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PARSI COMMUNITIES I. EARLY HISTORY

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i. EARLY HISTORY

Qeṣṣa-ye Sanjān (The Story of Sanjān). Iranians have been involved in trade with India from Achaemenid times, but the creation of a Parsi settlement in India was the outcome of the migration of Zoroastrian refugees from their original homeland in medieval Islamic Persia. There is debate over the exact date of this exodus: 716 CE (S. K. Hodivala, 1927, Chap. 1), 775 (Seervai and Patel), 780s (*Qeṣṣa*; all quotations from this source are taken from Eduljee's translation), 785 (Modi, 1905, pp. 1-11), and 936 (S. H. Hodivala, pp. 1-11) have been variously cited. The variations are due to the fact that the only source, the *Qeṣṣa-ye Sanjān* does not give precise dates but rather uses round figures (e.g., "In this way three hundred years, more or less, elapsed ... in this way another two centuries passed by ... In this way seven hundred years passed by ...," *Qeṣṣa,* tr., pp. 53-54). Furthermore, these are dates between events not all of which can be confidently identified. There is also a further overriding problem. The *Qeṣṣa* states that it was written down in 1600, based on oral tradition and it must therefore be used with due caution and appropriate allowances as a historical source, given the way it was composed and transmitted (Stausberg, 2002, I, pp. 375-98; Nanji and Dhalla, pp. 35-58).

The *Qeṣṣa* is, however, important as an indicator of the Parsis' own perception of their settlement in India. The account of the exodus begins by describing how a group of devout Zoroastrians in Persia went into hiding in the mountains during a time of fierce Islamic persecution. After a hundred years they moved on to Hormuz, but still remained under threat of oppression. "At last a wise dastur, who was also an astrologer, read the stars and said: 'The time Fate had allotted us in this place is now coming to an end, we must go at once to India.'" They sailed to Diu in western India, where they settled for nineteen years: "[t]hen a priest-astrologer, after reading the stars, said to them: 'Our destiny lies elsewhere, we must leave Diu and seek another place of refuge.'" But a storm came while they were at sea, endangering their lives, so they prayed "O Almighty God! Help us to get out of this danger. O Victorious Bahrām! Come to our aid" and they vowed to consecrate a Bahrām fire if they arrived safely in India. "Their prayers were heard; the victorious fire of Bahrām abated the storm," so they arrived safely in India (*Qeṣṣa*, tr., pp. 49-50). There they sought permission to settle from the local ruler, Jadi Rana. He asked for an account of their religion and laid down four pre-conditions before agreeing to grant them sanctuary: They should use only the local language, the women should adopt the local dress, they must put down their weapons and vow never to use them and, finally, their marriage ceremonies should be conducted only in the evening; the dastur agreed. In his account of their religion he emphasized the features that accorded with Hinduism, for instance, reverence for the sun and the moon, fire and water, and the cow. He also stressed that their women observed strict purity laws. In short, the settlement in India was written in the stars, their safe arrival was due to divine aid, and they were not asked to forsake any significant aspects of their religion; indeed Zoroastrianism shared much in common with that of the Hindus. Oral tradition relates that Jadi Rana felt apprehensive about granting sanctuary to people of such warrior-like appearance, but the priests convinced the king that they would be 'like sugar in a full cup of milk, adding sweetness but not causing it to overflow' (a variant relates the placing of a gold ring in the cup of milk; see Axelrod). Tradition states that the Parsi affirmations of their religion were delivered in sixteen statements (Skt. *ślokas*; though the oldest manuscripts date from the 17th century; *Qeṣṣa*, tr., pp. 60-80). They emphasized the points where their religion was consistent with Hindu tradition, but some details do not reflect Hindu practice; for example, there was no reason why weddings should be held at night. It has, therefore, been plausibly argued (Eduljee, 1995, pp. 60-70) that these traditions seek to explain why certain Parsi practices have evolved by imbuing them with an aura of

historical legitimacy and authority, harking back to the covenant reached with the Hindu ruler when they first settled in India.

The *Qeṣṣa* outlines the common Parsi perception of the pattern of their settlement in western India. After some time the settlers approached the king for permission to build a temple to house their most sacred grade of fire, an Ātaš Bahrām (see ĀTAŠ). He consented and gave them suitable land. The history of that fire, known as Irān-šāh, their "king of Iran" in exile, is central to much subsequent Parsi history. The legend states that "three hundred years more or less" elapsed while the Parsis settled in peace in Sanjān and beyond. Then the Ghaznavid ruler, Sultan Maḥmud, pledged to add Sanjān to his kingdom. His army advanced on Sanjān "like a black cloud." The Parsis stood alongside the Hindus. The battle is depicted in epic style. The sultan's forces included not only horsemen but elephants "... the plain was distressed by the weight of the elephants ... Day and night the battle raged ... The two leaders were as dragons, struggling with each other with the fury of tigers. The sky was covered with a dark cloud from which rained swords, arrows, and spears. The dead lay in heaps and the dying got no succor – such was Fate's grim decree." The battle went against the Hindus, who fled, but the Parsis stood firm and after three days the Muslim forces withdrew, before returning the following day with reinforcements. The Parsi leader, Ardašir, rushed on to the field like a lion and roared out a challenge. A Muslim knight "... riding a swift horse, charged at Ardašir with his lance ... the two warriors were locked in combat. The two fought like lions ... Ardašir managed to ... drag him down, and then he cut off his head." Then the Muslim reinforcements charged. "The din of clashing swords rose above the land, waves of blood flowed over the field like a river." Ardašir was struck by an arrow, "blood poured out of his wound; weakened, he fell from his horse and died. When tragedy beckons even marble becomes soft as wax" (*Qeṣṣa*, tr., pp. 54-56). The Hindu-Parsi alliance was defeated and Muslims ruled the land. Various Parsi scholars have attempted to identify this invasion with known external history, but with no clear conclusion (S. H. Hodivala, 1920, pp. 37-66). Perhaps the significant aspect of the story is not its debatable historical significance and plausibility, but rather the literary manner in which it invokes imagery from the *Šāh-nāma*, and particularly the way the heroic figure of Rostam is evoked in the description of Ardašir (Williams, pp. 15-34).

The *Qeṣṣa* then focuses on the story of the sacred fire, Irān-šāh. Fearing for its safety in the face of the Muslim invasion of Sanjān, Parsi priests took it to the

