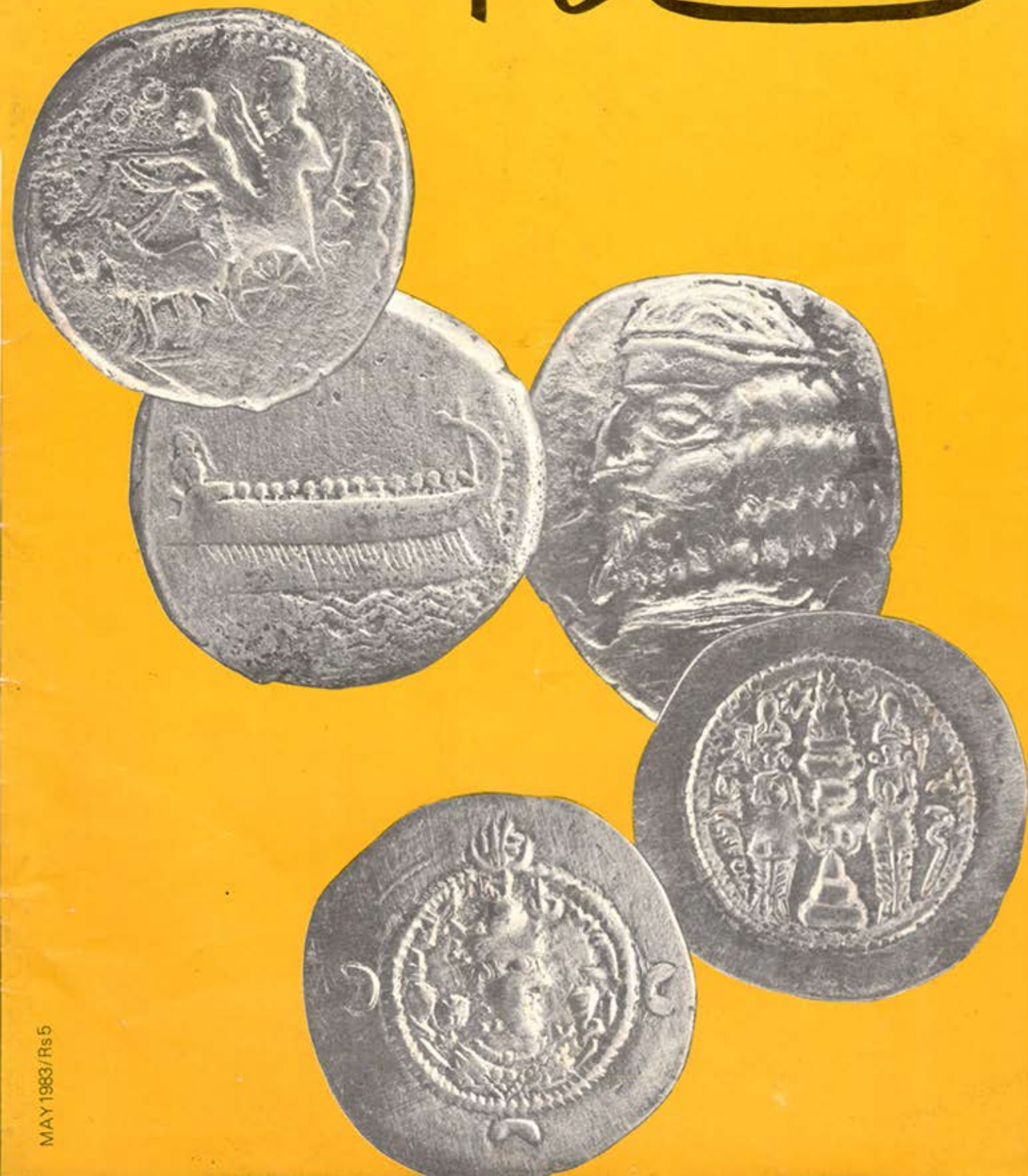


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Parsiana

May 1983,
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EDITOR Jehangir R. Patel

ASSOCIATE EDITOR Abraham Mathai

ASSISTANT EDITORS Hutokshi D. Doctor,
Gouri Wagadarikar and Gita Vasudevan.

DESIGN CONSULTANT Mini Boatwala

DESIGN ASSISTANTS Kranti Shilotri,
Yasmin Irani

MARKETING DIRECTOR Veera Patel

ADVERTISING Zarin Billimoria,
Hanita Irani and Meher Parakh.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE R.P. Thanavala

CIRCULATION D.B. Chinoy,
Yezdi Gandevia

MANAGEMENT Cheryl D'Penha,
Minoo Patel and Jasmine Driver

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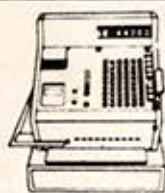
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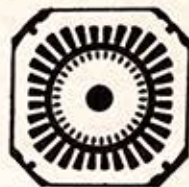
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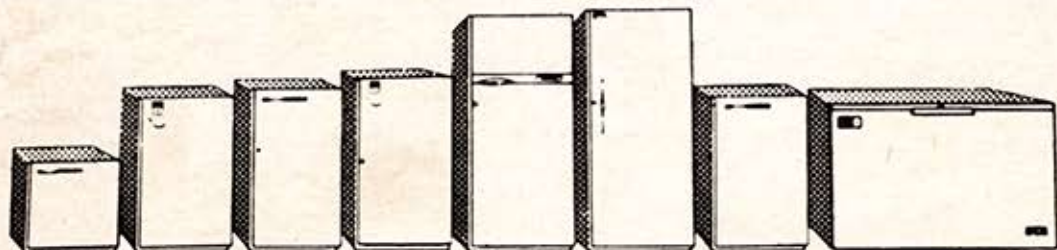
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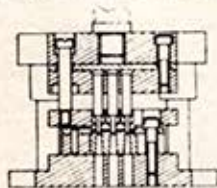
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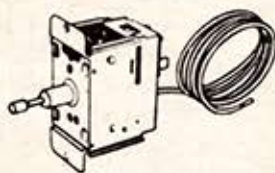
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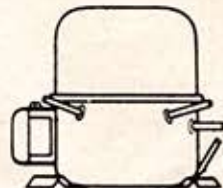
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Peterson's Navjote

The Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York's official position is that a navjote ceremony, however "controversial" it may be, is a strictly private affair. Admittedly, Mr. Joseph Peterson's navjote—representing the conversion/acceptance of an adult individual with no Zoroastrian links through ancestry or marriage and being the first such known ceremony in North America—is controversial. Nonetheless it too is and should be regarded as a private affair which has neither the sponsorship nor support nor condemnation of ZAGNY as an association.

Even though this position has been stated before, the continued concern voiced both by our own members and by other North American Zoroastrian associations, I sense the need to reiterate this position which perhaps may not have been clearly enough articulated so far. I also suspect that the venue for the

proposed function, combined with the possible lack of a broadly held and clear understanding of the roles of ZAGNY, the Darbe Mehr Trust (of N.Y.) and the Guiv Foundation, may have contributed to the confusion as to ZAGNY's role in the planned Peterson event.

With respect to the Darbe Mehr, which is owned by the Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr, ZAGNY is a tenant in the property and, in addition, has the responsibility of managing its use. Among the uses of the property are both official ZAGNY events as well as private functions—both religious and secular in nature—for which the premises are rented out. The use of the Darbe Mehr for the March 5 function was requested by the Arbab Rustam Guiv Foundation of California for a private event, i.e. the proposed navjote ceremony of Mr. Joseph Peterson. Further, attendance at this function by any member(s) of the Board of Directors, being in their personal and not their office-bearing capacity, should not be construed as being in any way representative of ZAGNY's "participation" in the event. Likewise, the inclusion of the event in ZAGNY's log of social events at the Darbe Mehr should not be viewed as concurring any particular ecclesiastical significance to this or any other particular event.

In conclusion, our unity is of paramount importance; with all our differences in language, customs, culinary preferences or opinions on this or that particular issue, we are all—whether we are Iranians or Parsis, whether we hail from Bombay or Surat or Karachi or Kerman, whether we regard ourselves as 'Bhagalias' or 'Udvadias' whether we are 'Behdin' or 'Athornan', whether we speak Gujarati or English or Farsi, whether we reside in New Jersey or New York—in the ultimate analysis, we are all Zoroastrians.

It is my sincere hope that this message helps to clarify ZAGNY's position on the current issue.

FAROF G. GANDHI
President, ZAGNY, U.S.A.

The article on 'The Navjote of Joseph Peterson' (*Parsiana*, March 1983) set me thinking. Very soon we will be having many such Joseph Petersons on the scene! Maybe later they will want their own places of worship and who knows, a big Zoroastrian Movement akin to

the Hare Krishna Movement will come up! Will they then be the true Zoroastrians? Or, let's put it this way, will they be in future, the neo-Zoroastrians—sans ancestral lineage, blood or culture?

Why are our Zoroastrians afraid to die out and not afraid to defile the very essence of Zoroastrianism? If need be let us die out—but let us die as true Zoroastrians.

COLLY DASTUR
Pune

To convert or not?

Some 3,500 years ago when Zarathustra addressed those who would listen he said: "Listen with your ears to the best things/Reflect with a clear mind—/man by man for himself..." (*Gathas*—Yasna 30 vr. 2)



Peterson with Antia and Hormazdiyar

Then he presented in the *Gathas* a doctrine. Those of his listeners who found in the doctrine a clear conceptual framework of God, the purpose of life and a workable moral code, became his followers—through conviction. Being convinced of a concept other than the one being held should be the only reason for anyone wanting to convert from one faith to another—and that too after sufficient deliberation. Not because of the convenience of marriage, offspring of mixed unions or the fear of diminishing numbers.

Parsis are born Zoroastrians and though devotional are largely ignorant of the tenets of the religion beyond the good thoughts, words and deeds concept. Too many have abandoned the

sudreh and kusti and questioned the need for rituals and old traditions. How can we Parsis invite a jooddin into the fold if we are unable to explain the doctrine? How can we offer them the initiation (navjote) with our own sudreh and kusti on a hanger? And above all how can we ask the jooddin who already has some understanding of his own scriptures to put these aside and join us in reciting the *Avesta* which most of us are hopelessly unable to decipher?

The logical answer seems to be for each Parsi to make an effort towards intellectual Zoroastrianism — that is to understand the message of the prophet by studying the *Avesta*. To proudly wear the badge of his community — the sudreh and kusti. To be united in our acceptance of traditions and rituals... and then ask the world to: "Listen with your ears to the best things..."

Only when each one of us Parsis are sufficiently enlightened Zoroastrians can we begin to think upon the question of conversion.

TINA MEHTA
Calcutta

Quest for Zarathustra

For some time now, there has been a spate of comments published in various publications like the *Jam-e-Jamshed*,



The filming of the 'Quest'

The Bombay Samachar, and *Parsiana*, on the filming of Zubin Mehta's 'Quest for Zarathustra'. The bulk of these comments appear to be focussed on the script of the film. Some feel that the script misrepresents historical facts, while others have commented on the wrong interpretation of the Gathas.

Not being a scholar in these matters, I naturally cannot dare to comment on the correctness or otherwise of the views expressed. However, as a layman I feel that it may be worthwhile to re-examine and spell out in specific terms, the real objectives of making this film, and the message it is meant to convey. Is the objective to present a historical document of Zoroaster the man and his scriptures, or is the objective to revitalise the sagging contemporary Zoroastrian community, with a view to inspire the present day Parsi youth? If it is the former, then perhaps the comments of the various people may merit consideration. However, if it is the latter, then in my humble opinion, we appear to be going about it the wrong way.

Today's young men, living in the space-age, are least interested, and understand even less, the spiritual interpretations of the Gathas, or the rituals introduced by the succeeding Parsis to give them an earthly meaning. If anything, these things only confuse and camouflage the essence and tenets of the true religion based on Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good Deeds, which Zoroaster was trying to propagate. If therefore, the film is directed towards the youth of the community, which we hope it is, then I feel that its focus may have to be re-oriented. The film should depict as to how the community's former greatness and meteoric rise in this country was mainly due to its following these basic tenets of the Zoroastrian faith. It must simultaneously portray the rather steep downward trend of the clan, due to its clinging on to rituals and dwelling on its past Iranian glory, instead of adhering to the simple three basic teachings around which the entire religion revolves.

In conclusion, I again wish to repeat that before we go on any further with the film, let us get its objectives correct. If the objectives are correct, the details will automatically follow, and will fit in their correct slots without much effort. If however, we are not clear of our objectives, then there is a danger that we may end up producing perhaps even a first rate film, but for the wrong reasons. This will be tantamount to giving our youth perhaps the correct answers, but to the wrong problems.

BRIG. N.B. GRANT (Retd)

It appears from press reports that the producers and sponsors of the film 'A Quest for Zarathustra,' Zubin Mehta and Cyrus Bharucha, are trying to

depict Zarathustra in the present day thinking.

The great maestro has been inspired to express his devotion to the teaching of the Zarathustrian faith and he is indeed a Zarathustrian, physically, mentally and spiritually.

For our microscopic community this will be a great achievement if the sponsors are properly guided by the spiritual heads of our community viz. Dasturjis, and not by western interpreters, or follow revelations on the life of Zarathustra where a true account of his earthly sojourn is given, not compiled or written by human beings but directly transmitted. Only then will the life account be portrayed authentically.

Bharucha intends to portray Zarathustra as healing a sick horse and this is definitely improper and blasphemous. In actual fact Zarathustra was capable and could perform any miracle or create supernatural phenomena.

About Zarathustra's demise, as per revelation in the *Ohaspe*, he was a captive of a ruler and voluntarily allowed himself to be destroyed when he realized his time was ripe for departure—by lions and not by knife attack as mentioned.

A.B. BHIWADIWALA



Tithal Sanatorium

Some 10 years ago, the trustees of the Tithal Sanatorium appeared to have approached the trustees of the Surat

Parsi Panchayet to take possession of that rich estate for development. The Surat Parsi Panchayet having decided not to accept responsibility of managing charity estates outside Surat, declined the offer of the trustees.

