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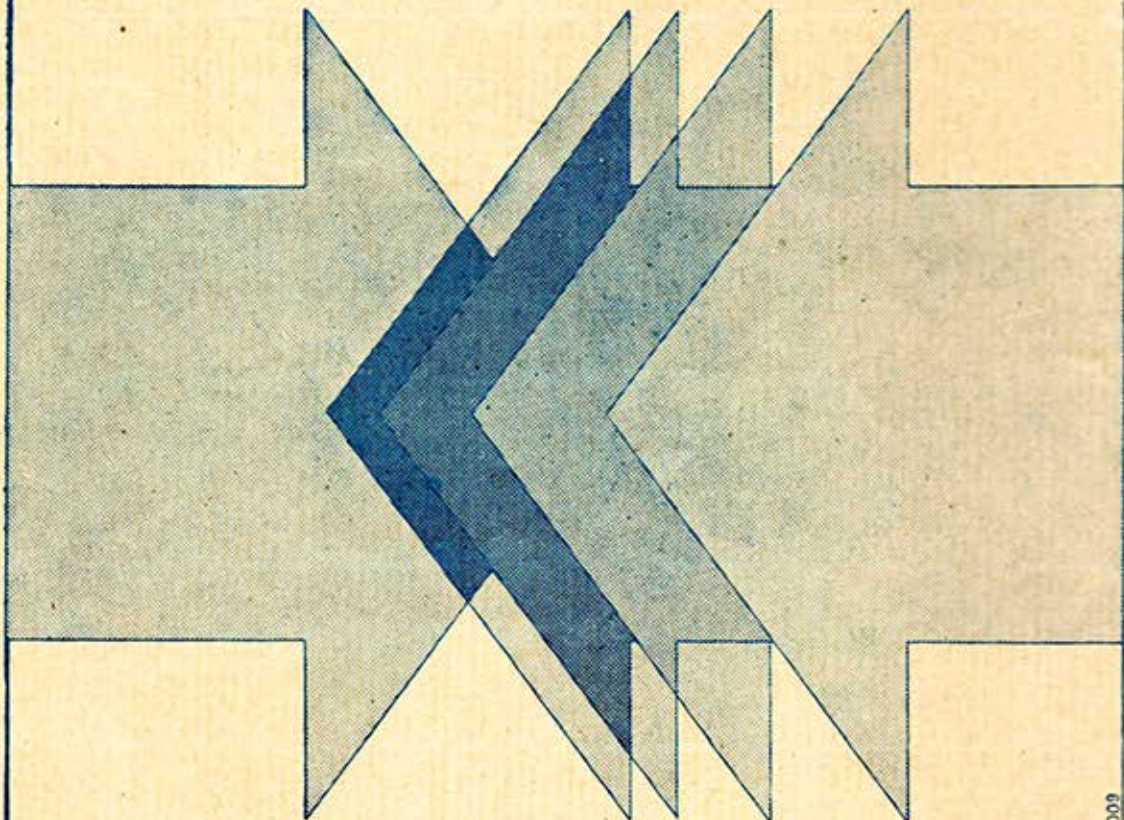
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Parsiana

August 1981 Volume 4 Number 2

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In Memoriam

Mr. Fali Meherji Variava,

Director

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Readers' views are welcome on any subject of interest to the community and should be sent to The Editor, Readers' Forum, Parsiana, G.P.O. Box 892, Bombay 400 001. Letters are subject to editing for reasons of space and clarity.

Dharamsala Digest

I have just returned from Bombay to Orissa by road, a few years back I had travelled from Bombay to Assam by road, and on both these occasions I felt the need to compile and make available to those who so desire, a list of Parsi Dharamsalas, with addresses.

Also, I would like to inform you for the benefit of your readers, that the Calcutta Zoroastrian Anjuman has painstakingly compiled a directory of all Zoroastrians residing in North-East India. This is a valuable reference book for young travelling Zoroastrian salesmen, businessmen and tourists to those areas.

K.E. KHAMBATTA
Bhubaneswar

The Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India intended to undertake a list of Dharamsalas, but as a result of the various splits, nothing was done.

Pilgrim's Progress

I was a visitor to the Metropolitan Washington area, and I met some of the Zoroastrians living there. Inevitably, the talks led to the article, *Pilgrim's Progress*, (Parsiana, April 1981) that you recently published about the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington's desire to build a Zoroastrian Centre, including an *Atash Dadgar* or *Agiary*. I felt that the figure of \$600,000 or over Rs 40 lakhs, as the eventual cost of that scheme, might frighten many Zoroastrians in India as "too big" and, therefore, deter them from helping this most worthwhile cause.

I must say that I was converted, after talking to the dedicated Zoroastrians who live here. The Washington Association's estimate includes a \$200,000 trust fund from whose income one or two full-time *mobeds* can be engaged to tend to the *Atash Dadgar*. Thus, their physical facilities will cost about \$400,000; or in terms of purchasing power in India, only about four lakhs of rupees.

The Washington proposal is very modest, although it is far-sighted in its approach and potential impact on all Zoroastrians.

FURDOON A. MEHTA
Arlington, U.S.A.

'Forgotten Factors'

Zoroastrians living abroad, feel a keen sense of participation in the impending, consequential, socio-cultural and organizational changes affecting the community in Bombay. We have been the forgotten factors in the local internecine conflict of Lilliputians, which have so far advanced nothing but egos, and afflicted us with a sense of dormant frustration.

The courage of the Committee for Electoral Rights (CER) in taking on single handedly not only the Committee of United Zoroastrians (CUZ), but with it, the Bombay Parsi Panchayat (BPP) and the orthodoxy at large, has at last exposed the hollow claim of representativeness advanced by the orthodoxy and the community has now projected its aspirations in no uncertain manner. The CER victory ensures that no longer will the community lend itself to maneuvering by a coterie.

The CER should gear itself to determining the nature and quantum of forthcoming changes, with full participa-

tion of an enlightened public. This should be done by way of holding several regional/ward seminars, at which, one main issue at a time may be projected. To be successful, a sense of direction must be provided, by recruiting the best available and willing talent for each major area of work or reform. A harmonization through intelligent participation may yet be achieved and the Community enabled to march forth as a united body.

HOMI B. MINOCHER HOMJI
Canada

Help Spenta

In the article on Zoroastrian Street Mandal, Secunderabad-Hyderabad, which appeared in the March 1981 issue of *Parsiana*, it is stated that the sales-counter, run as part of the self-help project, pays a high rent.

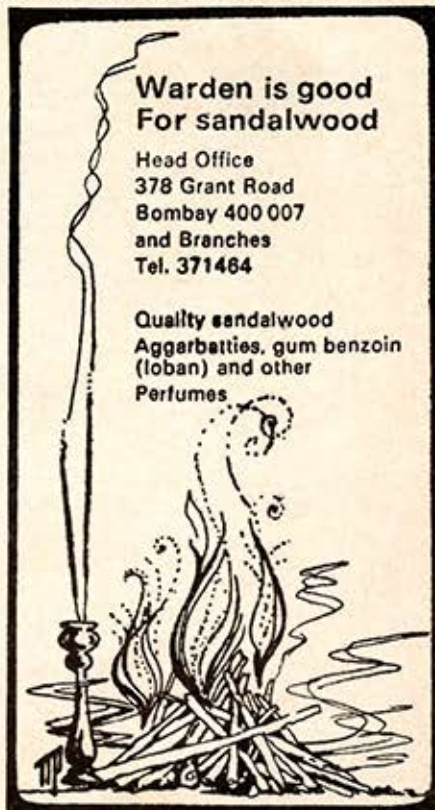
I would like to clarify that for our sales counter, "Spenta", the trustees of the Anjuman have given us a small place in one of their buildings on a modest rental. For our kitchen located some distance away from the sales counter, we are indebted to the trustees of the Old Parsi Fire Temple who charge us a truly nominal rent.

One of our biggest hurdles has been to get proper accommodation for our kitchen, show-room and office. As our kit-

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chen and showroom are in two separate places, great inconvenience is caused in transporting the preparations from the kitchen to the shop. The present arrangement is also vastly detrimental to a brisk sale.

To surmount this hurdle, we want a building where we could accommodate our kitchen, shop and office under one roof. To that end, unceasing efforts over a long period are continuing with the trustees of the Parsi Anjuman of Secunderabad and Hyderabad to allot us a piece of land in the Anjuman compound. The construction cost will mount into a formidable amount. Equipping the kitchen, the show-room and the office with adequate gadgets and furniture will mean a further sum.

To raise the finances for this purposes, we appeal to private and public trusts and to individual donors in India and abroad to donate to this praise worthy effort of the ladies of the Zoroastrian Stree Mandal, to make their beneficiaries self-respecting and self-reliant.

Donations should be in favour of the Zoroastrian Stree Mandal, Secunderabad-Hyderabad, 395, Bank Street, Hyderabad 500 001 (A.P.)

ALOO R. RUSTOMFRAM
President, Zoroastrian Stree Mandal,
Hyderabad

Dadar Madressa

In the article entitled *Madressa's Diamond Jubilee*, (*Parsiana*, May 1981) the second photo of the students reciting prayers and food being supplied to them, is not of the students of the Athornan Boarding Madressa, Dadar, but of the M. F. Cama Athornan Institute, at Andheri, Bombay.

The Dadar Parsee Youths Assembly High School (DPYA) which is adjacent to our Madressa, gives academic education to our students free of charge since the year 1966 as arranged by the then Honorary Secretary of the DPLYA, D. D. Kapadia.

We are very thankful to Darab D. Mehta, chairman, the authorities of the school, the principal and the staff, for all the co-operation that we receive from them.

R. N. PANTHAKI
Principal, Athornan Boarding
Madressa, Dadar.

Khandalavala Award

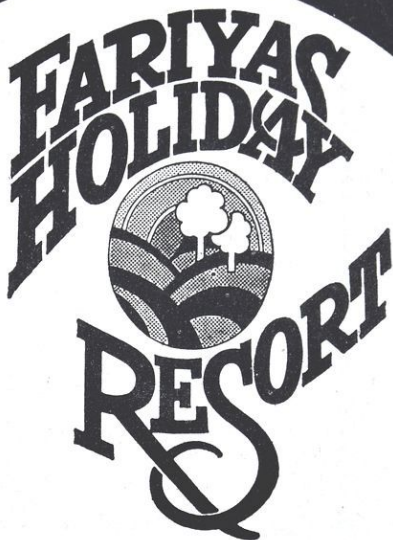
I refer to the report in the May 1981 issue of *Parsiana* which states that Karl Khandalavala was awarded the R. P. Chanda birth centenary medal by the Asiatic Society of Bangalore on 2 March 1981.

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To the best of my knowledge there is no Asiatic Society in Bangalore. The said medal was awarded by The Asiatic Society of Calcutta at its Annual General Meeting held on 2 February 1981.

And shouldn't the recipient's name be correctly spelled as Khandalava?

J. R. MEHTA
Calcutta

The report was taken from *The Times of India* issue dated 4 March 1981. The error in spelling is regretted.

Statue Shifting

A newspaper report notes that "The traffic department... is proposing to shift the statue of Karsetji Manekji Shroff, better known as *Khada Parsi*, from its present site at the foot of the Byculla Bridge, Bombay. The shifting is part of the new traffic design at the bridge and of the Byculla fly-over."

This news has, shocked me. This is a revered statue of well over a 100 years.

Sculptured in London, it was erected in 1867 by Shroff's friends and admirers at the junction of Bellasis, Clare and Rippon Roads, near Nagpada, where it stood for 61 years.

It was shifted in 1928, after consulting the family, to its present site, which incidentally is very close to where he founded The Alexandra Native Girls' English Institution, in March 1860.

This statue reminds citizens of a fine, straightforward Parsi whose sense of equality, honour and justice were impeccable.

PERIN M. R. B. JEEJEEBHOY

Religion of Change

Your readers may find the following remark by the noted philosopher Alfred North Whitehead of interest: "Religion will not regain its old power until it can face change in the same spirit as does science. Its principles may be eternal, but the expression of those principles requires continual development."

DHUN MEHTA.

Rashid D. Bamanbehram

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Events and Personalities

Ripon Rich

With so many prestigious clubs in Bombay operating in the red, the **Ripon Club** is proving an exception to the rule.

The 97-year-old institution situated on the 3rd and 4th floors of the N. M. Wadia Building on Mahatma Gandhi Road, showed a "moderate profit of Rs 53,522" in its annual report for the year ending 31st December 1979.

"The club earned this profit in the face of spiralling prices and all round scarcity and shortages," note the honorary secretaries, R. B. Dhalla and E. S. Hodiwalla.

Founded by Sir Pherozeshah Mehta in 1884 for the community, the club has around 400 members both men and women, according to the report. The nominal entrance fee of Rs 750 and a monthly subscription of Rs 25 keeps membership in the range of the young as well as middle-income Parsis. Being situated in the heart of the city's commercial area, the club with its old world atmosphere, is an ideal place for lunch, snacks and relaxing. Several newspapers and magazines are available and can be read on comfortable easy chairs on which the members can stretch their legs.

Wednesday is Dhansak day at the club; there is a fixed menu for the other days as well, plus a limited range of *a la carte* dishes at reasonable prices. Members have the option of dining on a common table or reserving a table for themselves and their guests. A hall cum terrace on the fourth floor is available for social functions.

The club has an impressive list of office-bearers, with its president being Jeejibhoy N. Marshall; vice-presidents: Sir Dinshav Petit, Baronet, Jamshed N. Patuck and Phiroze R. Vakil; Trustees: Phiroze R. Vakil, Ratanji N. Bhavnagri, Rusi N. Sethna, Eruch B. Desai and Rohinton B. Dhalla; Managing Committee: Kali H. Mody (chairman), Burjor H. Antia, Sapal R. Dalal, Firoze

Damania, Sam Lala, R. Nanabhoy, K. J. Khajotia and P. S. Shroff; Honorary Treasurers: Vispi S. Dastur and Minoo A. Seervai; Honorary Secretaries: Rohinton B. Dhalla and Eruch S. Hodiwalla.

For further information write to the Ripon Club, 123, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bombay 400 023.

Leading Lady

Roda Mistry the first Parsi woman to become a member of the Rajya Sabha, was recently elected to chair the Press and Public Relations Association (PPRA).



Mistry: furthering communication

The Delhi based association's activities include holding of seminars and courses as well as the publication of a monthly journal *Press and Public Relations* (PPR) in association with the Indian Institute of Journalism and the Institute of Public Relations and Home Management. PPR states it is "devoted to furthering the cause of communications. PPR is trade-oriented and fills an important gap in India's information programme."

Mistry who also chairs the Andhra Pradesh Travel and Tourism Development Corporation, is a former cabinet minister in the Andhra Pradesh government. She is in charge of the legal aid cell of the All India Congress Committee (I), chairperson of the Andhra Pradesh National Children's Fund, president emeritus of the Indian Council of Social Welfare, Andhra Pradesh, and All India president of the Indian Council of social welfare.

Active in the field of women's movements for welfare and progress, "her current interest in promoting the cause of women treated as beasts of burden and playthings has made her persuade the only too willing Indira Gandhi, the leader of her party, to open legal cells in all Pradesh Congress Committees in the country; these cells often come to the rescue of women on the verge of mental breakdown," notes her bio-data.

Born, brought-up and educated in the "Moglai" atmosphere of the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad, Mistry, now a grandmother of three, attributes the moulding of her political career and welfare activities to the late nationalist and former governor of Gujarat, Janab Mehdi Nawaz Jung. It was reportedly Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who first gave her the opportunity to enter politics on a Congress ticket in 1959.

Mistry has been lobbying for the Parsis to remain within the scope of the Adoption of Children Bill, 1980, presently before parliament.

Tata Scholars

Thirteen Zoroastrians are amongst the 73 J. N. Tata scholars selected for the academic year 1981-82, notes **Dinshah K. Malegamvala**, director of the J. N. Tata Endowment.

The students, their subjects and the colleges they will attend are: Tester F. Ashavaid, applied biology, Johns Hopkins University; Karan F. Billimoria, accountancy, City of London Polytech-

nic; Eduljee D. Chikliwala, chemical engineering, University of Southern California; Hector A. DeVitre, food science & technology, Kansas State University; Rustom K. Hathi, architecture, University of Texas at Austin; Percy C. Irani, computer engineering, University of California, Santa Barbara; Hormuz P. Irani, chemistry, University of Akron; Gulnar K. Moradian, biochemistry, Syracuse University; Shiroy H. Ranji, architecture, Pratt Institute, New York; Cyrus J. Shroff, business administration, Wharton School Pennsylvania; Daneshmund K. Tafti, mechanical engineering, Texas Technological Institute; Rohinton E. Taraporewala, mechanical engineering, U.S.A.; Sarosh N. Vesuna, electrical engineering, Pennsylvania State University.



Mehta receiving purse from Bodhanwalla.

Healing Touch

The Parsis of Jamshedpur "having had a spate of accidents, sickness and untimely deaths recently, have decided to tackle the situation with a *jashan*", writes, Silloo E. Surti, *Parsiana's* Jamshedpur correspondent.

