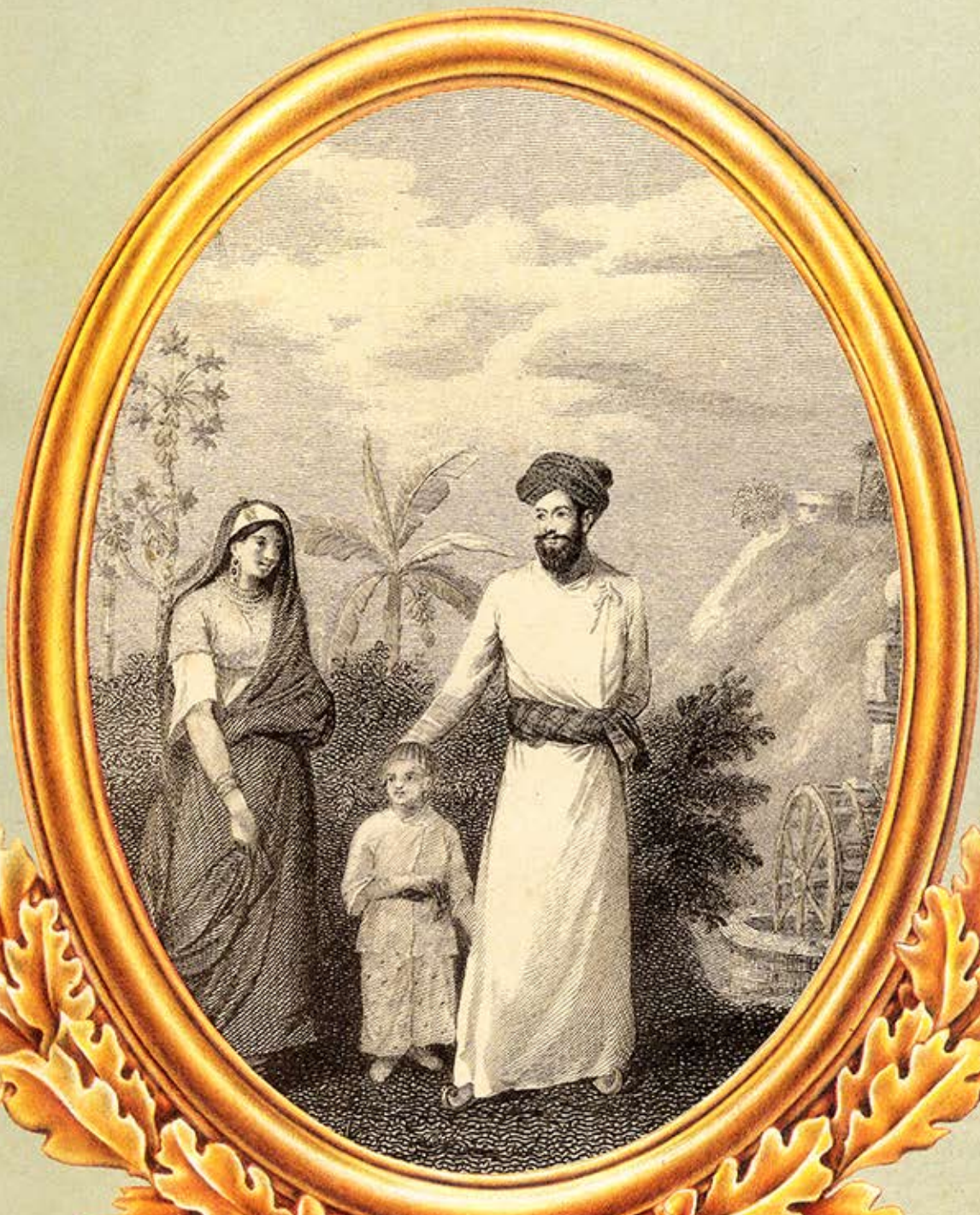


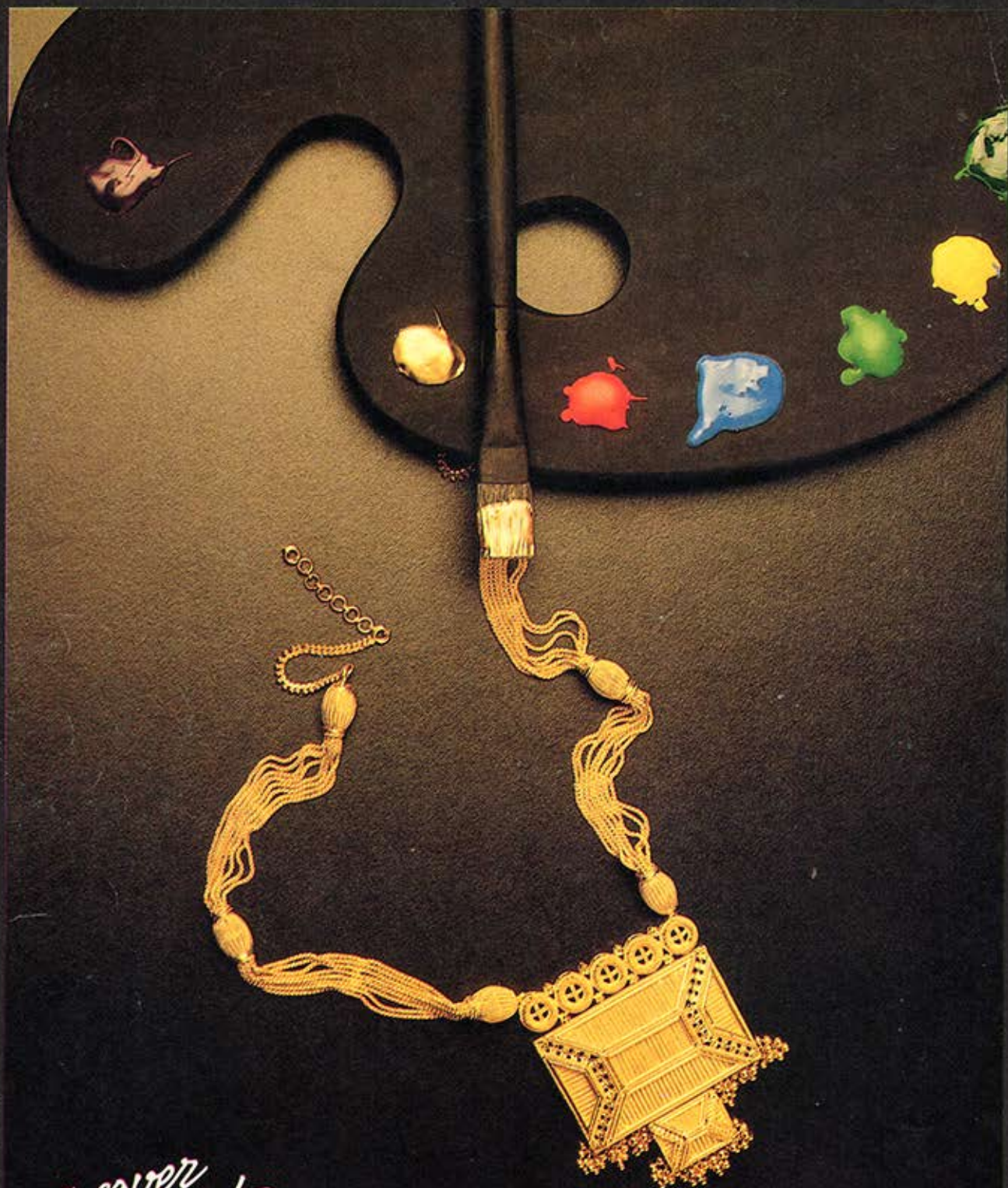
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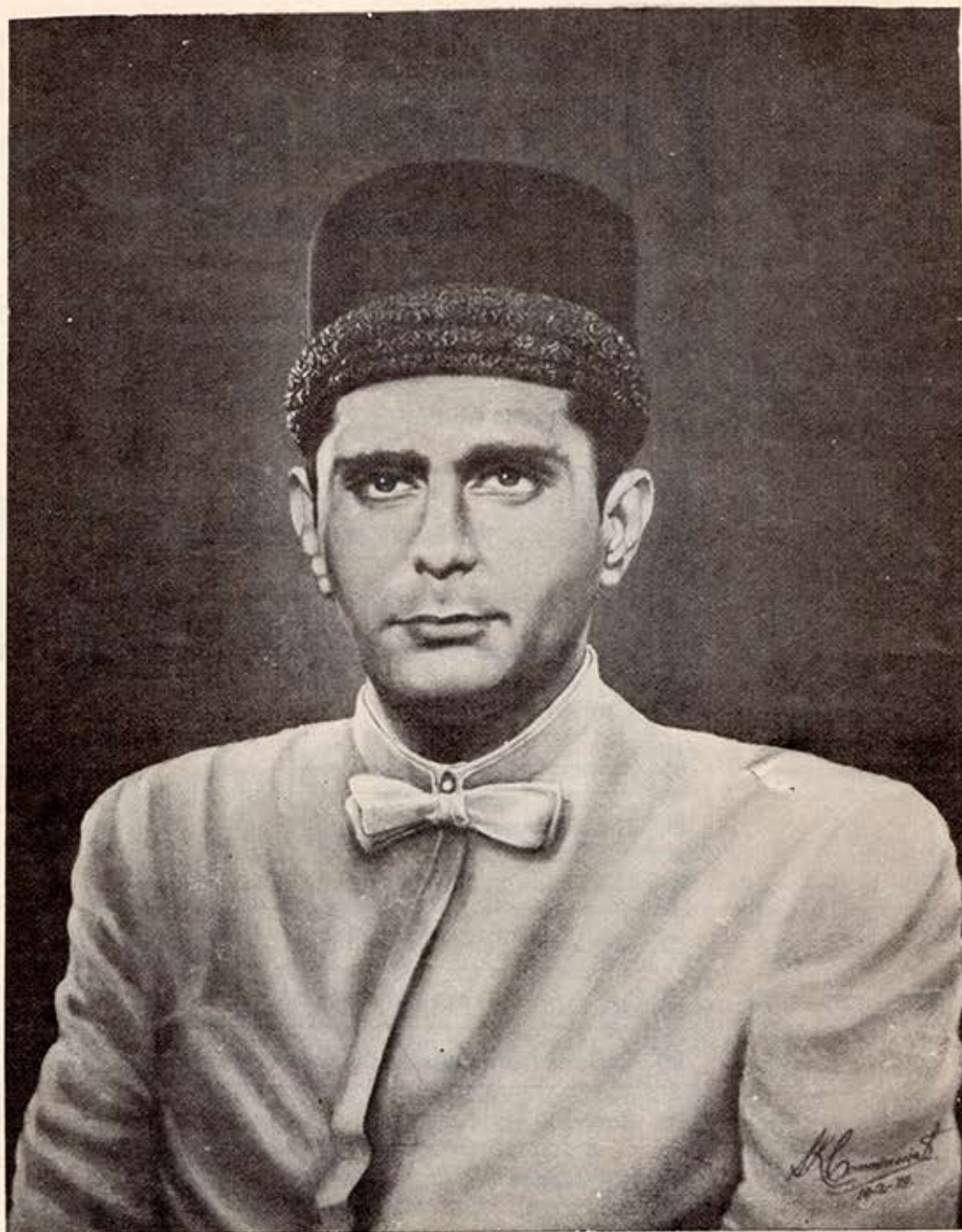
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Cover: Parsees at Bombay, Jam Forbes 1769; Engraving by T. Wageman;
Published by White, Cochrane and Company, Fleet Street, June 1,
1812. From the collection of Mr and Ms M. J. P. Mistry

Parsiana is published by Jehangir R. Patel
for Parsiana Publications Pvt Ltd, at C/o H.L.
Rochat, Navsari Chambers, ground floor, 39
A.K. Nayak Marg, Fort, Bombay 400001 and
printed by him at Parsiana Publications
Pvt Ltd, C/o Kaiser-E-Hind Pvt Ltd, 300 Perin
Nariman Street, Bombay 400001.
Color processing, Comart Lithographers;
and black and white processing, Shilpart.
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For editorial enquiries: 2048183.
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Annual inland subscription: Rs 60 for one
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Air mail Rs 275 for one year, Rs 525 for two
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"The railwaymen of..."

In "The railwaymen of Jhansi" (*Parsiana*, June 1989) Gustasp Irani mentioned that the past president of the Jhansi Parsi Anjuman was Ms G. N. Dinshaw and mistakenly speaks about her death.

The fact is that Mr N. N. Dinshaw, who was the president of our anjuman, has expired and Ms G. N. Dinshaw, his wife, is very much alive. This lady is very helpful to our Anjuman and gives shelter to the priests coming to Jhansi for jashan and death ceremonies from Delhi and Lucknow.

RONNY DICK
Jhansi

Gustasp Irani and Parsiana tender their apologies to Ms G. N. Dinshaw and the Jhansi Anjuman.

"When scholars..."

In his report on the International Congress hosted by the K. R. Cama Oriental

Institute ("When scholars deliberate," *Parsiana*, May 1989) Homi Rogers has cited Prof Philippe Gignoux's criticism of my paper, that it "did not say anything new and was just a general compilation."

Firstly, I would like to ask, who, when and where, has done a similar comparative study on the Zoroastrian and Tibetan Buddhist religions? Only S. Hummel had approached the subject in his *Zervanishtische Traditionen in der ikonographie des Lamalsmus* (Stuttgart 1967), on different grounds.

Secondly, to quote the works of learned researchers such as Paul Pelliot, Joseph Hackin, René Grousset, Alfred Foucher, who have scientific backing but have been hitherto neglected by so-called scholars, is doing more than a mere "compilation." Used innovatively, their work shows that Tibetan Buddhism borrowed many ideas from Zoroastrian Iran. My new book, *Des Dieux de l'ancien Iran aux saints du Bouddhisme, du Christianisme et de l'Islam*, contains further evidence in support of this thesis.

Prof PAUL DU BREUIL

Gladdening Zarathushtra

I have read with interest two articles in *Parsiana*, May 1989. One covered the deliberations of 25 savants on Indo-Iranian historical and cultural studies at the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute ("When scholars deliberate"). The second reported the project undertaken by Zoroastrian Studies on March 18, 1989, for medical aid, entertainment and food for the poor and needy Zoroastrians of Udwada and Solfalia ("Treat for Udwada locals" in Events and Personalities).

No doubt, scholarly discussions have their place in life. But as a simple housewife, I ask myself, which of these two groups must have gladdened the heart of my beloved Prophet Zarathushtra? Would it be those who discussed the merits and demerits of the correct meaning of the name Zarathushtra? Or would it be those who lived his religion, with good thoughts, good words, and above all good deeds, and brought a ray of sunshine, for however short a time, into the lives of our less fortunate brethren? Mr Palkhivala said at the Indo-Iranian meeting, "Zoroastrianism has been tried and failed, the religion of Zoroaster is yet to be tried." Perhaps, the devoted workers at Zoroastrian

Studies are doing so. "Ushta-te" to the workers at Zoroastrian Studies. May you be blissfully happy for you are indeed doing the Lord's work!

Ms DHUN SHIAWAX NARGOLWALA

"Outcaste milestones"

This refers to a letter written by Ms B. M. Irani ("Outcaste milestones," *Parsiana*, April 1989).

Firstly I would like Ms Irani to verify in a dictionary that the meaning of the word 'outcaste' is a person who has been rejected or ousted from society. I think what she actually meant to convey was, those people not belonging to the Zoroastrian religion.

Ms Irani is obviously in complete disfavor of Zoroastrians marrying outside the religion. She also does not want others to know about the happy union of two people who obviously love one another enough to brave the odds created by many in our community who think like her.

When we first settled here, the percentage of women was less than men; some people even say that there were no women among those who landed in Sanjan from Iran 1300 years ago. So, there must have been intercaste marriages even then and we may not be the pure-blooded Aryans many of us would like to believe we are. Also I would like to mention that it has been proved that too much intermingling among members of a community as small as ours produces retarded offspring.

What is it in our religion that does not allow conversion while all other religions do? I would like to point out that this was one of the conditions imposed upon us by the king of Sanjan for allowing us to stay on in his kingdom. At that time there were foreign invaders who were forcing Hindus to accept other religions. And we are holding on to this at a time when our very existence is threatened!

Ms REENA KAVINA
Pune

"Does Zoroastrianism...?"

In "Does Zoroastrianism teach reincarnation?" (*Parsiana*, March 1989) Dr Ali A. Jafarey purports to give "an altogether new view" of the fate of the soul derived from "a closer look at the Gathas." Arguing that "the Gathas do not speak about heaven and hell, or of

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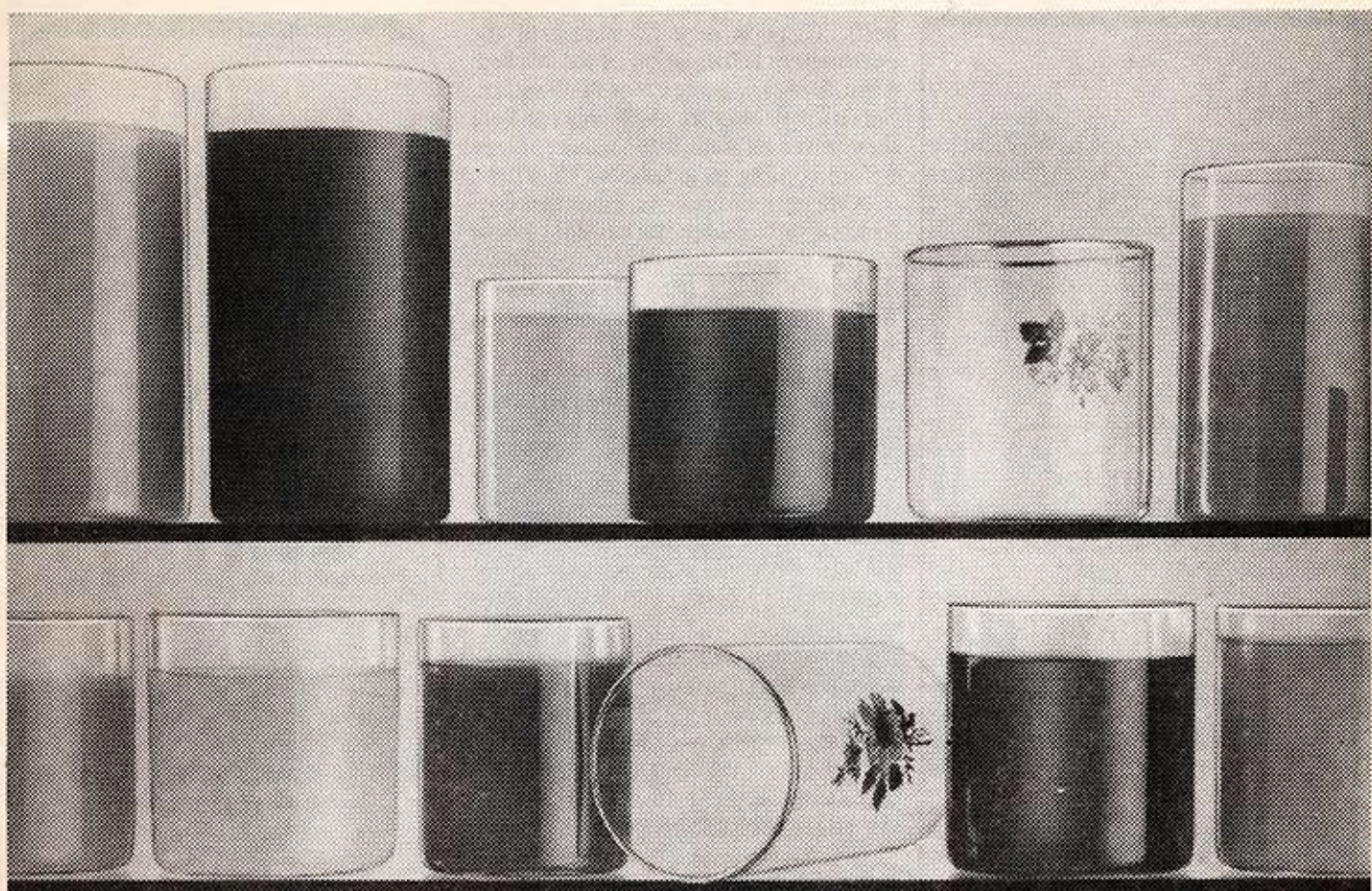
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judgement... but only point to the refining of the soul for an ultimate existence with the Godhead," he suggests that this "Zarathushtrian view" was lost to the Zoroastrians but retained and developed by the Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, Gnostics, Manichaeans and Sufis. While Dr Jafarey's view is perhaps novel, it is certainly not Gathic. The *Gathas* are silent on many points of Zoroastrian doctrine, but heaven, hell and judgement are not among them.

That the choices which individuals make, for good or for evil, have consequences both in this existence and at its end is one of the central themes of the *Gathas*. Zarathushtra recognizes the *spenta* nature of Ahura Mazda not only through his activities as creator but also through his establishment of a system of rewards for the good and punishments for the bad to be administered at the last judgement. (Y.43.5) Zarathushtra's eschatological vision of judgement and salvation runs throughout the warp and weft of the brilliant tapestry of the *Gathas*. It cannot be removed without destroying the integrity of the fabric and denying the justice of Ahura Mazda.

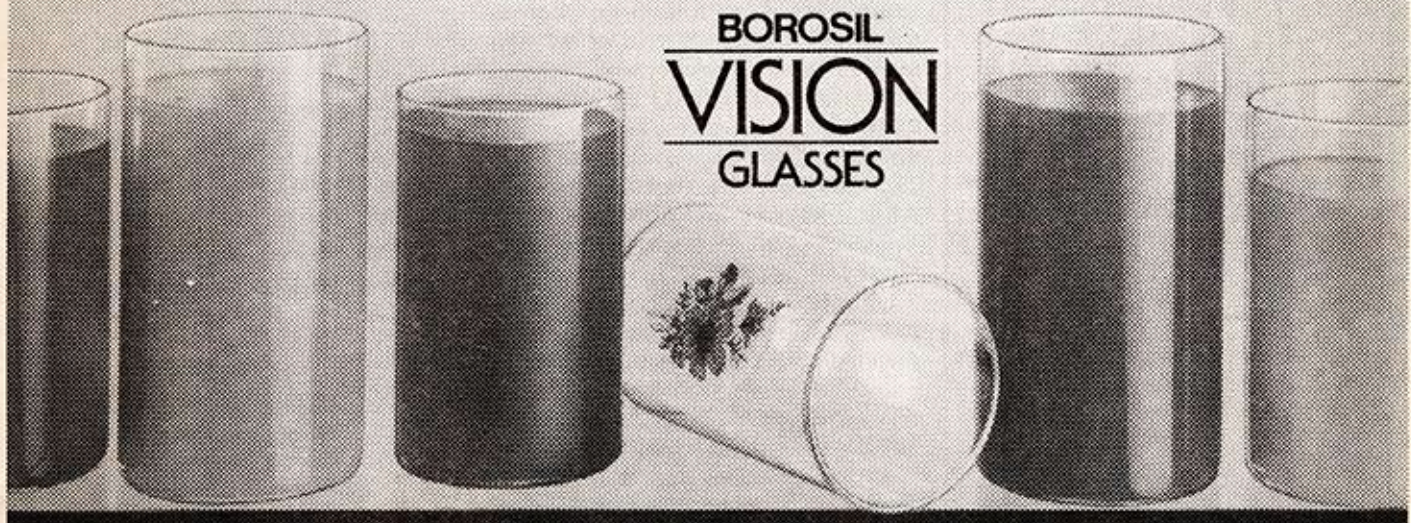
Even as the Truth is to be saved and the Lie destroyed (Y.49.3), so also is it Ahura Mazda's purpose to destroy the adherents of the Lie and to save the supporters of the Truth (Y.51.9). While Zarathushtra promises the faithful the reward of dwelling with Ahura Mazda in heaven (Y.51.15), he warns that the wicked will never join the righteous there (Y.32.15). Those who refuse to serve Ahura Mazda will receive at the judgement that which is worse than bad (Y.51.6), for their false teaching will place them at last in hell (Y.51.14) where they will dwell for eternity (Y.46.11).

The *Gathas* never speak of a process whereby "(the souls) of the wrongful return until the wrongful are made worthy" or "return until they turn into righteous persons" as Dr Jafarey alleges. The passage to which he obliquely refers is, of course, Y.49.11. As correctly interpreted by Dr Stanley Insler, the passage describes the punishment of the wicked in hell by their own souls which offer them foul food: "them shall their souls continue to encounter with foul food when they shall be true guests in the House of Deceit" (cf. Y.31.20 and Y.53.6 where foul food also appears as one of the punishments of



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hell). There is here no notion of the postmortem reformation of the wicked. *Cinvato peretu* is the point of no return. Salvation is only for those who declare themselves on the side of Ahura Mazda before coming to judgement (Y.30.2).

Although a kinder and gentler doctrine of universal salvation does occur in the Pahlavi literature (e.g. *Zand-Akasi*, 34.18-21), there is no trace of it in the *Gathas*. (As Irach J. S. Taraporewala remarked, "It would always be prudent not to import into the *Gathas* ideas which had developed in later ages, not even when they are supported by Pahlavi tradition.") Zarathushtra's doctrine as proclaimed in the *Gathas* is based on an apocalyptic eschatology. He hoped for the realization of the eschaton in the immediate future (Y.30.9) and consequently concentrated on the meaning and reality of the judgement on the last day at the expense of detailed descriptions of its mechanism. The *Gathas* do not speak of the resurrection of the body or of the individual judgement of the soul after death. For Zarathushtra, the justice of Ahura Mazda, already clear to his prophetic vision, would be made manifest to all on the last day when he would lead the righteous to salvation (Y.46.10) while the sinners, damned by their words and deeds, are chastised by their souls (Y.51.13) and placed ultimately in hell (Y.51.14).

In the *Gathas* there is also no indication of "the ultimate union of soul with Godhead," a doctrine which Dr Jafarey suggests was "lost to orthodox Zoroastrianism." Instead the goal of the righteous is the attainment of wholeness and immortality (Y.45.5), a future life (Y.46.19) in heaven (Y.51.15), truth and the hegemony of the good mind (Y.51.21), together with the other gifts of Ahura Mazda and the Bounteous Immortals. In other words, the righteous will receive as their reward whatever is best (Y.47.5). The doctrine of emanation from and re-absorption into the Godhead is more a characteristic of gnostic religions such as Manichaeism than of religions such as Zoroastrianism and does not occur in the *Gathas*.

Dr Jafarey states that he regards the *Gathas* as "thought provokers," and one cannot say that his allegorical exegesis of the Gathic eschatology is wrong any more than one can say that a Christian exemplaristic interpretation of atonement is wrong. But even as one can say

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that Paul would not have recognized the exemplaristic claim that the death of Christ was only to set a moral example of selfless love as an adequate statement of the central doctrine of Christianity, so also can one say that Zarathushtra would not have recognized Dr Jafarey's interpretation of the Gathic eschatology as an adequate description of his prophetic vision of the ultimate demonstration of the justice of Ahura Mazda.

H. MICHAEL SIMMONS
Director, Center for Zoroastrian Research
Bloomington, Indiana, USA

Dr Ali A. Jafarey replies

May I first make a few points clear:

- The Semites and their akin neighbors – Egyptians, Babylonians, and others – believed, and still believe, in one brief life on this earth;
- The Indo-Europeans, and this includes the pre-Christian ancestors of modern Europeans, believed, and some still believe, in transmigration of soul;
- Similarity of the eschatological beliefs between the apparently older Avestan religion and the post-exilic Judaism, Christianity and Islam constitutes one of the main factors that has led many scholars to state that Zoroastrianism has greatly influenced the three Abrahamic religions; and
- Some scholars (myself among them) hold that the influence has been reciprocal and that Zoroastrianism has also borrowed many ideas from western religions and cults. My studies show that the one-life theory is one of them.

It is in this context of similarities that Dr Simmons and those with whom he shares his opinions take the whole eschatological question. They take it for granted that Zarathushtra taught the one-life doctrine of do good and reap good for ever and do evil and suffer evil for eternity. They forget that Asho Zarathushtra rose in a predominantly



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Aryan environment away from Semitic and its neighboring influences; that he is original and unique in his doctrine and his sublime songs should be studied and understood first in their own context and then in their akin contemporary contexts; and that all the Avestan and Pahlavi details of the Zoroastrian eschatology – from *Vendidad* and *Yasht* 22 to *Menok Khrad* and the vivid description of Arda Viraf – belong to post-Gathic periods of the late Achaemenian and still later times during which much of the two-way borrowings of ideas had taken place.

They then give themselves the liberty to substitute Avestan terms and even Pahlavi words with their so-presumed equivalents of Biblical terms of heaven, hell, punishment, resurrection, salvation, and judgement, and if this does not appear to suffice, they make their footnotes to draw one's attention to the final judgement and other retributory formalities. With this in mind, Dr Simmons has plucked out a number of sentences, clauses, phrases, and words from the entire "brilliant tapestry of the *Gathas*," arranged them in a desired order, substituted the original Gathic concepts with Biblical terms to make his deductive comments.

Should one take every instance he has cited (Y.30.2, 9, 20; 32.15; 34.18-21; 43.5; 45.5; 46.10-11, 19; 47.5; 49.3, 11; 51.6, 9, 13-15, 21; 53.6), read it and the preceding and following stanzas in full with the Gathic concepts restored, the entire picture will change and his hypothesis will fall apart. One will not then find the *Gathas* speaking about one single life of a short span, the eternal condemnation merely for a number of offenses committed during this brief period, the judgement at *Chinvato Pereto*, and dropping the wrongful off into a sadistically torturous hell below to feed on foul food and hear woeful words for all time to come.

Instead, one will find them very guiding, particularly for the wrongful. One will see the living on this world as a part of an eternal life. Natural death, not mentioned in the *Gathas*, will appear just a transitory process. All the good and bad consequences of one's words and deeds, and even the promised "future-life" (Y.46.19), happen in this "fruitful, joy-bringing world" (Y. 44.6; 46.19; 47.3; 50.2).

Asho Zarathushtra, never speculative and imaginative, does not visualize for us a life beyond from which no one has

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so far returned to tell the story. His teachings lead one, the righteous sooner and the wrongful after due sufferings, to a social life and universal fellowship based on good mind (*vohu manah*), precision (*asha*), a good and chosen dominion (*vohu khshathra vairya*), serenity and stability (*aramaiti*), intuition (*seraousha*), conscience (*daena*) and many more primal principles of life (*datao angheush pouruye*), only to progress to peace (*rama*), prosperity (*hujyaiti*), radiant happiness (*ushta*), wholeness (*haurvatat*) and immortality (*ameretat*). This progress finally leads one to join other fully righteous souls who live in the House of Songs in which "Ahura Mazda came first and dwells in progress" (43.16; 51.15). One will also find that the turning point in the creation (Y.43.5) is in fact the advent of the Zarathushtrian age in which right replaces might and wisdom takes the place of fury, an age of peaceful progress that the ritualistic priests and exploiting princes had never advocated or practised. And the turning point in one's life (Y.51.6) and the Great Event (Y.30.2) are the day one decides to choose right or wrong as a way of life and living.

It is not I who "regards the *Gathas* as thought provokers," but it is Zarathushtra who literally calls them by that name - *Manthra*. He calls himself and his companions *Manthrans*, thought provokers. And given my freedom of choice to "hear the best with my ears and ponder over them with a bright mind," the *Gathas* are my guide and Zarathushtra my *Manthran*.

I am sure that with more clear thinking and less taken-for-granted attitude, light shall shine and illuminate us all.

"The Year of the Snake"

Besides other interesting information in "The Year of the Snake" (*Parsiana*, March 1989) Gustasp Irani states, "According to (Dasturji Firoze) Kotwal and (Ervad Peshotan) Peer, the Fasli New Year and calendar have little to do with King Jamshid and less to do with Zoroastrianism. It is the creation of the eleventh century Islamic King of Iran, Jalaludin Malek Shah and his minister Omar Khayyam."

Coincidentally, I read "Nature's New Year" in WZO's *Hamazor* of March-April 1989 which states, "After the downfall of the Sassanian empire, it was Sultan Jalaludin Malek Shah Selju-

ki (1072-91) who, on the recommendation of his vizier Omar Khayyam, commenced the civil year from March 21, 1079. The Zoroastrian calendar was reintroduced as the basis for computation."

These statements are very confusing. While one says that the Fasli calendar with March 21 as the New Year is the creation of Jalaludin and has nothing to do with Zoroastrianism, the other writer states that March 21 as the New Year is the Zoroastrian calendar which was reintroduced by Sultan Jalaludin Malek Shah Seljuki.

Which of the above two versions is correct?

Ms HOMAI FRAMROZE BODE

Dastur (Dr) Firoze Kotwal replies

In the time of Jamshid, the king of the Peshdadian dynasty, there was neither the existence of the day called March 21 nor that of the Zoroastrian calendar itself.

Jamshedi Navroz is a later accretion to the list of holidays, and hence it is not a religious Navroz, but a day commemorating the name of Jamshid on a fixed Christian date.