mountain of Bahrot, south of Sanjān, and hid it in a cave for twelve years before taking it to the village of Bansda; the dates are again disputed. Jivanji J. Modi (1905, pp. 1-13) dates the sack at 1490, while Shapurshah Hodivala puts it before 1478, probably 1465 (pp. 42-46; see also pp. 56-57 on a possible external account of the stay at Bahrot). There were two major Muslim conquests of Gujarat in the approximate period referred to in the *Qeṣṣa*, in 1465 and 1572; it is not clear which of the two dates is relevant. Because the route to Bansda was impassable during monsoons, Irān-šāh was eventually moved to Navsari at the behest of a legendary leader, Chāngā Āsā. The date is again a matter of debate. H. E. Eduljee considers it one of the few fixed dates in Parsi history, namely 1419. The first *rivayat* (*rewāyat*; see below), that of Nariman Hōšang in 1478, explicitly refers to Chāngā Āsā as leader in Navsari and his achievement in obtaining relief from the *jezya* (the poll tax levied on non-Muslims), but there is no mention of the transfer of Irān-šāh to Navsari through his proposal, a momentous event which would have been mentioned if it had occurred by then (*Qeṣṣa*, tr., p. 19; S. H. Hodivala, 1920, pp. 18-36, supported by Patel; for the translation of the passage on Chāngā Āsā, see Dhabhar, p. 600). There is a hint that it had been installed in Navsari by the time of the second rivayat, often referred to also as the rivayat of Nariman Hōšang (though he is not said to be the bearer of the letter) dated 1480 or 1485 (Paymaster, 1954, p. 67, following Hodivala). In short it seems that the Irān-šāh was moved to Navsari sometime in the late 15th century, and that a precise date cannot be given. This does not bring into question the basic narrative that the Parsis settled in the northwest coast sometime in the first millennium, that they consecrated a fire of the highest grade, and that they were threatened by Muslim conquest, which forced them to take the fire into hiding before establishing it at Navsari. Such events shape community identity and their memory is generally carefully preserved, but precisely because of their importance the stories can be subject to later “elucidation.” Sanjān was at the turn of the millennium a thriving port, and it is plausible that it was a major Parsi settlement as the *Qeṣṣa* indicates. It was from there, for example, that the Navsari community first called for priests in 1142 (*Qeṣṣa*, tr., pp. 87-88, argues for an earlier date; see S. H. Hodivala, p. 82, for a slightly later date, namely 1182, see also Kamerkar and Dhunjisha), but the community there disappears from Parsi history after the “sack” of Sanjān.

Early Parsi settlements in Gujarat. The *Qeṣṣa* outlines the dispersal of Parsis around Gujarat. It has generally been interpreted as indicating a migration from Sanjān northwards to Broach (Bharuch), Navsari, Ankleshwar, and

Cambay, but, as Eduljee points out (Eduljee, 1991, p. 42), the *Qeṣṣa* does not claim that it relates the only migration of Zoroastrians from Persia. The early settlements were in locations with harbors, some of which could accommodate large ships that crossed the oceans, for example Cambay and Broach, while others, such as Navsari, were harbors used by ships pursuing the coastal trade. The sea-borne trade between western India and the Persian Gulf (and to East Africa and China) dated back centuries (Kearney). The Parsi migrants were not therefore venturing into unknown territory, but to a region with which Iranians had long traded. It is plausible that there were several groups who migrated over the years. As noted below, there were a variety of traditions about the settlement in the early 17th century. The *Qeṣṣa-ye Sanjān* is the tradition that has become the focus of communal and consequently academic attention and should be viewed, as convincingly demonstrated by Susan Stiles Maneck (pp. 127-29) and Michael Stausberg (2002, I, pp. 277-88), not primarily as a historical source but as an example of a particular genre of Persian poetic literature (it is composed in Persian couplets), with theological and apocalyptic overtones that owe much to Islamic convention, especially in the opening doxology, the praise to God "the Giver, the Merciful, the Just ... You have made Adam out of clay" (*Qeṣṣa*, tr., p. 47).

There are a number of hints about early Parsi settlements in a range of sources, some Muslim, some notes on old manuscripts, and some early buildings. An extensive collection of such notes is in Seervai and Patel (see also Mirza, pp. 242-47; Paymaster, 1954, pp. 85-91). Some of the earliest are: the Kenheri cave inscriptions of 1009 CE; reports of the presence of Parsi traders in Cambay in the 11th century; the settlement in Navsari, which is said to date from 1142; and a copy of the *Vendidad* made in Ankleshwar in 1258. A new *daḵ-ma* (see CORPSE) was built near Broach in 1309 because the old one (undated) was dilapidated (Patel, p. 2). Some grants of land were made to Parsis around Thana in the 11th century, and there is a communal memory and ritual recall of a Parsi massacre at Variav in the 12th century (though the legend takes various forms, see *Qeṣṣa*, tr., pp. 100-5). With such fragmentary evidence it is difficult to plot a coherent chronological history.

There are indications of Iranian Zoroastrians in India about whose history we know little. In the 19th century some western academics and Parsis were excited by what were first thought to be long lost ancient Zoroastrian mystical texts, the *Dabestān-e maḏāheb* and *Dasātir*. They were soon shown to be modern texts reflecting the beliefs of some Zoroastrians interested in Sufism

and Hindu and Buddhist mysticism. The *Dabestān* relates that it was the product of one Dastur Āḏar Kayvān (see ĀẔAR KAYVĀN) and some of his followers. He settled in Patna in his later years and died there in 1617-18. It is not implausible that other Zoroastrians interested in mysticism might also have traveled to India, not only to escape persecution but also in search of enlightenment (Modi, 1932b; Stiles Maneck, pp. 129-45; Āḏar Kayvān, tr. 1937).

The Rivayats. Chāngā Āsā, credited with the bringing of the fire to Navsari, was a pioneer in another important development in Parsi history. Conscious of the lack of ritual knowledge in his community, and supported by leading Parsis in Surat and other centers, he arranged for a Zoroastrian layman (*behdin*) of Broach, Nariman Hōšang, to go and seek guidance from the Zoroastrian authorities (dastur) in Yazd and Kermān. He appears to have gone without any letters of introduction, indeed with no knowledge of Persian, so he spent a year in Yazd learning the language while earning a living by trading in dates. The reply he brought back in 1478 was addressed to Chāngā Āsā, as well as to the leaders of the various settlements (S. H. Hodivala, 1920, pp. 276-349; Dhabhar; Paymaster, 1954, pp. 66-84). Of the 26 *Rivayats* written between 1478 and 1773, 13 were written before 1600, an era otherwise sadly lacking in sources on Parsi history. The *Rivayats* provide information not only on Zoroastrian belief and practice, but also offer a glimpse into the conditions experienced by Iranian Zoroastrians. They were concerned with the Parsis' lack of knowledge and urged them to send two priests (*ērvad*; see HĒRBED) to Iran to study the religion, as they themselves suffered from a shortage of priests and could not spare any of their own to be dispatched to India. They praised Chāngā Āsā for negotiating freedom from the poll tax for Navsari Parsis. Sanjān is not named among the settlements greeted in the *Rivayat*, presumably indicating that the Parsis had moved on. Certain Indian centers were mentioned regularly in the *Rivayats*, namely Navsari (which had always the largest number of people addressed), Surat, Ankleshwar, Broach, and Cambay (or Khambat). It is a feasible that these were regarded as the main Parsi settlements at the time (Dhabhar, pp. 595-606). A *Rivayat* sent in 1511 expresses regret that Iranian Zoroastrians had been unaware of their co-religionists in India, despite the earlier *Rivayats*. The Iranian Zoroastrians sent manuscripts of various Zoroastrian texts to India. The signatories of the *Rivayats* were from Torkābād, Šarifābād, Khorasan, Sistān, and Kermān. A common theme in several *Rivayats* is the terrible hardships suffered by Iranian Zoroastrians, who interpreted their suffering as signs of the final assault of evil before a savior would come and the renovation commence. In

contrast, the Parsis were beginning to occupy important social positions such as *patels* or *desais* (village leaders and tax officers). The period of Mughal rule (1573-1660) was a time of relative peace and security, in contrast to the earlier period of oppressive rule from the Delhi Sultanate (13th-15th cent.).