"All the *navar-martabs* in town are invited to sit and pray for the well-being of Parsis in Jamshedpur in particular, and all Zoroastrians in general", notes Surti.

In other news from the steel town, "a handsome purse of Rs 3,500 was collected from the Parsis of Jamshedpur for Zoroastrian Studies, in response to an

Noted management authors, Minoo K. Rustomji (left) and Dr. C. Northcote Parkinson (right), of Parkinson's Law fame, at a function held to mark the release of their latest book, "Realities in Management" at the Taj Mahal Hotel, Bombay, on 15 June 1981.

appeal sent out by the Jamshedpur Parsee Association's Honorary Secretary, Eruch F. Surti. Donations are still coming in and the Jamshedpur Parsi shop to continue contributing to Zoroastrian Studies which is doing so much for the spread of Zoroastrianism by educating priests and laity and alleviating the condition of poor Parsis in Udvada and Navsari."

Zoroastrian Studies is the Bombay based institution founded by Oxford educated scholar-preacher, Khojeste Mistree. Tina Mehta, a student of Mistree, had delivered a series of 16 lectures in Jamshedpur, the last being given on July 19, to a class of over 60 students.

Village Welfare

Six hundred and thirty-five needy Zoroastrians living in the rural areas of Gujarat were given aid in cash and kind through funds collected by the Surat and Bombay Parsi Panchayats in consultation with village anjumans, states a report from Maneck Gheyara, president of the Surat Parsi Panchayat.

At a total cost of Rs 82,023, 9,745 kilos of rice, 9,305 kilos of wheat, 5,295 kilos of *tur dal*, 952 kilos of *channa dal*, 312 kilos of *mug dal*, 240 kilos of oil, and 2,940 kilos of *jawar* were distributed to the beneficiaries in 28 villages covered by the scheme, notes the report; debts incurred by the beneficiaries due to banks and other institutions were paid off by cheque.

Ophthalmic Honour

The first Indian doctor to be appointed a director on the Board of the National Eye Research Foundation of Chicago, U.S.A., is Dr Keiki R. Mehta, noted



Mehta: eye research director

ophthalmic surgeon of Bombay, states a press release.

"The Foundation is a non-profit research organisation devoted to the problems and management of the visually impaired and the blind. It is the prime international co-ordinating agency for eye care and has its affiliation in 22 countries all over the world," notes the release.

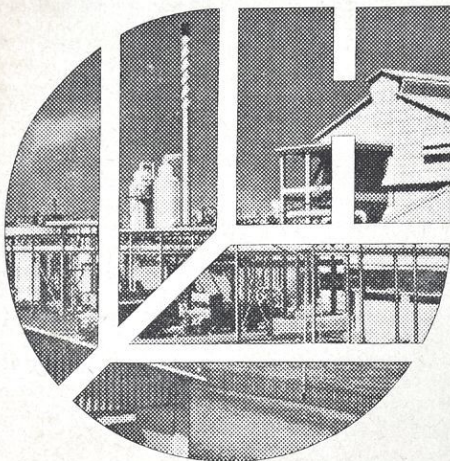
This honorary post has reportedly been conferred on Mehta for the numerous innovative research papers presented at the various International congresses sponsored by the Foundation in Europe and America.

Homaji's Baj

The Parsi Zoroastrian Youth League of Baroda held a *jashan* on 13 June to commemorate a legendary, 18th century, Parsi martyr, Homaji Jamshedji. According to tradition, Homaji was accused of kicking a pregnant Parsi woman,



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and thereby killing her. He was sentenced to death but protested to the last that he was innocent.

Before he died, he prophesied that the real culprit would die on the fourth day after his death, and that whoever remembered Homaji in his prayers would receive his blessings. As predicted, the culprit is said to have died four days after Homaji was put to death. Since then Homaji has been revered by Parsis.



Adi J. Katgara, director of the Travel Corporation of India (TCI) receiving the Tourism award for 1980, on behalf of TCI "for securing first place amongst travel agencies in foreign exchange earnings in the tourism field," from A. P. Sharma, minister of tourism and civil aviation at the annual Travel Agents Association of India Convention held in Colombo earlier this year.

Adoption Clarification

In the article "Adoption and the Parsis, 1981," *Parsiana*, July 1981 an amendment proposed by the Bombay Parsi Panchayat was inadvertently attributed to Rustom Gae, a senior advocate of the Supreme Court and a former law secretary to the Government of India.

Gae's amendment is: "For the removal of doubts it is hereby declared that nothing in sub-section (2) shall be construed to change the religion or religious denomination or sect of an adopted child into any other religion, religious denomination or sect to which the conversion of a person not born in such religion, religious denomination or sect is not permissible according to the doctrines, usages or customs applicable to the followers of such religion, religious denomination or sect."

Therefore, Gae's amendment would not as stated "prevent non-Parsis from receiving any of the benefits, rights, privileges, etc. reserved for Parsis."

According to Gae, non-Parsi children would be equated with the natural born child for all purposes except of a religious nature.

The error is regretted.

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Mehta: helping to raise funds.

Mehta, Music and Money

A Zubin Mehta Banquet and Symphony concert had been scheduled for August 23 in order to raise funds for the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago (ZAC) community center.

ZAC has "had the dream of building a center in Chicago, as an effort to preserve Zoroastrian religion, culture and traditions. This dream is close to becoming a reality, with the recent purchase of a beautiful two-acre property in suburban Hinsdale, and the offer of a large donation from the Arbab Guiv Foundation," notes the ZAC newsletter.

"On August 23, 1981, the Banquet at the Sheraton North Shore Inn, will have Maestro Zubin Mehta, conductor of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra as guest of honour. The program includes a cocktail hour, invocation and *jashan* ceremony, dinner catered by the Sheraton, with a refreshment table of Irani, and Parsi delicacies served by our ladies, and a fashion show of Zoroastrian costumes, past and present. There will be dancing to a band of American and Irani music. On August 24, the ZAC has arranged to reserve a block of tickets to see Maestro Zubin Mehta performing with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra at Ravinia Park, in a program of Brahms and Stravinsky."

An accompanying leaflet issued by ZAC entitled "Who are the Zoroastrians?" notes, "most Zoroastrians have come to this country (U.S.A.) within the past 30 years. They brought with them

more than their skills and talents, their willingness to work and determination to succeed. They also brought their faith, their culture and customs, their art and music, their language and literature—the legacy of a centuries old tradition to be nurtured and blended happily into the American milieu.

Threat of Extinction

The Zoroastrians of the world, and in particular the U.S. and Canada, face a very real and imminent threat—that of extinction by assimilation into the mainstream of America, with a complete loss of an age old heritage. With less than 4,000 scattered across the U.S. and Canada (200 in Chicago), the Zoroastrian can easily be wiped out, in the span of one or two generations, from the face of this continent.

Efforts to Survive

But the Zoroastrians are not ready to be delegated to the history books just yet. For some years now, concerned Zoroastrians have sought ways and means to stem the tide. One such effort, by the Chicago community is the creation of a religious, cultural and educational center, to perpetuate Zoroastrian culture and traditions. In time, it is hoped that this center would serve, in collaboration with a local university, as a research center for Zoroastrian studies. Early this year, the Chicago Zoroastrians purchased a two acre property in Hinsdale; efforts to raise funds for the construction of the Center are underway.

The Zoroastrians now solicit your help and support—it is hoped that this effort will be one small step towards keeping this ancient tradition alive in America."

Painting Walls

With labour and material costs soaring, the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York issued a plea in its July newsletter for volunteers to help paint the interior walls of the Arbab Rustom Guiv Darbe Mehr.

"It has been four years since the interior walls of the Darbe Mehr were painted," noted the newsletter. "The interior badly needs a fresh coat of paint. The directors have decided to paint the hall, kitchen, etc. on August 8, 1981. If we can get between 12 to 15 volunteers, we can finish the job in a day. The outside contractor would charge not less than \$ 750. Won't you

help us? If you cannot donate the labor, you can donate the material viz. paint, brush, rolls, etc."

Perhaps, if the Indian Zoroastrians were to persuade community members to participate in the upkeep of their institutions, a greater sense of involvement may be generated, not to mention the money saved.

Tata's China

"That Zoroastrian photographer with peppery complexion and unpretentious, modest personality has done it again," notes an article in the June issue of *Gavashni*, taken from the *Gazette* of March 28, 1981.

"Sam Tata, a resident of St. Laurent, Quebec and the frequent recipient of Canada Council of Arts awards and other honours, has once again exhibited his mastery over his ability to 'click' at the right time and place.

"This was displayed during the exhibit of his work recently at the Yajima Gallery in Montreal. Sam explained to the *Gazette* interviewer, Louise Abbott the background of his painting of men walking past a huge collection of birds by saying that, 'The Chinese sold lots of songbirds in the streets. They'd 'walk' their canaries and sit by the hour listening to them sing.'

"As the interviewer puts it, 'Rather than impose his own viewpoint, Tata allows his subjects to speak for themselves' and that says it all for Sam. *Gavashni* congratulates Sam on his achievement and wishes him on behalf of the entire community many more successes in the years to come."

Gavashni Spotlight

"Dr Feroze Ghadially of the university of Saskatchewan was awarded the Izaak Walton Killian Memorial Prize and Darius Bagli is the first Zoroastrian to be elected president of the McGill University Medical Student Society," notes *Gavashni*.

British Columbia Directors

The new board of directors of the Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia elected on March 28 are Ms Piroja Amrolia, Ms Lal Varza, Houshang Mehin, Rostam Zohrabi, Shahriar Bakhtian, Sam Madon, Jamshed Pavri, honorary secretary/treasurer. Ms Zarine Tata is the joint honorary secretary.

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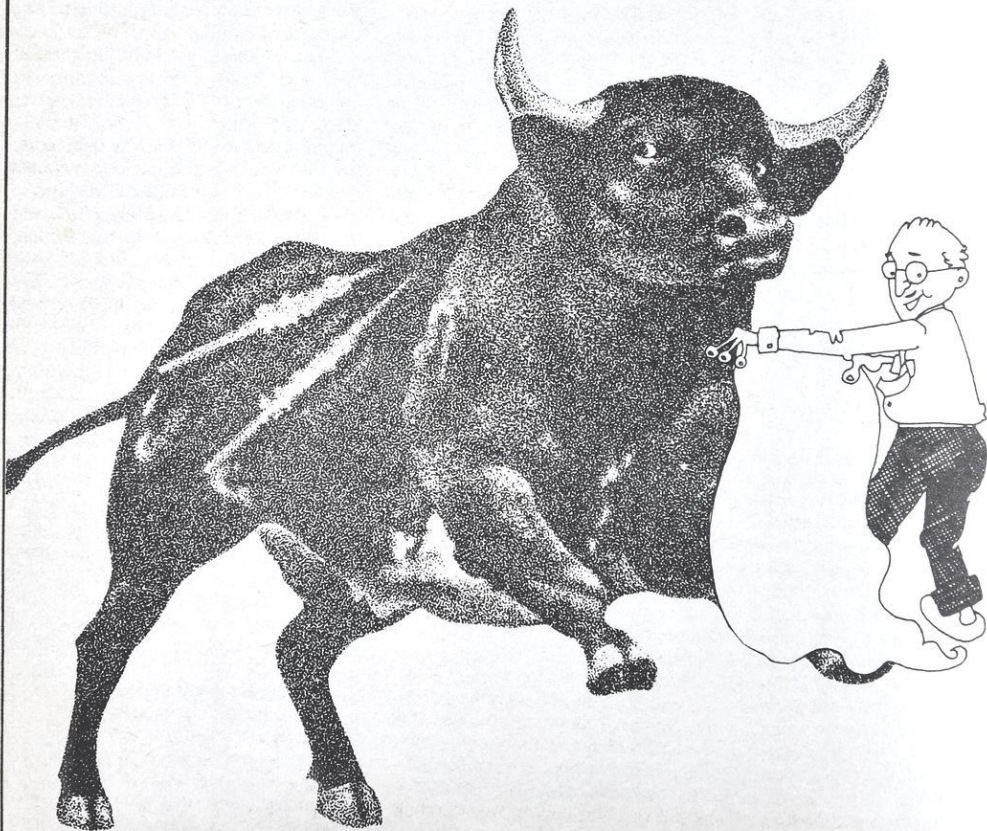
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News from the Media

A Quest for Zarathustra

In the magnificent Sea Lounge of Sir Jamshetji Tata's Taj Mahal Hotel, Cyrus Bharucha, a resident of the U.S., talks about the film on the Parsis and Zarathushtra that he is planning to do with Zubin Mehta.



Bharucha: A search for identity

It is a film that both he and the world famous conductor of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra have set their heart on doing. They are hopeful that the Parsi captains of industry, like the Tatas, the Wadias, the Godrejes will assist them.

In the beginning, Zubin Mehta was planning to host the film and be its narrator. He would come on the screen, say: "Good-evening, I am Zubin Mehta and I am a Parsi. People often ask me what is a Parsi..."

Cyrus had a bigger idea. Zubin should be the central figure of the film, set out in search of Zarathustra, in search of his own identity and the identity of 100,000 Parsis, among the smallest and most distinguished religious communities of the world.

The film, to be appropriately titled—"A Quest for Zarathushtra", deals with the history of the Zoroastrian people, some 2,500 years ago in ancient Persia, the life of Zarathustra and the last 150 years in the history of the Parsis.

Cyrus talks about it enthusiastically. "We begin with a *jashan*, a religious ceremony, the sound of prayers, music, Zubin conducting, then going back 35 years to his own *Navjote* in Bombay. His own life, his music (the theme music in the film will be that of Richard Strauss, especially his "Nietzsche", which he composed as a tone poem). Then the search for his identity, the quest for Zarathushtra, which will place Zubin in ancient Persia in 1500 B.C."

In a way, it is also Cyrus Bharucha's search for his own identity. He studied mainly in England, has been for 17 years in television and films, has worked as a fashion and food photographer, as photographer for the Science Museum in London, as a BBC film cameraman and producer for its current affairs department. It was at this time that he got his big scoop. The first interview with Albert Speer, Hitler's 'munitions minister', as he came out of prison.

Later, he moved on to the US, was executive producer with the Public Broadcasting Service, joined the 24-hour news service programme of commercial TV.

"Then I heard what Zubin was planning to do. I gave up my job, have come here to raise funds for the film. We expect it to cost \$ 332,000, around Rs 30 lakhs, we hope industrialists and major families in Bombay will help us."

There are two others associated with the film, Mr Moshen Sadeghi, a Bahai from Iran, who has his own motion picture company in the US, and Mr Meherji Madan, chief accountant for a multi-billion dollar corporation in Washington.

Six months will go in research, everything including ancient Iranian music. Shooting is expected to start in the middle of next year, 75 percent of it to be done in Bombay, Satyajit Ray is being invited as the film's artistic consultant.

The film is expected to have a major TV release, a limited cinema release and a premiere probably in Bombay. It may have big sales in Germany, since the Germans are interested in Zoroastrianism, good sales in Japan, since the Japanese have always been interested in religious subjects and should run well in the American art theatres.

Mid-day 7 July 1981



Mody: making education relevant

Bridging a Culture Gap

A lecturer in Bombay University's department of Civics and Politics, Ms Nawaz Mody is a specialist in Indian and Asian Studies. She has recently been awarded a Ph.D. in Politics for her thesis on 'Indonesia under Suharto—A study of the concentration of power from 1965-1971'.

The thesis, which has the distinction of being one of the first detailed research works on Suharto, and its acceptance for publication, are a tribute to Ms Mody's learning. A former student of Elphinstone College, Bombay, she has had a brilliant academic career. She stood first class first at the B.A. and M.A. examinations and has won numerous prizes and scholarships. In 1975, at the annual conference of the Liberal International at Gummersbach in West Germany, she presented a paper on the role of political parties in India. Later, as Fulbright scholar she spent a year (1978-1979) at Cornell University, U.S.A.

Hailing from a family of teachers, Ms Mody has "always wanted to teach and research. I have been offered other jobs—some more paying and more challenging too. But I turned them down. I work in my profession because I want to."

Her commitment to her work is, indeed, total. She had barely started on her thesis, when she married in 1976. "I was, however, determined to finish. So, my husband and I resolved to put off having any children until after its completion"—a decision which she feels has shocked many people.

Ms. Mody has newly launched into

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consultancy services to industry. "My first concern is to make education more relevant to the changing needs of society and industry." Her book, 'An Indonesian Handbook for Indian Expatriates', published under the auspices of the Khataus and the Tatas, and privately circulated, is an effort at using her expertise for practical purposes. She supplemented the book by a lecture tour of Indonesia in March-April 1981. Her next project is a hundred year history of the Khataus, for whom her husband works.

Her work apart, Ms Mody is greatly interested in women's problems, "especially in legal reform to better their status. Our constitution recognises the equality of the sexes and prohibits any discrimination between them. I would like to see these articles implemented. A beginning could be made by enacting a uniform civil code for all religions. In addition to securing equal property rights for all women, such a code would also help eradicate evils like bigamy.

