More than half a century ago, a noted Jainologist rightly lamented, "Of all Indological studies Jainism has been particularly unfortunate in that the little that is done for it stands in vivid contrast with the vast undone". The period intervening has seen publication of many a monograph pertaining to history and development of Jainism but treating the topic along familiar lines viz. discussing royal patronage to the Faith, its philosophy and its contribution to Indian Art. Jaina society as such has been devoted a chapter or so in a couple of books but as far as women in Jainism are concerned we hardly get an helpful insight. Papers and monographs written about the role, status and norms of behaviour prescribed for ancient Indian women view her only within Brahmanical frame of reference hardly ever differentiating the position of non-Brahmanic faiths from the Brahmanic one. So far as the Jaina women are concerned the scholars in the field labour under the impression that the appeal of Jainism being confined to a very small section of society, they constituted a microscopic minority and, therefore, did not merit separate attention. An alternative explanation could be that the Jaina society was part of the larger Indian society and necessarily partook of its patriarchal character and, therefore, with a variation here and there, the position of Jaina women could be legitimately subsumed under that of Indian women within Brahmanical frame of reference.
One thing is very clear at the very outset. Like Buddhism, there was no development of a legal literature with regard to women in Jainism. Barring a code of conduct which both prescribe for their respective orders of nuns in canonical literature, we have no systematic treatment of the role, status and property rights of lay-women and, if this deficiency has daunted the scholars to venture in the field so far, it creates an equally formidable obstacle in our attempt at interpreting the few references to women that we get in epigraphic records.

According to Jain tradition, Usabha or Rśabha was the first Jina and the first Tīrthaṇkara who was born in a very primitive age when people were illiterate and did not know any art. In fact it was he who is said to have taught the arts of cooking, writing, pottery, painting and sculpture for the first time. The tradition further claims that in his time came into being the institution of marriage, the practice of cremating the dead, the raising of mounds (thūbhas) and the festivals in honour of Indra and the Nāgas. Even if we dismiss this tradition as historically untenable, the antiquity of Jaina faith is taken well beyond the birth of Lord Mahāvīra who, for long, was regarded as founder of the faith. Pāsa or Pārśvanātha was the immediate predecessor of Mahāvīra and believed to have flourished about 250 years before the last Jina. From Sūtrakṛtanga and other canonical works we know that there certainly were followers of Pārśva round about Magadha. In fact the very family of Mahāvīra was attached to religion of Pārśva. The pre-mahāvīra origin of the faith is further
substantiated from the fact that his doctrines are spoken of in the Sūtras not as his doctrines but decreta or old-established truths - Pannattas.

Be that as it may, our purpose here is only to establish the fact that the order of Jaina nuns was not initiated by Mahāvira. It was in existence already. Jaina monks and nuns were respectively known as Niganthas and Niganthis. The Avasyaka Cumi mentions an ascetic Uppala as Pāśāvaccijja (Pārśva's disciple) and his two sisters Soma and Jayantī who also had joined the order of Pārśva but being unable to continue the rigid ascetic life became Parivrājikās of the Brahmanic order. From the same text we also hear of Vijaya and Pagabbha, the two female disciples of Pārśva (Pāsantevāsinī), who saved Mahāvira and Gosāla in Kuviya Sannivesa. There is also a reference to an old maiden (Vaddakumāri) Kālī, who joined the ascetic order of Pārśva and was entrusted to Puphaculā, the head of nuns.

As we know that in the history of ancient religions Jainism is regarded alongwith Buddhism a classic case in which a religious movement touched off a social change at a massive scale; so much so, that both the movements were popularly labelled as 'Social Movements'. Even if this may be taken to be an over-simplification of a basically religious phenomenon, the social message contained in the teaching of heterodox seers, equating all human beings and opening gates to salvation to all, irrespective of caste or sex distinction cannot be missed. The social dimension of Buddhist and Jaina teaching touched the
lower sections of society as much as it did the women. Logically therefore, the attitude to women in Jainism should have been substantially different from that in Brahmanism. But that is not so. Going by the references contained in the canonical literature, it appears the difference was marginal and the overall attitude is characterised by the same kind of contradictory thinking as in case of Brahmanism.

Complete subjection of woman to man, as recommended by Manu, finds its echo in a Jaina text in which it is prescribed that a woman when a child must be kept under the control of her father, when married under her husband and when widow under her son; thus a woman is never allowed to live independently. This attitude of extreme anti-feminism has its interesting etymological explanation. We have various synonyms of 'woman' in Prakāś; she is called māhi because there is no worse enemy of man than her; she is termed mahilā because she charms by her wiles and graces; she is called Pamadā because she accelerates man's passion; she is called māhiliyā because she creates great dissension; she is called rāma because she takes delight in men by means of her coquetish gestures; she is called aiganā because she loves the body of men; she is called jalanā because she attracts a man even in domestic quarrels, and keeps company in pleasure and pains; she is called josiyā because by her tricks and devices she keeps men under subjugation; she is called vanitā because she caters to the taste of man with various blandishments. To quote one more significant statement, "the intelligent may know the sands of the Ganges, the measure of water in the sea and the size of the Himvat; woman's heart
they may not know". It should be remembered that most of such statements come from commentorial literature which was not composed simultaneously with canonical literature, and so, reflects to a great extent the anti-feminism of contemporary Brahmanical literature. It is argued that the very philosophy of renunciation which was central to the Jaina teaching and its propagation by wandering ascetics called for rules of strict self-control rigidly denying oneself ordinary bodily gratifications. The Jaina teachers therefore, presented an adverse picture of woman, painting her as wicked by nature, a river or mountain of deceit, a mistress of a house of thousands of sins, a generator of sorrow, a slaughter-house for men and so on. Such was the fear of woman for a monk on way to salvation that he is instructed to avoid a woman even if her hands and feet are cut off and her ears and nose mutilated.

However there is other side to the picture also as in Brahmanism. The status of a Tîrthaṅkara is the highest in Jaina pantheon and at least one of the Tîrthaṅkaras, Mallî, was a woman. The mother of the first Tîrthaṅkara is believed to have obtained the highest goal of life, the summum bonum, even before her son did, and whereas the Buddha is known to have been reluctant to create the order of nuns, no such reluctance is reported to have been shown by either Pārśva or Mahāvīra. Ajja Candarā, the first female disciple of the last Jina, was ordained by him without entertaining any misgivings. It appears anti-feminism was not at the core of Jainism from
its birth but grew in course of times in tune with identical trend in the larger Indian society guided by the Brāhmaṇas.

The ambivalent attitude marked by clear contradiction would only broadly be applicable to the Jaina society. Within this general framework there were a number of variations as we will shortly see. Jainism suffered at least seven schisms the first of which was led by none other than Mahāvira's 18 sister's son as well as son-in-law Jamāli. However the most significant historically and epoch-making schism is not included in the list and seems to have grown gradually. It divided the Jainas into Śvetambaras and Digambaras, the former maintaining the use of clothes for its monks and the latter laying down absolute nudity as a necessary condition of sainthood. The difference of opinion in this regard is traceable to the very dawn of history since Pārśva permitted the use of an under 19 and upper garment but his successor went about naked. Hence the legends concerning the origin of the two sects are of late origin. It is also noteworthy that the Jaina inscriptions of the early christian centuries from Kankali Tila, Mathura do not show any trace of schism in the Jaina church, though the differences did crystallise by 5th century A.D.

This schism has an important bearing on the subject of our study. According to Digambara tenets, a woman is of inferior religious status to a man in that women are believed incapable of attaining enlightenment. To do so she must be born as a man
As a result there is no formal institution of fully ordained female ascetics, for asceticism is considered to be an essential stage to enlightenment. On the other hand, the Svetambaras have liberal attitude and they accord religious equality to women with men recognising therefore and order of female ascetics who are considered on par with the monks. Like the Digambaras they believe asceticism as an essential stage to moksa but keep it open to women. The code of conduct laid down for a nun in their canonical literature is the same as that for monks. The number of nuns mentioned in the Kalpa Sūtra with reference to some Tīrthankaras is larger than the one given for monks. We are told that under Rṣabha there were 84,000 monks and 300,000 nuns; Under Neminātha there were 18,000 monks and 40,000 nuns, whilst under Pārśvanātha the number of monks was 16,000 whereas the nuns numbered 38,000. For the last Jina the figures given are 14,000 and 36,000 respectively. No doubt the figures are inflated and exaggerated and, in any case, the first two Jinas mentioned belong to the world of mythology. However, this much is clear that the women freely took to asceticism and in some areas might have outnumbered the men. We have mentioned above that Marudevi, the mother of the first Jina, attained omniscience and moksa. The Svetambaras consider her to be the first person to have achieved enlightenment in that particular cycle of time. The statistics available in this regard show the same trend.
of women outnumbering men in the achievement of enlightenment. Under Mahāvīra 700 men and 1400 women reached enlightenment. Beyond doubt the figures are not to be taken at their face value but the trend indicated by them is in tune with the liberal stand taken by Śvetambara Sect towards women. An alternative explanation could also be the influence of larger Indian society in which woman stood degraded and deified simultaneously, because Śvetambara canon is not altogether devoid of anti-feminist ideas. In the Nayadhāmmodhāna we have reference to Tīrthaṅkara Ajitaṇātha, who, when he was born in the previous life as a monk, "did not think about women, the mud of whose association is hard to remove and bolts the door to emancipation. For they, if thought about, serve for the destruction of dharma". Obviously the idea is to warn men of the dangers of sensual pleasures. But then one does not come across warning women of the dangers of sexual temptations. Again, the explanation could be that men are more prone to be tempted than women and going by the instances of Mallināthā, Rajimati and other holy women of Śvetambara tradition one might treat the explanation as plausible.