In the history of the Sassanian times, there is not a single piece of evidence to

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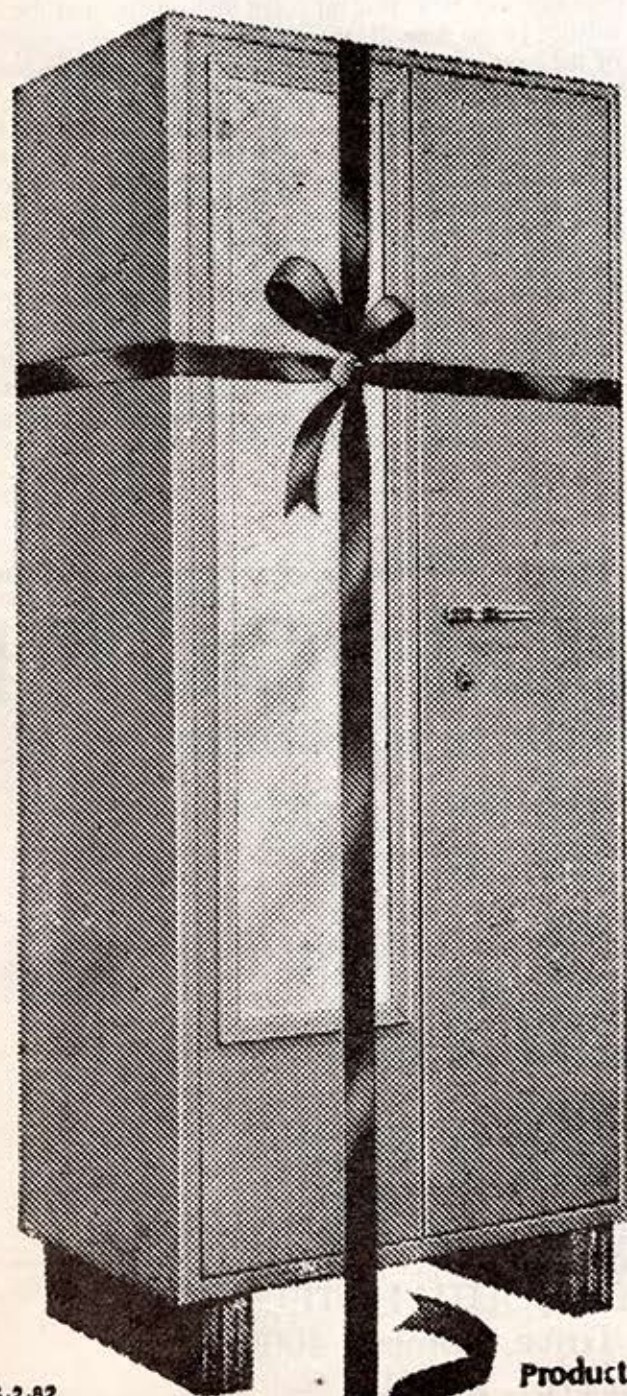
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show that the New Year, i.e. *roj Hormazd, mah Fravardin*, was celebrated on March 21. The last king of the Sassanian empire, Yazdegird Shahriyar, came to the throne on the New Year day (*roj Hormazd, mah Fravardin*) which was Tuesday, June 16, 632 AC.

Sultan Jalaludin Malek Shah Seljuki (1072-92) adopted the solar year of his conquered Zoroastrian subjects for the secular purpose of collecting revenue. It commenced on March 21, 1079 and since then the day — variously known as Navroz-e Jalali/Seljuki/Sultani — has been celebrated in Iran as a great social festival by Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

The Jamshidi Navroz is not listed among Zoroastrian festivals in the old Parsi historical records because it was only introduced in India by Nusserwanji Kohyaji towards the end of the eighteenth century. It created quite a commotion in Surat when it was introduced, but in course of time Parsis began to celebrate it with joy and gaiety. The

persistence of the late K. R. Cama, who publicized it in Bombay in the latter half of the nineteenth century, also added to its popularity.

Ervad (Dr) Peshotan Peer replies

Till the end of the Sassanian dynasty (651 AC) nowhere has it been mentioned that the New Year (Navroz) of the Zoroastrians occurred on March 21 (more correctly, the vernal equinox). We used to celebrate our New Year on the summer solstice i.e. on June 21, the longest day of the year. It is recorded that the celebration of the coronation of our last king Yazdegird Shahriyar commenced on June 16, 632 AC.

The great Iranian savant, historian and astronomer Al-Biruni declares in his work that Zoroastrian Iran never used to add one day in their calendar after four years (i.e. every leap year) but the kings used to add one month after the lapse of 120 years. The last month to be intercalated was during the reign of Shah Piruz in the fifth century AC.

After the downfall of the Sassanian empire, the method of intercalating one month after 120 years automatically lapsed under the Islamic regime and the New Year gradually shifted to the vernal equinox (i.e. to March 21). Sultan Jalaludin Malek Shah introduced the solar year in the twelfth century with the help of the great mathematician, astronomer and well-known poet Omar Khayyam.

Pahlavi books like *Denkart*, *Bundahishn* and others, and the *Shahnameh* of Ferdaosi Tusi were written during the Islamic rule when the Navroz coincided with the vernal equinox. Therefore, the authors of those books presumed that the Navroz in ancient Iran was celebrated on the vernal equinox.

Parsi Panchang Committeeno Report, a booklet in Gujarati with articles contributed by the learned scholars on the Parsi calendar, was published by the trustees of the Bombay Parsi Panchayet (BPP) in 1935. In his summing-up, Mr Mancherji Khareghat, an erudite scholar and then the chairman of the BPP,

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noted that this so-called Fasli New Year was introduced in Iran after the downfall of the Sassanian empire and was not known during the years of Zoroastrian rule in Iran.

The Jalali Navroz (falsely called Jamshidi Navroz) was introduced in Iran in the twelfth century only to settle the tax revenues. By the order of the king Jalaludin Malek Shah, Omar Khayyam fixed the solar new year on the vernal equinox instead of the shorter lunar Islamic year (354 days) which had resulted in people paying more tax in the long run. This Jalali Navroz has nothing to do with the Zoroastrian religion and its calendar.

"Mushkil-e-Aasaan"

"If it's Meher *roj*, it must be Aslaji's" (*Parsiana*, February 1989) made very interesting reading. As per the learned *ervads* and Dastur Firoze Kotwal, the concept of Bahram Yazad "Mushkil-e-Aasaan" is an Islamic one! With due respect to all of them, I wish to offer my comments on this subject, as far as my knowledge and experience go.

First and foremost, if Bahram Yazad belongs to the Muslims, we have never



been Zoroastrians! The Muslims have their Mohameds, Alis and Akbars. Since when has Bahram Yazad belonged to their clan?

Bahram Yazad "Mushkil-e-Aasaan"

is purely a Zoroastrian concept which has come down to us from the Zarthushtis of Iran. An Iranian Zarthushti prays "Bahram Yazad, *mushkil aasaan kon*," which when translated means, "Bahram Yazad please solve my difficulties." Thus, it is an obeisance to Bahram Yazad, and Bahram Yazad alone. Mushkil Aasaan is not any person, as is wrongly interpreted. It is this conception of "Mushkil-e-Aasaan" as a personality that has misguided people to believe that it has something to do with the Muslims.

Besides, what makes our Zoroastrians believe that *kathiyaras* (woodcutters) were all Muslims? In those bygone days, the Zarthushtis and the Muslims of Iran were occupied in common occupations like farming, fruit-picking, carpet-weaving, wood-cutting, etc.

In Iran, to this day, it is a practice amongst the Zarthushtis to offer grams and *kishmish* (raisins) when they go to the fire-temple on a Friday and in turn, all those who come, partake of the same. I have not known of Muslims offering grams and *kishmish* in their mosques on Fridays. How then could



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they be said to have influenced us? In fact, if any one were to ask an Irani Muslim about Bahram Yazad Mushkil Aasaan, he would retort, 'What on earth is all that?'

The best proof is a mud house in a bylane south of Tehran. Hundreds of Zarthushtis throng there on almost any day, but especially on Fridays and Bahram *roj* to offer obeisance to Bahram Yazad. In spite of all its simplicity, it is a heavenly place. Bahram Yazad has always been worshipped as the bestower of success in all things, great or small, especially by the Irani Zarthushtis, though Meher Dadar is also revered.

I felt it necessary to share my views with your readers since the portrait of Bahram Yazad has been promptly removed from one of our agaries, perhaps after reading that wonderfully misleading article!

How I wish that like the Jesuits, our priests would constantly occupy themselves with learning and more learning. It is only when they themselves have abundant knowledge and true perception, can they guide the laity to the right path.

Lastly, permit me to mention that the Zarthushtis of Iran love and revere Lord Zarathushtra so implicitly, that

for them there is one, and only one religion, the religion of Zarathushtra! Our Indian Zoroastrians profess to be staunch Zoroastrians on the one hand, and on the other hand they go visiting, nay worshipping, all sorts of *sais* and *babas* (saints of other religions), the priest class included. From this, it should become evident why the Zarthushtis of Iran have prospered and fared so well for themselves, whereas we are going miserably downhill!

Ms ABAN R. MINBATIVALA

"Parsi pioneers"

Dr Kersey Antia has sought facts about Parsi pioneers (*Parsiana*, February 1989). My aunt, the late Dr Perviz Bejonjee Heera was the second woman and the first Indian to have stood first in the MRCOG examination conducted by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, UK, earning a gold medal which was presented to her on March 22, 1969.

To the best of my knowledge, she was not just the first Indian, but the first Asian to have received this distinction. I do not know whether any other women or Asians have followed in her footsteps. The facts can be checked by writing to the Royal College.

Subsequently Dr Heera was made a Fellow of the Royal College. My late aunt was the head of the department of obstetrics and gynaecology at the Tata Main Hospital, Jamshedpur. I am sorry to inform you that she, along with my mother (her sister) Ms Nargish Keki Hathi, died in the accidental fire in Jamshedpur on March 3, 1989 that engulfed those celebrating the one hundred and fiftieth birth anniversary of the founder, Jamsetji Tata.

Incidentally, my mother was the first woman to have been admitted to, and to have studied at, the prestigious Delhi School of Economics for her MA degree. Both sisters were born, brought up and studied in Delhi.

Ms HUTOXI K. HATHI
Charlottesville, Va, USA

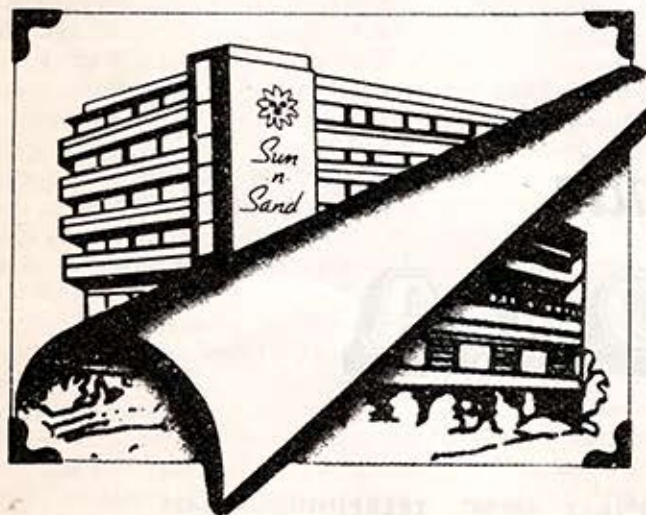
Aapru rojnu Jamé

It is really painful and disheartening to learn that *aapru rojnu Jamé* has stopped. *Jamé* is reckoned to be the second oldest daily in Asia and Parsis all over the world have been regularly reading this Parsi Gujarati daily with interest. Many aged ladies would rather miss their tea but not the *Jamé*. Except for the widely read *The Bombay Samachar*, there is no other Parsi Gujarati paper.

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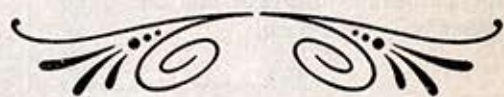
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umns, I hereby humbly appeal to the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India, the trustees of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet, other large anjumans and our Parsi industrialists like the Tatas, the Wadias, the Godrejs, the Iranis, the Guzders, the Balsaras, the Marshalls and others to render a helping hand to the publishers by way of donations, advertisements, etc so that the publishers may put this cherished paper back on the rails.

NAVAL B. VAKEEL
Secunderabad

Irani achievements

The article "This land is my land" (*The Times of India*, June 11, 1989) by Bachi J. Karkaria is a thesis on the genesis of chikoo plantations in the Dahanu-Gholvad belt. She credits their development to the latter-day immigrants from Iran whom she labels Iranis, and adds that they came to India in the 1800s.

Not all Irani immigrants were Zoroastrians. She has omitted to note that there were Moslems, Jews, Bahais, and even Christian Iranian immigrants, all lumped together as Iranis.

Iran is the land of orchards, of fruit bearing trees like plums, peaches, apricots, pomegranates, almonds and deli-

cious pistachios. The Californian almonds compare miserably with Iranian ones.

Nowhere in the whole of India will you find such intensive cultivation of chikoo as in the Palghar-Boisar-Dahanu-Umbargam area. The Iranis who came as refugees 100 years ago, ploughed their meager savings into the soil and developed all the orchards from Palghar to Umbargam.

This is not a hollow claim. An

A bust is a bust!
And sometimes you come up trumps
As they did in court.

Juveniles tried like juveniles
in Circuit Court for adult crimes
— Let off.
A nation a mere 200 years old, is
juvenile.

Greater love hath no man
than to die for a friend
— He died for me.

HOSHANG MERCHANT

For Navroze Mody (beaten to death in New Jersey)

The poem came belatedly
as knowledge does
— He could have been me.

That night he'd been to a speakeasy
with a boy darker than he
but his brother under the skin.

Kids pounced on his bald head
Calling 'Savalas!' (Telly)
Dot-busters!
Ball-busters! they said
and did him in
Before he could say
Christopher Columbus.

orchard requires a gestation period of at least five years of intense hard work, and the task is made more difficult when one has no capital to hold out that long. That itself speaks volumes for the tough, tenacious nature of Iranis, for all that the big Indian landholders since *Ramayana* times — the Banias, the Marvaris and the Bhaiaes — grow on their vast holdings, is grass.

The Parsis who came before the Ira-

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nis never thought of orchard farming, because Indian agriculture concentrates on the cultivation of rice, wheat, bajra, jowar, and sugarcane, especially in the Gujarat area, where the Parsis settled. The Parsis' forefathers, the vigorous Iranis, did farming with a vengeance. Every family had hundreds of acres under the plough. With the coming of the British, the Parsis left their lands for cosy 10 to 4 jobs in the Central Bank. When the "Land to the tillers" law came into force, they lost practically all their major holdings.

It was an Irani who started the first tea serving restaurant in Bombay city. Again, the Iranis popularized bread in Bombay. They were masters in the art of making leavened dough by the sour dough process. (The nearest the Parsis came to it was making *bhakhra* from toddy!) The Irani-owned Wibs has knocked the combined bakeries of Britannia and Modern for a sixer. Forty years ago the Rising Sun Bakery, whose one partner was Mr M. Z. Kabir, used to send six-tier cakes to Singapore and Hong Kong on the P&O Liners. Bachi should now write on the origins of the bread industry and the tea serving restaurants in Bombay.

I wish Bachi had not struck a disparaging note in her article by patronizingly labelling them as "jungli Irun(s)," a derogative term which she repeats later in her article. My answer is: When a pale, introverted, degenerated Parsi confronts a vigorous, active Irani whom he cannot comprehend, the Parsi conveniently labels him, and tries to run him down.

It is this snooty attitude which has got the Parsis into trouble with Iranis in the USA. Another typical example of Parsi snootiness is that after a few years

abroad they claim to be able to think and speak only in English. Just a few years abroad, and the Parsi forgets his roots!

Z. M. ZEND

Declining numbers?

Parsi Zoroastrians will never extinguish as a community as long as we have faith in Ahura Mazda

Instead of converting somebody from outside, why don't we convert those Parsis who have their navjote performed in childhood but never practise their religion? Milk will not become more white (pure) by adding water to it. Though the quantity will increase, the quality will diminish. There will be no layer of cream.

Why are we so worried? If from a mere 1,000 from Iran we could turn our figures into 1,00,000, then why not from 1,00,000 to 1,00,000,000? All that is needed is to persuade the younger generation. Teach them the value of being Zoroastrians. Zoroastrian value does not only mean giving dole or founding charity houses. Zoroastrian value means hard work like one forefathers did.

NEVILLE SARKARI
Augusta, Ga, USA

More consistency, please

On a recent visit to Lonavla, I could not rebut the arguments of a so-called spiritualist who contended that there is not much "stuff" in our religion.

He alleged that Parsis do not believe

in universal brotherhood of man and asked, "What is the caste of God? Is He a Parsi, Hindu, Christian or what?"

He further charged that there is too much controversy amongst Parsi Zoroastrian religious scholars. This tends to baffle the other members of the community who are consequently misguided and frustrated. According to this critic there is no proper foundation in our religion and he went on to suggest that we should confess that we are groping in the dark.

He further faulted us on having three calendars, on hiding our distinctive *sudreh* and *kusti*, on the inconsistency of not allowing non-Parsis at the funeral ceremonies but performing the *navjote* and wedding ceremonies in their presence, etc.

We, Parsis, believe in our prayers and recite them without knowing the meaning thereof, in the blind belief that the vibrations of the prayers yield effect. If that be so, then when we use foul language meaningfully (Parsis are well-known for that), would not such vibrations also create a bad influence on our aura? And if vibrations could have such effect, then why do we not run tape recorders instead of hiring priests who are well-known for skipping through the prayers?

Can these points be discussed openly in the interests of the community?

Ms C. R. MEHTA

Edited by Arnavaz S. Mama

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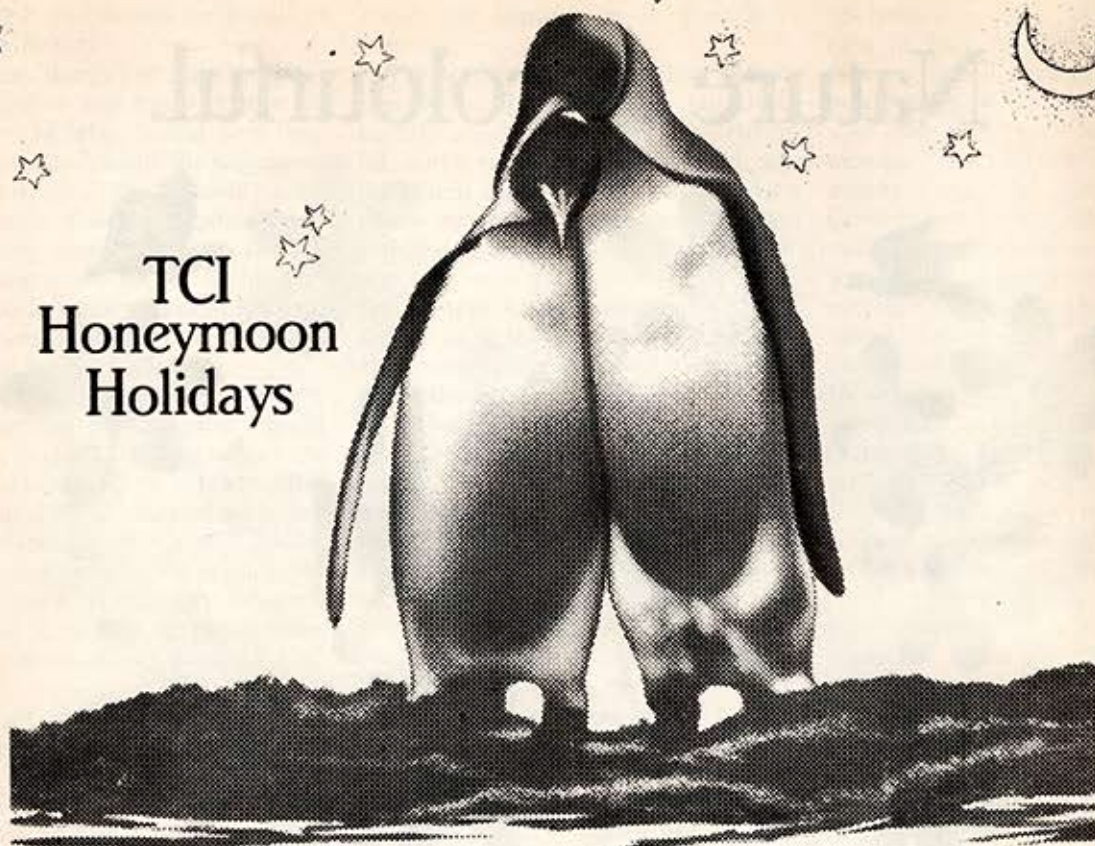
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Events and Personalities

World Congress program

The Fifth World Zoroastrian Congress will be inaugurated by Dr Shanker Dayal Sharma, Vice President of India, at the Parsi Gymkhana Grounds at Marine Lines, Bombay, on the evening of January 3, 1990.

The topics chosen for the Congress are: Regional follow-up action on the recommendations of the Fourth World Zoroastrian Congress and future priorities; Studies of contemporary Zoroastrian societies in different parts of the world; Demographic trends of the community and future implications for Zoroastrian institutions; Strengthening community organizations; covering aspects such as leadership, asset management, development, philanthropy and communications; Identity problems of Zoroastrians in other religious societies; Methodologies of religious education for pre/post navjote groups; and Survival of tradition in the twenty-first century.

Workshops will focus on: Future problems of young Zoroastrian families as perceived by the youth e.g. problems of marriage, children, adoption, identity problems, etc; and Problems of the poor and the aged in our community. While the main sessions will be held at the Birla Matushri Sabhagar at Marine Lines, the workshops will be held at the SNDT College, down the same road.

Admissions to the Congress will require a donation ranging from Rs 2,000 for patron plus spouse, Rs 1,250 for vice-patron plus spouse, Rs 500 for a member of the reception committee with Rs 200 for member's spouse, Rs 100 for a delegate (local and overseas), Rs 50 for a delegate's spouse, Rs 20 for a student and free admission to a full-time practising mobed. Registration as a patron includes free admission (for the patron and spouse) to the gala dinner-entertainment and play.

The four-page newsletter issued by the Congress Committee says that "Invitations to all the Parsi anjumans/associations in India and abroad have met with encouraging response. It is expected that

the inaugural function will be attended by about 3,500 persons. Approximately 1,200 delegates are likely to register for the plenary sessions.

"Due to limited accommodation, you are requested to enroll as soon as possible to avoid disappointment."

The theme of the Congress is "To 2,000 and Beyond." The Congress is being sponsored and organized by the Bombay Parsi Punchayet at the request of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India.

The daily program is as follows:

January 3: Inauguration at 5.30 p.m.

January 4: Plenary sessions at Birla from 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.; gala dinner entertainment at Parsi Gymkhana Grounds at 7.30 p.m.

January 5: Plenary sessions at Birla from 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.; workshops at SNDT College from 2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.

January 6: Plenary sessions at Birla from 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.; continuation of the previous day's workshops, if necessary at SNDT College from 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.; play at 7.30 p.m. at the Birla.

January 7: Plenary sessions in the morning and concluding session in the afternoon at Birla from 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.

There will be a lunch break from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. during the Congress sessions.

For application forms, contact or write to: The Joint Honorary Secretary, Fifth World Zoroastrian Congress, C/o The Parsi Punchayet Funds and Properties, 209, Dr Dadabhai Naoroji Road, Bombay 400001. Tel: 267421, 267422, 267423.

Murder in Allahabad

On June 29, 1989, Ms Parveen Tripathi walked into her mother's flat at Civil Lines in Allahabad to find a cloth stuffed into her mother's mouth and her face muffled by a pillow. Ms Dault Dinshaji Sorabji had been murdered. This information was sent to *Parsiana* by Capt Homi P. Dandiwalla, president of the Allahabad Parsee Zoroastrian Anjuman. The postmortem report showed that Sorabji, also known as Ms Lahewalla, was murdered at her residence

between two and four in the morning. She was living alone at her Civil Lines residence, reportedly a posh locality where people could always be seen. The murder of Sorabji "has not only shaken the small Parsi community, but others too who are living alone," Dandiwalla wrote.

Being financially "very well off with good bank balances," Sorabji had inherited wealth from her mother, *mama* (maternal uncle) and her husband. Though she was known to have a secretive nature, it is believed that her assets included a LIC (Life Insurance Corporation) building complex which comprises a vast area of land with an empty building. The property in Civil Lines is reportedly valued to be over 40 lakh rupees. None of her valuables seem to be missing. The reason behind the murder has not been pinpointed either. The Anjuman trustees have taken up the matter with the police authorities, the president wrote.

Qantas executive killed

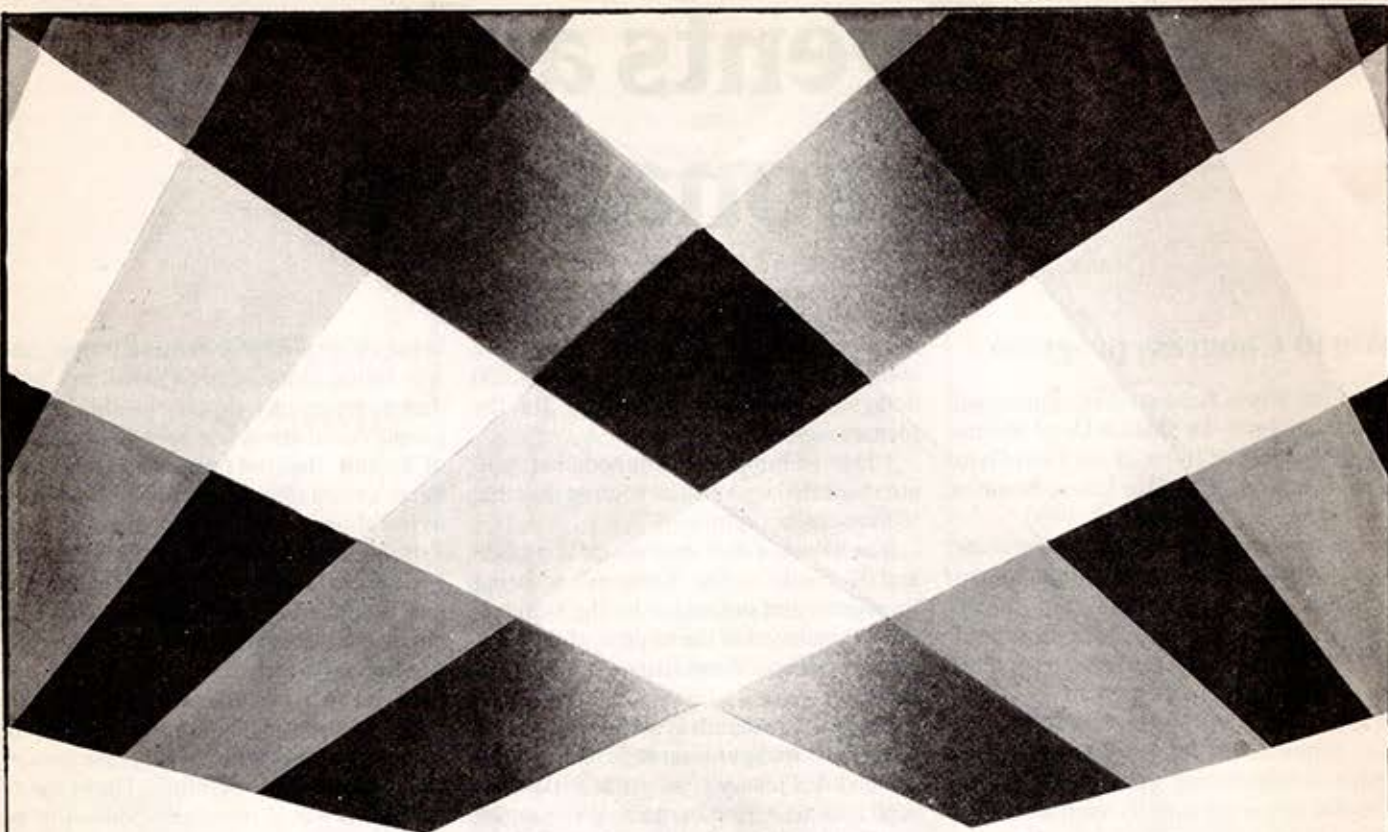
Ms Aban Agha, an executive of the Australian airline Qantas, was stabbed to death by three unidentified men at her Nizamuddin residence in South Delhi on September 15, 1989, notes *The Times of India* of the next day.

She was murdered at around 7 o'clock in the morning, it is reported. Agha suffered deep stab wounds in her stomach. On being taken to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, she was declared dead on arrival, notes the report in *The Indian Post*.

Forty-six-year-old Agha, working as the district sales manager of the airline, was reportedly a divorcee, staying alone in her apartment. The motive behind the murder is not yet clear, *The Times* quoted Neeraj Kumar, deputy commissioner of police (south).

Bengalee VC again

Dr (Ms) Mehroo D. Bengalee has been renominated as the vice-chancellor of the Bombay University, notes *The Indian Post* of April 22, 1989. She was



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given preference over the other contenders for the seat: the dean of the University's arts faculty S. D. Karnik, Parle College principal R. G. Sohoni, MVLU college principal S. D. Mulgaonkar and principal of Sydenham College S. K. Modak.

In her second tenure, Bengalee plans to promote "all-round development of the University and the students." Top on her priority list features the development of the Vidyanagari campus, introducing new research projects with UGC (University Grants Commission) aids and new vocational courses. Special stress would be laid on starting women-oriented courses, she said.

Welcoming her reappointment to the post of vice-chancellor, K. K. Thekedath, executive committee member of the Bombay University and College Teachers' Union, said that Bengalee had played a sympathetic role during the teachers' strike last year. He also hoped that she would play a similar role in the examination boycott by the teachers.

While she is recognized as being "clean," her ability to run the University's administrative affairs efficiently was questioned by some senior members of the University's senate. Her



Agha (left): murder motive unknown
Bengalee: second tenure plans



pliable nature has also been criticized.

An important role that Bengalee will have to play during the new tenure, according to a member of the University's executive council, is to take "a tough stance against the intervention of the state and central governments in running the varsity," it was reported.

Tata power for Sethna

Former chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission and principal secretary to the Government of India, Dr Homi Nusserwanji Sethna has been appointed chairman of the Tata electric companies - the Tata Hydro-Electric Power Supply Company Limited, the Andhra Valley Power Supply Company Limited and the Tata Power

Company Limited, notes *The Economic Times* of May 27, 1989. Sethna, who was deputy chairman, took over the chairmanship of these companies after the death of Naval Tata. He was first appointed director of the Tata electric companies in 1975.

In addition to his association with the Tata group of companies, sixty-six-year-old Sethna is chairman or director of several public and private limited companies like Bombay Dyeing, Mahindra Ugine, German Remedies and the Cable Corporation of India, to name a few. He also serves as consultant to the Bombay Burmah Trading Corporation and is chairman of the local advisory board of the Bank of Credit and Commerce (Overseas) Limited, notes his bio data.

A public sector undertaking of the Government of India to which Sethna has contributed substantially is the Indian Rare Earths Limited. He had the full responsibility for setting up the Rare Earths plant at Alwaye in Kerala. Deputy secretary general to the United Nations international conference on the peaceful uses of atomic energy, held in Geneva in 1958, he was appointed member of the study team on scientific departments constituted by the Government of India. Since 1959 he has been with the Atomic Energy Establish-

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ment at Trombay (now known as the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre) as its chief scientific officer and later became the director of the engineering group. Also a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency's scientific advisory committee for 15 years, Sethna became member of the United Nations' Secretary General's committee of specialists in 1969.

Many engineering institutes in India and one in Sweden have Sethna on their board of members. A fellow of the Indian National Science Academy and the Indian National Academy of Engineering, Sethna, to date, is the chairman of the board of governors of the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, the bio data reads.

In the field of education, Sethna was, last year, appointed the chancellor's nominee on the selection committee for the appointment of teachers of the University of Bombay. He has also served as chancellor at the North-Eastern Hill University and worked as honorary professor of the Kurukshetra University.

Graduating with a bachelor of science degree in 1942, Sethna did his BSc (Tech) two years later. He has been conferred an honorary doctorate in science and technology by various universities in India.



*Sethna (left): scientific backing to Tatas
Mody: mid-course change of career*



The renowned scientist is trustee of various Parsi-funded trusts like the Sir Ratan Tata Trust, Sir Jamshetjee Jejeebhoy Charity Fund, the Ness Wadia Foundation, member on the board of management of the Bai Jerbai Wadia Hospital for Children, and alternate member on the board of management of The Nowrosjee Wadia Maternity Hospital, among others, the bio data states.

Sethna has many awards and honors to his credit, the latest being the Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Award presented to him this year for engineering and technological sciences. Four years earlier he was presented the Dadabhai Naoroji Memorial Prize Fund Award in recognition of his contribution in the field of atomic energy, his bio data

further adds. The Government of India had also honored Sethna with a Padma Vibhushan in 1975.

Mody's ta-ta

"I might get involved in charity and social organizations. I intend to do some writing on the Zoroastrian scriptures. I am a qualified priest." These sentiments were expressed by one of the country's leading business executives, Minoo H. Mody, who resigned from the board of Tata Sons and from all executive responsibility of the Tata group of companies last July.