Early religious organization. Over the years a system of ministerial districts (*panthak*) was established, allocating different areas to the religious care of specified priestly lineages. We do not have a precise date when these agreements were reached. The oldest manuscript detailing them is dated 1543 (Sanjana, pp. 98-99). The Panthaks were: (1) Sanjān between the rivers Pardi to Dahanu (nowadays based in Udwada); (2) Navsari between the rivers Pardi to Variav and the River Tapti; (3) Godavra, from Variav to River Narmada near Broach; (4) Pahruc from Ankleshwar to Cambay; and (5) Cambay. Some of the regions, for instance, Sanjān and Navsari, long predate that period. As the Parsis moved around the region, disputes, sometimes violent, erupted over priestly rights and privileges.

The transferring of the sacred fire (*ātaš)* from Bansda was greeted with joy in Navsari, but it resulted in what might be called substantial "ecclesiastical problems." The families of priests who had tended the sacred fire from its consecration in Sanjān came with it to Navsari. The initial agreement was that only the "Sanjanas" (priests from Sanjān) should tend to the sacred fire and all other family rites in the town should be performed by the resident priests of Navsari, the Bhagarsaths (the sharers, i.e., of the priestly duties that the original priests sent from Sanjān had shared among themselves, see S. K. Hodivala, 1927, chs. 6-8; Kanga, pp. 2-22). The problem was a delicate one, because Parsi priests then (and now) are not paid a salary for rites performed. When the lay people of Navsari requested Sanjana priests to perform their family ceremonies, bitter disputes arose. In September 1686, seven Bhagaria *behdin*s and two Sanjana *mobad*s were killed. The *behdin*s took one Bhagaria, Minocher Homji, into their fold and established a *dar-e mehr* in his home (which is still known as Minocher Homji Agiary; see Jamasp Ashana, pp. 1-31; Patel, p. 5). It was a long-lasting conflict involving appeals to secular courts. Eventually it led to the moving of the sacred fire, which had been temporarily moved to fortified Surat 1733-36, because of Marathi Pindari invasion, and from Navsari to Bulsar in 1740, the date established by Shapurji Hodivala (1927, pp. 288-89, in contrast to Patel) on the basis of the date of the permission (*parvāna*) given by the Gāēkwād/Gāēkwār (ruler of Baroda) to move the sacred Irān-šāh. At Bulsar the sacred fire was kept in the house of a priest, since there

was no special building, for approximately two years. Despite an appeal in 1741 for it to be returned to Navsari, it was taken in 1742 to the village of Udwada, which was in the Sanjana Panthak, but with a second line of dasturs representing the lineage of the two priests who brought the fire to Udwada (S. K. Hodivala, 1927, pp. 259-344). There had been a Parsi community at Udwada beforehand, for it had a *daḵ-ma* built in 1697 (Patel, 1906, p. 5), but it appears to have been a poor community. There was some rivalry with the larger community in Bulsar (S. H. Hodivala, 1920, pp. 307 ff.).

PARSIS IN THE 17TH CENTURY

Up to the 17th century, sources offer only fragmentary information, but then, with the arrival of various European powers, a number of external accounts of the Parsis appeared, and the Parsis themselves began to keep more records. There were two earlier Western reports by the friars Jordanus in 1322 and Odoric de Pordenone in 1325, but they give scant detail. Although records increase, problems of history remain. The political situation in western India was complex. Mainly to the north were the Muslim powers, and from the south came Hindu Marathas. Their conflict ebbed and flowed so that territories changed hands several times, especially trading centers like Surat, where there was a growing number of Parsis. The situation was complicated by the rivalry between Western powers. By 1558 the Portuguese dominated an area of some thousand square miles in northwest India. Under Portuguese rule Parsis became traders and are mentioned by Portuguese writers (Firby, pp. 89-116). By 1600 the Portuguese were rivaled by the Dutch and the French and in the 17th century by the British, especially in Surat, a port of increasing importance and a meeting point for traders and the Parsis.

Father Anthony Monserrate was a Portuguese Jesuit who encountered Parsis on his journey through Gujarat to visit Akbar, the Mughal emperor, in Fatḥpur Sikri around 1580-83. He commented on their base in Navsari and noted their Persian ancestry. Like other Portuguese, he compared the Parsis to Jews “[i]n colour they are white but are extremely similar to the Jews in the rest of their physical and mental characteristics, in their dress and in their religion” (Firby, p. 91). He evidently had heard of some of the apocalyptic beliefs of Zoroastrians. He gave a reasonably accurate account of the *sodra* and *kosti* (sacred shirt and the girdle cord invested with when being initiated into the religion), described Parsi funeral practices, noted their reverence for the fire and the sun, and commented on their festivals.

The first Englishman to refer to the Parsis was John Jourdain (ca. 1572-1619), a former merchant navy officer and an employee of the newly established East India Company. In 1609 he and the rest of the ship's company were shipwrecked near Gandevi and made their way via Navsari (he refers to the Ātaš Bahrām) on to Surat. Writing of the Parsis in Navsari, he wrote "In this towne there are manie of a strange Kinde of religion called Parsyes. These people are very tall of stature and white people. Their religion is farre different from the Moores or Banians for they do adore the fire, and doe contynuallie keepe their fire burninge for devotion thinkinge that if the fire should goe out, that the world weare at an end" (Firby, p. 91). The comment that Parsis were white is a theme followed by several later travelers.

In 1616 Edward Terry (1589/90-1660) became chaplain to Sir Thomas Roe, the British ambassador, who was seeking trading opportunities in India from the Emperor Jahāngir, Terry's account of the Parsis was written in 1625 and an expanded edition appeared in 1665. One of the two main European travelers' accounts was that of Henry Lord (b. 1563) who was chaplain at Surat in 1625-29. Lord wrote a book, the first part of which is on the *banians* (Hindu traders) and the second on "the Persees." Lord is noteworthy for his use of Zoroastrian texts, and he relates that he was instructed by a Parsi priest. Although some of his account is inaccurate (e.g., he thought Zoroaster had come from China), he was writing only twenty years after the *Qeṣṣa-ye Sanjān* had been written, making him almost a contemporary of what is seen as the key source for early Parsi history. Much of his description of the community is perceptive. According to Lord, the original settlers arrived in seven ships at Suwali (the port down the River Tapti from Surat where ocean going vessels docked); another landed nearby at "Baryaw," but all were killed by a conquering Rajah (presumably a reference to the Variav massacre mentioned above); five landed at Navsari and the last group landed at Cambay. His account of the Zoroastrian creation story (see COSMOGONY AND COSMOLOGY i.), though couched in biblical language, is broadly accurate; his account of the legends concerning the life of Zoroaster is fairly traditional (e.g., the account of the prophet laughing at birth). His description of the priesthood displays respect for their values, as does his account of their ceremonies, especially their attitude to the sacred fire and funeral practices.

