

= Chamunda =

Chamunda ( Sanskrit : चामुण्डा , C?mu??? ; Kannada : ಚಾಮುಂಡಾ ) , also known as Chamundi , Chamundeshwari ( ಚಾಮುಂಡೇಶ್ವರಿ ) and Charchika , is a fearsome aspect of Devi , the Hindu Divine Mother and one of the seven Matrikas ( mother goddesses ) . She is also one of the chief Yoginis , a group of sixty @-@ four or eighty @-@ one Tantric goddesses , who are attendants of the warrior goddess Durga . The name is a combination of Chanda and Munda , two monsters whom Chamunda killed . She is closely associated with Kali , another fierce aspect of Devi . She is sometimes identified with goddesses Parvati , Chandi or Durga as well . The goddess is often portrayed as haunting cremation grounds or fig trees . The goddess is worshipped by ritual animal sacrifices along with offerings of wine and in the ancient times , human sacrifices were offered too . As the times have changed , meat , and wine are no longer offered . As of today it has been known that animal sacrifices have been discouraged by texts such as the Ramayan . Originally Devi Chamunda was discovered in Hinduism and later entered the Jain pantheon too . Though in Jainism , the rites of her worship include vegetarian offerings , and not the meat and liquor offerings .

= = Origins = =

Ramakrishna Gopal Bhandarkar says that Chamunda was originally a form of Devi worshipped by the Munda peoples of the Vindhya range of central India . These tribes were known to offer goddesses animal as well as human sacrifices along with ritual offerings of liquor . These methods of worship were retained in Tantric worship of Chamunda . He proposes the fierce nature of this goddess is due of her association with Vedic Rudra ( identified as Shiva in modern Hinduism ) , identified with fire god Agni at times .

= = Iconography = =

The black or red coloured Chamunda is described as wearing a garland of severed heads or skulls ( Mundamala ) . She is described as having four , eight , ten or twelve arms , holding a Damaru ( drum ) , trishula ( trident ) , sword , a snake , skull @-@ mace ( khatvanga ) , thunderbolt , a severed head and panapatra ( drinking vessel , wine cup ) or skull @-@ cup ( kapala ) , filled with blood . Standing on a corpse of a man ( shava or preta ) or seated on a defeated demon or corpse ( pretasana ) . Chamunda is depicted adorned by ornaments of bones , skulls , serpents . She also wears a Yajnopavita ( a sacred thread worn by mostly Hindu priests ) of skulls . She wears a jata mukuta , that is , headdress formed of piled , matted hair tied with snakes or skull ornaments . Sometimes , a crescent moon is seen on her head . Her socket eyes are described as so intense that it burns the evil of all three worlds . She is accompanied by fiends and goblins . She is also shown to be surrounded by skeletons or ghosts and beasts like jackals , who are shown eating the flesh of the corpse which the goddess sits or stands on . The jackal are her fearsome companions . The severed head and corpse represents the severing of the ego . The corpse hence is conquered by the Devi , showing that the Ego is conquered . The symbolism of the Devi is made as to where one is given the impression of the reality of life . This form as well as many of the other Eight Matrikas all show the reality of life . They show the bareness , non sugar coated version of reality . At times , she is depicted seated on an owl , her vahana ( mount or vehicle ) .

= = Hindu legends = =

In Hindu scripture Devi Mahatmya , Chamunda emerged as Chandika Jayasundara from an eyebrow of goddess Kaushiki , a goddess created from " sheath " of Durga and was assigned the task of eliminating the demons Chanda and Munda , generals of demon kings Shumbha @-@ Nishumbha . She fought a fierce battle with the demons , ultimately killing them . Goddess Chandika Jayasundara took the slain heads of the two demons to goddess Kaushiki , who became immensely pleased . Kaushiki blessed Chandika Jayasundara and bestowed upon her the title of ? Chamunda "

, to commemorate the latter's victory over the demons .

According to a later episode of Devi Mahatmya , Durga created Matrikas from herself and with their help slaughtered the demon army of Shumbha @-@ Nisumha . In this version , Kali is described as a Matrika who sucked all the blood of the demon Raktabija . Kali is given the epithet Chamunda in the text . Thus , the Devi Mahatmya identifies Chamunda with Kali .

In Varaha Purana , the story of Raktabija is retold , but here each of Matrikas appears from the body of another Matrika . Chamunda appears from the foot of the lion @-@ headed goddess Narshmi . Here , Chamunda is considered a representation of the vice of tale @-@ telling ( pasunya ) . The Varaha Purana text clearly mentions two separate goddesses Chamunda and Kali , unlike Devi Mahatmya .

According to another legend , Chamunda appeared from the frown of the benign goddess Parvati to kill demons Chanda and Munda . Here , Chamunda is viewed as a form of Parvati .

Matsya Purana tells a different story of Chamunda 's origins . She with other matrikas was created by Shiva to help him kill the demon Andhakasura , who has an ability - like Raktabija - to generate from his dripping blood . Chamunda with the other matrikas drinks the blood of the demon ultimately helping Shiva kill him . Ratnakara , in his text Haravijaya , also describes this feat of Chamunda , but solely credits Chamunda , not the other matrikas of sipping the blood of Andhaka . Having drunk the blood , Chamunda 's complexion changed to blood @-@ red . The text further says that Chamunda does a dance of destruction , playing a musical instrument whose shaft is Mount Meru , the spring is the cosmic snake Shesha and gourd is the crescent moon . She plays the instrument during the deluge that drowns the world .