"I had always had this dream of a mid-course change of career, and thought I would do it at 50. Now I am 57. One is not always able to do what one wants, and then events overtake us," said Mody in an interview with T. N. Ninan of *The Economic Times*, August 25, 1989.

Mody's abrupt departure from the house of Tatas which he joined over 17 years ago, came as a jolt to corporate circles. The reasons cited for his resignation were "personal and health" factors, but the rumors of differences between him and other Tata directors kept surfacing. Extracts from the interview:

Q: There are reports of differences within

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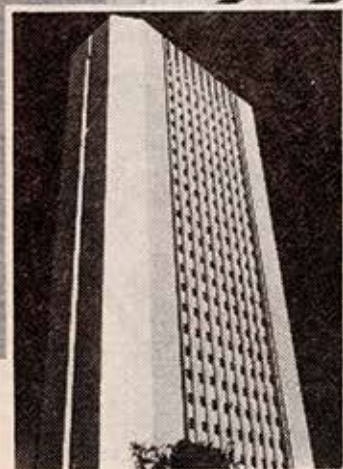
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Tata Sons that led to your resignation.

A: I know that there is all manner of conjecture about differences in policy. Of course there are differences, otherwise why have a board? But the Tatas are a very cohesive group, and the differences are more on detail than on policy.

Q: There are reports that you did not see eye-to-eye with Ratan Tata.

A: All imagination. There are all sorts of innuendoes. That people are happy to see me go, that there has been fraud and defalcation, that I was blocking progress, etc. There are also reports that I am going to join Tata Limited in London, or Unisys in America, or the World Bank, and even that the government has asked me to head a corporation. All this is rubbish and I don't pay any attention to it.

Q: Since there is the widely held belief that there have been differences with Ratan Tata, could there be smoke without fire?

A: The fact that the story is repeated by 10 people does not make it more correct than if just one person says it. Often, the perception at the lower level is quite different from the perceptions in the board room where you can disagree violently and yet be good friends at the end of the day, committed to a common course of action.

Q: How do you propose to spend your time now?

A: I want a change of lifestyle; less work pressure. So I am going to work for pleasure, maybe just three or four days a week, do some specific assignments for friends. Nothing full-time, involving the kind of pace I have been keeping. Right now I am planning a holiday for four or five months. In Rakhel or Mora. So, I am feeling exhilarated.

Q: Have you worked out your options in terms of work?

A: Not yet. One possibility is that I will go for a year of study to the US, related to the social environment of business in India.

I also want to finish work on my car. You know, it is a common hobby in the US to soup up your Volkswagen bug. I am doing it too. I have souped up the engine from 1300 cc to 1800 cc, I have built a fiberglass Ferrari body, and I think three-quarters of the work is done. I expect to finish it in the next few weeks.

Q: How do you see the future of the Tata group, specially the question of it staying together as a cohesive unit?

A: I think the group identity will get stronger, because there is very strong support for this identity from the managers in different companies. The group image helps

customer acceptance of products; it helps the public image of the people who work for the group. And now the group shareholding structure will also be increased, as we have tried to do in the case of Tata Steel. The factors that were weakening group identity have been reversed, and the new trend will now gain in strength. You will see all this more clearly five years from now.

'Steel'ing to the top

Deputy director of marketing of Tata Steel, Jamshed Batliwala has taken over as director of marketing from April 10, 1989, notes the *Financial Express* of April 23, 1989.

Batliwala was reportedly the first marketing manager (operations) when the marketing division of Tata Steel was reorganized in 1981. His next posting was as chief marketing manager of Indian Tubes until the company merged with Tata Steel and he was appointed the deputy director of marketing, notes his bio data.

Batliwala had joined Tata Steel in the office of the resident director of raw materials and sales in 1966, and during his association with the company, has worked at Calcutta, Cochin, Kanpur,



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**Batliwala:
marketing
move**



Bombay and Delhi.

He is also on the boards of Nicco Steels, Kumardhubi Metal Casting and Engineering, The Tata Metals and Strips, and Bundy Tubing of India. Batliwala was formerly vice chairman of the Narrow Cold Rollers Association of CEI and past president of the Calcutta-based Foreign Trade Association.

President of the Calcutta School of Music, Batliwala takes keen interest in social and cultural affairs. He is also enthusiastic about sports, his favorite being yachting, further adds the bio data.

Sethna berates Doordarshan

The Doordarshan has deliberately not featured award-winning films which are critical of the government on television. This scathing observation was made by Homi D. Sethna, chairman of

the jury for non-feature documentary films for the 1989 national awards, at the inaugural function of the film festival, noted *The Indian Post* of June 2, 1989.

The government representatives did not take kindly to Sethna's "appalling display of bad manners." But an unrepentant Sethna who has been making films since 1942 on varied topics including sanitary conditions, declared, "I hit them below the belt and I hope I get a chance to do it again."

Despite the jury's recommendations that all award-winning documentaries should be screened over Doordarshan within the shortest possible time and in a popular time-slot for maximum viewership, Doordarshan had not done so, *The Post* quoted Sethna. He gave the example of films like *An Indian Story* (about the Bhagalpur blindings which won the best film award for 1989), *Bombay Our City* (1981 best film award), *Bhopal - Beyond Genocide* (best non-feature film, 1988), *Raaste Band Hain Sab* (best ethnographic film, 1988) and *Pani* (best educational film, 1988).

Bringing to light the plight of young

filmmakers who use the 16 mm format instead of the 35 mm one, Sethna said that the filmmakers were discouraged by poor exhibition facilities in cinema halls, especially since the government does nothing to help them by telecasting the award-winning films on Doordarshan. He further hoped that the government would recognize the 16 mm format as it is the "most sensible way of making films" in India, reported *The Post*.

Tata Endowment scholars

A doctorate in international crop research at the Louis Pasteur University, France, a degree in civil engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and advanced studies in chest diseases at the American Educational Society in Vienna are some of the fields of specialization Tata scholars will be pursuing in the year 1989-90. The 12 Parsi scholars, amongst the 90 selected for the prestigious scholarship by the J. N. Tata Endowment for the Higher Education of Indians, are: Ms Parizad D. Batliwala, Histas M. Damania, Burzin N. Engineer, Xerxes P. Gazder, Zaheer R. Kasad, Malcolm J. Kavarana, Dr Rumi R. Khajotia, Dr Kayoze H. Lashkari, Nausad



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"It is heartening (to know) that this microscopic community, which has contributed so much to the development of India in almost every field, still produces first-rate students in the face of harsh all-India competition and refuses to be swamped by sheer numbers," noted Dinshah Malegamvala, director of the Endowment Fund. The distinctive accomplishments of five students in particular were listed by Malegamvala.

A research associate from the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), Patel has been invited to do a doctoral thesis at the prestigious Louis Pasteur University in Strasbourg, France. At the ICRISAT, funded by the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations, her work was recognized by a French professor who invited her to Strasbourg and volunteered to work as her guide for her doctoral thesis. Besides this, the professor arranged a full French government scholarship for the four-year term for Patel.

A first-rank civil engineering student for three consecutive years at the IIT (Indian Institute of Technology), Bombay, Shapoorjee has been admitted to the renowned Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Cambridge, USA. The cost of his education is about \$ 28,000 a year (approximately Rs 4,76,000). He has collected a sufficient amount for the first six to nine months from educational foundations in India and hopes to get a scholarship at the MIT after that.

A Tata girl throughout, Jamshedpur-based Batlivala, working as labor officer at TISCO (Tata Iron and Steel Company Limited) is trying for a full scholarship for her doctoral studies in an American university. She is a first-class graduate in English literature from the University of Bombay and is also a postgraduate diploma holder in human resources development from the Xavier Labour Relations Institute.

Khajotia, a specialist in chest diseases, is to go to Vienna to the American Educational Society for advanced training in this field. He will complete the fellowship exams in six months. The fellowship involves affiliation to the famed surgical faculty of the University of Vienna. It will also qualify Khajotia for a paid residency post in one of the hospitals where he hopes to gain further training and experience in this field.

Lashkari, who had won one of the UK awards in the Overseas Doctors Training Scheme, has left for the UK to study for his

FRCS (Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons) examination in general surgery. At the MS (Master of Surgery) examination, he had stood first from the Nair Hospital in general surgery.

Twenty of the 90 candidates are women; 33 come from low-income groups, notes Malegamvala. The total value of the Tata scholarships amounted to around Rs 20,80,000. The Tata awards are loan scholarships and are "returned to the country in dollars," notes the director.

The J. N. Tata Endowment for the Higher Education of Indians, the first Tata benefaction established by the founder Jamsetji Tata in 1892, is perhaps the oldest educational foundation in Asia. Since its inception the Endowment has awarded loan scholarships of nearly Rs 3.20 crores to 2061 scholars who today occupy high positions in India and abroad, informs a press release.



Poonevala: inclination for fine arts

Poonevala — best student

Ms Tanaz Erach Poonevala was the recipient of the 'Best Preparatory and Attitude Student of the Year 1988-89' gold award instituted by the Seattle Central Community College, Washington, notes a write-up sent by the family. The 23-year-old who is suffering from a hearing impairment since birth has been made Artists Program Director of the College where she is presently pursuing further studies in textile design and computer science.

Inclined towards the fine arts, Poonevala left for the States last September with the help of the largesse shown by the Bombay Parsi Punchayet, R. D. Sethna Trust and other charitable institutions, according to the write-up.

After completing her schooling from St Columba High School, Bombay, she joined Nirmala Niketan where she obtained her diploma in textile designing, the release further notes. On several occasions has she won awards for her paintings, it was reported.



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A creditable performance

Chairman of Ingersoll-Rand (India) Limited Jamshed K. Setna received the Corporate Performance Award, instituted jointly by *The Economic Times* and the Harvard Business School Association of India, at a function held in Bombay on April 29, 1989, noted *The Times of India* the next day. Ingersoll-Rand, a government recognized concern exporting high quality engineering equipment to technology leaders like USA, Canada, UK, Russia and Italy, bagged the award for its outstanding performance in the year 1987-88 in the private sector mini giants category. The other two companies to win awards were Bharat Refractories Limited (public sector) and MRF Limited (private sector giant). Reserve Bank of India governor R. N. Malhotra presented the awards.

These awards are given to companies for their creditable financial performance and their contribution to the general economic development. Participation in research, backward area development, employment generation, foreign exchange earnings and other social aspects of the economy are taken into consideration, notes a brief write-up sent by Kekoo Colah, manager, planning and systems of Ingersoll-Rand.

The total income earned by the Company for the 15-month period ending March 31, 1989 was Rs 109.55 crores, an increase of 13.6 percent over the previous year. The company's export figures stood at Rs 27.68 crores, denoting 25 percent of the total turnover of Ingersoll-Rand, the write-up adds. The gross profit stood at Rs 23.59 crores.

A total dividend of 45 percent and a bonus issue of 1:1 has been proposed. This is subject to receiving the necessary approval from the members of the Company and the controller of capital issues, the write-up further states.



Salt substitute

Adar Nutrimerics Private Limited is reportedly the first company in India to manufacture a low sodium salt alternative, Lo Salt. The name — 'Adar,' and the logo — fire that distinguish this Company are symbolic of the faith of its 29-year-old director Rohinton Maloo, notes a press release issued by the promoters.

Having only one-third the sodium content of common salt, Lo Salt claims to look, cook and taste like common salt. It promises relief to persons suffering from hypertension, high blood pressure and heart attack, and is recommended for the whole family. Today, this brand holds 90 percent of the share in the international market, claims the write-up.

Adar Nutrimerics also has plans to introduce numerous quality products in the field of 'nutri'tion and cos'metics' that are currently available only in countries abroad.

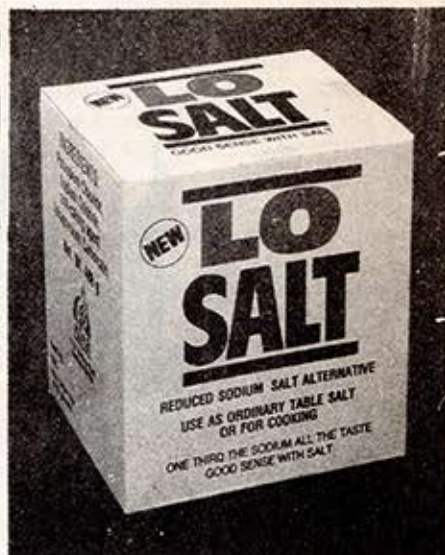
Apart from Adar Nutrimerics, Maloo is also director of Slim Fast Foods Bombay Private Limited, proprietor of Good Value Agencies based in Madhya Pradesh and managing director of Adverts Advertising and Marketing Private Limited which he started at the age of 24. Maloo, a graduate in mass communications, started his career with Trikaya Advertising Private Limited, further notes the release.

Khandala school's welcome

Member of the Minorities Commission Homi J. H. Taleyarkhan visited the Bai Dhunmai Cawasji High School in Khandala on June 3, 1989, notes a brief write-up by the School's principal Dr (Ms) Ketayun R. A. J. Madon. In the absence of Madon, Taleyarkhan was welcomed by ex-principal Ms Shirin Maneckshana.

Addressing the students, Taleyarkhan said that the best years of one's life are those spent at school, and one should work hard and take maximum advantage of the opportunities available. He

Far left: Setna (right) receiving the corporate award from Malhotra. Maloo and his Lo Salt: promises relief



promised all possible help to the institution and had plans to visit the School again in July, according to the write-up.

Today a cosmopolitan, coeducational school that has facilities for boarders as well as day scholars, the Bai Dhunmai Cawasji High School was established in 1934 to educate middle and lower-class Parsi girls. Despite extending all possible financial assistance to needy students, there are today not even 50 Parsi children availing of the School's facilities, Madon had lamented in a letter to *Parsiana*.

Dastur Dabu remembered

At a function to commemorate the hundredth birth anniversary of the late Dastur Khurshed Dabu, former High Priest of the H. B. Wadia Atash Bahram, Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) chairman Dr Aspi Golwalla offered, on behalf of the BPP, financial assistance to publish the remaining 11 volumes of Dabu's writings, notes the *Jam-e-Jamshed* of April 23, 1989. Some of Dabu's articles, which used to appear regularly in the *Jamé*, have already been published in four volumes.

A jashan was performed at the Wadia Atash Bahram led by Dastur (Dr) Firoze Kotwal who succeeded Dabu as high priest of the Atash Bahram. High Priest of Udwada Dastur (Dr) Hormazdyar Mirza and High Priest of the Anjuman Atash Bahram Dastur (Dr) Kaikhusroo JamaspAsa also partook in the ceremony.

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ny along with other priests.

Later the trustees of the Atash Bahram and other dignitaries present paid tributes to Dabu. They remembered him as a highly educated man who showed an inclination to read religious books from a very young age. "He gave the benefit of his knowledge to the community by his preachings," reminisced JamaspAsa who was in close contact with the late Dastur for 22 years, according to the *Jamé*. In his scholarly pursuits, Dabu is believed to have been substantially influenced by the late scholar of yore, Jehangir Vimadlal.

Atash Bahram trustee Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy who had chaired the function, noted that Dabu was a dastur in the true sense of the word. He led a simple life based on the teachings of the religion, and served the community with exemplary dedication and devotion. Besides being the principal of the J. J. School in Surat for 27 years, Dabu had also taught at the Surat Parsi Orphanage, recalled Jejeebhoy.

Remembering Dabu, Kotwal said the late Dastur's life embodied the good qualities that are taught in the Zoroastrian religion.



Dabu's philosophy, that "goodness will only come to the community if every family and every home practices the religious tenets, was recounted by Ervad Nadir Turel.

Keen on billiards

Twenty-year-old Godrej Roosi Gandhi was reportedly the only young Parsi participant at the National Billiards Championship for Juniors at Srinagar, in March 1989. Representing Gujarat, this was Gandhi's first attempt at the national level, notes a press release by Yashan Jokhi. He lost out to Haryana's top seeded A. Dubey in the first round, yet Gandhi acknowledged that he "gained experience and learned temperamental



Dabu (far left): simple ideals remembered. Gandhi: sporting temper

techniques" which would help him in future tournaments.

Last year Gandhi had ranked fourth among the juniors in the Gujarat State Open Billiards Tournament. He is a member of the Gujarat state team consisting of players like Geet Sethi, Raju Bhatt and Jaydeep Patel.

To recognize the efforts of the Ahmedabad-based Gandhi, the Parsee Youth League of Ahmedabad have nominated him "the outstanding Parsi sportsman."

A second year commerce student, Gandhi's other interests include table tennis and music, further adds the release.

Compiled by Roxana H. Kaka

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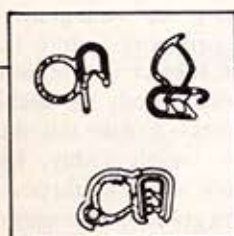
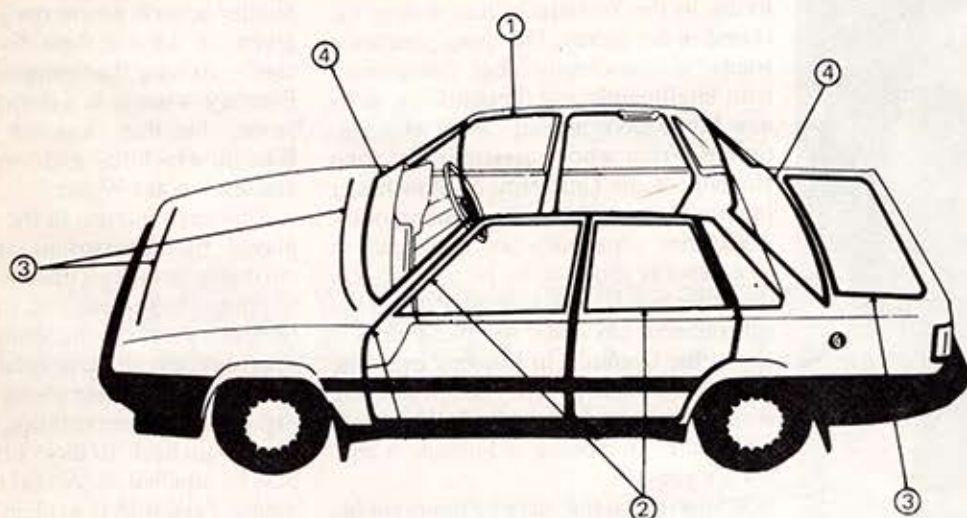
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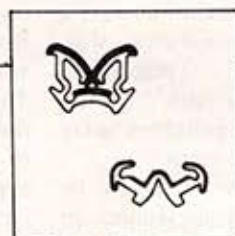
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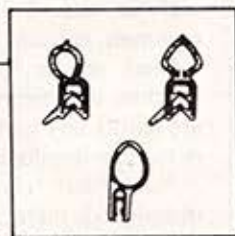
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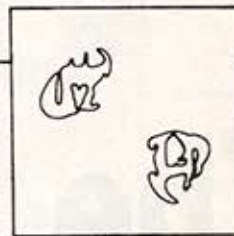
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The threat to their identity compels young Zoroastrians to seek their roots, says researcher Dr Rashna Writer



VAROHESE FERNANDEZ

The "root" cause

Parinaz Gandhi

What does it say in the *Gathas*? was the question frequently posed to Dr (Ms) Rashna Writer by young Zoroastrians living in the Western milieu during the course of her survey. The rising generation wants "to consciously adapt Zoroastrianism, intelligently and thoughtfully, to its new home environment," is the observation of Writer who is assisting Prof John Hinnells of the University of Manchester in a research study on the contemporary Zoroastrian community and its adaptation as a minority group in the New World. On the other hand, "Not a single Parsi in the subcontinent has asked me 'What does it say in the *Gathas*?' In Bombay everyone talks about housing. They feel if housing is solved, all would be solved. Whether it will lead to an increase in birthrate is anybody's guess."

Whilst collecting data by interviewing Zoroastrians in the UK, USA, Canada and in the Indian subcontinent, a common refrain she encountered was: "There are no leaders;" "There is no structure to overcome difficulties;" "There are hardly any mobeds to enlighten a lay person on theological questions."

When any change is sought to be introduced, there is often a resistance in the name of 'religion' and 'religious practices.' "But Parsis use religion as an umbrella term to describe their ethnicity, their fondness for *dhansakh*," Writer points out. It is when issues are allowed to slide, citing religion as an excuse, that we see a cumulative buildup of problems, notes the slim, young researcher, concern writ large over her fair face. The raising and lowering of the brows on her high forehead and hand gesticulations reiterate the emphasis of her mellow-accented statements. Settled in the UK now, it is not difficult for the Calcutta-born Writer to understand the pulse of the migrants. In fact, it was her "latent interest in her Zoroastrian roots" that made her accept work as a research assistant, she informed in an interview with *Parsiana* on December 9, 1988 when she was in Bombay to conduct her survey.

"We know with evidence that, unfortunately, the last two or three generations have forgotten the intrinsic aspects of the

Zoroastrian religion and history," insists Writer. She is happy though that in the West, an interest is being taken to educate the children in religious matters through Sunday schools where the youngsters are given an idea of their Zoroastrian heritage. Among the complacent Parsis in Bombay, "there is a deep level of ignorance, but that was not the case in Karachi which has a history of religious classes," notes Writer.

This keen interest in the religion, displayed by Zoroastrians abroad, Writer attributes to the fact that the generation of migrants have been cast in an alien culture, in a country where many of the citizens may never have heard of Zoroastrianism. The consequent threat to their identity compels them to think, to analyse, to want to go back to their origins. Rather than be labelled as 'Asian' or 'Paki,' the young Parsi tries to explain his existence, saying, 'I'm of Persian origin.' The minority group's integration — as distinct from assimilation — into the mainstream was the subject of interest for Writer. Through her study she sought to pinpoint the factors — like the migrants' age, place of birth, length of stay, level of secular education — that could possibly correlate with integration. Her sample comprised a cross-section of men and women, whether single or married, of different ages and from diverse professions. Writer would usually allow one hour per interview, but often it would stretch to three hours when the garrulous interviewees just would not stop! In the UK itself she did 204 interviews. The findings on the community in Britain will be compiled into *The Living Flame*. Both Writer and Hinnells are expected to participate in the Fifth World Zoroastrian Congress in Bombay next year and share their findings with the community.

One of the interesting facets that has come to light is the difference in approach between the Parsis and the Iranis. Unlike the Parsis, the Iranian immigrants are not plagued by an identity crisis and a sense of rootlessness. They identify themselves as Iranians before anything else. Since they only moved to the West after the 1979 Iran Revolution and continue to harbor a deep attachment to the soil and history of

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Iran, she prefers to classify them as "reluctant migrants." But they face a problem of a different nature — adjustment to Western society, especially because of the language barrier. Unlike Parsis who think in English (probably best in a combination of languages), Iranis think in Farsi and they see the loss of language as a serious threat to culture, summarizes Writer.

"Because of different cultural influences, there is a certain lack of tolerance between the Parsis and Iranis," Writer has noticed. "In matters of food, habits, customs and dress, in small aspects, they need to build bridges. But none of these matters are as minor as they appear..." Irani Zoroastrians fault Parsis for mispronouncing words

It is when issues are allowed to slide, citing religion as an excuse, that we see a cumulative buildup of problems

from the *Avesta*, for kissing portraits of saints and prophets in sacred precincts, for prostrating themselves (supposedly an Indian influence) instead of the practice prevailing in Iran of standing erect with only their heads bowed in obeisance, for adopting alien wedding rituals...

Amongst the Iranian Zoroastrians, as related by Writer, even though they do not favor intercommunity marriages, if their daughter were to marry a Muslim, they would accept the marriage and the husband within the community. Conversely, Parsi girls are often left with no option but to join the husband's ethnic group because they are rejected by the community, their children are spurned, and the husband ignored. As a result, the non-Zoroastrian spouse views the message of the religion as highly intellectual but the community's attitude as inhumane and impractical, Writer explains the psyche.

Writer was surprised at the confession of a middle-aged Zoroastrian who, after years of marriage to a non-Parsi, said that he still felt guilty for letting his parents down. "In every second home someone has married outside the community. It's a major sociological phenomenon. We must decide how to deal with it. The Zoroastrian community is spending a great

deal of emotion on controversial issues but it has not come to grips with what to do with a fait accompli," Writer seeks a practical solution.

Akin to the subject of intercommunity marriages is the issue of opening the doors of the Zoroastrian religion to non-Parsi spouses, to children of women married outside the fold. Conversion however is not yet perceived as a major issue in the Indian subcontinent, says the researcher. Since the implications are far-reaching, decisions are often deferred. "However it is not a subject that will quietly disappear," cautions Writer.

"The time has come to look at the critical areas facing the community going through this sticky passage in history," she emphasizes. "For adaptation to be successful, what is urgently needed is the ability to intelligently discuss and debate. Unfortunately we have lost that ability. It doesn't mean we can't hold opinions, but there is no need to be sworn enemies," she continues.

Instead of different associations observing their own independent constitutions which could lead to greater disorder especially if one area was to recognize an individual as a Zoroastrian and another look upon him as an outcaste, Writer has pointed to the need for an apex body to oversee, to help. The Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India could perhaps serve as a model, she suggests.

Professionals usually have reservations about involving themselves in controversial socioreligious subjects. "It is not that we lack individual expertise. Zoroastrians are extremely successful in the secular fields," says Writer, herself a political scientist by training who got a PhD from the London School of Economics for her thesis on "Identification and Development of Soviet Strategic Interests in the Indian Ocean." Subsequently she was awarded a fellowship by the British Institute of Persian Studies. The research analyst moots the development of a think-tank where specialists from different fields could interact and arrive at solutions: "The time has come to make a systematic categorization of problem areas," she reiterates.

"We need to have an overall identity." At the same time, the commonality that binds the community together should not be lost sight of. Rather than allow the commonality to be dissipated, she advises, "It should be retained, nurtured and held with pride."

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An anjuman in Germany

There are 54 Zoroastrian families comprising about 200 individuals in West Germany, writes secretary Ms Farangis Zorabi of the German Zoroastrian anjuman in a letter to *Parsiana* dated August 2, 1989. Established on March 31, 1988 the Hamburg-based Zarathustrischer Verein e. V. was formed to enable Zoroastrians in Germany to communicate with others all over the world and to enable their children to learn the religion and its traditions.

Zorabi anticipates that there may be many other Zoroastrians in Germany who may not have yet been identified and hopes to be able to get to know them.

North American Center

The actual scale and scope of the North American Zoroastrian Center "will depend on the wishes of the donors and the will of the Zoroastrian community, especially in the Washington DC area," according to the May-June 1989 issue of *Zoroastrian News*, the newsletter of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington (ZAMW).

Intended as a focus for Zoroastrian identity on the North American continent and not just a meeting place for the ZAMW, the Center will provide for the dissemination of information to new generations of Zoroastrians as well as to the public at large. It is expected to provide opportunities for study and research into the religion, culture and heritage of the community as also to conduct seminars and encourage participation in comparative religion and theology.

Conceived in three phases, the first stage envisages the construction of a library, offices, a large hall with movable partitions, a prayer hall and parking for about 100 vehicles. A director's residence and rooms for visitors comprise the second stage while the third stage encompasses a public museum and darbe-mehr, notes the detailed write-up on the project in the newsletter.

A budget prepared in July 1988 had estimated \$1,150,000 for capital costs plus \$50,000 as annual recurring costs on completion of the project, the latter to be met by an equal potential annual income. However, the newsletter notes, "This budget looked generous last year, but the cost of land has risen significantly during the last year, and is continuing to rise. The

previous and the present board has contacted several real estate agents (and) come to the conclusion that it is nearly impossible to find a piece of property that would be suitable for the Center in a central area...with the money we have. Our total resources, pledged and in hand, are under \$300,000 (of which \$250,000 have been pledged by the Arbab Rustom Guiv Foundation towards purchase of land). Should we spend this much or more on the land alone?

"If the Center is to meet its objectives of high visibility and accessibility to the people visiting Washington as well as those residing in the metropolitan area, it needs to be close in and near major highways. At the same time, to be able to provide all future services and facilities, ample parking for large gatherings, and meet all zoning and setback requirements, a fairly large piece of property is needed: say two to five acres. How far can we go into the suburbs to be able to afford two to five acres of land, and still meet the 'nearness to Washington' criterion?

"Once we have realistic guidelines and (have) revised our plans if necessary, we need to get the ball rolling to find more sponsors. If it is going to be the North American Center, we must get support from everyone in North America. The Board has received very good vibrations so far. But several other large metropolitan areas also need to build or enlarge their local centers. Will they support us? Can we support them?"

ZAPA's new team

Farhad Cama once again leads the team of office bearers of the Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania (ZAPA), informs the Association's newsletter of April 15, 1989. The elections held on March 18 for the 1989-90 board of directors returned vice president Behram Kapadia, secretary Ms Zarin Balaporia and assistant secretary Ms Mahrukh Morris. Darius Jagus continues as treasurer and is assisted by Ms Hutoxi Contractor. The directors at large include Farhad Contractor, Jehangir Mistry, Jehangir Morris, Ms/Mani Rao, Adil Balaporia and Hoshang Pavri.

Thereafter, at the first quarterly meeting of ZAPA on May 7, the subcommittees were formalized, notes the newsletter of July 14, 1989. Thus, Hutoxi Contractor and Adil Balaporia constitute the membership and fundraising committee, while

the religious subcommittee includes Jehangir Morris and Hoshang Pavri. Farhad Contractor and Mahrukh Morris are in charge of ZAPA programs while Jehangir Mistry and Mani Rao will take care of social affairs and hospitality.

A cemetery for ZAMW

Fifteen lots at the Mt Comfort Cemetery in Alexandria, Virginia have been donated to the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington by Ms Mehrbanue Aidun, gratefully records *Zoroastrian News*, the Association's newsletter of May-June 1989. The lots will be made available for the burial of Zoroastrians at a nominal price to be decided by the Association. Aidun has also arranged so that ZAMW has the option to purchase 100 adjacent lots at a discounted price.

ZAMW's new board of trustees was elected at its annual general meeting on March 4 to oversee its affairs until March 1991, notes the Association's April newsletter. Headed by Ms Shehernaz Joshi, the new team includes Khodadad (Tom) Khosravi as vice president, Rustom Kevala (vice president on the outgoing team) as secretary with Fereydoon Keshavarz as joint secretary. Khershed Cooper continues as treasurer aided by Mina Aidun as joint treasurer. Parviz Kavooosi is trustee at large. Two past presidents of the ZAMW - Adi Davar and Rohinton Tengra - have been coopted by the elected board.

According to the Association's constitution and bylaws, no member may serve more than two consecutive terms in the same position, informs the newsletter. Having met three times since their election, the board will form several working committees each with one member of the board, the rest of the members being drawn from the "rich pool of talented members." Initially four committees are envisaged: a program committee, a cultural and religious education committee, a committee for the North American Zoroastrian Center and a committee of elders, notes the newsletter.

"In order to grow, we need to develop a curriculum that will educate not only our children but ourselves... We should not only invite guest speakers and scholars from other associations and universities but also those within our midst who will study specific topics and...share their knowledge with us... Youth must be activated towards greater participation. With-

out their input, the Association has no future. Cultural functions, religious discussions and other activities must be initiated for both adults and children, thereby reinforcing our community awareness and Zoroastrian values," writes Joshi in the *Zoroastrian News* of May-June 1989.

At Davar's suggestion a one-day workshop was planned to set priorities for the working committees and clarify what the general membership expects from the board, notes the newsletter.

Of more than 200 families in the metro area, the Association currently comprises 75 dues-paying families, many of these not having attended a single meeting in years. The April newsletter speculates whether this could mean that ZAMW is not meeting the needs of many individuals and/or families or that it is meeting their needs without requiring them to be members of the Association; whether newcomers to the Washington area cannot find out who to contact in order to join; whether non-Zoroastrians are unaware that they can join as associate members; or that the dues are too high for certain groups such as students.

Ms Natalie Vania, a PhD candidate at the University of Maryland, has been granted the Charlotte W. Newcombe Fellowship by the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation—perhaps the first Zoroastrian to win it, notes *Zoroastrian News*. "The Fellowship allows a year of uninterrupted research and writing by students whose dissertations concern ethical

or religious values as they relate to important social, historical or literary issues," informs the newsletter. It is said that Vania, who is working on the theme "Ignoring the good: a case against consequentialism," will receive a stipend of \$10,000.

Navroz in Dubai

Parsis in the United Arab Emirates celebrated the Shehanshahi new year with a get-together numbering 350 at Dubai's Hyatt Regency Hotel, writes Ms Meher Bhesania in a letter to *Parsiana* dated September 12, 1989.

Apart from a big raffle draw that included an air ticket, the evening was highlighted by two skits staged for the first time by Parsis in Dubai, according to the write-up. Children aged 10 to 16 years participated in a presentation of *Zarathushtra*, written, produced and directed by Bhesania. Based on the birth and well-known legends connected with the Prophet, the young actors acquitted themselves well, notes Bhesania happily.

The adults presented a comedy featuring Infants Primary School principal Ms Aarmity Patel, manager of Al Shirawi Airconditioning Kersey Bhesania and surgeon Dr Rashid Mehta who also directed the skit. An evening of dancing, punctuated by a good meal, followed.