Ms Mody is associated with the Delhi-based Manushi Trust which brings out a magazine in English and Hindi. "They concentrate on studies of women and

have focused quite a lot of attention on issues such as dowry and rape. Unfortunately, their good work is crippled by a paucity of funds."

While she is the sole woman lecturer in her department, Ms Mody has many women students. She thought therefore, that it would be a good idea to introduce into the curriculum, a paper devoted entirely to women. But the men obviously didn't think so and Ms Mody had a settle for the inclusion of the subject as a mere 'sub-topic' in an optional paper—'Political Sociology of the Third World', at the M.A. level. . .

Ms Mody also takes an interest in the consumer guidance movement and is a life member of the Consumer Guidance Society of India. She has also found time to learn German and Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesia's national language). An avid fan of music, theatre and cinema, she belongs to the National Centre for Performing Arts (N.C.P.A.) the N.F.A.I., the Max Mueller Bhavan's 'Sangati Club' and the 'Cine Club' of the Alliance Francaise. But what she really "craves" to do and for which she has no time, is "relax with Georgette Heyer."

GIRIJA PRABHAKAR
Eve's Weekly, 27 June-3 July 1981

Tuning in to the Sound of Silence

Off cacophonous Park Street, two floors up a small building, there is a world without sound. But not without sense or sensitivity: the Oral School for Deaf Children. . .

Dhun Adenwalla—who founded the school and has over the years taken scores of children out of their confused and deafeningly silent world and put them into the mainstream—stresses the importance of not relying entirely on sign language. "It would destroy in deaf children all incentive for speech; it makes no difference to them since they cannot hear themselves but it would create a sub-culture of the deaf which will get them nowhere nearer the aim of integration". At the School, equal emphasis is given to oral speech, lip-reading, finger spelling. "It is not enough to give the child speech" says Mrs Adenwalla. "That is relatively easy. It is more important and more difficult to give him language otherwise he can do no more than parrot. Besides, the deaf do not overhear things as normal people do, so far more needs to be told to them."

As with most others suffering from a sensory handicap, the other senses of

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the deaf are better honed. They can, for instance, listen with their eyes in a remarkable fashion. This ability has impressed mime artiste **Zarin Chaudhuri**, who has worked at the School since 1973... "It is amazing how closely they observe the world, retain the details in their minds and then translate this into mime. At first, I used to act out sequences for them and they merely copied. Now, the whole impetus comes from them, I only need to give the directional touches"

BACHI J. KARKARIA
The Statesman 8 June 1981

Roshan's Cassette

The other day I met an interesting young lady who has some commendable achievements to her credit in the field of children's entertainment.

This is **Roshan R. Treasuryvala**, whose cassette of 16 songs for children has just been issued by India Book House in its *Amarnad* series. Roshan's educational qualifications are as notable as her experience with music for juveniles. She is a B.Com. and B.Ed. as



Treasuryvala: recording 'fairy tales'

also a Fellow of the Trinity College of Music (London) with two gold medals to her credit.

Roshan has devoted herself to composing music and writing plays for

children. Greenlawns School in the city has often produced her work, and to sound applause too. She bases her plays on Indian themes and they have been in good demand in the *Magic Lamp* programme of Bombay's Doordarshan.

One of her most popular works in this medium was *Adventures of a raindrop*. She also initiated a programme on coins and numismatics, part of which has been included in her cassette. *Uncle Happy and Aunt Grumble* was another of her hits, in which she was partnered by Pankaj Khandpur.

"My play, *Wild flowers* was staged 16 times", Roshan told me. It deals with the problem of child beggars and was directed by Saraswati Swaminathan of the INT.

Roshan's latest TV programme called *Swing and sing*, contained 16 songs, just like the *Amarnad* cassette with its 16 tunes packed with variety and lilting musical accompaniment. On the cards for Roshan are a video-tape based on nursery rhymes and fairy tales as also a recording of *The magic ring* for IBH.

Financial Express 3 May 1981

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Qissa-i-Sanjan...

The Obscure History of The Men of The True Faith

In the year 1600 A.D. on Khurdat *roj*, Farwardin *mah*, a priest, Bahman Kaikobad Hormuzdyar Sanjana put the finishing touches to the 864 lines of his epic, the *Qissa-i-Sanjan* or the Story of Sanjan.

The verses were the first written record of the Zoroastrians migration from a troubled Iran, across stormy seas to the hospitable shores of India. For over six hundred years, since the Zoroastrians landed in the 10th century A.D., the story had been related by the spoken word from generation to generation.

"I have heard this (tale) from a wise dastur who was renowned for virtue," wrote Bahman, "May the Dastur whose name is Hoshang live long, whose wisdom had always great excellence. . . He told me this tale according to the sayings of the men of old and repeated the obscure history of the men of the True Faith."

Little is known of Bahman except that he was "already advanced in age at the time (of writing) and that he came of a family noted for its literary tastes and aptitude for the composition of Persian verse," notes Shahpurshah Hormasji Hodiwala, the noted historian in his book *Studies in Parsi History*.

Bahman's father, Kaikobad, whose "heart delighted only in calling Iranshah to mind," appears to have been a leader amongst the Sanjana priests settled in Navsari.

"When . . . we consider the details of the history contained in the *Kisse-e-Sanjan*," wrote Rustam Barjorji Paymaster, a distinguished lawyer, journalist and publicist, whose translation of the verses is published in the issue, "we are confronted

with a controversy which has led to the formation of two rival schools of thought, one believing it to be history, the other placing it in the category of a historical novel."

The controversy regarding the *Qissa-i-Sanjan's* historical veracity came to the fore at the beginning of this century, when some Parsis decided to raise a monument at Sanjan to commemorate the Zoroastrians landing.

The dissidents, notable among whom were Ervad Jamshedji Dadabhoy Nadirsha, an Avesta scholar who is said to have travelled extensively in Persia, and B. N. Bhathena, who presented a paper entitled *Kisse-Sanjan: A Palpable Falsehood* at the 12th All India Oriental Conference, in Banares in 1943, contended that the whole of the *Qissa-i-Sanjan* is a figment of Bahman's imagination. Bhathena accuses Bahman of having composed the *Qissa-i-Sanjan* with "a view to glorify the Sanjana priests as the protectors of the religion of the Parsi community."

Both scholars discount the traditional notion that the Zoroastrians fled Iran in the wake of religious persecution and sought refuge in India. They claim that the Parsis in India today are the descendents of already established Iranian Zoroastrian traders and businessmen who had set up their colonies in Punjab, Sind, Gujarat and Thana, while Zoroastrian kings were still ruling in Iran.

Bhathena notes, "The fact is that on the downfall of Yazdegerd III, the Parsis in Iran had no cause to leave the country. The Arabs were not able to establish their rule securely for a considerable time; they had not resorted at once to convert the Zoroastrians forcibly to Islam; and there

were powerful and freedom loving Zoroastrian chieftians who challenged and defied the authority of the conquerors for a long time after the fall of the Sassanian Dynasty.

"When these brave *Ispahbads* were gallantly giving resistance to the Arab invaders, only the cowards can think of leaving the motherland to her fate and running away to some distant place for safety. If the supporters of *Kisse-Sanjan* rank their ancestors among the cowards, I have nothing to say."

Opponents of the *Qissa-i-Sanjan* dispute the existence of *Jadi Rana*, the account of the war fought by the Zoroastrians on behalf of his successors and, "in short, the whole *Kissa* is palpably false and entirely baseless," according to Bhathena.

Jivanji Jamshedji Modi, the reputed Zoroastrian scholar, defended the *Qissa-i-Sanjan* and commented, "not a single voice was raised against (the *Qissa*) for these 100's of years. It was only when I launched the column movement, that the first voice of opposition was heard."

The Reverend Dr. John Wilson, the noted Christian missionary whose school was attended by several Parsis including K. R. Cama, the noted scholar, at the turn of the century, states the verses are "the most important document of the very meagre accounts possessed by the Parsis of the settlement of their forefathers in the country."

Hodiwala says that "Bahman's statements appear to have been based not only on a nucleus of genuine oral tradition but, perhaps of written memoranda... Those memoranda... must be pronounced trustworthy and valuable... Bahman himself tells us at the end of the poem that he had written the *Qissa* according to what 'he had seen and also learnt from the conversation of his elders.'"

In a translation of the *Qissa* published by the Lutfuddaulah Oriental Research Institute in Hyderabad, the preface written by Sayyid Ahmadullah Qadri, then president of the Institute, notes, "It is far from reality to say that the story of the poem is fictitious. This *Qissa* is based on facts indeed, but there is difficulty in locating periods... as it is a historic poem, there is no room for conjectures. Its author, Bahman, was a learned and able poet."

Rustom P. Karkaria, the noted historian and author, commented on Bahman's epic in an introduction to a translation of the *Qissa-i-Sanjan* by Paymaster: "Literary merit it has few, its language is at times obscure and faulty, while its imagery is sometimes grotesque, still with its faults, it has always appealed to our people in a wonderful manner and we are sure the hold it has on Parsis will be stronger in the future. It is a voice from the past speaking of a past remoter still, and momentous as containing the germs of our present position in this land and of the future which time may have in store for our race. This tale of Sanjan is in embryo our *Odyssey* and *Aeneid* combined."

The *Qissa-i-Sanjan* was originally written in Persian and then translated into Gujarati. A Gujarati prose rendering was done by Framji Aspandiarji Rabadi, a noted 19th century, Parsi scholar.

English translations have been undertaken by Edward Backhouse Eastwich, a noted 19th century orientalist, Paymaster, Hodiwala and Hakeem Sayyid Shamsullah Qadri amongst others.

Parsiiana publishes in this issue Paymaster's translation which is amongst the most readable. Though there appear to be as many spellings of the *Qissa-i-Sanjan* as there are translations, *Parsiiana* has adhered to Dr Mary Boyce's spelling.

Researched by Arnavaz Patel

GOD, (I CRAVE) THY FAVOUR

In the name of God, the Giver, the Beneficent, the Merciful, the Just, the Kind, the Matchless, the High and the Great.

In the name of God, the Wise and Holy, every moment I sing heartily His praise.

Night and Day I offer to Him abundant thanks-giving because my soul is made happy (victorious) through His praise.

I do not say anything in season and out of season, except thanks-giving to Him, for He is the Eternal King of the creation.

He is powerful (and) mighty everlastingly, for the eyes of His servants (creatures) are constantly seeing through him.

He is our refuge and helper everywhere; He forgives sins and accepts our prayer and repentance.

Again He always comes to our succour. He has given us knowledge and shown us the true faith.

He is the Protector of the poor and the Lord of the Universe. He pardons sins and forgives (the sins of) mankind.

Further, He is our constant Guide (and) is the companion of our secret hours and solver of (our) difficulties.

Thou hast a perfect control over the creation. Thou art the King, Thy kingdom is without decline.

Thou art the Lord over Lords Thou art our darling, matchless and incomparable.

From clay Thou makest by Thy power the shape of man and Thou puttest into the soul, glad and happy.

Thou carriest from the loin (spinal cord) a drop of seed into the womb, Thou art the One Who delineates forms on water.

Thou gavest the drop of seed the form of a body, Thou madest the world visible in it.

Thou gavest man the outward, visible tongue; and Thou again hast given him the inward (invisible) gem (of wisdom).

Thou hast given him two eyes for the purpose of seeing and hast made two ears for hearing.

Thou hast given him a tongue for speech, so that it may move like a pair of compasses in Thy praise.

Thou hast given him the sense of smell for enjoying sweet scent Thou hast given him feet to stand up and worship (Thee).

Thou hast bound 32 pearls (of teeth) with one string, Thou hast created the sense of taste in the mouth (palate).

In such a (perfect) manner has the world been drawn on the slate of your workmanship that one can sacrifice his life for such workmanship.

To the souls of lovers thou bringest sorrow (yet) Thou hast given (them) comfort and joy with melancholy.

Thou hast (painted) the picture of the two worlds on (the tablet of) Nothingness (chaos), Thou hast made man the leader of angels.

I grant that divinity befits Thee, Wisdom has testified to Thy existence.

Every time I express unbounded thanks to Thee my tongue is fittingly employed every moment of such expression.

Love has put a cord round my neck, so that wherever it draws me I proceed.

I have no help but to obey the Command of God, because He has thrown me everywhere into cheerful resignation.

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No one deserves eternity except God, since He is always matchless.

All this entirely of existence has emanated from Thee, Thou hast given shape to the world through Thy wisdom.

Thou hast created Adam out of clay and Thou hast named him Thy deputy.

Thou art He who is not subject to changeability, Thou art He who takes us by the hand to assist us.

None resembles Thee, none is like Thee, the whole of the creation emanates from Thee only.

Thou hast created the earth and the heavens and thou hast graced them by creating man.

To Thy court Bahman has turned his face, enlighten his heart (mind) in this world.

Make his heart thrive in the true religion, and free his head from the chains of sorrow.

Keep him always prosperous (staunch) in the faith (and) by Thy own grace illumine his soul with light.

I have no benefactor save Thee, and in both the worlds my hopes are centered in Thee.

O Thou merciful One! forgive (my) sin, my tongue recounts (weighs) Thy attributes.

Thou doth help my friendless soul, Thou dost favour Thy servant with Thy bounty.

To whom shall I turn my face, if Thou drivest me away; where shall I go since there is none other than Thou.

I am ashamed of the crudeness of my words, I am not fortunate in this kind of art.

I have come before Thee to make apologies, for Thou holdest eternal sovereignty.

O Thou supporter of the world! befriend me, for I am Thy slave, the dust at the foot of the earth (i.e. Thy humblest creature).

I will not make any other altar except Thy door What shall I do that will be acceptable to Thee?

In life be Thou my companion, because these companions (of this world) will not come with me (i.e. avail me).

At the last the wheel (sky) will reduce me to ashes, what fear or dread have I to die this death?

When my soul goes to Heaven, bring the words Asham on my tongue at that moment.

At the moment when the soul leaves the body, direct an angel to me.

Acquaintance may be formed with the souls of the departed so that my soul may be enlightened thereby.

The sin that I may have committed secretly, pardon it, O Merciful One, through Thy kindness.

What excuse can Old Bahman offer to (Thy) Court (Thee), who has committed a number of faults in Thy service?

But forgive his sins, and free him (his soul) from secret defeats.

Accept the words of my prayer, for I have experienced from Thee divine mercies.

O God! Thou knowest my secrets. Why dost Thou make me run here and there for nothing?

My salvation in this world is from Thee, why then should I desire release (salvation) from others.

Youth is gone and old age has approached. My straight cypress (form) has stretched its head to Heaven.

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Old Bahman is the poorest of the poor. Be Thou my helper and assist me everywhere.

Thou art my Judge in both the worlds, Thou befriendest the weak and the helpless (like me).

O God! wash my sleepy eyes of their carelessness and (O God) turn my face towards vigilance (i.e. make me vigilant).

Judge me not, O beneficent King, in proportion to my sinfulness

From man nothing comes but sin, direct me to Thyself with the help of faith.

I am crying bitterly in Thy Court, so that Thou mayst not include my name amongst the sinners.

If thou wilt favour Thy servant, he will be exalted in both the worlds.

I was reflecting within myself about Thee, and was hesitating in my thoughts.

O Thou Judge, Acceptor of prayers, I pray for Thy mercy.

On the arrival of believers in the true faith to the land of India from the city of Khorasan.

Now hear wonderful narratives from the words of priests and from ancient writings.

Should I speak, it would be impossible to relate the whole history, and even on paper the whole cannot be expressed.

Yet I will find out a portion of it; but of a hundred words I will utter only one.

I have heard it from a wise Dastur, who was always famous for his goodness.

He had also read Zend and Avesta and had repelled the followers of Ahriman from himself.

In his city he was a Dastur by whom undoubtedly the religion was constantly made shining (*in evidence*).

In those days his order prevailed over all (and) he arranged the affairs of the religion.

Whoever wanted to know of him the secrets of the religion, could by his directions well regulate the affairs of religion.

He was an instructor in the city and his disciples were mightily pleased with him.

He narrated this story from the ancient tradition. He described the inward secrets of the truthful.

One day he told this story to me and pierced the pearls of news excellently.

This was the Dastur who told me this story. May goodness be his consort everlastingly.

I am repeating what he told me. I am revealing the secret works (legends) of the Faithful,

In the days of King Gushtasp, holy Zoroaster showed the path of religion.

In the Avesta is narrated what would appear (in future); namely that a tyrannical king would appear among you,

The true religion would be broken up thrice, in consequence of which the faithful would be ruined and wounded.

The name of the king would be Sitamgar (tyrant) and the true religion would suffer at his hands.

Now hear carefully what I say regarding the religion, it was thus the faithful became again sufferers.

At length their King Alexander appeared. He openly burnt the books of the religion.

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After him for a long period the faith was languishing (until) Ardeshir became King.

A second time (then) the true religion was restored; in the world was heard its good report.

Ardai Viraf was sent to the divine Court for (obtaining) knowledge of heavenly things.

Thereafter again the ill-omened Satan, broke up this faith.

