CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION
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In the preceding pages, the 'origin and antiquity', descriptions of 'Saptamatrikas in literature' and the 'iconographical features of Saptamatrikas' in the temples of Early Chālukya, Eastern Chālukya, Rāstrakūṭa, Noḷaṁba, Chola, Kākaṭiya and the Vijayanagara periods have been studied in a systematic and detailed manner. In this chapter, an attempt is made to discuss the modes of representations, dynastic characteristics and iconographic peculiarities of Saptamatrikas in the temple art of Andhradesa. An attempt is also made here to compare the iconographical features of Saptamātrakas with the prescriptions of iconographic texts, to trace similarities and dissimilarities and also the local and chronological divergencies in the depiction of the Saptamātrakas in the temple art of Āndhradēśa.

The worship of Saptamātrakas is one of the most ancient and popular cults in India. Evidently the Saptamātrika cult was widely prevalent during the early centuries of Christian era. The identification of the seven figures in a Harappa seal which is crucial for antedating the Saptamātrika worship to the days of the Indus Valley Civilization is thus a matter on which there is no unanimity of opinion among the scholars. As for as dependable archaeological evidence goes, it is difficult to postulate a pre-Kuśāna mātrika cult even though the worship of the mother goddess is certainly of more remote antiquity. Similarly, in Āndhradēśa, evidently the Saptamātrika cult was widely prevalent during the rule of the early Chālukyas of Bādāmi, though the worship of the goddesses is traceable at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa from 4th century A.D. The available Saptamātrika panels and images enable us to believe that the mātrika cult seems to have made

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a greater headway in Āndhradēśa only during the Early Chāḷukya period (6th to 8th Century A.D). This study reveals that after the Early Chāḷukyas, the successive dynasties such as the Eastern Chāḷukya, Rāṣṭrakūṭa, Nalamba, Chola, Kākaṭiya and the Vijayanagara rulers had contributed much for the growth of the cult of Saptamātrikas in Āndhradēśa. The extent sculptural panels and loose stone images of Saptamātrikas confirm the inference that the cult of Saptamātrikas was popular and widely prevalent in Āndhradēśa from 6th to 17th Century A.D.

A careful study of the iconographical features of Saptamātrikas reveals that the Saptamātrikas have been represented in various ways in the temple art of Āndhradēśa. A close examination of the iconographical features of the sculptural panels and loose stone images of Saptamātrikas of the Early Chāḷukya art reveals that the sculptors of the Early Chāḷukya art represented the mātrikas in six ways:

1. In the first stage, the mātrikas are represented with only two arms and without vāhanas and weapons. This type of representation which is found in the Yēlleśwaram and Dāmagatla (Plate 1) panels, represents the earliest iconography of Saptamātrikas which existed at the beginning (6th Century A.D.) of the rule of the Early Chāḷukyas of Bādāmi in Āndhradēśa.

2. The second mode of representation of Mātrikas is with two arms and with weapons and vāhanas as found in the panel in the Archaeological Museum at Guntur (Plate 2).

3. The third mode of representation of mātrikas is the depiction of mātrikas riding on the vāhanas with two and four arms (Mahēśwari and Chāmuṇḍa) as found at Rāmeśwaram (Plates 3-6).
4. Next stage in the development of mātrika figures in the Early Chālukya art in Āndhradēśa is that the divine mothers are shown flanked on either side by the associate deities Virabhadra, one of the forms of Siva himself and Gaṇeśa. This mode of representation is in conformity with the prescription of Mayamata. The best examples for this mode of representation are the reliefs in the Archaeological museum at Nāgarjunakōṇḍa (Plate 7), the Government Museum at Alampur (Plate 8), Guṇḍlūru (Plate 9), Tripurāntakam and Nānganūrupalī (Plate 10). The Early Chālukya mātrika panel preserved in the museum at Nāgarjunakōṇḍa is the earliest known example showing Virabhadra and Gaṇeśa in the company of the mātrikas. It will be evident that the earliest mode of showing Virabhadra and Gaṇeśa in company of Saptamātrikas evolved in the Early Chālukya area in Āndhradēśa.

5. The next mode of representation is the depiction of mātrikas without associate deities, Virabhadra and Gaṇeśa. The panels found at Tripurāntakam, Nandikoṭkūr and Takkaśila are good examples.

6. The early Chalukya artists also represented the mātrikas as separate figures in their art. Good examples of this type of representation are found in the Alampur museum (Plates 11-16) and Chējerla.