But the attitude, when viewed in its totality, does betray a dichotomy. In spite of all apparent religious equality of women with men and the statistical evidence glorifying women the fact remains that there is only one female among the 24 male Tīrthaṅkaras, and even that single female saint had
already accumulated Tirthankara Karma in previous birth as a prince but had to be born as a female in consequence of having committed a small sin. Similarly though there is complete religious equality between monks and nuns, the chief of nuns is subject to the authority of the chief of the monks. However, as we have remarked earlier, the position of women in wider Indian society must have affected the women in Jaina society and the dichotomy developed in course of time.

Here lies the value of the data available from epigraphic records. No doubt the records are not dated in all the cases and have to be viewed in a broad time-frame, with very few clues to correct chronology. In comparison with Buddhist records those belonging to Jaina faith are much less and could be taken as the measure of appeal Jainism enjoyed in contemporary India. For the same reason information available on the role, rights and norms prescribed for a Jaina woman is scanty. Our exercise of surveying and interpreting the inscriptional references could be meaningful only if combined with clarification or corroboration from Jaina literature and such an approach would not be academically unsound when a competent authority has dated the Jaina canons and commentaries thereon to the period from second century B.C. to the seventh century A.D. Even if this literature came to be finally compiled in the mid-first millennium A.D., a lot many of the traditions, and stories it was recording, must have had much earlier origin
with a fair amount of original element.

AI The Queen:

Lord Pārśva and Lord Mahāvīra both came of the royal families and we can legitimately assume that ladies from their families must have been ardent supporters of Jainism. In fact, we have a wealth of evidence in canonical literature testifying to the royal support of Jainism in the Mahājanapada period. However, inscriptive records become available to us only from Aśoka onwards and we will confine ourselves strictly to the consideration thereof. It may be noted that wherever necessary only the relevant portion of the text and translation have been quoted treating restored portion as part of the original record. Prakṛt names and terms have been rendered as they figure occasionally cited with Sanskrit equivalents.

Royal power in Kalinga though rooted out by Aśoka was reestablished by the cedis and the most remarkable ruler of this dynasty was Khāravela who was a devout Jaina and who has left a fairly detailed, though now fragmentary, account of his achievements, known to the students of history as Hāthigumpha Inscription. The inscription appropriately opens with salutation to the Arhat and the Siddha, the two highest spiritual positions in descending order in Jainism. The detailed document runs into 17 lines and gives a graphic description of his acts of political success and public welfare. Line 3 mentions of his...
mahārajyābhiseka which may have been according to Brahmanical rituals. Line 9 speaks of his land-grants to the brahmans. Thus though in his personal life he was a devout Jaina, as a matter of state-policy he extended encouragement to other faiths as well. It is further noteworthy that Khāravela calls himself Bhikṣurājā and Dharma-rājā in his record. We have a three line inscription of his chief queen from the swargapuri cave as translated below:

1). "A temple of Arhats and a cave for the śramanas of Kalinga caused to be made by the chief queen of Khāravela who was the daughter of king Lālāka, the grandson of Hastisahasā."

The technical term used for indicating her status of chief queen is Agamahisi and this shows that she was the senior-most among the queens of Khāravela. The second point emerging from this short record is that she took as much pride in being Khāravela's queen as in being the daughter of king Lālāka. Perhaps her father was not as well-known in contemporary society as his grandfather Hastisahasā, and so, she meticulously mentions the relationship. In all probability, she financed the making of the temple and the cave from her own personal property. The Uvasagadāśo speaks of the wives of Mahāsayaga of Rāyagiha who possessed ancestral property and the Uttarādhayavāna sutra refers to a king of Varanasi who
gave away one thousand villages, one hundred elephants, plenty of treasure, one lac of foot-soldiers and ten thousand horses to his son-in-law in marriage. Coming to the historical plane we have the well-known example of Kosalan queen of Bimbisāra who brought with her the district of Kāsi as her bath-money. To conclude the point, the unnamed queen of Khāravela must have financed the holy undertaking with her own personal resources rather than request the king to spare the money from State treasury.

Among the Mathura Jain Inscriptions, none can be ascribed to royalty with certainty in the absence of explicit mention to the effect. However, we venture to attribute one below to a noble woman, if not queen.

2). "Namo Arahato vardhamānasya Gotiputrasya Pothayasakakālavadasa......Kosikīye jīmitrāye Ayāpato".

The object of inscription here is to dedicate a tablet of homage by a lady named Śivamitrā of the Kauśika family or gotra wife of Gotiputra. The purport of recording the holy deed on her part and claiming the credit for financing it would have been more than served by this. But she qualifies the name of her husband by an epithet which gives us a clue that he came of a warrior ruling class, if not a ruler himself. The epithet is 'a black serpent for the Pothayas and Sakas'. The former it is difficult to identify but Sakas were surely the ruling clans of the time. Since Pothayas precede
Sakas in the mention they might have been more powerful. Be that as it may, it is clear that a person who is styled as a black serpent to these ruling clans must himself have been a ruler of no mean order. Therefore, we classify Sivamitra here as a lady from the royal family.

Apart from her husband she neither mentions any relative on her parents’ side or parents-in-law’s side nor name the spiritual guide who might have motivated her to make the gift. This is all the more surprising, as we will shortly see that such relatives and spiritual mentors are invariably mentioned by pilgrim ladies to Mathura.

From the extreme West of India we have two more records which could be attributed to noble and aristocratic family, if not royal. They are not religious in character as the two mentioned above. They were put up to commemorate the death of ladies figuring them and belonging to the same family. We quote below the relevant part from them known as Andhau Stone Inscriptions.

3) Madanena Sihilaputrena Bhaginiye Jestaviraye

Sihalachita Opaṣatisagotrāye lasti Uthopita

Here a brother Madana has raised a memorial pillar for his sister Jestavirā, who is daughter of Sihila and belongs to Opaṣatigotra. No epithet is associated here with any of the names to indicate aristocratic or royal status but the practice of raising memorial pillars in honour of departed female relatives was observed very rarely and a couple of examples that
we have come from ruling families.

4)  \( \text{Yaśadātaye Śīhāmita dhīta Senika Sagotraye} \)
\( \text{Sāmaneriye Madanena Sihila putrena Kutubiniye} \)
\( \text{lasti uthapitā.} \)

Here the same mourner is raising a memorial pillar but for his wife this time, who is also mentioned with her separate and, perhaps, original gotra belonging to her parents, which obviously indicates that even after marriage women of some communities continued to style themselves with their father's gotra. The only and purely incidental clue that we have to the Jaina affiliation of the family here is the epithet Sāmanerī used for Yaśadātā, who was, therefore, a Jaina novice nun since the word śramana is taken by Sircar in the sense of a monk, Jaina or Buddhist. We would clarify that the word śramana and śramana-śrāvika was more current in Jainism than Buddhism, which normally preferred words Bhikṣu and Bhikṣūṇī for its monks and nuns respectively. Hence, in all likelihood Yaśadātā was a Jaina nun whose demise here was commemorated by her former husband Madana. The Jaina affiliation of the family is further corroborated from the fourth inscription in which a śramana Rśabhadeva, son of Treṣṭadata is mentioned in whose memory the bereaved father raised the pillar. It is also noteworthy that Rśabhadeva is also the name of Madana's brother who is likewise commemorated in yet another record from the same place and we need
not point out that Rsabha is regarded as the name of the first Tirthankara of the Jainas.

All these four records belong to the time of Saka ruler Rudradaman I and are dated in the year 52 of Saka era. It is difficult to make out in which way the three members of a family expired in the same year and at the same place. Incidentally, the gotra of Madana and Treśṭadatta, the mourners, was the same and so may have been related to each other in some way.

B). The Vaisya-woman:

Jainism like Buddhism was opposed to the caste system and asserted the social superiority of the Kṣatriyas over the Brāhmaṇas. However, it would be a mistake to treat Jaina society as casteless. The earliest of the Jaina Suttas make mention of the four classes of the Brahmanical Varna system. The Setthis and Gahapatis of the Jaina texts corresponded to the Vaisya order. The Gitā assigns the work of agriculture, cow-protection and commerce to the vaisyas and the Gāhavais of Jaina canonical literature were rich, owning land and cattle and belonged to the mercantile class. We have references to Ananda and Pārāsar, the rich land-owners, the latter being so prosperous with his six hundred ploughs that he was nicknamed Kisipārāsara. We also hear of Gosankhi, a Kutumbi, a lord of the Abhiras whose son used to trade in ghee. Nanda was a rich Setthi of Rayagiha.
We have a couple of inscriptions in which women of this class figure as donor-ladies. The relevant portion of the records is cited and discussed below.

