Women, Patronage, and Self-Representation in Islamic Societies

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Contents

List of Illustrations vii

Preface xi

1. Vision and Power: An Introduction
D. Fairchild Ruggles 1

2. Ḍayfa Khātūn, Regent Queen and Architectural Patron
Yasser Tabbaa 17

3. Princess Safwat al-Dunyā wa al-Dīn and the Production of Sufi Buildings and Hagiographies in Pre-Ottoman Anatolia
Ethel Sara Wolper 35

4. Gender and Sexual Propriety in Ottoman Royal Women's Patronage
Leslie Peirce 53

5. The Yeni Valide Mosque Complex of Eminönü, Istanbul (1597–1665): Gender and Vision in Ottoman Architecture
Lucienne Thys-Şenocak 69

6. Women's Wealth and Styles of Giving: Perspectives from Buddhist, Jain, and Mughal Sites
Ellison Banks Findly 91

7. Gendered Patronage: Women and Benevolence during the Early Safavid Empire
Kishwar Rizvi 123

6

Women's Wealth and Styles of Giving

Perspectives from Buddhist, Jain, and Mughal Sites

Ellison Banks Findly

The monuments of the Mughal empire established an enduring presence of elegance and stability. In that, they reflected the desires of their patrons for a large empire that both included the wide range of religious traditions within India and celebrated the greatness of their imperial lineage. Most, in fact almost all, of these monuments were patronized by men—by the Mughal emperors themselves, as well as by princes, in-laws, and colleagues of Mughal families. Just a few were patronized by Mughal women, and the most well-known of these matrons was Nūr Jahān, last wife of the fourth Mughal emperor, Jahāngīr (r. 1605–27). Nūr Jahān's matronage extended broadly into a variety of the arts: not only did she fund and design gardens in north India and Kashmir, but there is good evidence that she had a hand in developing new themes and interests (particularly of women) in miniature painting,[1] and that her trade with European sources in embroidered textiles contributed to the flower designs on the surface of the Tāj Maḥal.[2] Nūr Jahān also patronized architectural sites, and one of the most precisely identified as stemming from her hand is the Serai Nūr Maḥal in Jullundur. This site not only reflects clear patronage by an Indian queen, but a style of donation in which the donor's sense of herself as a ruler is manifested in the syncretism of Hindu and Islamic surface design. More than any other Mughal woman of prominence, Nūr Jahān affirmed and took advantage of the South Asian culture that was her ruling milieu. We will argue, then, that this Muslim queen worked out of a context where patronage by women of many backgrounds had a long and enduring history.

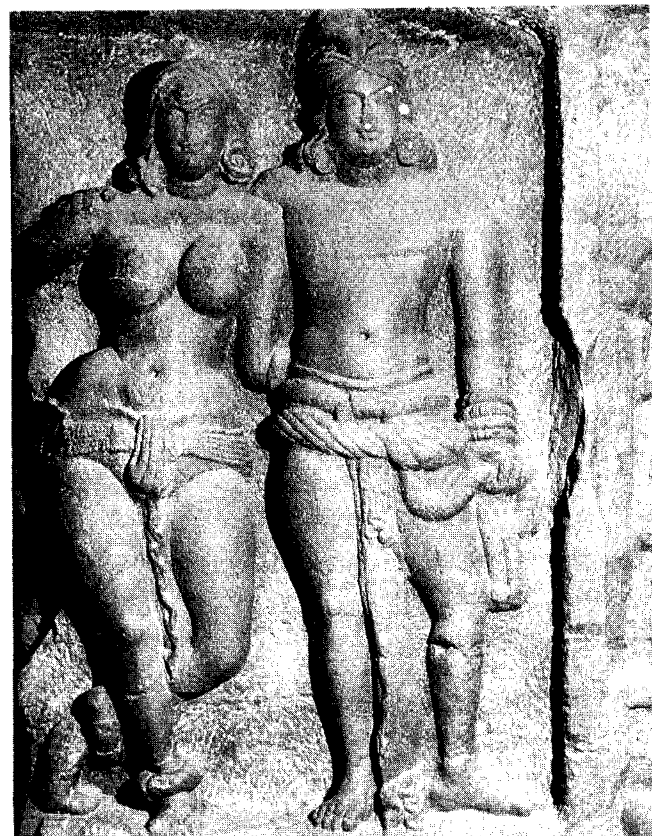

Fig. 6.1. Donor couple, *dampatī*, from the facade of the *caitya* at Karle caves, Maharashtra, Śātavāhana period, first century C.E. (Mario Bussagli, *5000 Years of the Art of India* [Harry N. Abrams, Inc., n.d.] pl. 79; courtesy of MPI Books, member of Roto Smeets)

Standards for donation (*dāna*) by women in non-Muslim India are based in traditional Brahmanic (priestly) codes of social duty, or Dharmaśāstras, which define a wife's economic identity as based in her relationship to two areas of property: her own personal property (*strīdhana*) anchored in a cache of jewelry and clothing, which a husband normally cannot touch[3] and which traditionally devolves upon daughters as inheritance,[4] and the property of the household. Although the traditional Brahmanic view of marriage is of a single, whole unit,[5] expressed in a

theory of joint ownership by the couple over the household and its property (the *dampatī*, "the two masters of the house," fig. 6.1), the traditional wife is viewed as manager of this household property[6] with certain rights concerning its disposal. One of these rights stems from the wife's principal agency in representing the household at the time of honoring a guest, an act performed by the wife but for the honor of the family as a whole.[7] Donative activity is, then, an extension of the hospitality of guest etiquette, particularly in the offering of cooked food to students and renunciants whose petitioning also falls under Dharmaśāstric jurisdiction. This paradigm, of giving food at the household door, then becomes one of several ways women's gift-giving activity is prescribed in the texts, and special categories of giving, which cover the construction and dedication of properties for public use, such as temples, wells, and parks, come to be particularly noteworthy for women.[8] While the exact source of wealth a wife might use in *dāna* is not altogether clear from the texts—whether from her own property or from general household property—that women can and do give is a defined Dharmaśāstric norm.

Women's donation activity in South Asia can be found in varied religious and social settings. Observing examples of women from three different backgrounds who gave support to religious institutions in north India, we will argue that the matronage of a queen like Nūr Jahān was not a singular activity but one which had as its larger context many sectors: householder women giving to Buddhist monastic complexes, a courtesan giving to a Jain complex, and royal women giving to Buddhist complexes. Although none of these examples is specifically Brahmanic, the traditional statutes about giving and, in particular, about the role of women in giving, may have been known and, in many cases, may have been informative. The exact relevance of Dharmaśāstric norms to the actual lives of women is open to some debate,[9] but it does seem that several of the sites discussed here had Brahmanic culture available to them. Schopen notes, for example, the importance of studying Brahmanic and Buddhist behavioral codes together,[10] as "it appears likely that most early Buddhist communities arose in . . . highly brahmanized areas."[11] Moreover, the evidence we will look at reflects some marking out of the wife, that kin relation which in the Dharmaśāstras "is most significant for a woman's identity and activities."[12] While "wife" is not the only kin designation conspicuous in the material which follows, its presence may denote the Brahmanical model as one of the several identifying structures at work in women's donative self-representation,[13] a structure for which there is ample textual description.

In the following examples of matronage from Buddhist, Jain, and Muslim sites, the traditional Brahmanic ideal may have varying degrees of influence. Orr has noted that there are probably a number of ways to conceptualize the axes "along which women's identities and activities might . . . be located"[14] other than public and the private, and the Dharmaśāstric norm is certainly only one of several shaping the context and self-representation of women as they give. As we examine each of these cases from the South Asian context in which Nūr Jahān herself later worked, then, we will be mindful of the source of a woman's wealth, the pluralistic context in which the matronage takes place, whether a woman's gift is in any way gender-bound as to beneficiary, and whether her gift customarily or self-consciously reflects a particular sense of self vis-à-vis the culture at large. On this last, we will pay special attention to whether there may be clear donor intention to personalize the gift in some way or whether the evident individuation belongs to other peculiarities of the tradition.

Patronage by Householder Women: Lay Buddhist Inscriptions at Mathurā and Sāñcī

Buddhist texts in the Pāli language from the early centuries B.C.E indicate that views about patronage by the householder and housemistress develop in relationship to the emergence of a Brahmanic ideal. It has been argued that the Buddhist disciplinary texts did not serve monastic communities in proximity to Brahmanical cultures.[15] In fact, however, Brahmanic notions about the defining place of women in the family and the role of property within the marital unit are clearly at hand in canonical discussions. It is in reference to the *strīdhana* model of property, for example, that the representation of a wife and property in these texts is one of greater autonomy in decisions regarding disposal of materials for which she is responsible and of considered independence in the actual disposal of them a marked and self-conscious change from older priestly notions. The stories of several monks,[16] for example, show their mothers' own wealth as separable and freely available stockpiles offered in the negotiations for the sons' return to lay life.