As regards to the iconographical peculiarities of the mātrikas in the Early Chālukya art, in the panel of Guṇḍlūru (Plate 9), Brāhmaṇī is represented with only one head and in some other panels at Nāgarjunakōṇḍa (Plate 7), Rāmēśwaram (Plate 3), Dēmagatla (Plate 1), Nandikoṭkūr, Guntur (Plate 2) etc., she is depicted with three heads infront and fourth one probably behind. Vārāhi is represented riding on eagle as her vāhana at Rāmēśwaram instead of buffalo as her
vāhana. Chāmuṇḍa is also depicted in various ways in the Early Chālukya art. In some panels, she is found with karandamakuta (Plates 2 & 9), dishevelled hair, with owl (Plates 6 & 7), fox (Plates 8 & 16) and with pendulous breasts and skeleton (Plate 6). Except these goddesses, the other mātrikas viz, Mahēśwari, Kaumāri, Vaishānavi and Indraṇi are represented in the Early Chālukya art in an usual manner with their vāhanas and appropriate weapons.

When compared with the iconographic texts, the depiction of mātrikas in the Early Chālukya art partially tallies with the Aṁśumadbhēdāgama, Vishnudharmōttara, Pūrvakāranāgama etc. In the panels at Nandikoṭkūr, Guntur (Plate 2), Nagarjunakonda (Plate 7), and Rāmēśwaram (Plate 3-6), the order of the depiction of Saptamātrikas is changed and these panels differ from the traditional order stated in the texts.

In Andhra-deśa, the Early Chālukya area was a principal and early centre of evolution and development of the mātrika cult and a veritable zone of iconographic experiments. V.R.Mani is of the opinion that it is from the Chālukya area of which Andhra-deśa formed a part, that the mātrika cult had spread to kalinga in the east and to the Pallava, Ganga and Pandya kingdoms in the south. Such travels and nuances and motifs and modes of depiction from places of their origin to contiguous areas and their ready absorption and happy assimilation at the receiving ends are not infrequent in the realms of Indian art and iconography.

The study of the iconographical features of the Saptamātrikas of the Eastern Chālukya art (7th to 11th Century A.D.) reveals that the sculptors of this period represented the mātrikas in two ways viz., (1) Saptamātrikas with vāhanas and without Vīrabhadra and Gāṇeṣa and (2) Separate images of the mātrikas. In the first variety of representation, in all the panels, Brāhmaṇi is
represented with three heads, while Chāmuṇḍa is depicted in ferocious form with sunken eyes, gaping mouth and frightful tusks at Biccavōlu (Plate 30). In this example, the prētavāhana is represented as corpse being torn away by the jackals and this recalls the Kalinga tradition. The terrific quality of the figure is best seen here. In the Biccavōlu image, corpse is shown as her mount whereas it is absent in the arts of early Chāluukya, Rāstrakūṭa, Nolamba, Chola and Kākatīya periods. The Saptamātrikas images from Elāmanačhili partially agree with the description of the iconographic texts like Pūrvakāranāgama and Vishnudharmottara. However, in the description of the Saptamātrikas, the iconographic texts differ in few points. It is significant to note that Chāmuṇḍa of Paṇchadhārīla has only two arms with her left arm clasps a child seated on the lap, showing an early tradition in its carving (Plate 30). In contrast to the Chāmuṇḍa figure of Biccavōlu, Chāmuṇḍa at Gaṇapuram is shown with pendulous breasts and in the panels at Papanāsam and Kanaparti, she is depicted as an ordinary female figure. The other mātrikas i.e., Mahēśwari, Kaumāri, Vaishṇavi and Indrāṇi are found represented in an usual manner as seated in ardhaparyāṅkāsana with their respective vāhanas and appropriate weapons in their arms. At Biccavōlu, a loose stone image of Vīrabhadra (Plate 27) of fine workmanship from a group of Mātrikas is found. The other associate deity i.e., Gaṇēsa is missing. The presence of the loose stone image of Vīrabhadra in this place enables us to believe that the Eastern Chāluukya sculptor seems to have represented the mātrikas at Biccavolu with Vīrabhadra and Gaṇēsa. This is the only place wherein we can see the presence of the loose stone image of Vīrabhadra which is absent in all other places in the sculptural panels and loose images of the Eastern Chāluukya period. The depiction of Saptamātrikas in the Eastern Chāluukya art is partly in accordance with the requirements of the iconographic texts.
Chamunda as Prahlaksha is that she is shown flanked by two standing female figures (Plate 40).