The file of correspondence was received by me some 10 years ago and I began to take interest in the trust.

Thanks to one Homi Charna, one of the trustees, Ms Shirinbai Narielwala came to see me. I was then informed by Ms Narielwala that besides herself, other trustees were P.A. Narielwala, Shapoorji Barielwala and B.K. Boman-Behram. I requested Ms Narielwala to ask Boman-Behram if he would give his consent to my taking interest in the development of the estate.

Word came to me through her that Boman-Behram had told her that the trustees would do what they could. But I am sorry that even with the passage of years the estate remains in the same neglected condition as it was before.

R.N. RUSTOMJI

'Of Clippings and Cuttings'

The article 'Of Clippings and Cuttings' (*Parsiana*, December 1982) is an eye-opener in many respects.

Firstly, how many of our old (religious?) books are not relevant to

present times, and everything contained in them is not to be treated as gospel truth? In the *Videvdat* or *Vandidad*, the text is often in the form of questions put to Ahura Mazda by Zarathustra and the replies given by him. This in itself is hardly believable, and seems to be a ruse to impress the common man that these are edicts of God. At best, this treatise can be looked upon as of sociological and historical interest, but not as a religious treatise.

Apart from the subject of hair and nails (commonly referred to as "nasso" by the older generations) the *Vandidad* contains several other matters which were obviously of interest to the people of those times. I have a copy of the English translation of this work made by Tehmurasp R. Sethna of Karachi, who has painstakingly translated into English several others of our ancient books, such as the *Visperad*, *Yeshts*, *Niyaeshes*, *Yasna*, etc. Going through the contents of the *Vandidad*, the following chapters or *Fargards* appear:

Number of days for mourning for a dead relation; on dogs and their care; on punishment for killing dogs; on five sins which make men sinful; on precautions for women during menses; on

disposal of hair and nails; on punishment of heretic priests, evil caused by prostitutes, etc.

There are other subjects too, some of which are interesting, e.g. *Fargard XX* which names a number of diseases which were prevalent at the time and which Zarathustra is said to have countered "with the juice extracted from medicinal plants" which "Ahura Mazda caused to grow abundant by many hundreds, thousands and tens of thousands all round our energetic world." The names of these diseases convey nothing to us today and unfortunately, none of the tens of thousands of medicinal plants have been mentioned by name or described.

The *Vandidad* plays an important role in our religious rites and there is a ceremony called the *Vandidad* ceremony. What exactly it consists of and on what occasions it is performed is not known but presumably, it is recited in toto. What however is known is that the *Vandidad* ceremony has to be performed, along with some other ceremonies over a hundred times in order to purify and prepare the fire which ultimately is used to consecrate an atash-behram.

What is very surprising is this: how can a book of ancient purification laws

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(and prescribed penalties for those who break them) become a book of prayer or worship, or should it be used for purification rites? This is somewhat like reciting the Indian Penal Code and the penalties prescribed therein as a form of religious worship. The situation is totally incongruous. If the mobeds who perform the *Vandidad* ceremony were made to do it in its translated form in Gujarati or English, they would soon realise the absurdity of their action.

It is obvious that enlightened as we are considered to be as a community, we are unable to think for ourselves where religious rites and ceremonies are concerned.

N.H. VAJIFDAR
Ootacamund

Religion for Behdins

In his Aek Atmakatha, Dr Dhalla has written that due to a dearth of athornan students, behdin boys were admitted to the Sir J.J. Zarthoshti Madressa (*Parsiana*, February 1982).

It is learnt that there is a dearth of athornan boys in our Andheri Madressa at present. If the rule was broken at that time the same can be done now and the curriculum for the

athornan and behdin boys should be the same, because some behdin students may turn out to be gems in the study of Zoroastrianism.

May those in authority consider this with advantage to the community especially those in Andheri and Jogeshwari. If athornan boys can work at the S.S.C. curriculum along with religious lectures, the behdin boys can do the same. If behdins do not pass this religious exam then this need not be made a hurdle in promotion towards the S.S.C. examination.

PERIN H. MEHTA

Microfilming Project

This project, undertaken by the Zoroastrian Community Development Institute, will put on 35mm film some of the old but valuable books of which one or few copies are known to exist.

Reprinting is an expensive and time consuming process; commercial microfilming is less expensive but still quite so, and it suffers from the major difficulty that the book has to be taken to the microfilm machine—something not advisable or not possible in the case of a number of rare old books and manuscripts. By techniques and equipment developed within the Institute,

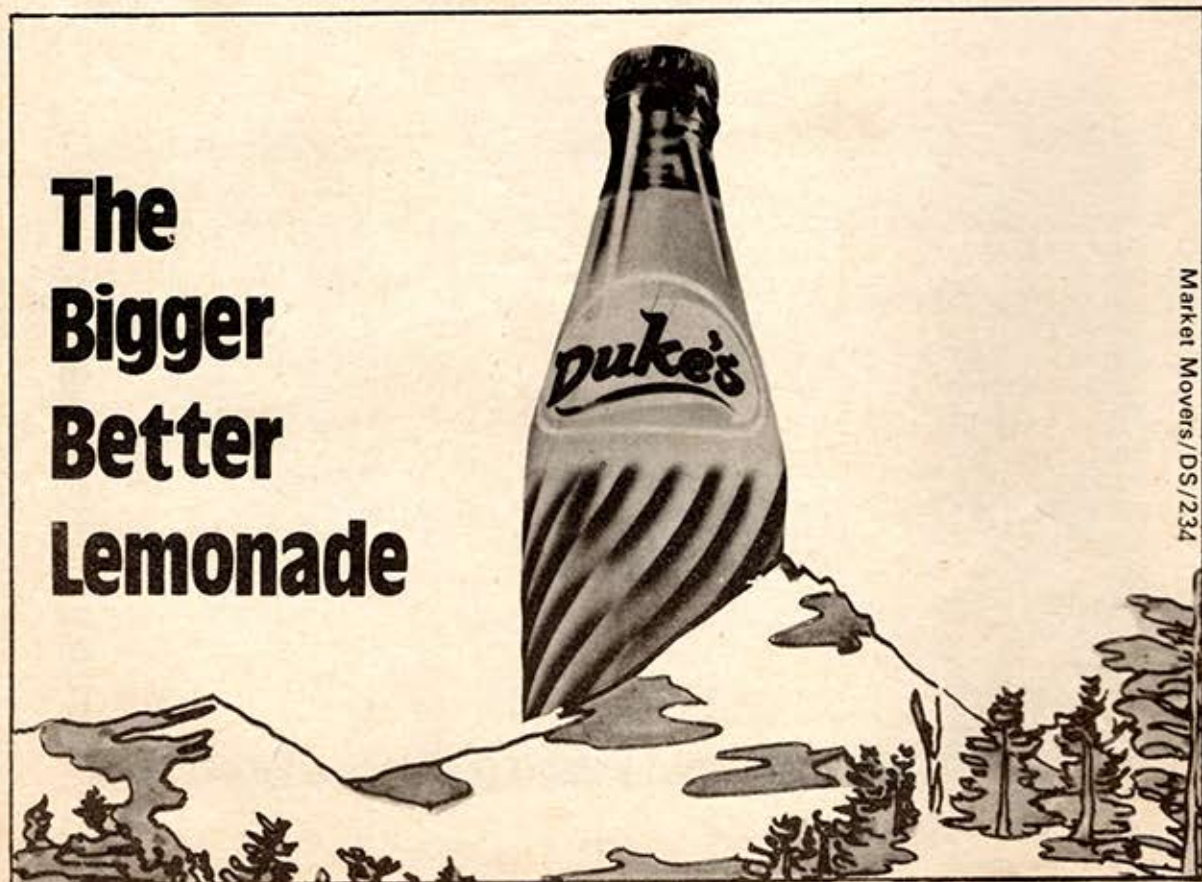
microfilming is done cheaply, and most important, by carrying the equipment to the book.

There exists a veritable treasure in such old books and the Institute is glad to be able to do its bit in the preservation of this treasure. Once a fair-sized collection of microfilmed books has been built up, the Institute will take up programmes to promote their use by various scholars and research workers inside and outside the community and the country.

Our work on this project is in consultation with a small advisory committee of some of the best scholars in the community today. With their guidance, the Institute has done considerable spade work and rescued old books on Parsi literature.

Some 30 acclaimed books have been put on microfilm and mounted in standard cardboard slide mounts so that they are readable by an ordinary 35mm slide projector. Persons with good eyesight can also read them through an inexpensive slide viewer, against good light.

There still remains a herculean task for the Institute in rediscovering "the lost heritage" that is sometimes found in the dusty attics of homes in Surat,



Navsari, where the owners of these gems themselves do not know the worth of such books.

A very interesting and worthy offshoot of our microfilm work has been that individuals (and in one case an institution) have given us some worthwhile old books for preservation and safe-keeping.

Interested individuals, book-lovers and institutions may contact, Mr Noshir H. Dadrawala, Project Manager of the Microfilming Project (under the auspices of the Zoroastrian Community Development Institute).

N.H. DADRAWALA

Dahanu Calling

It still seems to our Bombay Zoroastrian community that the only way to work in Bombay is to live in Bombay, in any deteriorating condition, forgetting that if they took the trouble to travel a little further out of Bombay, they would end up in natural and peaceful surroundings, with no maddening crowd around them all the time.

The place is Dahanu, 2½ hours by rail from Bombay, with all trains stopping here. Flats are being built by Zoroastrians here.

My advice to fellow Zoroastrians is to come and check Dahanu for themselves and I assure them that they will not regret taking the step out of Bombay.

GUSTAD FARHAD IRANI
Dahanu

The Baba Cult

Zoroastrianism is ethical, not magical. There is little occult involved in it. Unfortunately however, its ethics have been subordinated by giving over-importance to superfluous churchian rites, rituals and ceremonies which leads many a weak-minded Parsi to babas and their gods and into mandirs and mosques to try their luck from there through other gods.

The need of the day is to tell the community that there is no god but God, that there is no equal of Him and there is none in opposition. There are no interceding angels to help nor interfering demons. The Law of Karma, good reward for good actions and punishment for bad acts, is infallible.

Zoroaster in the bygone days of the then pagan beliefs in many gods is heard in the Gathas addressing Ahura Mazda, saying "I only know Thee, all others I dismiss from my mind."

DARA CAMA

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Events and Personalities

National Awards

Several Parsis were among those to receive Republic Day awards at a special investiture ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on April 3. The list included Lt. General Adi Meherji Sethna (Retd.), former vice chief of army staff and Kershasp T. Satarawala, vice-chairman and co-ordinator of the Asian Games special organizing committee, both of whom received Padma Bhushans and Dr Dara Kaikhushroo Karanjavala, nephrologist and kidney transplant surgeon who was awarded a Padma Shri.

Besides Gen. Sethna three other members from the armed forces who were selected for the national awards this year are: Air Marshal Minoo Jehangir Dotiwala, Flying (Pilot) who received a Param Vishisht Seva Medal (PVSM), Colonel Jal Master (Parachutes) who was awarded a Vishisht Seva Medal (VSM) and Sub Lieutenant Homi Dady Motivala who received the Shaurya Chakra. The military investiture ceremony however, was to be held at the end of April and the citations for the awardees are not yet available.

Sworn in as Lieutenant Governor of Goa, Daman and Diu in February this year, **K.T. Satarawala**, an outstanding civil servant, received the award in recognition of his services as vice-chairman and co-ordinator of the special organising committee of the Ninth Asian Games held in New Delhi in November 1982.

"Following the success of the Asian Games, Mr. Satarawala was drafted for the organisation of the non-aligned summit" which concluded in Delhi recently, notes a press report.

Appointed member of the Minorities Commission in 1981, according to his

bio-data, Satarawala has served as Advisor to the Governors of Gujarat, Orissa and Jammu and Kashmir in several crises.

A graduate of the Staff College, Quetta, his bio-data notes, Satarawala graduated in economics from Bombay University and did his post-graduation in political science from Punjab University. In 1963, he studied the British iron and steel industries on a Nuffield Foundation Fellowship.

Beginning his career with the Indian Administrative Service after six years in the army during the Second World War, Satarawala has held several responsible positions including that of general manager and chairman of Indian Airlines and secretary-general of the Family Planning Association of India.

After 39 years in the Rajputana Rifles Regiment, **Lt. General A.M. Sethna**, one of 17 to be conferred the Padma

Bhushan this year, retired as vice chief of army staff on December 31, 1982.

Sethna was awarded the Param Vishisht Seva Medal (PVSM) in 1981 "for distinguished services of an exceptional order rendered by him," notes the press release, in addition to the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM) which he received in 1971 for his "significant contribution" during the Indo-Pakistan conflict.

During the Asian Games Sethna was appointed deputy chairman of the Special Organising Committee and chairman of the Ceremonial Committee, notes the press release. As vice president of the Equestrian Federation of India, Sethna was responsible for the smooth conduct of the equestrian events held for the first time in India.

Sethna, who served in the Rajputana Regiment throughout his career, was commissioned in 1944 after graduating from Doon School, Dehradun and Alla-

Satarawala being sworn in as Lt. Governor



habad University, notes the write-up. Honoured with a national award for his significant role in the field of urology, **Dr.D.K. Karanjavala**, recipient of the gold medal from the Urological Society of India in 1981, is presently the honorary consultant in urology at several leading Bombay hospitals.

Credited with 43 published papers on his subject, Karanjavala is a member of urological associations in India and abroad, notes his bio-data, and a visiting professor in urology at some universities in the U.S.

After completing his M.B.B.S. from the Seth G. S. Medical College, Bombay, and his M.S. from Bombay University in 1948, Karanjavala collected several other medical qualifica-

tions. Starting his medical career as resident surgeon at the K.E.M. Hospital in Bombay and the Lambeth Hospital in London, according to his bio-data, Karanjavala has been involved "100 percent (with) urology since 1958."