Sydney snippets

At its twentieth annual general meeting (AGM) on August 6, 1989 the Australian Zoroastrian Association (AZA) of New South Wales elected its new board of directors, informs the September 1989

issue of *Manashni*, the Association's newsletter. The office bearers are Noshir Irani, president, Ms Gooloo Katrak, vice president, Ms Villie Meher-Homji, secretary and Ms Farida Irani, treasurer, while Ms Jeanie Unvala, Burjor Sethna and Ms Homaxi Irani - the youngest ever director at 22 - are directors at large.

The managing committee has set October 31 as the deadline for outstanding membership dues after which non-payers may lose their right to vote, stand for office, receive the newsletter, attend Sunday school or utilize the library. They would also forfeit their right to subsidized entrance fees to AZA functions. Defaulters wanting to rejoin would be charged a rejoining fee of five dollars per family or individual, notes *Manashni*.

The Association's new development application regarding AZA House was discussed by the six-member planning and development committee of the Baulkham Hills Shire Council on May 30, states *Manashni* (July 1989). Since over a year the neighbors have been objecting to the Association's use of the property which it had intended to develop. Accordingly all activities, including Sunday school, are currently being held elsewhere.

The committee called a conference on June 27 between the AZA and its critics. "The conference lasted about 40 minutes during which one objector and two from the AZA (the consultant and myself) spoke," writes president Noshir Irani in *Manashni*. "The councillors asked questions. The 'feeling' at the end of the conference was that the committee is likely to favor the neighbors."

Reporting on the ongoing battle, Irani writes, "The neighbors have launched a more aggressive campaign than last time. They also decided to use the local press... It is apparent that the matter has become very emotive. As it is in our interest to get a decision based on rational rather than emotive factors, I tried to meet the councillors on a one-to-one basis before the proposed conference could take place. I spoke to two councillors on the phone and could meet only one personally. As this effort to meet them was not so successful, individual letters were sent to the six councillors on the planning and development committee."

Contesting reports in the local press, *Manashni* editor Kersi Meher-Homji notes in a letter to the *Hills Shire Times* of July 25, "We have no quarrels with our fellow residents in Annangrove. Being a minor-

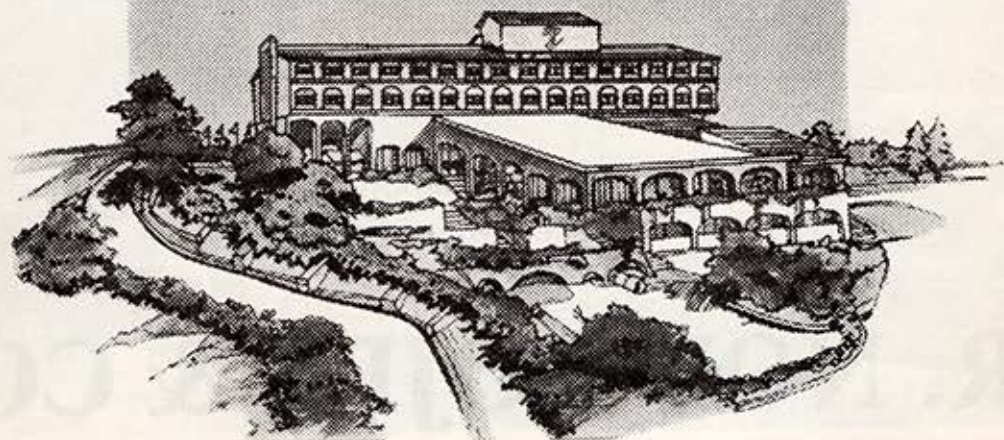
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ity community and friendly by nature, we assimilate easily. That is why the residents' objection against us to the Baulkham Hills Council stating: 'The activities and attitudes of the Zoroastrian members are not acceptable' has stumped us."

Referring to a recent demographic survey according to which 60.8 percent of the Zoroastrians are university graduates compared to the Australian average of five percent, Meher-Homji writes, "What have we done wrong in Annangrove? One noisy late night party in June 1987. That is one party in four years' stay at Annangrove. Just tell us how many noisy late night parties a normal Australian household throws in a year."

"Ron Prior who is 'dead against' our using our own property says in your article, 'It will create noise and traffic. It is totally out of character with the rural nature of the area.'

"To counter this opinion is the report of a town planning expert who says, 'The meeting place is in line with the environment.'

"Why should a layman's opinion gain precedence over that of an expert?... It is certainly unfair to ask us, Australian citizens, to move from the property we bought

with our hard-earned money!"

The Council's decision presumably went against the AZA though it has not been spelt out in the subsequent issues of *Manashni*. In its September issue *Manashni* notes in its report on the AGM, "The idealists said, 'Injustice has been done to us by the Council. We have done nothing wrong. Why should we leave our own property and relocate?' The realists agreed on the injustice theme but warned that 'even if we win the appeal (chances 60 percent; cost \$10 to 15 thousand) we won't be happy as the neighbors will continue to bicker. So we should be sensible and relocate.'"

The stalemate is expected to be resolved at an extraordinary general meeting to be held within three months, according to *Manashni*. In the meantime, a subcommittee has been constituted to look into property matters which includes Ms Behroze Bilimoria, Noshirwan Cooper, Ernani Giambuzzi, Purviz Kolsawalla, Ms Shema Kotwal, Ms Dinaz Mehta and Ms Dolly Pochkhanawalla. The team will look at different properties like old churches, warehouses, etc and research costs, zoning regulations, council attitudes and other relevant factors.

Novelist Bapsi Sidhwa has been awarded the US National Endowment Prize of US\$20,000 for her latest book *Ice Candyman*, writes *Manashni* (July) quoting *Dawn* of Karachi.

Pursuant to a study undertaken by the Fry Committee last year to assess the waste of human resources by the underemployment of immigrants, a migrants employment and qualifications board has been instituted, informs *Manashni* (September '89). Chaired by ex-Sydney mayor Sir Nicholas Shehadie, the board gave a patient hearing to a group of accountants of Indian origin.

Noting that "it is imperative that we join forces and respond now to this golden opportunity," *Manashni* advises Zoroastrian accountants and other professionals facing problems of non-recognition of qualifications by professional bodies to submit their case histories to Ms Arnawaz Merchant, Zubin Mody or Nauzer Bana. *Manashni* also notes that a similar committee has been set up at the Federal level indicating "a strong political will to address and rectify this particular problem."

Compiled by Arnavaz S. Mama

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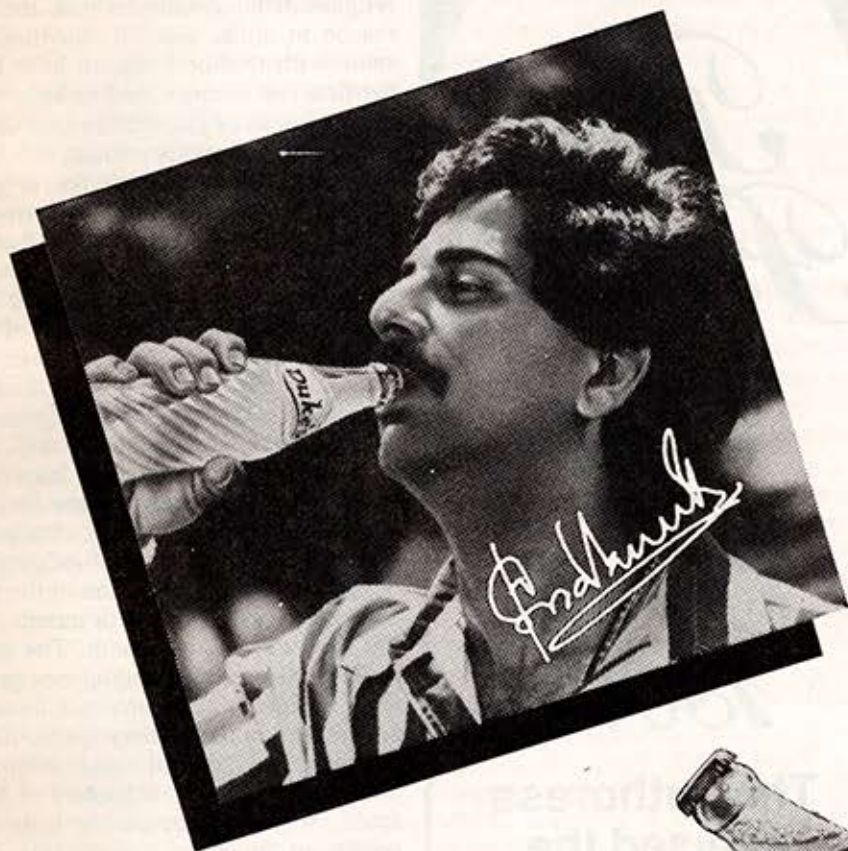
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This article has been extracted from the second edition of the *Journal of A Residence in India*, published in 1813. To maintain the original flavor of the article, the language and style have not been altered, nor have erroneous facts been corrected.

This *Journal* is from the collection of Jimmy Ollia, a noted authority on rare books and lithographs, based in Koregaon Park, Pune.

November 20th 1809 – A few days ago I was fortunate enough to make one of a party, assembled for the purpose of hearing from the Dustoor Moola Firoze an account of the actual state of the *Guebres* or *Parsees* in India. The Dustoor is the chief-priest of his sect in Bombay, and a man of great learning. He passed six years in Persia, or, as he more classically calls it, Iraun, two of which were spent at Yezd, the only place where the Mussulman government tolerates a Guebre college. His manners are distinguished, and his person and address pleasing. He is a tall, handsome man, of the middle age, with a lively and intelligent countenance. His dress is a long white muslin jamma, with a *cummerbund* or sash of beautiful shawl; another shawl was rolled round his high black cap, and a band of crimson velvet appeared between it and his brow.

The fragments of the ancient books of *Zoroaster* or *Zerdusht*, still extant, have been introduced in Europe by M. Anquetil, under the name of the *Zend-avesta*; and there is a good deal of interesting matter concerning the establishment of *Pyrolatry* in Persia, in the Chevalier D'Ohsson's *Tableau Historique de L'Orient*, chiefly on the authority of the Shah Nameh of Firdousi. But I do not know that there is any popular account in English, of the present state of such of the Guebres as are settled in India; and as these people form the richest class of inhabitants in Bombay, I have taken some pains to collect what information I could concerning them, both from Moola Firoze and other individuals of the nation.

It appears that there have been two legislators of the name of *Zoroaster*, one of whom lived in times of such remote antiquity, that no dependence

The Parsees In The 1800s

**The authoress
praised the
nineteenth
century Parsees
for their
enterprise
and liberality,
but also
claimed they
had a vulgar
air about
them**

Maria Graham

can be placed on the traditions concerning him. The last flourished as late as the reign of Darius, the son of Cambyse. He appears to have reformed the religion of his country which, there is reason to think, was till that time the same with that of India, to have built the first fire-temples, and to have written the books of Guebre laws, of which only some fragments remain.

The Parsees acknowledge a good principle under the name of Hormuzd, and an evil principle under that of Ahrimane. Subordinate to Hormuzd, the *ferishta*, or angels, are charged with the creation and preservation of the material world. The sun, the moon, and the stars, the years, the months, and the days, have each their presiding angel; angels attend on every human soul, and an angel receives it when it leaves the body. *Myrh*, or *Mithra*, is the *ferishta* to whom this important charge is assigned, as well as that of judging the dead; he is also the guardian of the sun, and presides over the sixth month, and the sixth day of the month. The good *ferishta* have corresponding evil genii, who endeavour to counteract them in all their functions; they particularly encourage witchcraft, and willingly hold converse with enchanters of both sexes, sometimes revealing truly the secrets of futurity for malicious purposes. As in other countries, the old, the ugly, and the miserable are stigmatized as witches, and the Indian Bra-





mins are regarded by the Guebres as powerful magicians.

Fire is the chief object of external worship among the Parsees. In each *atsh-khaneh*, or fire-house, there are two fires, one of which it is lawful for the vulgar to behold, but the other, *atsh-baharam*, is kept in the most secret and holy part of the temple, and is approached only by the chief dustoor; it must not be visited by the light of the sun, and the chimneys for carrying off the smoke are so constructed as to exclude his rays. The *atsh-baharam* must be composed of five different kinds of fire, among which I was surprised to hear the dustoor mention that of a funeral pile, as the Guebres expose their dead; but he told me that it was formerly lawful to return the body to any of the four elements; that is, to bury it in the earth or in the water, to burn, or to expose it, but that the latter only is now practised; consequently, if the *atsh-baharam* goes out, they must travel to such nations as burn their dead, to procure the necessary ingredient to

The date of the pictures is not certain but presumably pertains to the era. Pictures of 'Parsee' merchant at Bombay (below right), 'Parsee' lady and her daughter (below center) and 'Parsee' priest (on next page) are courtesy Jimmy Ollia. Dance scene and father-with-son photographs are from other sources.



rekindle it. When the last atsh-khaneh was built in Bombay, a portion of the sacred fire was brought from the altar at Yezd, in a golden censer, by land, that it might not be exposed to the perils of the sea.

The sun and the sea partake with fire in the adoration of the Guebres. Their prayers, called *zemzemé*, are repeated in a low murmuring tone, with the face turned towards the rising or the setting sun, and obeisance is made to the sea and to the full moon. The Parsee year is divided into twelve lunar months, with intercalary days, but there is no division of time into weeks. The festivals are the *nowroze*, or day of the new year, and six following days; the first of every month; and the day on which the name of the day and that of the month agree, when the same *ferishta* presides over both.

A Parsee marries but one wife, excepting when he has no children; then, with the consent of the first, he may take a second. An adopted child inherits equally with legitimate children, but, if there be none, before all other relations. The death of a father is observed as an annual festival. The body must not touch wood after death; it is accordingly laid upon an iron bier, to be conveyed to the repository for the dead where it is left exposed to the air till it is consumed. In Bombay these repositories are square inclosures, surrounded by high walls; the vulgar Parsees superstitiously watch the corpse, to see which eye is first devoured by the birds, and thence augur the happiness or misery of the soul.

The sacred books are in the Zend and Pehlavi languages, both ancient dialects of Persia. The fragments of these which escaped during the troubles that followed the Mahomedan conquest of Persia, are all that the Guebres have to direct either their practice or their faith; and where these are found insufficient, the *dustoor*s supply rules from their own judgement. The chief doctrines of the remaining books respect future rewards and punishments, injunctions to honour parents, and to marry early, that the chain of being be not interrupted, and prohibitions of murder, theft and adultery.

When the Guebres were driven from their own country by the Mussulmans, a considerable body of them resolved to seek a new land, and accordingly put to sea where they suffered great hardships. After attempting to settle in

When the sacred books are found insufficient, the *dustoor*s supply rules from their own judgment

various places, they at length reached Sunjum in Guzerat, and sent their chief *dustoor*, Abah, on shore, to ask an asylum. This was granted by the Rajah on certain conditions, and a treaty to the following effect was drawn up: The Guebres shall have a place allotted to them for the performance of their religious and burial rites; they shall have lands for the maintenance of themselves and their families; they shall conform to the Hindoo customs with regard to marriages, and in their dress; they shall not carry arms; they shall speak the language of Guzerat that they may become as one people with the original inhabitants; and they shall abstain from killing and eating the cow. To these conditions the Parsees have scrupulously adhered, and they have always been faithful to their protectors.

The Parsees in British India enjoy every privilege, civil and religious. They are governed by their own *panchait*, or village council. The word *panchait* literally means a council of five, but that of the Guebres in Bombay consists of thirteen of the principal merchants of the sect; these were chosen 'Parsee' priest



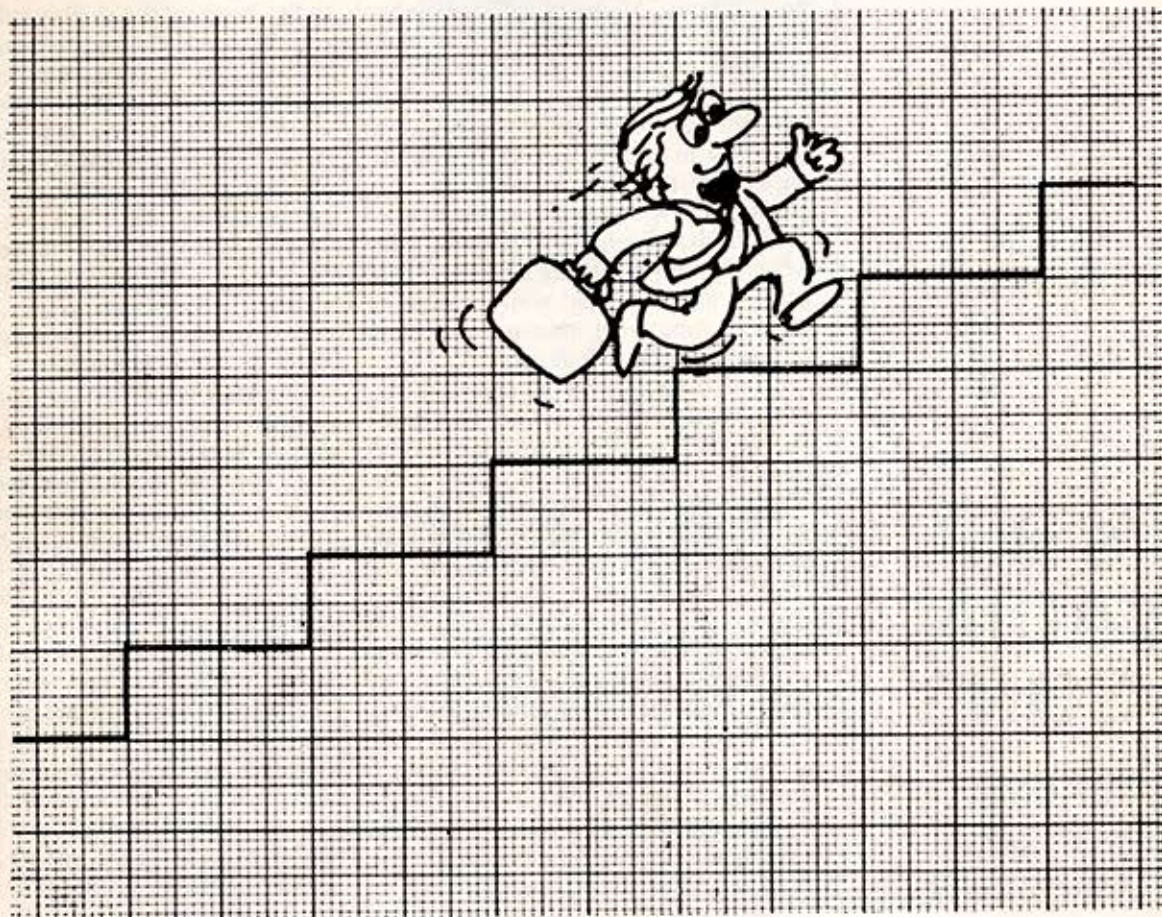
originally by the people, confirmed by the government, and have continued hereditary. This little council decides all questions of property, subject, however, to an appeal to the recorder's court; but an appeal seldom happens, as the *panchait* is jealous of its authority, and is consequently cautious in its decisions. It superintends all marriages and adoptions, and inquires into the state of every individual of the community. Its members would think themselves disgraced if any Parsee were to receive assistance from a person of a different faith; accordingly, as soon as the children of a poor man are old enough to marry, which, in conformity to the Hindoo custom, is at five or six years of age, the chief merchants subscribe a sufficient sum to portion the child. In cases of sickness, they support the individual or the family, and maintain all the widows and fatherless.

The *panchait* consists both of *dustoor*s and laymen. All religious ceremonies and festivals come under its cognizance, together with the care of the temples, the adjusting the almanack, and the subsistence and life of the dogs. I could not learn with certainty the origin of the extreme veneration of the Parsees for this animal. Every morning the rich merchants employ *koolis* to go round the streets with baskets of provision for the wild dogs; and, when a Parsee is dying, he must have a dog in his chamber to fix his closing eyes upon. Some believe that the dog guards the soul, at the moment of its separation from the body, from the evil spirits; others say that the veneration for the dogs is peculiar to the Indian Guebres, and that it arose from their having been saved from shipwreck in their emigration to India, by the barking of the dogs announcing their approach to the land in a dark night.

The Parsees use some solemnities when they name their children, which is done at five or six months old. When the muslin shirt is put on the first time, a sacred fire is lighted, prayers are repeated, and the name is given. Since their intercourse with Europeans they persist in calling this ceremony christening, because it is performed when the first or proper name is given. The second name is a patronymic; thus, *Norozejee Jumsheedjee*, is *Norozejee* the son of *Jumsheedjee*.

The Parsees are the richest individuals on this side of India, and most of the great merchants are partners in British

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commercial houses. They have generally two or three fine houses, besides those they let to the English; they keep a number of carriages and horses, which they lend willingly, not only to Europeans, but to their own poor relations whom they always support. They often give dinners to the English gentlemen, and drink a great deal of wine, particularly Madeira. The Guebre women enjoy more freedom than other oriental females, but they have not yet thought of cultivating their minds. Perhaps this is owing in great measure to the early marriages which, in compliance with the Hindoo customs, they contract. By becoming the property of their husbands in their infancy, they never think of acquiring a further share of their affection, and with the hope of pleasing, one great incitement to mental improvement is cut off.

Some days ago, we all spent an evening with the family of Pestenje Bomanjee, for they admit men as well as women to the ladies' apartments. The women were fair and handsome, with pleasing manners; they were loaded with ornaments, particularly the largest and finest pearls I ever saw. Pestenje's grandson, a child of seven years old, with his little wife, two years younger, appeared with strings of pearls as large as hazel-nuts, besides five or six long rows of the size of peas, and beautifully regular, given to them on their marriage, which happened a few months ago, on a lucky day and in a lucky month; for the Parsees, like the Hindoos, regulate all their actions by the motions and configurations of the stars, or rather by the interpretations of the astrologers. It is not uncommon for a rich man to spend a lack (sic) of rupees (about twelve thousand five hundred pounds Sterling) at the marriage of a child. Streets both carpeted and canopied with cotton cloth, confectionary and fruit scattered among the populace, feasting for several days for all ranks of people, processions and fire-works all night, and whole bazars illuminated, besides gifts to relations and dependents, account for the immense sums spent on these occasions. The little bride and bridegroom, borne on an ornamented palanquin, covered with jewels and flowers, preceded by banners and musical instruments, and followed by crowds of people, seem like little victims going to sacrifice, at least I cannot help considering them in that light.

The grandfather of Pestenje was Lowjee, who came from Guzerat to work in the dockyard as a day-labourer; but having genius and perseverance, he made himself master of the art of ship-building, and was employed by the Company as master-builder. He has transmitted his talents with his place to his grandson Jumsheedjee, who is now at the head of the dock-yard, where I visited him, and was conducted by him all over the Minden, the first line of battle ship he ever built, with the pride of a parent exhibiting a favourite child. It was singular enough at first to see all the ship-wrights in white muslin dresses, caulking the ship with cotton instead of oakum. All the workmen in the yard are Parsees, and the greater number come from Guzerat, where they leave their families, and come to Bombay for a few months or years, saving their wages carefully, and mostly subsisting on what they earn by chance-work, till they have amassed a sufficient sum to go home and set up a trade for themselves. Jumsheedjee is a clever workman, but his son Norozejee has more science, and I am told that his draughts have very great merit. This young man testifies the greatest desire to visit the great English yards, but his father cannot spare him from Bombay. The whole family, including Pestenje and Hormuzdjee, the brothers of Jumsheedjee, speak and write English so well, that if I did not see their dark faces and foreign dress, or read their unusual names at the end of a letter, I should never guess that they were not Englishmen.

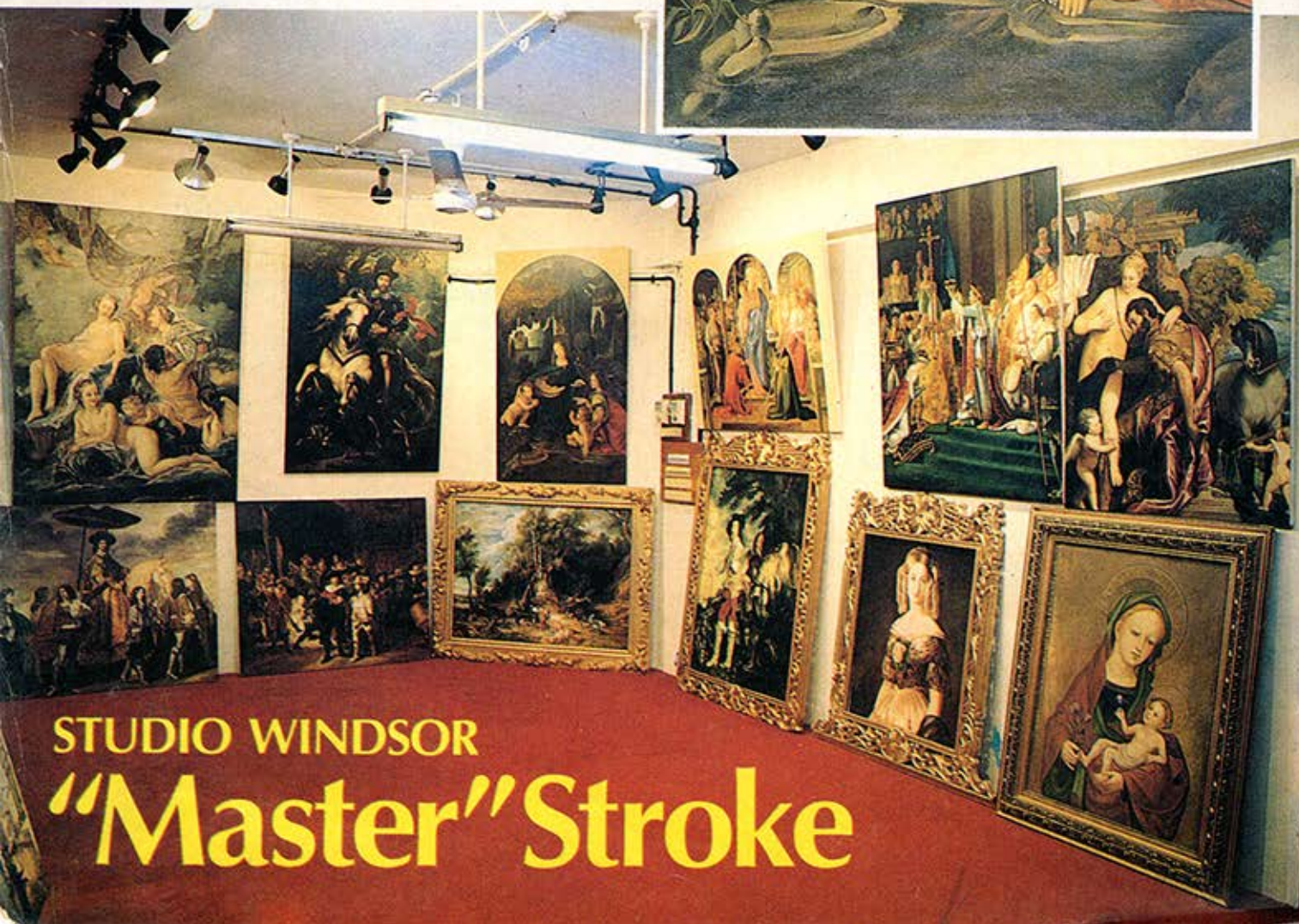
The Parsees are in general a handsome large people, but they have a more vulgar air than the other natives; they are extremely active and enterprising, and are liberal in their opinions, and less bigotted to their own customs, manners, and dress, than most nations. Of their hospitality and charitable dispositions, the following is an instance. During the famine that desolated India in the years 1805 and 1806, the Parsee merchant Ardeseer Dadee fed five thousand poor persons for three months at his own expense, besides other liberalities to the starving people. The Parsees are the chief landholders in Bombay. Almost all the houses and gardens inhabited by the Europeans are their property; and Pestenje told me that he received not less than £ 15,000 a-year in rents, and that his brother received nearly as much.

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Clockwise from right:
The Virgin on the Rocks: "ideal for a colonial type bungalow."
Studio Windsor: "an impressive collection."
"Re-creation" of a painting by Rubens.



STUDIO WINDSOR

"Master" Stroke

At Studio Windsor, in Bombay, one can buy a chip of history – painted reproductions of the Old Masters – at affordable prices

Gustasp Irani

Rembrandt peers out from his self-portrait, his eyes alive even in paint, reflecting the story of his life, daring you to probe for the living person that lurks behind the image, the lines. One has not seen the original, but the painted reproduction captures the enigma of the man, part of it at least. Rembrandt is one of the many Old Masters of European painting, copies of whose works are on display at Studio Windsor in Bombay. Not only is the concept and commercial scale of this new art gallery novel, but on its walls, under the glow of floodlights, are draped slices of art history.

Rembrandt, Rubens, Leonardo da Vinci, Botticelli, Van Dyck... the collection of artists in the red carpeted gallery, located on the ground floor of Corinthian Building on Arthur Bunder Road, Colaba is impressive. Inside the premises that also house the office of Vazifdar Builders Pvt Ltd, are treasures reminiscent of a miniature museum – paintings line the walls or stand propped on easels. You are welcomed by petite Ms Sherna Vazifdar who ushers you into an office brimming over with paintings. Here, her bearded husband Phiroze, dressed casually in a short-sleeved shirt, holds court. Sherna excuses herself with a smile but you are aware of her presence, like a mother hovering over her brood of children.

"The originals of these paintings sell for millions of dollars," explains Phiroze, one of the architects (pun intended, for he is a qualified architect from a family of constructors and builders) of Studio Windsor. The other two equal partners are his father Jehangir and wife Sherna. "For those millions you are buying a chip of history; the artist's originality and the rarity of the painting. How do you price the *Mona Lisa*? It's just not available." But copies are, and they are on display at Studio Windsor.

The prices are modest and range

from around Rs 8,000 to Rs 33,000 per painting, hand carved frames included. That, in essence, is the concept of the gallery – the production and marketing of painted reproductions of the Old Masters at affordable prices. "We aim to capture the essence of the painting's history and its artistic beauty. We are not copying the originals, we are re-creating them," says Phiroze. He clarifies that the studio is not selling prints but original paintings, even if they are copies of the Masters, done by a team of 60 to 70 local artists.

This is not mass scale reproduction. "We will not make two copies of the same painting," says a greying Jehangir, when we meet him at his office near Fariyas Hotel at Colaba which also looks like a museum rather than a builder/architect's business premises. A buyer can be reasonably sure that the painting he buys will be an exclusive reproduction of that painting done by Studio Windsor.

The Vazifdars' fierce pride in their studio is evident in the quiet passion that underlines their words. In fact, they expect that in time, the name of their studio will sell like that of a famous artist. But it is when they show you around the gallery that you feel their real sense of involvement in the paintings. Sherna, who has done a textile designing course, and till recently preferred to be a housewife, sums up the sentiment with, "I just can't stay at home anymore; I've got to be here."

"When we sell a painting, as businessmen we are happy," says Phiroze. "But, inside, we are not happy. We have grown attached to these paintings." He points to the reproduction of Rubens' *Peace and War*. "This one I won't sell, no matter what price I'm offered. I'm keeping it for myself." He also singles out a portrait of Francois I, King of France, by Jean Clouet, painted in 1540. "When I saw

the original in Europe, believe me, it was exactly the same; only the size differed a little. I can't say the same for all the other paintings."

Yet, there are certain standards that Studio Windsor adheres to. "Unless we are totally satisfied with a painting, it does not come out on our walls," says Phiroze. The present rate of rejects, he points out, is 60 percent to 65 percent. "We have to restore them the best we can. It's not: 'This has not come out well, so price it lower and get rid of it.' We are not sitting here to palm off things."

Total Involvement

Originally the studio had restricted itself to doing only paintings of the period between 1400 and 1830. "That is still our main identity," says Phiroze. He explains that generally they do not do reproductions of the Impressionists, the Cubists or the modern masters. But this does not prevent people from asking them to do special requests. Almost on cue, a lady with a girl of 10 in tow turns and asks, "If we bring a picture, will you paint it for us?"

Phiroze smiles. He unwraps a sweet from a trayful on his desk and pops it into his mouth. "Earlier we did not like to do special requests," he explains later, "but over the last one year we have been getting feedback on what the public wants – the size, the style, the artists, the period. Recently we have been entertaining requests, but not all requests; we will do it only if we like it." The condition is that the buyer is not compelled to buy the finished product. "If you don't like it, don't buy it."

The main buyers of the reproductions are hotels and business houses as well as individuals. Interior designers and architects also patronize the gallery on behalf of their clients. "Decor, imported marble, antique furniture – nothing has the same impact as a painting on the wall," says Phiroze.



"Shift a painting and the complexion of the room changes," the architect in Phiroze asserts itself: "A home without a painting is like a well without water."

He points out that modern houses in apartment buildings invariably have low ceilings and that, to a degree, accounts for the preference for horizontal canvases over vertical ones. Phiroze points to the painting of *The Virgin on the Rocks*. "That might be too large for an apartment type flat. But it would fit beautifully into a colonial type bungalow," which, he notes, is slowly coming into vogue again.

The Vazifdars' involvement with their paintings goes beyond the point of sale. They advise the buyer on where and how to place the painting. "Lighting and shadows are important. Frames play a vital role; they enhance the impact of the painting. We help the buyer select the right frame. We are keen that our paintings are displayed well." There is a vested interest in this, a touch of professionalism in the attitude. For, as Phiroze observes, a well displayed painting serves as a good advertisement for the studio. "It is for this reason that we discourage the sale of seconds. People come in here and say, 'We don't mind seconds.' We reply, 'But we do.'"