Chamundā in the most interesting feature and the great iconographic significance of the panels at Chhodulo (Plate 37) represents Chamundā in dwarf form with the head wearing insignia. The Garudaepuram, she wears Khāṭamakūra and Karanamakūra instead of displayed hair. The panels at Pancachārī (Plate 42), Nandikır (Plate 43), Ullīn (Plate 44) and required by the Śilpaśāstra. The sword and shield-cup are found in all the Rāṣṭrapāla panels, in right in abhaya and the lower left on the left third instead of carrying sword and shield cup on the mount bull (Plate 37). In the panel at Rāṣṭrapāla (Plate 33), Chamundā keeps her lower bōar, while in the panel at Chhodulo Vṛatrī is shown seated on a human figure instead of a deer. Prahlaksha (Plate 35) has the head of an ordinary female figure instead of that of the face of a female with their appropriate weapons in their arms. Vṛatnī at Bṛāhmanakirti (Plate 32) and face Vāishnava and Indra are represented in all the Rāṣṭrapāla panels as an ordinary female panels at Bṛāhmanakirti, Prahlaksha, Nandikır, Vyagṛpuram etc., she is represented with single panel with six heads at Chhodulo (Plate 37) and is in accordance with the description of the texts. In the panels studied, she is represented with the face of an ordinary female figure. Kamān is depicted whenever is represented with the face of a bull at Bṛāhmanakirti (Plate 31). In all the other panels at Chhodulo (Plate 37), she is represented with four heads as required by the above said text and Garuḍa and Gaṇeśa (2) Śaptāṁśīs without associate deities and (3) Independent Vīrabhadra and Gaṇeśa can be seen in three ways viz., (1) Śaptāṁśīs with the associate deities, and (2) Śaptāṁśīs without associate deities and (3) Independent. 

The model of representation of figures in Rāṣṭrapāla art (8th to 10th century) A.D. of
In the Rāstrakūta art, in some panels, the depiction of the mātrikas is in adherence to the requirements of the iconographic texts and in some other panels the depiction of the mātrikas differs from the texts.

In the Noḷamba art (8th to 10th century A.D.) the mode of representation of the mātrikas is found in three ways viz., (1) Saptamātrikas with vāhanas (2) Saptamātrikas without vāhanas and (3) Independent representation of Mātrikas. In all the panels of Noḷamba art, Brāhmaṇi is represented uniformly with three heads, while Maḥēśwari, Kaumāri, Vaishṇavi and Indrāṇi are represented in an usual manner with the face of an ordinary female figure. Vārāhi is depicted with the face of a boar. In the loose stone sculpture at Hēmavati, Chāmuṇḍa has jvālakēśa composed in taraṅga fashion meandering on either side in curly waves (Plate 56). In the upper arms, the goddess carries trisūla anddamaru instead of kapāla and nāga that some times occur in Chola sculpture. She wears nāgakucabaṇḍha and kapāla-yajñopavīta. In contrast to this sculpture, the figure of Chāmuṇḍa in the panels at Anantapur and Parigi has dishevelled hair and with her appropriate characteristic features. In the Noḷamba art, the convention of carving the 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 images of mātrikas at Parigi. It is doubtful whether these images originally belonged to this group or not. Further another interesting iconographic feature noticeable in the Noḷamba art is that the mātrikas in some Noḷamba panels are represented without their mounts (vāhanas) and they are distinguished from each other on the basis of their attributes and weapons. This depiction differs from the texts.
became amalgamated with that of the Parakramabahu temples and lost their individuality.

The temple complex is one of the most significant examples of Chola architecture, with its various structures and elements reflecting the cultural and artistic heritage of the Chola period. The temple was constructed during the reign of Rajaraja Chola I, who was a great patron of the arts and architecture.

In the temples of the Parakramabahu temples, the Chola period is characterized by the use of soapstone and laterite, which are typical materials of the Chola period. The temple complex is a fine example of the architectural tradition of the Chola period, with its various structures and elements reflecting the cultural and artistic heritage of the Chola period. The temple was constructed during the reign of Rajaraja Chola I, who was a great patron of the arts and architecture.

Another peculiarity of the temple complex is the presence of the Chola panels of Anuradhapura under study. This shows that the Chola sculptures depicted the manner in which the Chola panels of Anuradhapura were used in the construction of the temple. The temple was constructed during the reign of Rajaraja Chola I, who was a great patron of the arts and architecture.