= = Association with Matrikas = =

Chamunda is included in the Saptamatrika ( seven Matrikas or mothers ) lists in the Hindu texts like Mahabharata ( Chapter ' Vana @-@ parva ' ) , Devi Purana and Vishnudharmottara Purana . She is often depicted in the Saptamatrika group in sculptures , examples of which are Ellora and Elephanta caves . Though she is always portrayed last ( rightmost ) in the group , she is sometimes referred to as the leader of the group . While other Matrikas are considered as Shaktis ( powers ) of male divinities and resemble them in their appearance , Chamunda is the only Matrika who is a Shakti of the great Goddess Devi rather than a male god . She is also the only Matrika who enjoys independent worship of her own ; all other Matrikas are always worshipped together .

Devi Purana describe a pentad of Matrikas who help Ganesha to kill demons . Further , sage Mandavya is described as worshipping the M??rpa?caka ( the five mothers ) , Chamunda being one of them . The mothers are described as established by creator god Brahma for saving king Harishchandra from calamities . Apart from usual meaning of Chamunda as slayer of demons Chanda and Munda , Devi Purana gives a different explanation : Chanda means terrible while Munda stands for Brahma 's head or lord or husband .

In Vishnudharmottara Purana - where the Matrikas are compared to vices - Chamunda is considered as a manifestation of depravity . Every matrika is considered guardian of a compass direction . Chamunda is assigned the direction of south @-@ west .

Chamunda , being a Matrika , is considered one of the chief Yoginis , who are considered to be daughters or manifestations of the Matrikas . In the context of a group of sixty @-@ four yoginis , Chamunda is believed to have created seven other yoginis , together forming a group of eight . In the context of eighty @-@ one yoginis , Chamunda heads a group of nine yoginis .

= = Hindu worship = =

A South Indian inscription describes ritual sacrifices of sheep to Chamunda . In Bhavabhuti 's eighth century Sanskrit play , Malatimadhva describes a devotee of the goddess trying to sacrifice the heroine to Chamunda 's temple , near a cremation ground , where the goddess temple is . A stone inscription at Gangadhar , Rajasthan , deals with a construction to a shrine to Chamunda and the other Matrikas , " who are attended by Dakinis " ( female demons ) and rituals of daily Tantric

worship ( Tantrabhuta ) like the ritual of Bali ( offering of grain ) .

Many Kshatriyas and even the Jain community worship her as her Kuladevi " family deity " . The Chapa dynasty worshiped her as their kuladevi . The Kutch Gurjar Kshatriyas worship her as kuladevi and temples are in Sinugra and Chandiya . Alungal family , a lineage of Mukkuva caste ? ( Hindu caste of Shudra origin ) in Kerala ? worship chamundi in Chandika form , as Kuladevta and temple is in Thalikulam village of Thrissur , Kerala . This is an example of Chamunda worship across caste sects .

= = = Temples = = =

In the Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh , around 10 kilometres ( 6 @. @ 2 mi ) west of Palampur , is the renowned Chamunda Devi Temple which depicts scenes from the Devi Mahatmya , the Ramayana and the Mahabharata . The goddess 's image is flanked by the images of Hanuman and Bhairava . Another temple , Chamunda Nandikeshwar Dham , also found in Kangra , is dedicated to Shiva and Chamunda . According to a legend , Chamunda was enshrined as chief deity " Rudra Chamunda " , in the battle between the demon Jalandhara and Shiva .

In Gujarat , two Chamunda shrines are on the hills of Chotila and Panera . Kichakeshwari Temple , near the Baripada , Charchika Temple , near Banki and Vaital Deula in Bhubaneswar , Odisha .

Another temple is Chamundeshwari Temple on Chamundi Hill , Mysore . Here , the goddess is identified with Durga , who killed the buffalo demon . Chamundeshwari or Durga , the fierce form of Shakti , a tutelary deity held in reverence for centuries by the Maharaja of Mysore .

The Chamunda Mataji temple in Mehrangarh Fort , Jodhpur , was established in 1460 after the idol of the goddess Chamunda ? the Kuladevi and i??a @-@ devat? ( tutelary deity ) of the Parihar rulers ? was moved from the old capital of Mandore by the then @-@ ruler Jodha of Mandore . The goddess is still worshiped by the royal family of Jodhpur and other citizens of the city . The temple witnesses festivities in Dussehra : the festival of the goddess .

Another temple , Sri Chamundeshwari Kshetram is near Jogipet , in Medak District in Telangana State .

= = In Jainism = =

Early Jainism was dismissive of Chamunda , a goddess who demands blood sacrifice , which is against the principle of Jain vegetarianism . Some Jain legends portray Chamunda as a goddess defeated by monks like Jinadatta and Jinaprabhasuri .

Another legend tells the story of conversion of Chamunda into a Jain goddess . According to this story , Chamunda sculpted the Mahavira image for the temple in Osian , Jodhpur and was happy with the conversions of the Oswals to Jainism . At the time of Navratri , a festival that celebrates the Divine Mother , Chamunda expected animal sacrifices from the converted Jains . The vegetarian Jains , however , were unable to meet her demand . Ratnaprabhasuri intervened , and as a result , Chamunda accepted vegetarian offerings , forgoing her demand for meat and liquor . Ratnaprabhsuri further named her Sacciya , one who had told the truth , as Chamunda had told him the truth that a rainy season stay in Osian would be beneficial for him . She also became the protective goddess of the temple and remained the clan goddess , Kuladevi , of the Oswals . The Sachiya Mata Temple in Osian was built in her honour . Some Jain scriptures warn of dire consequences of worship of Chamunda by the Hindu rites and rituals .