I. The Merchant Housewife:

1). Sethi.....Sva.....Senasya Sahacari Khudāye
Deva.....pālasya dhiti Vadhamānasya pratimā

An image of Tīrthaṅkara Vardhamāna is dedicated in this record by Khudā who was wife of a Sethī. The document being badly mutilated the name of her husband can not be restored and so also that of her spiritual guide who motivated her to make the gift. But fortunately her father's name is fully readable but surprisingly not qualified by the class epithet Sethī which may be construed to mean that she came of a different class. Lastly the lady is qualified by the epithet Sahacari which is interpreted by Bühler as corresponding to Śrāddhacari and is the feminine of Śrāddhacara.

Before we pass on to the next inscription, let us pause to consider the version of this very record given by Lüder, which being substantially different from that of Bühler merits separate consideration. So runs the version:

"Dedication of an image of Vādhamāna by.....daughter of Pāla, daughter-in-law of.....at the request of Khudā, the female companion Sadacari of Sena, the female pupil of (Sisini) of Sethiniha". Here the word Sethi is taken in the sense of a proper noun rather than indicating a social class. Bühler takes
Khudā as wife of ..... whereas Lüders regards her as female companion and perhaps a nun. The text as given by Bühler does contain the term for daughter and none for daughter-in-law. Similarly the word for female-pupil (Sisini) is missing in Bühler’s text. It is possible that Lüders based his version on the basis of text given by some other scholar. In any case, Lüder’s list contains merely notice of the record and so less preferable to the full text and translation given by Bühler. The document is dated in the year 5 of Devaputra Kaniska.

2)  hikāto Kulaṭo Arya Jayabhūtīsya Sisīninam
   Ārya-Saṅgamikaye Sisīni Ārya-Vasulaye nivartam
   lasya dhitu, dnu, yeni, Srestisya
   dharmapatiye Bhattisenasya mātū Kumarmitayo
   danam bhagavato pratimā Savvatobhadrikā

The names of the father and father-in-law are missing altogether and that of her husband is also half-preserved the record being broken. However her own name Kumāramitā and that of her son Bhattisena can be made out as also the name of her spiritual mentor Ārya-Vala with her teacher and, if we may be permitted to use, grand-teacher also figure in the surviving portion of the record. The novelty here is that the donor-lady figures here in four of her family roles as daughter, wife, daughter-in-law and mother. The fact of her coming from a Sresthi family is also fairly clear. What is
further interesting is the use of term Dharmapati to indicate her wifely status in preference to Śāryā or Kutumbinī. The term is often taken to mean as the first wife and Bühler has understood as such. Apart from her, two other women, nuns Vasulā and Saṅgamikā also figure in the record but we will discuss their status separately in a section exclusively devoted to the life of Jaina woman as nun. Lastly it is also noteworthy that Kumāramitā gifted a four-fold image (Pratimā-Sarvatabhadrikā), which must have been costiler than single images gifted commonly.

3). Aryya Baladinasya Śidīni Kumaramita tāsyā
putro Kumārabhati gandhiko īśa.....Pratima
Vardhamanasya Saśita makhita bodhita Aryya......
Kumāramitāye

This is a rare record and perhaps the only one in our knowledge in which a male-donor has been motivated to make the gift by a female spiritual guide. Kumāramitā, the female-pupil of Venerable Baladina is, in fact the mother of the donor Kumārabhāṭi and that explains how a nun who usually guided women is mentioned as spiritual mentor of a man. However, the case should not cast any doubts on the morals of Jaina nuns, since, in all likelihood, the son must have been born when she was still a housewife. The tender bond was not broken even when she renounced the world and the change which it worked in her
is reflected in the three epithets - whetted, polished and awakened-attached to her name. Obviously the discipline and knowledge required of a nun must have sharpened and polished her understanding and character.

The epithet of Setthi is not attached with the name of the son Kumārabhaṭi and so the inclusion of this record may appear questionable. However, the fact of his being a dealer in perfumes is specifically mentioned and even without a formal caste title, he can reasonably taken as merchant. The document is dated in the year 35.

4). Vācakasya Aryya - Mātṛdinasya.....Sarttavāhiniye Dharmma-Somaye dānam namo Arhantanam

The available portion of the record which is relevant to our purpose contains neither the name of the husband of the donor-lady nor those of any other relations. It is interesting to note that her name is qualified by the technical terms indicating the professional status of her husband - Sarthāvaha. The only other person figuring the record is preacher venerable Mātṛdina who motivated her to make the gift. Though the document is mutilated somewhat, the portion chipped off does not seem to have contained the names of her male relatives that figure in most of the Jaina records from Mathura. In this respect the text seems to have been conceived away from the custom.
Here, again, the criterion we have adopted earlier has been applied and the donor-lady is being treated from the mercantile class on the basis that her unnamed son happens to be a dealer in perfumes. The name of her father - Rtunandi figures first followed by that of her husband Buddhi. The missing portion might have contained the name of her father-in-law or perhaps her son. Thus the drafting of the inscription has gone on customary lines. Her spiritual guide is Ganin Arya-nandin who requested to finance the making of a pratimā- sarvartobhadrikā. Interestingly, the technical term used for indicating her wifely status is Kutumbini which would have been more applicable to a peasant-woman.

The woman figuring in this record is not the donor but her son is. We do not know her name even. The purpose of including this record in our survey is an interesting and important fact contained in the inscription which has fortunately come down intact unlike many others from Mathura. Sihanādika, who financed the making of an Ayagapata is mentioned as son of Vānika Sihaka.
and Kosiki. The metronymic Kosikiputra indicates that her mother came of a Brāhmaṇa or Ksatriya family whereas the epithet Vānika appended to his father's name indicates his mercantile profession and Vaisya status. Thus it could be taken as case of intervarṇa as well as inter-caste marriage. Bühler was of opinion that the word Vānika might be a corruption or misspelling for Vāniyaka or Vānijaka. Before passing on to the next record we may also note that this male-donor has mentioned only the name of his parents to establish his identity in clear contrast with female-donors who normally indicated their status as daughter, daughter-in-law, mother and, in rare cases, even as grand-mother.

7). ........Senasya dhitu Dattasya Vadhuye
\[\text{ya,... ca ..., sya ..., Gandhikasya Kutumbiniye} \]
\[\text{Jinadāsya pratimā dharma-danam} \]

As chance would have it, the initial portion of record containing the name of the reigning king Mahārāja Vāsudeva and the date of the document are intact whereas the portion with which we are concerned and which is cited above suffers from numerous gaps. The donor-lady Jinadāsī was daughter of Sena and daughter-in-law Datta. The missing portion must have contained the name of her husband. However the surviving letter 'Ca' creates some confusion. It points to the mention of the names of her sons but in the conventional formula their name should follow that of their father and not before. In other
words the wifely status of the donatrix has to be mentioned earlier than her motherly status. But the phrase gandhikasya Kutumbiniye coming before her name precludes all this. Perhaps an epithet or two had been added to the name of her husband. Finally, if we are to be guided by the word Kutumbini as key to her social status that she should be taken as peasant housewife, and as will be clear from the section now following, we have done so in very many cases where there is no other clue to the social status of a lady-donor. In the present case, however, her husband is specifically mentioned as dealer in perfumes and therefore, a man of the merchant-Class. It is possible that originally the family followed agricultural profession and then switched over to business or perhaps continued with tilling of land simultaneously with selling of perfumes.

II The Peasant Housewife

In early records a cultivator or an agriculturist householder was invariably mentioned as Kutumbin and logically, therefore, the term indicating his wife was Kutumbini. In subsequent time the former term stood for a householder or ryot in general and similarly the latter was used to indicate wife in general. Since most of the records with which we are concerned come from pre-christian and early-christian
centuries, we have included here for our study all those
documents in which a lady is mentioned as Kutumbini
 treating her as a peasant housewife.

1). Ayabalavatratasya Siso Sadhisya Sisini.....
 Graha...... Vatana Nadiarita Jathakasya Vadhur
 Jayabhattacharya KutubinTya Rayaginive Vusuya.....

Bühler was unable to make out the sense of Vusuya and has
taken it to be an image or gift. It is strange that the word
appears only in this record out of the many found from the
site. The donor-lady Rayagini first mentions the name of her
father-in-law Jathaka adding also the place of residence
Nandigiri - of the family. Though her husband Jayabhatta
figures in the record but either she forgot to name her
father or avoided doing so. The name of her spiritual mentor
is also half available. She was female - pupil of Sadhi who
was pupil of venerable Balatrata or Balaratrata(?) we may also
postulate that either she was newly married or had no children
since they also find no mention in the record and she does not
take pride in the fact of being their mother.

