains three loose stone sculptures representing Vīrabhadra, Kaumāri and Chāmuṇḍa. Seated in ardhaparyāṅkāsana, the image of Vīrabhadra (plate 27) from a group of Mātrikas is of fine workmanship of the Eastern Chālukya art of the ninth century. He carries aksamāla and trisūla in his upper pair of arms, while the other two are in the tripatāka attitude. He wears necklace, udarabandha and yajñopavīta. His vāhana Nandi is shown in front of his pedestal. The presence of the image of Vīrabhadra in the matrika group enables us to believe that the artists attempted to show Vīrabhadra and Gaṅīsa in company with the
mātrikas. The image of Gaṇeśa is missing. Excepting this place, nowhere do we find Viṇabhadra and Gaṇeśa in company with the mātrikas in the Eastern Chālukya art.

Kaumāri (plate 28. Fig.2) from the Gōlingēśwara temple, Biccavōlu, is shown seated in ardhaparyāṇka posture (Fig.I.3) with four arms. She holds vajra (Fig.IV.7a) and pāsā (Fig. V 30a) in the upper right and upper left arms respectively. The lower right arm is in abhaya (Fig.I.8) and the lower left arm holds a round object (vijapūraka). She wears karanḍamakūṭa (Fig.II.7), cakrakundalas, necklace (Fig.III.3), yajñōpavīta, armlets and kankaṇas. She is beautifully fashioned and her vehicle peacock is shown with alertness in front of her pedestal.

An interesting image of Chāmuṇḍa (plate 28. Fig.1) from the Saptamātrikā group in the Gōlingēśwara temple at Biccavōlu, East Godavari district, of the period of early Eastern Chālukya king Gunaga Vijayāditya (848-890) is represented with four arms and with a fearful face. She is seated on a corpse on which jackal is feeding with gusto. In her right pair of arms, she has a khatvāṅga and the sword (Fig.V.14a), in the left pair, a huge cobra (Fig.V.23) and a skull-cup (Fig.V.24) from which to drink blood. She has a sunken belly and the contours of the ribs graphically present her emaciated. She wears a munḍamāla and yajñōpavīta composed of human skulls. Her necklace is a fearful snake, from her ear lobes issues snakes with raised hoods. Her matted hair is spread about as a huge mass of frizzled locks encircling her head and have human skulls as decoration. Her sunken eyes, gaping mouth and frightful tusks strike terror. The figure of Chāmuṇḍa, an emaciated one and hungry in countenance, has a bizarre jaṭabhāra (Fig.II.11) and an open mouth. The prētāsana is represented as a corpse being torn away by the jackals and this recalls the Kalinga tradition. The terrific quality of the figure is the best seen here.
The images of Brāhmaṇi, Maheśvari, Vārāhi belonging to the Saptamātrika group are also found at Elamani‘chili. These images have been studied by Prof. M. Krishna Kumari. These images have certain common features. They are seated on a pedestal, in ardha-paryānka pose (Fig.1.3), with the left leg folded and the right leg pendant. The lower garment worn starts from just below the waist level and runs beyond the knees.

The image of Brāhmaṇi is found in a niche of the modern gōpura of the Virabhadraswāmy temple. She is represented as seated in ardha-paryānka pose on a stool with three heads and four arms. In the back right arm she holds kamandaḷu and ākaṃāla and in the back left arm she holds noose (pāsa). The front right arm is in abhaya pose and the front left arm rests on the left knee holding a sacrificial ladle. At her bottom is carved a swan. The three heads are adorned with karaṇḍamakuṭa. She wears ear ornaments, necklace with pearls, armlets, bracelets and anklets. The lower garments is tucked at a lower waist level and comes down just below her knee level. An yajñopāvītā is seen from her upper left shoulder down to the right side of her lower waist level passing between her breasts.

The figure of Mahēśwari has four arms and is shown seated in ardha-paryānka pose on a pīṭha. She holds sūla, which is mounted on a small pike in the upper right arm, ākaṃāla in the upper left, keeps the lower right in abhaya and the lower left in varada pose above her left knee. Her head is adorned with jatāmaṇakuta and the ears with kuṇḍalas. She wears pearls necklace, bracelet, anklets and kāṭisūtra. Her lower garment is seen below her waist level which runs beyond her knees. The oval shaped prabhāvalī round her head is also beautifully carved with striations radiating from the centre. Below her folded right leg is carved the bull seated facing the left side.
The image of Vārāhi (plate 29) is done in black basalt stone. It has the face of a boar and wears on her head a karaṇḍamakuta and is adorned with ornaments made of pearls and corals. She is seen seated on a pedestal in ardhaparyānka pose (Fig.1.3) with four arms in abhaya and varadamudras respectively, whereas the upper right holds a pāsa and the object in upper left arm is not clear. The kēyūra on her left arm is beautifully treated and she wears anklets and bracelets. A flowing cloth is shown by a wavy line over the chest in the upavīta fashion. The oval prabhāvali round her head is treated with wavy horizontal lines. The lower garment is shown with its folds, being arranged at regular intervals. A buffalo, the vehicle of Vārāhi is carved below her, facing to left

Another interesting image of Chāmuṇḍa (plate 30) is found infront of the ruined temple of Visvēswara in the village of Panchadhārīla which is 10 Kms north-east of Elamānchili in the East Godavari district. This image has only two arms with a child on her left lap showing an early tradition in its carving. The right arm is partly damaged and the left arm clasps her child seated on the lap. Unlike the usual Chāmuṇḍa representations elsewhere, this image is not ferocious but has some grace of its own. The image is with (Atiriktānga) emaciated ribbed chest, prominent neck and the sunken eyes. She is shown with massive breasts unlike usual Chāmuṇḍa images which are generally shown pendulous, skinny breasts. She wears a long chain which passes through the middle of her breasts and reaches almost upto her navel. Due to the weathered state of the image, it is not clear whether it is munḍamāla or not. Her hair is arranged differently to the right side of her head in a fan like fashion. She wears big ear rings and the lower garment is firmly tucked at her lowest waist level, the hem lying in the centre is adorned with a flower like kaṭisūtra. The wavy lines on her right thigh show the folds of her lower garment. M.Krishna Kumari has studied the above described images of Elamānchili and assigned them to the first half of 9th century A.D. or slightly earlier and further observes that these Elamanchili sculptures exhibit iconographically the Chālukya, Gaṅga and Chola schools of art traditions.
REFERENCES