The next two travelers to comment briefly on the Parsis were Thomas Herbert (Surat, 1629, he explicitly used Lord) and Peter Mundy (Surat, 1650s). Nora Firby notes that subsequent British travelers' accounts fall silent until the

Restoration of Charles II and the British acquisition of Bombay (1662). Firby then, for the first time in the study of travelers' accounts of the Parsis, drew attention to W. Geleynssen de Jongh, who took charge of the Dutch factory at Broach in 1625. His account (tr. by Kreyenbroek, in Firby, pp. 183-93) is more comprehensive and probably more accurate than other 17th-century sources. He described the towns of Broach, Baroda, Cambay, and Ahmadabad. The sources on which he based his account were largely from Broach, a city neglected by historians, yet clearly important in Parsi history prior to the rise of Navsari (see BHARUCHAS). Geleynssen stated that 18,000 Parsis arrived in fifteen ships, with eight landing at Sanjān and seven at Cambay, further evidence of early 17th-century interest in the Parsi settlement in India. Geleynssen said that Parsis were to be found in many trades as merchants, shopkeepers, craftsmen, agriculturalists, and especially in the toddy trade (a drink from the sap of several species of palm which yields a potent brew). More than his contemporaries, he emphasized the role of the Parsis in the sea borne trade of Gujarat. As a merchant, his account of Parsi beliefs and practices betrays less theological bias than those of clerical writers such as Terry and Lord. He appears not to have seen fire temples, although he had heard of the Ātaš Bahrām at Navsari. His account of the funerals is well informed. Generally, he writes positively about the Parsis, commending their high ethical standards. His account of their theology, calendars, dress, domestic worship, and social customs is also informed and extensive.

Other 17th-century travelers to comment on the Parsis were Niccolo Manucci (1639-1717) who arrived in Surat 1656 and spent most of his life in Delhi, visiting Surat occasionally; Gerald Aungier (d. 1677), an early Governor in Bombay in 1669 who encouraged Parsis to settle in the new center; his Factor, Streynsham Master (1671-72), also comments on the sacred fire at Navsari and on a temple in Surat); John Ovington, who arrived in Bombay in 1689 and spent three years in Surat and gave a mostly sympathetic account of Parsi beliefs and practices. Ovington emphasized their charitable work "to such as are Infirm and Miserable; leave no Man destitute of Relief nor suffer a Beggar in their Tribe ... They are the principal Men at the loom in all the country" (Hinnells, 2000, pp. 117-39, esp. p. 127). The last traveler of the century was Alexander Hamilton (b. before 1688, d. in or after 1733), who arrived in Surat the same year as Ovington and used it as his base for trade as a merchant captain until 1725. His account of the trades that the Parsis were engaged in (ship building, weaving, ivory, agate, cabinet makers and toddy production) is particularly useful.

Thus, in nearly a thousand years the Parsis gradually migrated around Gujarat, with their main centers in Sanjān, Broach, Navsari, and Surat. Themes commonly noted by travelers were the Parsis' distinctiveness among India's races, their resemblance to white Europeans and Jews, their funeral and devotional practices associated with the fire, their charitable nature, and their involvement in textile production.

PARSIS IN THE MOFUSSIL FROM THE 18TH CENTURY

The British took possession of Bombay in 1662 but for the following hundred years Bombay remained relatively marginal to the East India Company's concerns. For the first seventy years, Portuguese influence remained strong, for example, in the use of their language and currency. Pirates at sea undermined its role as a port; the original seven marshy islands were unhealthy. Gradually the silting up of the port of Surat, the building of the dockyard in Bombay, and the political turmoil of the mainland with the battles between the Marathas and the Muslim powers, as well as European rivalries, led to the emergence of Bombay as the commercial capital of western India in the 19th century (Guha, 1982, pp. 2-8). The situation of the Zoroastrians in Bombay has been discussed in another entry (see BOMBAY i. THE ZOROASTRIAN COMMUNITY); here the focus will be on Zoroastrians in India outside this major emerging city.

N avsari. Although Sanjān occupied a prominent role in the early history of the Parsis, Navsari was to rise to a position of religious pre-eminence. The first temple is reputed to have been built there in 1142. From approximately 1300 CE and for about two hundred years, there was political oppression and persecution in the Navsari by Muslim rulers from Delhi (Kamerkar and Dhunjisha, pp. 42-44). In 1531 Maneck Chāngā, son of Chāngā Āsā, built a *dak̲ma* there (Palsetia, p. 10). One of the Navsari notables to whom *Rivayat*s were sent was Rana Jesang, who, indeed, was the first named in the sixth and seventh *Rivayat*s (dated 1520 and 1535, respectively). From records of land sales we learn that he purchased substantial properties. He was descended from the first priest to come to Navsari, namely Kamdin Zarthosht, and was himself a learned priest, authoring several books. His son, Meherji Rana, became a pivotal figure in Parsi priestly history. On his father's death he became the senior priest in Navsari, witnessed by some judgments written in his own hand. In 1573 Emperor Akbar conquered Surat, so acquiring parts of coastal Gujarat, including Navsari (Stiles Maneck, pp. 93-106). After his victory he met Meherji Rana and subsequently invited him to the court to give an

account of his religion (1577-78). Akbar took an active interest in the religions in his realm and invited the leaders of each to come and inform him about their religion; Meherji Rana was asked to expound on Zoroastrianism. Tradition relates that Akbar was impressed and took the fire as the symbol of holiness in his court. Further, he used the Zoroastrian calendar as an official court calendar. Some Parsi commentaries claim that Akbar was converted and wore the *sodra* and *kosti*, but he was a noted syncretist and it seems unlikely he took up Zoroastrianism to any serious extent. Nevertheless, he clearly respected Meherji Rana and rewarded him generously with a grant of land near Navsari. On his return home, he was feted as a hero, formally declared to be the senior dastur, and was given more land. The acclaim he received reinforced Navsari's standing as the main religious center of the Parsis in the 16th century (Stiles Maneck, pp. 93-129; Modi, 1903; Paymaster, 1954, pp. 113-21).

Later, Akbar invited Dastur Ardašir Noširvān Kermāni from Persia to help produce a Persian lexicon. The relative influence of the two Zoroastrians is unknown, but it is said to have been a factor in developing further contacts between Zoroastrians in the two countries, for Dastur Noshirvān Kermāni is said to have written to Dastur Kamdin Padam of Broach encouraging him to visit Persia (Mirza, p. 244).

Navsari gradually emerged as the center of Parsi religious authority in 17th-century India. It replaced Sanjān as the base from which priests were sent to Parsi communities elsewhere. For example, in 1543 both the Bhagaria and the Sanjana priests of Navsari sent *mobad*s to work in the region of Damaun and in 1580 to Diu (Patel and Paymaster, I, pp. 8-9). It was also the location of one of the oldest and most revered *agiāri*s (lit. the place of fire), the Vadi dar-e mehr. Its early history is unknown, but it was rebuilt in 1588 (Patel, 1906, p. 3), and again in 1795 and 1851.

Navsari is the seat of a senior priestly lineage, the Bhagarias, with Dastur Meherji Rana as their leader (Stiles Maneck, pp. 80-85). It has long been a center of religious learning. In the 16th century, it had a center where Zoroastrian manuscripts were copied and translations made into Gujarati. The priests were affluent, buying and selling land. In 1627 the priests received copies of the *Vištāsp Yašt* and *Visperad* from Persia; Dastur Asdin Kaka (d. 1638) was one of the early scholars (Patel and Paymaster, I, p. 13), and in 1693 the ancestor of the JamaspAsa high priestly family was born there.