2). Grahathasaya dhitara Sukhitaye Bodhinadiye
 Kulumbiniye Varanegane Puşyamitriye Kule ganima
 Aryadatasya Sisyasya Grahaprakivasa nirvartana
 Arahatapujaye.

Even in this short inscription the donor-lady has not failed
to record how fond a child she happened to be in her father's
house. The phrase *dhitara Sukhītaye* translated by Bühler as "Cherished daughter" speaks volumes for the affection with which she was reared by her father Grahahathi. On the other hand, though she mentions herself as Kutumbini (a housewife) but has forgotten to record her husband's name or that of her father-in-law. Thus this again, is a rare record in which a married woman has attached more rather exclusive, importance to her father and the special affection with which she was held by him than to the family of her in-laws. One may interpret this fact by postulating that she was born in very rich family though married into a family not-so-rich. Alternatively one could also take the view that she was the only child or daughter of her father and, therefore, a 'cherished' one. Her spiritual guide was Grahapravika, a monk, a pupil of the venerable Data, a gāma.


The record is mutilated and much of its meaning is lost. It purports to record a meritorious gift, an image of Jina Rṣabha in this case, by a peasant house wife Dattā. The name of her husband is half-preserved as also the place where from he hailed. The names of other relatives have also not survived. The gift was made at the request of Gānin, the venerable Kharṇṇa who was pupil of the preacher, venerable Viddhahasti.
In the preceding records we have been guided by the word Kutumbini as indicating the peasant status of the donor-ladies concerned. That very word is missing in the present record and yet, we have solid ground to base our view that Sihadatā, the donor-woman belonged to a peasant family. She is mentioned as the first wife of village-headman Jayanāga and daughter-in-law of village-headman Jayadeva. The name and social status of her father has not survived but, in all likelihood, he too was a village headman. She financed the making of a stone-pillar on being motivated by Akkā, the female pupil of Nandā and of Balavarmmā, the Saḍhcari of Mahanandi and female-pupil of Dandin. The qualifying epithet Aryya is not appended here to any of the names. The identity of the donor as housewife of a village headman is enough indication that she belonged to a peasant family. In accordance with customary requirements she has mentioned her triple family status.

The name of the donor-lady herself has not survived
though her wifely status is indicated by the word Kutubini. She was daughter of Dasa and wife of Priya and the name of her father-in-law, if it was there, is chipped off. Her spiritual guide was the venerable Vasulā, the female-pupil of the venerable Saṅgamikā.

6). **Aryya Jestahastisa ściśo Aryya Gādhoko**
   
   tasya ściśini Aryya Sāmaye Nivartana Uṣa
   pratimā varmaye dhītya Gulhāye Jayadāsasya
   Kutumbiniye danam.

   An image of Tīrthaṅkara Rṣabha here was financed by the donor-woman Gulhā being motivated by the venerable Sāmā the female pupil of the venerable Gādhaka who was pupil of the venerable Jestahasti. As regards her family status, she has made mention of only two: daughter of Varma and wife of Jayadāsa.

7). **Vācakasya Aryya Saṅgha Sihasya nirvartana**
   
   Datilasya .... Matilasya Kutubiniye Jayāvalasya,
   Devadasasya, Nāgadinasya Ca Nāgadinaya Ca matu
   Śravikaye Dinaye danam Vardhamāna pratimā.

   In the survey that we have done so far, this is the first and a rare record in which the donor-woman has taken pride apart from being the daughter or daughter-in-law (?) of Datila and wife of Matila in being the mother of no less than four children, three of whom were sons.
However the fact of Nāgadina being the daughter is not neglected and she too finds mention along with her brothers. Another important fact is that for the first time we find that the housewife is mentioned as grāvīka which is usual and approved technical term to indicate a Jaina lay-woman. Lastly it is also noteworthy that the name of one of her sons and the daughter are Nāgadina and Nāgadinar which might be taken as an indication of the special regard her family to the snake-cult.

8). Vācakasya ohanadīya Sisasya Senasya nivatānā
dsavakasya Pusasya Vadhuye Giha...Kutubini....
Pusadinsasya mātu.

The name of the donor-lady herself is missing though that of son and father-in-law are preserved fully and that of her husband seems half only. Incidentally, the name of grandson takes after that of the grand-father, the latter being Puṣa and the former Puṣadina. Her spiritual mentor was Sena, a pupil of the preacher Ohanandi.

9). Kutumbinie Graha ...Arya ....
Dasasya ...nivartanā Buddhisyā
dhīty Devilasya... Sīriye dānam.

The translation of this portion as given by Bihler does not exactly convey the sense of the surviving portion. The name of donor-woman he restores as Grahasrī and that of her spiritual guide as Godāsa. She is mentioned as daughter
of Buddhī and wife of Devila. The name of father-in-law and those of children, if any, has not been recorded at all.

1c). \[ tubaniye Dinasya Vadhūya \]

\[ \text{Just three words of the record survive without offering any facility to restore the missing portion. She is mentioned as daughter-in-law of Dina and wife of a peasant whose name is chipped off. However, the peasant status of the family is clear from the word} \text{Kutumbini, used for her though the first letter 'Ku' is missing.} \]

11). \[ Vardhamāna-patirmā Vajranadvayasya dhitā Vadhīśiva ..... Sya Kutubini \]

\[ \text{Here again there is nothing much to comment. The donor lady Dina was daughter of Vajranadha and daughter-in-law of Vadhīśiva. Her husband's name has not survived.} \]

III. The Artisan Housewife:

1). \[ Bisihatvacaka Ca ganin Ca Ja ..... mitrasya ..... Arvya oghasya Sisyā ganisyā Arvyapālasya śrañacari Vacakasya Arvyadattasya Sisyō Vacako Arvyasīṁa tasya nīvartanā Khottamitrasya mānikarasya ..... Jayabhatti dhitu dā ..... Sya lohavāniyasya Vadhara ..... Vadhū ..... Haggudevasya dharmapatiyē Mitrāyē \]
Fortunately most of the details necessary to analyse the inscription have survived for us. Mitrā, the lady-donor of this record was motivated to perform the meritorious deed by the preacher, the venerable Siha whose line has been described with usual epithets up to fifth generation. Her father Jayabhātī, who was a jeweller dealing in precious stones hailed from Khottamitta, but her father-in-law Vādhara was an iron-monger and that makes this marriage an inter-caste one. Alternatively, it is also possible that both belonged to the same caste but followed different professions. It is also noteworthy that she is first wife of her husband Haggudeva. The children, if she had any, have been left out, but to all appearances she did not have.

The surviving portion of the record has preserved neither the name of the lady-donor nor that of her husband or father-in-law. We can make out only the fact of her being a daughter of Deva, the gold-smith and her financing the setting up of a Vardhamāna icon, on being requested by Gaṇin Nandi. Being daughter of an artisan, she may have been married into an artisan family.
Though mutilated at some places and marked by misspellings in many cases, the record is rare and remarkable in respect of the information it supplies to us. It speaks of financing by a group of women, probably ten, a Jina-image. On the pedestal where of it is incised and which was recovered from the ruins of an ancient Digambara temple at Ramnagar in Uttar Pradesh. The women came of the carpenter-caste, which is specifically mentioned in the inscription. The meagre financial resources of these women is fairly reflected in the fact that all of them had to pool their money to finance the making of a single image. Their names can not be correctly made out owing to misspellings and missing letters as also of a couple of repetitions. It appears, as R.D. Banerji pointed out, that two names Jinadasi and Rudradeva have to be taken as one name Jinadasi-Rudradeva. The mother's name might have been prefixed to distinguish her from others bearing the name Rudradeva. The same may be the case with some of the other names. In our opinion, it is also possible that in couple of
cases, where the name clearly looks like that of a male, the husband or father of the lady concerned is figuring in the record. What is of uncommon interest in this regard is the probable representations of the donor-ladies on the pedestal of the image. The throne of the Jina has a standing lion on either side and the intervening space in between is occupied by a bas-relief. In the centre of the bas-relief is a wheel on short Indo-corinthian pilaster with two capitals and a square abacus, while a devotee is seated on the ground on each side. To the right of the pillar ten women are standing in two rows with garlands in their hands and to the left a group of ten men in similar positions. In view of the difficulty to read the names correctly, we are not sure that the actual number of lady-donors was ten but taken together with sculptural representations, the number can be accepted a correct one. It is noteworthy that the donor-ladies have not mentioned any of their relationships except in cases where it was absolutely necessary to establish their identity and that too is merely our assumption since terms indicating relations have figured nowhere. However, if the sculptural representations are to be taken as their then logically the ten male-figures on the left side have to be treated as of their consorts. Banerji pointed out that the usual order had been reversed in this case since the majority of bas-reliefs on the pedestals of images from Mathura show
the men on the right and the women to the left of the wheel. Perhaps the artist wanted to depart from the convention, since the donors financing the making of the image were all women. As regards the spiritual guide who motivated the women to make the gift, once more we have problem arising out of gaps in the text. The gift was made at the request of the sister of Datila...Harinandi, the female-pupil of the Ven. Pusila. Why the word bhagini has been used for the nun inspiring the deed is difficult to explain.