He again caused obstacles in the true faith and from every direction proceeded complaints about religion.

After a period, when King Shapoor appeared, once again the good religion became fully shining.

When the devout Adarbad Maraspand girt up his loins for the sake of the religion.

He made copper of seven materials and melted it and poured it on his own body.

He removed every difficulty of the faithful and a second time he restored splendour of the religion.

From King Shapoor to King Yazdegerd, the religion got its (original) dignity and position.

The days of Zoroaster came to an end for a time and no one found any trace of Zoroastrian state.

When a thousand years passed after Zoroaster, the true religion thus came to an end,

When King Yazdegerd lost his sovereignty and a king of alien faith seized his throne

From that time Persia was broken up. Alas! the kingdom and its religion were both made desolate.

At that time all who had faith in Zend and Pazand became scattered.

The lay followers of the faith and the Dasturs all had equally to conceal themselves for the secret preservation of the religion.

They all for the sake of their religion left their residence, place of abode, garden, hall and palace.

They remained a hundred years in Kohistan (the mountain) when their condition was reduced to such extremes.

Once a wise benefactor considered deeply the state of their religion.

He told his companions, that it was difficult to remain there also any longer, on account of the fear of the enemy of the faith.

He ran with priests and laity at once to the city of Ormuz.

When 15 years passed in that territory and they suffered a number of indignities at the hands of people of an alien religion,

There was a wise Dastur in that place who was an able astrologer.

Who had found from old calendars that our stay there was to come to an end.

(He advised) if we wish to leave this country we must at once move out of it;

Otherwise we shall all fall into a snare (come to grief), our wisdom will be useless and our work spoilt.

It would be therefore better that leaving the demons and the infidels we should proceed to India.

Being afraid of their lives and for the sake of their religion all then fled to India.

When the ships were launched into the sea and the sails were adjusted.



The Sanjan pillar

They made women and children sit there in and they drove their ships fast towards India.

When the ships came all of a sudden towards India, without doubt they anchored at Div.

Having secured a place there they came down—at last they found themselves once more on land.

The faithful remained there for 19 years after which an astrologer made a prediction.

An old Dastur read in a calendar and immediately said "O enlightened friends,

"We must remove hence to another place where we may find another place of refuge,"

All were pleased to hear him and they sailed fast towards Gujarat.

When the ship had proceeded to some distance in the sea they were overtaken by a storm.

All the priests were perplexed and were overwhelmed in the whirlwind.

They rubbed their faces (fell prostrate) entreatingly in the Court of the Almighty and began supplications standing.

Saying "O you Omniscient, help us out of the difficulty. Take us out of these hardships for once.

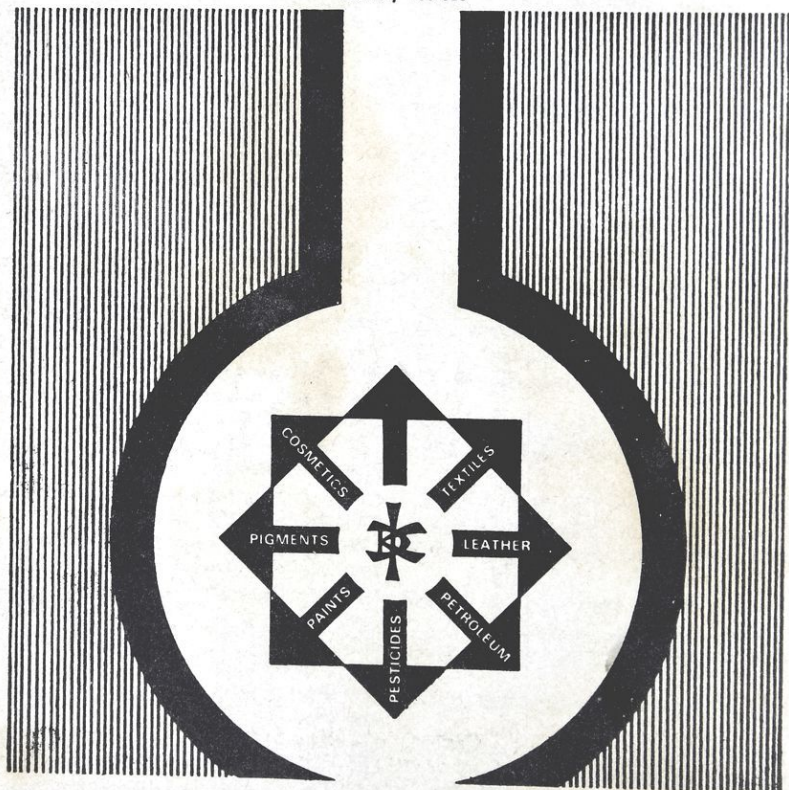
"O you victorious Behram, come to our help, extricate us out of this difficulty.

"By your kindness, we shall not be troubled about the typhoon nor shall we harbour fear in our heart or soul.

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"Come to assist the helpless, guide those who have lost their way.

"If we find a way out of this whirlpool, no calamity will overtake us again.

"If from this sea we reach the territory of India, happy and delighted.

"We will kindle the victorious fire (Atesh Behram) release us from this hardship and give us power.

"We accept this in the presence of God, because we have no one except Him (as our friend)."

By the blessing of the victorious fire of Behram all fortunately escaped from that danger.

The very hour their supplication was accepted, God befriended them in their work.

A favourable wind blew with heavenly light (and) the very same contrary wind disappeared.

When the captain of the ship brought the name of holy God on his tongue and steered the ship at once,

All the Dasturs and the faithful bound their sacred thread (and) immediately steered the ship in the sea.

It was so fated that thereafter they all arrived (towards) in the vicinity of Sanjan.

There was a good Raja in that place who was known for his righteousness.

His name was Jadi-Rana; he was liberal, sensible and wise,

The Dastur, who was noted for his learning and wisdom, went to him with a present.

He gave him benediction and said "O you King of Kings, give us shelter (place) in this City,

"We are poor and have come to your City and at your abode to ask for protection.

"For the sake of our religion we have come to this place; we have heard that there is a Raja here.

"Of the descent of benevolent Kings; that he has always been famous in India,

"(That) he will give us shelter in (his) own city and kingdom, he will look upon our condition with an eye of mercy.

"We rejoiced at hearing this news and we came to you under pleasant auspices.

"Now we have come to your City and we have escaped from the infidels in hope of (meeting) you".

On hearing this all the subjects of that beneficent Raja were pleased at heart and delighted in soul.

When that Prince saw them, all of a sudden he took fright.

He was afraid of his crown lest they should render the country desolate.

The Raja was afraid of their dress and asked the Dastur about their secret (observances).

At length he said "O you pious Dastur, first tell me the secret of this affair.

"Namely, what is after all the custom of your religion? What are secret, and what are open observances?

"First, let me see what your religion is, thereafter I shall prepare a place for you.

"Secondly, you must give up the language of your country, so that I may give you a resting place (here).

"You must avoid the language of the country of Iran and pick up the language of India.

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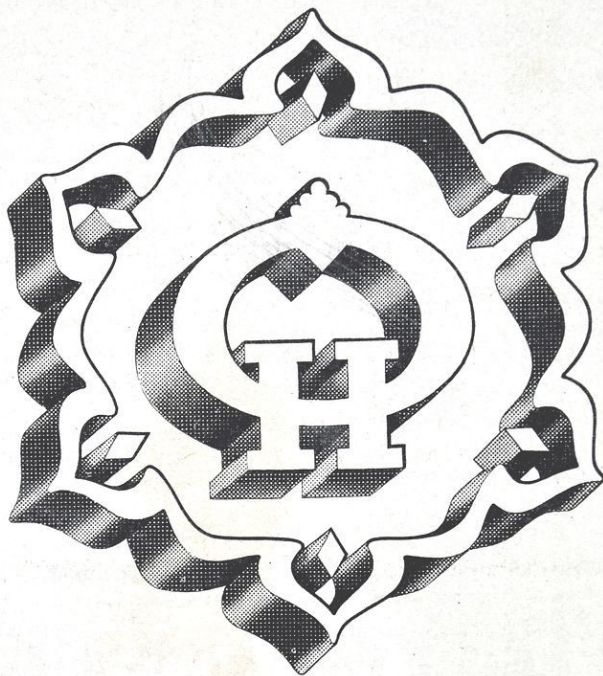
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"Thirdly, your women must put on clothes like our women.
"The fourth is this, that these weapons and swords must be laid aside (put within the scabbard) and should not be worn anywhere.

"Fifthly, when there is some good work (marriage) in connection with a child, it must be performed in the evening.

"If you accept these conditions, then you can get a place of residence in our City.

When the Dastur heard all this from the Raja, he had no help but to accept all that he said.

The aged Mobed then told him "O you wise Raja, listen to what I say about our religion.

"Do not be sorry on our account here, nothing wrong will proceed from us.

"We shall be friends with the whole of India and we shall everywhere cut off the heads of your enemies.

"Know for certain that we are worshippers of God (Yezdan) and have left (people of another faith) unbelievers for the sake of our religion.

"We have left behind us whatever we had, we have suffered much difficulty on our way.

"Even our residence, country and our possessions have we abandoned, O you fortunate King!

We are strangers (foreigners) from the descent of Jamshed, we revere the Moon and the Sun.

"Thirdly, we esteem the cow, water and fire on account of their good qualities.

"We worship fire and water, also the cow, the Sun and the Moon.

"Whatever God has created in the world, we pray to it, since He Himself has approved of it.

"This Kusti (sacred thread) of ours, with 72 threads, we bind (round our waist) and we sleep with a pure heart.

"The women, who sit (apart) in monthly course, do not look to the Sun, the Sky and the Moon.

"They keep at a distance from water and fire, since these things are of the essence of light.

"They carefully abstain from all things, during the light of day-time and the darkness of night.

"So long as the menses disappear they sit (apart) and when they wash their heads (i.e. are free from menses) they see fire and the Sun.

"Again the woman who begets, a child must remain apart for 40 days.

"She must abstain herself just as when she was in menses; if she does not do so, the things (she touches) become polluted.

"The woman who gives premature birth or birth to a still born child.

"She cannot go or run about where she likes, she even cannot converse with any person.

That woman also with great (strict) abstinence sits apart for 41 days."

And whatever other customs and rules they had, were all described to him one after another.

When they had recounted the secrets of their faith and pierced the pearls of discourse in the best possible manner,

When the Hindu Raja had heard these words of the Dastur, his heart was fully satisfied.

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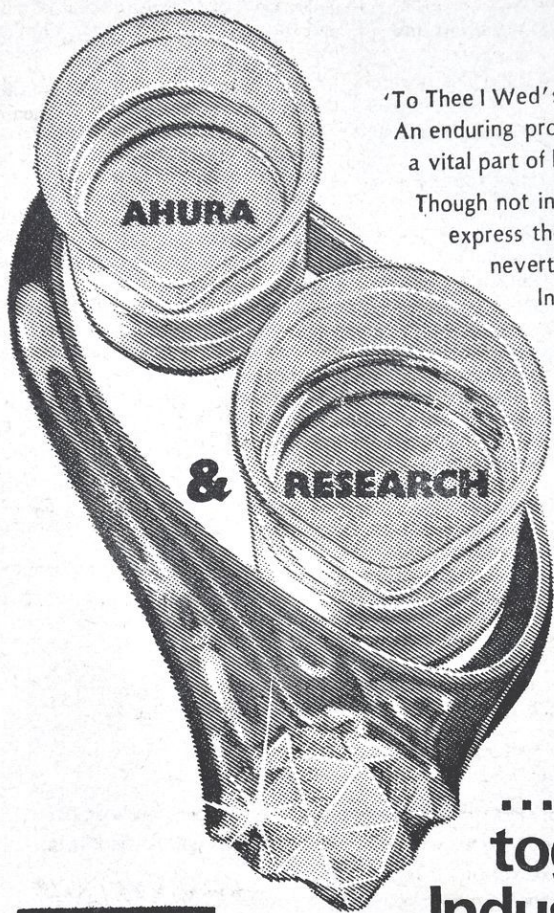
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The men who were wise, virtuous and tactful.

(They) examined the land piece by piece, (they) found a commodious place and informed the Dastur of it.

A plot in the desert was found acceptable, it was a pleasant spot and they took it up for their abode.

The people liked the place and a city grew up out of a jungle. It was altogether a barren desert, and old and young all came down to that place.

When the Dastur saw that good place he selected a spot therein for residence.

The Dastur named that spot Sanjan, it became prosperous like the land of Iran.

From that day they call it Sanjana, know that the city is named after it.

In it they were happy and comfortable and every one passed his time according to his desire.

One day they had business with the raja, (so) they all went up to him with a happy thought.

The Dastur told him "O you son of a king, you have given us a place in this kingdom.

"We now wish that in the land of India we should instal our sacred Fire.

"The land must be cleared for 3 *fursangs* (leagues), so that the sacred ceremonies may be properly performed there.

"No stranger should have access to that place and none should approach it except the people of the faith.

Not a single one of a different faith should come to that spot,

then only our (work) ceremony with the fire can be correctly observed,

"If any one were to make a noise there, undoubtedly there would suddenly be a great disorder in the religious work (ceremony)."

The Rai said "I have given my permission, I am pleased with you for this work.

I heartily give you my authority since such a great king (i.e. the sacred fire who was called Iranshah) there should be in my time.

"O wise man, what could be better than this, hallo! at once gird up your loins in this business."

Instantly the Prince issued his order and gave to the Dastur a pleasant spot.

The very, moment Jadi-Rai, the Hindu Rana, cleared the place in every direction.

He removed those of a different faith to 3 *fursangs* (leagues) and no one remained there except men of wisdom (i.e. the faithful).

For 3 leagues no one lived in the vicinity, no one lived within it except men of the faith.

Round about the *Arwisgah* the Dasture's, each in piety shining like sun-light.

(They) were there, night and day, keeping watch, by the order of Yezdan (God) such work was shown to them.

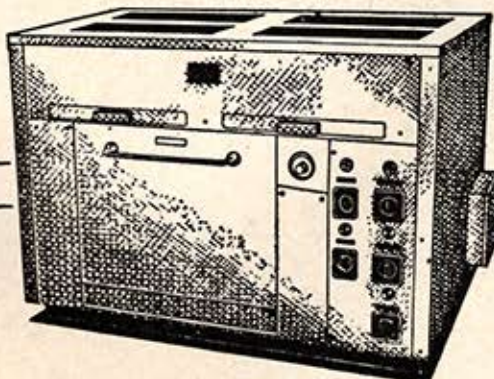
At that time every one was (wise) well-informed and (each one) was capable in the affairs of his religion.

On certain days and months they performed *Yezashni* ceremonies at night and made several attempts (in the affairs of religion).

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The faithful were engaged in their own work (and) they made several preparations against the (encroachments of) aliens. Even the the Prince Jadi-Rana himself used to send several things (offerings) of every description.

In those days all the affairs were managed by the Faithful. All work could be performed by them with ease, because they had brought their materials from Khorasan.

With those materials (implements) which were (brought) from Khorasan they worked there without being disturbed.

Because, along with so many Dasturs and laymen of that pure religion who had come to that place.

Several Alchemists had come, so, by the favour of God, everything was made easy for them.

They (Alchemists) had brought with them materials and they kindled the sacred fire in accordance with the rules of religion.

According to the custom of the faith all old men and Dasturs installed the sacred fire (Iranshah) full of abundant light.

In those times there were people who had knowledge of the faith and managed all matters of their religion with wisdom.

In these times God knows what the state of our religion is, only faith is required to practise according to its rules.

In that province all laymen and priests held a festival with rejoicing.

In this way 300 years, more or less, elapsed and some left the place and others came there.

They became scattered in India and they selected a place in every direction according to their liking.

Some turned to Vankanir, and some took their way towards Broach.

Some went to Variav; all went speedily to their respective abodes (selected by them).

Some arrived at Anklesar and some proceeded towards the City of Cambay.

Some took all their kit to Navsari—all with their title-deeds and fortune.

Each one got comfort in some place and thenceforth made it his abode.

In this manner many became happy and prosperous for two centuries.

In those days in Sanjan City several houses (families) of Dasturs had remained.

On them there was the decree of Fate (a calamity), I don't know what became of all the Dasturs.

There was a Dastur, young (hearty) in his goodness and of good intentions and a sweet tongue.

The name of the Dastur was Khooshmast and always he did benevolent works.

His son, whose name was Khujesta, desired to perform *Baj* and *Barsam* ceremonies,

The performance of *Yezeshna* ceremony was his constant work, *Baj* and *Barsam* were his constant companions.

He was also well versed in (the performance of) *Yezeshna* and there always remained his presence at the *Arviasgah*.

That holy person was highly esteemed. May he have happiness in paradise!

In this manner 700 years elapsed, in that city they had several descendants.

When several years passed, the crooked heaven became unpropitious to them.

All of a sudden the world became narrow to them, and time made an attempt on their lives.