As agents of donation, moreover, Buddhist women like their Brahmanic colleagues are ever present at the household door. There they give food to petitioners but not, following the Brahmanic model, as representatives of a household's hospitality function; rather, they are independent donors deciding for themselves on religious alliances and on the worthiness of each cause.[17] In the Buddhist donation context, further, the exchange element is clearly present whereby donors give the four requisites of food, robes, lodgings, and medicine in exchange for teaching, and for merit usually made evident in the next life.[18] Because the donor is not under a specific hospitality obligation to give, however, the burden of the transaction rests upon the renunciant who must generate the goodwill of the donor (usually the housemistress)[19] by his humble stance at the door.

In Pāli texts, women stand out as donors also in the making of large substantial gifts, and no one so clearly as the lay housemistress Visākhā, who gives not only food and textiles in abundance but a residence, the Migāramātupāsāda, as well.[20] While part of Visākhā's resources may indeed be the property due her as wife,[21] she clearly has other property to draw upon, as seems to be the case for many householder women of the Buddhist Canon.

Recent work attests that there are more textual and inscriptional references to patronage by women in the Buddhist context than in the Brahmanic context, probably because in the latter women are under "considerable social constraints."[22] Matronage is a feature for example, of the Buddhist rock caves of Bedsā, Kanheri, Nānāghāt, and Nāsik, and at the shrines of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, among several other places.[23] Two such spots, in fact, Sāñcī and Mathurā are, as we will see, especially significant for the great number of women donors noted in their inscriptions.

With the appearance of sites like Sāñcī, it is clear not only that the "lasting medium of stone" will play a role in Buddhist monumental art but that patronage at such venues is not primarily "the result of any royal decree" but of a "collective and popular" persuasion.[24] While royal patronage is clearly attested at many sites,[25] the overwhelming material support for Buddhist monuments in India comes from "the cooperative effort of the people,"[26] who give in worship of the Buddha or the *stūpa,* "temple," and who have hope for blessings in return. Sāñcī, whose original *stūpa* was erected by King Aśoka around 250 B.C.E., has over 631 donative inscriptions, the earliest dating from about the first century B.C.E.,[27] with donors ranging from individuals like royal scribes, artisans, teachers, stone masons, bankers, troopers, weavers, cloaksellers, and merchants to whole families, sects, and guilds.[28] One important group of donors, in fact the single largest, is nuns and monks, a donor category much discussed in recent years.[29] The reason for gifts of worldly property by those thought to have renounced it is ascribed to several things: either as surplus from what had been given to them and to the community by patrons,[30] gifts made on their behalf by lay

donors,[31] or as real gifts made from wealth privately held by the monks and nuns themselves.[32] Renunciants are known to have been involved in raising funds for the monastic complex, and presumably traveled "to numerous towns and villages collecting subscriptions,"[33] making private wealth a considerable possibility.

Donation inscriptions at Sāñcī are found on pavement slabs, crossbars, railing pillars, copings, and sculptures and, of the individual patrons listed, about one-third are women.[34] In fact, the large number of women and their prominence in these inscriptions is quite remarkable.[35] The appearance of the term *gharinīye,* "housewife," for example, indicates a strong donative basis in the lay community, and many of the nonrenunciant women clearly come from urban settings, an especially significant feature:

> Taking into account the urban base of the majority of women donors as well as the fact that ladies belonging to artisanal and mercantile classes figured more prominently as donors, it would be perhaps safe to assume that it was the emergent commercial spirit of the age which was to an extent responsible for transforming a section of women into an important category of donors.[36]

While this assessment is not peculiar to the Sāñcī site, it does point up the important changes taking place in mercantile and urban life which facilitate the rise in women donors such as those found at Sāñcī.

While there are a number of visual representations of women donors in the sculpture of Sāñcī—for example, Sujātā offering to the meditating Gautama, prostrating women presenting donations before trees[37]—one key to the self-representation of women donors, here particularly lay women donors, is that in the donation inscription, we find kin designation giving central context for the gift. Although kinship is used to identify men as well, it is more often the sole identifier for women.[38] These kin designations often tie the woman donor to a male relative and, of them, "mother" is the most frequently designated.[39] Next in number are designations of "wife" donors,[40] followed by "sister-in-law" donors, "sister" donors,[41] "daughter" donors, "daughter-in-law" donors and "niece" donors. What is significant here is that while kin designations for male donors do occur in inscriptions—e.g., "father," "son," "brother"[42]—they are far fewer than for female donors.

Inscriptional evidence from Buddhist sites at Mathurā in northern India indicates similar use of kin designations by women donors. Located fortuitously, Mathurā was at a crossroad of an important caravan route, with branch routes leading west to Taxila, east to Patna and Tamluk, and south to Ujjain and Brach. As a meeting place for travelers and traders who halted there over the centuries, Mathurā thrived off of the accumulating wealth and the heavy investments in its monuments. As at Sāñcī, donors covered a wide range of vocations from generals to troopers, from merchants and bankers to perfumers and cloakmakers, and Buddhist, Jain, and Hindu followers built complexes which were dominant at the site until the renewal of Brahmanism around the seventh century C.E. Buddhist monasteries at Mathurā were numerous, the Chinese traveler Fa-hien noting twenty such establishments with three thousand monks in the late fourth century C.E., and sites such as Kaṭrā, Saptarṣi, Bhūteśwar, and Govindnagar have all yielded Buddhist materials.[43]

One of the most well-known gifts by a woman at Buddhist Mathurā is the so-called Kaṭrā Bodhisattva or Buddha (fig. 6.2), seated in full lotus position on a lion throne with a *kapardin* (*kaparda,* "snail") styled knot on top of his head. This stele was commissioned by Amoghādāsī, the mother of Buddharakṣita, and her parents for the welfare of all beings and set up in her own monastery. It is not clear what Buddharakṣita's status was, whether a monk or a lay Buddhist,[44] but notable here is that in the donation inscription Amoghādāsī is not only designated as Buddharakṣita's mother but, because of the joint sponsorship of her parents, tied publicly to the preceding generation as well.

Another image at Mathurā, given by the nun Dhanavatī, confirms the centrally defining pattern of family designations for women donors. In her inscription, Dhanavatī notes that she is the sister's daughter of the nun Buddhamitrā, who has been identified with the nun Buddhamitrā, the donor of a large standing image at Kauśāmbī. This Kauśāmbī image is the "earliest dated cult image set up at Kauśāmbī," leading Schopen to conclude that it is the nun Buddhamitrā "who introduced at Kauśāmbī the cult image," and to say even further and more importantly that "nuns, and laywomen as well, seem to have been very actively involved in the development of the 'new cult'" of images.[45] This is a significant conclusion regarding the role of women, both as nuns and as laywomen, in the development of Buddhist iconography, and that Dhanavatī calls herself the "niece" of Buddhamitrā in her inscription not only supports the place of kin designation as an expressive feature of Buddhist women donors in general, but provides a central clue to a monastic woman's role in establishing the Kauśāmbī image cult.

As at Sāñcī, about one third of the donors at Mathurā are women.[46] Among women donors in Jain settings, there is a full range of kin relations

Fig. 6.2. Seated *kapardin* Bodhisattva or Buddha, Kaṭrā mound, Mathurā, Uttar Pradesh, first-second century C.E. Government Museum, Mathurā. (J. C. Harle, *The Art and Architecture of the Indian Subcontinent* [Yale University Press, 1994], pl. 43; courtesy of the Government Museum, Mathurā, U.P., India)

used to identify the matron: for example, "mother,"[47] "grandmother,"[48] "wife,"[49] "daughter," "daughter-in-law," and "granddaughter,"[50] and these women portray themselves together with their families, and even their servants, in the bas-reliefs.[51] Women donors in Buddhist settings show a similar range of kin relationships, each building on the place the matron has within the larger family network: for instance, "mother," "wife," "daughter," "daughter-in-law," and "niece."[52] While "mother" and "wife" are most prominent as designations at these two sites, that others are used

as well underscores the importance of precisely defined place within kin matrices as a significant identity marker for women donors.

Turning to the larger gender issue in self-referencing at patronage sites we find that men seldom set themselves within kin relations in a donation inscription and when they do, it is primarily with the single, particular designation of "son."[53] In contrast, the dominant pattern for householder women making gifts at both sites is for women to use at least some kin identification in their inscriptions. Moreover, kin identification among women is often much fuller—with two or three relationships named (e.g., "daughter-in-law/granddaughter," "daughter/daughter-in-law," "daughter/wife/mother")[54] rather than just one. The multiple kin networking is made especially clear in the case of a Buddhist nun mentioned earlier, Dhanavatī, who names herself not only the sister's daughter of Buddhamitrā and the female pupil of the monk Bala, but the co-donor with her father and mother as well. This is in contrast with a few monks' inscriptions—those, for example, of Yaśadinna and Budhavāla—who say they give simply for the benefit of their parents.[55]

Mindful, then, of Brahmanic ideals that would have been known to early Buddhist communities arising in highly Brahmanized areas, it is no surprise that householder women at Buddhist sites understand themselves primarily within the protracted network of family relations. In this way, they are like women donors from other South Asian areas, medieval Tamil Nadu, for example, where kin relationships were an essential aspect of their self-definition.[56] While it is not clear from the inscription what material resources women actually use in making donations to Buddhist monuments, the very fact that many do so in Buddhist contexts signifies a considered autonomy in the allocation and disposal of resources—a pattern evident textually in the Pāli Canon.[57] This autonomy is made evident not only as an economic act but within a context that is decidedly public. So, while the Brahmanic ideal of hospitable women as defined by family relational status is present, a different venue for it is affirmed: a public display of economic agency.