Gentleman JRD feted

The doyen of Indian industry and pioneer of civil aviation in the country, 78 year-old JRD Tata, was accorded a civic reception by the Bombay Municipal Corporation "in recognition of his contribution to the city and its industry and his epochal Karachi-Bombay flight," on March 11.

In the presence of several leading citizens of Bombay including Sheriff Sohrab P. Godrej, Mayor Pai, High Court judges, ex-Mayors, Municipal Councillors, and members of the consular corps, Tata was presented a shawl and a replica of a plane in silver filigree work.

At the reception in the picturesque Kamala Nehru Park, in his reply to the honour, Tata lamented the deterioration of Bombay, from a once-beautiful, clean and well-ordered metropolis to "the site of the world's largest collection of hutments and dilapidated buildings, congested streets largely occupied by unlicensed hawkers, plagued by hordes of beggars, its air heavily polluted. Many of the city wards look more like disaster areas than parts of a city fit to live in."

He was indignant at the "failure of the successive State governments to

face up to, and deal effectively with, the problems and misery inflicted on the city and its residents by the excessively large and rapid influx of people." He blamed this failure not to inefficiency or ignorance on the part of the Government of Maharashtra, but to a "misconceived populist posture" obviously to safeguard the votes of the masses.

Describing the living condition of the hutment-dwellers as "so appalling that one would hesitate to inflict them even on cattle or beasts of burden," Tata regretted that the municipality by its "absence of any restraining action had virtually encouraged" the wholesale occupation of public lands by hutment dwellers.

He urged the State government to take "urgent and determined action" to prevent Bombay from becoming "perhaps the greatest, most-wretched epidemic-ridden collection of slums in the whole world." Giving the example of Jamshedpur where the Tatas had tackled the same problem though on a smaller scale, Tata said it was possible to take effective action without causing hardship.

About the biggest crisis in Bombay, accommodation, he said that "the plight of the city over the years was aggravated by Government retaining, unchanged since 1947, the Bombay Rent Act which has frozen all rents at their level of 42 years ago." As a result of a heavy loss of municipal tax revenues it has become impossible to maintain the 30,000 or so dilapidated buildings which desperately need repairs.



Sethna: military distinction
Karanjavala: medical merit



JRD: Citing Bombay's problems



His panacea for the problems confronting Bombay was a four-point "action plan":

- * To accelerate the development of New Bombay as an alternative centre of business activity.
- * To stop further influx of immigrants into Bombay which would frustrate efforts of relocating slum-dwellers.
- * Transfer all wholesale markets to New Bombay to decrease congestion.
- * To amend the Bombay Rent Act to enable additional tax revenues to be raised by the municipality to repair old buildings.

He proposed the participation of large business houses like the Tatas to help beautify the city and also the teaming up of citizens action groups under an apex body to help solve the problems of Bombay.

Lauding the role of JRD Tata and the Parsi community, Mayor Pai said that the Parsis though relatively small in number, had played a vital role in shaping the destiny of Bombay and the nation. He praised Tata's contribution to the development of civil aviation, and his historical Karachi-Bombay flight in a twin seater, single engine, Leopard Moth in October '82.

Earlier JRD Tata was selected 'Gentleman of the Year' (1982), drawing the highest number of votes in a reader poll conducted by *Gentlemen* magazine. Described by the magazine's press release as "probably India's most distinguished industrialist," Tata was selected for "not only his contribution to India's industry and his philanthropy but also for the spirit of adventure he displayed in re-enacting his historic Bombay-Karachi-Bombay flight in a Leopard Moth."

The Gentleman of the Year trophy, a handsome gold plaque, is awarded annually to "the man who contributes the most to society in his field and displays a dedication to the pursuit of excellence."

Madon for Supreme Court

Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court **Dinshah P. Madon** was appointed to the Supreme Court, the highest judicial body of the country, along with three others in March this year.

One of seventeen Supreme Court Judges, Madon has been a member of

the Indian judiciary for the last thirty-eight years. A graduate in English Literature from Elphinstone College, Bombay, and with a first class in the LL.B examinations, Madon was appointed judge of the Bombay High Court in 1967, and Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court in September 1982.

The other three judges appointed to the Supreme Court are Sabyasachi Mukherjee (acting Chief Justice of Calcutta), P. Thakkar (Chief Justice of Gujarat) and R. Mishra (Chief Justice of Orissa).

Professional Secretary

Ms Homai Mehta, the first Indian president of the Association of Secretaries in Asia will chair the organization's Sixth Congress to be held in Bombay next year.

The question the biennial congress will ask is "Are we being recognized as a profession?" notes Ms Mehta who is the Faculty and Administrative Co-ordinator at the Sir J.J. College of Commerce in Bombay. While awareness of the secretary's profes-



Mehta: promoting professionalism

sional role is acknowledged in the private sector, "The concept of a secretary as we view it is still alien to the Government," she wrote in *The Personal Secretary*, the quarterly newsletter of the National Institute of Personal Secretaries of which she is the founder and president.

NIPS views the personal secretary as "the centre of communication, co-ordination and co-operation...The power centre in the organisation." The secretary as distinct from the stenographer, must possess "inter-personal skills...personality traits

which are important. We don't want gold medalists but native intelligence must be there." From a society of seven top secretaries registered in 1970, NIPS is now a professional body with more than 300 members, with its first chapter outside Bombay recently established in Madras.

"It was a personal obsession," said Mehta earnestly, sitting behind her desk in a pink and white flowered sari. She was herself a stenographer at Telco when she conceived the idea of a professional body of secretaries. Mehta, a graduate of the National College in Bandra, has been working at the J.J. College since 1971. NIPS grew with the support of this college which she says, "gave me the freedom to perform because we had the same kind of goal." At J.J. Mehta helps conduct the personal secretary's course which "covers every aspect of smooth conduct in an office."

"We've performed quite well in Bombay," says Mehta, and NIPS, through its lecture meetings and training programmes has helped foster a professional feeling amongst the secretarial fraternity, keeps its members informed as to the latest developments in the field, provides management with a top cadre of secretaries as well as keeps its members in touch with the top executives so that "there's education both ways."

Mehta has ambitious plans for NIPS: "The Professional Secretaries International of America is very active. The celebrations of Secretaries' Week are inaugurated by the President every year, and most Asian countries have followed suit. We are very much wanting to do this."

The scope for personal secretaries today, Mehta says, is "tremendous...The cry everytime is 'I want a secretary and I can't find one.' The market is 110 percent and they are never able to fill the demand."

Award for Naval's Labours

For his "exceptional services in promoting employer-employee relationship and outstanding contribution to the promotion of industrial relations in the country," **Naval H. Tata**, prominent industrialist and president of the Employers' Federation of India received an award from the Union labour



Tata: peace prize

minister Veerendra Patil. The award was presented at a two-day convention organised jointly by the Employers' Federation and the All-India Organisation of Employers in New Delhi in January this year.

A member of the governing body of the International Labour Organisation since the last 30 years, according to the citation, Tata's 20 years as President of the E.F.I. "reflect his untiring efforts and abiding interest in promoting harmonious relations between workers and employers."

Expert Lawyer

Noted lawyer J.B. Dadachanji participated as the legal expert for the Asian region in the United Nations commission on international trade law experts meet in Vienna this February.

The meeting was to discuss "the drafting of a legal guide on contractual provisions relating to international contracts for the supply and construction of large industrial works," notes the report.

"I am a shy person and I play a low key," wrote the Delhi-based Dadachanji in reply to *Parsiana's* request for further particulars.

Aid for Aadaraan

An appeal for funds to be used for "overdue repairs and restoration work" on the 50-year-old Vakil Anjuman Aadaraan at Khamasa Gate,

has been issued by the Vakil Anjuman Aadaraan Golden Jubilee Committee, (constituted by the Ahmedabad Parsi Panchayat). The donations will also ensure "regular supplies of wood" for the aadaraan, help the "upliftment of Mobeds," and will, according to the appeal, "create general funds for the Aadaraan."

The golden jubilee celebrations planned by the committee, which include religious ceremonies, tree plantation drives and religious discourses will be assisted by the donations.

"The Zoroastrians have prospered with the Blessings of Vakil Anjuman Aadaraan...(and) as a token of our

Rangoonwalla: honourable mention



gratitude and reverence we urge all benevolent businessmen, industrialists, charitable institutions and individual Zoroastrians to donate generously," notes Noshir K. Daboo, chairman of the committee.

A donor who contributes Rs 1,000 or more would be entitled to have his name "chanted in the *Tandarosti* prayers, to be followed by a *Machi* ceremony on any one day during the jubilee year," notes Daboo, while the names of those who donate Rs 3,000 or more would in addition, appear on a marble plaque at the Aadaraan. Those who gift Rs 5,000 or more would have the third benefit of having a *Baj* ceremony performed "in the name of the donors' dear departed" once every month during the Jubilee year.

Cheques may be drawn in favour of the Vakil Anjuman Aadaraan Golden Jubilee Committee, c/o Ahmedabad Parsi Panchayat, Khamasa Gate, Ahmedabad 380 001.

Who's Who Honour

Firoze Rangoonwalla, media critic and historian and the author of 10 books on films and film personalities, has been honoured with a mention in 'Who's Who in the World' published by Marquis Publications from USA, notes a press report in *The Daily*, (December 30, 1982).

"Earlier, Rangoonwalla's profile has been included in 'International Authors' Who's Who' issued by the Biographical Centre of Cambridge, U.K. and in the sixth edition of 'Men of Achievement'," notes the report.

With "complete practical experience in the different branches of film making," Rangoonwalla "was associated in film direction, screenplay and editing with Basant Studios and Wadia Brothers for about ten years," states the press release. His recent book is entitled *Indian Cinema Past and Present*, while the other nine include *Indian Film Index*, *Indian Filmography*, *Guru Dutt*, *Pictorial History of Indian Cinema* and *Satyajit Ray's Art*.

Winner of the Press Institute of India's award for film journalism, Rangoonwalla has written extensively on Indian and world cinema, both as a staffer on *Screen*, a weekly film journal, and now on a freelance basis.

At present making a Hindi feature film 'Om Swaha', sponsored by the National Films Development Corpora-

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tion (NFDC) on the theme of bride-burning. Rangoonwalla has made a 40-minute television film on Indian cinema, and has delivered a series of four talks on A.I.R. on 'Developing a film sense', notes his bio-data.

Rangoonwalla has served on the Censor Board, the Film Purchase Committee and Script Advisory Committee for NFDC, the Films Advisory Board and has a "private collection of rare ancillary material on silent and talkie films, like stills, posters, booklets, hand-bills and specially photographed records from old newspaper files... of the years 1896 onwards," which was displayed in a travelling exhibition entitled '75 years of Indian Cinema', notes his bio-data.

Fuel for Thought

Singapore International Airlines pilot Captain **Baji N. Kapadia** was awarded 1,000 dollars last Christmas by the airlines for submitting proposals on how to reduce fuel consumption on each flight, according to a report in *Outlook*, SIA's house journal.

Kapadia's ideas could result in "a saving of between 1,000 and 2,000 kg of fuel on each DC-10 sector," notes *Outlook*.

"The award which is the highest amount won by an individual to date is as much a milestone in the history of Singapore Parsis as it is in the company's records," writes Khorshed Vakil of Singapore who sent in the report.

"I made a study on all aspects of flying the DC-10, based on the data I had collected, and submitted various suggestions on certain procedures that a commander could follow for different stages of a DC-10 flight, with a view to saving fuel," the publicity-shy captain is reported to have said.

One of four Parsi pilots working with SIA, according to Vakil, Kapadia left Bombay for Singapore in 1974.

Refining Technologist

Minoo F. Bulsara, who has been associated with the Hindustan Petroleum Corporation since its inception 29 years ago, took over as general manager of the company's Bombay refineries in February this year, according to press reports.

Bulsara "belongs to the first generation of refining technologists in the country," notes the press release.

Desai appointed Director

Dr Armaity Desai, well-known social worker and principal of Nirmala Niketan, a school of social work in Bombay, was appointed director of the prestigious Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Bombay, last October, according to press reports.

Recently Desai completed a review of social work education for the University Grants Commission, notes the report, and "was president for some years of the Asian regional association of social workers."

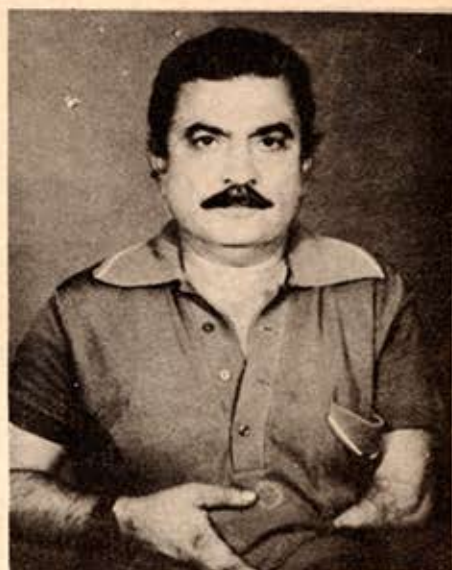
With a special interest in family and child welfare, Desai has reportedly "participated as a key resource person in several national and international seminars."

Herself an alumnus of the TISS, Desai got her M.A. there in 1957. "She obtained a doctorate from Chicago University" according to the report, "and has been with the Institute of Social Work at Churchgate for the last 18 years."

Bravery Nomination

For his daring rescue of a child kidnapped by dacoits in 1973, the district authorities of Jhansi have recommended the name of **Adi S. Engineer**, president of the Jhansi Parsi Anjuman, for a presidential award, according to the

Bulsara: top executive



Engineer: to the rescue

citation proposed by the district magistrate of Jhansi.

"Sri A. Engineer displayed rare courage and exhibited personal bravery in tackling the kidnappers" who demanded a ransom of Rs 51,000 for the return of the child, notes the proposed citation.

"In spite of being born as a handicapped child," writes N.N. Dinshaw, secretary of the Jhansi Parsi Anjuman, Engineer "drives his own car and runs his Wrestling Akhara named 'Baba ka Akhara'."