The same professionalism is extended to any buyer who might want to know about the history of the ori-

ginal painting. Information about its size, who painted it and when, and where it is presently located is furnished freely. Phiroze consults a list on his table and selects a painting at random. *The Painter's Studio* by Vermeer, 1666; original size 47 and 1/4 inches by 39 and 1/4 inch, presently at the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

The choice, coincidentally, is significant for the painting explains how the Old Masters worked, which in many ways is not very different from how Studio Windsor is structured. "What we are doing, was done centuries be-

Self-portrait by Rembrandt (above left)

A painting by Jacques Louis David, who was the first painter to the Emperor Napoleon (above right)

A painting by Pierre Mignard (left)

fore," says Phiroze. He is referring to the fact that the leading artists of yore ran studios with large teams of painters working under them. The Masters would guide their assistants and brush on the final touches to the painting. "Van Dyck started out as Rubens' assistant," Phiroze points out.

Modern day researchers and experts are unable to determine the actual artist of many famous paintings – the student or the master, reveals Phiroze. He illustrates with the example of *The Virgin on the Rocks* and the controversy that clouds the two versions of the painting. One of these paintings is at the Louvre, Paris, and the other at the National Gallery, London. Experts are generally agreed that one has been done by Leonardo da Vinci and the other by his student. But who did which is still a matter of debate.

Also a common practice then was that the Masters copied paintings of the great artists before them and art history is replete with such instances. Given the period which Studio Windsor seeks to re-create, its approach is consistent with its aims. A team of 60 to 70 artists, all Bombay based, are



Madonna with St George by Corregio

month. "We have gone through the weeding out process. We know what our artists are capable of. Some are good at landscapes, some at figures. We know what to assign to each one," Phiroze explains.

Heart or Mind?

Dadiba Pundole, partner of the Pundole Art Gallery at Fountain, Bombay, states that the little that he has seen of the works of Studio Windsor is good. He points out that the nature of the works at Studio Windsor falls outside the purview of his gallery which caters to the modern Indian artist. Regarding the artistic value of the reproductions of the Old Masters, he states: "It depends on what the artist is trying

to express. Sometimes, a copy may have more artistic value than the original!"

Studio Windsor, admittedly, is not trying to outdo the Masters but aiming only to match up to them. "It's a difficult task," Phiroze concedes. "A modern artist does his own thing, expresses his own creativity. We are compared to the Masters." Jehangir explains the difference between the abstract works of modern artists and the figurative paintings of the Masters. "These paintings," he waves to the reproductions that line the walls of his office, "they are works of beauty, done from the heart," he taps the left side of his chest. "Modern art is the work of the mind," he taps his forehead.

He further explains that true art appreciation goes beyond the layman's exclamation, "How beautiful!" A se-

assigned to work on paintings which are finally touched up by four to five master artists who work under the direct supervision of the Vazifdars. "We are like the conductors of an orchestra, like Zubin Mehta, coordinating, refining and putting the final work together," says Jehangir.

The final work they aim to put together is one as close as possible to the original. There are many problems in reaching this goal and one of them stems from the fact that art reflects the cultural backdrop of the artist. In the case of Studio Windsor, at least, the Indian-ness of its artists is discouraged. "Indian artists tend to use brighter colors and the features they paint have a distinct Eastern-ness. We have got to guard against this, tone down the colors, touch up the features," Jehangir explains.

Studio Windsor, however, does not attempt to capture the toll that time has taken on the originals; the cracks and chipping of the paint or the mellowing of the colors. The reproductions are obviously fresher and brighter, but, as Phiroze emphasizes, with modern refinements in restoration techniques, the original colors used by the Masters are being restored again. "The museums in the West are flush with color," he states.

The process, from assigning a painting till the time it finally finds a place for itself on the walls, takes at least a

Young Michelle and Neville with parents Sherna and Phiroze, and Caesar



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rious art connoisseur and collector will always have a professional art appraiser to assist him in his selection. He is looking for the paintings that have what is known as the "master's touch." He cites the case of Picasso. "He has done over 6,000 paintings, but it is the select few which are truly outstanding that have made him famous."

Modern art, according to Jehangir, is a distortion of nature. "The straight line, the colors - black and white - are not nature's creation; they are of human creation, the starting point of civilization." The ultimate work of modern art, according to Jehangir, is a painting with "no touch of nature's creativity. It is purely human creativity."

Jehangir states that over the last 40 years he has personally done over 5,000 paintings and held a number of exhibitions of his own works. One of his works titled *The Theft* consisted of only the frame with the painting cut out. Yet he has not been able to bring himself to sell any of his works. "They are like my children," he says and adds: "I'm not into this thing. I am an architect." About 40 buildings constructed over a period of 48 years stand testimony to this.

Yet Jehangir's interest in art has prompted him to create a new form of painting which he classifies as Modern Classics. These comprise primarily of prints of classic paintings on which modern art designs have been superimposed creating a totally new visual. These creations will also be on view at Studio Windsor and for the first time he has brought himself to sell his work - with his signature. These will be priced at Rs 1,200, frames included. The more expensive reproductions of the Masters will carry no signature, only the stamp of the studio on the back of the canvas.

Art and the Parsis

Are there any Parsi artists linked with Studio Windsor? Phiroze scratches his beard and ponders. "That's strange," he says. "We probably have artists from every community on our team but no... no Parsis" But he draws our attention to one Parsi painter who during the turn of

the century, did excell in reproducing paintings of the Masters. *The Indian Post's* report in his files observes: "A Parsi painter, J. Pithawala, who was at one time the president of the Bombay Art Society, was fairly noted and much appreciated for his copies of classical paintings. Pithawala was a popular artist and his works were even exhibited in Britain. Many of his copies of the masters are with his family in Poona and efforts are on to persuade the National Museum to buy the paintings."

One community that needs the least persuasion to buy the Vazifdars' copies of the masters are the Parsis. "Our Parsi clients are generally well-informed and have seen the world. They know what we are doing here. Our paintings are well-appreciated, but well-appreciated is a long way from the final plunge of buying. After all we are not selling a daily pick-up item," says Phiroze.

If the Vazifdars' paintings have won the approbation of the upper and middle-class Parsis, they have been doing other work that has been well appreciated by the entire community - catering. "Our Hotel Heritage is the most popular place for small navjotes, weddings and family functions. We have catered to thousands of Parsi parties on the terrace... Yes, authentic *lagan nu bhonu* (wedding feast) served on *patras* (banana leaves)." Phiroze explains that the baugs are too large for small functions of up to 125 invitees and these parties invariably land at the Hotel Heritage. When catering for these functions he does not lose sight of the reality that "Parsis eat a lot and Iranis eat more."

The other contribution the family has made to the community is housing. "Dad (Jehangir) was one of the pioneers in the concept of ownership (flats)... and a large percentage of his clients were Parsis," observes Phiroze.

In terms of contribution towards the dwindling numbers in the community, the last two generations of Vazifdars have limited themselves to two children each. In addition to Phiroze, Jehangir and his wife Daisy have a second child, a daughter Zarine, while Phiroze and Sherna have a girl Michelle and a boy Neville. The only reproduction they hope to do in the future is paintings of the Masters.

Same Old Class...



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For Visakhapatnam Steel Project—India's first coast-based steel plant—DASTURCO as the Principal Consultant is providing comprehensive design and engineering services. DASTURCO is also engineering consultant for

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- Silicon Steel Project, Rourkela Steel Plant
- Rourkela modernisation, etc.

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DASTURCO is the consultant to

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TISCO modernisation: Charging hot metal into the 130-ton LD converter



Visakhapatnam Steel Project: Thermal power plant and blower house with three 60 MW turbo-generator units



Misurata Steel Complex, Libya: DR plant



Sponge Iron Plant, Paloncha: DR unit with waste gas cleaning facility



Alloy Steels Plant, Durgapur—Modernisation Stage II: Continuous slab/bloom caster under installation



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INSTITUTIONS

On March 18, 1888 a young man of 32, Jamsetjee Nusserwanji Petit died. While he lived, his father Nusserwanji Manockjee Petit thought his son's dream of building an educational institute for Parsi orphans was impractical. But now that his only son was no more, a bereaved father dedicated his resources and energies to making the dream a reality. Within six months, on October 19, 1888 he opened the Jamsetjee Nusserwanji Petit Parsi Orphanage at Lalbaug, Bombay, in memory of his son. A hundred years later the educational institute, now located on 17 acres of prime land near Poona's famous Bund Gardens and known as the Jamsetjee Nusserwanji Petit Technical High School, rededicated itself to serving the poor and the needy of the community.

"I sincerely hope that the School during its second hundred years will have as much success as it had during its first century and that the long list of eminent old boys will continue to grow," said Sir Dinshaw Manockjee Petit, Fourth Baronet, in his presidential address at the function last October to celebrate the School's centenary when noted jurist Nani Palkhivala was the chief guest. Presently on the rolls are 121 boarders, all Parsis, and 1,000 plus day scholars, seven of whom are Parsis from Poona, all working towards their secondary school certificate



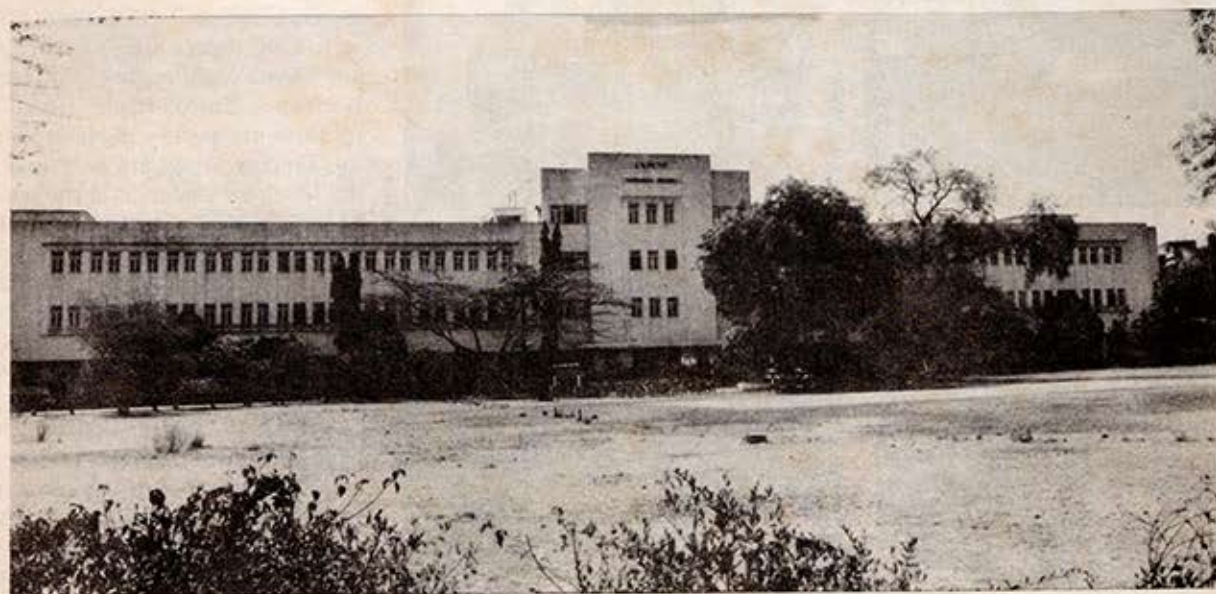
J.N. Petit School: "A second home"

Gustasp Irani

(SSC). To them, the impressive two-storied white building with playgrounds sprawled at its feet is a second home. More so for the boarders, all of them subsidized by the Nusserwanji Manockjee Petit Charity Fund, many dependent fully on grants to finance their stay at the School.

The Petit Fund covers their education fee, books, stationery, clothes, uniforms, sudrehs, pyjamas, food, almost every need. "Expenses per child work out to a little over Rs 800 per month," says Commodore L. S. Mehta (Retd), director of the School. "Parents may pay the full fees if they choose to or whatever they are able to. We would like them to pay something, even if it is a token amount." At present, according to Mehta, the maximum paid towards the upkeep of a student is Rs 100 per month. The total subsidy costs the N. M. Petit Charity Fund around Rs 16 lakhs per year, he adds.

Despite the subsidy, four of the eight dormitories remain empty. "We can accommodate another 100 to 150 boys," says noted industrialist Jamshed Guzder, trustee of the Petit School and also the Bombay Parsi Punchayet. He points out that eight years ago there were about 180 Parsi students. The number has been slowly declining since then. As a result the School decided to advertise the facilities available to Parsis in rural Gujarat. "The financial condition of a lot of Parsi agri-



There are spacious grounds and sufficient funds but not a sufficient number of Parsis avail of the educational opportunities at the J. N. Petit Technical School.

culturists there is, to say the least, critical. They are totally dependent on the whims of the monsoons. As a result of our efforts we are now getting a lot more students from these areas," says Guzder.

In July 1989, 21 students were enrolled as boarders, right from kindergarten to the eighth standard. "Often they come here confused. But over the years their vision expands and they reach a stage of taking for granted what had, in the initial stages, seemed out of their world," says Mehta. For instance he points out that the food is better than they ever get in their villages—eggs, porridge and bread for breakfast; vegetables, dal-rice and fruits for lunch; teatime snacks; vegetables, meat and sweets for dinner.

Even if a child does not recognize the value of good education, his parents do. An unemployed Irani whose son is presently studying in the Institute observes, "They look after everything: my son's clothes, food, education—everything. And thank God my son won't be illiterate like me."



At the centenary (from left): Mehta, Lady Petit, Nani Palkhivala, Sir Dinshaw, Ms Palkhivala

SONI STUDIO



A typical day for a student starts at 5.45 a.m. and ends at 9.45 p.m. His time is structured: there is time for meals, for studies, for school, for games and for religious classes, too. The religious classes are conducted by Ervad Minoo Karkaria, officiating head master, assistant director and in charge of the agiary on the School premises. The younger boys are taught the full navjote prayers and the older ones, the different aspects of the Zoroastrian religion. Karkaria, who is escorted everywhere by his faithful dog, has been with the School for 30 years. "This School is a temple to me," he declares.

Talking about admissions for day scholars, Mehta clarifies that "first preference is given to Zoroastrians." Room is made for them irrespective of classroom capacity. Entrance tests are only to determine the level the student is at and which class he will be ideally suited for. The problem that really is cause for concern to Mehta, however, is the size of the classes. Presently, there are two divisions per class with around 45 to 65 students per division. "An ideal student-teacher ratio would be 30 to 35 students per class," says Mehta. Nevertheless, the results over the years have been encouraging. "Our results are as good or as bad as of any other school—from 75 to 100 percent pass in the SSC examinations."

Due importance is given to technical

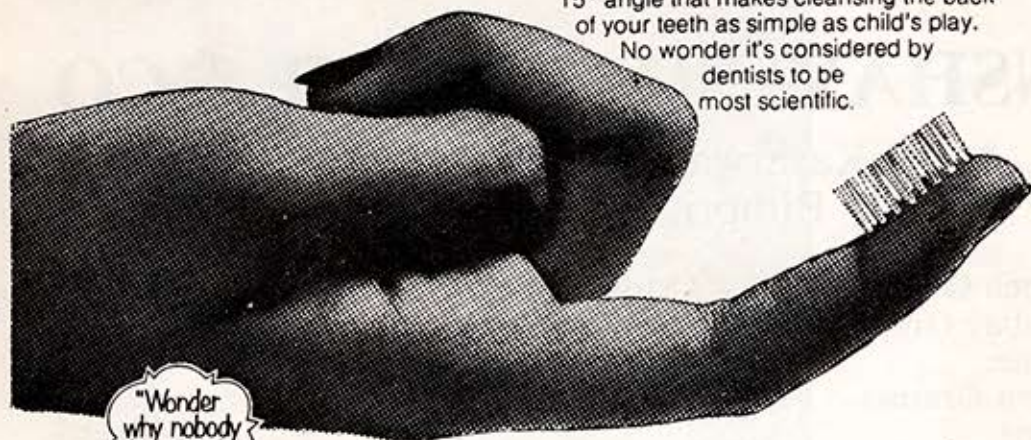
*(Far left and above)
Workrooms geared to impart technical skills to students
(Right) Youngsters being introduced to physical training and gymnastics*

IF ONLY YOUR FINGER HAD BRISTLES...

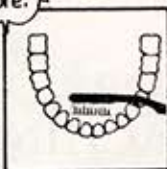
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education: "the idea being that those boys who are not inclined to do well academically are exposed to technical skills from the seventh standard onwards," says Guzder. All students are expected to take two technical subjects. Machine drawing is compulsory; the other optional subject can be welding, turning, fitting or electrical wiring.

In 1962 the School, that was till then exclusively for Parsi boarders, opened its doors to all communities but on the principle that they be admitted as day scholars only. "A large group of our non-Parsi students are from the low income group," says Mehta. "The trustees felt that to meet the objectives of the founders who established the institution for underprivileged Parsis, the same set of aims should be met when educating the non-Parsis." He adds, "We still remain a non-aided School. We don't take a single paisa from any government, municipality or zilla parishad."

Resolving matters concerning the School and charting out the future of the institution are in the hands of the trustees and members of the management committee who meet every month. In addition to Dinshaw Petit and Guzder, the two other trustees are Nanabhoy Jeejeebhoy and Jehangir Taraporewala. The management committee members are: Ms Dosibai Jeejeebhoy, Ms Nergish Palkhivala, Ms Homai Pudumjee, Ms Khurshed Jeejeebhoy, Rusi Sethna, Jehangir Daroga, Homa Petit, Jehangir Petit and Framji Petit.

"In its new garb, the present technical training institute offers the inmates a way of life which, compared to the original orphanage in Parel, could be described as luxurious." This statement was made by the late Naval Tata, then a trustee of the School. One of the institute's most illustrious ex-students (who rose to become chairman of several Tata companies), Tata reminisces about his school days in the centenary memorial brochure: "It was certainly a hard life for 300 poor boys supported on an extremely slender budget for food, clothing and health care...Despite such limitations of amenities, let me make a candid admission that for the 300 boys, through the grace of God, it was a heaven."

In addition to Tata many other well-known Parsis have spent their early formative years at the institution: the late Dastur Framroze Bode, High Priest of the Fasli Atash Kadeh, the late Dinshaw Avari who established a chain of hotels in Pakistan, Framji Sidhwa who founded Globe The-

atres, eminent sports personality Jal Pardiwala, Homi Bodhanwalla, special adviser to the chairman, Tata Steel, to name only a few from the long list of prominent personalities.

The value of good education was recognized even a hundred years ago. On the very day the Orphanage was opened, 89 applications were received for admission, according to the publication brought out to commemorate the School's golden jubilee. Soon the number of students rose to 300. Boys were classified as either boarders if they paid Rs 15 per month towards their upkeep, contributory foundaries if they paid part of their keep and foundaries if they were free. Apart from regular academic studies students were made to develop their skills in trade related subjects like typing, carpentry, printing, cabinetmaking, tailoring and more.

Just as a cheque of Rs 50,000, given by Nusserwanji Manockjee Petit to his dying son Jamsetjee helped establish the J. N. Petit School, many years earlier Nusserwanji had celebrated his son's navjote by making a gift of Rs 25,000 towards building a boarding school for Zoroastrians in Iran, notes the centenary memorial brochure. The son Jamsetjee was reportedly a multi-talented man who mixed inherited business acumen with acquired literary skills. His most famous literary effort was the Gujarati poem *Mahri Majeh*, a descriptive work of nearly 4,000 lines which, according to a critic of the time, initiated into the Gujarati language the use of blank verse. He also authored *Kehvat Mala* a collection of 10,000 proverbs and translated the *Vendidad* into Gujarati from its original Avesta. He was married to his cousin, Heerabai, daughter of Sir Dinshawji Manockjee Petit, First Baronet. The couple had no children.

Nusserwanji survived his son by three years, an emotionally broken man, according to the brochure. On the death of his son he withdrew from the business world in which he, along with his brother, the First Baronet, amassed a huge fortune by cashing in on the spiralling cotton prices on the international markets. These prices had been a direct result of the American Civil War and the supply crunch that followed in its wake. At the end of the Civil War, cotton prices plummeted and with it, the fortunes of many Bombay-based businessmen — 1864-65 were depression years in the city. But not so for the Petit brothers. "Nusserwanji was one of the very few individuals who saw the dangers ahead and escaped the fate which over-

FROM A WELL-WISHER

took hundreds of less careful persons," observed Sir Petit in his presidential address. He added, "Nusserwanji amassed considerable wealth... but instead of keeping his wealth to himself he decided to share it with the less fortunate of the community."

How dear the School was to the Petit family may be gauged from the fact that when in 1897 plague ravaged the city of Bombay, Nusserwanji's wife Dinbai took all the students of the school with her to Jehanbordi in Gujarat to escape the dreaded disease.

Interestingly enough, the Avabai Petit School, which started as an orphanage for girls, at Bandra was built in memory of Nusserwanji's only other child Avabai by her daughter Hamabai Mehta (née Petit). Mehta financed the project by selling all her jewelry valued at over Rs 12 lakhs, according to the J. N. Petit School's golden jubilee souvenir. Since Avabai was married to Sir Petit's son Framji and since Jamsetjee had no children, the Baronet's family came to inherit the responsibility of caring for the two institutions.

The Second Baronet, Avabai's son, ensured that every child leaving the J. N.

"Over the years they reach a stage of taking for granted what had, in the initial stages, seemed out of their world"

Petit Orphanage would get a brand new set of clothes including a pugree, sudreh, kusti and shoes. It was his son, the Third Baronet, who really brought about significant change and improvement by shifting the premises of the Orphanage from Bombay to Poona. Guzder recalls how during a card game of bridge, Sir Sasoon mentioned to the Baronet that he had a piece of land in Poona that he intended to sell. "It was a spur of the moment decision. The Baronet grabbed the offer."

The move however was not hiccup free. "The plans had to be postponed for the duration of the Second World War when

the British Government took over the brand-new building and established in it the Pre-Flying Training College of the Royal Indian Air Force," observed Mehta in his director's address. In 1948 the School finally moved into its new premises and, in doing so, dropped the title Orphanage in favor of Technical High School. "In my opinion he has built what is probably one of the best school buildings in the country," added Guzder.

For those presently enrolled in the School no efforts are being spared to better their lot. "We intend to give the children the very best education possible with good dedicated teachers, up-to-date vocational training and sports facilities. Computer technology, the subject of today, is going to be introduced in the very near future," said Sir Dinshaw in his speech on the centenary occasion. Though the N. M. Petit Charity Fund has a corpus of over one crore rupees to meet its present commitments, the new projects will need more funds. "We are a long way from our goal but by nagging and cajoling we will reach our objective (keeping in mind) the Petit motto 'consequitur quodcunque' which means 'He attains what he seeks.'"

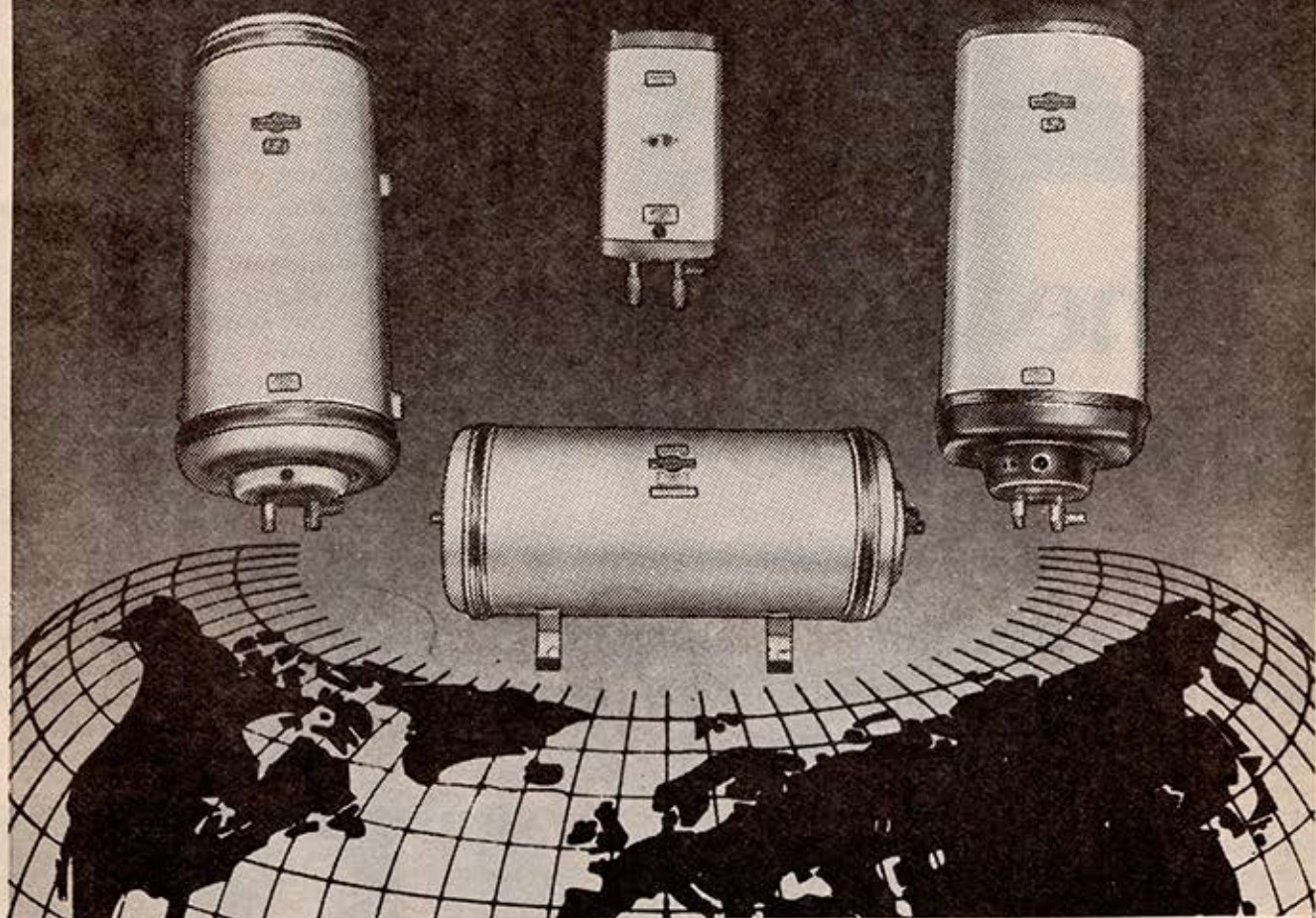
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The voice of orthodoxy

Noshir H. Dadrawala

A correspondent writes about his work experiences under *Jamé's* present and former editor

My association with the *Jam-e-Jamshed* began when I was barely 10 or 11 years old. I still remember my name appearing in print for the first time and my reading it over and over again for days together. The name was one amongst four or five others. All of us had won the weekly color contest. This relationship became more meaningful when as a teenager I actually began corresponding with the then editor, the late Adi Marzban. The letters, painstakingly written in ink with the choicest stationery, dealt with subjects ranging from the proper use of the English language to the mysteries of the Bermuda triangle. Adi was a man of wide and varied interest and our writings stimulated each other. He kept publishing my letters and I kept writing. Then one day I decided to meet him in person. I was not sure whether

I would be welcome without prior appointment. I later learnt that in order to meet Adi, one never required any appointment. One merely had to walk into his most untidy cabin.

And so we met that day over a cup of coffee, amidst heaps of books, magazines, crosswords, ballpens and a hundred different odds and ends. Adi was attired in simple baggy trousers and a shirt, the very picture of a man at peace with himself and the world. Deep within him lay a storehouse of knowledge, wit and, of course, mischief. We developed a liking for each other and this was the beginning of a long and rewarding friendship which lasted till his death.

I began writing on Parsi institutions; on subjects like religion and politics. As time went by, journalism began to grow

on me. Each article was an improvement over the last. Under Adi's watchful eye, many an article found its way into the waste paper bin. It hurt sometimes. But today when I sit back and reflect, I realize that what Adi did was probably the right thing. Around this time I also came in touch with the managing director, Russi Dhondy, who is now also the editor.

Over the years the articles Adi rejected, I got published through Russi. If Adi was shrewd and diplomatic, Russi was bold and uncompromising. If Adi would reject an article on grounds of stirring a hornet's nest or due to its lengthy nature, Russi would prevail upon Adi (mostly in my absence) and see the article through. If Adi used the red and blue pen liberally, Russi never did, at least as far as my articles were concerned. If Adi was my mentor, Russi was the tower to lean upon. If Adi had the sobering effect, Russi was the driving force. Both managed equally well in bringing out the best in me.

For years together the *Jamé* boycotted the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjuman of India and its executive council meetings. I had my reservations too. However, I did not see any harm in covering the deliberations for a widely read Parsi daily. I discussed the matter with Russi and within minutes he arranged a meeting with Adi and issued an identity card making me an official representative and honorary correspondent of the *Jamé*. Hereafter, there was no looking back. From the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) press conferences and Federation meetings to interviews with noteworthy Parsis, the columns of the newspaper were flung open



Nergish Palkhivala presents a purse to Silla Marzban (in specs) as Dr Aspi Golwalla applauds

(Top) Jamsetji Jejeebhoy presents a casket to Nanabhoy Jeejeebhoy (in pugree) as Noble (left) and Taleyarkahn look on | Photos: A. F. R. Suder

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to me and some reports (mostly those of Federation meetings) were published in as many as three instalments. Many a battle was fought through the columns of *Jamé* but never will I forget the battle I fought for the revamping of the Parsi Ward at Sir J. J. Hospital or the case of the Tithal and Bardi Sanatoriums (which had fallen into disuse). Sometimes these articles offended a few, but Adi and Russi stood behind me like a rock.

A year prior to his death Adi began a spicy column under the pseudonym "Whiplash." It kept readers guessing as to the identity of the author. The column was in keeping with the author's ever mischievous nature, "twisting the tail" of the community's leadership. But alas, Adi's failing health took its toll and the whip was consigned with Adi to its place of everlasting rest.

Adi's death marked the end of an era. Witty and thought-provoking editorials as also stimulating columns like "Personally Speaking" and "My Mail Bag" died a natural death.

Under Russi's editorship, *Jamé's* policies underwent quite a few changes, although the stand remained "medium orthodox." The columns, especially of the weekly, were opened to several new contributors. While on one hand columns on beauty, sports, health and films—contributed by professionals—flourished, sharp and at times unrestrained editorials on cases like the Masina Hospital led to legal battles. Interviews and book reviews received a further boost. I was given a free hand and I made the most of it.

Jamé's services to the community have been many and varied. "Today after over a century and a half of struggle (Asia's second oldest newspaper) has run out of breath. The *Jamé Weekly* continues to hold the fort and one hopes it will continue to do so for many more years," noted Homi Taleyarkhan, member of the minorities commission, at a function organized at the Framjee Cawasjee Institute on Sunday, July 30, 1989 to felicitate the *Jam-e-Jamshed*.

For years it published the long obituary columns as also the long list of donors to charitable institutions like the B. D. Petit Parsee General Hospital, the Byramjee Jeejeebhoy Parsee Charitable Institution and others free of charge. On the other hand, apart from the elaborate paidast-uthamna (obituary) columns, it had little news value. Yet the daily had a place in Parsi homes and today when it is no more,

or at least in a state of suspended animation, Parsis feel the pinch more than ever before. The morning cup of tea is no longer the same to many aged Parsis.

While it has contributed to the rise and growth of many a worthy institution, it has also played a major role in exposing and bringing about the fall of several dubious organizations. Like a mirror, it has for years reflected the views of the orthodox section of the community. That it faltered on certain occasions, one cannot but admit. Yet *Jamé* was, and continues to

**For years it
published free of
charge the long
obituary columns as
also the long list of
donors**

be, the only truly Parsi newspaper of its kind.

Extolling the virtues of the newspaper at the felicitation function, former trustee of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet, Dr Nelie Noble called *Jamé* "the voice of the community" and attributed a policy of medium orthodoxy to it in matters of religion and politics. She was also happy that while Sir Jamsetji Jeejeebhoy, First Baronet, as the trustee of the Parsi Punchayet, was instrumental in having set up the newspaper in 1832, it was in the fitness of things that Sir Jamsetji Jeejeebhoy, Seventh Baronet, was the chairman of the present felicitation committee. The highlight of the evening was the presentation of a silver casket and citation composed by noted Gujarati scholar Dr Ratan Marshall of Surat and read by Dastur (Dr) Firoze Kotwal, High Priest of the H. B. Wadia Atash Bahram—to the ailing Nanabhoy Jeejeebhoy. But for this philanthropist, the newspaper would have died almost a decade earlier.

A few weeks prior to the felicitation program when the editor announced that the daily issue of the *Jam-e-Jamshed* would be suspended until further notice, it sent shock waves throughout the community. However, those who had been observing the newspaper from close quarters were only surprised that the newspaper had managed to survive so long. The 157-year-old institution had been going through

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a bad spell for years. Multiple readership (four to six Parsi families sharing one copy of the *Jamé*) and lack of sufficient advertisements which form the backbone of any publication worth its name, were two of the main causes responsible for the downfall.