Patronage by a Courtesan: A Jain Tablet at Mathurā

We have seen that in the Hindu context men's primary identity is given by caste or occupation and that women's is given by family and kin ties. In the case of patronage by courtesans, kin ties remain, but occupational ties are seen as defining the female donor as well, perhaps in this case even more

explicitly. A striking example of this is a tablet from a Jain site at Mathurā given by the courtesan (*gaṇikā*) Vāsū. This example is different from previous examples of female patronage because of the resources she might have used to make the donation, how she styles herself in the donative inscription, and how the iconography of the image may be related to her profession or to peculiarities of the Mathurā locale.

Unlike householder women, courtesans, even when adhering fully to their duties, are not admired in Indian legal texts. Food offered by them is to be shunned by Brahmins, for example, and they are to be noted by kings as improperly depriving others of property.[58] While early Buddhist texts are aware of prevailing negative views of courtesans, they also portray them as a category of professional women who not only are open to hearing and converting to the Buddhist doctrine but are increasingly available as donors to the monastic community as well. Women like Ambapālī, Sirimā, Sulasā, Sāmā, Kālī, and Sālavatī garner high fees and are thus eminently wealthy and Ambapālī, especially, is known as a generous and pious donor to the tradition. Her gift of a mango grove to the order of renunciants, for example, is one of the most famous in the early Buddhist texts.[59]

Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra,* a detailed guide to Indian political administration from around the fourth century B.C.E., identifies several unusual ways of getting revenue and one of them is the organization of courtesans into different grades under the guardianship of a superintendent. Hoping to increase state coffers, the system placed courtesans and prostitutes into ranked categories that identified the annual salaries they would receive based on services rendered. Each courtesan's income went directly to the superintendent who controlled her salary in return; she then retained "full authority" over all her personal assets that included her salary, her jewelry, and the gifts she received from her lovers. Discussing the system as described by Kauṭilya, Chandra notes:

> [H]igh living was a characteristic feature of a courtesan's life, and was not calculated merely to satisfy their personal vanity, but was a trade trick to attract wealthy merchants and officers. In the free institution of *gaṇikā,* the courtesans, or at least the leading ones, earned a great deal of money and could live in luxury. But since prostitution was a state managed institution there is every likelihood that their palatial establishments and gardens were state property with life interests.[60]

A different aspect of courtesan life is given by the *Kāmasūtra,* a text attributed to Vātsyāyana in the early centuries C.E. In addition to detailed discussions of courtesan education and lifestyle, this manual of sensuality explores ways courtesans are encouraged to acquire fees and gifts from wealthy clients. While the advice may seem to encourage cleverness, pretense, and trickery, it is underscored by the clear message that this is courtesan livelihood and that, as a norm, the multigenerational network of women had to give preeminent focus to financial security.[61] One important aspect of the economic material in the *Kāmasūtra* is Vātsyāyana's advice on what the wealthiest of courtesans should do with their profits: use them to build temples, reservoirs, and gardens, to give cows to brahmins, to perform religious ceremonies, and to carry out religious vows.[62]

One such gift by a courtesan is found at Kaṅkālī mound, the site of a Jain *stūpa* at Mathurā dating to Kuṣāṇa times,[63] in the early centuries B.C.E. and C.E. While excavations at the mound have revealed Brahmanic and Buddhist remains, those belonging to the Jain tradition predominate and among the significant Jain finds are about two dozen *āyāgapaṭas,* votive tablets used for worship.[64] Although these may have been used as altar sites for the deposit of offerings,[65] or set in a high place to be seen and worshipped from afar,[66] their full ritual use is not yet clear.[67]

We have already seen that there is substantial patronage of Jain objects by women donors at Mathurā. Items such as images and gateways at the Kaṅkālī mound have all been gifted through matronage: for example, by a merchant's wife, a goldsmith's daughter, a jeweler's daughter, and an ironmonger's daughter-in-law.[68] Moreover, the sculpted slab tablet, the *āyāgapaṭa,* is also an item given by donors and is an item "donated almost exclusively by Jain women."[69] Often these tablets were made at the request of a Jain nun, perhaps a widow who became a Jain nun as a way of easing her dependence upon her family.[70] Patronage by women and for women, then, is a critical aspect of these tablets that are used in worship.

The Kaṅkālī mound tablet given by the courtesan Vāsū is noteworthy in this context. Normally, the inscription is understood to read that the tablet is a gift of the courtesan Vāsū, daughter of the courtesan Lavaṇa Śobhikā, the disciple of the ascetics, in honor of the Arhat Vardhamāna. The use of honorific epithets in the inscription, one each with the mother's name and the daughter's name, is interpreted as a designation of "their ranks among the co-professionals or their status in the society," that is, as a designation of senior and junior.[71] The inscription also notes that Vāsū's co-donors are her mother, her daughter, her son, and her whole household—significant because, first, it reflects the multiple kin networks found in other female donation inscriptions and, second, because it reflects the

matrilocal basis of courtesan families. While the tablet is accompanied by a gift of a shrine, a hall of homage and a cistern, it is the tablet itself that is of interest here: it depicts a *stūpa* (temple) accessed by steps and a gateway with three architraves, the lowest one supported by lion brackets, and surrounded by a railing and bordered on either side by two pillars, the left holding a wheel and the right holding a seated lion.[72] The *stūpa,* whose portrayal here is a fairly complete representation of contemporary *stūpa* architecture,[73] has a *yakṣī* (female protector deity)[74] on either side of the drum, a *kiṃnara* (male celestial attendant) on either side above, and, at the top, two flying figures which may be *munis* (silent sages).

This particular act of matronage highlights several issues in the Jain tradition. In particular, while the restrictive Hindu context for women is certainly influential here, the Jain vision is open (along sectarian lines) to the possibility of full salvation for woman.[75] In light of this and of the fact that Jainism disapproves of prostitution without socially punishing it, salvational opportunities are expressed as available for women of even the lowest status. Socially, the Jain tradition deals with prostitution "in a matter-of-fact and candid way," being most concerned that the presence of prostitutes and courtesans not weaken the ascetic vows of renunciants.[76] With regard to spiritual salvation, however, courtesans are seen as imperfect beings just like any others who are caught in the cycle of birth and rebirth.

To improve the chances for a better rebirth, then, Jainism, like Buddhism, emphasizes donation for its laity, a practice that had its most public manifestation in the construction of temple architecture and images.[77] We have seen that Jain women have always been involved in the donative process, either as housemistresses at the door giving out food to renunciant petitioners or as matrons funding monumental works. For a courtesan with her own particular cache of resources, the support of monuments may stem from a number of uniquely configured motivations: not only may the donor be sensitive to improving the material lives of her donees and to acquiring merit for her own future rebirths, but she may be mindful as well of the role giving has in securing "a creditable reputation" for herself, in a culture where donation "serves as a means by which . . . [one's] moral and financial status can be established."[78] Moreover, in addition to the issue of status, courtesans may have donated in order to assuage guilt: like ruling and mercantile groups who give out of "a sense of guilt produced by the exploitative nature of their economic pursuits as well as the increasingly impersonal and unscrupulous manner of their social dealings," courtesans may give because they are "still not looked upon with approval by the

traditional moralists of the time," and may be exceptionally sensitive to the manner in which they have procured their wealth.[79]

In turning to the donor-specific marks of the image itself, we focus on the two *yakṣīs* (female protective deities) on either side of the *stūpa* drum.[80] Much has been made of the extensive cult of male *yakṣas* and female *yakṣīs* at Mathurā, including their ties to tree deities and other folk divinities, their mythological wealth and their use as protecting attendant figures in both Buddhism and Jainism, and their possible place in the development of the Buddha image.[81] They may also be linked, we argue, with courtesans like Vāsū. The voluptuous rendering of *yakṣī* figures on Mathurā railing pillars, for example, with their large round breasts, exaggerated heavy hips, thin calves, and seductive, unabashed postures and gestures, may represent the courtesan ideal and even particular courtesans.[82] The merchants and rulers who patronized monuments at places like Mathurā also patronized courtesans and the

> *Yakshī* figures [depicted at Mathurā may reflect] the memory of these licentious beauties. They reveal undreamt of pleasures of the flesh. They depict them inviting and soliciting men or engaged in their toilet or enjoying the pleasures of drinking and dancing, singing and roaming in gardens in the company of their lovers.[83]

Another suggestion develops the Jain designation of *yakṣīs* as the female attendants of Jain saints (Tīrthaṃkaras) by identifying them with "the leaders of the women converts," some of whom would clearly be of courtesan status.[84] The use of actual sculpted figures to represent donors to a monument is common in India (fig. 6.1); the depiction of them as something other than ordinary human beings is unusual. The suggestion that the *yakṣī* figures reflects not only the occupation of the donor (through its voluptuousness), but the social position of the donor within the religious community (through its attendance on the Tīrthaṃkaras) makes these images especially significant.

