CHAPTER II

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

We have had a general idea of the status of women in the society in the early periods of Indian history commencing from the Aryans down to the Mauryas. We learn about women scholars and poetesses who have contributed to the development of literature. But we do not know much about their participation in administration. As in the north, even in Andhra, the historical period commences with the Mauryans. Andhra had been a part of Mauryan empire, as is clear from the existence of Yerragudi and Rājulamandagiri edicts of Asoka in Anantapur and Kurnool districts. Asoka could not certainly have annexed these regions to his empire, since the only campaign of conquest he indulged in was against Kalinga. His father took to philosophy rather than administration. Chandragupta, the grandfather, was no doubt engaged in wars. But he too had no time to think of the south. He had to drive out the Nandas first and extend his kingdom northward to occupy the provinces that were being governed by Seleucus. It becomes quite obvious, therefore, that Andhra had
been a part of the Nanda Kingdom, although when and how it was annexed by the Nandas cannot be said.

Asoka took interest in the spread of Buddhism. Literary evidences speak of his sending his daughter Saññhamittrā and son Mahendra as missionaries to Ceylon. Although this is an inference drawn from Buddhist literary sources, this would highlight the part played by the princess Saññhamittrā in the diffusion of Buddhist teachings. She herself must have been a learned lady with strong convictions about the efficacy of Buddhism and need for the spread of its principles among the people at large. Emphasis was laid more upon Dhamma (Dharma) - righteousness - than the spread of any religion.

In Andhra, the Mauryas were succeeded by the Sātavāhanas. There is a difference of opinion with regard to the ruler whom Andhra Simuka, killed and paved the way for the downfall of the empire. Be it as it may. Surprisingly, Simuka did not occupy the Magadha throne but confined himself to the Deccan region.
In the Satavahana family the earliest woman of importance to figure is Nāganīka of Āghiya family of the Mahārathis who were powerful in southern Maharashtra. She was the wife of Sātakarnī I, who was the grandson of Śimuka and son of Krishna. This matrimonial alliance strengthened the Satavahana power, since he received help from his father-in-law in his expeditions. The Nānāghāṭ inscription of Nāganīka clearly says that she, along with her husband, performed many religious sacrifices, such as the Rājasūya and Aśvamedha, which indicate the expansion of her husband's empire. She also says that her husband achieved the 'Lordship of Dakshinā-patha' 3.

After the death of her husband, she assumed regency of her minor son, Vēdisiri. It was as a regent that she issued the Nānāghāṭ inscription. This epigraph clearly speaks of her administrative efficiency and religious tolerance. In spite of the fact that she joined her husband in performing the Vedic sacrifices like Rājasūya, she never showed any disrespect towards other religions. The fact that she did not engage herself in any offensive or defensive battles,
seems to indicate that she followed a policy of neutrality. Though we know next to nothing about her educational qualifications, it is obvious that she was shrewd and efficient in her administration.

The next ruler of importance was Gautamiputra Sātakarni, a great conqueror. Towards the end of his reign, he tasted defeat at the hands of Kshatrapa Rudradāman loosing Malwa, Gujarat, North Koṅkan and Māhishmatī in the sequel. As a part of diplomacy, he got his son, Vāsishṭhiputra, married to the daughter of the mahākhatrapa. We are in the dark even about the name of his daughter-in-law.

Ikshvakus were the political successors in Andhra, occupying most of the land south of the Krishnā. Only three generations of rulers of this family are known. Chāntamūla Vīrapurushadatta's wife was Rudrādevī - bhattacharīkā, also known as Mahādēvi. She is described as Ujjanikā Mahādevibālikā (the princess of the King of Ujjani) which indicates the importance attached to the political alliance through matrimony. Vīrapurushadatta's daughter Kodabalasiri married the king of Banavāsi of the Chūtu family. It is interesting
to note that this queen of the Chūtu family was responsible for getting a Vihāra built at Nāgārjunakonda. Similarly, we see Vāṣisṭhīdvī, wife of Mādhavāputra Virapurushadatta and mother of Ehuvula, patronising Buddhism. She built a Vihāra which came to be known as DeviVihāra dedicated to the Āchāryas of Bahuṣrutīya sect of Buddhism. From this it might appear that these royal women could make grants and construct Vihāras on their own. But it would be more appropriate to surmise that these individuals had greater freedom to indulge in such activities, obviously with the tacit approval of their husbands.