2. Ibid.


5. Ibid., p.61


11. The description of these images are found in M. Krishna Kumari's book *History of Medieval Āndhradēśa* (New Delhi, 1989) Pp.96-100.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.
3. SAPTAMATRIKAS IN THE RĀSTRAKŪṬA ART
(A.D. 8th to 10th Century)

Historical Background:

The Early Chālukyas of Bādāmi were overthrown from power by the Rāstrakūṭas, who exercised their authority for about two centuries (A.D. 753-973) over the Deccan of which the western part of Andhra (Chālukya-Viṣaya, Mahābūbnagar and Kurnool districts) formed a part.

The wars of the Early Chālukyas with the Pallavas on the one hand and the advance of the Arabs into Gujarat during the 8th century on the other are indicative of the chaotic political condition of the times. This was taken as an advantage by Dantidurga, the founder of the Rāstrakūṭa family. He defied the Bādāmi Chālukya suzerainty and established himself as an independent ruler by 753 A.D. and ruled upto 758 A.D. Within that short period, he conquered the areas upto Kaṇchi in the south and the Sindhu in the north. Dantidurga claims in the Dasāvatāra cave inscription, the conquest of the entire Śrīsaila region. He was succeeded by his paternal uncle, Krishna-I (A.D. 758-772), also known as Akālavarsha-I, who conquered Konkan and the Western Ganga Kingdom of Talakāḍ and consolidated his position. Krishna-I gained the effective control over Srisailadesa and made the Rēṇādu Chōla owe allegiance. Next he sent an expedition to Vēṅgideśa which met with great success. It was he who was responsible for the excavation of the great rock temple of Kailāsa at Ellōra. Krishna was succeeded by Govinda-II (A.D. 772-780) who helped his father in his campaigns as crown prince. There was a conflict between Govinda-II and Dhruva, his brother, in which the former was successful. After ascending the throne, he seems to have got addicted to vices and relegated his powers to his brother, Dhruva. Dhruva continued the Rāstrakūṭa hostility over Vēṅgi as Vishnuvardhana-IV, the Eastern Chālukya king had supported Govinda in the war of succession of Rāstrakūṭa throne.
Dhruva (A.D. 780-793) was one of the most notable kings of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa family. In north India, Gujarat Pratiharas and the Pālās were fighting for supremacy. Dhruva also vied with them for power and defeated the Pratihara ruler Vatsarāja and the Pala ruler Dharmapāla. After these victories in the north, Dhruva fought against the Eastern Chālukyas successfully and married Silamahādēvi, the daughter of Vishnuvardhana-IV. The king, then, disciplined the insubordinate Kalinga chief, Sivamāra, imprisoned him and appointed his own son, Kambha, as the governor. Later, he defeated Nandivarma-II of the Pallava dynasty\(^4\). He nominated his third son, Govinda-III as his successor.

Govinda-III (A.D. 793-814) during his reign, proceeded northward where he defeated Nāgabhaṭṭa, who escaped to Rajasthan; Dharmapāla sued for peace. He also brought large portions of Gujarat, Malwa and eastern Madhya Pradesh under his power\(^5\). His minor son, Amōghavarsha, became the ruler after his death, with Karaka Suvaṇṇavarsha, a cousin, functioning as the regent.

Amōghavarsha-I (A.D.814-880), known as Nṛputuaṅga, inherited a vast empire. A number of rulers in the Deccan and the south, who suffered defeat at the hands of Govinda, rebelled against the young king. However, the regent took all the necessary measures to put down the rebels and by A.D. 821 the throne was made secure for Amōghavarsha. Amōghavarsha was succeeded by his son Krishna-II (A.D. 880-914). He repeatedly attacked Vēṇgi, the capital of the Eastern Chālukyas, but was defeated by Gunaga Vijayāditya. But the death of Gunaga Vijayāditya in A.D.891 afforded an opportunity to Krishna to conquer parts of Vēṇgi but only for a short time\(^6\). By this time, the Pallava power was on its wane and the Chōḷas were slowly emerging.
on the political scene. Krishna gave his daughter in marriage to Early Chōla King Āditya-I. His grandson, Indra-III (A.D.914-929) succeeded Krishna-II to the throne. He chased Mahipāla upto Kanauj and destroyed the city. After Indra, Amoghavarsha-II (A.D.929-930) ruled only for a few months, he was maneuvered out of power by his ambitious younger brother, Govinda-IV (A.D.930-935), who had good looks, but also a licentiousness which alienated the courtiers. Govinda was replaced by Amoghavarsha-III (A.D.935-939). Opposition to Amoghavarsha-III by Dantiga and Vappuka of Acalapura, leaders of Govinda's faction, was crushed. Amoghavarsha, being old, largely left the affairs of the State to Krishna-III.

Krishna-III (A.D.939-967), was the last great ruler of the family. He waged a war against the Chōlas and occupied the area stretching from Kañchi to Tanjāvūr. During his reign the Rēnāḍu region (Cuddapah, parts of Ananatapur, Kurnool and Prakāšam districts) was the centre for Rāstrakūṭa-Chōla conflicts. He seems to have checked the expansion of the Chōlas for an inscription of Krishna-III revealing his active control over Rēnāḍu are found at several places in Cuddapah and Chittoor districts. During a military expedition to the north, he defeated the Gūrjara Pratihāras and Paramaras by A.D.964.