The *yakṣīs* on the tablet gifted by Vāsū the courtesan, then, can be interpreted in at least two ways. First, they may be the idealized representations of courtesans patronized by wealthy men of Vāsū's extended community, images with which she identifies herself or through which she represents herself publicly to the audience of Jain worshippers; second, they may be associated with women converts to Jainism, which may include Vāsū herself. However the two *yakṣīs* on this *āyāgapaṭa* tablet are interpreted, the categories of self-representation used by Vāsū

remain within familiar boundaries set by the contextual traditions: a network of multiple kin designations placing her within an extended family and household; an appellation of *gaṇikā* tying her to a South Asian tradition of courtesan wealth and giving; and a figural image of the *yakṣī* tying her to gender or occupational patterns well-established within the (Jain) setting at Mathurā.

Patronage by Royal Women: Kambojikā at Mathurā and Nūr Jahān at Jullundur

A third type of matronage is that by women of royal position. Donation by queens is known from many sources in South Asia and in any list of female donors their names are prominent.[85] Royal women have considerable wealth with which to support large acts of donation, and often do so in ways that reflect their particular religious habits and persuasions. The Cōla queen Sembiyan Mahādevī, for example, supported an ambitious temple building program tied to specific sacred sites, in the context of which she promoted the worship of Naṭarāja.[86] And the widow of the emperor Humāyūn, Hājī Begam, built a tomb for her husband in Delhi that borrowed its use of the wide base platform from Hindu architecture; allowing for circumambulation of family cenotaphs, the spacious structure confirmed the Mughal lineage's establishment within the broad Hindu environment.

We focus here on monumental gifts made by two royal women of very different background: patronage of a Buddhist monastery (*vihāra*) by Kambojikā, wife of the Scythian (Śaka) king Rājula (Rajuvula) who was father of Śoḍāṣa, at Mathurā (first century C.E.), and patronage of a traveler's rest house (*serai*) in Jullundur by the Mughal queen Nūr Jahān. What these gifts have in common is not only that they are located at points of substantial convergence for travelers and traders but also that, because of their location and their specific royal matrons, they signify a synthesis of several cultural traditions. In this way, we see Nūr Jahān's patronage of the *serai* not only as a donative act understandable to her subjects familiar with the kinds of patronage undertaken by housewives and courtesans, but as an act of donation commensurate with similar acts done by other high-ranking women.

In the case of the Mathurā site, two works are of interest: a lion capital from the Saptarṣi mound with a Kharoṣṭhī inscription recording the building of a Buddhist cave monastery, *Guhā Vihāra,* by Kambojikā the chief queen of the Mahākṣatrapa Rājula,[87] and an almost life-size figure,

made of schist stone in the Gandhāra style, of a royal woman, also from the Saptarṣi mound. This figure is usually identified as Kambojikā (fig. 6.3).[88] Our interest here is both the context of the matronage and the details of the female figure, as both suggest a significant convergence of elements from different cultural traditions—a process facilitated, perhaps, by the high status of the donor.

The lion capital inscriptions, which were engraved at a time of significant religious patronage, suggest an origin among a nonindigenous elite, as Mathurā was generally beyond the range of Kharoṣṭhī inscription.[89] Issuing from their original homeland in Central Asia, the Śakas may well have reached Mathurā independent of their progress up the Indus River Valley.[90] As members of a foreign ruling class who, in Indianizing fashion, styled their rulers Mahākṣatrapas ("great governors"), the Śakas retained their distinctive styles of dress at the same time as they followed the local religion of Buddhism.[91] To the artistic heritage of Mathurā, they contributed materials gleaned in the course of their other invasions of Hellenistic and Parthian lands in the first centuries C.E. The Śakas, then, acted as middlemen passing on cultural and artistic elements acquired from their contacts with Iranians, Greeks, Romans, and others.[92]

The female figure commonly identified as Kambojikā exhibits traditional Gandhāra drapery style, notable for the knot just above the left leg, and the clasp at the left shoulder, arm decoration, and multiple neck wear. The wreath on her head (fig. 6.4) is fastened with fillets in the back, and "an ornamental tress showing bead and floral motif suspends on her back."[93] The attention to anatomical detail is noteworthy here, as is the slightly left-bent cast of the head, the lidded eyes, and the clear symmetry of the face. If this figure is indeed Kambojikā, it establishes portraiture, here of women, as an early mode of representing high-ranking donors giving to South Asian monuments. While there are clearly elements generic to the Gandhāra style, the fact that the figure comes from the same find spot as the lion capital with its inscription dedicating the *Guhā Vihāra,* personalizes the features of face and dress. Whether this is an example of *self*-representation is not clear, but it does stand in contrast to the inscriptional and representational milieus we have seen for women in donative art so far.

Many of the objects now extant in Gandhāra style belong in some measure to the Buddhist tradition, and the Saptarṣi mound at Mathurā, significantly, was under the considerable sway of the Sarvāstivādin sect. It is quite possible that the Śakan allegiance to Buddhism at Mathurā was based on the religion's appeal as a liberal, universal, and non-exclusive

Fig. 6.3. Female figure, in Gandhāra style, said to be Kambojikā, wife of Mahākṣatrapa Rājula, Saptaṛṣi mound, Mathurā, Uttar Pradesh, first century C.E. Government Museum, Mathurā. (R. C. Sharma, *Buddhist Art: Mathura School* [Wiley Eastern Limited, New Age International, 1995], pl. 11; courtesy of Government Museum, Mathurā, U.P., India)

tradition,[94] which allowed members of any group, including their own, to support its institutions. Interpretation of the ties between the Śakan and the Sarvāstivādin Buddhists range from the renunciants enjoying the "royal favor" of the foreign rulers[95] to their active lobbying for royal support—the monastery being given "at the instance of the Sarvāstivādin ācāryas,"[96] for example—but, whatever the vantage point, the commitment to the religion seems to be a strong component of Śakan presence in Mathurā and, in particular, of Queen Kambojikā.

The female figure thought to be this matron reflects a number of features of Mathurā art found across the site: the assimilation of foreign components, the introduction of images styled as portraits, and the treatment of female figures with particular care and delight.[97] While the convergence of each of these three elements in the Kambojikā figure single her out aesthetically among woman donors at Mathurā, her multiple kin designations

Fig. 6.4. Detail of back of head, figure 6.3. (R. C. Sharma, *Mathura Museum: Introduction* [Government Museum, 1971], fig. XXIII-B; courtesy of Government Museum, Mathurā, U.P., India)

tie her directly to the matronage practices of other South Asian women. Not only does the lion-capital inscription name her as the chief queen of Rājula, but related artifacts designate her as a daughter and as a mother.[98] Thus, kin designations continue to be useful identification markers for women donors, though they are not, by any means, exclusive to them.

A final element pertains here as well. It has been noted that patterns of royal Cōla patronage show royal women over long periods of time sponsoring costly and enduring religious monuments while kings focused, contemporaneously, on other types of legitimizing behavior. While kings looked to established ritual patterns to provide mandate in the Cōla context, queens—particularly Sembiyan Mahādevī—turned to conspicuous and often extended patterns of *dāna*.[99] The donation activity of Kambojikā may well fit this pattern, supported as it would be by the positive nature of Buddhist attitudes towards female giving.