Business houses like Tatas, Godrejs and Wadias spend crores of rupees on advertisements in secular newspapers and Doordarshan, but not on Parsi institutions. "To be secular does not mean you should not support Parsi institutions," asserted noted tax consultant and BPP trustee Homi Ranina at the function. On the other hand, the lack of Gujarati readership within the community, lack of good staff, failure to professionalize the columns, etc have all been responsible for the decline in circulation.

Today, the daily is no more. There are efforts to revive it and the community would be none the more happy and grateful. However, one has to face reality. The cost of newsprint has become prohibitive. Even national dailies and eveningers with huge advertising revenue and readership are feeling the pinch.

The circumstances under which the newspaper had been established have changed over the years. *Jamé* had been set up under the editorship of Pestonji Motivala to defend the Punchayet against the whiplash of *The Bombay Samachar*, founded by Fardunji Marzban. But subsequently, the Marzbans switched over to the *Jam-e-Jamshed* and nurtured it for four generations.

Years ago, Pirojsha (Pijam) Marzban had said, the day *Jamé* will give up its orthodox stand, the newspaper will crumble. Today the *Jamé* daily has closed down (temporarily or otherwise) for reasons Pirojsha probably never envisaged.

Jamé has to grapple with the times. If the daily must be revived, efforts must first be made to generate sufficient revenue on a sustained basis. This apart, the columns need to be made more newsworthy, educative and informative. All the ingredients that go into making a good professional newspaper must be pumped into it, in generous amounts.

The Parsi community is an enlightened community and has so far never been found wanting in supporting good causes. The *Jamé* daily is one such cause. It needs the entire community's support—from subscribers to advertisers. However, the community is also a very fastidious and demanding community, and the *Jamé* management will need more than just finance and determination to revive the daily.

A losing battle

Adherence to old customs and hesitancy to move with the times took its toll of the *Jam-e-Jamshed*

It was with poignant pain that the Parsis read about the discontinuance of the *Jam-e-Jamshed* daily. This was not unexpected.

For more than two decades the newspaper had been fighting a losing battle. Most of the reasons for the failure of the newspaper were beyond the control of the proprietors. Being a sectarian paper of a minuscule minority, its readership was limited. Again, the Parsis increasingly took to English. Some went abroad, never to return. The ever increasing costs of bringing out the paper and very limited scope for getting advertisements led the proprietors to take the inevitable decision.

At this point memories come crowding upon us. *Jam-e-Jamshed* had its day. It represented the ideas, ideologies and staunch beliefs of the community. It was in fact the voice and conscience of the Parsis. At a time when the winds of change were blowing over the country under the influence of western culture, there was a genuine fear of the community being swept off its feet. At that critical juncture the *Jamé* stood firmly for our tried and tested customs and traditions. Its contribution towards the unity of the community was immense.

But even a good thing can be overdone. The *Jamé* clung too closely to the old antiquated customs; it refused to move with the times and turned its back upon great and profound Parsi scholars and social reformers. It ignored the voice of the creative minority of the community. Communities and nations bring about their decay in several ways. In an effort to escape the present they adopt two routes: archaism, which is an excessive respect for the past; and futurism, an excessive concern for the future.

Another factor which tends to hamper progress is the tendency to rest on one's oars. In other words it means complacency over an accomplishment, overlooking the challenges facing the community or civilization.

These characteristics slowly and steadily took root in the *Jamé*. Up to a point it rendered valuable service to the community by holding up old morality, old customs and traditions. But it missed the bus. Its very virtue became its weakness. Consistency is commendable but journalism must keep abreast of times, inform and mold the opinion of the readers. It must be alive and vibrant. Somehow, its task became more difficult and it became a hostage to orthodoxy.

The management made gallant efforts but all the factors were against it.

Every Parsi will miss the *Jamé* daily. In its own time it has fought many a battle for the community; it has given us our journalists, writers and scholars. For 157 years, it has been the guiding light of the community.

Now the *Jam-e-Jamshed Weekly* struggles on. The task before its proprietors is formidable and fraught with heavy responsibilities. Parsis expect that the weekly should not go the way of the daily. Those at the helm of affairs will be judged at the bar of history. We are not talking about an ordinary newspaper. Let us bear in mind that it is the second oldest newspaper of Asia; it has been the voice and conscience of a small but splendid community and its name is already enshrined in the history of the Parsis. It must not be allowed to die. Mere brave words cannot save it. It is too late to make amateurish attempts or experiments. There is no denying the fact that the present management has given the work of keeping the *Jam-e-Jamshed* going, its full attention and dedication. It has, however, so far failed to do the trick. Something more is needed.

We hope, wish and pray that Ahura Mazda will give the correct guidance to the proprietors of the *Jam-e-Jamshed*.

Reprinted with permission from an editorial in *The Bombay Samachar*, July 9, 1989.

From a trolley retrieval contract to the establishment of handicraft shops, Farida Mobedji has been strengthening her business hold at the Bombay International Airport



JAYHESH FERNANDEZ

BUSINESS TAKEOFF From Bombay Airport

"Just as we Indians have a craze for foreign items, it is the same with them (tourists)," laughs Ms Farida Mobedji who, after successfully managing a trolley retrieval contract, has ventured to establish two handicraft shops — Chandragupt and Era International — at Bombay airport's international terminal at Sahar.

"Rajasthani blankets, silver jewelry and embroidered Rajasthani clothes," says Mobedji, "sell the most." A favorite with the foreigners is the *beedi* which they call the 'Indian cigarette,' she informs. One packet of *beedi* worth around Rs 1.15 in the local market fetches five to eight rupees, she cites as an example of the price that the foreigners are willing to pay for popular items. Other items of saleable value are Indian musical instruments and Indian dolls which the Japanese are particularly fond of.

"By end August I hope to have two to three more shops at the Sahar terminal," she adds. "They will be in the transit lounge and like Chandragupt they too will stock handicrafts, traveller's requisites and even medicines,

spices and eatables."

In early February this year, Mobedji's Era International was among the 15 shops in the transit lounge damaged by the fire that swept through a part of the terminal. "It was designed in the shape of a Rajasthani hut and sold exclusive Indian crafts, traditional dresses and objects in bronze, brass and silver." Farida had anticipated that the restoration work would be completed by end August.

From where does she get her exclusive artifacts? Farida travels extensively throughout the country in search of rare handicrafts and apparel for her shops. The embroidered and patchwork garments are from nearer home, made at a wholesaler's in Matunga where Mobedji selects her own design and color combinations. The Kashmiri goods are ordered directly from Kashmir, the marble items from Agra and the brassware from Muradabad.

Apart from the trolley retrieval contract which she runs under the name of Voyage International, 27-year-old Mobedji has recently undertaken a two-year cleaning contract named after her

mother Manizé. The work involves looking after the cleanliness of the customs hall at the Sahar airport. Planning to expand her horizon further, Mobedji hopes to bag a similar cleaning contract at the Santacruz airport by the end of the year.

Mobedji is also interested in export of handicrafts, "on a small scale," she points out. Last October she held an exhibition at the Ripple Art Gallery at Marine Lines to canvas orders. "Basically Indians are not interested in these things," so the exhibition was not as successful as she would have liked it to be, she says candidly. "But I did get a small response from the staff of the Canadian consulate." She is thus trying to get small export orders through her family and friends abroad.

The young-entrepreneur finds her business very satisfying but she misses out on her social life, she says ruefully. Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings she is at the airport supervising her staff as early as 7.30, as those are the days earmarked for inspection by the airport directors. Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday mornings are

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kept free for her weekly rounds to buy artifacts for the shops. The rest of each day is spent between Chandragupt and Era International, and ensuring that the customs hall is spick-and-span. Coming home can be as late as 10.30 or even 11 p.m.

Though quite strict with her employees (in the trolley and cleaning business, Mobedji has about 500 employees working for her, 120 of them being women), they get to see the softer side of this career woman when she meets them at the monthly tea party she hosts. There, Mobedji gives a patient hearing to each one's grievances, and gets to know their family members as well. She says she makes it a point to be present for their social functions and even visits ailing employees in the hutments.

The businesswoman also squeezes a

little social work into her hectic schedule. She says that she renders assistance in different ways: helping those of her staff who live in the Sahar slums with family and welfare matters, getting children admission into schools and colleges, and donating blood frequently. She is also a regular visitor at Mother Teresa's home in Bombay and in July 1988 was appointed a special executive magistrate by the government.

The plump executive had started a travel agency - Aftab International - at Dadar in 1985 when she was 23 years old. Though it has since been sold, "in 1985 the travel business was the best business and there was not much competition," she says. "Also, I already had my liaison business, so I had the contacts." Today, four years later, Mobedji recalls that she started her career as a telephone operator at Hotel President after completing her twelfth standard

from Burhani College of Commerce and Arts. Her schooling was at the J.J. High School at Fort where the only thing she remembers being good at was elocution. After a two-year stint at the President she joined Maharaja Builders as a receptionist and received her first lessons in dealing with "the Mantralaya, the municipality and the police." If anyone brought out the latent potential for public relations in Farida, it was her boss Dhirubhai Sheth, she acknowledges. But management problems forced her to leave the company. "Rich with (her) contacts," she set herself up as a liaison officer for Maharaja Builders. "Then I thought of starting a travel agency," she recalls.

It was at this time that she saw an advertisement in the papers inviting tenders for Sahar terminal's trolley retrieval contract. She bagged the contract and while she was managing the trolley business, put in a tender for a shop in the departure lounge. Thus Chandragupt was born and emboldened by its success she later opened Era International. "Handicrafts are the only items saleable at the airport," she insists. "People of all countries are passing through, so Indian culture has to be represented."

Not very keen to reveal the financial side of her business, she notes that she took a loan from a bank to start the two shops. Tightlipped about her annual turnover, Mobedji acknowledges the shops' profitability: "Otherwise I wouldn't go on with the shops," she avers.

At an interview with *Parsiana* on July 19, 1989, Mobedji, visibly moved, says that she owes her success to her late father Rustom who was her guiding force. "My sole aim was to provide him with all the luxuries of life. But four months before Chandragupt was inaugurated, he passed away," regretted the daughter. Youngest among three brothers and three sisters, she took the responsibility of supporting her parents after her brothers and sisters were settled.

When asked how she feels about being successful at such a young age, she says, "It scares and thrills me." Until now she has been ploughing back her profits into her shops. "But by the end of the year I will start to get returns from my two new shops." Once this materializes, Mobedji says, "I want to help my community to the maximum. It needs so much... But I don't want to do it in my name..."

Mobedji at Chandragupt



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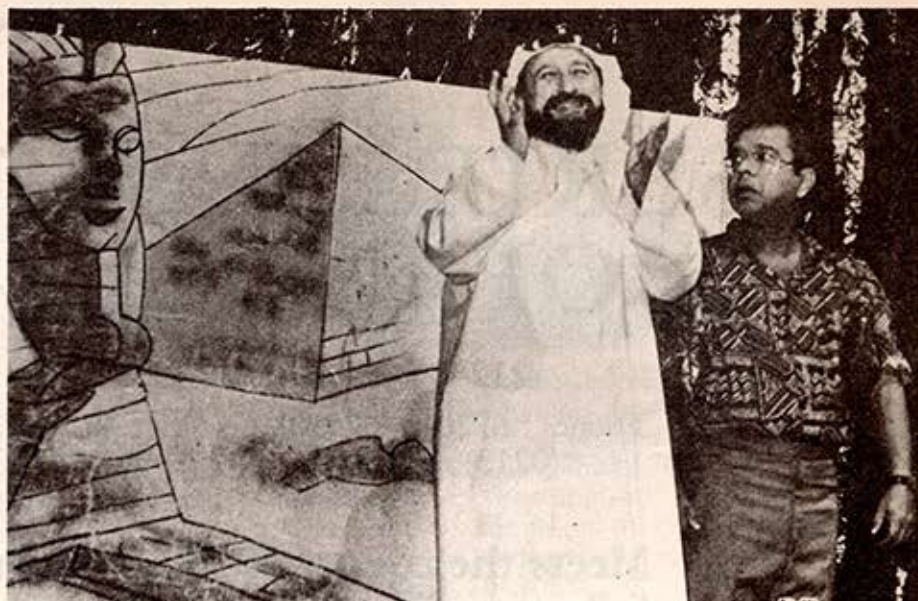


Protection from Birth Onwards

THEATER

A theater affair

Geeta Doctor



From Parsi *nataks* to English dramas, Burjor Patel has helped professionalize theater in Bombay

In an ideal world actors, like royalty, should only be viewed from a distance. Reality tends to destroy the aura that gives them their special status. Most actors, sensing the danger, hide behind a variety of selves, masks, postures, personas.

Burjor Patel's persona is that of an ordinary, everyday sort of fellow. He looks, when he walks into the office at *The Statesman* where he has worked for over two decades, as though he might have problems with his tax consultant, his digestion and his wife – an imaginary one of course; not the talented actress Ruby Patel whom he happens to have married in the best loved of theatrical traditions, after first meeting her on stage. As he talks however, the ordinary-man mask slips away. The slow nasal drawl and the Walter Matthau mannerisms disappear to reveal a person with quicksilver reactions and a manner so animated that I begin to think of him as a very handsome young man. I am reminded of Pip, the Dickensian hero of *Great Expectations*. Burjor

Patel is like a child who has got onto a carousel that has never stopped spinning.

Every once in a while, another mask slips into place. It is a magician's mask, a deadpan face in which the rubbery muscles have been trained to move in life-like grimaces. Behind the facade a pair of shrewd eyes are watching, waiting for a reaction. The look belongs to a master-magician, the King of Laughter, as Burjor Patel describes him, the doyen of modern Gujarati-English theater, Adi Marzban. In a written tribute, Patel notes, "Today's frontline performers, directors and producers have, at one time or the other, passed through the hands of Adi Marzban... Although he had no children, he has, perhaps, the largest theater family in the country."

He does not add that he was both son and heir-apparent to the Marzban magic kingdom. Until in the way of all sons – who must, as in the Greek myth, kill their father – he broke away and started his own theatrical company. Burjor Patel has all the inwardness and strength of the man who would be the king of theater, yet for some reason is not.

"I'm an actor of a kind," he says. "I am also known as a person in my official capacity as Branch Manager of The

Patel's "obsession with the theater:" (top) playing the role of an Arab in Bottoms Up; (left) with wife Ruby in a scene from the INT production, Lagan Khel



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Statesman. I've not acted for a long time now. I was an actor of the Parsi-Gujarati plays of the '50s and '60s. It was a golden age. Adi Marzban was at the height of his powers. I left him in 1966. I don't act at all now in the English plays. I don't think that the kind of English that I speak matches the kind of English that is required on stage at the West End. At least I don't have that kind of confidence."

Patel recapitulates his involvement with the footlights: "I've done both types of theater. I've done commercial theater. Adi always had an eye on the box office and I learnt that from him. So we started the suspense comedies and thrillers like *Hello Inspector* and *Catch me if you can*, where you try to put a smile on the face of the audience. And I've done plays like *Shadow Box* where we had the best talent working for us but where we lost maybe 30 thousand or 40 thousand rupees, which is a big loss.

"In a way we are in show business. You can't ignore what the audience wants. I would like to do plays like *Bottoms up*; I would like to reach out to larger audiences. I like to do fun plays but that does not mean that I am not serious about theater. There is a discerning theater audience, which wants, I don't like to use the word 'experimental' but 'artistic' plays. For instance we did a play called *Nuts* where (Patel's daughter) Shernaz did the main role and then we did *Broadway B...*? which also tackled a different sort of theme. I've done these plays, what you would call good theater or meaningful theater, but that is not to say that I can dismiss the bedroom comedies. You need real talent there to bring them off successfully. It's only through these plays that I can afford to try out the more serious plays. As long as we can provide good theater, as long as we don't let the audiences down - they expect a certain standard from us - it does not matter whether it is a comedy or a serious play.

"Unfortunately the English plays that are being written in India today are few and far between. I agree that the plays that we do don't always relate to our own lifestyle, but if the performance is a good one, the problems that they tackle may offer some resemblance to ourselves."

Tracing the history of theater in Bombay, Patel says that the Elphinstone College's Dramatic Club dated back to



"I like to do fun plays but that does not mean that I am not serious about theater"

1860. But the Parsis had already established their own dramatic club, the Parsi Natak Mandali, a couple of years earlier. The peculiar combination of Gujarati and English they parodied was also to be seen in *The Bombay Samachar*. It is not entirely accidental that the names that are associated with journalism should also find an echo in theatrical circles. The journals of the time embodied a certain type of crusading spirit, searching for new modes of expressing the instinct towards independence. The stage required new material and most of this was provided by the writers working at the fledgling native presses.

Why middle-class Parsis responded so avidly and energetically to the theater is a mystery; to merely say that it was because they were better educated, is only half the answer. They built playhouses and for a long time "Pilahouse" was a synonym for the localities where Parsis lived. They organized touring companies that went to different parts of the country.

These plays were in Urdu and since not many people understood the language, they had to resort to short scenes full of action or a broad humor that

could break through cultural barriers. Patel pointed out that the audience for the Parsi theater in Bombay also included the Gujaratis, Bohras and other communities.

The comic revue with music and entertainment that is a feature of the current '80s, as exemplified in *Bottoms up*, probably had its antecedents in these early skits. It is said that wherever the Parsi troupes performed, the seeds of theater were sown, that is to say the conventions of a modern proscenium style theater. When they performed in Mysore for instance, the Maharaja immediately started a play group in the palace. This is an interesting reversal of trends: The Parsi drama groups made it possible for the middle-class to take part in theater, whereas traditionally it was the court that patronized such leisure activities. The process of commercialization also meant that a more professional theater was initiated a long time back and is not merely, as is sometimes stated, a post *Bottoms up* factor.

Even in the '50s if a play ran for six full shows, the play could be said to have been a great success. Actors had to bring everything - the makeup, the clothes, any props they needed. And, of course, they had to put their hand to any stage activity - lighting, prompting, keeping the accounts - that needed to be done.

Recalls Patel, "My love for the theater was from the days of school, the Bharda New High School. Every year there was a competition - only scenes from Shakespeare. We had an entire Shakespearean wardrobe at our disposal and a small stage, and for me acting was a passion. We only did the classics; Shakespeare of course, and Shaw, Galsworthy and Jonson. For the competition, I did a scene from *Julius Caesar*. I remember I played Cassius. I was hoping to win the individual prize. Actually it was won by a boy called Jhangoo. Even as ex-students we were invited to come and train the next set or the ex-students would come and direct a play for us. But it was not just theater that we took seriously. At that time my first love was cricket. The Bharda High School came up to the (interschool) finals at least once."

It was while he was in college that Adi Marzban first spotted him. The meeting between the young Burjor and Adi Marzban at the Elphinstone College theater group was only to be expected. What Patel did not expect, he says rue-

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fully, was that he would be kept waiting in the wings for so long by Marzban before being given a role. "It was very unnerving. Here I was, a college prize-winner, and all I was doing was attending rehearsals and nobody was even noticing me. Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow – it stretched on for six weeks. 'What the hell is this?' I thought. But what he did was a good thing. When my time came, it was the scene of a meeting, just two or three lines of a play called *Shirinbai nu Shantiniketan*. I was very eager for it.

"He did not have any young male lead at that time, so gradually I got those roles. There were non-Parsi actors also, by the way. I soon found myself playing the part of the husband. When Ruby joined us we did a play together as young lovers. Adi first saw her in a school play. She was studying at the Alexandra (Girls' English Institution) and though she was interested in theater, her real interest at that time was in running. But Adi spotted her talent straight away and she became one of his all-time best actresses. We had so many talented people at that time; Piloo Wadia for instance. So, while I did get the lead roles, I must mention that Adi's greatest forte was in writing... the meatier character roles woven into all his comedies. Adi was very fond of women and for women he wrote the especially meatier character roles. He would start with just a small germ of an idea. And if there was an entertainment program, for the Parsi New Year or some occasion like that, he would bring an old theme up-to-date by portraying the changing lifestyles. His comedies were satires on family life. The audience loved them. The Parsis are a strong community. They can take a joke against themselves."

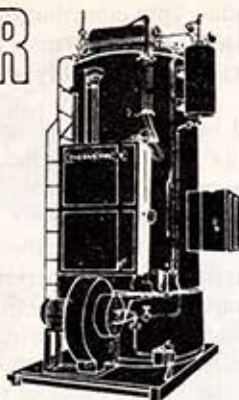
While awaiting his career in law to begin – a long process for which he did not have the patience – Patel accepted Marzban's offer to join the advertising department of the *Jam-e-Jamshed*. "He wanted me to be a part of his theater group so he took me with him and I virtually became his right hand. They treated me like their own son. But gradually there were differences between us. I worked with him till 1960 and then joined *The Times of India* as assistant advertisement manager.

All through his acting life, Patel has managed a professional career, including, as he says with some pride, a stint

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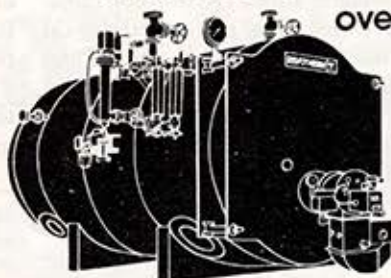
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When he joined *The Statesman* in '69 "They knew of my theater obsession," he recalls. But that did not interfere with his theater schedule. "When I was posted to Delhi for a short while, my love for the theater started to come in the way of my duty to *The Statesman*. Not that it bothered me. What I would do was to fly from Delhi, perform on Sunday and then fly back on Monday. That was how I managed for at least three months, until they realized that it was no use keeping me out of the theater. The play was *Lafra Sadan* - Uproar in the house. It really created an uproar in those days. There were 120 shows. It was a record of its kind."

By that time he had joined the Indian National Theatre (INT) as a director and producer. He rates the years between '68 to '78 as the best years of Gujarati theater. For one thing the INT, which was formed as a trust, had plenty of money available for giving grants. The artistes were all paid, and it gave them the freedom to choose the more unusual plays that were being written. Different directors would come forward so there was a lot of cross fertilization of ideas. During the same period the Theatre Unit also had some

very strong personalities like Derek Jeffries, Sultan Padamsee and Ebrahim Alkazi who took charge of the group. Patel formed a Parsi wing within the INT and then started his own Burjor Patel Productions. In 1978 Adi Marzban lost his "right hand," Pesi Khandalava, in a car accident and invited Patel to form the Adi Marzban-Burjor Patel Productions.

Between them they had managed to introduced a new genre, the sex-comedy with plays such as *Move over Mrs. My darling daughter*, *Never too late*, *Why not stay for breakfast?* and the ever popular *Cactus Flower*, though possibly there was nothing to compare with *Ah Norman*, directed by Marzban in '73 to underline the fact that finally the permissive stage had arrived in Bombay. But Patel notes that even as he seemed at the height of his success, Marzban began to lose his touch. "His writing became stale. He did not move with the times. He continued to do plays till the very end. But in a way Parsi theater died even while Adi was living." Instead, both the Gujarati theater and the English theater started to grow.

Describing the current trend Patel adds, "Theater has become a business. Artistes can now hope to earn Rs 500 and more per night and maybe there

will be eight performances in a month. I don't think we have reached a stage where we can compare ourselves with the West, but you can earn an Indian living wage. You can call it a full-time career. I think this is what you can call my contribution, if you want to see it in those terms. In personal terms I'm comfortably off. My demands in life are not much, so when you say (that theater has become) commercial it's not just for the money; it's important in terms of being able to provide the best that you can."

He describes how he had a most satisfying experience playing to audiences in the USA, the small pockets of Indians living around New York, and Chicago, who came with tears of laughter and nostalgia, to see a revival of the old Gujarati-English comedies. "It was a touching experience. I think I am a very emotional person; I get touched very easily. I have been a part of people's lives. In a way so many people are a part of me."

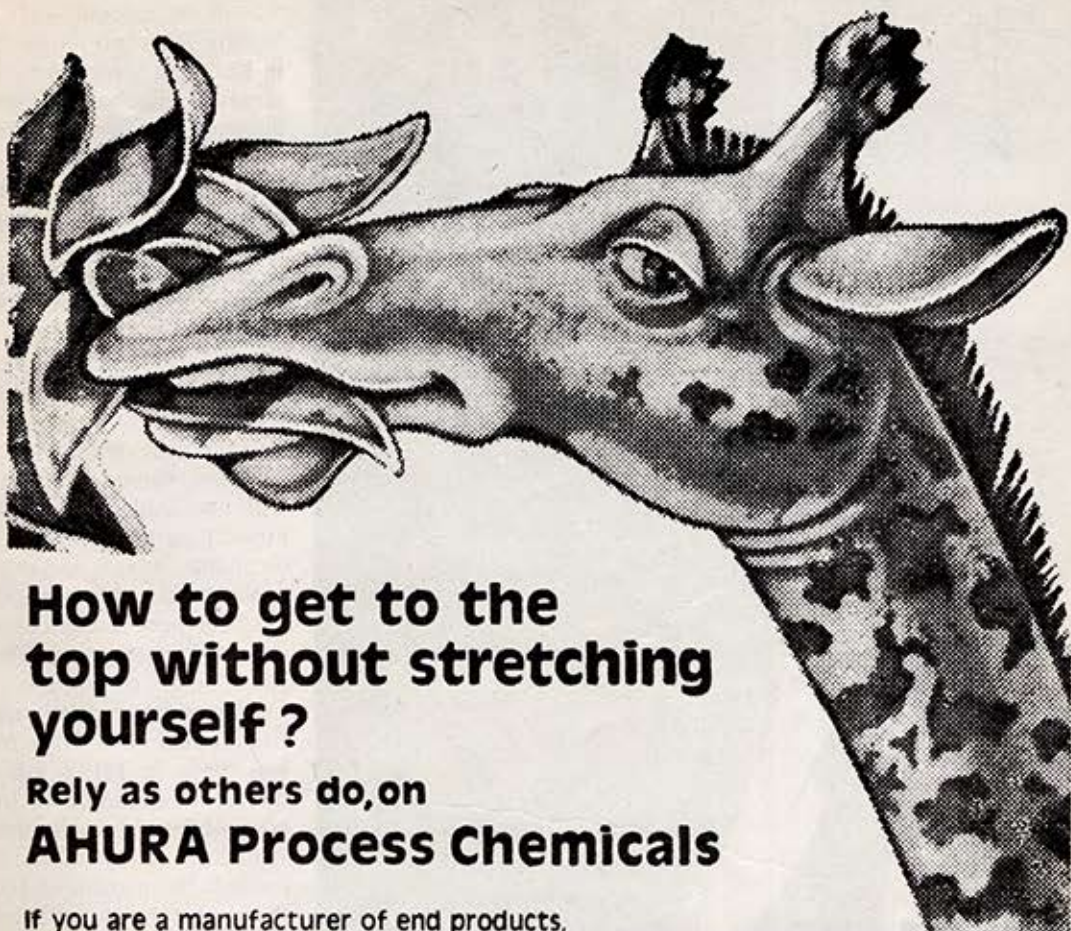
For an uncrowned king of the contemporary theater, it is a modest summing-up.

This interview with Burjor Patel was conducted prior to his taking over as advertising manager of the Khaleej Times in Dubai.

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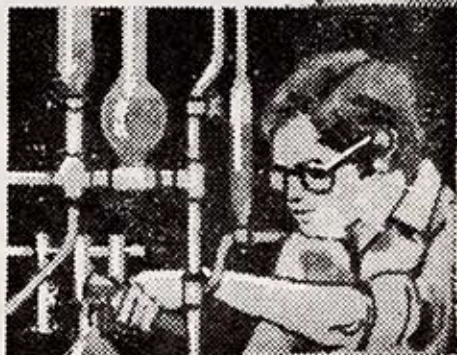
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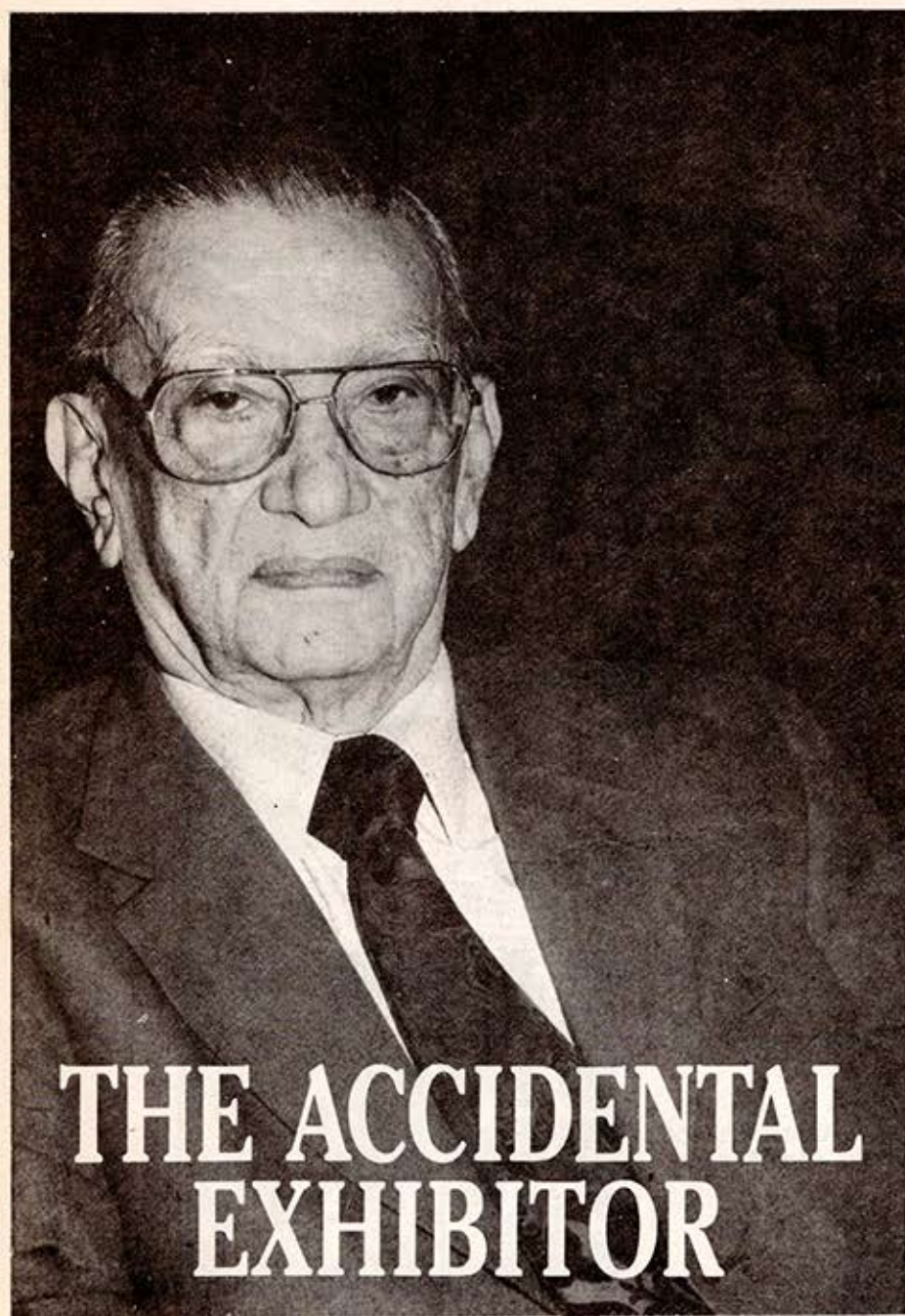


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Homi J. Rogers

Peshotan Kuka's contribution to the growth of Indian cinema was recognized at the film industry's platinum jubilee celebrations in Madras recently

In the early thirties when Indian cinema was in its nascent stage and Peshotan Sorabji Kuka no movie mogul, it was in Kolhapur's warm crucible that Kuka received his baptism into the dicey business of film exhibition and was first anointed to glory. "In 1935 the Raja of Kolhapur built a theater there especially for me to run," reminisces Kuka, the octogenarian chairman of Goodwill Theatres Pvt Ltd and Cine Properties and Finance Pvt Ltd which own and run Bombay's Novelty and Dreamland cinemas, sited a furlong apart. The honor was doubled, as Kuka retells with a faraway look creeping into his eyes, when the cinema house, Rajaram, named after the king, opened with unparalleled fanfare — the Raja himself came drawn in a procession of elephants, horses and even cheetahs.

Since then, for over 50 years, Kuka has been honored and feted by heads of state — kings and presidents alike. The latest honor to come his way, on the Indian cinema's platinum jubilee (the first Indian film *Raja Harishchandra* was made in 1913), was conferred by the Film Federation of India, the apex body of the Indian film industry, for his "valuable and significant contribution towards the growth of Indian cinema." Presenting the award at a function held belatedly — symptomatic with the industry — on April 16, '89 at the University Centenary Hall in Madras, was India's President R. Venkataraman.

"The industry wanted to honor 75 living people who have and are continuing to contribute actively and responsibly to it. And I happened to be one of the 75," says Kuka with candid modesty. Yet, he cannot hide his happiness as he recalls, with a justifiable glint of pride, the star-studded function when the President of India presented him with a shawl and an award. For 55 years he has dedicated himself to the industry, during which time — barring production — there is no sphere Kuka has not dabbled in. The founder president of the Theatre Owners' Association, Kuka is now its patron for life.