The successors of Krishna-III, Khoṭṭiga (A.D. 967-972), Karkka-II (A.D. 972-973) were very weak. The Paramaras retaliated by conquering the Rāstrakūṭa territory and plundering its capital. Tailapa-II of the Western Chāḷukya family, along with a number of other subordinates, overthrew the Rāstrakūṭa rule in A.D. 793 and re-established the Chāḷukya dynasty designated by the historians as Western or Kuntala or Kalyāṇi Chāḷukya dynasty.
From the beginning of the Rāstrakūṭa rule, Śrīśailadēsa i.e., the Kurnool and Mahābūnb Nagar districts witnessed the growth of cultural, religious and architectural activities. Among the Brahminical sects, Saivism continued to be the paramount religion of the Rāstrakūṭa empire. Dantidurga and Krishna-I were its great patrons and the Brahminical sculptures in the Daśavatāra cave and in the Kailasa temple ensemble at Ellora were the result of this patronage. Jainism also flourished. Amōghavarsa had heavy learnings towards Jainism. Amōghavarsa’s successors also continued patronage to Jainism. Jaina temples also received support from the Rāstrakūṭa family. The contribution of the Rāstrakūṭas to religion, literature, art and architecture is noteworthy. The architectural style developed under their aegis vies with - even in certain aspects excels - that of the Pallava of Tonḍaināḍu and in some instances eclipses that of the Early Chāḷukyas of Bāḍāmi. The earliest edifices of the Rāstrakūṭas are found in their Elapura homeland (Ellora). After their imperial status was firmly established and after they had shifted their capital to Māṇyakhēṭaka the Rāstrakūṭa style spread also to Chāḷukya territories, both eastern and western. The temples constructed during the Rāstrakūṭa hegemony in their territories show many surviving and thriving local elements of the Early Chāḷukya period. In Andhra Pradesh the temples built during the Rāstrakūṭa period are found at Rūpāla Saṅgamsēswaram (Saṅgamsēswara, Bhujangēswara temples), Baṇḍatāndrapāḍu (Siva temple), Veldurti (Rājarājēswara temple), Pratakōṭa (Nāgēswara, Mokshēswara temples), Malleśwaram, Somāśila, Gūḍēm (Siva temple), Miyāpur, Panchalingāla etc.

Besides Saivism and Jainism, another important feature of this period is the worship of Saptamātriikas. The temples at Rūpāla Saṅgamsēswara, Pratakōṭa, Miyāpur and Panchalingāla contain interesting panels of Saptamātriikas. These Māтриka panels suggest that the worship of Māтриkas was continued during the Rāstrakūṭa period.
ICONOGRAPHICAL FEATURES OF SAPTAMATRIKAS IN THE RASTRAKUTA ART:

In the Rastrakūta territory of Āndhradeśa, panels containing the Saptamātrikas are found in a considerable number at places like Brahmāṇakoṭkūr (Bōgēśwara temple), Miyāpuram, Prātakōṭa (Mokšēśwara and Nāgēśwara temples), Chebōlu (Chadramoulīśwara temple), Ullūru, Rūpāla, Nandikoṭkūr and Pañchaliṅgāla (Pañchaliṅgēśwara temple). The panels in these places can be broadly divided into the following categories:

1. Saptamātrikas with the attendant deities, Viśabhadra and Gāṇēśa.
2. Saptamātrikas without the attendant deities.
3. Loose stone sculptures of Saptamātrikas.

1. Saptamātrikas with attendant deities, Viśabhadra and Gāṇēśa

The Bhōgēśwara temple at Brahmāṇakoṭkūr, Kurnool district, contains a remarkable stone slab (plate 31, 32 & 33) of the Saptamātrikas. This slab shows the seven divine mothers flanked on either side by the guardian deities Viśabhadra and Gāṇēśa as required in the Mayamata. In this panel, all the mātrikas are seated in ardhaparyāṅka pose (Fig I.3) with four arms, holding appropriate weapons in the upper arms and keeping the lower right arms in abhaya-mudra (Fig I.8) and the lower left arms resting on their left thigh. Brahmāṇi is shown with a single face, while Mahāswari has the face of a bull. Vāraḥi has the head of an ordinary female figure instead of that of a boar. Except Chāmuṇḍa, the Goddesses wear karaṇḍamakuta (Fig II.7), kuṇḍalas, necklace, armlets and kankānas. The vāhanas are partly visible as the pedestal is partly buried in the ground. Chāmuṇḍa has dishevelled hair and keeps her lower right in abhaya and the lower left arm on the left thigh instead of carrying sword and skull-cup. Viśabhadra holds a sword in his two arms while Gāṇēśa carries broken tusk and mōdaka in his arms. This panel, on the basis of artistic features, may be dated to A.D. 9th - 10th century.
2. Saptamātrikas without the attendant deities.

The panel of Saptamātrikas found in the Nāgēśvara temple at Prātakōṭa represents the divine mothers as seated in ardhaparyāṅka pose with only two arms, keeping the right arm in abhaya and the left arm in varada pose. They have their respective vāhanas below the pedestal. The attendant deities, Virabhadra and Gaṇēśa are absent in this panel. This panel may be placed in A.D 9th century.

The Mōkṣēśvara temple at Prātakōṭa, has the mātrika slab (plate 34 & 35) which represents from left to right Brāhmaṇi, Mahēśwari, Kaumāri, Vaishṇavi, Vārāhi, Indraṇi and Chāmuṇḍa. All these images are four armed and seated in ardhaparyāṅka pose (Fig.I.4) without associate deities Virabhadra and Gaṇēśa. The mātrikas hold in the two upper arms the appropriate weapons kamanḍalu, aksamāla, trisūla, damaru, spear, sakti, cakra, sāṅka, gada etc., and the other distinguishing feature, the vehicles are carved on the pedestal. Excepting Chāmuṇḍa, the lower right arms of each goddess is held in abhaya and the lower left arm is on the left thigh, holding a round object. Chāmuṇḍa is holding a sword in the lower right and a skull-cup in her lower left arm. In this specimen, she is terrific in appearance. All the goddesses wear tall makuṭa (Fig.II.2) and a number of ornaments. What is of particular interest in this panel is that Vārāhi has the head of an ordinary female figure instead of the face of a boar. On the basis of artistic features, this panel may be dated to A.D 9th century.