Like Kambojikā, Nūr Jahān was married to a ruler sovereign in a land not originally his family's own and over a people of predominantly different cultural persuasion. Unlike Kambojikā, however, who joined other followers of Buddhism, Nūr Jahān retained her family's Islamic heritage all the while developing a receptivity to the Hindu culture around her.[100] The last wife of the Mughal emperor Jahāngīr, Nūr Jahān (1577–1645) came to power in 1611 at the time of her marriage, strengthening the hand of her already entrenched Persian family and shoring up the rule of a husband vulnerable to intoxicants. She had been married before, to a Persian adventurer known as Sher Afghān and, after his death in 1607, came to the women's quarters at the Mughal court in Agra under the sponsorship of Ruqayya Sultān Begam where she and her daughter lived until 1611.[101]

Upon her marriage to Jahāngīr, Nūr Jahān acquired not only considerable power but the substantial resources available to Mughal women at the time. Although there is not direct evidence that she came to this second marriage dowered in the traditional manner by her family,[102] we can assume that her upwardly mobile relatives, headed in India by her father I'timād-ud-daula, supported her materially in whatever ways were appropriate. We do know that members of her own family benefited, primarily through promotions, as a result of her marriage and that she herself was the object of sizable gift-giving at the time.[103] Not only were gifts given on the occasion of her marriage, but women of the *zanāna* (women's apartments) received regular increases in their allowances from the imperial purse. Akbar's *Ā'īn-i Akbarī,* memoirs of his reign, describes a system of entitlements for palace women designed to reflect internal social hierarchies as well as to keep control over the often extravagant expenditures, which were frequently devoted to luxury items of toilet and ornamentation brought in from local and overseas markets.[104] Not only did Nūr Jahān routinely receive such entitlements, but she was the chief beneficiary of the estate of her father who died early in 1622. This estate, which reverted by escheat to Jahāngīr, might ordinarily have benefited Nūr Jahān's brother Āṣaf Khān, but was bestowed upon her as part of Jahāngīr's normally extravagant largesse toward his favorite wife.[105] Finally, Nūr Jahān's substantial wealth was augmented through various channels of trade, both domestic and foreign, which she cultivated from the very beginning of her power. Her domestic revenues derived from collecting duties on textile goods, spices, and other consumer stuffs as they passed through trading centers,[106] and her foreign trade involved the export of textiles and indigo and the import of various luxury items.[107]

Although the disposal of these many resources went in part for enhancing life in the women's apartments, it was also turned toward acts of patronage. Reflecting, perhaps, Islamic tradition in which "the wife has often been the agent through whom monies or goods have been distributed to the poor,"[108] Nūr Jahān is said, by chroniclers such as Muḥammad Hādī and Mu'tamad Khān, to have been exceptionally liberal in her generosity and to have, for example, dowered five hundred orphan girls during her lifetime.[109] Her patronage also extended to buildings and, like a few other Mughal women of rank, though perhaps to a far greater extent, she used her resources to build monuments that were not only useful and necessary, but innovative and trend-setting as well: the tomb of her father in Agra, the Pattar Masjid in Srinagar, the tomb of her second husband in Lahore, her own tomb in Lahore, and many gardens on the plains and in the mountains.[110]

One of the earliest of her projects was a caravanserai located on a Mughal roadway between Agra and Lahore. Jahāngīr had called for wells and rest houses to be made for travelers along the major roads under Mughal sovereignty, and one of Nūr Jahān's contributions was the handsome Serai Nūr Maḥal in Jullundur district of the Punjab, with quarters for travelers and a mosque. Begun in 1618–19 and completed two years later with much fanfare by both Nūr Jahān and Jahāngīr,[111] the Serai Nūr Maḥal could accommodate upwards of two thousand travelers and their mounts, each traveler for a modest fee.[112]

The inscriptions on Serai Nūr Maḥal leave no doubt that the complex is the product of Nūr Jahān's patronage, effected within the context of the ruling Mughal family. The building is small but beautifully detailed,[113] and it is thought to be one of the most magnificent made under Jahāngīr. Francisco Pelsaert, a senior factor for the Dutch East India Company, noted while in India in the 1620s, "she [Nūr Jahān] erects very expensive buildings in all directions—*sarais,* or halting-places for travellers and merchants, and pleasure-gardens and palaces such as no one has ever made before—intending thereby to establish an enduring reputation."[114] This enduring reputation impressed Peter Mundy, an English factor in Agra during the 1630s, about ten years later who happened upon the *serai* "built by the old Queene Noore mohol . . . for the accommodation of Travellers;" it was "a very faire one," he noted, and compared favorably to what he had encountered heretofore.[115]

The facade of the western gateway of Serai Nūr Maḥal (fig. 6.5) is subdivided into several panels, many of them carved with abstract angular

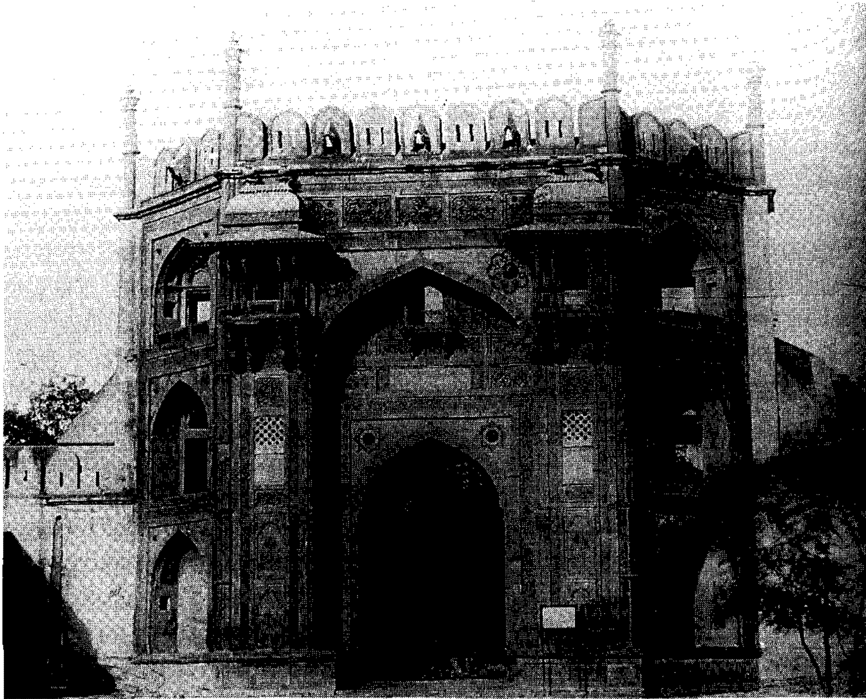

Fig. 6.5. Western gateway, Serai Nūr Maḥal, Jullundur, Punjab, ca. 1620. (Courtesy of the Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi)

and vegetal arabesques alternating with panels of figural representations: women, men on elephants, peacocks, and plants (fig. 6.6). It is important to note here that, like Kambojikā, Nūr Jahān found herself at a point of substantial cultural convergence, among a goodly array of religious and aesthetic traditions and, through monumental patronage, sought ways to syncretize normally divergent, even antithetical, visual heritages. Thus, in her caravanserai, Islamic skill in repeated and interconnectic arabesque pattern (geometric and organic, linear and planar) is neatly blended with the naturalistic representation that is a hallmark of Hindu art.

The appeal of Hindu female forms to Mughal women is first expressly reflected by Gulbadan, sister to Humāyūn (r. 1530–56), who in her *Humāyūn-nāma* marvels over the gift of dancing girls, sent "as curiosities of Hind."[116] The contrast of the open, loose, and revealing clothes of the dancers to the modest covering layers of the Muslim women is stark, especially when

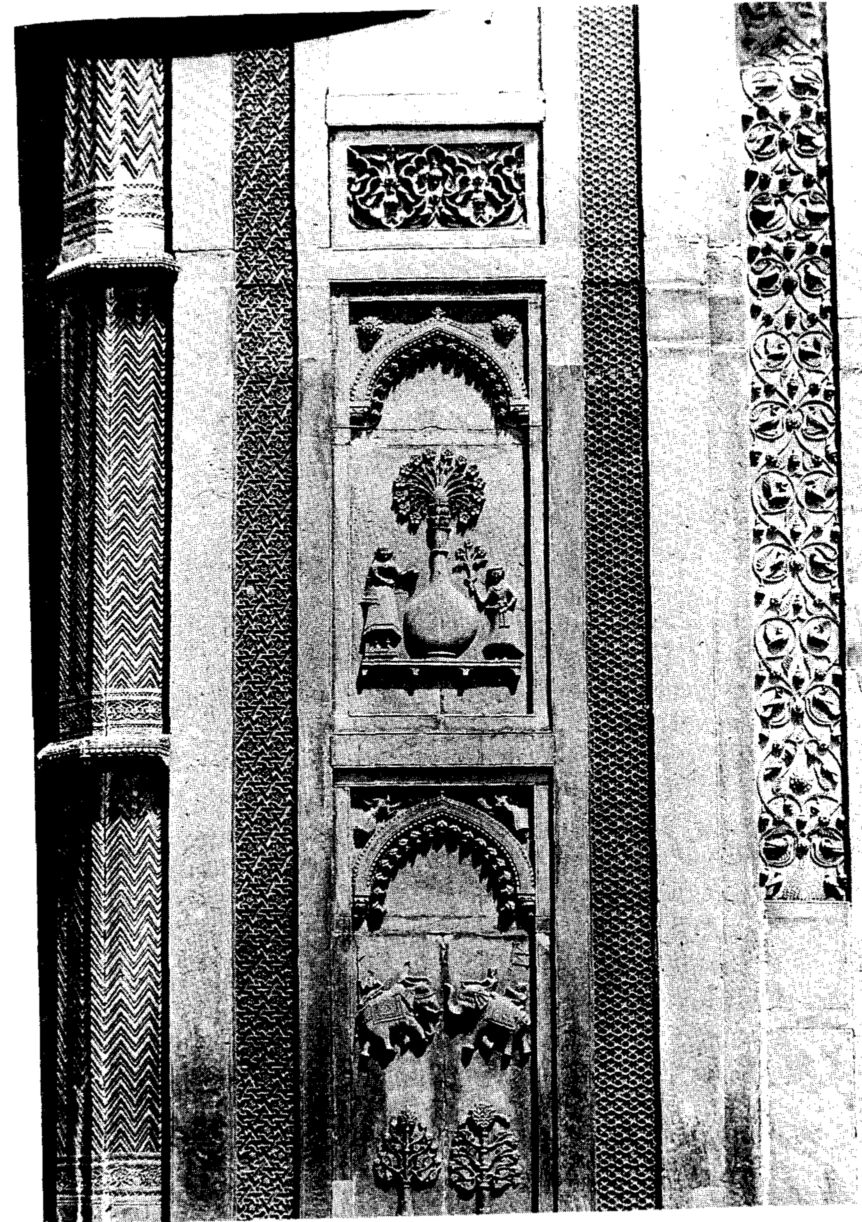

Fig. 6.6. Detail of facade, figure 6.5. (Courtesy of the Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi)