Dastur Jamasp Asha (b. 1693) had a thirst for knowledge but faced many struggles. He studied Persian, Sanskrit, and astrology from a pundit but he wanted also to learn Zand/ Pahlavi and so he went to Broach to study with Jamshid Kamdin (Jamasp Ashana, pp. 4-22). He had, however, done this against his father's will and consequently had no funds even to buy oil for lamps to read by. A sympathetic Hindu in Broach allowed him to sit and read while his shop was open before he became well known in Broach literary circles. He read from the *Šāh-nāma* for the Nawab until a jealous Maulvi (Moslem scholar) condemned the reading of the *Šāh-nāma* and Dastur Jamasp Asha lost his position. He returned to Navsari in 1719. The leading priests of the time were reluctant to provide the *behdin*s with translations, but he had no such hesitation and produced Gujarati translations of five *gāh*s and some *Yašt*s. This made him controversial, as did his teaching on laying out the corpse with *padān* (the mask worn over the mouth by priests to avoid defiling the sacred fire in the sanctuary), and the celebration of the *Gatha* days (the five Gathic days added to the last month of the year; see CALENDARS i.), and his belief that *behdin*s should be allowed to study and, if knowledgeable, become dasturs. When Dastur Jamasp Velāyati arrived in Surat in 1721, Dastur Jamaspji and two other dasturs went to study with him. When Dastur Velāyati left, he pronounced Dastur Jamasp Asha to be the most perceptive and presented him with copies of two Pahlavi texts. From that time, he was thought of as senior among Navsari's dasturs. Several other dasturs, including some from the Sanjana and Meherji Rana families, studied under him. Among those who acclaimed his knowledge were Dastur Mulla Bin Kaus and later Martin Haug. Dastur Jamasp Asha collected a library of manuscripts that his three sons (Dastur Noshirwanji Jamaspji of Poona, Dastur Jamshedji Jamaspji of Bombay, and Dastur Khurshed Jambudji of Mhow) divided between themselves. He died at the age of sixty in 1753 (Jamasp Ashana, pp. 4-22).

The most scholarly of the sons was Jamshedji Jamaspji. He created some controversy by arguing against the consecration of the Ātaš Bahrām in Navsari after Irān-šāh had been moved to Udwada. He refused to attend the inaugural celebration (*jašan*) but gave a lecture on fire afterwards, which brought him much acclaim. He was also well regarded by the Gāēkwād, to whom he recited the *Šāh-nāma*, but court pundits attacked him because he ate meat and drank liquor. They proposed, and the Gāēkwād accepted, that there should be the challenge of a debate, which Dastur Jamaspji won, thereby earning himself recognition as a pundit. In 1781 he traveled on foot to Bombay where he was again held in high esteem, directing the consecration of various *agiari*s "places

for fire" (for example the Maneckji Sett *Agiāri*) as well as daḵmas in the Mofussil. He was content to live in poverty and it is said that when Lowjee Wadia (1700-1774), the builder of the Bombay dockyard, was traveling between Surat and Bombay he saw Dasturji's hut-like home and left money for him to have a suitable house. On his return, he asked where the new house was, to which tradition relates the Dastur replied "Sir not in this world but in the spiritual" (Jamasp Ashana, pp. 25-38).

The Bombay lineage of the JamaspAsa family became established under Dastur Kurshedji Jamshedji, who, after studying Zand, Pahlavi, Persian, Arabic, and Sanskrit, went to Bombay in 1801 where he was the first Shahenshai Dastur, although the Qadmis had a dastur there for the previous eighteen years (Jamasp Ashana, pp. 153-258). He was officially declared dastur on 5 April 1812 and, when the Bombay Parsi Panchayat's membership was increased from twelve to eighteen in 1818, he became one of the priestly *akabar*s (managers of the panchayat). Until the late 19th century, successive dasturs of this lineage were born and studied Avesta, Pahlavi, and Persian at Navsari before they were appointed to the dastur-ship in Bombay. The first to be born in Bombay was Dastur Kaikhusroo Jamaspji in 1866. In 1898 he performed the first *boi* ceremony (i.e., ceremony of feeding the sacred fire) of the new Anjuman Ātaš Bahrām.

Several members of the lineages have been the focus of controversy; for example, Dastur Jamshed Rustom was criticized in 1844-45, because he showed the missionary John Wilson various manuscripts and explained some rituals to him. Dastur Kaikhusroo Jamaspji, who was the first dastur of the new Bombay Ātaš Bahrām, performed the *naujote* (ceremony of investing a person, usually a child, with sacred shirt and cord) of Tata's French wife (Patel and Paymaster, I. p. 39). The JamaspAsa lineage (nowadays in Bombay/Mumbai and Poona/Pune) holds what is referred to as the third "chair" among the dasturs of Navsari, the first being held by the Meherji Ranas and the second by Dastur Pahlan's lineage since 1726.

Although Parsis were generally politically secure and flourished in Navsari, the region was subject to diverse threats during the 17th and 18th centuries: famine in 1630-37 and 1718-19, the plague in 1684 and 1691, floods in 1731-32, and the invasion of the town in 1664 and 1667 by the Mahratta chief Šivāji. In the 1730s the Parsis feared the desecration of Irān-šāh by the invading armies of Pēšwā Bāji Rāo and so took the fire to the home of a Parsi leader in Surat. Parsis, as other communities, faced various external threats as well (S. K.

Hodivala, 1927, p. 259; Kamerkar and Dhunjisha, pp. 76-80).

When Irān-šāh was moved to Udwada in 1742, attempts were made to consecrate a new Ātaš Bahrām in Navsari. The story of the consecration of the second Ātaš Bahrām in India, this one for the Bhagarias (Irān-šāh being the responsibility of the Sanjanas), is related in Shapurji M. Sanjana's *Qeṣṣa-ye Zartoštiān-e Hendustān*. Although the *Qeṣṣa* is traditionally depicted as focused on the settlement in Sanjān, the central theme is the history of Irān-šāh Ātaš Bahrām down to the time of Changa Asa. The *Qeṣṣa-ye Zartoštiān-e Hendustān* is a parallel text dealing with the consecration of the second Ātaš Bahrām at Navsari. The priestly and lay folk of Navsari proposed the consecration of an Ātaš Bahrām, which reportedly was led by the Pious Khorshid. He obtained permission from Akbar and then circulated Parsis in other important settlements all of whom expressed joy and promised support. With a book from Persia to guide them, they duly consecrated the second Ātaš Bahrām in India in 1765 in the presence of a hundred priests "wise, pure of body and of powerful wisdom," driving the demons and sorcerers into "the darkest hell." All those who worshipped the Ātaš "became like a flowered garden." As people assembled to honor the Ātaš "everyone became free from sorrow because of its sight, the wishes were satisfied and the needs diminished" (Sanjana, tr., pp. 120-23). The celebration of the second Ātaš Bahrām's consecration became the subject of popular legend in Gujarati oral tradition, which produced a liturgical text of a song performed on auspicious occasions such as *naujote*s, weddings, and the *Ātaš nu git*, which awaits full scholarly analysis (see Stewart, 2004, pp. 443-60).

There were, naturally, other religious structures. Daḵmas were constructed there by Changa Asa's son in 1531, by M. N. Sett in 1747 (Patel, pp. 3, 6), a large 195 *pāvi* (sacred [making it one of the largest in India]) daḵ-ma in 1796 (Patel and Paymaster, I. p. 168), and a further one in 1823 (Patel, p. 32). In 1864 an estimated crowd of 8,000 Parsis assembled from Bombay, Bulsar, and Surat to celebrate the consecration of a new daḵ-ma (Patel, p. 163). Ātaš Bahrām, consecrated in 1765, was installed in a new building in 1810 (Patel, p. 26).