Engineer, who takes an interest in the city's activities, is the referee for all district wrestling and weight lifting competitions, is president of the public library and according to Dinshaw, was one of the City Fathers for five years.

Dignity in Death

A terminally ill patient is lying in a hospital bed waiting for inevitable death. Can the patient choose to die by refusing treatment after receiving adequate information?

Though the question is still taboo, the Society For The Right To Die With Dignity holds that every human being of sound mind should have the right to choose to live or to die within the limits that may be laid down by law.

"Whose life is it anyway?" asked Mr. Minoo Masani, a former member of Parliament and president-designate of the society's world body, in an interview to UNI here.

The world body has 28 national units affiliated to it. They are operating in the US, Australia, New Zealand, the UK,

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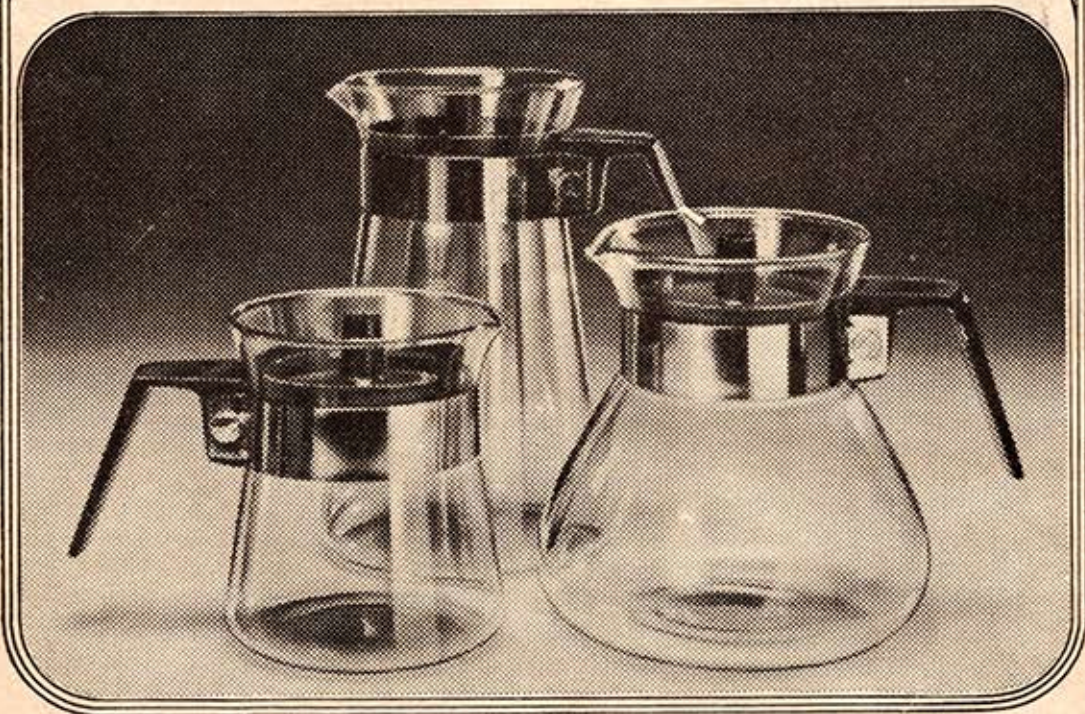
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Scotland, Western Europe and Japan.

"We are not for mercy killing but voluntary euthanasia. The issue is not the right to die but the right to choose between life and death," Mr. Masani said.

He said mercy killing was unlike voluntary euthanasia as the former stipulated that A or B might decide to put C to sleep and this might lead to C being bumped off.

Mr. Masani said voluntary euthanasia suggested that C could assert the wish to die in advance and when in sound mind through a "living will" which called upon the doctor and relatives to respect it when the time came. The will, like any legal document, would have to be sworn before a notary public, he said.

Distinguishing between active and passive euthanasia, Mr. Masani said "at present, we only support the right of doctors to withdraw treatment." Doctors in 14 states of the U S were immune from civil or criminal liabilities if they allowed patients to withdraw treatment, he pointed out.

Referring to the people who held that life was sacred, Mr. Masani said: "Only the good life is sacred." Even the Catholic Church had now modified its position in this regard.

He quoted an article from *The Examiner*, a Catholic journal, to illustrate the point. The article postulated that "when inevitable death is imminent in spite of the means used, it is permitted in conscience to take the decision to refuse forms of treatment that would only secure life, so long as the normal care due to the sick person in similar cases is not interrupted."

In Hindu tradition, Mr. Masani said the concept of sanyas was espoused by a line of saints. Bhoodan leader Acharya Vinoba Bhave was preceded by Sant Tukaram and Sant Gyaneshwar. The latter attained samadhi when he was 21. Vinoba Bhave thus followed the great tradition.

He spoke of karma which held that suffering is penance for past action. "We are not asking for a law that is compulsory."

Courtesy *Indian Express*, February 28, 1983

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After the Navjote...

"If you have succeeded in obtaining pictures of the notorious incident we shall be grateful if you would please send them to us, identifying the persons involved."

The priests who performed the navjote ceremony of 27-year-old Joseph Peterson of Minnesota, U.S.A. have become the focal point of the orthodox backlash.

Angry letters in the conservative Gujarati daily the *Jam-e-Jamshed* denounced their act as "disgraceful" and called for a "social boycott" of the priests.

Another writer threatened to fight to oust at least one of the priests from the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago (ZAC).

Six Chicago priests struck back saying they found "no meaning or mission in serving ZAC as voluntary priests anymore and we urge ZAC strongly to hire their own Priest to serve its needs."

The ZAC Board of Directors called for an "Open Forum" on June 12 to discuss the issue of "Conversion/Acceptance."

First Letter

The attack on the priests started with a letter from a ZAC member, Sarosh Khambatta, which appeared in the *Jam-e-Jamshed* on February 15. The letter stated:

"I thought that I must let you know about a problem we Zoroastrians are facing over here. On March 5, 1983, in New York, a Navjote ceremony of one Mr. Joseph Peterson (not a Zoroastrian in any way) who says he is a scholar in our religion (I don't believe

that he is a scholar, as he should know by now that Zoroastrianism has no conversion) will be performed. Kersi Antia will be one of the priests taking part in the ceremony. I do not know who the other priests are, but there is another person by name Mr. Hormazdiyar (who is married to a non-Zoroastrian) who will be with him. This Navjote is to be performed at the Darbe Mehr at New York and this has already led to the resignation of two Zoroastrian Priests of New York who opposed this function. The Guiv Foun-

"If they could be excommunicated from Priesthood, it would be great."

dation financed the Darbe Mehr and they are insisting that the Navjote MUST be performed there against the wishes of the Zoroastrian Association of New York. We in Chicago are split about this Navjote and I, as you know, am against this stupidity. We are hurt that our priest Kersi Antia is encouraging this disaster.

"Could you please do me a favour? Could you approach the Cama Athornan Institute or any other religious body which confers the priesthood to

Zoroastrians, and obtain a letter on their letterhead stating that this action of conversion and mixed marriage is deplored and condemned by them, as this is not what they expected from them. If they could be excommunicated from Priesthood, it would be great. There are many others who are writing to these Institutes from here. Upon receipt of this letter, I will fight to get Kersi Antia and Neriosang Karanjia or any priest who violates our Zoroastrian Laws, out of our Zoroastrian Association of Chicago. I will be waiting to hear from you about this."

Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, the president of the M.F. Cama Athornan Institute endorsed Khambatta's views in a letter to the *Jame*.

"It is only the Parsi/Zoroastrian who can be invested with the Sacred Shirt and Sacred Thread and a Non-Parsi can never be invested with these. As Mr. Joseph Peterson is a Non-Parsi, he can never be initiated into the Zoroastrian fold. He may have read or studied the Zoroastrian Religion but this does not mean that he can be converted into Zoroastrianism. Remaining steadfast to his own religion he may also follow the teachings of the Prophet Zarathustra in his daily life. There are many European Scholars who have studied Zoroastrian Religion and Zoroastrian Scriptures, viz: Avesta, Pahlavi, Old Persian inscriptions and

although they are profound scholars and Professors of Iranian studies, yet they have never claimed for the initiation into the Zoroastrian Religion."

According to the May ZAC newsletter Khambatta claimed he had written the letter to his parents and "neither he nor his parents know how that letter reached (the) *Jam-e-Jamshed*."

The newsletter goes on to note, "One of Bombay's Parsi Athornan Gujarati papers the *Jame* ran an article by Mr. Jehangir F. Shroff, Trustee of the Athornan Mandal in reply to Mr. Sarosh Khambatta's letter. Mr. Shroff writes on the subject of Jooddin Navjote Ceremony, 'We are afraid by the time the community read your 'Open Letter', the Navjote ceremony must have already been performed. We very much deprecate, deplore and condemn in no uncertain terms the disgraceful action of Mr. Kersi Antia and his associates, Hormazdiyar and Neriosang Karanjia. The incident is without doubt a blot on the fair name of the

ing that Neriosang did not indeed participate in the ceremony). As most members are aware our Priests have served this community and surrounding areas over the past several years and feel they do not deserve this kind of treatment from some members of the community who happen to disagree with their point of view."

Six of the ZAC priests wrote an angry letter addressed to "The Zoroastrian Community of Chicago" which was reprinted in the May newsletter. The letter stated:

"You must be aware that one of our ZAC members Mr. Sarosh M. Khambatta has written a letter so disdainful of and damaging to our Priests in the *Jam-e-Jamshed* Newspaper on 3/4/83. Since he vows that 'I will fight to get Ervad Kersi Antia and Ervad Neriosang Karanjia or any Priest who violates our laws out of our ZAC,' and since no one has yet cared to assure us of any ZAC action in this regard it is imperative that ZAC

way to take time and do research on the subject of conversion in Zoroastrianism and had shared his findings with all the members at the ZAC meeting held on February 20, 1983, when Mr. Khambatta and his supporters were present. Dr. Antia has taken further time to prepare a paper on this subject. We would like you to distribute it among all ZAC members, so that someone so ignorant of our

"If these priests wish to resign from their religious obligations to the community they serve, they should be encouraged to do so."

religion as its self-imposed saviors won't make statements that contradict our Prophet's own teachings.

"Moreover, what worries us is every time our Priests take a stand on an issue, some disgruntled member who lacks courage and knowledge to debate them in ZAC will find an easy way out to threaten them in the Parsee orthodox newspapers with the possibility of excommunication etc., which is totally absurd and impossible, and only shows an overtly and disgustingly revengeful attitude to Priests.

"Since Mr. Khambatta mentions in his letter that 'There are many others who are writing to these institutes from here, and since those that disagree with our Priests had plenty of opportunity to present their views and cast their votes, they seem to be interested only in making mischief and harassing Priests in one way or the other, though they do not have any knowledge of their religion and everybody knows that there is no excommunication of Priests or laymen possible today. Suffice it to say that the opinion of revered Dastoorjis Daboo, Dhalla and Bode etc., have been often quoted to be in favour of navjotes similar to that of Joseph Peterson's, but those that disagree with our Priests nevertheless do not hesitate to malign the Priests for not agreeing with them. Ervad Neriosang Karanjia has served our ZAC as a Priest day and night at the expense of his own time and comfort, but Mr. Khambatta has

Continued on page 33



Antia (left) and Hormazdiyar addressing the gathering after the navjote

community and the precepts laid down by our Lord Zoroaster."

"According to Mr. Shroff, 'The best remedy is to socially boycott Mr. Kersi Antia and his associates from all communal and religious associations, societies, functions, etc.' He goes on to add, 'If you have succeeded in obtaining pictures of the notorious incident we shall be grateful if you would please send them to us, identifying the persons involved.'

"As a result of all this, the Priests serving our Association are upset with the events, specially the reference to Ervad Neriosang Karanjia in Sarosh Khambatta's and Mr. J.F. Shroff's articles when he was in no way involved nor did he participate in the Navjote ceremony. (Sarosh has stated that he would write to *Jam-e-Jamshed* clarify-

show a more positive attitude than it has so far, and take definite action to deter those that become self-appointed saviors and scholars of the community despite their shameful and woeful ignorance about their religion, and try to castigate the Priest the moment they disagree with him. If our Priests are to be treated in such a shameful and disparaging manner as Mr. Khambatta has done, ZAC does not deserve to have Priests. Priests have been serving Mr. Khambatta and other members of ZAC without any remuneration at the expense of their time and business and this slander of our Priests is like adding insults to the injuries.

"Mr. Khambatta had plenty of opportunity to discuss the issues as a ZAC and a Board Member and Dr. Kersi Antia had gone out of his

A residential building, a sanatorium and a shack comprise Jehangir Baug, ensconced amid the innumerable hotels, restaurants and bungalows of film stars not far from the beach in Juhu, one of Bombay's posh suburbs. Behind the baug is a wasteland which belongs to the Flying Club and behind that, a creek.

On a working day Jehangir Baug is deserted except for the old who potter around while the young are at work. And the aged live in fear of harassment, assault and burglary.

The 21 families who live in Jehangir Baug allege that the slum-dwellers who live beyond the creek jump the baug's wall, which has been broken in one place, sometimes at night and often even in the daytime.

On the ground floor of Jussawalla building, which houses twelve families lives Ms Sheroo Katrak, old and

bed-ridden. There have been several attempts to break into her flat, the wire mesh across the windows having been slit several times and utensils lifted out of the kitchen window, so that it is now dangerous to keep the windows open.

Apart from the routine stealing of clothes, coconuts, utensils and metal covers of the water tanks, the miscreants attempted a more serious crime on the night of September 3, 1982, according to the residents. They broke into a vacant flat on the third floor, upsetting the furniture and trying to force open an iron cupboard. They had latched the doors of the other tenants and only fled when some people from the sanatorium opposite raised the alarm. Luckily, they took nothing of value, but the Jehangir Baug residents now live in fear, especially since the older residents are

left alone in their insecure homes all day.