The Ikshvāku rule was followed by the brief rule of Brihatphalāyanas, Śālaṅkāyanas and Ānandagōtras. We do not know anything about their royal or noble women. The next dynasty of rulers was of the Vishnukundins. Mādhava-varma II, son of Gōvindavarma, was one of the great rulers of this dynasty. He married Vākātaka Pravarasena II's daughter and helped his brother-in-law, Narėndrasena, whose kingdom was in jeopardy. He maintained matrimonial relations with Rāshtrakūtas by marrying the daughter of Dēvarāja. He had a son by name Vikramēndravarma I from the Vākātaka princess.
We see that during the rule of the Eastern Chalukyas over Andhra, royal women took greater interest and played a major role as peace-makers, administrators and patrons of religion. Śilamahādevī, daughter of Vishnuvardhana IV, was married to Rāshtrakūṭa Nirupama Dhruva. Her father, along with other confederates, of Mālava, Kānci and Gaṅgavādi, supported and rendered valuable help to Gōvinda II, brother of Dhruva, in his claim against his brother. But the conspirators were defeated and Dhruva marched on an expedition against Vishnuvardhana IV. No details about this invasion are forthcoming. Vishnuvardhana opposed him, but suffered defeat and had to sue for peace. A treaty was concluded between the two, according to which he accepted the supremacy of the Rāshtrakūṭas. Peace came to be established through matrimonial alliance between the royal house of Vēngi and Mālkhēd. The Jethwai plates of this Śilamahādevī clearly refers to her as "Paramēśvari paramabhattārikā śrī Śilamahādevī", the great queen of paramabhattāraka mahārājādhirāja paramēśvara Dharāvarsha and registers a grant from her of the village, Kōṭepadra (Nandipuradvani district) to two Brahmanas. She made this grant in 786 A.D., on her own authority. There is no evidence of her joint rule or
her being a regent of her minor son. Naturally, she made the grant as a queen independently.

Thereafter, again, there was a conflict between Vijayāditya and Bhīma Śaluki. The latter was driven out and desired to seek the assistance of the Rāṣṭrakūtas. In that kingdom, Gōvinda, however, passed away and was succeeded by Amōghavarsha whose regent Karka Suvara - varsha of Gujarat was in charge of the government. Realising the futility of antagonising Vijayāditya, Karka entered into matrimony, by giving his own sister, also known as Śīlamahādēvi, in marriage to Vishnuvardhana, son of Vijayāditya.

Chālukya Bhīma II had two wives, Ūrjapī or Aḍki-dēvi, daughter of a king of Kaliṅga and Lōkāmbikā, whose parentage is not known. The king of Kaliṅga cannot be identified. Both of them had a son each - Dānārṇava and Amma II who later fought between themselves for the throne. Dānārṇava killed Amma II, but was himself killed by Jaṭāchōda Bhīma. Dānārṇava's sons Śaktivarma and Vimalāditya had to flee the kingdom. Chōla Rājarāja gave asylum to Vimalāditya and also gave him in marriage, his daughter Kundavai10. By now, in Karnataka,
the Rāṣṭrakūṭas had made way to the Western Chālukyas, of whom Taila II overthrew the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and established his own kingdom. After Śaktivarman's death, Vimalāditya succeeded his brother who had no issues. Rājarāja was Vimalāditya's son by Kundavai. Later, Western Chālukya Vikramāditya VI married the Chōla princess, daughter of Vīrārājendrā. In the Chōla country there was political confusion, Adhirājendrā, son of Vīra-rājendrā, having been killed. Rājendrā, the Eastern Chālukya, being a Chōla in the maternal line, finally ascended the Chōla throne, under the name Kulottuṅga, thereby bringing together the two families of the Chōlas and the Chālukyas. It is interesting to note that in these political movements the diplomacy of matrimony played a major role. The princesses acted as cementing bonds, sealing hatred and healing wounds. In this respect, they bore a great responsibility and burden.

After the downfall of the later Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa, the Kakatiyās of Warangal, who had held some area around that region as chieftains and as feudatories, declared themselves as successors to Chālukyas and started ruling
independently. Unlike the Eastern Chālukyas, who almost throughout their centuries of rule, held power as subordinates, the Kākatīyas were independent rulers. It is in this period that women of the royal families dominated themselves and played both influential and powerful roles in shaping the destiny of the dynasty.

Mention may be made here of Ganapāmba, the daughter of Gaṇapati and sister of Rudramādevī. She was married to the Kota chief Bēta. She had to bear the burden of administration after his death. As she had no children to succeed her husband, she had necessarily to depend upon the advice of her father Gaṇapati. Luckily for her, she had been well trained in riding horses and elephants, driving the chariots, wielding weapons like bow, arrow, schimiter and the like. She was proficient in theology, poetry and epic lore. The Mogalutla grant dated Śaka 1141 (1219 A.D) states that her husband had passed away in the previous year viz., 1218 A.D. The Yanamadala grant is dated 30 years later, Śaka 1171 (1249 A.D). This means that she continued to rule for at least three decades.