**C. The Courtesan:**

Only a solitary record from the Mathura Jaina inscriptions can be ascribed to a courtesan with certainty. However, that single record is sufficient to show that the courtesans were equal to queens in commanding vast financial potential. In the documents we have surveyed so far, queens and women from aristocratic or Setthi-families have figured but none comes even near to the munificence of the courtesan figuring the inscription quoted below.

1) "Nama Arahato Vadhaminas Damdaye ganikaye Lena sobhikaye dhita Samanvasvikaye Nadaye ganikaye Vasaye arahata devikula ayagasalha Prapah Silaraata patisthapitam nigamanah arahatayatane Sah Matare bhaginiye dhitare Putrena Savina Ca Parijanena arahat-Pujaye."
This six-line record is by far the most important containing deep significance for our theme. It is very carefully worded breaking all the conventional formulae and fully tailored to the needs of the case. It is rare and remarkable also for the fact that complete sense can be made out of its contents, though it needed restorations in some places.

To begin with the donatrix is the lay-pupil of the ascetics, (Samana-Sāvīka) the courtesan, Nādā the Vasā. She naturally traces only one relationship and that is to her mother, the courtesan Damā, the Lenaśobhikā (or the adorer of the caves). She associates in the meritorious act her mother, her sister, her daughter, her son and all her retinue (Specifically called Parijana). It is interesting that though she takes the epithet Samanaśāvika but the name of any of the spiritual guides who might have inspired her for the gift is conspicuously missing in the record. Not that it is missing in some lost portion, it has been left out and in this respect also the text of the inscription is a clear departure from the conventional practice, followed by housewives. From the cash which she seems to have gifted a shrine for the Arhats, a hall of homage, a reservoir and a stone slab were set up in the Arhat temple. Beyond doubt taken together these multiple objects of gift must have required huge financial resources speaking volumes for the
riches of the donatrix that seem equal to or perhaps more than a queen. In the Nayadhamma-Kahao we have a reference to a rich courtesan of Campa. Her fees were a thousand coins and such was her renown that she was granted the privilege of carrying umbrella, chowries and fans and moved in a Karniratha as a mark of royal favour. She was also head of many thousands of courtesans. It is possible that the ganika of our record was such a one. It is significant that in contrast with housewives, she refers to only one of male relationship: her son is associated in the meritorious act.

2). Namo Arahantananam Faguyasaasa Natakas

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<tr>
<th>Bhaya Ve Sivayasã</th>
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<th>69</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avagapato Kãritã Arahapatujjaye.</td>
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This is not strictly-speaking a case of courtesan figuring as donor. Sivayasã of the present records is merely the wife of a dancer named Faguyasa. However as she did not fit into the categories covered above, we have included her here. Apart from her husband, she does not seem to have mentioned any of her relatives.

D. The Casteless Woman:

In this section we shall include all the remaining available inscription in which women figure but with no clue to their caste or class status. May be in some cases there was one mentioned, but owing to the mutilated condition
in which most of the records below have come to us, it seems to have been lost. Hence the word casteless, mentioned above should not be taken to mean that the women of records below were outcaste. We simply mean that the records do not help us in classifying the donors along caste lines. We will confine ourselves only to the portion relevant to our purpose in the records. Since most of the records contain data which is incomplete owing to their broken text and which is substantially of the same nature, only a rapid survey will be enough.

1). Vācakasya Aryya baladinasya Śīgyo Vācako
   Aryya Matṛdinah. Tāsyā nivartanā ....Sucilasya
dharma patniye Le .....dānam.

   Only one letter of the name of the lady-donor has survived. However, the fact of her being the first wife of Sucila can be made out. She financed the making of an image of Santinātha being requested by the preacher, the Ven. Matṛdina.

2). Buddhisyā Vadhuye Dharma Vṛddhisyā.....

   Possibly the record contained mention of all the three customary relatives but the surviving portion tells us of only her being the daughter-in-law of Buddhi. The other name Dharmaśraddhi was probably of her husband.

3). .....Kalasya dhitṛ Śinvisusya bhagināya.

   This is an import fragmentary record for the reason that the donor-lady mentions a relationship which was not part of the conventional formula as seen some of the above inscriptions. She mentions herself as daughter of Kala and
sister of Sinavishnu. The brother-sisterly relationship we come across for the first time.

4). \[ \text{Ganisya Aryya Budhidirisya} \]
\[ \text{Sisyo Vēcako Aryya Sandhikasya} \]
\[ \text{bhagini Aryya Jayā Aryya Gostha.} \]

Like the preceding record here also we have brother sister figuring in the record but the context is far more important. The \text{bhagini}, the venerable \text{Jayā} is the sister of the preacher, the venerable \text{Sandhika}. Possibly the brother and the sister together renounced the world.

5). \[ \text{śramana-śrāvikaye \ldots lahastinīye} \]
\[ \text{toranam Pratisthāpi Saha mata-pitihi} \]
\[ \text{Saha Saśrū-Śāsurena.} \]

Interestingly here the lady-donor has mentioned both of her parents and parents-in-law but without specific names. In fact she associates them in the meritorious act rather than merely refers to show her own family status as was the convention.

6). \[ \text{Aryya Araha\ldots Śidini.} \]
\[ \text{Dhamthāye nirvartanā Grahadatasya} \]
\[ \text{dhitu Dhanahathi\ldots} \]

The broken record has preserved only a couple of facts which can not be sensibly connected with each other. Dhamathā appears to be a nun at whose inspiration the donor-lady made the gift. The name of her father Grahadata survives but no clue to his social status. Dhanahathi could be her
father-in-law or husband because phrasing of records on both the patterns we have seen.

7) \[ \ldots \text{dhita Sa\text{\textregistered}ghanadhisya Vadhuye Balasya}\ldots \]

Just four words to our purpose have survived but they reveal three relationship that the donor-ladies used to mention as a matter of convention. The name of lady herself or that of her spiritual guide we do not have but the fact of her being daughter of somebody, daughter-in-law of Sa\text{\textregistered}ghanandi and wife of Bala is well established in the surviving portion.

8) \[ \ldots \text{\textregistered}ryya Sukasya \text{\textregistered}isini}\ldots \]
\[ \text{\textregistered}ryya N\text{\textregistered}gadatt\text{\textregistered}ya \ldots \]

Here only the names of spiritual guides have survived. We are not sure whether the donor happened to be a woman or man because not even a fragmentary detail or epithet has survived. Therefore one might question the inclusion of this record here. We are guided by the consideration that the surviving portion refers to a female-pupil whose name is lost and another nun N\text{\textregistered}gadatt\text{\textregistered}a. Hence the record has a bearing on the theme of our interest.

9) \[ \ldots \text{\textregistered}aritiputrasa P\text{\textregistered}ajasa bhavye} \]
\[ \text{Samas\text{\textregistered}vik\text{\textregistered}ye Kochiye Amohiniye} \]
\[ \text{Saha putrehi P\text{\textregistered}aghosena, Pothaghosena} \]
\[ \text{Dhana ghosena Ayawati pratithapita} \ldots \]

This is indeed a very important record though it could not be fitted into our categories of classification. The donor-lady Amohini is wife of Haritiputra P\text{\textregistered}la and word
used to indicate her wifely status is 

\( \text{bhāryā} \) which we are coming across for the first time. So far the terms familiar to us in this regard are \( \text{Dharmapati} \) or \( \text{Kutumbini} \). There are two more epithets with which Amohini seems to have styled herself with pride. They are \( \text{śrāmana-śrāvikā} \) and Kautsi her gotra-name. The former is technical word used for any Jaina lay-woman whereas the latter indicates that she came of a Brahmāna or Kṣatriya lineage. Since her husband is also styled with a metronymic - Haritiputra - the practice of retaining and using gotras by a woman belonging her father seems to have been well-established in the region from which came Amohini or in the section of society to which she belonged. The lady-donor has proudly made further a mention of the fact of her being mother of noless than three sons - Pālaghoṣa, Pothaghosa and Dhanaghoṣa. We do not know if she had any daughter. It is also possible that her family being brahmanical background, the daughters were not given much weight or importance. Lastly it is difficult to make out the exact meaning of the gift - \( \text{Āryavati} \) - that she made. Sircar's glossary is silent on the point. However, it must have been an object used in worshipping the Jinas, which is clear from the phrase \( \text{Āryavati Arahata-Pujāye} \) at the end of the record.

