



**NAGANIKA –A BENEVOLENT QUEEN OF ANDHRA
SATAVAHANAS**

M. Esther Kalyani

Dept of History

Ch.S.D.St.Theresa's Autonomous
College for Women
Eluru, W.G.Dt

D.Rajani Deivasahayam

Dept of English

Ch.S.D.St.Theresa's Autonomous
College for Women
Eluru, W.G.Dt

INTRODUCTION

The Andhra Satavahanas were the Post Mauryan Family. After the fall of Mauryans they established on Independent kingdom and empire in the Decan.¹ They worked for Political Unity, Protected country from foreigners, gave peace and prosperity to Dakshinapatha. K. Gopalachari opined "No ancient tribe has on record such and Unique achievement in all braches as the Andhras".

The interesting study of the political history of satavahana dynasty is its two queens 1) Naganika, who is related to our present study 2) Gautami Balasri in Chorological order.

NAGANIKA :

Naganika was the wife of Satakarni-I, who ruled over Deccan from 180-170. B.C. Among the early Satavahanas Satakarni-I was one of the ablest monarchs. He seemed to have celebrated his success by performing an Asvameda Sacrifice.²

She was the daughter of Maharathi Tranakayiro, who belonged to the Angiya or Anigiya or Angiya or anibhiya kula or family. Tranakayiro, seemed to have remained with his daughter Naganika when the Satavhana were in danger to safeguard the interests of his daughter and the empire. Bhaya and Hakusri of the Relico inscriptions also belonged to the Angiya kula probably they might have been the brothers of Naganika³.



The queen naganika was a great personality. On the death of her husband, she became regent to her son vedasri. It was during the period of her regency the Naneghat inscription was issued from which we note that she was interested in religious rites. She used to observe monthly fasts, brahmacarya and led her life like a hermit – house – holder. It also described her husband satakarni. I as the Lord of 'Dakshinapatha' and as the welder of the unchecked wheel. This shows that she followed Hinduism and must have taken part in the sacrifices performed by her husband. This inscription not only informs us the religious character of Naganika but also gives the information of the brilliant success achieved by her husband in his campaign against the intruders on his kingdom. Further there is a detailed account of the gifts made over to the deserving at the time of the sacrifice.

The regency of Naganika did not witness disturbances and she followed the path of her husband in all directions. The figures of Srimuka, Satakarni I etc. Sculptured in relievio at Naneghat proves her admistrative policy.

Naganika did not seem to have disturbed the administrative policy in which the feudatories were given full freedom subject to the control of the royal officials⁴. Kingship was hereditary in the male line and the king was the guardian of the established social order. Taxes were raised to further the lot of the poor. There were three types of feudatories: 1. Rajas, 2. Mahabhojas and 3. Mahara this to which family Naganika belongs. The Rajas were having the power of striking coins in their own names. The state was divided into administrative units called aharas, under the control of a minister Amatya. Next in order came a village with its gramika a headman.

The very fact that she took part in the vedio sacrifices, performed by her husband, and gave presents as given in the Naneghat inscription proves that the social order followed by vedic religion was maintained intact. In spite of this there was religious tolerance.

Though there is no direct evidence to know the educational qualifications of Naganika we understand that she was well trained in political science. Others wise it would not have been possible for her to



maintain the empire. No untoward events internal or external – came into light in the period of her regency. There was neither the revolt of feudatories who generally look for an opportunity to establish independence, after the death of satakarni or any other aggression until the time of satakarni II. Her policy of tolerance should have given no opportunity either to Jains or Buddhists or Hindus, to quarrel among themselves and create disturbances. We do not have any episode of any other religious influence on her.

This may be attributed to her profound knowledge in Brahminic religion. Thus we note that naganika was not only an adept in political science but also was well conversant with the religious texts. Her period passed of peacefully.

Conclusion:

We do not know whether she issued some more inscriptions or not. So far only one Naneghat inscription came to light which enables us to presume the above account of Naganika.

REFERENCE

1. M. Rama Rao., The Satavahanas, P.56
2. Ibid., P.58. See also I.K.Sarma : Coinage of the Satavahana Empire, P.25.
3. IHQ., Vol. XXVIII, P.74. In the Satavahana convention it is stated that Kumara Haksuri was one of the sons of the royal pair satakarni I and Naganika. But from another inscription i.e., Epigraphia Indica, Vol.VIII, P.91 we understand that he belongs to angiya kula.
4. K.A.N. Sastry., A History of South India, P.96.