Jehangir Baug has no security arrangements, according to Khorshed Ghadiali, who lives in Jussawalla building, next door to Ms Katrak, with her mother and sister Sheroo. The Ghadialis lived in the shack for 12 years before shifting to Jussawalla building and Khorshed says, "If you kick the door of the shack it will fall in." Three families are housed therein. The front doors are made of peeling plywood; instead of glass panes, a square of woven palm leaves serves for windows which open to reveal a dark interior behind the wooden bars that stretch across the make-shift windows. There are gaping holes in the matting that serves for walls. Rusted corrugated iron sheets serve as a low roof. Two old women in petticoats, sudras and 'mathubanus' shuffle out to the

Jehangir Baug: Insecure Homes

Hutokshi D. Doctor

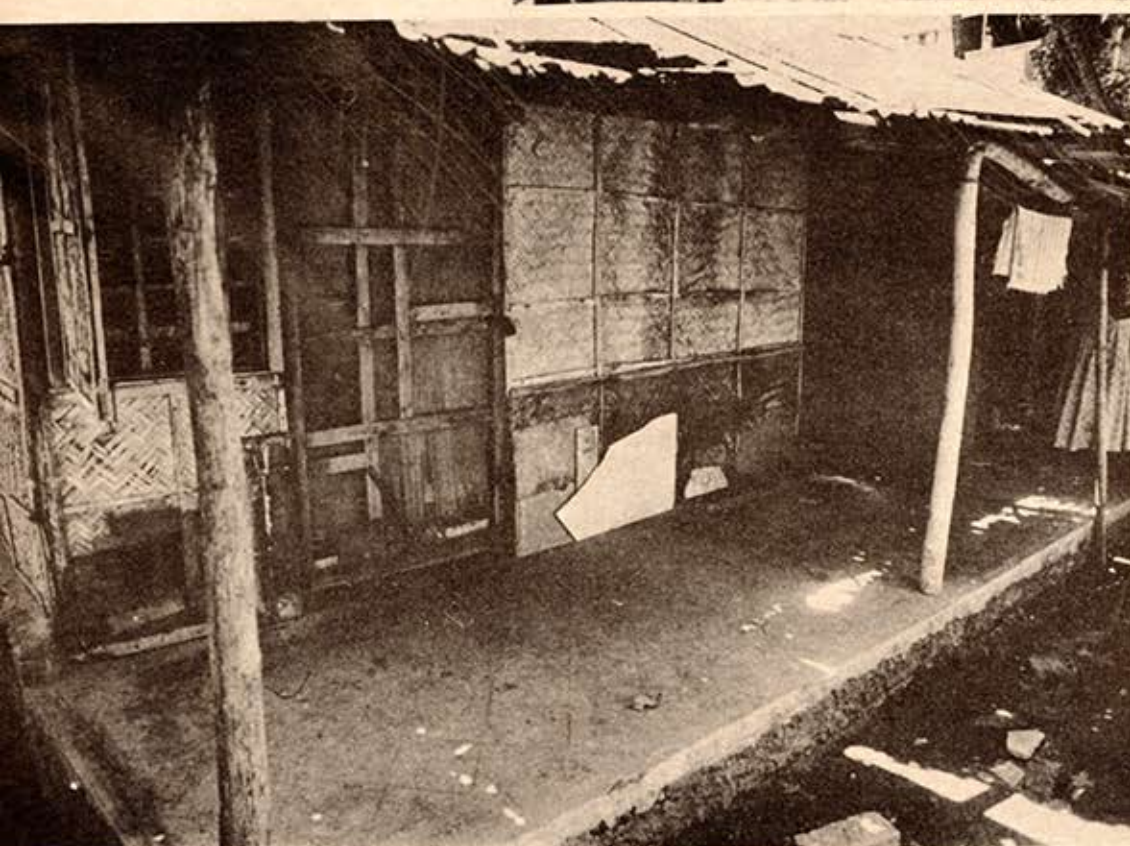


There have been several attempts to break into her flat, the wire mesh across the windows having been slit several times.



Left: The dilapidated shack which houses three families

Below: A resident points to the broken wall behind the baug



tap outside their home with shiny brass buckets.

"Only we know how Parsi people are struggling here," says Sheroo who adds in woeful acceptance, "There is no housing."

Referring to the sanatorium which is managed by the Seth Jehangir Merwanji Jussawalla Trust, with two flats on each of the three floors, each flat being shared by two parties, Sheroo says, "You don't think there are any old people who come to the sanatorium now, or sick people," as they once came to convalesce in the fresh sea air.

Extreme left: Jehangir Baug with the sanatorium (left) and the residential building (right)

Left: The squalid sanitary facilities used by the occupants of the shack

Photographs by Homyar Mistry

"Nowadays there are mainly young married couples who move from sanatorium to sanatorium, hunting hunting," as she puts it, for a place to stay in this teeming city. They are allowed to stay in the Jehangir Baug sanatorium for three months, thereafter for an additional month. Then they must move again.

A recent news item in the Bombay newspaper *The Daily* which brought to light the attempted robberies and harassment of the Jehangir Baug residents concluded with, "Will the police allay the fears of the residents?" But although the police have been alerted and complaints made, according to the residents, little has been done.

And unless security arrangements are provided, the residents of Jehangir Baug will, as the paper's headline stated, continue to "live in fear."

Alpaiwalla Museum

A one-storeyed, nondescript building in the heart of Bombay houses the only community museum in India. The F.D. Alpaiwalla Museum situated in Khareghat Colony on Patkar Marg focuses on the "various aspects of the Parsi contribution to Indian life," says the curator, Ms Nivedita Mehta.

An unfamiliar concept in India, a community museum can be defined as one that "reflects community aspirations, customs and ideology," according to Dr S. Gorakshkar, director of the Prince of Wales Museum in Bombay. Inaugurated on November 7, 1981, the museum "in addition to being an asset to the Parsis would be an asset to the city of Bombay," he observed.

"The artifacts of the museum are worth anything between 40 to 50 lakhs, accordingly the trustees have decided to incur an expenditure of Rs 1,59,000 to organize it in a scientific way," noted former BPP chairman, B. K. Boman-Behram at the inauguration.

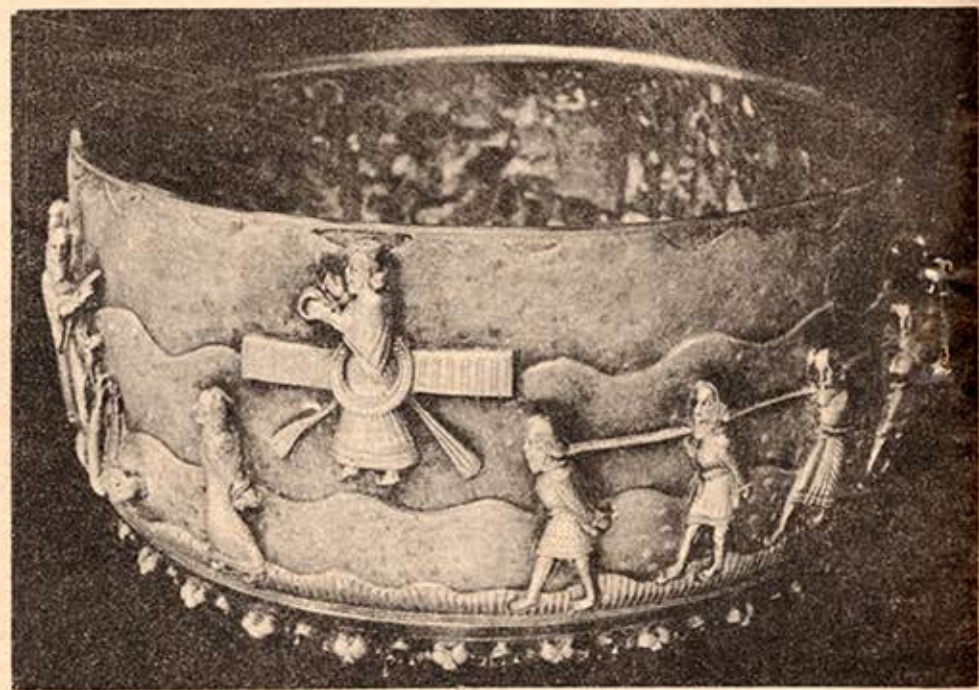
The exhibits in the museum are not restricted to items of historical, aesthetic and domestic use associated with the Parsi community alone, but is an assortment of antiquities from Persia and Mesopotamia, Indian metalware, Chinese porcelain, European glassware, paintings, stamps, rare photographs of old Bombay, old cigarette advertisements, tram and bus tickets, books, legal and fiscal documents, clothing, a Gandhara sculpture of Buddha and even soda water bottles from the Victorian age!

Beginning with an introduction which promises the viewer "glimpses of Parsis from their roots in Iran to their migration and eventual integration into Indian life," the first half of the large room that comprises the museum recreates life in Susa, a settled village in about 4000 B.C. As you walk around one of the wooden dividers which effectively create sections, the migration of the Parsis to India is traced. One wooden partition is studded with photographs of Parsi notables like Dadabhai Naoroji, Jamsetji Tata, Pherozeshah Mehta, Homi Bhabha, Veer Nariman, Sir Dinshaw Davar, Pestonjee Meherjee, Zubin Mehta,

Field Marshal Manekshaw and others. An unusual addition is Dadabhai Naoroji's visiting card when he was a member of the House of Commons.

Another wooden wall displays excellent photographs of old Bombay—now a collector's item. These pictures have been the basis of an exhibi-

tion by the Bombay Municipal Corporation and are now permanently on view at the Bhau Daji Museum at Victoria Gardens. The collection consists of over 80 albums of picture postcards covering a wide range of subjects from pictures of old Bombay to great paintings of the world.



m: Tracing Traditions

Gouri Wagadarikar

A prized exhibit is a beautiful sunburst type rosewood cupboard with figures of Zarathustra carved on its doors. The cupboard was part of Alpaiwalla's collection.

At the entrance is an imposing 17th century carved wooden gateway to the Polia-Desai Wad at Navsari, "kept as

a reminder of an entry into a Parsi wad," says Ms Mehta. It was brought to Bombay by Dr Jamshed Unwalla in the late 1950s.

A wooden door with brass studs and knobs belonging to the 18th-19th century with "carving typical of Gujarati woodwork of that period," has been

installed at the entrance to the godown. The entrance was specially built to accommodate the size of the carved door, informs Ms Mehta.

About 85 percent of the collection housed in the museum today, informs Ms Mehta, was accumulated by Mr Framji Dadabhoy Alpaiwalla

The Alpaiwalla Museum promises the viewer "glimpses of Parsis from their roots in Iran to their migration and eventual integration into Indian life."



Left: Postcard of old Bombay

Below: Rosewood cupboard with figures of Zarathustra on doors



Left: Silver bowl with a scene from Naksh-I-Darius, showing Darius being received by the angels and (below) chained prisoners; made in India in the early 20th century by a Bombay guild, Gill's workshop

Above: A brick from the famous 'Frieze of the Archers' from the palace in Persepolis

Right: Head of mother goddess, Anahita

Photographs by Homyar Mistry and Rashid D. Bamanbehram





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Interior of late 19th century Parsi house recreated, with a focus on the furniture

(1881-1952), who hoped to set up a 'Parsi Historical Research Institute and Museum.' According to a press release issued by the Parsi Punchayet, Bombay, on the occasion of the inauguration of the museum, Alpaiwalla's aim was to "make future generations fully aware of their great

There is enough material in the museum to create even four exhibitions a year.

heritage—Indian and Persian." And so he assembled antiques from *ferias*, *jeripuranawallas* and dealers and maintained detailed descriptive catalogues of all objects. Alpaiwalla had almost converted his large flat in Bhavnagri House (now called Alpaiwalla House at the corner of Princess Street next to the Anjuman Atash-Behram) into a museum.

There are some items from Iran which have been collected by an Avestan scholar Dr Jamshed Unwalla, who spent ten years excavating in Susa. Susa formed the tail-end of the Tigris-Euphrates basin (presently in Iraq), and was a settled village in about 4000 B.C. It is known by Western historians as the Kingdom of Elam. With the rise of the Achaemenian emperors, Susa gained importance and Darius the Great made it his capital. The decline of Susa began in 330 B.C. when this lavish city was plundered by Alexander

the Great. French archaeologists have reportedly been excavating Susa for over a hundred years.

In the 1930s Unwalla brought back terracotta figurines of mother goddesses, coins, cuneiform tablets, seals, metal objects like copper arrowheads, axes and vessels and a glazed decorated brick, part of the famous 'Frieze of the Archers' from the palace in Persepolis.

Another fascinating find is a five feet tall 5th century B.C. inscription of the genealogy of Artaxerxes III. The last of the Zoroastrian Sassanian emperors was defeated at the Battle of Nehavand, probably around 641 B.C., and Unwalla has brought back Nehavand pottery dating back to 1500 B.C. Excavating the Dakhma of Yazd, Unwalla found shoes, clothes, baskets, terracotta vessels, even a pair of scissors and a comb of the 16th century A.D. which he brought back and which are now exhibited at the Museum.

Educational Courses

For those who think of museums as "glorified godowns" full of cracked pottery, useless coins and ancient tattered documents with indecipherable lettering, the Bombay Parsi Punchayet which owns and manages the museum, proposes to commence educational programmes. Believing that "Museums have to be a dynamic part of society," as curator Ms Mehta says, these courses will first be designed for school/college students. A qualified archaeologist, Ms Mehta has observed the courses conducted abroad during a recent British Council scholarship tour

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of the U.S.A., England and Europe and through these courses, she would like to "explain not only the (Parsi) community to the community, but also the community to other communities."

About the community aspect of the museum, she says, "we would like to focus on little-known facts about the community. Starting from the roots in Iran and development there, to the immigration to India and finally the settlement and the deep-rooted affiliation for the country of their adoption." Emphasis would be laid on community efforts in the development of modern India.

"Museums are the greatest instruments of non-formal education," observes Dr S. Gorakshkar. He considers the artifacts in the Alpaiwalla museum invaluable and exclusive and the museum itself one to be proud of.