10). \( \text{Bhadata} \) Jāyasenasya \( \text{Āntevasiniye} \):

\( \text{Dhāmaghoṣaye dāno Pāsādo} \)
This small record of just four words is of profound significance and though we could have placed it in a separate category meant for nun-donors but we have not done so for the reasons recorded below. The inscription purports to register the gift of a lady named Dhāmaghoṣa, an Āntevasinī of the venerable ascetic Jayasena. Bühler translates the word as "female-disciple" but is reluctant to take her as a nun for he clarifies in a footnote that it should be understood on the analogy of the word Āntevasi figuring in another record from the same place in which a male-donor has that epithet as well as the well-known one of Sravaka. The combination of the two clearly pointed according to him that an Āntevasi is merely a lay-hearer and so the feminine of it Āntevasinī would correctly be taken as female lay-hearer. We do not challenge Bühler's interpretation but his views raise a number of problems in our context which are not easy to solve satisfactorily. In the first place, if she is merely a Sravika which Bühler wants us to believe why she has not mentioned even a single relationship which was a contemporary convention on such occasions? At least she could have mentioned her father's name or that of her husband. Had the record been badly mutilated the natural assumption would have been that they are lost in the chipped off portion. In the second place, if Uttaradāsaka of the other record carefully attaches both the epithets - Āntevasi and Śāvaka, to his name, why was it forgotten or
ignored in the present case. Lastly her gift is not for meeting the cost of an image or a pillar but a whole temple which must have required huge amount. The financing of a whole temple would have been possible only for a queen or courtesan or a Setthi-housewife but Dhāmaghoṣā does not seem to be any one of these, at least there is no hint in the record to the effect. On the other hand we can treat her as nun also setting aside the valid objection of Bühler. In the present state of our knowledge we can only say that the word Śrāvika which should have been added, has been missed due to oversight or some sort of negligence. In any case, if we treat her as nun, we have also to explain where from she procured the huge amount necessary for financing the construction of the temple. All the nuns, we have seen so far, including the mother of a male donor, appear in our records in the capacity of a spiritual guides inspiring the lay-hearers, rather than doing the meritorious deed themselves.

11) Maṭhuraka Ṵāvādaṃ 81
bhayē .. tāye Ayāgapato.

This extremely fragmentary inscription tells us only about the husband of the lady-donor who hailed from Mathura and her gift which was a tablet of homage. The word used to indicate her wifely status is Bhāryā. No other relatives seem to have been included in the text. It is interesting that the
donor was a local lady, the fact of her husband belonging to the place is nonetheless mentioned. May be she took pride in the fact.

12) Pusyantrasya Śīṣīni Sathisihāye
Śīṣīni Sīhamitrasya Sañhacari
Dāti Saha Grahaceten Grahadāsena.

In Bühler's translation the name of the donor does not figure but beyond doubt the donor was a woman. If we are not mistaken her name was Dāti, the female-convert of Sīhamitra, the female-pupil of Sathisihā. Bühler tentatively translated the word Sañhacari as female convert. It appears the gift was made in association with Grahaceta and Grahadāsa though there is not even an indirect reference to that effect. We are also not sure if any other relations found place in the record. In the absence of a definite meaning of Sañhacari, the status of Sīhamitra in the social or religious hierarchy also remains uncertain.

13) ......Vāsi Jayasya ......tu
Māsīgiye dānam Sarvvytothadra........

The name of the donor woman is fully preserved as well as that of her son Jaya. She seems to have donated money for setting up a Pratimā-Sarvatobhadrikā. The half preserved word Vāsi before the name of Jaya could be Ṭanterāsi though Bühler has not entertained the possibility. Likewise
his restoration of the missing letter before 'tu' by mā and

treating Māsigīye as Jaya's mother, is acceptable only as

possibility and not certainty for, if the missing letter was

'dhi' then Māsigīye becomes Jaya's daughter. Much of the

record being mutilated, we cannot say how many of other

relationships figured in it.

14).  "...dhitu Mitāsirīye Bhagavato

Ariṣṭanemisya ...........

Of our interest are just first two words indicating

that the donor-lady Mitāsirī was daughter of ...... She caused

an image of the Lord Ariṣṭanemī to be made.

15).  Aya-Ārdhahasti Arahato Nandīavartasa

pratimam nivartayati.....bhāryyaye

Srāvīkāye Dinaye dānām Pratimā

Voddye thupe Devanirmite......

At the advice of Ayavṛddhahasti, an image of Arhat

Nandyavarta was financed to be made by the female lay-disciple

Dinā. Her wifely status is clear from the word bhāryyaye

but the name of her husband has not survived. She is also

styled as Srāvīkā, a female-lay-hearer. Incidentally the record

also reveals that Vodvā Stupa was commonly believed to have

been built by the gods.
16).  *Ayikājivāye Antevasikiniye Dataye* nivatana *Grahasirīye.*

This record reinforces our doubt expressed in course of discussing No. 10 above that Bühler might be mistaken in interpreting the word *Antevasini* therein. This inscription clearly contains a request made by *Antevasini* Dattā in compliance of which the donor-lady Grahasirī seems to have made the gift. It is interesting to note that Bühler himself translates the term as female-pupil.

17).  *Dhukasa Vayakasa Śikiniye Sāditaye ni .................*  

The donor-woman with all her relationships, it expressed, is lost in the missing portion. However, the purpose of including the record in our survey is to notice the name of nun Sāditā, female-pupil of Vācaka Dhuka. The last single letter 'ni' indicates that the gift was made at the advice of Sāditā.

18).  *ganisya Uggahiniya Sīso Vācako ghosako Arhato Parāvasya pratimā.*

This is another problematic case in which the name of donor-lady and her relations have perished but the surviving portion is nonetheless interesting as well as intriguing.
Apart from reference to Lord Pārśva whose image was intended to be financed, the names and designations of two spiritual teachers have survived. The relevant portion is translated by Bührer as, "The preacher Ghoṣaka, pupil of Uggahini a Gaṇini". He was baffled since the name Uggahini corresponds with Sanskrit Udgrahini, which is clearly a female-name but in association here with the title Gaṇin exclusively reserved for males alone. In other inscriptions we come across nuns but never with this title and so Bührer may very well be right. We will have to conclude in that case either the name is wrongly written or a monk carried this unusual name.

19). Namo Arahantānā śīvaghoṣakasa bhariyā......

In this extremely fragmentary inscription only the last two of the surviving words are of our interest. But they merely tell us of the wifely status of the lady-donor. Husband's name - Śīvaghoṣa - has survived fully.

20). ........Malanasa dhitu Bhadrayaśasa

Vadhuye Bhadradinaśa bhayāye

Acalāye Āyāgapato Pratithāpito

Arahatpujaye. 92

This one of the few records in this section where name of donor-lady with that of all her male relatives has survived whereas the name of her spiritual mentor is missing. Acalā who gifted a tablet of homage was daughter of Malanā, daughter-in-law of Bhadrayaśa and wife of Bhadradina. Her
wifely status is indicated by the term bhāryā.

21) ....Aryya Balattratasya śidini
Aryya Brahma Aryya Balattratasya
śiṣyo Aryya Sandhisya Parigrahe
Navahastisya dhītā Grahasenasya
Vadhu ....śivasenasya Devasenasya
śivadevasya Ca bhraṭinam mātu
Jāyaye Pratimā ....māṇasya
Sarvasattvānam hitasukhayā.

The wording of this record is slightly different from others we have seen so far. Bühler has translated the above portion in this manner, "For the acceptance of Aryya-Sandhi, pupil of Aryya Balattrata and of Aryya Brahma, the female pupil of Aryya-Balattrata, .......Jayā, daughter of Navahasti, daughter-in-law of Grahasena ......mother of the brothers Śivadeva, Devasena and Śivasena has set up an image of Vardhamāṇa for the welfare and happiness of all creatures". In the first place the name of the female seems to have been misspelt, more appropriately it should have been Aryya-Brahmā. It is also possible the stroke indicating vowel 'a' is lost. In the second place, the technical term nivatana has been replaced here by the word 'Parigrahe' though it does not seem to have made much difference, since the religious deed consisted only of financing the setting up of an image as in most of other records. However in their case the deed was done at the
'request' of the nun or monk whereas in the present case it is for their 'acceptance'. In all likelihood, the spiritual advisers themselves may have worded the documents of dedication and so here the question was only of the preference of the term. Last and slightly intriguing is the fact that here we have two spiritual guides of donor-lady, a nun as well as a monk and both being disciples of the same teacher: Aryya Balattrata. On the secular side what interests us is the word Bhrātṛṇam. Earlier also we have studied records in which the status of donor-lady as mother of son or sons is indicated merely by the word mātṛ but here we find an additional term 'bhrātṛṇam' preceding 'mātṛ' and the two together mean 'mother of the brothers'. One wonders why it should have been added at all when one word was enough and used invariably in all identical records. Either the lady donor wanted to emphasize her motherhood or their brotherhood. The former is natural but the latter is incomprehensible. It is possible they were all not sons of a single mother but she regarded herself as such and wanted to lay double emphasis. Finally though her father and father-in-law figure in the surviving portion, the name of her husband, which in all certainty must have been there, is lost.

22).

*bahavo Vācaka Va ganino Ca*
Samadīa .....Vasya Dānarasya Śiśīni
Ayya Jinadasipanatī gharitaya Śiśinī,...
.....ghakarabapanatī tiharamasopavasīni
Bubusya dhita Rajyavasusya dharma...
Davilasya matu Visnubhavasya pidamahika
Vijaya^irjye dana Vadha.