coupled with the women's elaborate jewelry and the intoxicating movements of the dance and, in a biography of Gulbadan, Rumer Godden interprets this experience as "the first sight of a new world . . . [stirring] a great deal of excitement."[117] In the next generation, Akbar would favor Hindu forms of dress and, under Nūr Jahān, Hindu sensibilities toward the female body would find renewed receptivity.[118] The argument here is not whether figural representation was Hindu or Muslim in origin—indeed there are long traditions of figuration in both religiocultural contexts—but rather that in the early seventeenth century in the time of Nūr Jahān, peacocks, lotuses, and elephants had a Hindu connotation. Their inclusion in Nūr Jahān's *serai* along with Islamic curvilinear arabesques and geometric repetitions signal not merely a passive eclecticism but the self-conscious collocation of traditions. The women of the reliefs, then, though in Mughal dress, nevertheless betoken an affirmation of the Hindu willingness to express the feminine form in stone relief and three-dimensional sculpture.[119]

These examples reflect several of the ways women in South Asia have been visible as patrons of monuments—donation patterns that render matronage by the Muslim queen Nūr Jahān, for example, fully consonant with the values of her ruling milieu. Not only have women given, historically, and been named as givers, but they have represented themselves in ways reflective of their peculiar social roles within the prevailing culture. While there may be a variety of axes used to locate the self-identification of women as they give,[120] the influence of the traditional Brahmanic norm is evident in the prominence, though not the dominance, of "wife" as a named kin relationship in several areas of women's donation inscriptions. What is of considerably more importance than this, however, is the great preponderance of kin relations in general as a way of self-designation for women among lay and renunciant Buddhist communities at Sāñcī and Mathurā, and for at least one Jain courtesan at Mathurā. The power of the extended family identification for matrons of all traditions—Buddhist, Jain, and Mughal—then, is evident throughout.

In the present examples, however, there is another feature shaping this identity as well: an affirmation of some economic autonomy and religious independence for women in the public endowing of religious institutions. This material agency is an especially accessible channel for religious activity by women, and becomes particularized not only in the kin titles of inscriptions but, if the interpretations are correct, in visually self-referential renderings as well. Here we note the case of the courtesan giver at Mathurā, as reflected in *yakṣī* figures, for example, and the case of Kambojikā as reflected in actual portraiture.

The royal matronage of Kambojikā and Nūr Jahān highlights two further themes: establishing the high status of the donor and expressing contemporary cultural syncretism. The very fact that the female figure from the Saptarṣi mound at Mathurā may be Kambojikā, donor of the *Guhā Vihāra,* suggests not only that it is a portrait statue, but also that such a representation might be made only of a figure of consequence. Moreover, the head wreath, the neck and arm adornments, and the complex draping of her robes signify a person of some importance. In the case of Nūr Jahān, the recognition of the *serai* as hers by the factor Francisco Pelsaert and the traveler Peter Mundy, and the notation that it belonged to a larger building program both consonant with Jahāngīr's and uniquely her own, aligned her matronage with that of other Indian queens in both physical scope and social consequence. In both cases, then, signs of the high status of the donors are evident, diversifying in this way the expressions used for self-representation found among women donors.

In all the cases of matronage examined here, we have noted the confluence of many peoples and influences at the sites. Several sites, Mathurā in particular, are urban centers where economic life is vigorous and complex, and where opportunities for women's donation are particularly varied and accessible. In the two cases of royal matronage, we note that the cultural confluence of the site is reflected in the object itself: in the case of the Kambojikā figure, a Śakan queen portrayed in Gandhāra style supporting a Buddhist institution, and in the case of Nūr Jahān, the collocation of Islamic arabesque and Hindu ornament, the latter showing, further, Mughalized tendencies and Persian, and perhaps European, influences. It may be that these two objects elucidate the role of women in synthetic processes, or that they underscore the role of high-ranking figures in inspiring or legitimizing the collocation of cultural trends, or that they mark the place of personal promotion in the donative tradition. It is certain, however, that in these two cases particularly, women are prominently visible as donors and that the very visibility of their donation spotlights both the unique person of the donor herself as well as the rich diversity of her time. Nūr Jahān's matronage of the Serai Nūr Maḥal, then, can be seen as consonant with other, somewhat earlier, examples of female giving in South Asia in which the donor is statedly a woman, using wealth appropriate to her status, for monumental art that reflects how she personally sees herself in the cultural matrix of the time.

NOTES

1. Ellison Banks Findly, "The Pleasure of Women: Nur Jahan and Mughal Painting," *Asian Art,* "Patronage by Women in Islamic Art" issue, 6.2 (Spring 1993): 66–86.

2. Ellison Banks Findly, "Nur Jahan's Embroidery Trade and Flowers of the Taj Mahal," *Asian Art and Culture,* "Indian Trade and Textiles" issue, 9.2 (Spring/ Summer 1996): 7–25.

3. *Manusmṛti (Manu),* ed. Mahāmahopādhyāya Gangānātha (Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1939) 8.29.

4. *Manu* 9.131, 195, 198, 200. See Pandurang Vaman Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra* (Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1930–62), 3:788–801; A. S. Altekar, *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization* (1938; 2nd ed., rpt., Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1973), 229–50; Vijay Nath, *Dāna: Gift System in Ancient India (c. 600 BC. – c. AD. 300); A Socio-Economic Perspective* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1987), 72.

5. In which the wife is "half of the [husband's] own self" (*arddho ha vā eṣa ātmano yaj jāyā*). *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa,* ed. Ācārya Satyavrata Sāmaśramī (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1903–12) 5.2.1.10. See Stephanie W. Jamison, *Sacrificed Wife/Sacrificer's Wife: Women, Ritual, and Hospitality in Ancient India* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

6. *Taittirīyasaṃhitā,* ed. E. Roer and E.B. Cowell (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1860–99) 6.2.1.1–2; see *Manu* 9.11.

7. I. Julia Leslie, *The Perfect Wife: The Orthodox Hindu Woman according to the* Strīdharmapaddhati *of Tryambakayajvan* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989), 183–93.

8. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra* 2.2:889–93.

9. Leslie C. Orr, "Women in the Temple, the Palace and the Family: The Construction of Women's Identities in Pre-Colonial Tamilnadu," in Karashima festschrift volume, ed. Kenneth R. Hall (forthcoming), 3–4, 9, 17, 21. See also Leslie C. Orr, "Jain and Hindu 'Religious Women' in Early Medieval Tamilnadu," in *Open Boundaries: Jains in Indian History and Culture,* ed. John E. Cort (Albany: State University of New York Press, forthcoming).

10. Gregory Schopen, "Doing Business for the Lord: Lending on Interest and Written Loan Contracts in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya,*" *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 114.4 (October-December 1994): 535.

11. He does note, however, problems regarding Pāli disciplinary rules (Vinaya) in this light. Gregory Schopen, "Monastic Law Meets the Real World: A Monk's Continuing Right to Inherit Family Property in Classical India," *History of Religions* 35.2 (November 1995): 110, 122.

12. Orr, "Women in the Temple," 9.

13. Ibid., 21.

14. Ibid., 20.

15. Schopen, "Monastic Law," 122; see also Gregory Schopen, "Two Problems in the History of Indian Buddhism: The Layman/Monk Distinction and the Doctrines of the Transference of Merit," *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 10 (1985): 9–10.

16. *Mātumattikaṃ itthikāya itthidhana,* "the mother's portion, the wife's property due her because she is a wife," in *Vinaya* 3.17; and *mattikaṃ dhanaṃ,* "the mother's property" in *Majjhima Nikāya* 2.63. All references to Pāli texts are to Pāli Text Society editions. These efforts, however, proved futile.

17. Ellison Banks Findly, "The Housemistress at the Door: Vedic and Buddhist Perspectives on the Mendicant Encounter," in *Debating Gender,* ed. Laurie L. Patton (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

18. Paul Dundas discusses this distinction in the case of the Jains (*The Jains* [London and New York: Routledge, 1992], 221).