There is a stone slab (plate 36) in the temple of Satyamma at Miyāpuram, Kōlhapur taluk, Mahābūnagar district. In this panel, the divine mothers are shown in seated posture (Fig.I.5) with four arms, holding appropriate weapons in the upper arms. Brāhmaṇi keeps her lower right
in abhaya and holds a round object (vijapūraka) in the lower left arm. Mahēśvari rests her lower right on the thigh and the content in the lower left is not clear. Kaumāri holds a sword in the lower right and rests the lower left on the knee of the left leg. Vaishṇavi carries vijapūraka in the lower right and rests the lower left on the knee of the left leg. Vārāhi holds a sword in the lower right and keeps the lower left on the thigh. Indrāni holds vajra in the lower right and rests the lower left on the thigh. Chāmuṇḍa carries a sword in the lower right arm and the content in the lower left is not clear. All the mātrikas wear makuṭa, kundalas, necklace (Fig.III.4), yajnopavīta, armlets and kaṇkaṇas. Since the bottom part of the pedestal is fully white washed the vāhanaś are not clearly visible. This panel is datable to 9th century A.D.

There is an interesting Saptamātrika panel (plate 37) in the Chandramoulīswara temple at Chēbōlu, Ātmakur taluk, Kurnool district. In this panel, all the mātrikas are carved beautifully in developed form and represented as seated in ardhaparyānka pose (Fig.I.3). Brāhmaṇī has four heads and four arms as required in the Aṁśumadbhēdāgama. She keeps the lower arms in abhaya and varada poses. Her mount swan is carved below. Mahēśwari is holding sūla (?) and dāmaru (Fig.V.22b) in her two arms. Her vāhana bull is found on the pedestal. Kaumāri has six heads and four arms. She carries a knife and a rod in the upper arms and sword (Fig.V.14b) and shield (Fig.V.15) in the lower arms. Her mount peacock is shown below. Vaishṇavi has four arms and holds cakra and śaṅka in the upper arms and arrow (Fig.IV.6b) and bow in the lower arms. Her vāhana Garuḍa is seated on the pedestal with his hands held in anjali. Vārāhi while the other examples, has eight arms and holds swords and cakra in the right arms and two swords and śaṅka in the left arms. The front two arms are in abhaya (Fig.I.8) and varada (Fig.I.9) poses. The peculiarity to be noted with regard to Vārāhi is that she is seated on a human
figure instead of her mount buffalo. Indrāṇi is holding a khadga (Fig.V.14a) in the right arm and keeping the left in varada pose, with an elephant carved underneath. The head of Chāmuṇḍa is shown decorated with trident designed makūṭa and her body is depicted in dwarf form. In this panel, the divine mothers are carved in bold reliefs and the composition is crowded. Brāhmaṇī with four heads, Kaumārī with six heads, human figure lying below the figure of Vārāhi and Chāmuṇḍa with trident shaped makūṭa and her body in dwarf form are the special iconographic features of this panel. The Mātrikas wear makūṭas (Fig.II.6), kucabaṇḍha and several other ornaments. The convention of carving the mātrikas between Virabhadra and Gaṇeśa is absent in this panel which can be dated in about A.D. 10th century.

There is another interesting stone slab of Saptamātrikas at the entrance of the fort of Peddamarrūru, Kōlhapur taluk, Mahābūnagar district. Seated in ardhaparyāṅkāsana, the Mātrikas in this slab have four arms. The upper arms bear the appropriate weapons and the lower right arms are in abhaya and the lower left arms are on the left thigh. They wear makūṭa, kundalas, necklace, armlets and kaṅkaṇas. The pedestal contains the respective vāhanas of the Mātrikas. This panel can be assigned to 9th / 10th century.

In the fragmentary panel (plate 38) of the Nāgēśvara temple at Pratākoṭa, Nandyal taluk, Kurnool district, Vaishṇavi and Vārāhi are beautifully depicted as seated in ardhaparyāṅka pose (Fig I.3) with four arms and with their respective vāhanas. Vaishṇavi holds cakra (Fig.IV.11b) in the upper right and śaṅka (Fig.IV.10c) in the upper left arm. She keeps her lower left in varada (Fig.I.9) and the lower right is broken. She is decorated with cakrakuṇḍalas (Fig.III.11), necklace (Fig.III.4), yajñopavīta, armlets and kaṅkaṇas. Her face is damaged. Her vāhana
garuḍa is carved on the pedestal. Vārāhi has a boar's face which is also damaged. Her upper right arm carries gada and the upper left arm rosary (Fig.IV.2a). She keeps her lower right in abhaya (Fig.I.8) and the lower left in varada (Fig.I.9). She wears a necklace (Fig.III.4), yajñōpavīta, armlets and kāṅkāṇas. Her vāhana, buffalo is found on the pedestal. Artistically this panel is of the Rāṣṭrakuṭa period and may be dated to A.D. 9th century.

There are two temples, Siva and Nāgēśvara at Nāndikoṭkūr in Nandyal taluk, Kurnool district. The Siva temple has a broken Saptamātrikā slab which contains the figures of only three mātrikas. The Nāgēśvara temple also contains only the figure of Chāmuṇḍa. The broken slab in the Siva temple represents three Mātrikas viz., Vārāhi, Indrāṇi and Chamunda. These are shown seated in padmāsana (Fig.I.2) with four arms, holding appropriate āyudhas in the upper arms and keeping the lower right arms in abhaya and lower left arms holding a child emphasising the mother aspect as found in the image of Chāmuṇḍa at Pañchadhārā and Mathura Museum. This fragmentary panel as its features suggest, can be dated to belong to A.D. 9th century.