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In the Kākatiya art, the Saptamātrikas are found depicted in three ways viz., (1) Saptamātrikas in the company of Virabhadra and Gaṇēsa (2) Saptamātrikas without attendant deities and (3) Independent representation of Saptamātrikas. In the Kakatiya art, Brāhmaṇi is shown with three faces and Varāhi with the face of a boar. Mahēśwari, Vaishṇavi and Indrāṇi are represented as an ordinary female figures. In the panel preserved in the Victoria Jubilee Museum at Vijayawada, Kaumāri is found represented with three faces (Plate 76), while in the other panels of the Kākatiya period, she is represented as an ordinary female figure. The figure of Chāmūṇḍa found in the Site Museum at Kolanupāka has dishevelled hair with karandaṃakuta (Plate 78), while at Palampet (Plate 77) she has the hair finely combed. The depiction of mātrikas in the panels of Warangal, Kolanupāka, Vijayawada and Palampet are in adherence with the requirements of the iconographic texts. The mātrika panel of Paṭāncheru (Plate 74) partially tallies with the texts.

The study of the iconographic features of Saptamātrikas of the Vijayanagara art reveals that the Vijayanagara artists represented the mātrikas in two ways in their art viz., (1) Composite group of Saptamātrikas and (2) Separate representation of the Saptamātrikas. In all the panels of Vijayanagara period under study, Brāhmaṇi is represented with three heads. As in the Chola panels under study, in the panel of Lēpākshi (Plate 79) and in the loose sculptures of Rāmagiri (Plate 82 Fig.1) and Surutupalle (Plate 86. Fig.2) the figure of Mahēśwari is represented as holding paraśu and mriga in her upper arms instead of trisūla and ḍamara. Kaumari has single face in the Vijayanagara panels excepting the panel of Lēpākshi wherein she has three heads. Varāhi has the face of an ordinary female figure in the Lēpākshi panel instead of that of the face of a boar which is found in all the other Vijayanagara panels described. Vaishnavi and Indrāṇi
are represented in all the panels in an usual manner Chāmuṇḍa is shown at Suruṭupalle in the act of killing the demon with trisūla (Plate 87). The prētavāhana is shown on the pedestal of Chāmuṇḍa at Rāmagiri (Plate 85). The order of depiction of mātrikas in the panel of Lēpākshi is changed and this differs from the traditional order mentioned in the iconographic texts. Further, another striking feature of this panel is the absence of the vāhanas of the Goddesses on the pedestal. However, the mātrikas are distinguished from each other by their appropriate weapons and attributes. The weapons in the arms of the mātrikas at Lēpākshi, Rāmagiri and Suruṭupalle differ from the requirements of the texts.

In the depiction of mātrikas in the temple art of Āndhradēśa, we find some departures from the prescribed iconographical rules. Further, we also find some interesting local and chronological divergencies in the depiction of mātrikas in the temple art of Āndhradēśa. In the early Chāluṣkya art, in early forms, the mātrikas are represented without any distinguishing vehicles or attributes. This type of depiction indicates a stage when iconographic features were still in a process of crystallization. Later on, all kinds of distinguishing features (vāhanas, weapons, prabhāmaṇḍala and associate deities Vīrabhadra and Gaṇēśa) began to appear even in the early Chāluṣkya period itself and consequently developed forms of Mātrikas are found in sculptural representations. The mātrikas of the subsequent periods (from Eastern Chāluṣkya to Vijayanagara) exhibit a fully evolved stage with some variations in their depiction. The mātrikas are generally found represented either in a group or separately in ardhaṁpaṛyāṅkāsana or in padmāsana in the temple art of Āndhradēśa. But in some loose stone sculptures of the Chola period, Vaishṇavi is represented in standing pose without her mount (Plates 59, 71 & 73). In the Early Chāluṣkya panel preserved in the Government Museum at Alampur (Plate 8) the mātrikas
are provided with a prabhāmandala behind their head, showing a divine character of the mātrikas. This is the earliest panel showing this feature. This feature is found continued in the Eastern Chālukya, Rāstrakūṭa, Nōlamba, Chola and Kākaṭiya arts. However, the prabhāmandala feature is absent in the Saptamātrika panels and images of the Vijayanagara art. In the Rāstrakūṭa panel at Brāhmaṇakoṭkūr (Plate 31) and in the loose stone sculpture of the Chola period at Kalakaḍa (Plate 60), Mahēśwari is represented with the face of a bull. In the Rāstrakūṭa panels at Brāhmaṇakoṭkūr (Plate 31) and Prātakōṭa (Plate 35), Vārāhi has the face of an ordinary female figure instead of that of the face of a boar. It is interesting to note that Chāmuṇḍa at Pañchadhārā probably of the Eastern Chālukya period holds a baby on her lap (Plate 30) emphasising the mother aspect and showing an early tradition in its carving. This feature is found only in the contemporary Rāstrakūṭa panel in the Siva temple at Naṇḍikoṭkūr. This feature is absent in the Early Chālukya, Nōlamba, Chola, Kākaṭiya and Vijayanagara Arts.