This again is a rare record, the only of its kind we have surveyed so far. The donor-lady is a paternal grandmother of Visnubhava and proudly mentions the fact. Possibly among her sons only Davila was alive or was the only one to have a son. Her first-wifely status is revealed from the half-preserved word dharma, the full being dharma-patni. What further surprises us is the fact that her father was alive and she mentions herself as daughter of Babu. By the same logic her father-in-law seems to have been dead for he does not find place in the text. There is no possibility his being included in the lost portion of the inscription. The occasion of the gift seems to have been completion of a long period of fast in tune with the tenets of Jainism. It was a month-long fast as a consequence of which she has the epithet masopavasini. The name of her spiritual guide is lost, rather half-preserved: Ayya ......ghakarba who was the female pupil and obeying the command of Ayya Jinadasi who was in turn the female pupil of Samadi ...... whose teacher was Dinara the great preacher and again. The lady-donor is Vijayasi.

23). Ayya-Jestahastisyasīgyo Aryya Mihilo
tasya Sīgyo Ayye Kserako Vacako tasya
nirvata$n varahastisyas$a C$a Deviya Ca
dhita Jayadevasya Vadhu Mosiniya Vadhu
Kuthasya Kasuthasya dharmapat$ha
There are many spelling mistakes in the texts as seen above. However the message is fairly clear. Most of the facts mentioned might appear as conventional ones on first glance but that is not so. On closer examination we see that the donor-lady mentions herself as daughter of not only her father Varanahasti but of her mother Devi as well. Similarly she mentions herself as daughter-in-law not only of Jayadeva but also that of her mother-in-law Mosini. Thus here again is a rare and the only example of mother and mother-in-law being specifically named along with father and father-in-law. The relation must have been one of pure and profound affection to warrant departure from the conventional formula.

24) ......Ye Mogaliputasa Puphakasa

bhayaye Asaye Pasado.97

This fragmentary record was found on a slab from Kankali Tila, Mathura. Unfortunately the left portion of the stone which contained the beginning of the inscription is lost. However, this much is clear that the lost portion did not contain the conventional formula naming the father or father-in-law of the lady-donor. Perhaps it mentioned the date of the record and the name of the spiritual guide.

The object of inscription is to record a gift and not necessarily a temple as one might feel altering the last word
Pasādo to Pāsādo with an implicit understanding of some word like dānam or patithapito or Kārito. In Lüder's view "Such an alteration is unnecessary, and that we may rest satisfied with 'present' especially in the very common term 'Praṣādikaroti!' we would agree with him taking pasādo of the inscription as a synonym of the more usual dānam. In the light of above, the object of donation in the present record would be the slab which bears the inscription and which probably was a so called āyāgapatta. Before we pass on to the other record we may note that Asā, the donatrix, seems to hail from a Brāhmaṇa or Kṣatriya family. Her husband's name, mogali (Maudgali) puta Puphaka appears to indicate it.

25). Arhatayatang. Sthapito, etc. devakulam Ca.

Lüder has rendered the abstract of the above portion as "the setting-up of an image of the Arhat (Arhat) Mahāvira in the temple of the Arhats and of a shrine (devakula) by Ujhatikā, daughter of ..., and of okharikā, by the lay-sister (Sāvikā-bhagini), okhā, of ... Sirika and Sivadna." However, the text itself, as quoted above, is not that clear. Even if we accept the version of Lüder, the relationship of Ujhatikā with the lay-sister okhā is nowhere established. The relevant portion of the text as it stands above make Ujhatikā a daughter of okharikā. If we
premise that the word 'Vitu' is mistake for dhihu and missing portion contained the name of her father. On the other hand the exact status of Okha, as Sāvikā-bhagini can not be defined as also her relationship with Sīrīka and Śivadina. To all appearances she may have been their mother but we can not be sure on the point. Lastly, the inscription records two gifts by two lady-donors without revealing the relationship between them. In any case the record seems to be rare since it mentions the names of parents of the donatrix without referring to her father-in-law or husband. Similarly if our assumption about Okha is accepted then here we have a case of exclusive reference to motherly status.

26). Cunningham found a broken slab that bore an extremely mutilated record. The name of the donatrix has survived as Vaihikā who financed the making of an image at the request of the Ātapika Grahabala who was pupil of the preacher (Vācaka) Arya Kakasaghasta(7). The donor-lady does not record any of conventional relationships. However, it is interesting to note that the gift has been made to the community of the four orders viz. lay-male and lay-female worshippers the monks and the nuns and the technical term used for the purpose is Caturvarṇa-Samgha.

27). An image inscription of the time of Mahārāja Kaniska mentions the name of Vikata, the donatrix, wife of Bhattimita and daughter of Brahma. The name of father-in-law, if it was
there, does not survive in the available portion. The meritorious deed was done at the request of Vacaka Nāganandin. A very brief inscription noticed by Lüders in his list refers to Nasāpriyā, the daughter of Surana. The record itself does not contain its religious affiliation but as Lüders has called it Mathura Stupa inscription, we presume it could be of Jaina affiliation. Mathura is known to have yielded the remains of Jaina Stupas and was an important centre of Jainism in early Christian centuries. However, the record itself is unusual in being silent about all the customary details we have seen above. Neither the name of spiritual guide figures in it nor the relationships except of course, the daughterly one. Since such record are very common at Sanchi and Bharhut, the present record also could be of Buddhist affiliation.

Turning now from Mathura to the east coast of India, we have some more records from Orissa. They come from the well known Udayagiri hill which was an early site of Jainism. We have already discussed the record of Kharavela's queen since it was possible for us to classify the record. In the case of three records discussed below we have no clues to the social status of the donors concerned, we are constrained to classify in this casteless section.

29) "Gift of Kama and Harakhina". Though the object of inscription is nowhere stated, going by the analogy of the following record we could postulate that gift intended in this case is the cave itself in which it is incised. The dedication seems to have been a joint one and most probably a couple. In
all likelihood the couple came of an aristocratic lineage since, financing of the excavation of a cave must have required a princely sum. Alternatively, both could be from mercantile community also. In any case, it is difficult to be definite on the point.

30) "The cave (lepa) of Nāki (Nāgi), wife of Mahāmada".

Here is slight improvement in our position upon the preceding record. The brief inscription clearly states that the cave itself is the gift and obviously it is. Jambēvāragumpha in which the inscription is incised. Secondly the earlier dedication was a joint one whereas this one is claimed to have been made by only the donatrix who refers to her marital status and name of the husband merely to establish her identity. In all probability she may be of a royal family or a feudatory one, for otherwise finding finances to make this gift would not have been easy for her. The name points to her nāga lineage, and very likely, her personal name may have been a different one.

31) "Gift of Kotha and a (?) jeya by Cula Kama (Kṣudrakarman)".

Hardly any sense can be made out of the text of the record. As it is incised in a cave, other than the two mentioned above, the object may have been to dedicate the cave in which it is found. The cave is known as 'Haridāsagumpha' at present but that does not help us. The technical term lepa standing for cave and used in the preceding record is also missing here. We doubt if the word Kotha can be taken as its substitute. The
donor is Culakama, to all appearances a man, having some resemblance with the husband's name in No. 29 above. Going by the preceding two records from the same site, the name of his wife should have figured but it does not.

Our survey of the Jaina inscriptions having been complete now let us view the picture as it emerges in its totality. The purpose of putting up inscription invariably in every case was to record a gift, which was to finance the making of an image or an 

**Aryagapatta** in majority of the cases. The question that naturally confronts us now is the source of finance which the lady-donors commanded. The case of a queen or an aristocratic woman we have already touched in the concerned section on this point. As regards the commoner, we are in an unenviable position. The Jaina counterpart of Brahmanical **Smrti** literature does not exist and there is hardly any legal text even of a medieval period about property rights of Jaina women. Perforce, therefore, we will have to proceed with stray references scattered in Jaina literature, canonical as well as non-canonical whichever have some bearing on our problem. By way of corroboration we may also take into account contemporary customary law and arguments thereon.

Bhadrabahu was a historic Jaina saint of fourth century B.C. and a teacher of the first Maurya in Jaina tradition. In the work that he authored (Bhadrabahu-Samhita) we have reference to widow's property rights. The work agrees with the Brahmanical legal view that widows have no right to their husband's property if the joint family has not been divided.
However, it states that in cases where the family has divided and the dead husband owned some property, his widow will have precedence in inheriting the same before her sons. We further learn that a widow may institute her son as manager of the property. She has the final authority as to what is done with it and the wealth that accrues from it. It is quite clear from the provisions noted above that a childless widow enjoys full rights of disposing her husband's property to the exclusion of her husband's male relatives.