According to Gorakshkar, there is enough material in the museum to create even four exhibitions a year. For example, if ship-building is taken up as the subject, the technology of this craft can be traced with the help of models and pictures with a section reserved for the pioneer ship builders who

dominated the Indian industry for 111 years and built ships even for the Royal Navy, the Wadias. Similarly, aviation could be traced from infancy to its present magnificence with a section for the Tatas who laid the foundations of civil aviation in India 50 years ago.

There is immense potential but a lot of groundwork still needs to be done. Alpaiwalla had kept descriptive catalogues of the antiques he collected, but the antecedents of the objects are not known. Presently the museum authorities are involved in researching facts and classifying the exhibits. It is long and tedious work, but as Ms Mehta explains, "We are at the developing stage now. If we had to start from scratch, I would say, it would be a very difficult task. But once you have a museum, the only thing you can do is to make it dynamic."

The Alpaiwalla Museum at Khareghat Colony, Patkar Marg, (Hughes Road) is open six days a week from 10.15 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. and 2.30 to 5.00 p.m. Closed on Tuesdays. There is no entry fee and it is open to all communities.



Reproduced on cover:

1,2, Silver coin of Artaxerxes III, (359-338 B.C.)

3, Silver drachma of Xerxes, (485-464 B.C.)

4,5, Silver dehrum of Khushrew I, (532-580 A.D.)

*Cover photographs by
Homyar Mistry*

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Savaksa

Saleem Peeradina

The time — late 1960s. The place — a village in South Gujarat working its way to becoming a small town. The setting — a manorial house belonging to Savaksa, a 60-year-old landlord. The action — a domestic battle which centres around Savaksa's attempt to marry a 20-year-old girl from a poor family in Bombay.

Savaksa, Gieve Patel's new play, comes more than 10 years after his first, *Princes*, which won the merit certificate in the Sultan Padamsee playwriting competition and was produced by Theatre Group in 1970.

Both *Princes* and *Savaksa* are about family relationships — relationships that are bonded by warmth, dependence and inescapable feuds — which are ultimately destructive. *Princes*, staying within the four walls of a house, was apolitical. *Savaksa* is more ambitious: it attempts to mirror "the destructive emotional manipulations prevalent in the country today at personal and social levels."

The fact that Patel's family comes from Nargol in Bulsar district in Gujarat and that he worked as a doctor in a Primary Health Centre in the Sanjan-Tarapur coastal area in the same district, has a lot to do with the new play he has written. It gives the play a local habitation — the characters are Parsis, remnants of the ancestors who first migrated from Persia and settled in coastal Gujarat. The two-and-a-half years that he spent there as a doctor gave him a feel for the quality of life led by the commercial and middle classes in a developing village-town.

The genesis of the play has a curious origin. When asked how he got to the subject of the play and how it developed, Patel said:

"All I had to start with was a 'sensation' in the mind, of a dry itch; a dry, scruffy landscape, mangy dogs, and yellow papers sleeping in files. The



next connection was two stories that I heard during my spell at the Health Centre. One was about a custom in the early days, of carrying the bridal bed in a public procession for every wedding. Another story I heard concerned a very old man who married a very young girl. The two stories together created a funny sight — the bed, the old man, the young girl — and I thought of writing a harsh comedy, perhaps. What finally came out was different. The image of the dry itch persisted and congealed into an eczema, and I wrote it down immediately. That was the first page of the play and it stands as it was written, although I wrote the rest of the play after a gap of two years."

Indeed *Savaksa's* opening words have behind them the combined vision of the poet-painter that Patel is, plus the doctor's clear diagnosis:

Savaksa: (displaying a large eczema on his arm) So many colours — brown, red, blue. First it was wet and red, then it gets dry, and becomes brown. The dry place becomes wet again. The red hurts very much — see, touch it. Ah! Hurts! The blue place — touch, touch — blue! You cannot know — I feel many things: I want to scratch, I want to cut this out, like meat, but, it will come up again on another place. So I make it my friend, it won't go away.

For Gieve Patel, the situation in the play reflects what he finds around himself — in the family, among friends and in the broader political culture.



Khorshed: It is a disease? Or what?

Savaksa: A gift! I can know so many things! If I touch softly I know one thing. Then I touch hard — more thing. All right now you touch hard here (Khorshed does) — third thing. Now take this feather. Put feather here (she caresses) — fourth thing. All right, put feather here — fifth thing. Now take this stone, rub it here — six; rub here — seven. I have a wonderful thing.

The eczema on Savaksa's arm is an all-weather instrument — it is a temperature chart, an emotional barometer, a map of his estate — and of course, a raw, inflamed, itching wound. It is an exact replica of Savaksa's mind and soul.



Savaksa loves the exercise of power. All his relationships — with his workers, with his family, with the members of the *panchayat* of which he is the head — are governed by strict trade principles. He controls by doling out favours; he makes and changes the rules of bargaining as it suits him; feigns tenderness and concern, plays the benevolent lord, but is at all times crafty, manipulative and tyrannical.

Adeser, the younger son (who is 30), is retarded and completely dependent on him. His elder son, Dorab (who is 40), is overwhelmed by his father and rages against his authority.

Dorab: Taking things from you is not so easy.

Savaksa: No! But in the end you always do take.

Dorab: It is not my right to take?

Savaksa: It is always your right to take. You are my son.

Dorab: But you don't give it like that.

Savaksa: Then how do I give it?

Dorab: Like a punishment.

The women of the house, his daughter Kermina (who is 36), and Jer, his daughter-in-law (who is 34), are more readily victimised. Their genuine compassion protects him, brings out the martyr in him, and subtly encourages his evil genius.

Savaksa's orchards provide him with apt metaphors for classifying women:

"Mangoes, we look after them and look after them the whole year; put so much money in them, attention, attention, fuss, fuss, pleading, pleading, then the little fruit comes; mangoes are — indecent women.

"Chikoos! You can treat them very badly! Forget them; don't water, don't spend money! But they are generous. Fruits come all year — they are good home women!"

It is the women from the city — Perin, the girl he wants to marry, and her older sister, Hutoxi — who bring the counter-offensive against Savaksa's reign.

Perin, who is "quiet, thoughtful, with flashes of whimsicality," agrees on an impulse — to escape the domination of her sister — to marry the rich

Extreme left: Gieve Patel—Combining the vision of the poet-painter with the doctor's clear diagnosis.

Above: "The exercise of power"

Left: Warmth and feuds in the family relationship



Relentless battle between the fiery Hutoxi and Savaksa

widower. But it is Hutoxi, prodded by an internal demon of her own, who engages Savaksa in a hard, relentless battle.

"The creation of character is based upon a collage of real and invented people and the exploration of one's own self. The deeper strata of the play is a conjunction of what you see in society and what you see in yourself. Characters and events unfold as the

The eczema on Savaksa's arm is an all-weather instrument ... It is an exact replica of Savaksa's mind and soul.

play is being written. In a way, the play already exists — writing means uncovering what is present by blowing away the dust, as it were, from a stone frieze."

The violence of Savaksa is matched by the destructiveness of Hutoxi.

"One can't create a living character unless one plumbs the depths of one's own violence. The character of Hutoxi emerges from memories of stories heard in childhood during family



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"You cannot know — I feel many things."

discussions about the kind of violence that women can exercise in family conflicts; also from stories related by patients of terrifying physical violence between sisters." But the character really jelled when these stories could be given depth and power by involvement in the writer's own psyche. Witness Hutoxi's speech:

"So when the time comes, do call me! You can rely on Hutoxi to perform her sisterly duties! And I will help you — I will pull out for you — those half-formed children one by one! (Pause)."

"Yes! I will pull them out from your body — with all their twisted faces! Do you think such an old man can give you healthy babies?"

This image is taken almost directly from a dream experienced by the writer. Were there other sources and other forces which helped in the conception of the play?

Temperamentally, I'm a bit dreamy and lackadaisical and I allow external events to hit me and filter through me; whereas Toni, my wife, takes them in her grasp and works out bold choices of attitude to these events. In that sense, she is politically more alert and the constant presence of this alertness around me while the play was being written has left a profound mark on the final product."

For Gieve Patel, the situation in the play reflects what he finds around himself — in the family, among friends and in the broader political culture. He

sums it up in a single word — unaccountability. "You can do or say anything and contradict it the very next day and feel no twinge about it at all. In *Savaksa*, it is the constant yes-no-yes-no flicker throughout that plays havoc with the lives of people." The only anchor in this continuous vacillation is the feeling of "love" that takes hold of Savaksa. "Love" exposes a need, a dependence, demands accountability. Savaksa deliberately evades, refuses to allow this feeling to attain any degree of clarity. The only pure moment in the play, the admission of a painful truth, is when Savaksa pleads with Perin to consider his offer — "You can laugh at me because I have no power," he whimpers. In reply, Perin cradles his head in her lap and strokes and kisses his eczema. Savaksa whines softly like a stray dog who has received his first kindness.

The moment he reveals a human vulnerability, he becomes subject to counter-manipulation by Hutoxi who ultimately foils his desire to marry Perin. Of course, in the end, Hutoxi suffers a greater defeat by Perin's running away and is thus completely isolated.

Power that is self-flattering can only create the illusion of authority, can make at best only token offerings. Quoting an instance of the time when Savaksa was praised by the villagers for bringing scavenging pigs to clear the village muck, Dorab continues:

Dorab: But now there are more and more pigs, and they make more dirt and they eat only vegetables from the rubbish! They are spoiled! They won't eat the muck! So people are not happy. And all of Pappa's actions have become like that. Useless.

After a pause his wife, Jer, urges him to continue the story about pigs.

Dorab: Pigs! (Pause) Reforms! That is important! Because I gave you one example about pigs you can't understand what I am saying? What is important is reforms! For the poor that is important!

That, according to Patel, is the mirror of ironies reflecting our political culture today. Pigs vs. Reforms!

Patel is not sure if the play has commercial possibilities. The difficulties in putting up a serious play in Bombay are considerable. If the audience for it is likely to be small, the gate money may not square up the expenditure on it.

Production budgets range from Rs.

50,000 to Rs. 75,000 these days. He had organised a couple of private readings for friends and interested professionals, and eventually settled for a small-scale production by a team of dedicated theatre people, led by Director Pearl Padamsee. A grant by the Tata Press and free use of the Max Mueller Hall helped. None of the actors or actresses made any conditions — Sabira Merchant, Roger Pereira, Meher and Noshawan Jehangir and others all agreed to work without payment. For them, as well as for Padamsee, the play was the main consideration.

Sabira Merchant who plays the fiery Hutoxi, has a throat infection on the afternoon I go to see her rehearse. She is present and participates fully but speaks in a whisper.

Roger Pereira in the title role is struggling to discover the soul of Savaksa. At this point in time, the role is still taking shape and Pereira will have to combine in his frame the authority that Savaksa possesses with the putrefying odour of decay that surrounds the old widower; the folds of Savaksa's skin will have to convey his insatiable and unrepentant lust; and his wily, cussed nature will have to stalk the stage like a menace.

Pearl Padamsee as the director has a superb grasp of the material she is handling — the script as well as the

"In *Savaksa* it is the constant yes-no-yes-no flicker throughout that plays havoc with the lives of people."

cast. In her military-commander yell, she shouts orders, describes the needs of a particular scene, demonstrates various roles, sits back and nods approvingly and generally supplies the vigour and push to bring the text and the performance as close together as possible.

If the audience response to the initial performance is good, (The response has been very good — Editor), there will be more shows and perhaps more people will have the chance to see this piece of meaningful theatre.

Reprinted with permission from the *Express Magazine*, *Indian Express*, November 14, 1982. Photographs courtesy Debonair and Madhu Gadakari.

A Tale of Tiles

A striking full-page advertisement appeared in *The Times of India* on December 30 last year, entitled 'The Bharat Tiles and Marble Story Book' which recorded the history of the pioneers of the cement tile industry in India.

The 'Story Book' designed by Trikaya Advertising, chronologized the 60-year-old saga of the Bharat Tile Company, one of the leading quality tile manufacturers in the country: "When the Bharat Tile Company started (in Uran) in 1922, there was no electricity, water or telephone service. And the only link with the mainland was the fishing boats which plied when the weather was fair. Why, then, the choice of Uran? There lies another story.

"The family of promoters of Bharat Tiles had already built large factory sheds at Uran, to manufacture liquor from Mogra flowers. Suddenly in 1918, the British Government decided to augment its revenues by taking over all liquor production...and the Uran factories were left idle.

"Fishing boats provided the only freight services between Bombay and Uran. Finished tiles were loaded onto the 'machwas' at Uran and carried to Brick Bunder, Bombay. No one remembers whether the 'machwas' carried tiles and fish at the same time. In any case, there is no recorded complaint about the tiles smelling of fish...

"To the founders of Bharat Tiles, Pherozesha Sidhwa and (nephew) Rustom Sidhwa, the quality of tiles produced was critical. The reasons went beyond aesthetics, into hard business sense—if the tiles were not as good as imported ones, nobody would buy them.

"In 1923, Pherozesha was dissatisfied with a batch of black and white tiles made for New Readymoney Building (Flora Fountain). So he stopped delivery and took the dramatic step of having the entire batch thrown into the sea.



Old Bharat Tiles factory in Uran, (inset) Pherozesha and Rustom Sidhwa (right)

"Soon after, he left for Italy to find out what he was doing wrong. As it turned out, all that the black and white tiles needed was better polishing!"

In the 60 years since then, Bharat Tiles has paved a number of well-known structures including the Sachivalaya, the Reserve Bank, Aarey Colony, the Stock Exchange, Bombay Central Station, the High Court, Air India building, Max Mueller Bhavan, Taj Mahal Intercontinental, Churchgate Station, several Tata Electric buildings, new LIC building and others.

Now with an annual turnover of 25-30 lakh rupees, Bharat Tiles continues to remain a family concern, with the members of the Sidhwa family on the board of directors of Bharat Tiles and the associated companies, Grindwell Norton, Vitro-Brite, Daka Company and Lightcrete Products.