After some years by the turning of the wheel of Fortune the

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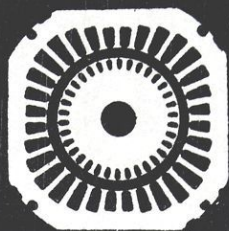
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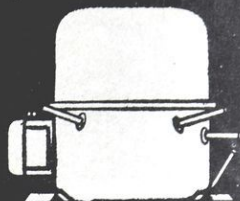
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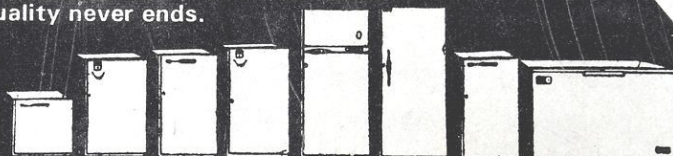
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King (of Gujarat) received information about the Raja of Sajan.

When 500 years passed after their (Zoroastrian's) arrival in India, Moslem arrived at Chapaner.

The sending of his army by Shah Mahomed for fighting with the Raja of Sajan and the latter coming to know of it.

A good King appeared to have fortunately sat on the Throne in that City.

He was called Sultan Mahomed. The subjects called him "Shadow of God".

After several years, when it appeared (that) towards Sanjan in India there was a King,

One day he told a Vazir of his (named) Alefkhan that an order had been issued by the prosperous King,

(That) immediately with an army he must go towards Sanjan and capture the province from him,

By the order of King Sultan Mahomed he issued forth from his place like smoke.

At that moment he prepared the whole army, he let his eagle-like (banner) fly.

When Alefkhan removed his army to that place, and reached the prosperous Sanjan,

The Hindu King came to know of it, that a numerous army had been brought from every direction.

That he had selected 30,000 horsemen, all brave and noted warriors.

The Raja became unconscious on hearing the news. The next hour (when) he recovered his senses,

The very moment he called all priests—all men of good faith and Mobeds.

(And) that benevolent King asked them "O faithful friends, what is the remedy?"

"You were the chosen of my ancestors, they have done you great good.

"Immediately gird up your loins in this emergency of mine, You be my guides in the battle.

"If you recount the favours of (my) ancestors, you will not fail to show your gratitude"

An old priest thereafter replied, "O King, don't be aggrieved on account of (at the approach) the enemy,

"Each one of us, until death, will shed the blood of a hundred thousand of the enemies.

"Truly in battle it is our custom that so long as our life remains, its value is this:—

"That not a single soul from among us will turn back, even if a millstone were to turn on the head".

Hearing this, the Prince gave each one of them a robe of honour

During that period (to ascertain) how many men of the good faith there were, old and young,

A count was taken of the entire community (and) 1,400 were brought on the record

Immediately they put their saddles on their horses. The horsemen stood up putting on their armour.

In that place the men of the good faith drew up their ranks side by side with the Raja,

The dawn peered out of dark night (and) the light of the stars went below the cave (of darkness).

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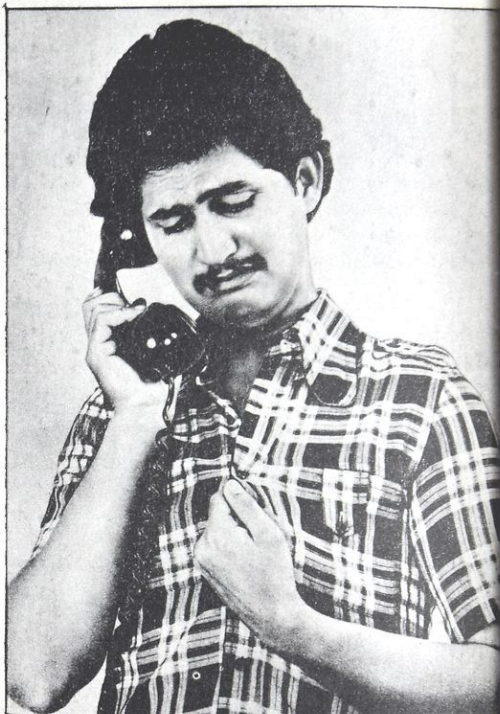
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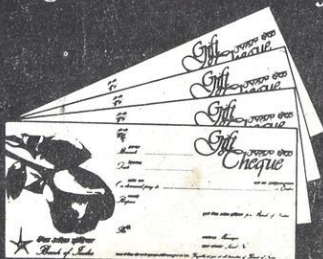
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Fight between Alefkhan and the Hindu Raja and the flight of Alefkhan caused by Ardeshir.

From the other side when Alefkhan, with his horsemen, putting on the armour, came into the battle-field

They put embroidered saddles on their horses (and) the banners on the backs of elephants.

They saddled their horses for the purpose of the fight, the land was distressed by the (weight of the) elephants.

Commanders arranged their armies and exposed weapons of war on every side.

When on the field they had drawn up their numerous armies, they instantly blew the Roman (or brazen) trumpets,

The army was so arranged on each side, on one Moslem and of the Hindu Raja on the other.

Day and night they were engaged (in battles), the pace of the horses had to be slackened on account of full gallop.

The two Commanders on each side, who were like whales, encountered each the other like leopards.

The world became darkened through clouds like pitch, from which rained swords, spears and arrows.

On both sides so many were killed in the battle that heaps were formed of the slain.

Not a soul came to the help or succour,—such was the Decree of Providence (against them).

Of the army not one looked around; all were killed in the battle without number.

Suddenly a flight took place from the maidan, so that one could not recognise another in the battle.

The devout layman told his companions—"I do not find of the Hindus anybody befriending us (from) before or behind.

"The Hindus have fled from the field of battle, none has remained here except the Faithful.

"Now is the time to fight, O my dear friends, we must plunge into their ranks like lions.

"If we attack their force in a body, we will shed the blood of opponents with sword and arrow."

The first person of the Faithful that came into the field (was the man) who was known as Ardeshir among them.

That instant famous Ardeshir spurred his swift-footed charger into the battle-field.

He plunged all of a sudden into the ranks (of the army), having taken in his grasp an iron javelin.

He stood in the field with the javelin in hand, with an armour on his body and a sword tied (round his waist).

At first arrows rained in every direction and the armour was (consequently) torn on the (bodies of the) warriors.

The world-illuminating Sun was concealed, how could anybody know whether it was night or day?

Owing to the dust the face of the Sun was veiled; on every side man fell on man.

You would say the world was covered with pitch, and in it were glittering arrows like diamonds.

Of the spearmen and mace-bearers, at last, out of thousands many were lost.

The earth and the sky became darkened and black; the dust became (red) like tulip on account of the blood of chieftains.

Blood flowed from the body like fountain, spears were cut to pieces by the swords.

From head to foot the heroes were drowned in iron (were armed) which was shining like the bright Sun.

Darts flew about on both the sides, blood began to flow continuously in the dark dust.

Spears pierced into their chests and blood dropped through the armours.

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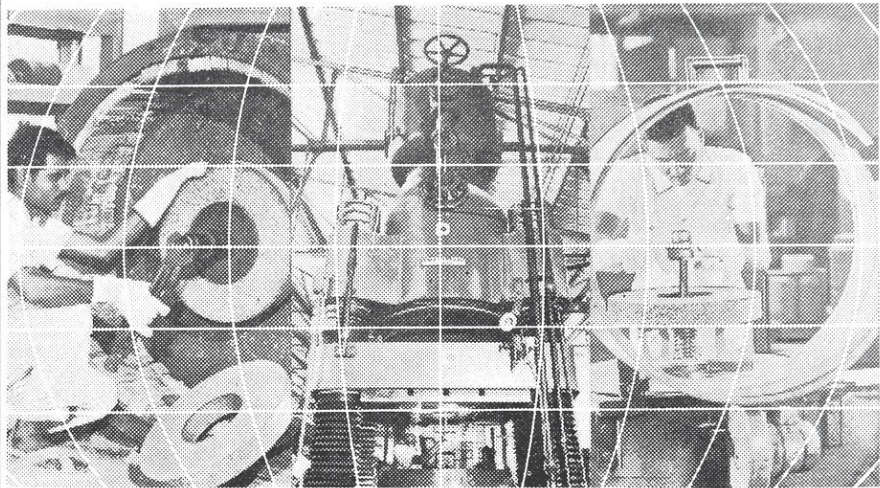
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No one turned his face from the blows of heroes, all weapons demanded blood-shedding (i.e. were waiting for shedding blood).

By the shoes of horses the earth became plated with iron, in every direction it overflowed with blood upto the knees of men.

In this manner the battle continued for three days and (three) nights, so that the hands and feet of men refused to work.

From every side lightning and swords began flashing, by sharp swords the heads of Chieftains were cut.

In the battle-field the Moslems were defeated; they were killed in the battle with the (Hindu) prince.

Alefkhan fled away under (cover of) the darkness of night, he forgot his tents and weapons.

His army was entirely daunted and fled away from Ardeshir. Many enemies were killed in the battle and at both (Ardeshir) stood victorious.

The entire pavilions, tents and equipments fell entirely into the hands of Ardeshir.

The next day, the Sun came up from the mountain range and the world was all at once illumined by his light.

On the second Fight of Alefkhan with Ardeshir and his Victory.

From the armies on both the sides the shout of battle issued, and the earth a second time was filled with commotion.

By the sound of bells and Indian pipes many heads became dull (confused).

Again Alefkhan prepared for battle, the hawk of battle-drum was again flown (beaten).

The famous Commander Ardeshir came in an instant running to the spot.

He immediately told the excellent Raja, "For every hundred of them (the enemies) we are (only) one.

"Now what will you take us as in this work (emergency), because at least this time there is a larger army (opposing us)?

"We will either give them our lives or take (their) lives, with this intent (resolve) we will remain in (stick to) the battle-field.

"In this field (battle) God is our friend, for He always solves our difficulties."

On hearing these words all were exceedingly pleased, and many hearts were relieved from pain.

They then immediately put on their armour and again came to fight with (Alef) Khan.

That instant, famous Ardeshir hung his noose on the saddle like a black snake.

Many lion-hearted men came into the ranks, with Indian sword on the waist-belt and spear in hand.

He (Ardeshir) shouted out loudly "O ye tigers" why have you got confused (perplexed) in the fight?

"Who is now your Commander, what business has he here, what is his name?"

A champion came (out) and said "Look, I am he who will in one blow shed the blood of (several) brave men,"

Under him was a galloping horse (and) he came running to him (Ardeshir).

With a spear in hand he came to fight, like a drunkard he reeled on every side.

To Ardeshir he gave a shout, saying "Beware now, O you son of a pious man.

"Your rival in combat has now come to you, now show your superiority in prowess."

That instant, Ardeshir gave him response "Your antagonist has come to you with all preparations."



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Both of them became (fought like) lions in this battle-field and both had been satiated with (tired of) their (own) lives.

At last Ardeshir over-powered him, and threw him down from the back of his horse.

He (Ardeshir) threw down his noose and drew him in it. He (Ardeshir) came down from his horse and cut off his head.

When Alefkhan found that he was killed, his heart was very much pained (affected).

He (Alefkhan) then ordered that the people of Fars (Persia) and of the Raja should be killed and should not (be allowed to) live on the spot.

When he came in support of (to help) his army to take revenge he instantly spurred on his horse to the battle.

A flashing of the swords arose and blood ran (from their bodies) like a river in sand.

When the armies on both the sides encountered each other, blood oozed out from their bodies like a sea.

Waves arose out of (in) a sea of blood, there was injury to men from every direction.

There was no (not an inch of) space left even for an ant to pass, what could man do even for a moment without the command of God?

Ardeshir then came (plunged) into the midst, and remained there—his days were numbered.

An arrow pierced him in the waist and (the point) came out from the other side all of a sudden.

His body became torpid on account of the wounds (that he received) since every limb of his become a fountain of blood.

Ardeshir fell prostrate from his saddle his army became perplexed and helpless on his account.

Alas! for that brave Commander that Time at length destroyed him;

When evil fortune frowns, a hard stone becomes (soft) like wax.

If he (Ardeshir) fought so many battles and made (so many) efforts, of what use were they when Fortune had turned away from that person?

On both sides many (a number of) soldiers were killed, (and) officers, gallant and illustrious.

That instant, the Hindu Prince was killed and a panic arose in the battle.

Alas! for that good Hindu Prince, who died and his city became desolate on all sides.

About the flight of the faithful to mount Bahrut and their proceeding to Bansda.

At last the Faithful dispersed. There is a mountain in India named Bahrut.

Many fled there to save their lives—there is no help (escape) from the order of God.

Twelve years elapsed in succession, they took with them in a proper manner the sacred Fire (Iranshah).

After a time, by the decree of Providence all set forward with their families and connections.

They then had with them the (Sacred) fire of Behram (and) all came towards Bansda.

When the town of Bansda got the news of his (Fire) coming, they came to receive him with love.

With 300 horsemen they went in company of several noted persons to meet them.

They brought them into the city with a hundred marks of respect, in like manner as a sick man (who had taken poison) finds an antidote.

Hereafter Bansda became like the season of spring (*i.e.* rejoiced) and in this way a long time passed.

Thereafter people of the descent of the Faithful, in whatever province that there were these (men) of pure faith, Men and women, young and old, went there for worshipping the King of Iran (the Sacred Fire).

As in former times (when) in exalted Sanjan, they went (there) from every direction (for the sake of prayer.)

In this manner the Parsees came to Bansda also from every place with a number of articles (presents).

For 14 years thereafter the spheres revolved in accordance with their desire.

On Changa Shah's bringing the Sacred Fire to Navsari from Bansda.

In those times a follower of the Faith appeared, the like of whom there was none (in those days).

He was distinguished in his time for his devotion to the faith and several marks (miracles) were exhibited by him:

He was *Dahewad* (a leader of the village) whose name was Changa *bin* Asa, who used to comfort the hearts of the faithful.

In the latter times that man of virtuous qualities did not allow the good faith to remain in imperfection.

If one had no *Sudra* or *Kusti*, he used to provide means to him (for the same) out of his own pocket.

That man had taken several good measures for the promotion of the faith, no one came to him full of affliction.

To whom he did not provide a remedy or whose heart he did not console with his whole soul.

In those days several men of the good faith became religious through his favour.

My tongue cannot sufficiently portray that man of the good faith who did so much service to his religion.

One year that holy man formed a resolution and went to the Fire temple (at Bansda).

At that time there was the festival of *Sadeh* (and) the Fire temple was in the city of Bansda.

In the month of Adur and on the day Adur, O brother! that festival of *Sadeh* occurred.

That devout and enlightened man took along with him all laymen and priests.

In his sight they all prostrated themselves and performed worship in that place.

Thereafter each one with joy and rejoicing returned from the Fire-temple by that way.

People went away from that place marching with gladness and comfort to their homes.

After this when two or three months out of the year had passed, the well-wisher (Changa Asa) brought this into his heart,—

One day he called the entire *Anjuman* and there he made a speech about the Fire-temple (thus):—

“I wish, O Well-wishers! that we should bring from there (*i.e.* Bansda) our King of Kings (*i.e.* Sacred fire) to this place.

“If we daily have sight of the King, much benefit will accrue from it.

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"Secondly, every year we experience much difficulty on the way on his account.

"Because in this month there is excessive rain, (consequently) our going there is inconvenient.

"O my dear friends! what would be better than this that we should go there (to Bansda) with discreet (wise) persons.

"(And) bring the victorious Fire, so that we may daily see his face.

"By him (*i.e.* by his grace) our livelihood and income would increase and the hearts of the people of the Faith would be gladdened."

All the people rejoiced at hearing him (Changa Asa), all were relieved from the trouble of (going to) Bansda.

They brought him (the Sacred Fire) with a hundred marks of honour and located him in a beautiful Temple.

Three of the good faith were in his (*i.e.* of the sacred fire) service and remained with him (Sacred Fire) for a long time.

They were in his service day and night, they were appointed for each *geh* in his service.

The name of one was Nagen Ram, he was always desirous of doing pious deeds.

Another Dastur there was whose name was Khurshed. His father was always (known as) Kiyam-ud-din.

The third Dastur was Janyan son of Sayer, he was always well known for his services to the Fire.

They had their families and households, who were all in company of Iranshah.

They proceeded with great pomp and honour, dignity and splendour.

The three Dasturs reached Navsari, all with their households after a long journey.

In those days that religious Dastur (Changa Shah) was assisting those officiating priests.

May he have this servant's salutation in this world, may he have his resting place among the celestial.

On the completion of the book.

Countless and continuous thanks to the Lord of the world, nourisher of His servants.

He set my tongue to (this) work; He opened mysteriously a door of His favour.

The Dastur has shown (related to) to me this story, may God keep him prosperous in both the worlds.

I, the humble one, whose name is Bahman, my camp is in Naosari.

Further, know that my father is Kaikobad; his heart is glad in the remembrance of the King of Iran (*i.e.* the sacred Fire).

His father (was named) Dastur Hormuzdyar, may his place be full of light in brightest heaven.

O friend! know that his surname is Sanjana, by (help of) every

(sort of) knowledge he was weighty (*i.e.* discreet) in his work. On account of that knowledge his surname was Sanjana, because he has shown his wisdom in religious matters.

Another name (title) that was given to him was the "High Priest of Religion". In every place they (the people) opened their passage (road) to religion through him.