The acceptance of two theaters Capitol and Venus in Kolhapur, which was then the cradle of the film industry in western India, on management basis, marked Kooka's initial foray into the

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field of film exhibition. The early experiments succeeded, and the full regalia honors paid by the king, spurred Kuka to expand, accepting similar arrangements for theaters at Sangli, Ichalkaranji, Pune, Kirkee, Bombay, Bilimora, Surat, Ahmedabad, Baroda and Nadiad. The magic in Kuka's wand lay in the fact that he would take up dilapidated and neglected theaters, and turn them around. In the course of his career, Kuka has owned, leased, and/or controlled nearly 50 theaters, including around 15 cinema houses outside India in the West Indies, British Guyana, Kenya and Singapore. Recognized as pioneers of Indian cinema worldwide, Kuka's companies, Indian Film Combine Pvt Ltd and India Overseas Film Distributors Pvt Ltd with branch offices at Port of Spain, Nairobi, Beirut and Singapore, owned theaters and distributed Indian films worldwide. He thus enlarged the market for Indian cinema much before the government or the industry worked towards this aim. With new taxation policies, embargos on transfer of foreign exchange, and the demise of his partners - M. B. Billimoria, the Naterwallas of Evergreen Pictures, the legendary Modis (Sohrab and his brother Keki who owned Excelsior cinema, which also Kuka managed for some time), etc - Kuka sold his shares in cinemas abroad.

Now, his interests are centered around just two cinema houses - his flagship theater, Novelty, situated at Bombay's bustling Grant Road, and Dreamland, the renovated Krishna Talkies, in a lane across the road,

"Never be in service, for the root of the word is in 'servitude,' which means slavery"

within earshot of the nuptials at Cama Bag. Fifty years ago, in 1938, when Kuka first started to manage Novelty, it was a decrepit old theater, bypassed by the best films. "I became a financier of films under sufferance," says Kuka with disarming honesty, recalling how he would part-finance films on the understanding that when completed they would be given to him for exhibition. This led him into distribution, "also by sufferance," and his company, New India Pictures Corporation distributed 12 pictures in the days when Kuka was bent on creating a market.

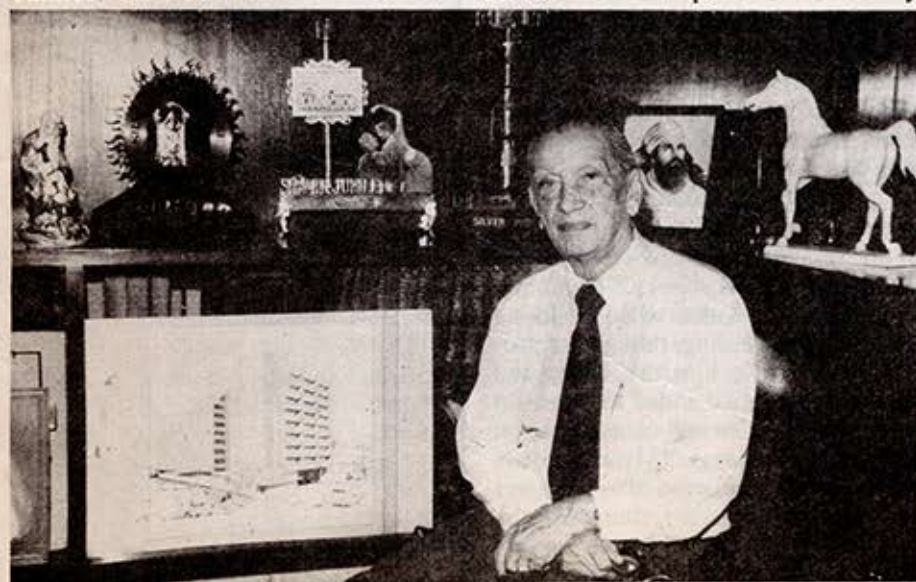
Today, the 1,200-seater Novelty, described by Kuka as "theater magnificent," attracts the best of Hindi films, and the box office clangs to the jingle of money. In his office on the second floor of the eight-storeyed Novelty Chambers are trophies given by thankful producers whose films have celebrated jubilee runs. The building, constructed by Kuka, houses many offices including those of government bodies. Kuka obtained Novelty from its previous owners after a long-drawn legal battle and renovated it into the cinema house of his dreams, exactly 25 years ago. Inspired by the theaters he had seen abroad on his frequent visits, Novelty,

according to Kuka, has the second largest foyer in Bombay (Metro has the largest), toilet facilities in excess of the minimum stipulation, and a number of exits so that the auditorium can be evacuated within seven minutes. "It was the first cinema house in Bombay to offer a 70mm and wide screen, and fitted with stereophonic sound," tells Kuka who was keen to inaugurate it with *Lawrence of Arabia*, a film that greatly impressed him when he first saw it abroad. "But Pakistan banned it, and its release was subsequently delayed here too," informs Kuka. Instead, on July 18, 1964, a renovated Novelty opened to Bimal Roy's Meena Kumari-starrer, *Benazir*. "It was a classic film, and hence ran only for six to eight weeks," says Kuka. However, he made up with a vengeance when he opened a renovated 'Krishna - A Dreamland' with not one but two jubilee hits - L. V. Prasad's *Khilona* in the evening show, and the Film Finance Corporation backed epoch-making *Bhuvan Shome* in the matinee. A few years later, Novelty screened India's first 70mm film, the Raj Kapoor starrer *Around the World*, and Kapoor's own magnum opus, the gargantuan, ill-fated epic, *Mera Naam Joker*.

The son of a humble mobed, a panthaky at an agiary in Harda ("a railway junction bustling with Parsi drivers and guards" as Kuka recalls it), Kuka has come a long way. Kuka inherited his love for books, culture and lust for knowledge from his father who unfortunately died at the young age of 37, leaving Kuka to absorb the knowledge and philosophy of the Avestan and Iranian scriptures from his professors. Kuka glories in his Persian roots: "It was a sheer delight seeing an ice-clad Mount Demavand," the legendary mountain in Iran where Zohak is believed to have been imprisoned, "and visiting the ruins at Persepolis." His trip to Iran was undertaken as a patron of the Iran League. "Our religion is marvellous," Kuka affirms, "though it has become a sham today," he admits. "We ourselves are responsible for this," he adds, advising, like a teacher he may have been, that the young should study the true (he stresses "true") Zoroastrian religion and follow it.

The lifetime spent in the film industry actually came to Kuka "by accident." Born on July 28, 1907 at Bom-

Kuka: surrounded by trophies and momentos Photos: Varghese Fernandez



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bay's Masina Hospital, to which he was to contribute much, Kuka signed up as a teacher at Bombay's Cama Athornan Institute after graduating in philosophy. "I was the only student in Surat to opt for this subject, and my professor used to give me lectures in the principal's room," Kuka recalls, adding with a chuckle that he even has a photograph of just the three of them in the room. His interest in philosophy brought him in close association with Prof P. A. Wadia, Principal D. R. Gadgil, whom he yet recalls in glowing terms, and Dr Irach Taraporewalla, whose translation of the *Gathas* Kuka had helped to co-publish.

However, throat problems which would not allow him to lecture for more than two consecutive periods, called an end to his stint at teaching. Young Kuka, bereft of a job, and on the verge of matrimony, left for Ajmer where his brother-in-law-to-be, an ex-general manager of Calcutta's Madan Theatre, ran a cinema house called Majestic Talkies. For 11 months, Kuka worked with him, but left when he found the atmosphere too stifling, the little theater providing barely enough work for the two young men. Cajoled by a cousin not to dabble in the risk-laden business of film distribution, and coaxed by uncle Dhunjishah Madan, then a director in Tatas, to seek a secure job, Kuka enrolled at the Davar's College and passed the Institute of Bankers examination to join as a clerk at the Zoroastrian Co-operative Bank in its founding years. A little later, he joined the Western India Oil Company where, within three short years, he rose to the position of an assistant secretary, with an enviable pay packet and the perquisite of a car.

But his interest in exhibiting films, kindled in Ajmer, continued to simmer within. He started to take theaters on lease, and run them as a side business. "My advice to the young," says Kuka determinedly, "is never be in service, for the root of the word is in 'servitude,' which means slavery." No empty words these; for Kuka, when he found his business increasing, though not proportionate to give him the salary and benefits of his job, decided to throw up his lucrative service and concentrate on his fledgling business. "My employers tried to restrain me, even offering that I work just half-day for them for the same salary...but I had made up my mind." Kuka had taken the first step

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into writing his name into the annals of Indian film history.

For Kuka, "things just happen." Having contested — and lost — a municipal election, he who "would have been an educationalist," found the way paved back to his original love. Actively associated with the Bharat Education Society for a long time, Kuka was offered chairmanship of the Society by his supporters who felt that a man of his caliber and means should be gainfully occupied in public work.

The Bharat Education Society, whose chairman he remained for 25 years at a stretch, and to which he donated around Rs 1.5 lakhs, has grown from a small class of 60 pupils into an institution of about 3,000 to 3,500 boys and girls with a montessori, secondary and high school, a technical school, and a college of physics and economics affiliated to Bombay University.

"I do not seek honors," clarifies Kuka, who has hence not thought it fit to contest the Bombay Parsi Punchayet trusteeship elections. He claims, though, that he might have become a trustee had his cousin Rusi Kuka withdrawn from the contest against Maneck Hodiwala, as the latter was prepared to

recall his nomination in Peshotan's favor.

The trusteeship of an ailing Masina Hospital fell into Kuka's lap in an equally accidental manner. The Hospital, Kuka retells, was being sold, and the matter was in court. The sale for a paltry sum was stayed, and the court order nominated Kuka as a trustee. Together with Lady Silloo Jejeebhoy, Dr Rustem Colah and others, Kuka swung back the Hospital into an economically viable unit, and recalls having collected a record figure of Rs 10 lakhs for the Hospital's funds in 1986, when Masina celebrated its platinum jubilee. By then it had 260 beds as against 65 when he had joined as a trustee, Kuka noted. It also boasted of a Premature Children's Ward, complete with incubators, which, when started in 1970, made Masina the second hospital in Bombay to provide this facility. Kuka smiles off his contributions as ordained by fate to allow him to "pay back the debt of gratitude" to the Hospital where he was born, had his tonsils removed and, when admitted for an illness later in life, "treated like a prince when I was only a pauper."

Today at 81, Kuka, assisted in his business by his two sons-in-law, wears

his honors as lightly as his years. Cinema in India is threatened by video piracy. The film industry is, pardon the pun, reeling under trouble. Many cinemas have shut down in the past three months. "The future is bleak and dark," admits Kuka. He is hoping that the Government would step in and help rather than overburden theater owners with taxes on property (65 percent), entertainment (100 percent of ticket value), and even a 'show tax' where theater owners are under compulsion to show Films Division newsreels or documentaries as well as pay for it, instead of receiving payments as they do for screening advertisement films.

In addition to the above problems, Kuka is currently faced with a union threatening to get belligerent if its claims under the Tambe Award are not paid. "Business is no longer a joy," confesses Kuka. As long-time friend and current chairman of the National Film Development Corporation, B. K. Karanjia states: "Running a cinema is like trying to solve a crossword puzzle in which the clues across do not synchronize with the clues down." "But I am optimistic," says a confident Kuka. "Show business will never die, though it will have to modify itself."

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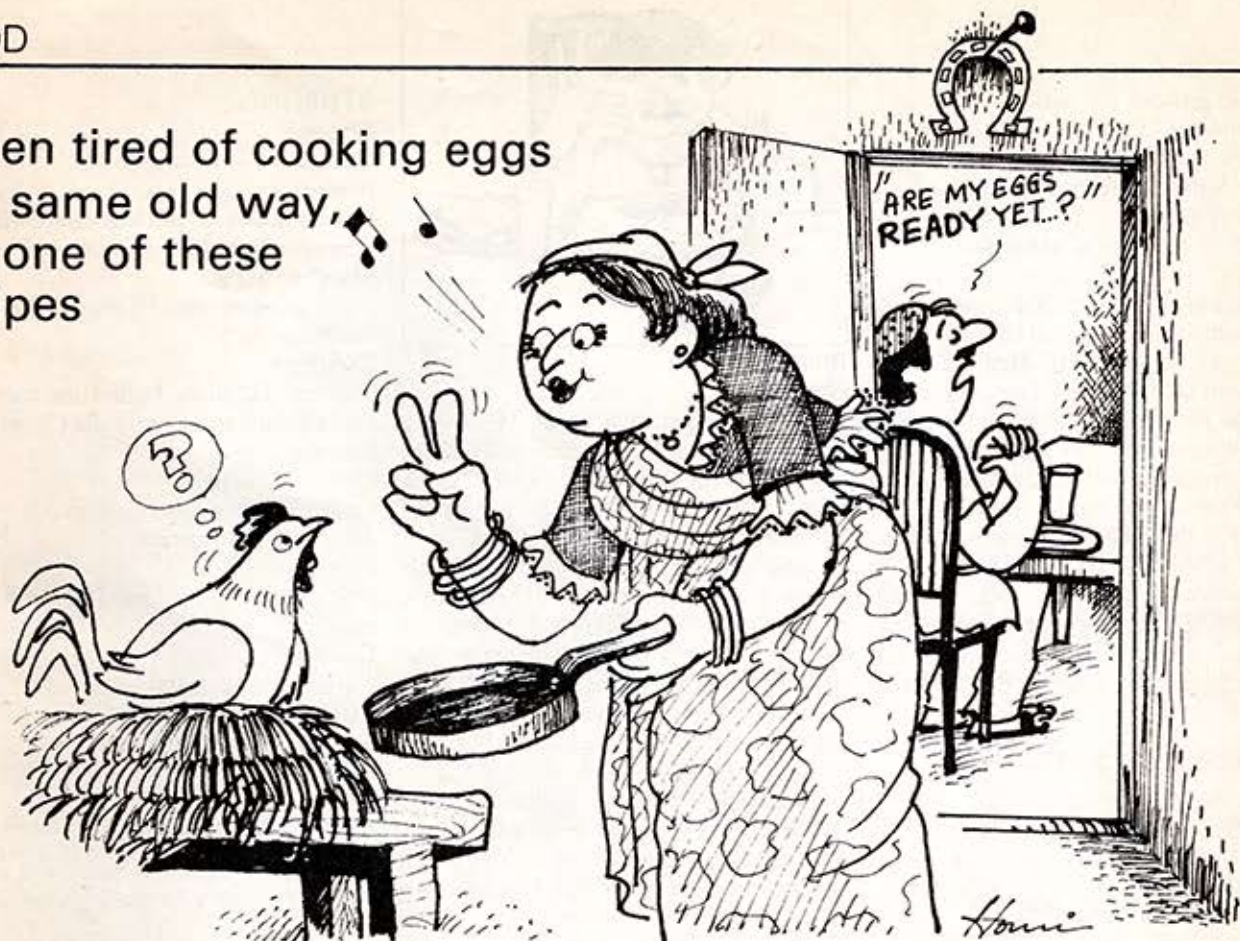
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BHOOJELA ENDA

(Serves 3 or 6)

Oil (2 tbsp)

Butter (2 tbsp)

Dried bread crumbs (1½ cups)

Onion (1 – finely chopped)

Green chillies (2-3 – seeded and chopped)

Coriander leaves (2 tbsp – chopped)

Chilli powder (½ tsp)

Turmeric powder (½ tsp)

Garlic (1 tsp – chopped)

Topping

Eggs (6)

Dried bread crumbs mixed with salt, pepper and chilli powder (½ cup)

Melted butter (2 tbsp)

Melt butter with oil and spread this mixture over the base of a baking dish or a shallow frying pan. Mix the rest of the ingredients and spread evenly over the butter mixture. Make 6 depressions in the mixture and break eggs in them,

allowing the whites to spread. Mix rest of topping ingredients and scatter on top. Melt butter and sprinkle on top. Either bake in a medium oven with the dish in a *bain mari* (double boiler) or on a low heat in a frying pan covered with a lid. Cook either way till the eggs are just set. Serve with hot *ghau ni rotli* or garlic bread.

EGGS BAKED IN ESCARGOT BUTTER

(Serves 6)

Correctly speaking, these are eggs 'sur le plat.' These eggs are cooked so lightly that they are barely set. They are cooked individually in individual shallow baking china dishes with fireproof ears, or in copper dishes with handles.

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(Escargot Butter is so called as it is used in serving escargots.)

Eggs (12)

Butter (100 gms)

Salt and pepper (to taste)

Garlic (6 large cloves – crushed)

Parsley (1 tsp – chopped)

Melt butter. Add seasoning, garlic and parsley. Put a little butter mixture in 6 shallow dishes which will hold 2 eggs each, and heat. Break 2 eggs in each dish. Cover with rest of butter mixture and bake in a hot oven (375° F) for 4 to 5 minutes. Serve immediately with hot toast, rolls or a hot baguette loaf.

KOOTO PER ENDA

(Serves 4-8)

Fresh *kooto* (very small shrimps the size of a clove – 250 gms)

Onions (2 large – chopped)

Green chillies (4 – seeded and chopped)

Coriander leaves (2 tbsp – chopped)

Garlic (6 cloves – chopped)

Ginger (1½ inch piece – peeled and chopped)

Turmeric powder (½ tsp)
 Chilli powder (1 tsp)
 Cumin powder (1 tsp)
 Malt or Valsad vinegar (2 tbsp)
 Jaggery (1 tsp)
 Oil (3 tbsp or more if needed)
 Eggs (8)

Clean *kooto* well by picking them and then washing them several times in running water. Drain well. Heat oil and brown onions lightly. Add ginger, garlic and saute for a minute. Add all the powders and *kooto*. Fry till all the moisture is gone from the fish. Add green chillies and coriander leaves. Remove from fire. Place the mixture in an ovenproof dish or a shallow frying pan. Make 8 depressions in the *kooto* mixture and break the eggs in them. Bake in an oven (350°F) or cover with a lid and cook on top of a stove on a medium fire till eggs are set.

SOUFFLE OMELETTES

(Serves 4)
 Eggs (8)
 Water (4 tbsp)
 Milk (4 tbsp)
 Salt and pepper (to taste)



Butter (80 gms)
 Oil (8 tsp)
 Separate 2 eggs at a time. Mix yolks with 1 tbsp water and 1 tbsp milk. Beat egg whites till stiff. Heat 10 gms butter with 1 tsp oil in an omelette pan (6" diameter). Fold whites with yolks lightly, and pour into hot butter and oil. Allow to set at the bottom. Then with a knife make a depression in the center of the omelette and put the pan under the grill till it has risen and puffed up. Fold over and serve immediately. Repeat with the rest of the eggs.

Stuffing can be added if desired. The stuffing must be ready before the omelette is made. The various stuffings and the quantities required per omelette are listed below.

STUFFINGS

Cheese
 Cheese (50 gms – grated)
Prawn
 Fried prawns or prawns fried with turmeric and chilli powder (60 gms)
Mushrooms
 Fresh mushrooms (50 gms – sliced and sauted in butter)
Chicken
 Chicken (60 gms – boiled and cubed) cooked with sauce supreme (70 gms)
Caviar
 Caviar (1 tbsp)
 Onion (1 tsp – finely chopped)
 Juice of lime (to taste)
Foie gras
 Foie gras (50 gms – mashed with a little milk)
Curried chicken
 Curried chicken (60 gms)
Curried prawns
 Curried prawns (60 gms)
 Bon Appetit!

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Behind MASKS AND FACES

Gustasp Irani



Masks and Faces, a collection of short stories by B. K. Karanjia. Published in 1989 by Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd, 576, Masjid Road, Jangpura, New Delhi, 110014. Pp: 123. Price: Rs 125.

Remember the movie *Pestonjee*—Naseer-uddin Shah, Shabana Azmi, Anupam Kher—one of the few Hindi films that made a serious attempt at an honest portrayal of the Parsi community? The film is based on a short story *The Cost of Dying* by Burjor Karanjia, first published in 1957 in *The Illustrated Weekly of India* and now republished in a collection of 15 short stories, *Masks and Faces*, by the same author. All the stories in the hardbound 123-page book have originally appeared in various Indian publications between 1957 and 1979. But for three, the rest have Parsi characters and Parsi themes.

There are other common threads that have been woven into the fabric of the collection. In addition to Karanjia the Parsi, one can recognize Karanjia the journalist (a number of characters are journalists), and Karanjia of the filmworld as film sets serve as backdrops to events often enough. Karanjia has edited *Filmfare*, *Screen* and is presently the founding editor of *Cinema in India*, a publication of the National

Film Development Corporation of which he is also the chairman. He has also served as chairman of the Film Finance Corporation from 1969 to 1976.

Most of all, *Masks and Faces* reflects Karanjia the sympathizer. Be it Jimmy of *The Better Man* who sacrifices his love for a friend, or the prostitute in *No Statues for Saints* who helps Kersasp find a doctor to abort the child his daughter is carrying, the portraits are always executed by a loving pen. Even in the lecherous Sethji with his rolls of fat in *The Man in Quest of a Gold Mine*, there is something endearing. Karanjia recognizes the human beings behind his characters and etches them with the dexterity of his journalistic pen: vividly, and in simple language.

We see an example in this word sketch of Mr Fraudfighter who campaigns against the consumption of alcohol in *Gentlemen in the Bar*. "Looking at him we couldn't take all that fire and thunder seriously. Five foot nothing, rumped in a dingy, cotton suit, with a sola topi which he seldom took off and tennis shoes. His features drawn, stretched down as if reflected in a concave mirror. His Hitler moustache a rectangular smudge. Slung over his shoulder, he carried a satchel, filled, I imagine, with all those petitions. I almost forgot—on his lapel he wore a medal. Presented to him by Pope Paul at the time of the Eucharistic Congress in India. So he claimed. Proud of that medal, he was."

Likewise in *The Blessings of 'Dhujti Doki'* Karanjia depicts the feeding habits of Parsis at weddings and navjotes through his gate-crashing hero. "He arrived around dinner time and paid scant attention to the ceremony... He took good care always to occupy a strategic seat near the dining tables... those who wish to dine at the first sitting at a Parsi navjote or wedding must needs possess considerable sprinting skill, not to speak of shoving prowess."

"At the caterer's clarion call 'Come on, ladies and gentlemen, dinner is ready. Bride's guests on the mill side, groom's guests on the sea side,' there is a scramble for dinner seats which in its spurt and sweep recalls the Allied forces seeking to establish a beachhead at Normandy. Before you can bat an eyelid the rows upon rows of cool long white tables laid with plantain leaves become alive with jabbering, gesticulating men, women and children." The cruel part of the story was when the popular Parsi Gujarati/English daily *Khush Khabar* ran an exposure on the hero's gate-crashing activities.

In fact, another common thread run-

ning through the collection of stories is the gossip mongering activity of *Khush Khabar* which, unlike the characters in the book, is unable to win the author's sympathy: "But let me tell you about *Khush Khabar*... At one time it had been the last bastion of the British Raj in India. Now its pages were full of weighty problems such as the shamelessness of Parsi girls who wore *cholis* (sari blouses) so abbreviated that it was obvious that they put on neither *sudreh* nor *kusti* and who were now beginning to sport the *salwar-kameez* which wasn't a Parsi dress at all. Its pages were enlivened by controversies as to which of the three Parsi New Years was the correct one to celebrate. It printed verbatim accounts of divorce proceedings in the Parsi Matrimonial Court. *Khush Khabar* which means 'Happy News' was a misnomer 'Happy news is no news at all.'"

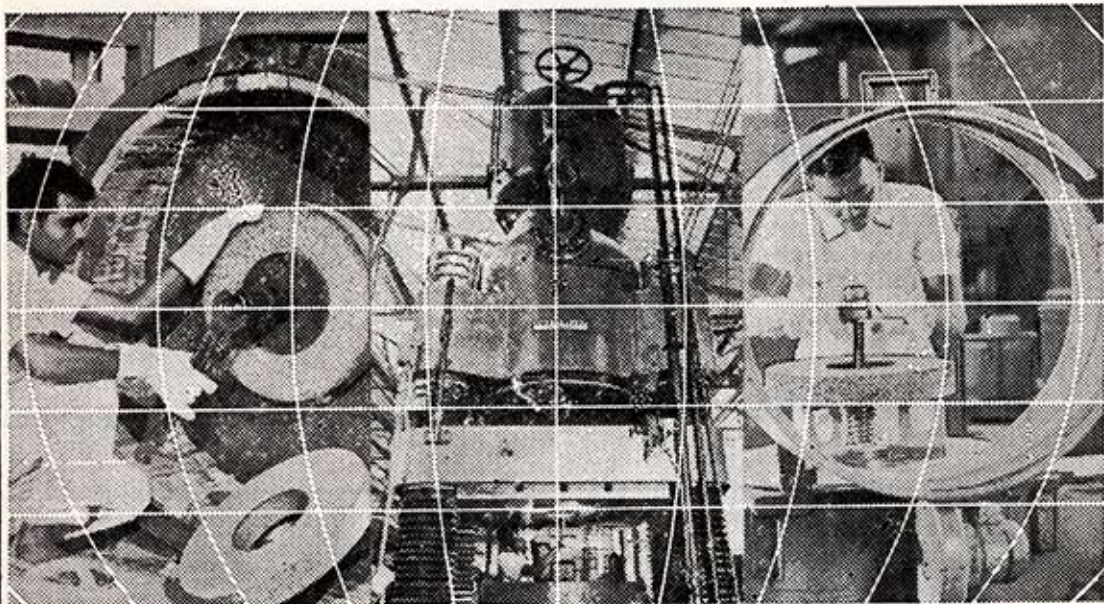
In *An Awkward Thing*, the model comments to the journalist-photographer with whom she is getting emotionally involved: "There are so many funny things about our community—so many sad things too—that need to be told as you are telling them..." She might have been and probably is, talking to Karanjia himself. For in this collection, Karanjia is lovingly sketching the community, eccentricities included, and, in doing so, the portrait often overrides the excitement of the events in the tale which are predictable enough.

This sketching, naturally enough, extends even into the three non-Parsi pieces. Observe the pride and fall, a physically crippling one, of trapeze artists in *Two Mistakes*, the bureaucracy of office systems in *The Enquiry* and the prostitute striving for respectability in *Julie is Dead*.

In fact, "fallen women" appear frequently enough between the covers of the book. In *The Puppet*, we have the story of a young Parsi boy's disillusionment as his brittle fantasies of a streetwalker crash around him.

In contrast, we have high irony and humor in *The Man in Quest of a Gold Mine*. Darabsha Daruwala has been sweet talked into financing the next film of the famous director, 'the Cecil B. De Mille of India.' The unit gets ready, after endless delays, for the *moorat* (inaugural) shot. The lights are switched on, the cameras get ready to roll, the clapper boy gets into position... but there is a last minute hitch—there is no trace of any script or dialogue. The spotlight is on the people behind the cameras. It is this theme that runs through the book—that behind events are human beings who, in *Masks and Faces*, also happen to be mainly Parsis.

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MILESTONES

The data on births, marriages and deaths has been compiled from information supplied by various anjumans in India and abroad, courts and hospitals. It must be pointed out that this information is not always complete or consistent.

This month's marriage list includes civil marriages between Parsis as well as inter-community marriages contracted by Parsis over the seven-month period, January to July 1989. Cases of uncertainty, where the names could not be wholly identified as Parsi, have been omitted from the list.

Heart disease claimed 21 of the 106 Parsis who died in Bombay. Sixteen succumbed to old age and 11 to lung disease. The other killers were pneumonia (eight), cancer and brain disease (seven each) and kidney failure and liver disease (five each). Diabetes and hypertension claimed three victims each while shock, injuries, nervous disorder, blood disease and anemia killed two persons each. Isolated cases of gastroenteritis, septicemia, lupus, asthma, bronchitis and malaria were also registered. There were four cases of stillbirth (including one set of triplets). Two youths aged 16 and 29 were lost to the community. A centenarian also breathed her last.

In the breakup of deaths according to illnesses, it must be noted that in some cases, especially in those of the very old, death is often due to a combination of several diseases.

If readers have any information they would like published, some proof to ensure the veracity of the report would be required. We are sure our readers would appreciate this requirement and cooperate with us.

AHMEDABAD

Born

A girl, *Mahtab*, to *Pericher* and *Subrata Nundy*, on July 7, 1989

BOMBAY

Born

A girl to *Yasmin* and *Kurush Chinoy*; June 9
A girl to *Yasmin* and *Kali Kapadia*; July 4
A boy to *Mini* and *Marzban Ghista*; July 5
A girl to *Aban* and *Jamshed Bapasola*; July 6
A boy to *Zarine* and *Framroze Mehta*; July 12
A boy to *Pervin* and *Percy Daver*; July 14
A girl, *Nazreen*, to *Shernaz* and *Hormazdyar Hathiram*; July 14
A boy to *Pinky* and *Rohinton Dadachanji*; July 17
A girl to *Pilloo* and *Sarosh Ginwala*; July 18
A girl to *Tenaz* and *Firdosh Karwa*; July 18
A boy to *Kashmira* and *Yezdi Daver*; July 19
A boy to *Yasmin* and *Marzban Merchant*; July 19
A boy to *Goolshan* and *Jamshed Pardiwalla*; July 19
A girl to *Kashmira* and *Yazdi Pir*; July 20
A boy to *Persis* and *Percy Batliwala*; July 24
A boy to *Nargis* and *Hoshedar Khambatta*; July 27
A boy to *Havovi* and *Kersi Sethna*; July 28
A girl to *Aileen* and *Nader Patel*; July 30
A girl to *Zarin* and *Feroze Sukhia*; July 31

Married

Anahita P. Jamasji and *Khurshed P. Fitter*; January 30
Hira Jehangir Mistry and *Iqbal Husein Mohdali Rupani*; February 5
Asha Baliram Jadhav and *Homji Dorabji Bilimoria*; February 9
Pauline Mullaney and *Cyrus Bahmani*; February 11
Binifer R. Nariman and *Sunil Kaushal*; February 11
Niloufer Kapadia and *Jacob Eapen*; March 5
Kamal S. Marshall and *Imran M. Panju*; March 17
Clara Chang Lai King and *Minoo Russy Shroff*; March 20
Pushpa Valrani and *Sharokh Engineer*; March 31
Poornima Padamshi Bhatia and

Rohinton Rustomjee Inspector; April 1

Sabina P. Machado and *Darius J. Kakalia*; April 1

Gulshan Keki Irani and *Amirali Roshanali Rupani*; April 1

Sheela Singh and *Minocher Rustom Masani*; April 5

Gulshan Rusi Siganporia and *Jamshed Kharshedji*

Sachinwala; April 10

Rashmi Balkrishna Shrivastava and *Maneck Pirojshaw*

Bharucha; April 11

Tayunaz Engineer and *Saleem Merchant*; April 21

Janet Gregory D'Silva and *Bahadur Jamshedji Hansotia*; April 24

Dhun Phiroze Katrak and *Ardeshtir Pestonji Cama*; May 1

Meera R. Nayak and *Darayus H. Mistry*; May 2

Maria Bernadeth Toures Lobo and *Polly Merwanji Dumasia*; May 4

Pervin Savakshaw Jilla and *Sunil Pandurang Balvalli*; May 8

Bakhtawar Pirojshaw

Amroliwalla and *Aspi Navroji Mistry*; May 8

Benaifer A. Irani and *Sanjay Mallik*; May 19

Perveen K. Panthaky and *Piyush N. Sanghvi*; May 19

Maleka Mohsin Madraswalla and *Jimmy Dali Palkhiwalla*; May 22

Pasquin L. Braganza and *Sam R. Sukhadia*; May 22

Dinaz Homi Daruwalla and *Farrokh Dossabhai Turner*; July 15

Died

Parin Savaksha Daroovala (84), residing at 'B', 180-A,

Lamington Rd, 400007; July 2

Jeroo Ardeshtir Khambatta (65), 33, Abubakar Mans, Near

Regal Cinema, 400039; July 2

Rusi Shavaksha Vakil (40), Meherbai Wadia Bldg, 275-K,

Tardeo, 400007; July 2

Goolhai Kurush Bharucha (86), Allana Chmbs, Bomanji

Petit Rd, 400026; July 3

Palanji Sorabji Bhesania (75), Happy Home, Forjett St II

Lane, 400036; July 3

Gulestan Jehangir Jassawala (100), Theosophical Clny,

Juhu, 400049; July 3

Hoshang Phiroze Kharas (56), 10/62, Juhu Rajnigandha

Gulmohar Cross Rd, 400049; July 3

Noshir Savakshaw Dehnugara (55), 306, Rizvi Mhl, Bandra,

400050; July 4

Pirojsha Burjorji Karanjia (72), N/23, Nowroz Baug,

Lalbag, 400012; July 4

Najamai Cawasji Makhania (87), Hormuz Bldg, Sussex Rd,

Byculla, 400027; July 4

Sarosh Burjor Mody, husband of Behroz and father of

Gitanjali and Navaz; July 4 (cremated)