"The technology of tile-making is very simple," says Ms Tehmina Sidhwa, wife of the late Pherozesha Sidhwa. It is the "integrity of the ingredients" that determines the quality of the tile. And determining quality is not so easy, one cannot judge a tile just by looking at it. A superior tile can be distinguished over a period of time, since, "a tile gets more beautiful with age."

The fragile nature of tiles makes them an expensive item to transport, hence Bharat Tiles makes tiles mainly for consumption in Bombay. On out-of-town orders, the company simply sets up a temporary factory at the site, to be dismantled when the job is complete.

The hazard of transportation was one reason why Bharat Tiles moved its factory from Uran to the city in 1956, the other was that the main market for tiles was in Bombay. The shortage of cement that began in the 1940s was a major handicap which reached its depths in 1972 when the situation was so bad that the company all but closed down. Many employees had to be retrenched and production was low. Now with the free sale of cement, the situation has improved.

If the advertisements of Bharat Tiles



have been few and far between, remarks Ms Dilnavaz Variava, Pheroza Sidhwa's daughter, it can be attributed to the fact that "we let the quality of the tiles speak for itself." And even if the stability of the building cannot be guaranteed, comments Ms Sidhwa lightly, "Bharat tiles will last the lifetime of the building in which they are laid."

Gouri Wagadarikar

A Full Moon on the Rise

The moon it is said, affects different people in different ways. But when Dara Acidwalla and Cyrus Guzder talked business on a full moon night, they decided to form an advertising agency, appropriately named Raka, the Sanskrit word for full moon.

The Bombay-based agency, with an authorised share capital of 10 lakh rupees of which two lakhs are paid up, includes amongst its clients Larsen and Toubro, the giant engineering concern.

"Raka will offer a comprehensive package of marketing consultancy and communication services," states the 37-year-old bespectacled and bewhiskered Acidwalla. A 16-year veteran of the advertising profession, Acidwalla has worked for some of the leading agencies in the country including Advertising and Sales Promo-

Acidwalla: offering a comprehensive marketing package



tion, Hindustan Thompson Associates, Inter Publicity and Frank Simoes Advertising.

"I am an account executive, not a visualizer or a copywriter," says Acidwalla. The job entails "striking a mean between the client and the creative persons...to understand the brief given by the client, realign it and bring it out in advertising form."

Some of the most fulfilling campaigns he has worked on have been the launching of 'Lime 'n Lemoni' Limca, the "bizarre but memorable" Gold Spot series, the unusual advertisements for Arvind Mills ("We had models coming out of test tubes and beakers") and the introduction of Raymonds' 'Legwear' trousers.

Dissatisfied with the "non-involvement of executives" in the creative aspects of advertising, Acidwalla left for Kuwait to join a company as their advertising manager. But there, troubled by the sweltering heat, the subtle but ever-present discrimination against Indians and his wife Jehanara's ill-health, he decided to come back.

Backed by Cyrus Guzder, managing director of 'Airfreight' and the Guzder family, Acidwalla started Raka in March this year.

"We are gearing ourselves to service clients efficiently and on a professional basis," says Acidwalla, with the accent on "personalised service."

"We are now interested in consolidating our position," to face the "tremendous" competition, says Acidwalla. As for the current cut in advertising expenditure due to budget disallowances, he feels it will definitely affect new business coming in. The setback however, will be to small advertisers who cannot afford the disallowance, rather than the bigger ones.

Apart from Raka, Acidwalla helps his wife Jehanara in her business, whenever she needs it. The sole representative for a Kuwaiti group of publications, *Dar-Al Seyessah*, Jehanara has started 'Medialink', through which she helps Indian advertisers promote their products in Kuwait, providing information about competitive products, translations into Arabic and organizing foreign exchange clearances. They keep their working lives separate though, and Jehanara operates from home; this probably also ensures proximity to their 11-year-old twin sons Shamak and Gieve.

Content to be a small concern for the moment, Acidwalla remarks, "We don't want to departmentalize, otherwise the job becomes mechanical, one department does not know what the other is doing." Being of the opinion that anybody in the agency should be able to take the brief from the client, he affirms, "we will discuss all campaigns together."

Gouri Wagadarikar

Best Woman Entrepreneur

Ms Dhun B. Baldawala, director of Industrial Boilers Private Limited, was awarded the 1983 Best Woman Entrepreneur award instituted by the Institute of Marketing Management and Cinni Fans. The annual award was presented at a ceremony in New Delhi



Baldawala: receiving award from President Zail Singh

in the presence of President Zail Singh in January this year, notes a press release.

The company, which installed its first boiler unit in 1977 "has maintained a steady growth rate of 40 percent," notes Baldawala, and since then hundreds of energy-saving units developed with indigenous technology have been installed all over the country. In addition, the organization deputed its team of qualified engineers to various industries to offer guidance in energy conservation and the achievement of maximum plant efficiency.

Baldawala ascribes the success of her organization to the "fine team spirit" at every level of operation. Of the

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woman entrepreneur Baldawala writes, "Women can work wonders with their instinct whenever the element of risk is involved and with this quality of adventure, I am sure the eighties will have many more women entrepreneurs."

'Prize' Gold

Out of nine gold medals awarded at the Leipzig Spring Fair with "9000 participants from over 123 countries all over the world" India bagged two, of which one went to Besta Cosmetics' entry, 'Prize' Aloe Vera Shampoo.

In the March 13-19 West German fair, Besta had their entire range of cosmetics on display, and in competition with giant multinational cosmetic companies claimed the gold for the "quality and medicinal value" of their product.

Besta, a small-scale unit of the Balsara group, has a factory at Vapi in Gujarat, and produces cosmetics, toiletries and a range of ayurvedic cosmetics for export.

This gold medal comes in the wake of the recent Monde Selection Gold Medal with Palm Leaves that Besta won for its 'Prize' fluoride toothpaste last year.

"Besta and Balsara prove that small-scale units are capable of manufacturing and marketing quality products of international standards," notes the release issued at an earlier press conference.

The company's exports manager A.K.D. Iyenger expressed confidence that the award would "result in actual business in course of time."

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Continued from page 17.

created a very misleading and malignant impression that Neriosang has violated our Zoroastrian laws. Mr. Khambatta in his characteristic and malignant manner says "I will fight to get (him) out of ZAC." Ervad Karanjia who has served the ZAC so faithfully does not deserve this kind of shabby, shameless and slanderous treatment by a self-appointed dispenser of Zoroastrian laws. Mr. Khambatta's letter unfortunately also implies that Neriosang was a party to Joseph Peterson's navjote, though that is not what Mr. Khambatta himself meant, but from the responses that Neriosang received from home, it is clear that's what Mr. Khambatta's letter gave the impression to his relatives and friends. Moreover, Neriosang has not at all violated any of the ZAC laws in any way at all and it only shows Mr. Khambatta's unpardonable ignorance not only of the Zoroastrian laws but also of the ZAC bylaws.

"How could we Priests then find it necessary to volunteer our time and energy to ZAC members who will not hesitate at the slightest pretext to malign and defame our Priests in public? Mr. Khambatta and his supporters' attitude is so unZoroastrian that they should be ashamed to call themselves Zoroastrians, much less have any validity to write letters about Priests in the name of Zoroastrianism.

"We do not expect all ZAC members to agree with the Priests. Nor do we expect all Priests to agree with one another as our Prophet wants us to decide for ourselves. But that does not authorize any ZAC member to make misleading statements about Priests in the Parsee newspapers in India or try to excommunicate them. *We Priests do not have to serve the community* unless we want to. While we would very much want to do so, we find ourselves alienated and maligned by the actions of Mr. Khambatta and his supporters. Unless the foul and filthy air created by them is cleared up forthwith and the Priests are reassured that they won't be abused so readily and ZAC lays down rules to take action against those that take it upon themselves to judge and overrule and malign the Priests. If they still persist to do so, we will have no choice but to ask them to have their own Priests because they cannot expect to have their cake and eat it too, they cannot mistreat the Priests and still expect them to serve them.

"We cannot tell you what to do, nor do we ask for much; all we want to know is whether the rank and file of ZAC is behind the Priests or not, and will take all possible and positive steps to stop the mistreatment of the Priests by the self-appointed messiahs like Mr. Khambatta. *Until this is done in a manner totally satisfactory to all the Priests, we very much regret to say that we find no meaning or mission in serving the ZAC as voluntary Priests any more and we urge ZAC strongly to hire their own Priest to serve its needs.* While we deeply appreciate the fact that a significant number of ZAC members are solidly behind the Priests, we urge not to let just a handful of members pollute or vitiate the milieu which will inspire the Priests to volunteer freely their time and energy not only for performing religious rites but also for leading the community on very critical and often very controversial issues facing us today.

"Hoping that you will understand our wounded feelings and injustice done to us by these few ZAC members, we remain, sincerely yours,

Signed:

Ervad Kersi Antia

Ervad Neriosang Karanjia

Ervad Pesi Vazifdar

Ervad Keikhosrow Mobed

Ervad Behram Shahzadi

Ervad Jamshed Antia"

The *Jame* published the priests' letter in its issue of May 10 and added "the priests have a duty and obligation to work in conjunction with the wishes and aspirations of the majority of the community..."

"Indeed these rebel priests should be boycotted by right-minded Zoroastrians in Chicago and their services should be dispensed with for all future religious happenings... it would be preferable for the signators of this letter to stop serving the community... if these priests wish to resign from their religious obligations to the community they serve, they should be encouraged to do so."

Should the Chicago Zoroastrians decide at their 'Open Forum' to stand by the priests, than by the yardsticks stated by the *Jame* editorial, the priests would be in the right. But by then new grounds would have been found to denigrate all those directly or indirectly connected with the navjote of Joseph Peterson.

Photographs courtesy Porus Cooper

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Graphic A-181

Mountboard Miniatures

Hutokshi D. Doctor

A small, rickety and paint-stained black table stands on the veranda outside the Gandevias' home in Navroz Baug, Bombay. On its worn and chisel-scarred surface lie a few stray pieces of mountboard. At any odd hour of the day, the neighbours can watch Jal A. Gandevia at work on this table, his heavy-featured face intent, bending and carving the cardboard into varied forms and designs. His only tools are two small chisels, glorified screwdrivers really, Fevicol and paint.

Currently working on the models of buses and trucks, Gandevia, who drives the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research buses, says, "Once I start on trucks, I keep making trucks only; if I start on mandirs I keep on making those."

He pulls out dog-eared copies of the Tata and Telco annual reports, and indicating the latest models of trucks, points out his own replicas, every detail complete, each variation in the body faithfully reproduced. The dashboards of these vehicles are neatly pencilled in, the gears have little red knobs atop, the seats are cushioned in sponge, the window-glasses slide up and down, the doors open, close and lock.

While the tyres of his trucks are made of wood, his intricate black and white locomotive is entirely of cardboard, the wheels and piston moving



smoothly, product of Gandevia's mechanical skill.

What is remarkable is Gandevia's observation of detail, and the exceptional use to which this otherwise uninspiring material is put. "This truck has not been registered yet," smiles the quietly modest Gandevia, pointing to a blank number-plate, though the usual message 'Horn Please' has already been painted on the rear, and the lotus symbol painted above the wind-screen.

On an elegant horse-carriage a coachman is mounted. "He has been operated upon," and civilised, the original figure of a loin-clothed savage in a menacing stance, now transformed. There is apparently no detail overlooked — the coachman has his whip, the mandir has its spire, the floors are neatly paved.

"When I was hardly ten or so I used to watch my father making models. I used to see how the cardboard is cut, carved and bent into different shapes."



A student of the Behramjee Jeejeebhoy Boys' School, Gandevia has made innumerable models to date and says, "I have the same sort of attachment for all my models, from the largest to the smallest." With his obvious mechanical flair, Gandevia would have liked to be an engineer, but, he says, "that requires money."

Down the corridor in Navroz Baug, in the home of Gandevia's mother, one of his father's models is preserved. The large grey model of the Lady Willingdon Building for the Parsi Ambulance Division is a virtual masterpiece, though the boundary wall is in ruins, and there is a deserted air about the half-open broken windows and peeling paint. Through the open doorway each room beyond is visible straight through to the window at the opposite end. The actual building stands in Bombay's Dhobitalao area, still the same shade of grey, but well maintained.

The church which Gandevia worked on for a year is realistically imposing, its red-tiled roof symmetrical and neat, a bell suspended in one of the twin steeples, the bell-rope hanging all the way down. The translucent patterned glass windows of the perfectly proportioned structure are lit up from behind.

Gandevia has always regretted the fact that he has crafted both temples and churches but has never made an agiary. Of late he has begun work on an agiary; the walls have already been erected, the censer and a figure of Zarathustra installed.

"I make these models from my pocket expenses, from whatever little I have managed to save," says Gandevia. The pieces are seldom sold, though the occasional friend or neighbour sometimes buys one. Most of the models, however, remain with their creator, either in the family showcase or in shrouds on the tops of cupboards. His wife Perin and son Yezdi, whose main interest is learning Indian classical music, take a lively interest in Gandevia's creative efforts.

Recently he crafted a furnished bungalow to order, and also made a model of a multi-storeyed building for an architect. His architectural models, though well-proportioned, are generally not made to scale. Neither are they inspired by any existing structures. "I don't know where the inspiration comes from or how I can imagine these models," says Gandevia with a shrug of his shoulders.