Not much information is available about her administration excepting some stray references to the taxation
system. We find Gañapāmbā making donations to a number of temples. After the death of her husband, she placed golden pinnacles on the holy shrine of the brilliant lord Amarāśvara at Śrī Dhānyakapura. She also built a Śiva temple at Yanamadala, which she named as Bētāśvara, after her deceased husband. To fulfil the requirements of that temple, she granted a village known as Benādevī, which was rich in all kinds of grains. She also built one more temple named Gañapesvara after her father. For this temple she granted a village Chintapalli. Being a generous lady, she provided 12 houses which were formed into a hamlet and later came to be known as Gañapavarapādu. This village was donated to 12 Brahmanas who represented 12 ādityas. She also provided rich stipend ( vrittis ) to these Brahmanas. Being a strong devotee, she got instituted many festivals in the Śiva temple. Thus, she developed a religious mind and became the renowned lady in the history of the Kākatīyas.

Rudramādevī, the famous Kākatīya queen assumed regal powers on the death of her father Gañapatidēva who did not have sons to succeed. She, as well as her sister Gañapamba, were born to Somalingadevi. Both the
There is an interesting discussion about Rudramadevi, being a daughter or, a wife of Gananatidēva. Marco Polo, an Italian traveller, who toured Andhradēsa, states in his work that Rudramadevi was the wife of Gananatidēva. Kumārasvāmi (son of Mallināthaśūri), a commentator of Pratāparudrīya, interpreted a passage in that and opines that the king Gananatidēva had only daughters and the widowed queen Rudramadevi reigned for several years and retired, after coronating her grandson, Pratāparudra. Ekāmbaranātha in his Pratāparudra charitra has stated that Rudramadevi was the wife of king Gananatidēva. Kūchimarēnī Jaggakavi agrees with Ekāmbharanātha in this respect. To some extent traditional stories in this regard also seem to support this relationship.

These sources seem to clearly point out that Rudramadevi was the wife of Gananatidēva. However, these are all literary sources whose credibility is not beyond doubt. There is no contemporary epigraphical evidence to uphold the theory that Rudramadevi was the wife of Gananatidēva. Epigraphs unanimously say that she was his daughter. Besides, there are also some other
literary works, like Pratāparudrayasobhūshaṇa of Vidyānātha, which suggest that she was not a wife, but a daughter of Ganapati. In fact, to show that she was in no way inferior to men, she is referred to by the male name Rudradeva, making a casual reader feel that she was infact a 'he', although in reality it was a 'she'.

Redramadēvi's renowned teacher Viśveśvarasambhu established in the Malkāpuraśāna that she was the daughter of Gaṇapatideva and she was coronated on the eve of her birthday celebrations.

The commander of the army of Rudramadēvi, Sūramahīpati issued a copper plate inscription at Kōtagiri in 1278 A.D., which also stands testimony to this argument.

Pōti-nāyaka's Kolanupāka inscription says that Rudramadēvi was the daughter of Gaṇapatideva and Sōmaladēvi and wife of Viṃrbhadra. An inscription in the Sōmeśvara temple of Sārañgapāṇidēva near Nalgonda clearly says that Rudramadēvi was the daughter of Gaṇapatideva.

Kālūvacheruvu epigraph of Anitalli says that Rudramadēvi, daughter of Gaṇapatideva, after reigning for several years, coronated her grandson, Pratāparudra.
When a daughter was born to Gaṇapatī this fact could not be kept hidden for long. But, Gaṇapatī gave her necessary training to make her a warrior and an administrator besides educating her in all sciences like Vēdas, Purānas and polity (rajanīti). She was allowed to lead the armies in battle fields, and participated in learned discussions. She grew of age and had to be married. It is stated that a svayamvara was arranged. Several princes were invited for this. Some of them did not come forward on the ground that she had more manly behaviour. Finally, however, Vīrabhadra of Chālukya family married her. To this couple were born Mummadamma and Rudramma. Ruuyamma, daughter of Rudramadevi's teacher, was adopted and was brought up by her as her own daughter.

Gaṇapatī hesitated to elevate his daughter to the throne since he feared that the subjects may not
accept to be ruled over by a woman, a rather unusual affair. Hence, he had thought of Hariharadēva, one of his feudatories. But, many subjects objected to this selection. The king summoned his feudatories and forwarded the proposal of coronating Hariharadēva as his successor, since he had become old. His feudatories Murāridēva, Vīrabhadradēva, Gōvīndanāyaka, Ketarāja of the Kōṭa family, Rēcharla Rudrāreḍḍy, Kāmireḍḍy and Vīraballāla-dēśika expressed their opinion regarding the choice of succession. At this time the royal preceptor was requested to proclaim the name of Rudramadēvi, because both of the step brothers were not from the main line of her father. In the assembly she appeared in male attire and came to be addressed as Rudramadēvamahārājā. She became the ruler in 1262 A.D. Her father was always behind her and guided her well in the affairs of the state. This would be clear from a record of Jamigadēva dated Śaka 1191 or 1269 A.D. at Durgi in Palanadu, when she was not yet the queen. We can conclude that Rudramadēvi was only the queen designate in 1219 A.D., but not a sovereign.
When Rudramadevi ascended the Kākatīya throne some of the disgruntled chiefs and officials rose in revolt and she was forced to face internal and external disturbances. More prominent of the trouble makers were Hariharadeva and Murāridēva, who seized the capital city of Warangal. But, with the help of her supporters like Jannigadeva and his younger brother Tripurāri, the Velama chiefs mahāpradhāna Kandhāra-nāyaka, mahāpradhāna Gaṇapatidēva-mahārājulu Nissanka Mallikārjuna, Malayā-nāyaka and Madagānāyaka, she successfully quelled the revolt and seized the throne.