3. Loose stone sculptures of Saptamātrikas

Brāhmaṇī (plate 39) from the Sunkalamma temple at Ullūru, Kurnool district, is a three faced deity. She is seated in padmāsana (Fig.I.2) and has four arms. She holds śrūk and śruva in the upper arms and akṣamāla and a bowl (?) in the lower arms. She wears karaṇḍamakūṭa, kūṇḍalas, necklace, yajñōpavīta, armlets and kāṅkāṇas. Her vehicle swan is carved on the pedestal. There is a prabhā-maṇḍala behind her head.
A magnificent panel depicting Chāmuṇḍa (plate 40) as seated in ardhaparyānkāsana (Fig.I.3) with four arms is found in the Nāgēśvara temple at Prātakōṭa. She holds damaru and trisūla (Fig.IV.5a) in the upper arms and khaḍga (Fig.V.14a) and skull-cup (Fig.V.24) in the lower arms. The most interesting feature and the great iconographic significance of this panel is the presence of two standing female figures on either side of the Goddess, a feature rarely seen in the sculptures of Chāmuṇḍa. This sculpture is assignable to A.D.9th century.

The figure of Chāmuṇḍa (plate 41) in the Saṅgameśvara temple at Rūpala, Kurnool district, is also four armed. Though badly mutilated with all the four arms along with the attributes, the figure still reveals the character of the Goddess as conceived by the Purāṇas. The Goddess is represented as seated on a human being. She wears a necklace of human skulls and kapāla-yajñōpavīta. The pendulous breasts, protruding eye balls, protruding tusks and ghastly expression are represented in this image. This image is datable to A.D.8th - 9th century.

The Pāncalingēśvara Temple at Pāncalingāla has a very fine image of Chāmuṇḍa (plate 42). The image shows the goddess seated in ardhaparyānka pose (Fig.I.3). She has four arms and holds damaru (Fig.V.22a) in the upper right and trisūla (Fig.IV.5c) in the upper left arm. In the lower right and lower left arms, she carries a sword (Fig.V.14b) and a skull-cup (Fig.V.24) respectively. Instead of dishevelled hair, she wears a kriṭtamakuta (Fig.II.6) which has the carving of a serpent on its front, cakrakuṇḍalas (Fig.III.7), necklaces (Fig.III.4), kapāla-yajñōpavīta, anklets and manḍiras. At the bottom to the left of the Goddess are found the fox and the human head. The carving of a snake on the kriṭtamakuta and kapāla-yajñōpavīta add to the fearfulness of the goddess. This sculpture is datable to A.D.8th century.

Chāmuṇḍa (plate 43) from the Nāgēśvara temple at Naṇḍikoṭkūr, is in seated posture (Fig.I.5). She has four arms and holds damaru in the upper right and trisūla in the upper left
arm. In the lower right and lower left arms, she carries a khadga and a skull-cup respectively. She wears karaṇḍamakūṭa (Fig.II.7) instead of dishevelled hair. kuṇḍalas, necklace, hāra (Fig.III 6) armlets and kaṅkāņas. At the feet of the goddess, on the pedestal are found the carvings of human heads. This image is dated to A.D.9th/10th century.

The Sūnkālamma temple at Uḻūru also contains a highly interesting image of Chāmuṇḍa (plate 44). The four armed Chāmuṇḍa has been represented in seated posture (Fig.I.5). She holds trisūla in the upper right and damaru in the upper left arm. In the lower right and lower left arms, she carries a sword (Fig.V.14a) and a skull-cup (Fig.V.24) respectively. She wears karaṇḍamakūṭa (Fig.II.8), kuṇḍalas, necklace, hāra, yajñopavīta, armlets, kaṅkāṇas, girdle, and pādavalayas. At the feet to the left of the Goddess is found her vāhana, the fox. The sunken belly, heavy thighs, cobras and the prabhā behind her head are the noteworthy features of the figure. This sculpture is assignable to A.D.9th - 10th century.

Seated in ardhaparyāṅkaśana, Chāmuṇḍa from the Chauḍēsvari temple of Gārgēyapuram, Gārgēyapuram taluk, Kurnool district, has four arms. She holds damaru in the upper right and trisūla in the upper left arm. She carries sword in the lower right and skull-cup in the lower left arm. She is decked with kiriṭamakūṭa, kuṇḍalas, hāras, kēyuras, armlets, anklets and mañjīras. This sculpture is datable to A.D.9th - 10th century.

The Chennakeśava temple at Vēlatūru, Kōḻhapur taluk, Mahabūbnagar district, has an interesting sculpture of Chāmuṇḍa. Here Chāmuṇḍa is represented as seated in ardhaparyāṅka pose. She has four arms and holds damaru and trisūla in the upper right and upper left arms respectively. Her lower right arm holds sword and the lower left arm a skull-cup. She wears makuta, kuṇḍalas, necklace, kēyuras, armlets, udarabaṇḍha and kaṅkāṇas. Her pedestal is designed with human heads. This image may be dated to A.D.9th - 10th century.
REFERENCES

1. Rajendra Prasad.B., *Art of South India Andhra Pradesh*, (Delhi, 1980), P 124


3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p.108

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid., p.141

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid., p.142

9. Ibid.

10. See plate No 30 of this Thesis

11. Agrawala, V S., "A catalogue of the Brahmanical Images in Mathura Art", p.59 (Fig.31)
Historical Background:

The Nolambas were a feudatory family under the Gaṅgas, Rāstrakūtas and Chālukyas and they flourished during the 8th to 10th century A.D. They were the rulers of districts of Tumkur and Chitaldrug in Karnataka, part of Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh and portions of Salem and North Arcot districts of Tamilnadu. Their epigraphs are largely found in Kolar area, Chittoor district, Hemavati, Dharmapuri, Bhoganaidi etc. The Nolambas ruled over Nolambalige, later known as Nolambavādi - 32,000 with their capital at 'Heṃjēru' or Hemavati in the Madakasira taluk of Anantapur district. This Nolambavādi area extended as far as Kolar district on one side and Anantapur on the North.