19. See I. B. Horner, *Women under Primitive Buddhism: Laywomen and Almswomen* (London, 1930: rpt., Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1975), 42, 55.

20. See Nancy Auer Falk, "Exemplary Donors of the Pāli Tradition," in *Ethics, Wealth, and Salvation: A Study in Buddhist Social Ethics,* ed. Russell F. Sizemore and Donald K. Swearer (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1990), 124–43; Janice D. Willis, "Nuns and Benefactresses: The Role of Women in the Development of Buddhism," in *Women, Religion and Social Change,* ed. Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and Ellison Banks Findly (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1985), 59–85; Janice D. Willis, "Female Patronage in Indian Buddhism," in *The Powers of Art: Patronage in Indian Culture,* ed. Barbara Stoler Miller (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992), 46–53.

21. Nath, *Dāna,* 75.

22. Ibid., 70.

23. Vidya Dehejia, *Early Buddhist Rock Temples: A Chronology* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1972), plate 53, table 9; D. Jithendra Das, *The Buddhist Architecture in Andhra* (New Delhi: Books and Books, 1993), 1, 18–19, 39, 57; H. Sarkar, *Studies in Early Buddhist Architecture of India* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1966), 77.

24. Vidya Dehejia, "The Collective and Popular Basis of Early Buddhist Patronage: Sacred Monuments, 100 BC – AD 250," in *The Powers of Art,* ed. Miller, 35.

25. See, for example, Walter M. Spink, "Ajanta's Chronology: Politics and Patronage," in *Kalādarśana: American Studies in the Art of India,* ed. Joanna G. Williams (New Delhi: Oxford & IBH Publishing Co., in collaboration with American Institute of Indian Studies, 1981), 109–26.

26. Das, *Buddhist Architecture,* 57; Sarkar, *Early Buddhist Architecture,* 55, 57.

27. Schopen, "Two Problems," 10, 23.

28. Dehejia, "Collective and Popular," 36; Manjushree Rao, *Sanchi Sculptures (An Aesthetic and Cultural Study)* (New Delhi: Akay Book Corporation, 1994), 184–214; John Marshall and Alfred Foucher, *The Monuments of Sāñchī,* 3 vols. (Calcutta, 1940; rpt., Delhi: Swati Publications, 1982, 1983); Vidya Dehejia, ed., *Unseen Presence: The Buddha and Sanchi* (Mumbai, India: Marg Publications, 1996).

29. Upinder Singh, "Sanchi: The History of the Patronage of an Ancient Buddhist Establishment," *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 33.1 (January–March 1996): 15–18.

30. Dehejia, *Early Rock Temples,* 144–45.

31. Nath, *Dāna,* 81, 71–72.

32. Schopen, "Monastic Law," 106. See also Schopen, "Two Problems," 26; Gregory Schopen, "On Monks, Nuns and 'Vulgar' Practices: The Introduction of the Image Cult into Indian Buddhism," *Artibus Asiae* 49.1–2 (1988–89): 153–68; Gregory Schopen, "Deaths, Funerals, and the Division of Property in a Monastic Code," in *Buddhism in Practice,* ed. Donald S. Lopez Jr. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 473–502.

33. Dehejia, "Collective and Popular," 38.

34. Alexander Cunningham, *The Bhilsa Topes; or, Buddhist Monuments of Central India* (London, 1854; rpt., Nepali Khapra, Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1966), 171.

35. Singh, "Sanchi," 9.

36. Nath, *Dāna,* 72. See also Rao, *Sanchi,* 208, and B. G. Gokhale, "The Early Buddhist Elite," *Journal of Indian History* 42.2 (1965): 391–402. For the *ghariṇīye* inscription, see Marshall and Foucher, *Sāñchī,* I (text): 315, no. 160.

37. Singh, "Sanchi," 11.

38. Singh, "Sanchi," 11, and on p. 20 Singh notes that while kinship is the critical marker for women donors, native place is an important one for male donors.

39. Given as in Cunningham, *Bhilsa,* 150–222, inscription nos. 4, 8, 37, 66, 80, 83, 85, 95, 105, 127, 148, 166; p. 222. For a longer list, see Marshall and Foucher, *Sāñchī,* I (text): 301–83, inscription nos. 31, 49, 60, 88, 108, 119, 124, 125, 136, 162, 217, 218, 336, 351, 352, 364, 367, 482, 495, 527, 567, 571, 625, 653, 701, 721, 728, 735, 770, 813. See also no. 347.

40. Given as in Marshall and Foucher, *Sāñchī,* I (text): 301–83, nos. 16, 41, 42, 44, 73, 75, 142, 172, 173, 193, 301, 321, 330, 368, 411, 490, 492, 493, 498, 500, 549, 804. See also nos. 583, 762. Compare the chart in Singh, "Sanchi," 12.

41. Given as in Cunningham, *Bhilsa,* nos. 16, 45, 46, 62, 96, 109 (sister-in-law); nos. 7, 18, 63, 64 (sister). See also Marshall and Foucher, *Sāñchī,* I (text): nos. 78, 79, 189, 597.

42. Cunningham, *Bhilsa,* nos. 118 (father); 121, 150, 190 (son); 135 (brother). See also Marshall and Foucher, *Sāñchī,* I (text): nos. 450 (father); 398, 479, 490, 592, 762 (son); 135, 769 (brother).

43. R. C. Sharma, *Buddhist Art: Mathura School* (New Delhi: Wiley Eastern Limited, New Age International, 1995), 6–7, 31, 35, 37; R.C. Sharma, *Mathura Museum: Introduction* (Mathura: Archaeological Museum, 1971), 2, 4.

44. Dehejia, "Collective and Popular," 42; Sharma, *Buddhist Art,* pp. 46, 53–55, 152, 167, figure 65; Sharma, *Museum,* 34–35, figure 28; J. C. Harle, *The Art and Architecture of the Indian Subcontinent* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986), 62–64, figure 43; Jack Finegan, *An Archaeological History of Religions of Indian Asia* (New York: Paragon House, 1989), 420, figure 13.1.

45. Schopen, "Image Cult," 162, 163.

46. Nath, *Dāna,* 70.

47. Heinrich Lüders, *Mathurā Inscriptions,* ed. Klaus L. Janert (Göttingen: Van den Hoeck & Ruprecht, 1961), inscription nos. 13, 93.

48. N. P. Joshi, "Early Jaina Icons from Mathurā," in *Mathurā: The Cultural Heritage,* ed. Doris Meth Srinivasan (New Delhi: South Asia Books, American Institute of Indian Studies, 1989), 347.

49. Lüders, *Mathurā,* nos. 15, 23, 93. See also D. C. Sircar, "Observations on the Study of Some Epigraphic Records from Mathurā," in *Mathurā,* ed. Srinivasan, 257, 258.

50. Lüders, *Mathurā,* no. 14, 17, 93.

51. Joshi, "Jaina Icons," 347.

52. Lüders, *Mathurā,* nos. 1, 24, 68, 74, 76, 81, 136, 143, 150, 151, 167, 172, 180; see also R. C. Sharma, "New Inscriptions from Mathurā," in Srinivasan, ed., *Mathurā,* 312.

53. Lüders, *Mathurā,* nos. 60, 61, 62; Sharma, "New Inscriptions," 312, 313, 314.

54. Examples from Jain inscriptions: Lüders, *Mathurā,* nos. 14, 17, 93.

55. Lüders, *Mathurā,* nos. 24, 67, 90. Orr finds "multiple kin" identification, that is, the process of identifying women by reference to more than one relative, to be a significant marker in tracking the changing trends of medieval Tamil inscriptions for women donors. Orr, "Women in the Temple," 10.

56. Orr, "Women in the Temple, 9.

57. For discussions of the status of women donors and renunciants in early Buddhism, see Findly, "Housemistress at the Door," and Findly, "Women and the *arahant* Issue in Early Pāli Literature," in *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion,* 15.1 (Spring 1999): 57–76.

58. *Manu* 4.209, 219; 9.259, 260.

59. Horner, *Women,* 87–94. See Altekar, *Women,* 181–82 and Nath, *Dāna,* 71.

60. Moti Chandra, *The World of Courtesans* (Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1973), 48; see also 43–56.

61. Chandra, *Courtesans,* 85–91.

62. *Kāmasūtra* 6.5.25.

63. Kendall W. Folkert, "Jain Religious Life at Ancient Mathurā: The Heritage of Late Victorian Interpretation," in *Mathurā,* ed. Srinivasan, pp. 103–12; Sharma, *Buddhist Art,* 55–57.

64. Sharma, *Museum,* 24–26; Sharma, *Buddhist Art,* 14; Finegan, *History,* 243–45; B. C. Bhattacharya, *The Jaina Iconography* (Lahore, 1939; 2nd ed., rev., Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1974), 142.

65. Harle, *Art and Architecture,* 61.

66. Joshi, "Jaina Icons," 333.

67. John E. Cort, "Art, Religion, and Material Culture: Some Reflections on Method," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 64.3 (Fall 1996): 620.