Burjorji Cavasji Turel (89), Avabai Petit Bldg, Gilder Lane,

Tardeo, 400008; July 4

Kaikhosro Hormasji Dastoor (73), Jame-Jamshed Bldg,

Jame-Jamshed Rd, Dadar, 400014; July 5

Temuras Nanabhai Jangalwala (76), Guzder Mans, Princess

St, 400002; July 5

Jerbanu Rustomji Khergamwala (99), Satyabhama Nivas,

Kashinath St, Tardeo, 400034; July 5

Aderji Kaikhosro Majoo (85), 4, Mehta Bldg, Room 8, Khan

Est, Mahim, 400016; July 5

Goolamai Framroze Palkhiwala (74), 796,

Dosabhai Mans, Jame-Jamshed Rd, Dadar, 400014; July 5

Hormusjee Dinshawji Bhandari (77), Batliwalla

Agiary, Tardeo, 400034; July 6

Hilla Homi Deshmukh (72), Tata Hsg Clny Comp, Parel,

400012; July 6

Rustomji Jamshedji Ghadiali (73), 'C', Empire Mhl,

Khodadad Circle, Dadar, 400014; July 6

Eruch Cooverji Kerawalla (54), Baria Bldg No 3, Room 2,

Gamadia Clny, Tardeo, 400007; July 6

Manek F. K. Mirza (78), V-16, Dalal Est, Lamington Rd,

400008; July 6

Phiroze Rustomji Sachinwala (72), 7, Bharucha Bldg, Gilder Lane, Lamington Rd, 400008; July 6

Percy Hormusji Saher (38), 171, Baj Bldg, Khetwadi Back Rd, 400004; July 6

Phirozshah Rustomji Vajifdar

(88), Chawla Hse, Wodehouse Rd, 400005; July 6
Sheroo Eruch Bilimoria (65), 3/A, Satyabhama Nivas, Kashinath Rd, Tardeo, 400034; July 9
Triples of Dadi Noshir Kerawalla (stillborn), C/4, Captain Clny, Haji Ali, 400034; July 9
Boman Ruttonshaw Shroff (78), Dina Lodge, 40, Garden Rd, Apollo Recl, 400039; July 9
Piroja Rustom Shroff (94), Nariman Bldg, M. Karve Rd, Cooperage, 400021; July 9
Rustomji Nasswanji Dordi (84), 280/A, Khimji Nivas, Sopari Baug, Parel, 400012; July 10
Kety Fakirji Sutaria (73), 81, Kapadia Hse, Trinity St, Dhobi Talao, 400002; July 10
Rustom Behramji Cardmaster (80), Motiwalla Mans, Gowalia Tank, 400036; July 11
Alamai Phirozshah Governor (90), Agiary Chawl No 1, Room 9, Dr S. S. Rao Rd, Lalbaug, 400012; July 11
Perin Framroze Madon (89), Azad, Oomer Park, Warden Rd, 400026; July 11
Kety Faredoon Master (75),

'C,' Botawala Bldg, Tardeo, 400007; July 11
Kaikhushrow Rustomji Meherhomji (84), A/9, Sahar Co-op Hsg Soc, Andheri (E), 400069; July 11
Tehmina Behramji Shroff (88), 101, Mody Bldg, Gamadia Clny, Tardeo, 400007; July 11
Dara Ardeshir Adrianwala (82), Tafti Mans, Kohinoor Rd, Dadar, 400014; July 12
Jerbanoo Marzban Dastur (88), 8/1, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, Byculla, 400027; July 12
Shahera Manchershah Dastur (69), A/28, Shreyas Apts, COD Rd, Malad (E), 400097; July 12
Gulbai Hormusji Madon (77), Narielwalla Agiary Comp, Naigaum Cross Rd, Dadar, 400014; July 12
Virbaijee Pherozsha Shroff (94), 280/A, Javalkar Mans, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Parel, 400012; July 12
Eruch Burjorji Daruwalla (77), Rati Villa, Motibai St, Tardeo, 400007; July 13
Khodadad Behram Irani (76), 174, Irani Bldg, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Dadar, 400014; July 13

Behram Phirozshah Khambata (64), 280/C, New Sitaram Bldg, Princess St, 400002; July 13
Baby of Pervez Eruch Poonawalla (stillborn), Tulsiwadi, Bhanji Rathod Rd, Tardeo, 400034; July 13
Hormusji Cawasji Siganporia (72), E-12, Jer Baug, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Byculla, 400027; July 13
Perin Nariman Dalal (82), 405, Cumballa Crest, Peddar Rd, 400026; July 14
Pirojshaw Dadabhoy Daruwalla (90), 9/7, Tata Clny, Tardeo Rd, 400034; July 14
Rustomji Bapuji Dubash (89), Seva Sadan Annexe, Gamdevi, 400007; July 14
Freny Dhanjisha Gotla (74), H/19, Nowroz Baug, Lalbaug, 400012; July 14
Jal Muncherji Kapadia (84), 'B,' Dhun Bldg, 312, Lamington Rd, 400007; July 14
Freny Nusserwanji Kerawalla (89), 25, Kerawalla Chmbs, Apollo Bunder, 400039; July 14
Burjor Ratanshaw Panthaky (59), Wadia Agiary Chawl No

2, Room 12, Lalbaug, 400012; July 14
Fali Jehangirji Randeria (61), 11/5, Mody Bldg, Gamadia Clny, Tardeo, 400007; July 14
Hormasji Framji Bajan (77), 81, Kapadia Hse, Trinity St, Dhobi Talao, 400002 and 102, Zarina Co-op Hsg Soc, S. V. Rd, Bandra, 400050; July 15
Dina Byramji Madon (85), 611, Pateti Block No 3, Jame-Jamshed Rd, Dadar, 400014; July 14
Rodabe Minochare Majra (64), 3/3, Sir Ratan Tata Bldg, S. V. Rd, Bandra, 400050; July 15
Rustom Navroji Mehta (85), Patel Bldg, Cama Rd, Andheri, 400058; July 15
Manek Pirosha Mistri (83), Krishna Mhl, Marine Drive, 400020; July 15
Coomi Jalejar Pagdiwala (70), C/21, Meherzin, 109, Wodehouse Rd, Colaba, 400005; July 15
Khushman Hoshang Desai (16), 614, Kasinath Bldg, J. S. Rd, Dhobi Talao, 400002; July 16
Bapuji Manekji Ghadiali (75), B/6A, United Chmbs, 347, M. Shaikat Ali Rd, 400007;

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Shirin Fareedoon Irani (75), 28, Baimai Bldg, Jerbai Wadia Rd, Parel, 400012; July 16

Shirinbai Jamshedji Khariwala (86), 6/C, Hill Top, 49/49/A, Pali Hill, Bandra, 400050; July 16

Persis Jamshed Tangri (50), 176, Fiona, Juhu Tara Rd, 400049; July 16

Ady Jehangir Dalal (43), Moti Mans, Ormiston Rd, 400039; July 17

Sorabjee Kaikhushroo Kharas (80), Ahmed Bldg, Gunpowder Rd, Mazagaon; July 18

Homai Nadersha Kotwal (70), 21/A, Kapadia Bldg, Panthaki Clny, Andheri (E), 400069; July 18

Savaksha Cawasji Saiwalla (82), 7, Padamji Bldg, Khan Est, Mahim, 400016; July 18

Khorshed Noshir Tantra (75), 3, Malcolm Baug, S.V. Rd, Jogeshwari, 400102; July 18

Rustomji Phirozshah Wadia (69), 404, Narmada Krupa Co-op Hsg Ltd, Bhayander (E), 401105; July 18

Jamshed D. Madon (87), Hormazd Bldg, Sleater Rd, 400007; July 19

Naju Dara Pandole (65), Heliopolis, S. B. Rd, 400005; July 19

Sohrab Rustomji Sopariwala (49), C/31, Staff Qtrs, S.V.R. Engineering College, Icchanath, Surat, 395003; July 19

Goolcher Dinshaw Gamir (67), Munsif Bldg, Captain Clny, Tardeo, 400034; July 20

Jijoo Rustomji Lakdawala (78), 'K' Bldg, GPO, 400001; July 21

Jerbai Shapoorji Sabawalla (91), Mody Bldg, Marzban Clny, Gilder St, 400008; July 21

Noshir Ardeshir Adajania (70), 301, Zera Villa, Sherly Rajan Rd, Bandra, 400050; July 22

Phiroze Dadabhoy (92), 6/5, Khan Est, Chhotani Rd, Mahim, 400016; July 22

Shirin Merwan Irani (80), Jehangir Mans, First Marine St, 400020; July 22

Nariman Khurshedji Antia (82), Bhesania Bldg, 327, S. B. Rd, Fort, 400001; July 23

Kaikhushroo Cawasji Bhatena (73), 785/B, Khareghat Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; July 23

Khorshed Bappu Bhoot (67), Durlabh Bhavan, Jalbhoy St, Charni Rd, 400004; July 23

Homai Fakirji Bhansali (74), 6/4, Panthaki Baug, H.S. Rd, Andheri (E), 400069; July 24

Cooverbai Bomanji Waghmar (99), Cowas Turner Bldg, 5, Gamadia Clny, Tardeo, 400007; July 24

Minoo Byramji Billimoria (78), Fire Brigade Bldg, Shivaji Park, 400028; July 25

Neville Adi Khodaiji (29), Bhiwandiwalla Bldg, Wadia St, Tardeo, 400034; July 25

Soona Dinshaw Mody (75), 21, Ashiana, 25, Nepean Sea Rd, 400036; July 25

Faramroz Dadabhoy, *Daruwalla* (85), 3/5, Tata Clny, Tardeo, 400034; July 26

Mehroo Nesserwanji Goawalla

(78), Gulistan, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Dadar, 400014; July 26

Goolmai Rustomji Kerawalla (96), M/10, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; July 26

Hormasji Fakirji Elavia (82), E-1, Shapur Baug, V. P. Rd, 400004; July 28

Jasi Shavaksha Kapadia (59), 284, Jupiter, Cuffe Parade, 400005; July 28

Dhanmai Manekshaw, *Billimoria* (93), Multani Bldg, Khambatta Lane, Khetwadi, 400004; July 29

Dinshaw Sheriar Irani (Zainabadi) (75), 10/13, Sir Ratan Tata Clny, Tardeo, 400034; July 29

Jer Manekji Madon (87), Minerva Mans, Grant Rd, 400007; July 29

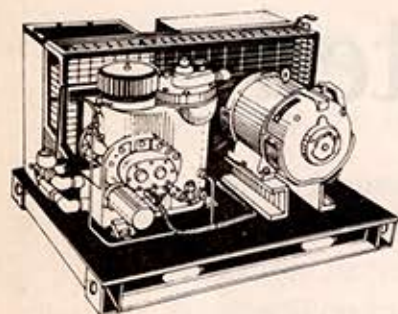
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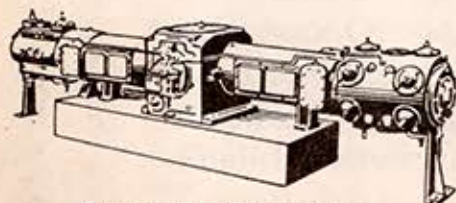
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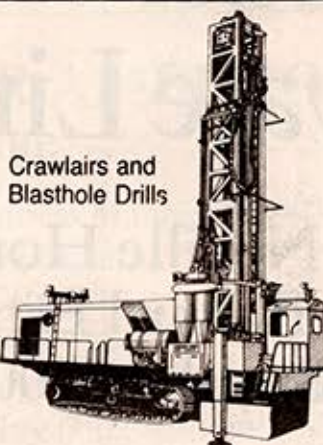
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Kavarana Mans, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Dadar, 400014; July 29
Mani Rustom Patel (68), 11/3, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, Byculla, 400027; July 29
Sheryar Dadabhai Wadia (71), 9/1, Tata Clny, Tardeo Rd, 400034; July 29
Dolat Pestonji Balivala (78), H/1, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; July 30
Nergish Merwanji Dalal (56), 20, Sleater Rd, 400007; July 30
Tehmina Jamshed Dhabhar (76), 10/12, Blossom Clny, Marol, Andheri (E), 400059; July 30
Burjorje Cavasji Elavia (60), E-29, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; July 31
Framji Sorabji Wadia (74), 4/3, Hirabai Block, Malcolm Baug, Jogeshwari (W), 400102; July 31

CALCUTTA

Died

Allamai Meherjibhoy Olpadwala, mother of Minoo; July 15
Mehroo Daddy Mazda, mother of Rohinten and Armaiti; July 22

CHICAGO

Born

A boy, *Malcolm*, to *Khorshed* and *Marazban Vandrewala*; July 19

DELHI

Born

A girl, *Freyan*, to *Jean* and *Jamshed Soonawalla*; March 2

DURGAPUR

Died

Savak Hirjibhai Ghadiali; April 29

GERMANY

Died

Sylvia Eugenie Munshi, wife of *Hoshang*; July 3

KARACHI

Died

Afshad Khushro Mehta (25 days); May 1
Khorshed Faramroze Vania (78); May 5
Mithamai Behramji Boatwala (81); May 6
Gool Rustom Mirza (82); May 15
Pirojbaai Rustomji Dastur (89); May 23
Tehmina Ruttonji

Collector (83); May 27
Tehmina Darabshaw Ghadiali (62); June 10
Gool Kaikhushru Kanga (85); June 14
Meheramai Bejonji Vakharia (86); June 14
Alamai Behramji Aga (78); June 21
Homai Jal Boga (52); June 22
Goolbai Pestanji Sidhwa (91); June 22
Piroja Dinshaw Gotla (78); June 29
Dhunmai Nariman Sethna (87); June 29

POONA

Died

Amy Pesiba Seervai (76), 21, Bund Garden Rd, 411001; June 1
Bomi Jehanbax Bhandara (68), 129/B, Bakhtavar Bldg, Ngr Rd, 411006; June 12
Rustom Pestonji Ghaswalla (79), 2/B, Store Yard Rd, Camp, 411001; June 24
Roda Ardeshir Satha (65), Bindra Hse, Irwin Rd, 411002; July 2
Allamai Erachshaw Baliwalla (83), 602, Akasdip Soc, Khadki, 411002; July 4

Mani Rustomji Mistry (73), 714/D, Baruram Chmbs, Bhavani Peth, 411002; July 11
Bahadur Mancherji Tata (80), 15, Divya Ngr, 411040; July 29
Phiroze Jehangir Unwalla (75), 129, Lullanagar, 411040; July 29
Pesi Rustom Irani (65), 121, Mahatma Gandhi Rd, 411001; July 30

QUEBEC

Died

Parvez Motawara, husband of *Mithoo*; March 21

SYDNEY

Born

A boy, *Zahan*, to *Susan* and *Rashid Kotwal*; May 14

CORRECTION

In the death list carried in the Milestones column of *Parsiana* May 1989, one name was inadvertently misspelt. The name should correctly read as *Aban Pharokh Sunavala*. The error is regretted.

Compiled by Roxana H. Kaka

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DAMANIA: LAWFUL RESPECT



Corporation of India and Diners Club, medical centers like the B. D. Petit Parsee General Hospital, Masina Hospital and the Indian Red Cross Society, or educational institutions like the Byramjee Jeejeebhoy Parsee Charitable Institution and the Queen Mary School, in times of dispute it was Damania's advice that was sought to tide them over an impasse between the management and the employees. For several trusts and institutions like the Bombay Parsi Punchayet, The Zoroastrian Co-operative Bank, the Indian Cancer Research Society, he sacrificed his time and energy to render honorary services. While all these institutions sent condolence messages to the family, the Queen Mary School, in addition, expressed its gratitude on a hoarding prominently displayed at Oval Maidan diagonally across from the Churchgate Railway Station.

The Parsee General Hospital convened a condolence meeting on June 24 in honor of Damania who had served on the executive committee for 27 years "giving sound advice and attending to all staff matters, especially negotiations with the staff union," as recalled president Dinshaw H. Petit.

"Practically all nationalized banks

engaged the services of Shri Damania in complicated cases," read a condolence message from the Advocates Association of Western India. "He was also associated with a number of unions (like the Transport and Dockworkers Union, Maritime Union, Indian Pilots' Guild, Engineering Mazdoor Sabha, etc) and espoused and ventilated their grievances with conviction and sincerity... His contribution to the development of labor legislation is noteworthy," it was recorded.

Before pursuing a matter in a legal court, Damania would first always attempt to bring about a compromise between the warring sections. He would never say 'No' to anyone seeking his legal aid, informs one of the junior lawyers working under him, adding, "He never had a bad word for anyone... Even in the worst of situations you would never hear him say 'arré (an exclamation of dismay).'" This statement was substantiated by Andhyarujina who said, "No one ever saw him lose his equanimity even in the midst of the most complex case and in spite of the gravest provocation ... He remained at all times an unassuming, jovial and friendly person... Though pushing and enterprising, he was never petty and small-minded. He was unspoilt by success and uncorrupted by arrogance or conceit."

"He was humility personified and even a clerk could have access to him without fear of causing him annoyance," remembers S. Y. Rege of Crawford and Bayley. There are several juniors he trained and fostered and who are today well-established in their own fields. Says Dr (Ms) Roxna Subramanian Swamy, advocate, Supreme Court of India, he was "so kind, helpful and full of goodwill to all of us juniors." Many an aspiring lawyer benefitted from the knowledge he imparted to students at the Government Law College where he was visiting lecturer.

Despite his work load he always found time for reading - books, magazines and all the daily papers. His staff members credit him with a photographic memory: A glance at a document was enough for the detailed implications to register with him. Meticulous and up-to-date with his case records, he

Died: Firoze Darasha Damania, 54, leading senior advocate on labor and industrial law on May 27, 1989 at the B. D. Petit Parsee General Hospital in Bombay following cardiac arrest.

"For the man responsible for many noted decisions of the Bombay High Court," as summarized by Chief Justice Chittatosh Mookerjee, a court reference was made on June 8, 1989 when several representatives from the legal profession paid their tributes to senior advocate Damania. Mookerjee described Damania as being "unpretentious, firm in his convictions, clear in his exposition of law, and steadfast in espousing the cause he represented." A much sought after advocate in the Bombay and other High Courts as also in the Supreme Court, "he appeared interchangeably and with no embarrassment both for the employer and the employee, for the industry and the trade union," indicating "the confidence reposed in him by his clients," said senior advocate Tehemton Andhyarujina who had known Damania since his college days and was representing the advocate-general at the condolence meeting.

"His reputation at the bar for honesty, integrity, intelligence and deep knowledge was, even during his life-time, legendary," Justice Bakhtavar Lentin of the Bombay High Court paid his compliments in a condolence message to the family. Similar sentiments were expressed by Justice S. P. Kurdukar: "He had appeared before me in a number of cases and he was found to be always straightforward, honest and well prepared. He was most soft-spoken but well determined. I do not recollect even a single incident when he was rough with the Court despite (having) suffered an adverse order against him." Justice Sujata Manohar wrote to the family, "From the bench we shall miss his responsible advocacy, sound knowledge of law and courtesy to the bar and the bench. He helped without bothering about any reward."

Whether it was legal firms like Crawford Bayley and Company, Mulla and Mulla and Craigie, Blunt and Caroe, government establishments like the Bombay Municipal Corporation, business houses like Buckau Wolf, Travel

never believed in the practice of taking work home, telling his wife Dinoo that "work is for the office." He made time to view cricket and tennis matches, and to listen to Western classical music. Very generous, he was most satisfied when others partook of his largesse.

Daman's roots were in a humble middle-class family. He graduated in arts (from St Xavier's College) and in law (from the Government Law College). He was enrolled as an advocate in 1957. Initially he started out on his legal career as an advocate assistant with a nominal stipend. Thereafter he became junior to Maneck Gagrati, a senior practitioner in labor and industrial courts where was laid the foundation for his industrial and labor

acumen. Since 1965-66 he set up his independent practice, handling all branches of litigation, be it matrimonial, commercial or accident claims, but his forte was labor and industrial law. When his work pressure increased, he withdrew from the Tribunals and Labour Courts and devoted himself to the High Court. In 1985 he was enrolled as senior advocate.

His last appearance before the court went on vacation was in the Mazagaon Dock case which involved vital questions of wage fixation (including dearness allowance) in public sector undertakings in India.

Daman is survived by his wife Dinoo, daughter Ayesha and sons Shamax and Farzaad.

lengthen and the periods of rest be curtailed. "In recent years I saw her with her back bent and her eyes almost blurred as she painstakingly wrote and rewrote proof and corrected it," added Gimi. Even after putting a paper to bed she would not hesitate to reorganize the matter, to change the text, to accommodate some last minute insertion, remembers her eldest daughter Bachi Karkaria, a senior assistant editor of *The Times of India*.

"Though she had a staff of trusted lieutenants and could easily have spared herself at least some of the strain of editing a weekly and running a printing business, she always remained fully immersed in work taking the minutest chore in her stride," remembers free-

KANGA'S NAVROZ

Died: Jaloo Naval Kanga, 67, publisher and editor of Calcutta's only bilingual (Gujarati - English) weekly, *Navroz*, on April 9, 1989 at Bombay's B. D. Petit Parsee General Hospital following heart ailment, kidney failure and allergy to medication.

"To a large extent the credit for the bond of unity and friendship prevailing among the Gujarati speaking community of Calcutta should go to Jaloo," noted an editorial in the *Fed Newsletter* of June 1989. It wasn't only the Parsis who felt that *Navroz* was 'theirs.' The Gujaratis, the Bohris, the Khojas, all felt a sense of loyalty to this medium of communication. Barely a week after her death, nearly 60 organizations - connected with education, welfare, medicine, sports, culture, business - got together to hold a condolence meeting in her honor.

Thanks to the Kanga family which regularly brought out *Navroz* for 72 years without a break, Calcutta was better in spreading Gujarati than many parts of Gujarat, acknowledged Dr Ratan Marshall, a prominent literary figure in Surat, in a written message.

Kanga's association with the periodical spanned nearly five decades, receiving her initial training at the hands of her father-in-law, and after his demise shouldering the editorial responsibilities while her husband Naval looked after the administrative side. But the praises conferred on her relate specifically to the last six years of her life

when she single-handedly managed the paper and the press, fulfilling her promise to her in-laws that as long as she was alive she would ensure its continuity.

Kanga's "willing assistance to all the Parsi institutions in various ways" was recorded in a resolution passed at the Calcutta Parsi Anjuman-convened condolence meeting on April 23. Representatives on behalf of the Parsi Zoroastrian Association, the Calcutta Zoroastrian Stree Mandal, the Saklat Physical Culture Institute, the Calcutta Parsi Youth League and the Calcutta Parsee Club referred to the help they had received from *Navroz*. For The Calcutta Parsi Amateur Dramatic Club she helped out not only with the printing jobs but also the sale of tickets, using her contacts. "We have realized that such unstinted help and cooperation was not only rendered to us but to each and every Gujarati institution in Calcutta," the Club vice president noted. Music maestro Vistasp Balsara credited Kanga for being "instrumental in promoting his career."

"Jaloo was not just one Parsi lady running a weekly magazine; she was a person with a secular outlook despite her tremendous affection for her religion and her community, and she was a one-person institution," wrote Rusi Gimi in the *Navroz*.

There being no demarcating boundary between their residence and the press, hours of work would invariably



lancer Charles Newton. "She was fully conversant with all the technicalities of the printing trade, as also with editorial and publishing responsibilities," he adds. "Sometimes I called at the office of *Navroz* early in the morning, only to find Ms Kanga reading the Zoroastrian scriptures or absorbed in prayer," Newton recalls her commitment.

Referring to her mother's "200 per cent dedication" to the cause of *Navroz*, Karkaria says, "The time that she did not have for the family, she had for young writers for whom our house was always kept open." While some associates referred to *Navroz* as "her fourth child (she has three daughters)" others would enquire in jest, "Are you married to Naval or to *Navroz*?"

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were the two objectives she sought to achieve through her print medium. "She invariably gave (young writers) the pleasure of seeing their work in print," noted a tribute in *Gavashni*, the newsletter of the Calcutta Zoroastrian Community's Religious and Charity Fund.

Comments from several writers she helped shape and who remembered her with nostalgia on her passing away have been printed in the April and May issues of *Navroz*. Arvind Parekh credits her for opening for him doors to new avenues. Champaklal Oza remembered her as a "topgola (machine gun)" who fired questions, and marvelled at her determination to continue reading despite her failing eyesight. He further ventured to say that she must have read all the books at the library at Navsari (from where she hailed). Kiran Raiwadare writes that if there was a late submission of article, there would first be a reprimand followed by an offer of tea. Personal messages to the family were also sent by 83-year-old Dr Hira Lal Chopra who for years contributed to the popular Diwali issue, and Madhu Rye Thaker who had fond memories of Kanga. Wrote Thaker from California, "She was witty, warm and womanly in the best possible sense. I am partial to her also because she offered me refreshments every time I brought her a column, and of course, never rejected any of my writings. In those days I was very poor and also starving for affection, recognition and all that. Jaluben was the...only exclusively unique editor who paid me promptly..."

Kanga was particularly keen to promote Gujarati. When those with a Gujarati upbringing neglected to teach Gujarati to their offspring she declared it as "maha paap (great sin)" and "maha apraadh (great offence)," recalls Dinesh Modi.

The main reason why her daughters feel incompetent to assume responsibility for *Navroz* is because their knowledge of Gujarati does not measure up to the high literary standard the magazine was reputed for, explains Karkaria. In fact, after their father's death, the daughters were trying to get her approval for a smooth takeover so that she wouldn't have to overburden herself. But instead of loosening her grip, she invested greater effort into the weekly and popularized it even further until "no one had the temerity to dislodge it," says Karkaria. With a circulation of around 3,000, *Navroz* and the

press are a financially paying proposition but the daughters are determined that they will sell it only if they can be assured that the paper's long-standing ethos will be continued by the next proprietor. The principles that the Kangas and *Navroz* were known by were their "non-partisan, independent and balanced approach and a great respect for journalism as something more than just a profession." "*Navroz* was not just a business or a means of livelihood to her," acknowledged *Gavashni*.

In Bombay last year, the Abhivadan Trust had organized a felicitation function to honor Kanga on the occasion of *Navroz* completing 70 years. The weekly, and especially its Diwali issue, was known to be so popular that, as expressed by Jayantilal Mehta, "Without *Navroz*, not only Saturday afternoons but Sunday and the whole week would be dry."

Usually it was on weekends that Kanga would be relatively more relaxed, *Navroz* being brought out every Saturday. Even death chose to visit her on Sunday, probably knowing her priorities, observed Raiwadare. Despite her commitments, she preserved her zest for life and her sense of adventure never deserted her, notes Karkaria. She appreciated Indian classical music as also ghazals and fired her grandchildren with a love for Persian and Hindu mythology.

Kanga's upbringing was in Navsari where she only had a chance to study up to matriculation. Yet her breadth and depth of reading as well as the capacity to retain knowledge impressed many.

Several sources have referred to her flashes of anger beneath which lay concealed gentleness and consideration, known to all who were in regular contact with her. The editor has left a lasting impression on several minds: several poems were composed in her memory; The Literary Society felt that with her death, *Navroz* (which symbolizes spring) has come to an end; Harendra Doshi suggests the institution of a trophy to perpetuate her memory; Yashwant Kadikar refers to his intention of dedicating his book to her; and Hansa Vithlani talks of the only time she had a pressing desire to collect an autograph - "that of Jaloo Aunty."

Karkaria remembers her parents' philosophy: "You have to live for something beyond yourself. Materialism and rewards are not the only ends in life. You must be able to get satisfaction that

can't be measured in terms of rupees."

Kanga is survived by her daughters Bachi Jehangir Karkaria, Yasmin Sudev Das and Persees Baji Antia.

IN BATLIVALA'S CAMP

Died: Ardeshir Kekobad Batlivala, 85, former trustee of the Calcutta Zoroastrian Community's Religious and Charity Fund and actively involved in other Calcutta-based Parsi organizations, on May 21, 1989 following kidney failure and cardiac arrest.

"If any single person has been responsible for the uplift of our community (in Calcutta) more than anyone else during the last 50 years, it was this man." This tribute came from Dr Russi Anklesaria who for 14 years had worked as co-trustee with Batlivala on the Calcutta Anjuman. "As a trustee he firmly believed that happiness for his community members was the only star to be aimed at; that humanity was the only religion; that love was the greatest gift to bestow on others... An appeal for help never went past him without being answered," continued Anklesaria giving an insight into this "brave and compassionate man."

During his years as trustee of the Anjuman, "momentous decisions were taken for the benefit of the Parsis of Calcutta," it was recorded in a resolution passed at the condolence meeting convened by the Calcutta Parsi Anjuman on May 28, 1989. Batlivala is also credited with playing a significant role in the materialization of the Olpadvala Hall, the headquarters of the Anjuman, whose creation was made possible thanks to the largesse of individuals and organizations. A detailed report of the condolence meeting was carried in *Calcutta Gavashni*, the newsletter of the Calcutta Anjuman, and in the bilingual weekly *Navroz*.

Batlivala was in the forefront of several movements: He was the founder president of the Calcutta Parsi Youth League, president of the Parsi Zoroastrian Association, vice president of the

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Calcutta Parsee Club, and president, even at the time of his death, of the Saklat Physical Culture Institute (SPCI). "Above all, he will be remembered for starting the SPCI Scouts and Guides and making these groups two of the finest in Bengal," read the resolution.

Several officials from the scouts federation, in addition to present and ex members of his troop, had gathered at the Olpadvala Hall to pay their homage to "Skipper" as he was affectionately called. The notes from the *Last Post* and *The Reveille*, followed by a recitation of Avestan prayers set the tone for the function. Representatives from various organizations with which he was connected recalled his outstanding contributions. Time and again reference was made to his commitment to the cause of the youth and the children, and his attempts to inculcate in them good citizenship, a sense of character and service to the community through the scouts movement.

"He considered all children as belonging to one big happy family; made them feel needed and important," informed Phiroze Mogrelia of the SPCI. "Although in the early years there was a shortage of funds, no boy was ever deprived of attending a camp because of his parents' inability to pay the camp fees," remembered ex-scout Erach Medhora with nostalgia. "He taught us to be honest, self-reliant, resourceful and above all self-denying...trusting, loyal, helpful...courteous...obedient, smiling...clean in body and mind," Medhora acknowledged. His own example of self-discipline inspired many. At camps, he would reportedly never have his own food until everyone else had been served.

The troop completed its golden jubilee in 1986 and in its five decades of existence, over 300 Parsi boys and 100 girls are believed to have received their training under him. The scenario was quite different in 1936 when his appeal to the SPCI that he be allowed to form a scout troop attached to the SPCI was conceded to with some degree of caution. Permission was granted on the condition that the activities of the troop should in no way interfere with the gymnasium classes and that he would have to raise his own finances without charging any fees for the scouting activ-

ity. Nearly 20 years later a cub pack was formed; a decade thereafter a bulbul flock when girls were admitted to the SPCI; and a year later a guide company.



Batlivala's association with the parent SPCI began in 1936, within six months of his move from Bombay to Calcutta, when he was co-opted as a member of the Institute's committee. Thereafter he was elected as the scouts secretary and physical education director. The physical culture shows that he organized for Navroze functions were a much looked-forward-to event. Later he was made general secretary of the Institute and in 1976 he was first elected as president of the Institute which post he held until his death 13 years later.

"A lover of sports, a great athlete and a great administrator," from 1968-85 Batlivala had served as vice president of the Calcutta Parsee Club. His administrative abilities were utilized when he was appointed on the golden, diamond and platinum jubilee celebrations committees of the Club.

His philosophy - nothing great can be achieved without great labor - was recalled by Dinsha Surti of the Parsi Zoroastrian Association. "He was a man who knew the pulse and heartbeat of the community," said Ms Khursheed Ardeshtir of the Calcutta Parsee Youth League when talking of their founder member. His purpose in forming the Youth League as explained by Ardeshtir was to "provide a forum for young people to meet and exchange views and opinions."

"He lived a life of simplicity, auster-

ity and gentleness but his thoughts, his ideas, and his actions were so far-reaching that the Parsi community of Calcutta will benefit from them for generations to come," wrote Ms Persees Antia in the *Navroz* of June 3, 1989.

Batlivala's association with the community was not restricted to Calcutta. For several years he was one of the vice presidents of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India and at the time of his death was a co-opted member from the east zone. "His contribution to the growth and development of the Federation was substantial," noted an editorial in the *Fed Newsletter* of June 1989. "He listened to everyone patiently and expressed his own views gently and politely but firmly. He spoke only when absolutely necessary and his words of wisdom helped in formulating the policy and programs of the Federation," the tribute continued.

He was a founder member of the first Lions Club to be chartered in East India, working "hard at every project and right till the end of his days never failed to attend meetings," wrote Anklesaria. He also maintained his links with the Iran Society, as its committee member, even helping out financially when the need arose. There were several others who also benefited from his largeheartedness. As revealed by Alak Ghosh, vice president of Bharat Scouts and Guides, "Ardeshtir invariably slipped an envelope into (my) pocket with the words, 'If there is a needy boy, give this to him.'"

While he gave his money freely, he also spent great time and effort on collecting coins, his cherished hobby. He was reportedly always willing to show his splendid sets and talk about them.

"Most of us today claim we have no time for any sort of service to the community. The world has become a rat race, but Ardeshtir made the effort to rise above it," observed an editorial in the *Calcutta Gavashni* of April-May 1989. He was also on the board of *Gavashni*. "He ran a successful business, he raised a family, and yet found time for scoutmastership and much more..."

Batlivala is survived by his wife Najoo and son Marzban.

Written by Parinaz Gandhi

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