The early kings of the dynasty were subordinate to the Imperial Rāstrakūtas and on occasion, to the neighbouring Gaṅgas. The reign of Mahēndra-I (A.D.860-895), the sixth prince in the line - was more eventful than that of his predecessors. He is credited with defeating the Bānas, a victory attested to by inscriptions at Dharmapuri in Salem district. After Mahēndra, his brother, Iṣiva Nolamba (A.D. 895 - 919) seems to have ruled conjointly with his mother Dēvalabbarasi. An inscription at Āvaṇi refers to the death of Mahēndra and the raising by his mother Dēvalabbarasi of the temple known as Nolamba-Nārāyaṇēsvara after one of the epithets of Mahēndra. In the period of the subsequent rulers Ayyapadēva and Anniga (A.D. 919-940), the fortunes of the Nolamba kingdom suffered heavily due to the campaign of the Gaṅga king Rācamalla against Nolambavādi which resulted in the loss of the region around Āvaṇi. Another inscription at Āvaṇi of A.D.931 states that one Tribhuavana Kartaradēva, a Siva pontiff,
Governed Avani for 40 years and built many temples. Iriva Nolamba Dilipa (A.D. 940-967) the next ruler of Nolambavadi, was a powerful monarch who fought on the side of the Rastrakuta Krishna - III in the battle of Takkolam against the Chola Parantaka - I (A.D. 967-970), the Ganga Narasimha (A.D. 960-974) over ran Nolambavadi and captured Ucchangi fort, but soon after, in Mahendra-II’s reign (A.D. 975-980), the Nolambas regained their independence. This was but for a brief time, for at the beginning of Ekavakya’s rule (A.D. 980-1005), the Chalukyas of Kalyana defeated the Nolambas and Nolambavadi became a part of the Chalukya empire.

The Nolambas were beneficent patrons of Saivism, as their many temples constructed to Siva at Hemavati would clearly indicate. Hemavati, the capital of the Nolambas, is about twenty two miles west of Madakasira off Kodikonda - Amarapuram road and is about eight miles from Amarapuram. The village stands on an extensive mound and was a town of considerable importance during A.D. 8th to 10th century under the Nolambas when it was known as Hejjuru or Hejjeri. Of the temples at the place, the chief are those of Siddhesvara, Doddhesvara, Virupaksheshvara and Malleswara standing in a group to the north - west of the village. The temples of the Nolamba are also seen at Dharmapuri and Arlaguppe. Saptamatrika cult also was supported by the Nolamba rulers. Beautiful representations of Saptamatrikas are found in the Nolamba temples at Hemavati. This shows that the Nolamba showed keen interest in representing the Saptamatrikas in the Nolamba Art.

ICONOGRAPHICAL FEATURES OF SAPTAMATRIKAS IN THE NOLAMBA ART:

In the Archaeological museum at Hemavati, Madakasira taluk, Anantapur district, there are six Saptamatrika panels and five loose sculptures belonging to Siddhesvara and Doddhesvara temples, which belong to the Nolamba period, about A.D. 8th to 10th century. Saptamatrika panels
of the Nolamba period are also found in the Pandādamma temple of Parigi and District Central Library at Anantapur.

The Saptamātrika panels and images found in these places may be classified into the following three categories:

1. Saptamātrikas with vāhanas.
2. Saptamātrikas without vāhanas.
3. Separate (loose) sculptures of Mātrikas.

1. Saptamātrikas with vāhanas

A stone slab of Saptamātrikas is found at the entrance of the Saptamātrika temple at Parigi. In this slab the Mātrikas are represented as seated in ardhaparyānkāsana with four arms and their respective vāhanas. The mātrikas depicted from left to right are Brāhmaṇi, Mahēśwari, Kaumāri, Vaishnavi, Vārāhi, Indrāṇi and Chāmunḍa. They are holding appropriate weapons in the upper arms and resting the lower two arms on their thighs. The seven mothers including Chāmunḍa wear karandamakuta, kuṇḍalas, necklaces, armlets and kankānas. Artistically, this panel belongs to the Nolamba style and may be dated to A.D. 8th / 9th century.

The panel (179 x 54 cms) found to the left at the entrance of the Hēmavati museum (plate 45) represents the Saptamātrikas in ardhaparyānkāsana (Fig.I 3) with four arms and with their respective vāhanas viz., swan, bull, peacock, garuḍa, buffalo, elephant and fox. Brāhmaṇi is a three faced deity. Her upper right arm carries aksamāla (Fig.IV.2b) and the upper left kalaśa (Fig.IV.3a). Mahēśwari holds trisūla (Fig.IV.5b) and a cup in the upper right and upper left arms. Kaumāri carries vajra and pāśa (Fig.V.30a) in the upper right and upper left arms.
Vaishṇavi, holds cakra and śāṅka in the upper right and upper left arms respectively. Vārāhi has a boar’s face, which has been chopped off. She holds dānda in the upper right and pāsa (?) in the upper left arm. Indrani holds sakti (?) in the upper right and aṅkūśa in the upper left arm. Chāmuṇḍa holds sūla in the upper right and dāmaru in the upper left arm. She keeps a skull-cup in the lower left arm. The lower right arms of all the Mātrikas are in abhaya and the lower left arms, except Chāmuṇḍa, are in varada. Except Chāmuṇḍa all the Mātrikas wear karaṇḍamakūṭa (Fig.II.8), kuṇḍalas, hāra (Fig.III.3), armlets, anklets and ardhōrūka. Chāmuṇḍa has dishevelled hair and other terrific features.