68. Dehejia, "Collective and Popular," 43–44; B. N. Mukherjee, "Growth of Mathurā and Its Society (Up to the End of the Kuṣāṇa Age)," in *Mathurā,* ed. Srinivasan, 65. A translation and discussion of many of the Jain inscriptions bearing the names of women donors can be found in Georg Bühler, "New Jaina Inscriptions from Mathurā," *Epigraphia Indica* 1 (1892): 371–93, and Bühler, "Further Jaina Inscriptions from Mathurā," *Epigraphia Indica* 2 (1894): 195–212.

69. Dehejia, "Collective and Popular," 43.

70. Bühler, "New Inscriptions," 380.

71. Sharma, *Museum,* 25; Finegan, *History,* 264. For an alternate version, see Chandra, *Courtesans,* 57. The designation of a professional lineage in this donation inscription of a *gaṇikā* woman is similar to the designation of teaching lineages in inscriptions of Jain religious women in medieval Tamilnadu. See Orr, "Jain and Hindu 'Religious Women,'" 12.

72. Finegan, *History,* 264; Sharma, *Museum,* fig. XIX.

73. Sharma, *Museum,* 25.

74. Cort, "Art," 616.

75. On Śvetāmbara Jain views, see Padmanabh S. Jaini, *Gender and Salvation: Jaina Debates on the Spiritual Liberation of Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

76. Chandra, *Courtesans,* 32; see also 32–42.

77. Dundas, *Jains,* 150–52, 164, 169–70.

78. Dundas, *Jains,* 171.

79. Nath, *Dāna,* 31.

80. Finegan, *History,* 263.

81. Sharma, *Museum,* 26–28; Sharma, *Buddhist Art,* 89–92, 122–31; Finegan, *History,* 254; Bhattacharya, *Jaina,* 29, 65–107; Gritli v. Mitterwallner, "Yakṣas of Ancient Mathurā," in *Mathurā,* ed. Srinivasan, 368–82.

82. Harle, *Art and Architecture,* 60; Sharma, *Buddhist Art,* 128; Mario Bussagli, *5000 Years of the Art of India* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., n.d.,), 97–101.

83. Chandra, *Courtesans,* 57.

84. Bhattacharya, *Jaina,* 86. For a discussion of *yakṣī* imagery in the Jain context in medieval Tamil Nadu, see Orr, "Jain and Hindu 'Religious Women,'" 4, 6–7.

85. The women in the harems of Kings Udena and Pasenadi in the Pāli Canon (*Vinaya* 2:290; *Jātaka* 2:23–26), for example, who give robes to the Saṅgha in abundance, Queen Nāganikā who gives support to the Nānāghāt cave complex, Queen Vāsiṣṭhīputrā who supports the Kanheri cave complex (Dehejia, *Early Rock Temples,* plate 53, table 9, series IV), and the chief queen of Khāravela who supports a temple and cave at Manchāpuri (Nath, 71).

86. Padma Kaimal, "Early Cōla Kings and 'Early Cōla Temples': Art and the Evolution of Kingship," *Artibus Asiae* 56.1–2 (1996): 33–66; Cynthia Talbot, "Temples, Donors, and Gifts: Patterns of Patronage in Thirteenth-Century South India," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 50.2 (May 1991): 308–40; Orr, "Women in the Temple," 5–6.

87. Sharma, *Museum,* 6; Sharma, *Buddhist Art,* 8–9, 24–25, 47, 61, 154–55, figure 12; B. D. Chattopadhyaya, "Mathurā from the Śuṅga to the Kuṣāṇa Period: An Historical Outline," in *Mathurā,* ed. Srinivasan, 21–22; J. E. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, "Foreign Elements in Indian Culture Introduced during the Scythian Period with Special Reference to Mathurā," in *Mathurā,* ed. Srinivasan, 74–75; Sharma, "New Inscriptions," 309.

88. Sharma, *Museum,* 5, 29–30, figures XXIII-A, B; Sharma, *Buddhist Art,* 24, 61–62, figure 11; Bussagli, *Art of India,* 79, figure 81.

89. Chattopadhyaya, "Mathurā," 21.

90. Romila Thapar, *A History of India,* vol. I. (Baltimore, Md.: Penguin Books, 1966), 96–99.

91. Harle, *Art and Architecture,* 68–69.

92. Van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, "Foreign Elements," 74, 79.

93. Sharma, *Museum,* 30.

94. Van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, "Foreign Elements," 75.

95. Sharma, *Buddhist Art,* 154.

96. Sharma, "New Inscriptions," 309.

97. Sharma, *Museum,* 9.

98. See related artifacts in the Government Museum at Mathurā; Sharma, *Buddhist Art,* 24, 61.

99. Kaimal, "Early Cōla Kings," 55, 63–64.

100. Findly, "The Pleasure of Women."

101. For details, see Ellison Banks Findly, *Nur Jahan: Empress of Mughal India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

102. On the traditional Islamic *mahr* or dowry for Muslim women, see Robert Roberts, *The Social Laws of the Qorān* (London, 1925: new ed., London and Dublin: Curzon Press, 1971), 15–16, 28–33; Reuben Levy, *The Social Structure of Islam* (1957; rpt., Cambridge: University Press, 1971), 95, 97, 114; John L. Esposito,

Women in Muslim Family Law (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1982), 24–26; Jane I. Smith, "The Experience of Muslim Women: Considerations of Power and Authority," in *The Islamic Impact,* ed. Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, Byron Haines, and Ellison Findly (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1984), 91–97.

103. Findly, *Nur Jahan,* 37–40. See also Irfan Habib, "The Family of Nur Jahan During Jahangir's Reign," in *Medieval India, A Miscellany* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1969), 1:74–95.

104. H. Blochmann, trans., *Āʿīn-i Akbarī by Abū'l-Fazl 'Allāmī* (1873; 2nd ed., rev. by D. C. Phillott, Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1927), 1:46–47. See also W. H. Moreland and P. Geyl, trans., *Jahangir's India: The* Remonstrantie *of Francisco Pelsaert (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons Ltd., 1925), 64; Niccolao* Manucci, *Storia do Mogor, or Mogul India, 1653–1708,* trans. William Irvine, 2 vols. (London, 1907; rpt., Calcutta: Editions Indian, 1965), 2:308, 310, 315–16, 319; Rekha Misra, *Women in Mughal India (1526–1748 A.D.)* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1967), 60–64.

105. Alexander Rogers, trans., and Henry Beveridge, ed., *The Tūzuk-i-Jahāngīrī, or Memoirs of Jahāngīr,* 2 vols. (1909–14; 2nd ed., Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1968), 2:228.

106. Pelsaert, *Remonstrantie,* 4–5.

107. Findly, *Nur Jahan,* 128–60. See also Findly, "The Pleasure of Women"; Findly, "Nur Jahan's Embroidery Trade."

108. J. I. Smith, "Experience of Muslim Women," 107.

109. H. M. Elliot and John Dowson, trans. and ed., *The History of India as Told by Its Own Historians: The Muhammadan Period* (London, 1875; rpt., New York: AMS Press, 1966), 6:399, 405.

110. See Vincent A. Smith, *A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), 180;* Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture (Islamic Period)* (1956; 4th ed., Bombay: Taraporevala's Treasure House of Books, 1964), 83, 100–101; Khalid Mahmud, "The Mausoleum of Emperor Jahangir," *Arts of Asia* 13.1 (Jan.–Feb. 1983): 57–66; Catherine B. Asher, *The New Cambridge History of India,* 1:4, *Architecture of Mughal India* (Cambridge: University Press, 1992), 127–33.

111. *Tūzuk* 2:192–93.

112. Wayne E. Begley, "Four Mughal Caravanserais Built during the Reigns of Jahāngīr and Shāh Jahān," *Muqarnas* 1 (1983): 168. See also Sheo Narain, "Serai Nur Mahal," *Journal of the Punjab Historical Society* 11 (1931): 29–34.

113. Asher, *Architecture of Mughal India,* 128–29.

114. Pelsaert, *Remonstrantie,* 50.

115. Richard Carnac Temple, ed., *The Travels of Peter Mundy, in Europe and Asia, 1608–1667,* vol. 2 (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1914), 78.

116. Gulbadan Begam (Princess Rose-Body), *The History of Humāyūn (Humāyūn-Nāma),* trans. Annette S. Beveridge (1901; rpt., Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyāt-i Delli, 1972), 7.

117. Rumer Godden, *Gulbadan: Portrait of a Rose Princess at the Mughal Court* (Twickenham, 1980; New York: Viking Press, 1981), 45, 48.

118. Godden, *Gulbadan,* 130; V. A. Smith, *History,* 178; Findly, "Pleasure of Women."

119. I note here as well that the right-hand panel of figure 6.6, showing arabesques with birds enclosed, is reminiscent of embroidery patterns traded internationally at this time and foreshadows arabesques with flowers enclosed used on the Taj. See Findly, "Embroidery Trade."

120. Orr, "Women in the Temple," 20.