The scholarly tradition of Navsari continued in various ways. In 1856 a Zoroastrian school (*madrasa*) was opened to educate young priests and enable them to withstand the criticisms of Christian missionaries (Patel and Paymaster, I. p. 716). A major Parsi library, the Dastur Meherji Rana Library, was opened in 1872, which became famous not only for its collection of books but also for its collection of manuscripts of religious texts (Patel and

Paymaster, II. p. 407). Several schools were founded, which educated some of the major leaders of future Parsi society. The earliest one, Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, the first Indian to be knighted and then made baronet in recognition of his charitable works; was orphaned at an early age and went to Bombay from Navsari to earn his living in his future father-in-law's (F. N. Batliwala) business. Batliwala had left Navsari in about 1790 to start a business in collecting and selling empty bottles before he went into the China trade in 1801, where he was again joined by Jeejeebhoy. In his later years, Jeejeebhoy visited Navsari and other Gujarat centers bestowing much largesse, including a *dar-e mehr*, walls around the *sagdi* (building for the fire in funeral grounds) and well for lustrations, a hall for the seasonal festivals (*gāhambār*/*gāhānbār*) and a school, as well as doles for the poor. He also paid the Gāēkwād 11,907 rupees to save his co-religionists in Navsari from paying the poll tax (*jezya*; Patel and Paymaster, I. p. 545). His visit casts an interesting side light on priestly authority of the time. Candidates for *nāvar* (priesthood initiatory ceremony) had to undergo initiation in Navsari. Now that there was an Ātaš Bahrām in Bombay, Jeejeebhoy conveyed a request that such initiations could henceforth take place in Bombay; but the permission was refused (Patel and Paymaster, I. p. 912). Other Parsi notables with their roots in Navsari include Dadabhoy Naoroji and the Tata family.

There are a number of episodes pointing to the extent of Parsi prestige in the wider community. Although it was not normal for maharajas to visit and honor priests in their homes, in 1861 Maharaja Khanderas Gāēkwād called on Dastur Meherji Rana in his home and honored him with a shawl and turban (Patel and Paymaster, II. p. 8); and in 1874 the Maharaja of Baroda called on N. R. Tata in his Navsari home (Patel and Paymaster, II. p. 467). In 1878 the governor of Bombay, Sir Richard Temple, traveled to Navsari in order to see the Tata daḵ-ma and *sagdi.* He taken to see them by Dastur H. J. JamaspAsa, before they were consecrated, an event attended by approximately 10,000 Parsis (Patel and Paymaster, II. p. 584; Patel, pp. 231-36, 243-45). They also held prestigious public offices as well. For example, in 1886 Dinshah D. Mullan was appointed public prosecutor in Navsari. Dastur Edulji N. JamaspAsa, as well as officiating as dastur, was also customs officer in the Nizam of Hyderabad's state in the 1890s, and Burjorji R. Gharda was commissioner of Navsari municipality and was appointed by the Maharaja of Baroda to his State Commission in the same period. Sohrabji J. Taleyarkham (d. 1900) was made a judge in Navsari by the Gāēkwād (Patel and Paymaster, III. pp. 178, 625, 627).

Because of Navsari's religious importance, its Parsi community has been the focus of considerable charitable work by wealthy Parsis from elsewhere; including the founding of schools, hospitals, maternity homes, charitable dispensaries, science and arts colleges, orphanages, an animal dispensary, roads, as well as religious buildings and the famed Dastur Meherji Rana library. In the 1881 census the Parsi population of Navsari was recorded at 8,118: 4,447 females and 3,671 males. The educational levels were not as high as those in Bombay. In that year, there were 1,934 educated males and only 605 educated females (Patel and Paymaster, III. p. 30). Navsari, however, also remained a center of priestly conflict with the Bhagaria, Sanjana, and Meherhomji lineages, contesting each other's rights to perform ceremonies. The disputes lasted into the 20th century.

Surat. The port had been important in coastal trade for centuries. It had also developed as an important international port, partly as a stage for the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca, and also for trade in the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, and even China. Parsis took part in the growth of this trade (Karaka, I, pp. 1-46; Bulley, passim; Kamerkar, 1998, passim; Kamerkar and Soonu Dhunjisha, pp. 69-74). From the 17th century Surat became a major center for the Parsis, overtaking Broach as their main commercial base in the Presidency. The earliest reference in the *Prakash* to Surat is a call for two *mobad*s to come from Ankleshwar (the base of the Godavra Panthak) in 1616, four more were sent for in 1659 (Patel and Paymaster, I, p. 11). In 1647, Nanabhoy Punjya built a daḵ-ma, but there is reference to an earlier undated one (Patel, p. 6). The cause of the increased importance of Surat was the arrival of European traders in the city. A number of Navsari Parsis moved to Surat following the Maratha raid on Navsari in 1707, for Surat, which had been fortified in 1664 following the raid of Šivāji, gave them greater security (see above).

The leading 17th century Surat Parsi trader was Rustom Maneck Seth (1635-1721), who has been the subject of a number of studies, among which the ones carried out by Jivanji Modi (1929), Shapurji Kavasji Hodivala (1931, chaps. 1-4), and David L. White, apparently the most scholarly one, stand out. There is also the succinct account of Maneck Stiles (pp. 170-204). The key source materials are "The Qisseh of Rustom" discussed by Modi and the Surat Factory Records (for the Portuguese records see Panduronga Pissurlencar). Rustom's father had served as a broker to the Portuguese, a position Rustom inherited. He also served the Dutch and finally the British. The history of the

East India Company at this time was complex. The Old East India Company, sometimes referred to as the London East India Company, had a monopolistic control of trade between India and Britain and employed the (Hindu) Parekh brothers as brokers, but “interlopers” who had engaged in private trade started the New (or English) East India Company, which employed Rustom Maneck as broker. The result inevitably was confrontation. The situation was made more complicated when parliament dispatched Sir William Norris to the Mughal Court in 1702-03 to negotiate trading privileges for the New East India Company and Rustom was deputed to accompany and assist him. Norris displayed little respect for Awrangzēb, dismissed his conditions for trade, and departed with undiplomatic haste, leaving Rustom to incur a substantial fine, which the company was reluctant to reimburse. Rustom, however, remained in the monarch’s favor and received large gifts of land around Surat, which he gave to his family members, thus creating the three major areas of Surat: Frampura (after Rustom’s elder son, Framji), Nanpura (after his grandson Nanabhoy), and Rustompura after Rustom himself. The last of these consisted of a large garden up the Tapti River, a purchase that later became significant. Rustom amassed a fortune despite being caught up in company and broker feuding. He displayed considerable charity on numerous occasions in building bridges, digging wells, etc. In 1707, he settled in his garden a group of refugee Parsi weavers from Navsari, who were fleeing Maratha incursions. These weavers, and later Parsi groups seeking security in fortified Surat, enabled Rustom to control the means of production, further alienating his rivals and eventually provoking the jealousy of the company, which dismissed him. But he was reinstated and continued in the economically powerful position of East India Company broker until his death in 1721 (Bruce, III, pp. 249-636).