The second panel (161 x 51 cms) found at the entrance to the right side of the Hēmavati museum (plate 46) represents only five of the mātrikas. The extreme right end part of the slab which should have Indrāni and Chāmuṇḍa is missing. As in the case of the first panel described above, the mātrikas in this panel are also represented with four arms and their respective vāhanas carved below the pedestal. Brāhmaṇī is holding kamāṇḍalu (?) in her upper right and akṣamāla in the upper left arm. Mahēśwari is holding trīsūla and dāmaru in upper right and upper left arms. The weapons found in the upper arms of Kaumārī are not very distinct. Vaishṇavi is holding cakra (Fig.IV 11b) in upper right and śāṅka (Fig.IV 10b) in the upper left arm. Vārāhi is boar faced, holding cakra in her upper right and śāṅka in upper left arm. The lower right arms of all these mātrikas are in abhaya and the lower left arms carry vijapūraka and rest on the left thigh. All the Mātrikas wear karaṇḍamakūṭa (Fig.II.8), kuṇḍalas, necklaces (Fig.III.3), bāhuvalayas, ardhōrūka and pādavalayas.
Still another panel of Noāamba Art is found inside the Hēmavati Museum. It has five out of seven mātrikas. They are Mahēśwari, Kaumāri, Vaishṇavi, Vārāhi and Indrāṇi. Brāhmaṇi and Chāmuṇḍa are missing. In this specimen also the mātrikas are seated with four arms, carrying appropriate weapons. Their respective mounts are carved on the pedestal.

2. Saptamātrikas without vāhanas

The Saptamātrikas panel (142 x 44 cms) of the Noāamba period has also been noticed at the tank bund (plate 47) which is at a distance of about half a kilometre from Hēmavati. In this panel also only five mātrikas are to be seen. They are Brāhmaṇi, Mahēśwari, Kaumāri, Vaishṇavi and Vārāhi. All the mātrikas are depicted in seated posture (Fig.I.5) with four arms but without their respective vāhanas. The lower right arms are in abhaya and the lower left arms carry vijapūraka and rest on the left thigh. Brāhmaṇi has three faces. Her upper right arm carries padma and the upper left kalaśa (Fig.IV.3a). She wears jatāmakuta (Fig.II.1), kuṇḍalas, hāras (Fig III.4), kēyūras, armlets, anklets, and pūrnōruka. Mahēśwari holds triśūla in her upper right and ḍamaru in the upper left arm. Like Brāhmaṇi, she is also adorned with jatāmakuta, kuṇḍalas, hāras, kēyūras, armlets, anklets and pūrnōruka. Kaumāri holds ankuśa in her upper right arm and pāsa in the upper left arm. She is decked with karandamakuta (Fig.II.8), kuṇḍalas, hāras, kēyūras, armlets, anklets and pūrnōruka. Vaishṇavi holds cakra and śaṅka in her right and upper left arms. She is decorated with kirītāmakuta (Fig.II.6), kuṇḍalas, kēyūras, hāras, armlets, anklets and pūrnōruka. Boar faced Varahi holds vakradaṇḍa in her upper right arm and pāsa (Fig.V.30a) in the upper left arm. She is also decorated with karandamakuta (Fig.II.8), kuṇḍalas, hāras, kēyūras, armlets, anklets and pūrnōruka.

Artistically, this panel may be dated to 10th century A.D.
There is another fragmentary relief (110 x 37 cms) found to the right side, infront of the Hemavati museum (plate 48). It has five out of seven Mātrikas. They are Mahēswari, Kaumāri, Vaishṇavi, Vārāhi and Indrāṇi. The first and the last mātrikas i.e., Brāhmanī and Chāmuṇḍa are missing. In this panel the mātrikas are depicted in seated posture (Fig.I.5) with four arms and without their respective vāhanas. All the Mātrikas wear karaṇḍamakuṭa (Fig.II.8) and several other ornaments. The Goddesses keep their lower right arms in abhaya (Fig.I.8) and vijapūraka in the lower left arms. Mahēswari holds aksamāla in upper right and trisūla (Fig.IV.5a) in upper left arm. Kaumāri carries daṇḍa in her upper right and the āyudha in the upper left is chopped off. Vaishṇavi has cakra in her upper right and śaṅka in upper left arm. Boar faced Vārāhi has pāśa (Fig.V.30c) in her upper right arm and śaṅka in upper left arm. Indrāṇi has parāśu in her upper right arm and bow (Fig.V.29) in upper left arm.

The Hemavati Museum is in possession of yet another stone slab (89 x 50 cms) of Saptamātrikas (plate 49). This is found inside the museum. In this panel only three mātrikas are found. They are Vaishṇavi, Vārāhi and Indrāṇi. The three mātrikas are represented in seated posture (Fig I.5) with four arms and without their respective vāhanas on the pādapītha. Vaishnavi holds cakra (Fig.IV.11b) in upper right and śaṅka (Fig.IV.10c) in upper left arm. Her lower right arm is broken and the lower left arm carries a round object (vijapūraka). Vārāhi with the face of a boar, carries daṇḍa (Fig.IV.12b) in upper right and pāśa (Fig.V.30a) in upper left arm. Her lower arms are broken. Indrāṇi carries vajra in upper right and śakti(?) in upper left arm. She keeps her lower right in abhaya and the lower left arm is broken. All the three goddesses have been beautifully executed and wear kirīṭamakuṭa (Fig.II.4), kūndalas, hāras (Fig.III.3), kēyūras, armlets, kucabhaṇḍa, yajñōpavīta, udarabāṇḍha and kaṅkaṇas. These mātrikas are provided with a prabhāmaṇḍala (Fig.II.17) behind their heads. Artistically, this panel may be dated to 10th century A.D.
A very fine group of Matrikas illustrating the Nolamba Art is found on the exterior wall (front side) of the District Central Library at Anantapur. The District Central Library preserves two Saptamatrika slabs of which one represents Brahmani, Maheswari and Kaumari and the second one represents Vaishnavi, Varahi, Indrani and Chamunda. These two slabs as their features indicate belong to the Nolamba style. The three divine mothers of the first slab (plate 50) are represented in seated posture (Fig. I.5) with four arms and without their respective vahanas. The lower right arms of the matrikas are in abhaya (Fig. I.8) and a round object (vijapuraka) is found in the lower left arms. Brahmani has three faces and carries pasa (Fig. V.30a) in upper right and kamandalu (Fig. IV.3a) in the upper left arm. Maheswari holds aksamala (Fig. IV.2b) in upper right and trisula (Fig. IV.5b) in the upper left arm. Kaumari carries aksamala in upper right and trisula in upper left arm. These matrikas are decked with karandamakuta (Fig. II.8), kundalas, necklace (Fig. III.4), kucabandha, yajnopavita, udarabanda, girdle and ardhoruka.