He had his house in Naosari, which can be estimated to be 200 years old.

May a hundred thousand salutations and praises be on him and also on the souls of the pillars of religion.

With success and by the order of God, in this manner I have written the story of brave men.

Know that when a religious man reads it, he will at the end pray for me.

May more than thousands of salutations from me reach those good persons and men of those times.

May the Holy Spirit send back (salutations) on my soul and ask for pardon for it from God.

May praise be on the Spirit (Zoroaster) everlastingly and may his soul and heart always be rich.

In 969 of the Yazdagerd era, this story was written.

In the month of Farwardin and on day Khurdad, these couplets were finished justly.

(When) I wrote and completed this story, at the end I asked for justice for myself from God,

I ask for considerable blessings from the reader for some time; because by him my honour and position will be increased.

May his soul remain with the holy Spirit who every moment heartily wishes me to be happy.

I have narrated this story (*Kisseh*) according to what I saw and heard from my elders.

Further, my master has revised it (and) he has grown such roses in the garden.

O God! grant him the natural term of life, that his years may be like spring-tide

When I narrated this story, I followed the path of the truthful.

Since you have (seen) received from me this good story, pronounce upon me fitting benedictions.

May there be endless, countless praise and ample thanksgivings on devout Zoroaster

Further, may you have the grace of God so that you may give to my soul the gift of eternity.

Satan became slave, (this is) completed, this writing is finished, my work is over

This story of Khorasan (*Kisse Khorassani*) is completed.

The copyist is the devout servant Noshirwan son of Manekji, of the good faith, the son of heavenly Edalji, son of Cooverji. Whoever reads this will send praises to him, and it (the book) is completed on the auspicious day *Behram*, the month of Khordad, Kadmi year 1112 of Yazdagerd of Sasan, the auspicious dynasty of Persia.





Amongst the several groups and individuals striving to propagate Zoroastrianism in the community, Zoroastrian Studies founded

Zoroastrian Studies: A Religious Experience

Khojeste Mistree

by the Oxford educated, scholar-cum-preacher, Khojeste Mistree, has met with the most success and acclaim.

From humble beginnings, the institution has grown to encompass Zoroastrian communities throughout India and the world. Mistree has been invited to lecture in North America, England, Pakistan, Singapore and even Australia, amongst other places. His students in turn, are spreading

the ZS gospel far and wide.

Though Mistree's scholarship and orthodox leanings have earned ZS criticism from several quarters, his patient efforts are gaining him new friends in an increasingly secular and skeptical world.

We publish in this issue an article, relating the genesis, successes, disappointments and future aspirations of ZS, written by Mistree, at *Parsiana's* request.

Zoroastrian Studies was conceived of in England, but was born in India in the autumn of 1977, when Alan Williams and myself delivered two lectures and presented a slide show as an experimental venture, to ascertain the pulse of the community in Bombay. The response and enthusiasm generated by the public, was a clear indication to us, that many Zoroastrians were ready and willing to rouse themselves from their habitual state of apathy, indifference and blissful ignorance.

It was decided thus, that we should organize and deliver a few more lectures in order to satiate this untapped interest, after which it was our intention to return to the quiet, gentle world of academia.

Alan went back to England later that year, while I remained behind with my activities trebling, and out of it emerged what is now affectionately known to many as ZS—Zoroastrian Studies.

Our Objectives

Zoroastrian Studies is primarily concerned with both, the religious as well as the socio-economic aspects of the community. It is our aim to encourage, promote and support an awareness of the tradition and culture in order to be able to initiate a spiritual and material renaissance, for those who seek it.

ZS is founded on the basis that these objectives can best be achieved through the use of modern scholarship and new teaching methods; as well as through an

awareness of the cultural heritage, which is so closely linked with the economic well-being of the community.

Our Structure

In order to accomplish these objectives, a master plan was drawn up which envisaged a Zoroastrian Secretariat, operating in the two main spheres of religious and socio-economic affairs.

On the religious front, we realized the need for a structured educational system for children and adults, and hence identified our specific activities to be in the fields of training teachers, running adult study groups, conducting children's classes, making audio-visuals and other films, producing good books and reading material, organizing public lectures and funding academic programmes. The economic and educational upliftment of the priestly class is also within the sphere of our activities.

On the socio-economic front, we decided to encourage active participation and financial support for a programme of research surveys on the problems and areas of concern in the community, by identifying through professional methods, the possible solutions to them.

The First Fruits

In June 1979, I began to teach a class of 32 participants who were carefully chosen, in order that eventually I would be able to gather together a team of committed Zoroastrians, who in turn would spearhead the defined objectives of

Zoroastrian Studies. Two years later, it is gratifying to know that ZS does have a hard core of professional volunteers, who are the *hamkars* (co-workers) for this new impulse.

ZS and the Poor

In August 1979, another important project was launched. We came to hear of the sad plight of a 75-year-old Udvada priest, who for 58 years had worked for the religion, but was now destitute and at the mercy of public charity. We realized the failure of the organized institution and hence decided to move into this field. ZS could not stand by and allow the poor in its community, to be seared by the flames of social deprivation and indifference.

Shortly afterwards, I conducted a survey of all the aged and infirmed Zoroastrians in Udvada, where I discovered a world of poverty, alien to the 'good religion'. All those whom I personally interviewed, seemed to be the victims of circumstance, neglected by our rich within whom a moral lethargy undoubtedly prevails.

What has happened since, is part of history now, for ZS today helps 83 old people in Udvada and Navsari. Our project is carefully monitored, with follow-up surveys conducted periodically. In March 1981, the first ever eye-camp was held in Udvada and later this year, ZS will be organizing a free dental camp for the poor.

We strongly feel that an organization

like ZS, must, as of moral duty, practise the spirit of the religion which in the past, led to the accolade—"Parsi, thy name is charity!"

In spite of our efforts and hard work, neither the recognized institutions nor trusts have come forward to help financially, for the continuance of this project. Our poor are supported through the toil and sacrifice of the middle class—a sad indictment to the memory of the Parsi visionaries of yesteryears.

Our Other Activities

Over the past 48 months, ZS has been involved in a number of other activities. Once a year, we hold a religious essay and painting competition in order that our children may enjoy the spirit of the religion, through a creative process of learning. We have made a very successful, audiovisual titled—*Revelation A Light in Darkness*, which has been screened all over the world. Our next audiovisual is already in the pipeline.

ZS produces a quarterly Newsletter which is sent regularly to a mailing list of over 2,000 people. We are in the process of expanding our readership, so that we may be able to form a global link, serving Zoroastrians all over the world. It is hoped that this development will bring about a greater cohesiveness and a sense of identity within our community. We are also involved in the publication and distribution of scholarly articles and other reading material.

ZS has embarked upon a well-researched programme for children's education. We have conducted a number of religious creativity classes, with the aim of teaching religion through arts, crafts, quizzes, music, role playing and stories, in order that the children may learn through fun and joy.

Adult education is also our priority. A number of classes and seminars have been conducted by ZS members in Bombay, Calcutta, Jamshedpur and New Delhi. A small study group has recently been started in Toronto, by a ZS protégé. ZS would like to spread its wings abroad, with professional seminars undertaken if the need arises.

Under the auspices of ZS, a number of public talks have been organized and it is our belief that over 15,000 people have passed through our doors, over the past 48 months. I myself, have lectured at various Universities, as well as to our community in different parts of the world, and to date I reckon that I must have given over 400 lectures.

In March 1980, we decided to evaluate our efforts and achievements. The

response from our mailing list members was indeed heartening. 96 percent of the respondents believed that ZS could accomplish programmes beneficial to the community, 88.2 percent of the respondents credited us for developing a greater appreciation of the religion, 62 percent of the respondents credited us for developing community consciousness, 52 percent of the respondents credited us for giving inspiration for spiritual growth. Our greatest support comes from the educated, working segment of our population, with 62 percent of our respondents being below 50 years of age.

Much more important is the fact that we have been accepted by the younger generation, in whose hands lies the future salvation of the community.

The Lack of Financial Support

If Zoroastrians are desirous of a good religious service, then full-time trained personnel are required to meet this demand. This can only come about if individuals within the community recognize this need and are inspired to initiate a professionalism which in the long run will ensure our survival. It is about time young people are given the incentive to make a good professional career in religious education, which till now has been treated with utter disregard.

The misconceived idea that religious services must be extended free of charge, and that individuals involved in

restoration may prove to be too difficult and expensive.

The need of the hour is the need for a dynamic religious revival, and this cannot take place without substantial funding, to encourage a new generation of

Our poor are supported through the toil and sacrifice of the middle class.

specialized religious teachers trained in the fields of doctrine, ritual, education, psychology, creative writing, audiovisual techniques and so forth. It is with these skills that Zoroastrian studies would like to revolutionize religious education within the community.

The Lack of Leadership

The community also lacks good collective leadership and hence, all the infighting and a crisis of ideology amongst our people. Religion is indeed not negotiable, but an understanding and knowledge of it would give one the flexibility and insight into what is desirable and right for one's self. Only then can emerge a new awareness and love for the religion, founded upon scholarship, devoid of speculation.

A monitored change for a new order may indeed be desirable and should not be seen as a threat to our religion and community. Concerted action based upon a series of bold decisions, needs to be taken, and for this, we require a team of international experts, whose task it would be to examine and study our socio-religious problems. Their findings can then be presented to the community, for it is eventually the community that must decide its future, based upon its heritage of the past, coupled with the urgency of the present. This can only be achieved through dynamic and enlightened leadership.

The Forgotten Torch Bearers

The economic and educational upliftment of the priests has been discussed greatly, though very little by way of tangible amelioration has come their way.

The fires are beginning to flicker, the rituals are slowly dying away and the priests continue to be trained poorly at their schools, a sad reversal of the vision of the founders of these schools. With an anachronistic syllabus and inadequate educational facilities, can one blame the boys for being unenlightened and ignorant? An educated and well-



Raok: the ZS mascot

this task, must subsist as the "poverty stricken dregs" of our community, must come to an end.

Our problem today is not one of lack of community funds, but that Zoroastrians who have become "the unconscious receptacles of the tradition", have through a myopic and false conviction, come to believe that the task of

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paid priesthood should be the priority of the day.

Economic and housing incentives need to be given liberally, so that we can bring back a sense of professional dignity so a new generation of boys are attracted to the priesthood. The salaries of the priests need to be commensurate with those of their educated friends working in other fields, rather than the pittance that the average mobed earns today. With no provident fund, medical benefits, holiday facilities, nor any pension to look forward to, is it surprising that very few boys want to become priests?

A dearth of funds is the excuse one often hears—a travesty of affairs.

A monitored change for a new order may indeed be desirable and should not be seen as a threat to our religion and community.

judging from the resources that could be made available if a bold and innovative approach was taken, through better utilization of funds.

A fair percentage of the trustees of our institutions and fire temples, are rich in their own right. Could one of them not make the supreme sacrifice of digging into his own resources, to endow additional funds? Would not the sale of prime property yield a substantial sum of money, for it to be utilized towards the economic upliftment of the priests? Indeed with the legal and tax luminaries available, this problem can be solved.

The problem, therefore, is not one of lack of funds, but one of moral and selfish bankruptcy in which the rich and powerful, do not have the volitional consciousness to give generously.

The Vision

We at ZS have a vision—a vision of a religious renaissance which will give the community, the strength and the force to thrust Zoroastrianism into the 21st century.

The Community has to contribute its goodwill and financial support, for this dream to become a reality. Let not the future historians say, that our miniscule community which survived centuries of merciless persecution, failed to "draw its life's breath in the time of plenty." Let not Zoroastrianism become a fossilized anthropological phenomenon, to be found only in the text books of the

21st century. Let us get together and grow together, to become once more, the bright beacons of the 'good religion'!

The Dangers

It is not diminishing numbers, intermarriages, nor conversions that are going to wrought havoc on our community. It is the lack of rational religious knowledge coupled with an unawareness of our heritage, which may thwart the survival of our religion.

After all, our forefathers did not come to India in the tenth century A.D. to maintain only their Iranian, racial identity. They came to preserve our religious uniqueness which more and more Zoroastrians today are so ignorantly shedding.

An economic upliftment without a religious renaissance is surely meaningless if the Zoroastrian identity is not doubly reinforced. On the other hand,

racial dilution is inevitable in the times we live in; therefore, it is the religion and culture that have to be safeguarded, against the pressures of the New Age.

Equally, there lies no salvation in bigotry and religious fascism, so amply

The problem is not one of lack of funds, but one of moral and selfish bankruptcy.

reflected by the support given to many heretical cults and pseudo-scientific quacks, whose utter disregard for scholarship leaves much to be desired. Added to this, is the ill-conceived though fashionable trend amongst many educated Parsis, of veering towards greater secularism, thereby threatening the very fabric of our small, fragile community.



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Fire Fighting

Berjis Desai

What happens when obscurantists clash with religious zealots in a court of law? Amongst other things, an important judicial decision and the consecration of a new *Adaran*. The reference is to the decision of the Gujarat High Court in a suit filed by Udvada High priest, Hormazdyar Mirza, and others, versus Behramshaw Bharda and others.

Bharda and others, members of the so-called "Pundole Group", had established an *Adaran* in Udvada. The priest of Udvada objected and claimed that Zoroastrian custom prohibited the consecration of an *Adaran* between the Par River near Pardi to the Vaitarna River near Bombay.

Mirza's group averred that an *Adaran* can only be established at a place where no *Atash Behram* exists. All these arguments were sought to be substantiated by obscure religious texts and the *Rivayats*, a compilation of information on social and liturgical matters in the form of questions and answers. The Pundolites challenged the constitutional validity of the alleged custom and the stage was set for a massive legal showdown.

Justice S. H. Sheth and Justice S. B. Majumdar of the Gujarat High Court held that no such custom existed and the religious texts revealed a picture which was quite contrary to what was stated. The "*Atash Behram—Adaran*" argument of the plaintiffs was dubbed an "exaggerated falsehood" by their Lordships.

The court laid down an important proposition of constitutional law when it stated that the individual citizen's fundamental right to freedom of religion and conscience enshrined in the Indian constitution was not subject or secondary to the right granted to religious denominations to manage their own affairs in matters of religion.

The judges were of the opinion that any contrary interpretation would not only stifle the individual's fundamental right to freedom of religion and conscience but also lead to the hegemony of the clergy. The rights given by the constitution are meant to protect individual groups against the power of the State and are not to be used against the legit-

imate rights of other dissenting individuals.

It was held that every Zoroastrian has a fundamental right to establish a religious institution for professing, practicing and propagating his religion. The court held that it was the fundamental right of every Zoroastrian to establish a religious institution.



Pundole Adaran at Udvada

Whilst one must laud a decision favouring individual freedom and conscience, it is necessary to reflect upon its practical consequences. It would now be perfectly legal for any reformist group to establish an *Agiari* wherein not only religious rites for cremated persons can be performed but also where non-Parsis would be permitted to worship. However, radical this may appear, this epoch-making judicial decision can be taken to its logical culmination. Perhaps, the mobeds of Udvada have unwittingly stirred up a hornet's nest.

Dastur Mirza, a reputed religious scholar, filed a Special Leave Petition in the Supreme Court of India against the judgement of the Gujarat High Court and obtained a *status quo* order. The Pundolites in turn applied for a variation of that order and succeeded.

The Supreme Court has ordered that pending the appeal, the mobeds of the Pundole *Adaran* be allowed to offer their

personal prayers around what they consider to be their "Sacred Bull" and further that they can also offer prayers for their own dead.

Mirza and others are reportedly planning their next salvo, to be fired when the Supreme Court reopens after the summer recess. Till then, the Pundolites will offer their personal prayers for their dead and the living.

Finally, it is impossible to disregard the less beneficial consequences of such a protracted litigation. Already thousands have been spent over the consecration of a new fire temple when the existing ones are facing a grave future due to shortage of funds and other resources.

Isn't it ironical that the same people who are clamouring for assistance to fight poverty and penury, are willing to spend so much on court battles? It seems that we are fast becoming a bunch of compulsive litigants.

S. B. Vakil and J. M. Panchal appeared for Behramshaw Bharda and others, B. R. Zaiwalla with D. K. Trivedi and G. Vakharia with Bhushan B. Oza appeared for Mirza and others.

Marriage, Parsi Style

Can a Parsi married under the Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act, 1936, obtain a valid divorce abroad? Or is he bound by the provisions of that Act and subject to the jurisdiction of the Parsi Matrimonial Courts only, irrespective of where he resides?

Some light was thrown on these interesting questions by the Parsi Chief Matrimonial Court of Bombay delivering a judgement in a case for alimony and maintenance filed by the wife. This oral judgement of Justice Aggarwal delivered on 2 April, 1980 is important not only from the point of view of Parsi matrimonial law, but also from the principles of private international law.

The parties were married according to the Parsi form of marriage under the Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act, 1936, in Bombay. They had two children. In 1975, the husband was posted to Geneva, Switzerland, whilst the wife, who was keeping indifferent health, remained in

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Bombay. According to the wife, the husband had an affair with another woman there.