His three sons inherited their father’s position but quickly fell foul of intrigues by their rivals, leading to their imprisonment. One of them, Naoroji, managed to escape and obtained passage aboard ship back to England, where he spent a year persuading the directors of the East India Company of the injustices done to his family (see Commissariat). He obtained full restitution and returned to India a wealthy and powerful figure. He settled in Bombay, where he became prominent in the Bombay Parsi Punchayet and a major charitable donor, although the family retained offices and influence in Surat and were major charitable donors in Surat, Bombay, and Navsari.

The successful appeal of Naoroji Maneck in London has resulted in that family being the focus of attention for writers on Surat Parsis. There were other

important families as well, notably the Davar Modi family, who were regarded as the heads of Surat Parsis for centuries. Their ancestor dated from the 17th century. He and his descendents supplied provisions to the British in their early settlement and were therefore known as *modi*s (approximately meaning "house stewards"). They were also recognized as community judges or magistrates (*dāvar*s). Their authority was recognized both by the Nawab of Surat and the British, and some of their descendents continue to live in Surat (Katrak, passim). The family also claimed to speak on behalf of all Mofussil Parsis on major issues. For example, in the 1860s, Modee Rustomjee Khoorsedjee protested against the change in Parsi family law being planned by Bombay Parsis and questioned their right to speak on behalf of all Parsis (Palsetia, pp. 211-20). In part it would appear that the Mofussil Parsis feared the reforming possibilities of the highly educated urban Parsi leadership.

The conflicts between Bhagaria and Sanjana priestly lineages, which started in Navsari, had also an impact on Surat, but Surat was the base of a yet greater controversy in connection with the religious calendar. In 1720, an Iranian Zoroastrian, Mobad Jamasp Velāyati (Jāmāsp Welāyati), arrived in Surat and realized that the Parsi calendar was one month in advance of the one followed in Persia. Being aware of religious disputes in Surat in connection with funeral practices, he hesitated to make the discrepancy public. Instead, he taught Zand/Pahlavi to three bright priests, namely Dastur Dārāb (Kumana Dadaru) of Surat, Dastur JamaspAsa of Navsari, and Dastur Kamdin of Broach. Velāyati visited Bombay before returning to Persia in 1721; his prior stay in Surat is perhaps an indication of the importance of the city at the time, which Jivanji Modi has shown to have been a center of priestly learning in the 17th century (Modi, 1916, pp. 79-87). Following Velāyati's advice a layman, Maneckji Edulji A. Dalal, began praying according to the *qadmi* (the ancient) calendar, which caused further disputes. Fifteen years later, in 1736, a *behdin*, Jamshid, came from Persia to Surat and began to explain to Parsis there the differences between the Iranian and the Parsi calendars. Dastur Murzban Kaus Fredun Munajjam of Surat (1717-79) discoursed at length with Jamshid regarding the calendar and concluded that Jamshid Irani was correct and so advised Surat Parsis, thus giving birth to the Qadmi group. Their first Dasturs were Dastur Darab and his cousin Dastur Kaus Darab, who had studied Avestan and Pahlavi with Jamasp (Patel and Paymaster, I. p. 49). Four years later the latter moved to Bombay, where he spoke extensively about the calendar issue. The ensuing disputes over two decades caused such problems that complaints were made in the durbar "court" at Broach, resulting in the arrest of Dastur

Kamdin and others. The Nawab of Broach referred the matter to the Parsi panchayats of Navsari and Surat, and Bombay Parsis were told to follow the judgments of these two panchayats (illustrating the continued authority of the older settlements). Their judgment was communicated to the community in Broach affirming that the old ways should be continued and so most Parsis follow the traditional Shenshais (< Pers. *šāhanšāhi*, "royal") calendar (on the calendar controversy, see Stausberg, 2002, I, pp. 434-40; Vitalone, pp. 11f.).

The importance of Surat's Parsi community was highlighted by the fact that when Abraham Anquetil du Perron stayed in India to study Zoroastrianism and the Parsis, he stayed not in Bombay but in Surat (1757-60; Patel and Paymaster, I. p. 41; Modi, 1916, pp. 1-141). In 1754 Anquetil's interest in the Parsis had been aroused by the sight of some facsimile leaves of the Avesta and by Thomas Hyde's (q.v.) book *Historia Religionis*, which was based mainly on Persian, Greek, and Latin texts. Avestan was not then understood in Europe. He traveled to India in 1750 and journeyed around the country. His aim was to gain a first hand understanding of Zoroastrianism, knowing that the Parsis possessed much more literature about the religion than could be found in Europe. He also appreciated the importance of studying the cognate language, Sanskrit. In 1757 he settled in Surat, and published his findings in 1771. Anquetil's account of early Parsi history is based on the *Qeṣṣa-ye Sanjān*, but he witnessed at first hand the arguments between Sanjana and Bhagaria priests and the calendar dispute. He was taught by Dastur Darab, a pupil of Dastur Jamasp Velayati. He spent most of his time collating various Avestan and Pahlavi manuscripts. Anquetil relates that he persuaded Dastur Darab into allowing him entry into the fire temple, disguised as a Parsi, a claim whose accuracy Modi has questioned. At the very least Modi established that Anquetil dramatized events to the point of distortion to emphasize his own bravery to his countrymen (Schwab, pp. 109-41; Modi, 1916, passim).

Surat had also been the home of Kaus Jalal. A leading businessman in Surat, Dhunjishah Manjishah, became leader of the Qadmis, and in 1768 sent Kaus Jalal with seventy-eight questions concerning the calendar and other issues to the dasturs of Persia. This stimulated the last of the *Rivayat*s, the *Ithoter* (=78, see Vitalone). His motive was to learn about the consecration of fire temples, specifically Ātaš Bahrāms, because a Qadmi Ātaš Bahrām was planned for Bombay. Kaus Jalal took with him his ten-year old son, Peshotan. They left Surat by ship in 1768 and traveled via Muscat to Bandar ʿAbbās, thence to Yazd, a journey of three and a half months. Kaus left his son in the charge of a

priest in Yazd to learn Avestan, and after four years of training he was ordained *nāvar* (initiated into priesthood). They stayed in Yazd for three years before proceeding to Isfahan, where Peshotan studied Arabic and Persian in a *madrasa*. After periods in Shiraz (where Kaus Jalal successfully interceded at court for Zoroastrians of Kermān to be released from the *jezya*) they journeyed to Baghdad, where Peshotan studied Turkish. Tradition relates that the caliph was so impressed with their erudition that he gave the honorific title Mollā to father and son, an honor normally reserved for scholarly Muslims. Thereafter Peshotan was known as "Mulla Feroze." This is, however, an anachronistic legend, since the Abbasid caliphate at Baghdad had come to an end in 1258.

In 1780, after twelve years of studying in Persia, father and son returned to Surat. They later moved to Bombay, where their teachings on the calendar caused considerable disputes, but under Kaus Jalal's influence the wealthy businessman funded the consecration of the first Ātaš Bahrām in Bombay, the Qadmi Dadiseth Ātaš Bahrām. Kaus Jalal was hailed as its first dastur in 1783. In 1794 he resigned and moved to Hyderabad, where he became a respected member of court, handing the dastur-ship to Mulla Feroze (Paymaster, 1931a, passim).