Distinct Designs

Anupam Pruthi

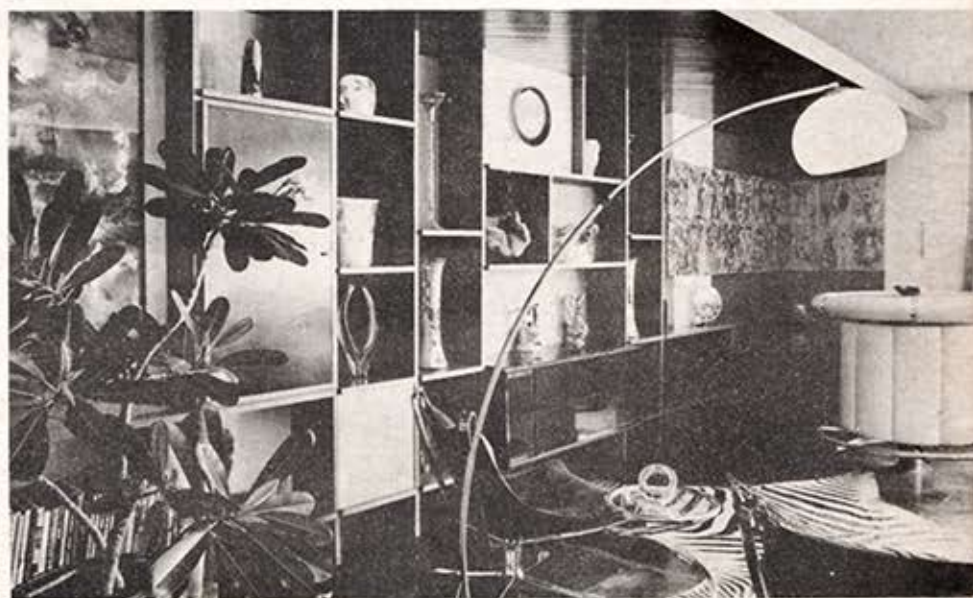
Pila Billimoria was one of the pioneers of the thriving and very lucrative business which interior decoration is today. He has just been made a Fellow of the IIDD, an institution of which he was a founder member.

Pila studied for his profession at the London School of Interior Decoration, England, in 1938-39. When a bomb razed the school building, Pila was lucky not to have been in it at the time. He was on his way back to set up practice in Bombay in 1940.

"At that time there were only three others who did this work here and I was the only Indian among them. People poked fun at me at the start," he laughs. "What are you going to design?" they asked. I took it all in good humour and carried on working." Beginning with residential interiors, Pila went on to offices and for a long time was connected with Air

India has a wealth of materials and talent, comparable to the best in the world, but bemoans the fact that our technology does not keep pace with it. "Many designers do take pains to do good work but others take on too many jobs at a time and this results in assembly-line sort of decorating. Today's normal three-bedroom flats have the same sort of lay-out, the only major difference being the dimensions. Many designers say to their contractor or their supervisor, 'Go and measure that place and accordingly change the dimensions of the furniture we made for such and such place and fit it in. Take care to shift the dressing-table from the right to the left of the room, so that it looks somewhat different'. This means that they can start work immediately!"

Pila's own home-cum-office and another home nearby, are extremely individualistic. The house he lives and



India. He is responsible for the designs of a lot of that airline's offices around the world.

Now Pila is at a stage where he can afford to pick and choose exactly what he wants or does not want to do. "Of course, money is important but it is not the main criterion. The satisfaction of creating something and doing a job well is what counts. This is one reason I never undertake more than four to six jobs a year."

Each place Pila designs has its own distinct individuality. He reckons that

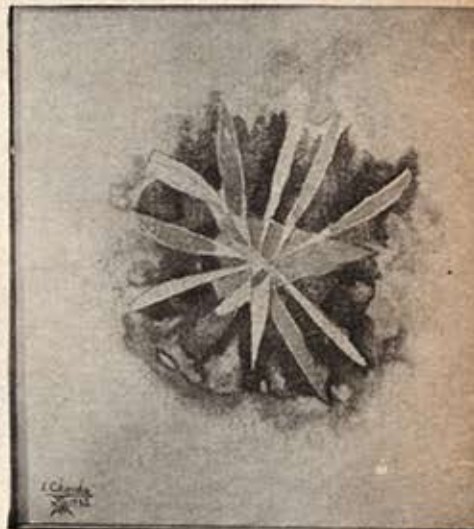
works in hasn't changed in the last 14 years and this is the first time he has allowed his homes to be photographed. The elevator stops at the floor below and one has to walk up three short flights of stairs to Pila's front door. The door has a simple geometric pattern in wood and there is a lovely play of lights from the glass mosaic by Badri Narayan, which comprises the window facing the door.

The door opens and with it a sense of continuity, for facing the door on a flat column is a painting by Jehangir Saba-

Chavda's 40th Show

Dnyaneshwar Nadkarni

vala, perfectly in keeping with the atmosphere of the stairs and the door. It is in hues of brown with touches of blue and has diagonal planes which complement the pattern on the door. Below the painting is a Chinese vase of unknown age. This sense of continuity permeates the whole flat.



In Pila's other home, after the front door opens you see a painting on a wood panel. Tuck your fingers into a niche under the frame and pull. A door opens which conceals a passage which takes you right into the flat, bypassing the living-room.

Both apartments have an ambience which makes them difficult to place in any one particular city. They have distinct identities but they could belong in any part of the world. First and foremost, the main flat is a home-cum-office and after that a repository for some terrific and priceless art. The other place is also a home, though less frequently used than the first, but there again painters like Shanti Dave, Ila Pal, Jehangir Sabavala, Laxman Shrestha, Hussain and Pila Billimoria rub shoulders with a tapestry by Monika Correa, crystal sculptures from Lalique and Rosenthal and any number of other treasures from all over the world. "I love my beautiful things and would not part with a single piece. I just don't have any more space on my walls or my floors to put in anything else!" Pila manages to sound just a wee bit wistful though he cannot quite keep his pride in his beautiful domain from coming through.

Shiavax Chavda's current exhibition at the Taj art gallery is his 40th show: an achievement which calls for a tribute to his long innings in our art world.

One has particular reason to be nostalgic. As an adolescent reviewer, I had visited the Princes' Room in the Taj where he began these innings in 1945. Those memories have not been dulled by a passage of nearly four decades.

When Shiavax had that first show, the aura of a Parisian education was very much around him. Less known was his early training in Hindustani classical music. He is one of our very few artists who have kept up a lively interest in the theatre arts.

Chavda's line was no doubt academic but very seductive in dealing with the vibrating anatomies of our classical or folk dancers and musicians. Travelling to south-east Asia, he reaped a full harvest capturing the cultural ethos of that region. In colour he was as sensuous as he was sinuous in line.

Chavda has travelled far since those early years and the flamboyant achievements of the middle period. The show at Taj (where a gallery proper now fulfils the function of the still thriving Princes' Room) reveals the artist's qualities all over again: a tightness of construction, an overall

Top and left: Two sectional views of Billimoria's individualistic home-cum-office

Above: A view of the dining room from the verandah off the living room

Above right: Chavda's "Seascape II" and "Mirage"

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economy of treatment harnessed to unaffected evocation; the simple but stylish projection of such natural elements as sun and moon, sea and sand or objects on a beach. If the colours are bright, the simple textural methods and the division of the canvas space into subtly inter-linked small areas offset the possibility of garishness.

And so, our felicitations to the sexagenarian artist whose exhibition career is 40 years young today.

Courtesy *The Times of India*, March 9, 1983

Dastur's Elevating Recital

Mohan Nadkarni

Firoz Dastur is one of the three eminent disciples of Sawai Gandharva — the others are Gangubai Hangal and Bhimsen Joshi. But unlike them, his concert appearances are few and far between, because teaching has been largely his avocation.

But whenever he performs, Dastur reveals through his music many virtues that put him apart from his contemporaries. First, he has no use for virtuosity for its own sake, nor does one find those vocal surprises we associate with Bhimsen and Gangubai. Secondly, he does not indulge in the kind of physical gestures or facial contortions or the aggressiveness of manner which often besets most vocal recitals. Above all, he is content with concentrating on the

spirit of his chosen *raga* and does it with distinction. His music is basically sweet and his melodic depictions have an uncanny, tranquil grace of their own. One can truly say in his case that his music reflects his personality.

Detailed Khayal

Not surprisingly, therefore, Dastur's vocal recital at the Dadar Matunga Cultural Centre on March 12 — his first public concert in four years — drew a packed audience, which included the great Moghubai Kurdikar, the 78-year-old doyen of Hindustani vocalists, and her worthy daughter, Kishori Amonkar.

Dastur was in fine form. He is 63 and what is more, the rigours of teaching have not told on his performing stamina. He began with a detailed *khayal* exposition in *Shudh-Kalyan* in *vilambit* and *drut*, followed by a briefer unfolding in *Saraswati*, also in *vilambit* and *drut*. The post-interval fare included *vilambit* and *drut* compositions in *Mal-kauns* and the *Jhinjhoti thumri*, "Piya bin nanhin awat chain," immortalised by Abdul Karim Khan, his guru's guru.

In each of the *ragas*, Dastur achieved a complete realisation of its classical and mystical implications. He sang with feeling, understanding and a keen sense of what is sublime and beautiful. His *Jhinjhoti thumri*, "had its usual caressive, often bitter-sweet touch. To this reviewer, however, his *Shudh-Kalyan* came as the very epitome of all that is best in the Kirana ideology.

Mention must be made of the superb vocal *sangat* that came from his disciples, Arvind Apte and Ashok Tulpule. Tulpule is a busy medical man and it redounds to his credit that he finds time to keep his music so trim. Veteran Shejwadar on the harmonium and young Deepak Nerurkar on the tabla also lent the right instrumental support.

Courtesy *The Times of India*, March 14, 1983

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Committed Trustee

Died: Erach Ardeshtir Nadirshah, 88, former chairman and trustee of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet, on February 14, 1983, at the Parsi General Hospital, Bombay, following a heart attack.

A trustee of the BPP for 20 years, Nadirshah was first elected in 1957, and after the death of the then chairman Lady Hirabai Cowasjee Jehangir in 1976, he took over as chairman until the expiry of his term the following year.

"As a qualified engineer backed by long years of practical experience, Mr Erach Nadirshah was a great help to his colleagues on the Board of Trustees of the BPP in their attempts to solve the most burning problem of Housing," notes a Resolution passed by the Punchayet.

After graduating in engineering from the U.K., Nadirshah worked with the Bombay Municipality as a hydraulic engineer, and was later appointed chief engineer of the Concrete Association of India and Editor of the *Indian Concrete Journal*, in which capacity "he was largely responsible for the propagation of modern advances in concrete design and technology into Indian practices."

Nadirshah was a member of several religious, educational and engineering organisations in the city. He is survived by his wife Amy.

Milk for Millions

Died: Dara Nusserwanji Khurody, 77, pioneer in the development of dairying in India, on March 30, 1983, at the Breach Candy Hospital in Bombay, following a brief illness.

Khurody received the Ramon Magsaysay award (Phillipines) in 1963 for the development of milk supply in Bombay, and the following year was awarded a Padma Bhushan by the Indian government in recognition of his outstanding services in the development of dairying in India.

"The first to give a complete cross-section of the Indian milk industry," according to the Ramon Magsaysay Awards publication, Khurody organised the Aarey Milk Colony during his tenure as Milk Commissioner of Bombay, "which was to become the largest cattle colonisation farm and milk supply plan in Asia."



Nadirshah: Former BPP chairman



Khurody: Dedicated dairyman



Patel: Baroda trustee

Soon after the Aarey scheme, Khurody negotiated a contract with UNICEF to equip a second dairy plant for Bombay, notes the write-up, and in fact the Worli Dairy has brought a large percentage of Bombay's population under the milk scheme.

"Khurody is also credited with initiating 'Agmarking' (Agricultural Marketing) in India, the first concerted attempt to guarantee standard quality agricultural products," according to the Magsaysay publication.

"His reputation abroad was enhanced by a film entitled 'Milk for the Millions' depicting the story of the Bombay Milk Scheme," notes the write-up. He worked for the development of dairying in Lebanon, Egypt, Ceylon and lectured on the subject in other countries as well. Khurody attended several international dairy conferences, notes his bio-data, and to further education in his field, established the Khurody Dairy Education Trust and started the Dairy Technology Institute at the Aarey Milk Colony. He is the author of 'Dairying in India — a Review.'

The president awarded Khurody a Shield of Honour in 1973 at the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the National Dairy Research Institute, Bangalore, from where Khurody received his dairy diploma and a gold medal in the Institute's first course conducted in 1925, according to his bio-data.

Born in Mhow, Madhya Pradesh, on January 2, 1906, Khurody decided to adopt dairying as a career after working with his uncle who supplied cream and butter to military establishments in Mhow, notes the write-up.

He began his career as "Farm Superintendent for the 2,000-acre dairy farm of the Tata Iron and Steel Company at Jamshedpur," informs the write-up.

After his retirement from government service in 1963, Khurody spent six years

as regional Co-ordinator (Asia) for the Dairy Society International (USA) in Lebanon, notes his bio-data. He was Dairy Consultant to the Government of Lebanon and for UNICEF in Egypt before returning to India and joining Larsen and Toubro Limited as Controller of Administration and later General Manager (Exports).

He also established Khurody Technical Services Private Limited, Bombay, consultants in the dairy and food industries.

Khurody is survived by his wife Persis and sons Firdaus and Nawshir.

Distinguished Service

Died: Rustomji Kharshedji Patel, 67, former deputy superintendent of police in Baroda and a trustee of the Baroda Parsi Panchayat, on November 26, 1982, in Broach, Gujarat, of a sudden seizure.

Patel's police service was marked by the award of three Distinguished Conduct medals from the Central Government, notes his bio-data, and he was the first Indian police officer to win this award within the first 10 years of service.

Noted for his successful handling of communal riots in Gujarat and the refugee situation in Bombay after partition, Patel earned "tremendous popularity" during his tenure as D.S.P of Baroda, according to his bio-data.

On retirement from the I.P.S., Patel was appointed Security Advisor to the Gujarat State Fertilizers Company and the Gujarat Narmada Valley Fertilizers Company.

Patel, a trustee of the Baroda Parsi Panchayat, "was instrumental in the construction of a new Parsi Dharamshala and renovating the Tower of Silence," notes the write-up.

He is survived by his wife Freni and son Dr. Minoo Patel.

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