The husband was transferred to London in 1978, but he came down to Bombay and filed a suit for divorce in the Parsi Matrimonial Court. However, in 1979, he unconditionally withdrew the suit and filed a petition for divorce in the High Court of London. In the meanwhile, the wife had already moved the Bombay courts for restitution of co-jugal rights and was even granted an *ex-parte* decree for the same.

The husband succeeded in convincing the President of the Family Division, High Court of London that as he was domiciled in England since 1936, (he had come to England as a child of two and stayed on until he was 18 years of age), the English Court had jurisdiction to hear his petition for divorce.

Undeterred, the wife petitioned the Bombay Court again for maintenance and alimony whilst the husband's divorce petition in London was pending.

The husband claimed that the Bombay Court had no jurisdiction to try the case as he was a British subject residing in England and any order passed by the Bombay Court would amount to interference with the jurisdiction of a competent court which would be contrary to the principles of comity of nations and international goodwill.

The Bombay Court turned down this contention by saying that the husband had already submitted to the jurisdiction of the Bombay Court and the domicile argument was only an afterthought on his part and he had no right now to challenge it.

The Bombay judges held that the Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act, intended that once a marriage was contracted under that Act, all questions of divorce and separation were to be decided only by the Parsi Matrimonial Courts with the aid of Parsi delegates alone.

Justice Aggarwal pointed out that a Parsi married under the Act is bound by the provisions of the Act regarding divorce and such divorce can only become operative if a decree is passed by a competent court under this Act. Nor could a Parsi create a jurisdiction in the court of some other country by changing his domicile after marriage. The purpose behind such a scheme was that legal ideas relating to matrimonial matters prevailing in foreign countries should not affect the Parsi community in India.

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The judge went on to award alimony and maintenance to the wife.

What exactly is the significance of this judgement? A sizable section of our community resides abroad. Often, they return to India to marry under the Parsi Marriage Act. Can these parties later on obtain a divorce from the Canadian, English or American Courts? According to commonly accepted principles of private international law, all such foreign courts would undoubtedly have jurisdiction to entertain such a divorce petition on grounds of domicile, habitual residence or even nationality.

It appears that, if the present judgement is relied upon, such a divorce may not be regarded as operative in India for the simple reason that the parties are married under the Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act, 1936, and only the Parsi Matrimonial Courts are qualified to determine any question of dissolution of such a marriage.

This may create problems in the field of matrimony and succession. On the basis of a valid foreign divorce, a person may remarry in India, only to be accused of bigamy or the children of such a second "marriage" declared illegitimate.

The Court's decision may have been just, but if it is taken to its logical extreme it may lead to some strange results.

Justice Aggarwal's observation of, "Parsis have been separated from the mainstream of private international law" needs to be re-examined in the light of accepted principles of private international law.

Lawyers for the wife were Meher Master-Moos and F. D. Damania; Porus A. Mehta with M. P. Shroff of Gagrut and Company, represented the husband.

BERJIS DESAI

Berjis Desai is a lawyer with the solicitors firm of Crawford Bayley and Co.

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The life of
Dastur Dhalla XVI

SETTING SAIL

Aek Atmakatha is the autobiography of the late Dr Manek Nusserwanji Dhalla, high priest of the Pakistan Parsis and a renown religious scholar. This is the sixteenth edited and condensed extract from the English translation of the original Gujarati, by Gool and Behram Rustomji, published by the Dastur Dhalla Memorial Institute, Karachi.

THE STORY SO FAR

Born to a poor dastur family in Surat on 27 August 1875, Dhalla moved with his family to Karachi three years later. At the age of eight, Dhalla was married to five-year-old Cooverbai. After failing his matriculation, Dhalla sought employment while educating himself in religious matters.

The Parsis of Karachi made arrangements for him to study for his masters degree in Iranian languages at Bombay University and later Dhalla went on to Columbia University, New York, where under the guidance of Professor A. V. W. Jackson, the well-known Zoroastrian scholar, he was awarded his Ph.D. in 1908.

Four years in the west had altered Dhalla's outlook to life and religion. On his return to India, Dhalla was nominated the Dastur of Karachi in 1909. He advocated reforms in the established religion and felt that priests were best suited to do this. One of his first steps in this direction was the organization of the Zoroastrian Conference to bring all the mobeds and ervads together to consider the problems facing the community. The conference's work began smoothly but soon, it came to be regarded as an extreme reformist party. The orthodox faction tried unsuccessfully to remove Dhalla from the office of high priest.

Ten years ago as an Ervad I had travelled to Gujarat in order to deliver sermons and lectures. I decided to repeat the performance. All the arrangements were to be made by the Standing Committee of the Zoroastrian Conference at Bombay.

Starting from Ahmedabad, we were to deliver three or four lectures in every town before reaching Bombay. Our committee had received intimation that as the news of our arrival was spreading in certain towns, they were inciting adverse propaganda against me.

Between Ahmedabad and Bombay I gave about 32 talks. In generous appreciation, kind co-religionists everywhere had presented me with gifts in cash which amounted to Rs 4,500. This was a welcome initial instalment towards my cherished aim to go some day to England and America to lecture on the Zoroastrian religion and on allied historical subjects.

Successfully completing the tour organized under the auspices of the Zoroastrian Conference, we returned to Karachi after two months.

The first opportunity we had of visiting Lahore was in 1913. At that time signs of Parsi glory attained in the past century were apparent; yet, at the same time, it seemed that their prosperity was at an ebb.

Two prominent Parsi families of Lahore were to be linked by marriage. From one side, the ceremony was to be performed by Dastur Kaikhushru Jamaspji, the Head Priest of the new *Atash Behram* at Bombay and I was to officiate for the other party. Taking advantage of this opportunity, four lectures in English and Gujarati were organized there.

As we were approaching Lahore, my wife and I were preparing to alight, when at an intermediary station two gentlemen and a lady boarded the train and settled in our compartment. They informed us that they had come particularly to receive us with due respect. From their talk it transpired that there was a rift in the small community and matters had reached such a state of dispute that the opposition party had even started a temporary *Agiari* of its own.

They pleaded that instead of leaving Lahore as scheduled at the conclusion of our programme, we should stay back and endeavour to bridge the unfortunate gulf between the two parties and save the community from the unnecessary expense of maintaining two fire temples.

We expressed our willingness to render whatever humble service we were capable of in this direction. On reaching Lahore we were received at the station by men and women belonging to both parties.

During my stay in Lahore the representatives of both parties kept in touch with me and explained their individual objections. Gleaning the root causes of the differences between the two sections, I was able to establish peace between the two parties after a fortnight's persuasion and pleadings. It was decided to close down the second *Agiari*.

Just then a major and unprecedented difficulty arose from an unexpected quarter. News of the intended performance of the *Navjote* ceremony of the off-spring of the Muslim mistress of a well-known and respected elderly trustee of the Anjuman came to light. Leading trustees of the Anjuman and their friends were bent upon preventing this step from being taken, whereas the revered Dasturji Kaikhushru, true to his honest belief, had agreed to perform the *Navjote* himself.

Those who had set up the new *Agiari* expressed their strong opposition to this and told me in no uncertain terms that should this come to pass, the understanding that the two parties had arrived at would be dissipated and they would reopen the *Agiari* that had been closed down. It took us another 12 days to end this dispute.

What was lacking and upon what was founded all future controversy, was the Nirang

Those associated with the *Navjote* agreed to avert it, hence peace was restored. In joyous gratefulness for the dissolving of long-standing disputes, the Anjuman organized a *jashan* ceremony followed by a dinner.

As soon as we reached Karachi, a letter was received from Lahore stating that the *Navjote* that had been prevented had eventually been performed. Party spirit revived and bitterness waxed high. I started a lengthy correspondence and begged of them to forego ill-feelings and to submit to circumstances and to be tolerant. Common sense prevailed at long last and the threat to reopen the closed *Agiari* was finally abandoned.

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My book entitled *Zoroastrian Theology* was nearing completion. As printing and binding in India were not as good as they were in America, I had resolved to have all my future books published there. It was not necessary to go to America personally to have this work done. With a little delay and botheration it could have been accomplished from this end also.

When I had left the shores of America in 1908, I had determined that if God ever places any money in my hands, I would save it and utilize it in the service of my community and my faith by lecturing on the Zoroastrian religion and its history in the west. My hopes were raised as a result of my lecture-tours to Gujarat, Bombay, Poona and the Punjab. My wife accumulated all the cash gifts that were given to me by the various Anjumans of different places, and had managed to collect nearly Rs 6,000.

This amount would suffice merely to have the book published there. Of course there was the hope of recovering some of the expenditure from its sales later. My wife's coming would increase the expenditure by about Rs 2,000.

The steamship companies allow a certain discount in their passage to Christian Missionaries in order to assist them in their endeavour to spread their faith. We had no right to such a discount. Yet, thanks to the contrivance of some Parsi authorities in the shipping company and to the kindness of the officers, as Zoroastrian missionaries we were given a rebate of Rs 150 in the fare.

The Anjuman called a meeting to bid us *bon voyage* and together with their good wishes, the community presented me with a purse of Rs 2,500.

On 22 April 1914, we set sail for Liverpool in the *City of Karachi*. From there we were to cross the Atlantic in another ship. It would take us five weeks to reach New York.

As Zoroastrian mission —
aries we were given
a rebate of Rs 150 in the
fare.

Shortly after I had returned to India on completion of my studies in America, Professor Jackson's wife had expired. After some time, he had married again and they had visited India via Persia. We had informed them from England of our arrival and of our ship's

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schedule. The husband and wife had come to the wharf to welcome us and were very happy to see my wife accompanying me for the first time.

We rented a small room in the vicinity of Columbia University and had our meals at an inexpensive restaurant nearby. I wore American clothes, while my wife wore a sari at home. But when she stepped out she became a western dame. At the annual function of the University, I sat next to Professor Jackson attired in *Jama-Pichhodi* and she, beside Ms Jackson, in a sari.

As the printing of my book had commenced, Professor Jackson together with Drs. Ogden and Hass did the proof-reading. We met daily for this purpose. The work at the press was progressing rapidly and to keep pace with it, I had much work to do on the manuscripts.

I had to commence work at dawn every day. As soon as the alarm-clock rang the hour, my wife would leave her bed despite all my dissuasion, and would sit by me and fan me while I wrote.

At that time an unprecedented war broke out in Europe—a war such as had never been recorded in the annals of history.

My main job of publishing the book was over. My lectures had been delivered. My wife had learnt many new things. She had purchased goods worth Rs 6,000 with a view to sell them in India. News from the war front was growing increasingly alarming, daily. The new threat and terror of the submarine was well on its way.

Ultimately, with God's name on our lips, we had our passages booked on the *Transylvania*, a newly commissioned ship of the Cunard Co. which plied between New York and Liverpool.

We had to return to Liverpool in order to take the steamer for Karachi; so we left all our luggage including the six trunks that contained my wife's purchases which were meant for sale, in the warehouse of the steamship company and proceeded to London.

We lodged at a boarding house that had been opened by a Zoroastrian. After 1855, the year in which Dadabhoy Naoroji, Muncherji Hormusji Cama, and Khurshedji Rustomji Cama established the first Parsi and Indian firm in London—the Cama Company—several other firms were founded and many Parsi families started to settle there.

When their children were of age the parents took them to India and per-

Orthodox Dasturs and Ervads expressed the opinion that the Navjote was null and void.

formed their *Navjote* ceremony. This practice was set with many difficulties. Some child may be ready for the *Navjote*, but due to business commitments, it was not possible for the elders to leave the place for three to four years, then their uneasiness increased.

Rustomji Rattonji Desai, an enterprising Athornan who had been a practicing priest in his earlier days but had taken to business later and was carrying on a flourishing trade in London since years, took advantage of my presence and requested me to perform the *Navjote* ceremony of his grown-up daughter. I willingly complied with his request.

Because of the Zoroastrian Conference all my activities were impeded under one pretext or another, hence we had taken all possible precaution not to give cause for complaint. We had managed to obtain sandalwood and frankincense with great difficulty and from a

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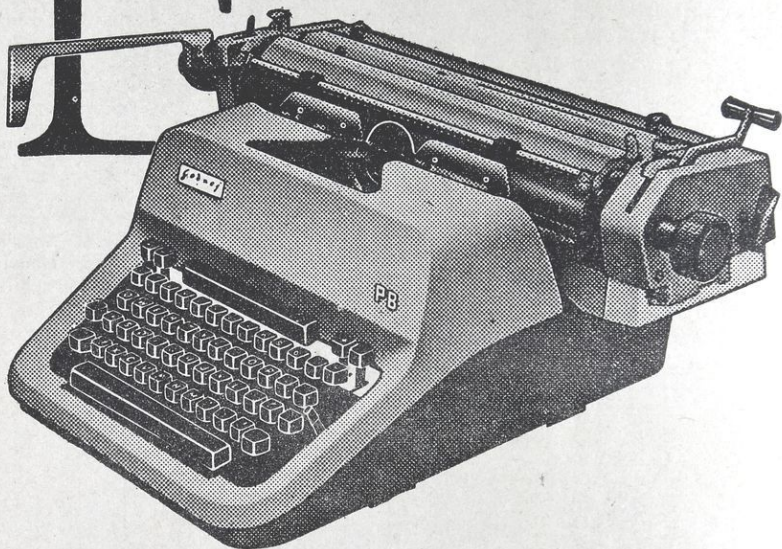
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great distance we had secured the leaf of a pomegranate. Care had been taken to bathe and purify the initiate according to custom.

What was lacking and upon what was founded all future controversy, was the *Nirang*, i.e. the sanctified bull's urine. My wife had collected all the requisites of happy augury as per Parsi practices. Empty salmon and sardine tins had been perforated in auspicious designs of fish and coconuts and prepared as boxes to imprint *chalk* on the doorways. Nor had she failed to fill the *sopara* with chocolates and sweets. The Caxton Hall was adorned with garlands and *chalk* imprints and the *ses* was duly prepared.

This very first *Navjote* in Europe was performed with due ceremonies and rejoicing 'midst a large and distinguished gathering of all the coreligionists residing in London, many prominent Englishmen and Parsi doctors who had come from Brighton and other places to serve in the military due to the war. At the conclusion of the *Navjote*, I delivered a sermon and Sir Muncherji Bhawnagari thanked me.

By the grace of God everything pass-

ed off very happily. But later the question was raised in Bombay whether this *Navjote* could be considered valid or not. Dasturs and Ervads spent many precious hours in trying to solve this perilous problem and certain revered orthodox Dasturs and Ervads expressed the opinion that the *Navjote* was null and void.

The reason given was that the custom born in ancient times, which has found a footing in the community considered to

**My wife would sit by me
and fan me while I wrote.**

be educated and progressive, namely that of giving the child the consecrated *taro* together with the pomegranate leaf—was not adhered to.

Thus the first *Navjote* performed in London came under fire but today the performance of *Navjotes* there is quite common. Students of the priestly class going there for study or doctors who have been initiated as Navars and are

practising in London, wear the white turban when necessary and go to the assistance of coreligionists living in far-flung places, and fulfil their pledge to the faith.

Steamers had become scarce, so we had to remain in London for six weeks. At last, on securing passages we set sail from Liverpool for India.

We had to pass through all kinds of trepidations while passing through the Mediterranean. It was pitch dark at night on board the ship. At intervals, submarines of the Allies would appear and leave various messages with the Captain. Near Malta, a British torpedo boat stopped us for several hours from proceeding further and allowed us to go forward only when the sailing was safe.

Some months later, at the same place, the ship that had set sail from Karachi with the well-known scholar of Zoroastrian literature, Reverend Professor James Hope Malton on board, was sunk.

We disembarked at Bombay as I had been nominated to preside over the Zoroastrian Conference which was to be held in Bombay on 25 March.

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The Plethora of Parsi businessmen being featured regularly in the general newsmedia has prompted PARSIANA to start a BUSINESS column.

Any news pertaining to businessmen in the community is welcomed.

BUSINESS INDIA in its issue of June 8-12 featured Naval Tata on the cover and in the issue of July 6-19 wrote about the House of Godrej.

BUSINESS WORLD published by the Ananda Bazar Patrika group featured J. R. D. Tata and Russi Mody on the cover for an article on The Tata Iron and Steel Company Ltd. (TISCO), while the issue of July 6-19 featured J. S. Khambata, Managing Director of the multinational company Glaxo on the cover.

SOCIETY magazine published by Lana Publishing Company featured on the July cover J.R.D. Tata and SUNDAY magazine featured in its March 22 issue Russi K. Karanjia owner, publisher and editor of BLITZ weekly and THE DAILY, Bombay's newest and lively left-wing morning news paper.

PARSIANA carries extracts from BUSINESS INDIA and BUSINESS WORLD and will focus on the other publication in future issues.