Externally, she had to face the campaign of the Kalinga army which was advancing towards her kingdom. She sent her generals Pōti-nāyaka and Prōli-nāyaka with a huge army. Both her generals succeeded in driving out the enemy troops. She had to face the onslaught of the Yādavas. They were in friendly terms with one another, when Kākati Gaṇapatidēva and Sēvuna Krishna were ruling their empires. But Krishna's successor Mahādēva could not reconcile to a woman sitting on the
throne and being his adversary. He led an expedition against the Kākatīya Kingdom. But he had underestimated Rudramadēvi's powers. Assisted by feudatories Rudramadēvi repelled the enemy who had seized the fort and chased the Sēvuṇa forces upto the walls of their own capital, Devagiri. Mahādēva had to sue for peace with Rudramadēvi. As a mark of victory she erected a pillar of victory. A fragmentary inscription from Bīdar extols the valour of Rudramadēvi and refers to the defeat of Mahādēva. A general named Hiriya Bhairava, probably belonging to a Sinda family, is credited with this victory.

Thereafter, Rudramadēvi had to face Ambadēva, the Kāyastha chief. While Rudramadēvi was dealing with the aliens, this chief had declared himself as an independent ruler. Nīlagaṅgavaram inscription says that Ambadēva defeated Śrīpati Gaṇapati who has been identified with Garindala Gaṇapati and earned the title Rāyasahasramalla. After fighting with 75 Nāyakas of the Kākatīyas, he turned his
attention towards the Pāṇḍyas of Tamil country. Jatāvarma Māravarma and Māravarma Kulaśekhara, as also the Kalukada chiefs, Kēsavadeva and Sōmidēva occupied their territories. He killed Manumallideva of Eruva region, conquered all the chiefs and annexed the territory from the south west of the Kākatīya kingdom below the river Krishnā. His title Kādayara Vidyavamsana suggests that he would have killed the Kādava chief Kopperunjingga. He also proceeded towards Nellore. Thus, the great Rudramadēvi’s power in the south beyond the Krishnā river, leaving some parts of the eastern territory, suffered an eclipse.

The date of death of Rudramadēvi is also controversial. With the help of available inscriptions, it has been assumed that by 27th November, 1289 A.D. she passed away. In Chendupaṭṭa village of Nalgonda district an inscription dated November 27, 1289 A.D. says that some land was gifted to god Sōmanāthadeva by a warrior Puvvula Mummaḍi for the merit of Kākatīya Rudramadēvi and her general Mallikārjuna-nāyaka who
attained Śīvaloka. We know from the Pānugallu epigraph dated 1290 A.D., that Immadi Mallikārjuna-nāyaka was a general of Rudramadēvi. So, we may conclude that both Rudramadēvi and her general Mallikārjuna-nāyaka died somewhere in November 1289 A.D. We have seen that in her later years of rule Rudramadēvi had to face the revolts of Ambadēva. Being valorous she personally led the army against the enemy, guided by her general. Perhaps it was in one such encounter, when she was fighting along with Mallikārjuna-nāyaka by her side, that she appears to have lost her life on the battlefield. But, Ambadēva never boasted himself of having killed Rudramadēvi.

In administrative matters she followed the policy of her ancestors. On the one hand she engaged herself in campaigns of conquest while, on the other, she also adopted a policy of appeasement through matrimony. She gave her daughter Ruyyama in marriage to Annayadēva, the king of Kaliṅga. She was a very kind lady and helped the poor a lot by relieving them
from the burden of taxation. The Peddaganjām inscription says that a shepherd who supplied ghee to the temple was exempted from taxes like āri (property tax) pullari (tax on grazing the cattle on government land) and appanamu (tribute to the king). The customs or sunkamu was collected either in kind or cash. The expenditure on the temples in villages had to be borne by the farmers. The Gurla epigraph of 1287 A.D., says that Bopparāja of the Recherla family, a subordinate of the queen, made a grant of 15 nivarttanas of wet land to a village deity in addition to income from ṣulka.