The second slab (plate 51) represents Vaishnavi, Varahi, Indrani and Chamunda. Like the Matrikas of the first slab, these four matrikas are four armed and keep their lower right arms in abhaya and the lower left arms hold a round object (vijapuraka). Vaishnavi holds cakra in upper right and sanka in the upper left arm. Varahi has the face of a boar. Her upper right arm carries cakra and the upper left arm sanka. Indrani has ankusa in her upper right and sakti in upper left arm. Chamunda carries damaru in upper right and the ayudha in the upper left arm is indistinct. Excepting Chamunda, the Matrikas wear karandamakuta (Fig. II.7), kundalas, necklaces (Fig. III.4), kankanas, yajnopavita, girdle and anklets. Chamunda has erected hair and kapala-yajnopavita. Artistically, these two panels may be dated to 10th century A.D.
3. Separate (loose) sculptures of Matrikas

There is a separate modern temple for Saptamātrikas at Parigi in Hindupur taluk, Anantapur district. It is locally called 'Pannāḍamma temple'. This temple contains the loose stone sculptures of Saptamātrikas which are fixed on a rectangular pitha. On either side of the mātrikas the images of Virabhadra and Gaṇēśa are also found. The seven mothers found from left to right are Brāhmaṇi, Mahēśwari, Indrāni, Vaishṇavi, Vārāhi, Kaumārī and Chāmuṇḍa. These mātrikas are seated, have four arms and carry the appropriate weapons and attributes. Stylistically, these images are datable to 9th - 10th centuries A.D. In the Nolamba Art, the convention of carving of Mātrikas between Virabhadra and Gaṇēśa as required by the Mayamata is absent. However, two loose stone images of Virabhadra and Gaṇēśa are found along with the images of mātrikas at Parigi. It is doubtful whether originally these images belonged to this group or not. If these images are taken that they belonged to the Mātrika group of Parigi, then it can be said that Parigi is the only place wherein we can see the stray example of Nolamba Art showing the Mātrikas with Virabhadra and Gaṇēśa.

Apart from the above described panels there are also five more loose stone images of Mātrikas representing the Nolamba art. They are Mahēśwari, Kaumārī, Vaishṇavi, Vārāhi and Chāmuṇḍa. Of these, Mahēśwari and Kaumārī are found in the Archaeological Museum of Hēmavati, while the other three Mātrikas, Vaishṇavi, Vārāhi and Chāmuṇḍa are found in the Siddēswara and Doḍēswara temples of Hēmavati. Mahēśwari is seated on a high pedestal (plate 52) in ardhaparyāṅkāśa posture (Fig.I.4) with four arms, holding trisūla (Fig.IV.5b) in upper right and ķamaru in upper left arm. The lower right arm is broken and the lower left carries a round object. She is decorated with jatāmakuṭa (Fig.II.2) with a prabhāmaṇḍala behind her.
head, necklace (Fig. III.3), kundalas, armlets, yajnopavita, kanka, purnoruka and manjiras (Fig. III 14). Traces of her vahana is to be seen on the pedestal. On the basis of artistic features this image may be dated to A.D. 10th century. Kaumari (plate 53) like Maheswari, is seated on a high pedestal in ardhaparyankasana posture (Fig.I.4) with her vahana, mayura (peacock) carved on the pitha. She has four arms and holds spear (Fig.IV.6a) in her upper right and the contents in the upper left and the lower arms are broken. The prabhamaandala behind her head is designed like lotus petals. She is decked with karanakuti with simha motif on its front, kundalas, necklace (Fig.III.3), kanka, three stranded yajnopavita, gridle and purnoruka. This image closely resembles the image of Maheswari in its execution and figuration of ornaments. This image also may be dated to A.D. 10th century.

The image of Vaishnavi (plate 54) from the Doddeshwara temple of Hemavati is shown in seated posture with four arms. She holds cakra (Fig.IV.11a) in upper right and saha (Fig.IV.10b) in the upper left arm. Her lower arms are broken. She is adorned with ratnamakuta (Fig.II.15), necklace (Fig.III.3), kanka, armlets, yajnopavita, udarabandha, girdle and purnoruka. Artistically, this image may be dated to about A.D. 9th century.

The image of Varahi (plate 55) from the Siddheswara temple of Hemavati is represented in seated posture (Fig.I.5) with the face of a boar. She has four arms and holds hala in upper right and pasa (Fig.V.30b) in the upper left arm. She keeps her lower right in abhaya and the lower left arm rests on the left thigh. She wears karanakuti (Fig.II.8), kundalas, necklace (Fig.III.3), yajnopavita, armlets, kanka and purnoruka. Stylistically, it may be dated to about A.D. 9th century.
The image of Chāmuṇḍa (plate 56) from the Doḍḍeswara temple of Hēmavati has four arms. In the upper arms, the goddess carries trisūla and damaṇu instead of kaśaṇa and nāga that sometimes occur in Chola sculpture. The lower arms are broken. The jvālaṅkēṣa (Fig.II.16) or flaming hair of the goddess are composed in taraṅga fashion meandering on either side in curly waves. She has a pleasing countenance as opposed to the emaciated and horror looking form of the Chaḷukya Chāmuṇḍa. She wears a necklace, nāga-kucabaṅḍha and kaśaṇa-yajñopavīta. This image may be ascribed to 9th century A.D.¹⁰
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5. Ibid.

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7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.


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