The Other Tata

In the last few months, **Business India** has concentrated on overall issues like power cuts, oil and stockmarkets. And we thought it was time to focus on an individual who has had a considerable impact on industrial activity in the country. **Naval Tata**, besides being a family member of the House of Tatas and an active force in several of the group's companies, has played a prominent role in employer-employee relations in India. Tata has been actively involved in the field of labour and employee relations, both in India and abroad. He has been, for over 30 years, a member of the governing body of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in Geneva. Within the Tata group, he is the chairman of the textile companies and the power companies. He is also a member of the board of several other companies. He is unusual among the senior directors of the Tata group in as much that his wife and son also manage a Tata group company each. He has also been an active sports administrator for several years.

Business India is appreciative of the fact that Tata took time out to meet with us and give us a lucid and candid account of his views. He sees his role as a non-executive chairman of the companies he is involved in, leaving day to day management to his managing directors. This role includes trying to ensure that the companies "follow age old Tata traditions and the policies laid down by the Chairman."

Business India, Editorial, June 8-21 issue

Dr. Johnson said of Edmond Burke that you could not stand under a shed with him while it rained without recognising his calibre. So also with Naval Hormusji Tata—humanitarian, industrialist, staunch critic of government red tape and inefficiency, a spokesman of employers in their dealings with employees and scion of the house of Tatas. Less known, but equally important to him personally, is his role as a humane administrator of several charitable trusts including those established by the Tatas.

Though occupying the top-most positions in management and the recipient of numerous honours bestowed by both industry and the state during a long and illustrious career, the other Tata, as



Tata: "the compleat man"

Naval Tata (who is guardedly, and sometimes not so guardedly, talked about as a successor to J. R. D. Tata) is sometimes called, has never forgotten his humble beginnings. "If I have been able to do something in these 50 years of my association with Tatas," he says with characteristic modesty, "it is simply because God gave me an opportunity—a rare one. And from that day, somehow or the other, it became a mission in my life."

The Tata family, showered with abundance in all other respects by Dame Fortune is not blessed with many offspring. Neither of Jamshedji N. Tata's two sons—Dorab and Ratan—had any issue. In 1917 when Lady Ratan Tata became a widow at the age of 40, a family council suggested that she adopt the son of one of Sir Ratan's cousins as heir. The choice fell on 13 year-old Naval Hormusji Tata a second child of his parents who was studying in an orphanage. His grandfather was related to Jamshedji's grandfather and his grandmother Cooverbai and Jamshedji's wife Hirabai were sisters. Naval's side of the family was not well off due to the early death of Naval's father.

On his adoption, the impecunious lad was suddenly elevated into one of the most affluent families in the country. It seemed, Naval Tata says, as if a magic wand was waved and a fairy godmother had appeared. Fortunately, he had time to adjust because for four years, in accordance with the rules governing non-

"His main gift, is his ability to be at home with anybody and talk his language."

fee paying boarders, the boarding school, would not release him. He was only allowed to be with his foster mother, Lady Ratan Tata, during his holidays.

Rapid rise

He graduated in economics from Bombay University and did a short course in accountancy in England. On his return, he joined the Tata organisation in 1930 as a despatch clerk cum assistant secretary at a salary of Rs 150 per month.

He soon rose to be assistant secretary of Tata Sons Ltd. and later secretary of Tata Airlines. In 1939, he became the joint managing director of the Tata-run textile mills and, in 1948, he took over charge as the managing director of Tata Oil Mills.

Today Naval Tata who, incidentally, is 32 days younger than J.R.D. Tata, is deputy chairman of Tata Industries and Tata Sons, in both of which companies J.R.D. Tata is chairman. He is also chairman of the three Tata Electric Companies, the four textile mills and of the Sir Ratan Tata Trust. He is also a director in several Tata companies and a trustee of many of the Tata and other trusts. Consequently, he is forced to spend a lot of his time over files and at conference tables. His charming wife, Simone N. Tata is managing director of Lakme Ltd. . .

Encouraging sports

"Today, go where you will in India," said A.F.S. Talyarkhan, the doyen of Indian sports commentators, "when you say 'Tata' you also say 'sport'." The gold and royal blue colours of Tata sportsmen are familiar to sports lovers all over the country in athletics, football and hockey. The Tatas have fielded over a hundred sportsmen who have represented India at various international sport events. Naval Tata's contribution to Indian sport has been significant. When India established the All India Council of Sports to administer and financially assist all branches of sports organisation in India, Jawaharlal Nehru nominated him first president of the council. He served on the council for four years.

During his 11 year term as president of the Indian Hockey Federation, India

won the world hockey title at the Olympics, winning gold medals on three occasions. C. A. Swamy, the sports writer, commenting on the state of Indian hockey and Tata's contribution to Indian hockey wrote: "Funds were embezzled, he got them back. He was bluffed and disappointed by the ones he trusted; he came out best in the long run. Parties within the Federation waged a bitter gang war, but he got them together for the sake of hockey."

Charitable work

Tata is currently chairman of the Indian Cancer Society and a trustee of several philanthropic bodies including the Tata trusts. He has always found time amidst his multifarious activities to act as a trustee on the board of various charitable organisations. "I strongly feel that no one in Bombay House could ever take Naval Tata's place where organising of charities and charitable work is concerned," says K. Dadinatha, secretary of the Sir Ratan Tata Trust. "The fundamental principle he has always kept in view is to see that every charitable institution should become self-sufficient sooner or later and not continue to be dependent on a parent Trust."

He takes a keen interest in running the Sir Ratan Tata trust of which he is the chairman and is very much involved in the proposed Lady Navajbai Ratan Research Centre for Diagnosis and Treatment of Cancer which is to be set up in the Queen's Barracks area at Colaba in Bombay.

Yet, however high he has risen in public eminence Naval Tata, that Robert Frost of industry, has never lost the common touch. His candour, his genuine concern for people, has over the years made him a host of friends and won over many enemies. "His main gift," says K. M. Gherda, deputy managing director, Tata Electric Companies, "is his ability to be at home with anybody and talk his language. He can talk at his most polished when with royalty or speak the simple language of the common man. He is a most humane man."

Freddie Mehta, in his filicitation address at the function celebrating Naval Tata's 50 years in the Tata organisation praised Tata's sense of humour, his flair for reconciling differences and his compassion for the weak and the needy. He ended by describing him as the "compleat" man.

Many there are who feel that he was not stretching the truth.

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*Extracts from the interview with
Naval Tata by Rusi J. Daruwala.*

Which companies of the Tata group do you look after and how much time do you devote to them? What precise role do you play in the management of these companies?

My primary responsibility is to look after the four textile and three electric companies in the Tata group. It is difficult to measure the amount of time I devote to them. The pattern varies. There are days which are smooth sailing when normal office hours would be enough for my work. On the other hand there are days which require late hours in the office and at home after dinner. My wife also works with me till late in the night on her own office problems...

In short, I owe overall responsibility to my colleagues for the well-being and reputation of the companies. The day to day management and operations of the companies are handled by the managing director and joint managing directors and their subordinate officers.

What is your role in the House of Tatas?
As deputy chairman of Tata Industries I make a sincere effort to follow the age-old Tata traditions and carry out the policies laid down by the Group Chair-

man. I am accountable to him for any issues raised regarding companies under my chairmanship.

How would you characterise your style of management? What are the qualities you look for in your senior managers?

Despite the prolific growth of industries and the new style of scientific management acquired and practised by industrially advanced countries, my concept of management has still remained somewhat orthodox. Our group chairman, J.R.D. Tata and a few of my colleagues have from time to time generated considerable interest by inviting knowledgeable consultants on the subject of management.

However, I cannot claim to have mastered to any considerable degree the tenets of modern management. The younger generation of directors in Tatas, some of whom have been educated at European and American universities, are bound to adopt a modern approach. Our current concept of management is substantially more progressive than that held by J. N. Tata and his sons in their day. I have great faith in the dynamic approach of the coming generation towards more scientific management.

Briefly what I look for in our senior managers, is faith and belief in the age-old Tata traditions. Thereafter apart from proficiency I prize loyalty, integrity, initiative and capacity for hard work.

What are the guiding principles by which you run the companies in your charge?

It is difficult to define this, I try always to be true to the Tata tradition because I sincerely and passionately believe in it. Then I take into account our government's ideologies because we are so much dependent on them. I try to confine myself, for our own survival, to the code of honour reasonably acceptable to the government and to the intelligentsia of the country.

A New Lease of Life for TISCO

It was a pleasure to interview J. R. D. Tata. Quickly overcoming his intense irritation at being given short notice for the interview, Tata was his usual suave, knowledgeable and outspoken self, qualities which have consistently inspired not only the managers but also the

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Tata: problems can be solved
workers in India's oldest and pace-setting industrial corporation.
Business World, Editorial, April 13-26 issue

*Excerpts from the interview with
J. R. D. Tata by Dilip Thakore*

Are you optimistic about the future of the company and the economy in general?

Any citizen of this country must be an optimist to retain his mental equi-

brium. If you don't maintain an optimistic outlook there would be no future. I must confess that very often one cannot but take a bleak look at what is happening, whether it is in the political field, whether it is in the industrial field, whether it is in the ordinary social field in the life of our country. If only the citizens were given the opportunities and a chance to develop our many skills, and also are given the minimum requirements of a happy life.

But while I am generally optimistic, I am very pessimistic in one respect and that is about the consequences of the continuous and unrestricted growth of our population. I cannot make myself comprehend an increase to the figure that the World Bank visualises for, I think, 2050 A.D. of 1.6 billion people in this country. I do not think we can live with a huge population like that, I think we would reach a stage of chaos in the country which is horrendous to think of and therefore that problem must be solved quickly. Then, in addition, we must stop the erosion of our land, the growth of deserts in the country, the destruction of our forests, the denudation of parts of the country. In other words, if we continue as we have in the past, one cannot but be pessimistic on

those aspects of the country's future.

I believe these problems can be solved provided there is a real belief in the possibility and in the will to solve them.

Government is more concerned with political problems than economic and social problems which are the major problems of this country.

But in our country, everything is so politicised, people think too much of their politicians. Government is more concerned with political problems than economic and social problems which are the major problems of this country.

*Extracts from the interview with
Russi H. Mody.*

R. H. Mody, 62, vice-chairman and managing director of TISCO in Calcutta, is primarily given credit for the remarkable stability of industrial relations in the company.

On the management style in TISCO.

I think we are a dynamic organisation and we view each difficulty as a challenge. Sometimes we succeed in overcoming the challenges that con-

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front us; sometimes we don't. But no difficulty is ever allowed to go unchallenged.

For instance, when last year we saw that the railways were breaking down and indiscipline on the railways was going to affect our production, especially the movement of coal, we organised a massive movement of coal by road, although it was a very much more expensive proposition. This massive effort saved the company and thereby produced steel for the country. We could have easily said 'Well, if the railways break down, there is no coal then what can we do?' But that is not our style of management in TISCO... There is an overall commitment to the prosperity of the company, which I find is one thing really lacking in the public sector. Public sector managers are just as intelligent, just as good, just as brilliant as any of us in the private sector, but their style of management is such that enthusiasm, initiative, commitment suffers.



Mody: overall commitment

On the style of managing industrial relations in TISCO.

I would say it's a friendly style of management in which there is no question in anybody's mind as to who is managing the organisation. But at the same time it is not through fear that work is being done. For instance, at a duly appointed time, any worker can come and see me with his personal pro-

blems and I always reply to him in writing, under my own signature. In the last six to seven years I have been managing director, I have personally replied to 80,000 letters and personally signed 80,000 letters to workers.

Quite frankly, if you ask me what I believe is the essence of good management, I would say 'morale'. I think in an organisation if the morale is high, all constraints can be overcome given the will to work. I think that this concept has a great deal to do with the success of TISCO.

Glaxo Takes the Strain

Excerpts from the interview of J. S. Khambata, Managing Director of Glaxo by Dilip Thakore.

Business World, July 6-19 issue.

"In 1979-80 through better management practices and strict control of costs we were able to cushion inflationary pressure and maintain the company's profitability," comments J. S. Khambata (50) a former advocate of the Bombay high court who is currently the managing director of the company. "However in 1980-81 we have had a year of increasing inflationary pressures

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all constraints can be
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and erratic raw material supplies which factors have pushed up our costs of production. In the absence of any worthwhile price increases in the selling prices of our products particularly formulations, the recently concluded year has been nowhere as good as last year." says Khambata....

"Like most other corporate organisations, drug companies are business organisations which are expected to give a return on investment to their shareholders. Besides, what is the acceptable level of profit in the drug industry?"

"I think we should view this matter of the prices of drugs in its proper perspective. Drug prices constitute no more



Khambata: "drugged policies"

than 10% - 12% of the Union government's expenditure on health programmes. The fees of doctors, hospital charges and last but not the least, the excise duties that the government imposes on drugs and formulations constitute the bulk of the expenditure of the government or an individual on health.

"Today the drugs industry is not making profits anywhere near the norms set by the Union government under the drug policy, 1978. Glaxo also does not make the percentage profit envisaged by the drugs policy. With inflation still not under control and under the current adverse trend in government policy on prices, a number of major companies are already facing the spectre of declining profitability to such an extent that the percentages cited in the policy for all practical purposes are an illusory set of figures.

"One never hears talk suggesting a ceiling on doctors' fees or on hospital charges, even though these constitute a

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major part of an individual's expenditure on health. Also, if the government is so concerned about the prices of drugs why does it not reduce the excise duty on drugs and formulations? The entire criticism seems to be misdirected in concentrating on a small part of the nation's health programme to the exclusion of other, probably more important aspects."

Godrej: The Untold Story

Godrej is an extremely well managed company, running profitably, with an enviable reputation, and a record of treating its workers exceedingly well.

Business India, Editorial, July 6-19 issue.

Vikhroli—the industrial township in the suburbs of Bombay—has become synonymous with the private business empire of the Godrej family. The huge estate—reportedly covering over five square miles—houses the spaciouly constructed plants of Godrej & Boyce Manufacturing Company Private Limited and its main subsidiary, Godrej Soaps Limited. In addition, the estate has an impressive residential complex, where comfortable flats are provided to the employees at generously subsidised rates.

The Godrej empire today is the translation of the vision of **Ardeshir Burjorji Godrej**—the eldest son of a Parsi family, who, in 1897, decided to switch from law to lockmaking as a token "contribution to India's self reliance". From locks, he went to safes and soaps—all without protection—selling his products in open competition with similar items which were imported. The good work was continued by his brother **Pirojsha B. Godrej** and his sons and grandsons. Today the Godrej group produces a wide range of products—from locks, steel furniture, security equipment, typewriters, refrigerators, machine tools, steel tubes and forklift trucks to soaps, vegetable oils, fatty acids and animal feeds.

The Group

The group's operations are split up into a number of units—with Godrej & Boyce as the holding company. The Godrej companies have been faring very well, their combined turnover reportedly having crossed the Rs 200 crore mark last year. During 1979, for instance, Godrej & Boyce registered a profit of Rs 607 lakhs, Godrej Soaps (Rs 324 lakhs), Vegoils Limited, a subsidiary of Godrej Soaps (Rs 17 lakhs), Godrej



Diners World Travel offices and (inset) Pervvez Aggarwal.

Malaysia Sendirian Berhad (M \$ 2.43 lakhs) and Godrej (Singapore) Private Ltd. (Singapore \$ 3.25 lakhs)...

Sorabji Pirojsha Godrej, the eldest of the three sons of P. B. Godrej is the chairman of the entire empire. The other two brothers are at the helm of affairs of the two main companies—**Naoroji P. Godrej** and his son **Jamshed**, manage Godrej & Boyce, while **Burjorji P. Godrej** and his sons—**Adi** and **Nadir**—run the "soap operations."

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A Pioneer

G & B's strength lies in its brand name, the wide marketing network and after sales service. But, another significant aspect should not be overlooked. G & B entered almost every market as a pioneer—and has reaped the benefits of being a leader.

Diners Travels

Parsis have been in the travel business ever since the first voyage about a 1,000 years ago. Though those migrant Zoroastrians in search of a homeland may not

have had a travel agent, today many Parsis are notable in the travel agency business.

Added to names such as Jeena, Asiatic, Indravel, H. K. Lala and others, is the Diners World Travel (DWT) agency located in a posh office at Bombay's new commercial centre of Nariman Point.

Launched by **Pervvez Aggarwal**, director of Diners Club, India, who has been in the travel business for over 20 years and her husband **Shamsunder**, chairman of Diners Club, DWT is the 14th such full-fledged Diners World Travel Agency in the world.

"We have the talent, know-how and experience to offer every kind of service required by international and domestic travellers," says Ms Aggarwal. As a result, DWT has greatly exceeded its targeted turnover since the agency opened on March 21. The formal inauguration two days later was by **Yves Gautier** chairman, of Diners Club and Diners Voyages, France.

Aside from offering the usual travel facilities, DWT operates incoming and outgoing tours for members of Diners Club as well as the general public. From September this year, DWT has 14 'Regal' and 'Royal' tours to the Far East, according to Ms. **Ruksana Mehta**, a director of the company. Tours to Europe are planned for April and May.

Ms Aggarwal, who started her career as a journalist in Nagpur, and subsequently joined Jeena and Company in Bombay and later, Indravel, intends to gradually expand the DWT services to the other metropolitan cities of India.

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