The Kākatīyas followed a novel system of decentralization of power. This wonderful queen Rudramadēvi, is credited with the introduction of nāyankara system. According to her, the king would assign some villages to the Nāyakas in lieu of which they should provide a fixed amount of cash besides military equipment along with the military personnel, to the king. Rudramadēvi's interest in education and literature was also quite laudable.
and she evinced keen interest in the propagation of Sanskrit literature. Viśveśvara, the royal priest of both Gaṇapati and Rudramādevī obtained a village from the queen, which he converted into a new Śaiva colony with a Sanskrit college, where he taught three Vēdas i.e., Rig, Yajus and Sāma, besides grammar, logic and Sāhitya. Pushpagiri was a University of national fame in those days. During her period Kolanu Rudramādeva, son of Manuma Gunda of Indulūru family and a famous general of the queen wrote Ślokavārttikā Vyākhyā or Rājarudrīya.

Rudramādevi had no issues, something which agitated her. Naturally, she took interest in other activities. Perhaps to get over the mental agony and perhaps also to gain greater merit, she developed a fascination for temple construction. She got erected a raṅgamandapa in the temple of Svayambhu Deva probably the family deity, in commemoration of her victory over the Śevunas. Rudramādevi bore the titles such as Rājagajakesari or Rājagajendrakesari or Adirodevani rāyagajakēsari Rudramādevi. She was one of the very few queens of the country for whom sex was never a disadvantage.
Attired like a male she carried the burden of administration and managed the affairs of state very efficiently. Even at the very ripe age of 80 she led her forces to the battlefield to face Ambadeva. She was a staunch devotee of Śiva and constructed temples for him. She played the dual role of a wife and a queen. Her royal duties never came in the way of the household, her husband and daughters getting as much affection from her as the State administration did.

MINOR DYNASTIES

Kōna Haihayas The Kōna Haihayas, a local dynasty in Vēngi, had entered into matrimonial alliance with Chālukyas. Kōna Mummadi married Rājadēvi, daughter of Rājāditya alias Rāyabhūpa of the Chālukya lineage. Lōka and Bhīma, who ruled jointly between 1150 A.D., and 1168 A.D., accepted the overlordship of Rājarāja, the Chōla. To avoid further warfare with local chiefs, they contracted marriage alliances with many other local Chālukya chiefs of Vēngi. The Kōna Haihayas, who succeeded an influential chief who assisted the Telugu Chōla against the Reddis-Vallabha and Mallidēva (1175 - 1182 A.D.), were shrewd enough to continue such alliances with local chiefs. They wanted to avoid aggressive warfare and preferred a reign of peace.
They became relatives to the Undi chief Kāma, of the West Godavari region. Vallabha married Āchamāmbā, daughter of Kāma. In the next generation, Ganapati and Bhīma-vallabha (1254 - 1300 A.D.) followed the footsteps of their forefathers. Bhīma's wife Anyamma was the daughter of Chāluṅga Indusēkhara, and Odayamāhādevī was the daughter of Mahēdeva-chakravarti, known as Vishnuvardhana of the Chāluṅga family of Nidadavōlu, and she married Ganapati.

Thus the records of these rulers clearly indicate that women were the best channels for the sound and happy relationship among many local chiefs.

**Haihayas of Panchadhārala**: Haihayas of Panchadhārala were also in friendly terms with their neighbours. No details are forthcoming. What we are told is only that they had matrimonial alliances with their neighbours.

**Haihayas of Vardhamānapura**: The exact date of the rule of these Haihayas over Palanādu is not clear for want of inscriptive evidences. Yasodhadevi in her thesis has suggested that it might be between 1178 and
1185 A.D., taking the date of the kings who had supported Nāyakurālu Nāgama, during the battle of Palanādu as an evidence in support. Below is given a brief account of Nāyakurālu Nāgama, Śilāmbā, mother of Bālachandra, the hero of the battle and Manchaladēvi, wife of Bālachandra. In fact, it is the battle of Palanādu and the circumstances leading to it that has been the subject matter of the literary work Palanāṭivīraḥaritamu of Śrīnātha. It is Nāyakurālu who figures as the heroine of this work. It is said that this bewitching lady had a great hold upon the chief of Palanādu - Nalakāmarāju or Nalla Kāmarāju.