The provisions are supported by a Digambara work of medieval period. To quote the relevant portion, "If a lady is good, she shall become owner of all the property of the deceased husband and whether there is a son or not, she shall have full powers like her husband". Hemachandra, a Śvetambara saint of medieval Gujarat in one of his verses echoes the opinion thus, "If a widow is separate, she can according to her desire spend her property; her dayadas (son or affinal male relatives) have no power to prevent her". Identical is opinion held by contemporary jurists. In connection with litigation involving cases of Jaina widows claiming rights to the property of their husbands the judicial stand has been that the Jainas are not governed by Hindu law in matters of adoption or the widows' rights to adopt as also in matters of succession and inheritance. She is heir to her husband to the
fullest extent ..... and she can do what she pleases with the estate which descended to her".

Much of the evidence we have cited does not belong to the period in which inscriptive records were put up. However, if the medieval and modern legal opinion in the matter of Jaina widow's property rights is based on earlier traditions traceable to Bhadrabāhu, the financial source in case of some of our lady-donors stands explained. The records nowhere reveal the exact position on the point but a few of our donor ladies must have alienated the property for religious purposes or inheriting it after their husbands' death.

As a matter of fact, it is argued that the very law governing widow's succession was motivated by worldly considerations rather than based on ideas of sexual equality. The saints and leaders of religions had to maintain religious institutions and women being more religious-minded than men, the law enabling a widow to acquire inheritance and alienate property for religious purposes found favour with them. This may be true of our own times, but does not seem so for the period with which we are concerned. Out of the available Jaina inscriptions an overwhelming majority concerns donations by ladies but very few of them seem to be widows. In many cases not only husband is mentioned but his profession is referred to as well. References to relationships are made with great care
to indicate daughterly, wifely or motherly status and there are a few cases in which wifely status is mentioned to the exclusion of all others.

While discussing the property rights of a queen in Jainism we have referred above to the wives of Mahāsaya of Rājayagṛha possessing ancestral property. We have cited the case of a Kosalan princess who brought the district of Varanasi as her 'bath-money' when married to Bimbisāra. It appears either a part of dowry or the whole of it was enjoyed by the bride. As regards landed property, even if it was administered by her husband or other male relatives, she had the freedom to enjoy the income therefrom. In this context it is noteworthy that the father of the lady-donors in our records has not only been given a place along with her husband and father-in-law but the first place in conventional formula. Majority of the records included in section B-I, II and III above contain the conventional formula. Even in section D where we are not sure whether a donatrix was a merchant-housewife or peasant-housewife we find father's name figuring in the formula. In D 5 the donation is made along with both the parents and parents-in-law. Similarly in D 23 the lady-donor Sthīrā not only mentions both the relationships but names her father, mother and father-in-law mother-in-law separately. By far the most significant is the case of Bodhīnadī in no. B II 2 in which she uses the phrase "cherished daughter" (dhīṭara-Sukhitāye) indicating that
either she was the only child of her father or perhaps the only
girl child and so a 'cherished' one. This prominence given to
father-daughter relationship in our records shows that though
the Jaina society was a patriarchal, the women maintained a
close and unbroken bond with their father's family even after
being transferred to the family of their husbands. In the
analogy of queens, we may also hold that the property given
by the father to her daughter at the time of marriage remained
her personal possession and may have constituted the source of
donations we have discussed. In the inscription A 4 above we
find that the husband Madana who raised a memorial pillar in
honour of his wife Yasadatā mentions her gotra separately
which is different from his own. We have also come across
many a metronymic in our inscriptions like Kautsi, Haritī,
Vātsī, Gauptī and Kausīkī, to cite, only a few. On the one
hand, if these are treated and taken to be traces of matriarchy,
they could also be taken to mean that the bride retained a
distinct identity even after marriage which she inherited from
her father and if the solitary example seen in A 4 above is
any indication, the in-laws' family respected the convention.
It is possible that the practice was confined to a very small
section of society and was fast dying out under the impact of
surrounding Brahmanical society in which father of the married
lady did not have any importance far less a place of equality
with husband and father-in-law. A place of precedence was
simply unthinkable.
Interesting enough, we have couple of references from Jaina canonical and commentarial literature in which it is the son-in-law who is transferred to the family of the bride rather than the bride getting transferred which was the usual and known practice. This happened in three circumstances: 1) when the girls father was well-to-do and had no son, 2) when the girls family was very poor and wanted the help of a strong man, 3) When the son-in-law was a poor man and could not pay a dowry. It is possible that some of our lady-donors had husbands who resided with their fathers-in-law and looked after or shared business affairs of the families concerned. The women who were thus not uprooted from their original families must have enjoyed greater financial freedom than those who were transferred and that could also explain part of our problem regarding female property-rights. However, the nature of records being purely dedicatory we have hardly any evidence directly from them.

Finally it is noteworthy that the records from royal and semi-royal families never contain the conventional formula containing father's name though their number is too small to fall into any pattern whereas the records of merchant and peasant housewives does form a set pattern.

We have not created any separate section or sub-section in our arrangement which is exclusively devoted to nuns. The primary reason has been to avoid repetition. The Jaina-nuns, unlike their Buddhist counter parts, have nowhere figured as
donors, and so, whatever references to them we have are already covered among inscriptions discussed above. We may now discuss the contents relating to them and determine their role and status.

What strikes us at the outset is the fact that no nun figures as spiritual guide of a śrāvaka. A solitary case which we have seen in BI 3 is that of a nun who happened to be mother of the male-donor Kumārabhati. In the second place, no nun has been given the higher epithets of Vācaka and Ganin. We do have a doubtful case in D 18 where a woman seems to have been styled ganin. But Bihler, who edited the record was baffled and remarked that the title was exclusively reserved for males. If Uggahini of that record is accepted as female, then we will also have there the case of a male-disciple (śīya) Vācaka Ghoshaka initiated by a female teacher. In all the records the nuns figure as teachers of nuns or a monk figures as teacher of a nun. We have no record showing nun as a teacher of a monk. Finally the only epithet that they are styled with is Aryya or the Venerable.

Statistically speaking we have 4 inscriptions from royalty combined with nobility, 19 from middle classes consisting of merchant, peasant and artisan housewives, 1 from a courtesan and out of the remaining 31, which we cannot classify for want of a clue from the record itself, some belong to the first category it seems and most to the second one. Thus the mercantile classes were the mainstay of Jainism and it is
remarkable that female-donors outnumbered the male-ones if all the inscriptions are taken into account.

Geographically speaking it is surprising to see that no record has come to us from the land of Lord Mahavira's birth. The inscriptions show that there were two strongholds of Jainism—one in Orissa and the other at Mathura. The former flourished mainly under royal patronage whereas the latter enjoyed support mainly of merchant and peasant families. No nun or monk figures in the records from Udayagiri hill whereas almost every record from Mathura, unless badly mutilated, contains mention of a spiritual guide and in a few cases traces his or her spiritual lineage as well.
NOTES and REFERENCES


7. In connection with laying down the duties of Dharma-mahamattas and enumerating contemporary faiths Ashoka also uses the word Nigatha to indicate the Jainas in his Pillar Edict VII.


13. Ibid., p.143.


19. Ibid., p.27.
21. Ibid., p.38.
24. Ibid., p.49.
30. Ibid.,
34. Ibid.
37. Ch. XVIII, V. 44
40. Ibid., p.388, Fn. 27, The word figures nowhere in Sircar's Glossary.
41. Laders List, No.18.
However, the metronymic led him to believe that Sihanadika was actually a Ksatriya and the term Vanik stood for the clan to which he belonged.

The missing portion preceding the epithet lohanaivisya seems to have contained the place-name.

Luders (No.74) however is inclined to translate the term Hairanyaka as treasurer.
67. The Indian Antiquary, Vol. XXXII, No. 33.
68. Nayadhammakahao, p. 7 ff.
70. Ibid., Vol. I, No. XLIII, (III).
71. Ibid., (X).
72. Ibid., (XVI).
73. Ibid., (XX).
74. Ibid., (XVII).
75. Ibid., (XXI).
76. Ibid., (XXIV).
77. Ibid., No. XLIV, (XXX).
78. Ibid., Vol. II, No. XIV, (II).
79. Ibid., (IV).
80. Ibid., p. 99, Fn. 17.
81. Ibid., (VIII).
82. Ibid., (XI).
83. Ibid., p. 201, Fn. 35.
84. Ibid., No. XV, (XII).
85. Ibid., (XIV).
86. Ibid., (XX).
87. Ibid., (XXI).
88. Ibid., (XXVII).
89. Ibid., (XXIX).
90. Ibid., p. 207, Fn. 88.
91. Ibid., (XXX).
92. Ibid., (XXXI).
93. Ibid., (XXXV).
Our assumption may be wrong because it is possible that father's name may have been included only as a matter of convention and in all probability he might have been dead. It is also possible that her husband Rajavasu, the grandfather of Visnubhava may also have been dead.


Indian Antiquary, Vol. XXXII, No.28.

Ibid., Vol. XXXII, p.34.

Ibid., Vol. XXXIII, No.19

Luders List, No.29.

Ibid., No.136.


Luders List, No.1350.

Ibid., No.1352.

Ibid., No.1353.


Ibid., pp.54-55.

Ibid.