In the Early Chālukya panels at Rāmēśwaram (Plates 3-6) and Nagrajunakonda (Plate 7) and in the Chola sculpture in the B.T. College at Madanapalle (Plate 70), Chamunda has the owl as her vehicle as required in the Pūrvakāraṇāgama. In the sculpture at Biccovōlu, she has corpse being torn away by a jackal. This depiction recalls the Kalinga tradition. In the loose stone sculptures at Rāmagiri and Surutupalle of the Vijayanagara period, she is represented with a corpse as her vehicle as required in the Vishnudharmottara and Pūrvakāraṇāgama. Excepting these, in all the panels and images of Chamunda described, she has fox as her mount. In the Chola sculptures in the B.T. College at Madanapalle, Yātavākili and in the Vijayanagara image at Surutupalle, Chāmuṇḍa is represented in the act of killing the demon with her trisūla. This type of depiction is absent in the Early Chālukya, Eastern Chālukya, Rāstrakūṭa, Nōlamba and
The terrific quality of Chāmuṇḍa is seen in all the figures of Chāmuṇḍa described. However, in the Vijayanagara panel at Lēpākshi, Chāmuṇḍa is not in the ferocious aspect but her face and features are as benign as those of other mātrikas.

The iconographic text such as Mayamata requires that the mātrikas should be flanked by Viṟabhadra and Gaṇeśa on the two sides. These associate deities are absent in the Noḷāṁba, Chola and Vijayanagara arts. The vāhanas of the respective Mātrikas are found depicted on the pādapīṭha. However, these are absent in the Noḷāṁba panels at Anantapur (Plates 50 & 51), Hēmavati (Plates 47, 48 & 49) and in the Vijayanagara panel at Lēpākshi (Plate 79). In the temple art of Āndhradēsa, in each period, in some panels, the artists depicted the mātrikas according to the iconographic texts, while in some other panels of the same period they did not strictly adhere to the requirements of the texts. In some panels of the Early Chāḷukya art at Nandikoṭkūr, Guntur, Nagarjunakonda, Rāmēswaram and in the Vijayanagara panel at Lēpākshi, the order of the depiction of Saptamātrikas is changed. They are normally carved in this order: Brāhmaṇi, Mahēswari, Kaumāri, Vaishnavi, Vārāhi, Indrāṇi and Chāmuṇḍa. The above stated departures from the iconographic requirements would suggest that the artists from the Early Chāḷukya to the Vijayanagara period did not strictly followed the iconographic traditions in the temple art of Āndhradēsa.

Finally, this study also reveals that the Saptamātrika panels and images ranging from the Eastern Chāḷukya to the Kākaṭīya period bear out powerful impact of Early Chāḷukya iconographic traditions. The waves of this influence were so persistant that all the mātrika sculptures (Except Chāmuṇḍa at Pańchadārīla and Biccavōlū) of Āndhradēsa under study upto the Kākaṭīya times were simply local versions of Early Chāḷukya melieu. In this connection it may
not be out of place to mention here that it is from the Early Chālukya area that the Mātrika cult had spread to Kalinga in the East and to the Pallava, Ganga and Pāṇḍyan kingdoms in the south.\(^9\) The figure of Chāmuṇḍa at Panchadārla (9\(^{th}\) C.A.D.) probably of the Eastern Chālukya period, holding a child with her left arm recalls the depiction of Mātrikas in Kushāna and Orissan arts wherein the Mātrikas are shown with a child.\(^{10}\) The depiction of the figure of Chāmuṇḍa at Biccavolu of the Eastern Chālukya art exhibits the Kalinga tradition.\(^{11}\) In the Vijayanagara art the mātrikas display notable variations in treatment and a considerable difference in details, i.e., without prabhāmanḍala and associate deities Virabhadra and Gaṇeśa in the panels and images under study and without vāhanas in the panel at Lēpākshi.
REFERENCES


3. In the Orissan art, in the Parasurāmēśwara temple (650 A.D) at Bhubanēswar, Chāmūnda has an owl as her vehicle on the pedestal. (Bhagwant Sahai, *Iconography of Minor Hindu and Buddhist Deities,* New Delhi, 1975, p.211)


5. Sivaramamurti, C., In his Royal Conquests and Migrations deals with this aspect of Indian art history; Mani, V.R. *Op.Cit.,* p90.


11. In the Vaital Deul (775 A.D.) at Bhubaneswar, Chamunda has a corpse under her feet with a jackal dragging it. (Bhagwant Sahai, *Op.Cit.,* Pp.212 & 213)