Nāyakurālu was the brain behind the war. Availing the opportunity of some misunderstanding between Nalakama and Brahm -naidu she got herself appointed as the premier of the Palanādu chief. Stung at this, Brahm -naidu demanded assignment of small territories for the chief's step-brother Peda Mallidēva and others. Nāyakurālu was not in favour of this. It may be noted here that Nāyakurālu was an official designation and she was known by the name Nāgama. She now plotted to get the prince murdered. Brahm -naidu was thereupon forced to leave Gurizāla and settle at Mācherla on the bank of Chandra -vaṅkā or Chandrabhāga.
The formation of a new rival chieftaincy within the kingdom of Palanādu intensified the opposition of Nala-kāma and Nayakurālu. They sent an army to plunder Mācherla. But, it was completely devastated by the minister of Peda Mallidēva. Nayakurālu tried to poison Brahm-naidū. But this too failed. She finally designed a new plot, of inviting Brahm-naidū to a cock-fight, on condition that the looser should go into exile for seven years. Unfortunately, Brahma-naidū lost the fight, left Mācherla, crossed the Krishnā and settled at Mandade which was 20 miles away from Gurizāla. Nayakurālu once again advised her king Nalakāma to send robbers to plunder Mandade, and drive off their cattle. This time Peda Mallidēva could not oppose them. Along with Brahma-naidū he left that place. He once again crossed the Krishnā, proceeded towards Tripurāntakam, built Viramāṇa-pī near Mārkāpur and settled there.

After the completion of the term of exile, Brahma-naidū sent Alaraju, son-in-law of Nalakāma, as his ambassador to Nalakāma's court, demanding the lordship over Mācherla, along with income from tax for six months that was due to Peda Mallidēva and others. Once again,
Nāyakurālu hatched a plot to kill Alarāju. According to her plot, he was killed in a Brahmana's house on his way back. Brahma-naidū and Mallidēva declared war on Nalakāma and invaded the territories of Gurizāla. Both the parties got help from different sources. The battle was fought for three days, Nalakāma's forces being led by his brother Narasimha and Peda Mallidēva's forces by Bālachandra, son of Brahma-naidū. Uncorroborated as it is by the contemporary epigraphical evidences, all the details narrated in the literary work given above lose their value. According to Viracharita, Brahma-naidū and his party won the battle. Nāyakurālu fled from the battle-field and Brahma-naidū enthroned Nalakāma. But, tradition holds that Nalakāma was victorious. Brahma-naidū was forced to sue for peace with him 44.

We can see, thus, that this Nāyakurālu Nāgama was a dominant personality of her times. From humble origin she rose to the position of a prime-minister. With an iron will she challenged Brahma-naidū for a cock-fight which resulted in the elimination of Brahma-naidū for sometime from Palanādu's political arena. She played a pivotal role in plotting and continued the civil war which finally ended in favour of her master.
Palanāti Viśracharītamu speaks of two more ladies of great honour. One was Aitamma, wife of Brahma-naidu. Śilāmba, mother of Bālachandra was a pious lady who not only devoted her time to attend to domestic chores but also took interest in making munificent grants and assisting in celebrations of marriages of the poor and the needy, restoring worship in deserted temples, establishing free feeding houses and water houses for pilgrims, donating huge copper bowls to ascetics and begging bowls to Śāivities. She is also stated to have donated gold and silver pumpkins to god Mallikārjuna and Bhrāmarāmbā. She was an ideal wife, mother and mother-in-law. She was very much worried about her wayward son's behaviour. When she met her daughter-in-law she pleaded with her to look after her son, and also asked her to prevent him from visiting harlots.

Yet another lady of virtue was Māncāla, the daughter-in-law of Aitamma. Ideal wife and daughter-in-law, she served her mother-in-law with great respect and assured her that she would accompany her husband even to heaven if need be, in case he died on the battlefield. She also vouched for preventing her husband visiting the harlots. Her behaviour made her husband realise: 
how unfortunate he had been and how much he had missed her due to his animal-like behaviour. True to her word she committed _sati_ on the eve of her husband's death.

**Natavādi chiefs**: The Natavādi chiefs, were originally subordinates of Western Chālukeyas. Later on, they shifted their loyalty to the Kākatīyas. We do not know why or how they came to be associated with this region around the Nandigama taluk of Krishna district, although their records are found in Warangal district. We find that Muppāmbā, mother of Kākitiya Mahādeva, was the daughter of Bēta and sister of Durgā, the Natavādi chief. Durga's grandson, son of Buddha, both of them known by the name Rudra, married Mailama and Kundama, daughters of Mahādeva. This matrimony resulted in the Natavādi chiefs having easy terms with the Kākatīyas.

**The Malaya chiefs**: Only one name, of a queen, of this dynasty is known to us. She was Lōkamā, wife of Ganapati and daughter of Kōna Bētarāja. Perhaps Ganapati married her to maintain amicable relations with Kōnas. She provided for the _mantrabhōga_ - service of
sacred incarnations of god Ishtakāmeśvara of Velpura.

Kōna Kondravādis: Records of Kōna Kondravādis indicate that they had maintained sound relationship with Kākatīyas, Kōtas and Naṭavādis. Pārvatī and Prōlama, daughters of Pōta, the Kōna Kondravādi, were married to Kēta II of the Kōta family. There was another family of chieftains, known as Ivani Kondravādis. But, no details are available about the women of this Kondravādi family.

The Indulūri family: Members of this family were also feudatories of the Kākatīyas and were related to them by marriage. Annaya of the Kolanū dynasty was the son-in-law of queen Rudramādevī as he was married to Ruuyāmbā, adopted daughter of the queen.

Chālukyas of Pīṭhāpura: Gauri and Vijaya-mahādevī were two queens of this family. The first of them was the queen of Satyāśraya and a daughter of the Gaṅga King Anantavarman Chōdagaṅga of Kaliṅga (1078 A.D). The latter was the queen of Vijaya-mahādēva, and is said to have belonged to the solar race hailing from
In the history of Chalukyas of Vengi and Nidadavolu, we see that Mahādeva I alias Vishnuvardhana (1266 - 1300 A.D.) contracted marriage alliances with Kōna Haihayas. His daughter-in-law, Odaya-mahādevi, wife of Vīrabhadra, was probably a princess of Kōna Haihaya family. His granddaughter Anyāmāmbā was married to Bhīma-vallabha, also of the Kōna Haihaya family. His grandson Vīrabhadra was married to Rudramādevi⁴⁹. Mahādeva II (1270 - 1306 A.D.) of the same dynasty also continued such a relationship with the Kōna Haihayas on the one hand and Kākatīyas on the other. He also married Mummadāmbā, daughter of the Kākatīya queen Rudramādevi. They had a son by name Pratāparudra. After the death of Mahādeva II, his son Pratāparudra succeeded to the chiefcy. He was also a grandson of Rudramādevi, the Kākatīya. When he succeeded to the Kākatīya throne in 1296 A.D., the chiefstains of the Chālukya family came to be merged with the Kākatīyas.
The Pallavas: Some branches of the Pallava family ruled around the regions of Guntur, Nellore and Pentrala. Of them some figure as donatrix of grants. Princess Devarasiyar, queen of Vijayagandagopala of Nellore granted three cows for three lamps in the temple of Tiruvëṅkaṭa-mudaiyan. Kāchaṭambā, sister of king Ahōbalēśvara made gifts to the temple (1254 A.D).

Pallavas of the Vīrakūṭa branch entered into matrimony with Matsyas of Oddōda, Gaṅgas of Jantaranādu, etc. Though many details are not known, the donations made by royal women are mentioned in the records. Queen Kommañdevī presented a Kanakavalaya of 108 gold coins to Bhīmēśvara of Drākshārāma (1157 A.D.). Queen Lakshmīdevī presented a lamp to the same deity and another Lakshmīdevī, queen of Narasimha (1357 A.D.) presented lamp stands to gods Bhīmēśvara and Simhādrinātha.

The dynasties in Kalinga: The Matsyas of Oddādi

As seen above, the Matsyas of Oddādi contracted matrimonial alliances with the Pallavas of Vīrakūṭa, Gaṅgas of Jantaranādu and the Kōna Haihayas also.
More details are not available. Surama was the queen of Arjuna and Bimmala, the queen of Annava-chōda of the Kōna Haihaya family. Only the grants made by Matsya queens to Bhīmeśvara and Akkāmbā’s regrant for havirbali-archana on the day of the bright fortnight—davanapaurnami—in the month of Chaitra and dōlōtsava of Bhīmeśvara have been mentioned in the records.

The Gangas of Jantaranādu: These chiefs owed allegiance formally to the imperial Gangas and had matromonal alliances with the Matsyas and the Silas. The names of Sumitrādēvi and Satyamahādēvi are mentioned in the records. Sumitrādēvi, in 1346 A.D., gave 25 cows for a lamp and a lamp-stand made of rubies and Satyamahādēvi provided a tiru-tōmāla to the god for the night service of burning incence (dhūpa) daily.

The Silas of Nandapura: These chiefs had blood relations with the Matsya chiefs. Pratapagaharāja of the Sila family had no sons and he married his daughter Siŋgama to Khajjalabhānu alīas Vināyakadēva, the founder of the kingdom of Gōdāri. As he had no son, he might have nominated his son-in-law as the successor to
his chieftancy. It is true that after the death of this king, two kingdoms of Nandapur and Gōdārī near Gunupura were united under Vināyakakḷa, who is said to have been of the Gaṅga family of Cuttack. Thus, in this case we see a happy admixture of two families, which opened up fresh opportunities for their development.

The Nāgas : Siddarasa (1213-14 A.D.), the ruler of Nāgas of Nellore had blood relations with Telugu-chōlas. His queen Immaḍi Śriyāḍēvi was a Chōla princess, her father being Sūrāḷvar Kāṭṭadēvar of the Uraiyur Chōla family. His sister Pachchalādevi was married to Manumāsiddharāya identified with Manumāsiddhi II (1198-1210 A.D.) the Telugu-chōla of Nellore. It is not improbable that this Pachchalādevi is identical with Bāchalādevi of Panditārādhya Charitra. Thus, from the records it becomes quite clear that these Nāga chiefs maintained amicable relationship with Chōlas, providing peaceful atmosphere for their survival.

Vaidumbas : The Vaidumbas who ruled over parts of the Telugu country, including Cuddapah and Nellore districts
and the country south of Krishnä had blood relations with Chōlas. We know that in 965 A.D., a Vaidumba princess had married prince Arinjaya, the Chōla. After 1251 A.D., no Vaidumba is heard of in the Telugu country. A record at Kānchīpuram says Vinaya-mahādēvi, queen of Kāmarāṇava VI and mother of Vajrahasta III was a Vaidumba princess. No more information is available from them. But, we can assume that the Vaidumba almost recognised the suzerainty of the Chōlas to strengthen their position in the Telugu land and maintained matrimonial alliances with Chōlas.

Telugu Chōlas of Nellore: The chiefs of this family had allied themselves with the Yādavas through matrimony. Nūñkamadēvi, wife of the Telugu Chōla chief Nallasiddha, was the daughter of Rājamalla Yādavarāya, son of Yerra siddha of the Yādava family. Likewise, we see that Tikka I, Ālutikka, son-in-law of Manumasiṣṭhi, and the Yādavas became friends and faced a common enemy. For example, Ālutikka (1249 - 72 A.D.) married Lakshmīdēvi, daughter of Yādavarāya.

K. Venkataramappa in his Kannada book 'Telugu Chātu Padyagalu' refers to the mother and the wife
of Ranatikkana, both of whom possessed strong will and heroism. When Tikkana came back home, being defeated in the battle, his wife arranged for his bath in a corner where women bathe, kept a cot for privacy and a bowl of turmeric on it. She also brought water in a vessel for him. He felt sad and enquired the cause for her strange behaviour. She said that when he had shown his back to the enemies, people laughed at him, so they were three in women at home ( herself, mother-in-law and Tikka ) and need not feel sorry for it. She obviously meant that he was no more a male member of the family. After the bath, when he sat for food, his mother served him curdled milk. When he questioned, she told him that along with him many cattle were sent to battle field. When he came back defeated, the cattle gave curdled milk. Hurt by this, he returned to the battle field. The same tradition is also mentioned in Chātupadyamani -manjari. Thus it becomes clear that both the mother and the wife of Tikka I evoked his emotions and made him march into the battle field. Then he became a hero in the Telugu land and has been remembered for centuries. May be it is a traditional story bordering on folklore, but it reflects the spirit of the age to which he belonged.
In the above pages is given a brief account of the political background for the study of the subject proper. The purpose of this is more to highlight the part played by the women, specially of the royalty and the nobility, in changing the destinies of a kingdom or a chieftaincy. Matrimony was a part of diplomacy; but women through whom matrimonial alliances were struck, quietly but forcefully asserted themselves and through their husbands manipulated politics too. Here is an effort to stress this aspect and other factors corollary to it.
NOTES AND REFERENCES


2. Luder's list, No. 1112.


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5. ibid., P. 52.


12. ibid., verse 17 - 19.

13. *ibid.*, V. 20

15. *ibid.*


17. *ibid.*, V. 24


20. ibid.,
21. ibid.,
22. ibid.,
23. ibid., P. 137.
24. ibid., P. 177 - 78.
24 a. ibid., P. 178.
25. ibid.,
26. ibid.,
27. ibid.,
29. EI, X, P.422 and Sastri P.V.P., op.cit., P. 118.
30. ARIE., 1956-57, No. 185.
31. EI, XXV, P. 227.
32. Sastry P.V.P., op.cit., P. 124.
34. C II., II, P. 103.
35. ibid., III, P. 97.
37. ibid., P. 121.
38. ibid., P. 260
39. ibid.,
41. Sastri P.V.P., op.cit., P. 126.
42. S.II., V, P. 121.
43. Palanativiracharittra (Telugu) (Madras, 1961),
Introduction, P. 8 - 9.
44. JAHRS., XIX, P. 35.
45. ARSIE., 249 of 1935 - 36.
46. Kakatiya Samchika, (Rajahmundry, 1955), Appendix,
47. ibid.,
48. JAHRS., XX, P. 74.
49. Sastri P.V.P., op.cit., P. 128
50. S II., IV., N. 1365.
51. JAHRS., XXIII, P. 19.
52. Sastri K.A.N., The Cholas (University of Madras, 1955)
P. 168.
53. Tirumala Tirupati Inscriptions, I, P. 106.
54. JAHRS., XXVII, P. 37.