The story of Mulla Feroze and the Qabissa controversy highlight the importance of Surat in 18th-century Parsi history. It was also the first place to have more than one Ātaš Bahrām. Plans for each had long been maturing. In 1819 the widow of D. N. Modi sought the Anjuman's permission to establish an Ātaš Bahrām. At the same time P. K. Vakil planned a Qadmi *Ātaš*. As there was no precedent for two such temples in one place there was much debate. The Shenshais, being the majority, argued that they had priority. The Supreme Court of Surat said the widow should have her building consecrated first and thereafter Vakil could consecrate his. Some 20,000 people gathered to celebrate the installation of the fire in the Modi *Ātaš Bahrām* on 19 November 1823. The Surat government closed the courts, the Collector's office, treasury, and all factories in honor of the occasion. It was estimated that the *ašo-dād* (remuneration to a priest) expenses amounted to approximately 8,000 rupees, for there was a huge communal feast. Similarly, when the Vakil *Ātaš* was consecrated on the fifth of December of the same year, priests and *behdin*s from numerous Gujarat villages, as well as from Bombay, congregated and again shared a large communal feast (Patel, pp. 34-38). The agreement that more than one *Ātaš Bahrām* could exist in one place provided the precedent for Bombay, where the first was the Qadmi Dadyseth *Ātaš*, then the Qadmi

Banaji *Ātaš* (1845), and finally the Sanjana Wadia *Ātaš* and the Shahinshahi Anjuman *Ātaš*, founded in 1830 and 1897, respectively.

Surat was also the birthplace of a new Parsi religious movement, Ilm-i Khshnoom. The founder, Behramshah Nowroji Shroff (1858-1927), was born there and after his visit to Persia and his mystical experiences there and a tour around India returned to Surat (1891-1909), where he remained silent for some time before beginning his teaching, and then moving to Bombay.

Several Surat leaders were major benefactors. For example, Bhikhaji Eduljee (d. 1780), resident of Surat, funded a building for Irān-šāh at Udwada; N. Kohaji (d. 1797), an agent for British ships coming to Surat, built a structure for the sacred fire in Yazd and sent the sacred fire from Surat to Yazd by road and purchased two properties to cover its upkeep. He also funded the consecration of the Goti Adaran just outside the walls of Surat, a much-loved temple where it is believed that miracles had occurred (Patel and Paymaster, I. p. 83). R. M. Enty, a prominent Surat Shetia and a leading figure in the cotton industry, built a daḵ-ma and *dharmsala* (building devoted to charitable or religious purposes) in Surat (Patel and Paymaster, I, p. 99). As with Navsari, the Surat community, and the Parsis in surrounding villages, were the focus of considerable charity both from its own members and from descendants who had moved to Bombay. The three main forms of charity were the building of temples, daḵmas and dharmsalas, but there were many others also: schools, sanatoria, technical institutes, orphanages (which also catered for children who were not necessarily orphans from remote villages so they could attend school in Surat), hospitals, old people's homes, charitable dispensaries, libraries, medical care, and classes for Avestan and Pahlavi. Not all donations were exclusively for Parsis. For example, in 1864 F. S. Parakh donated 25,000 rupees for a dharmsala for travelers of all communities, and C. F. Parakh in the same year gave 15,000 rupees for the renovation of the Hindu-run Panjrapole (place for stray cattle); in 1868 the D. N. Mistry school was opened in Gopipura for children of all castes and creeds (Patel and Paymaster, II, pp. 111, 135, 259).

As in Navsari, leading Parsis in Surat were held in high esteem by the authorities. For example, in 1822, Ferozeshah and Ardashir Dhunjishah were honored by the nawab in a durbar at Surat, returning to their homes in triumphal procession, with the nawab's retinue of elephants, Ardashir on horseback, two hundred guards from the nawab's court, mace bearers and finally Ferozeshah, a triumphant procession subsequently repeated for them

by the British in 1829. Ardashir Dhunjishah was honored for his work as Kotwal (superintendent of police and magistrate) and for rescuing many from floods and fire. Indeed Bhagwan Swami Narayan, when visiting Surat, called on Ardashir and gave him his turban and portrait as a mark of respect. Ardashir kept them in a place apart in his home, and once each year displayed them for public darshan when Swami Narayan priests visited to do puja (Patel and Paymaster, I, pp. 164, 112, 221; Kamerkar and Dhunjisha, p. 90). In 1863 R. C. P. Ghadiali of Surat ran the mint for the issue of new coins for the Maharaja of Baroda, and in that year two Parsis were made municipal commissioners (Patel and Paymaster, II, p. 54). In 1869 Kaikhusroo H. Alpaiwalla was made government pleader in the Surat court, and in 1875 he was made judge of the Surat Small Causes Court (Patel and Paymaster, III, p. 805).

Surat, like Navsari, suffered persecution from the Delhi sultanate in the 13th and 14th centuries but was more secure under the Gujarat sultanate after 1407. Both were invaded by Šivāji in 1664 and 1667, when the homes of Parsis and non-Parsis alike were looted. Surat also sustained a plague epidemic in the 17th century besides four major fires in the 18th century and six more in the first half of the 19th century. There was a major fire in 1836, two in 1837 followed by four days of flooding, and another one in 1889 (Patel and Paymaster, I, pp. 289, 303, 305, III, p. 291). These instigated substantial charitable donations while also prompting a number of Parsis to migrate. Most headed south to Bombay, and some traveled north to Karachi. The economy of Surat was weakened by the silting up of the river, which made access for ships more difficult and the conflicts between the various powers in the city resulted in much business transferring to the growing metropolis of Bombay in the 19th century. The 1881 Census recorded 12,593 Parsis in Surat, 5,779 males and 6,814 females, by far the largest number outside Bombay, which by that time had begun to assume pre-eminence among Parsis in India.

Broach. There are various indications that Broach/Bharuch was a more important early center for Parsis than we can currently document. It was an ancient port mentioned in the Periplus Maris Erythraei (ca. CE 80) and by Ptolemy as Barygaza, and perhaps dating back to Harappan times. It is plausible that the Parsi community there was an early trading Diaspora group from Persia as Stausberg (2002, I, p. 382) has suggested. There are suggestions that there was a Parsi temple in Broach in the 10th century. The first individual Parsis known to have settled there arrived in 1142. In 1309 one Pestonji built a daḵ-ma, because the “old one” had become dilapidated (Patel,

p. 2, in Patel and Paymaster, V, p. 81; the earlier one is dated 1239; see also Kamerkar and Dhunjishah, p. 71). An agiari is said to have been consecrated there in the 11th or 12th centuries (Patel and Paymaster, V, p. 175). Broach is said to have been a center for copying Zoroastrian manuscripts from the 16th century. It was from Broach that the first Parsi (Nariman Hōšang) went to Persia, which resulted in the first of the *Rivayat*s, and its leaders were among those directly addressed in that *Rivayat* (Dhabhar, p. 600). The leader of Broach, Hōšang son of Ram, is identified as "that holy and dear" person in Nariman Hōšang's *Rivayat* (Dhabhar p. 606). The township mentioned most frequently in the *Rivayets* was Navsari, but Broach was also important. Broach Parsis were involved in nine of the *Rivayat*s, but what we know of them is mainly due to the travel accounts of W. Geleynssen de Jongh, who was in Broach in 1625.

It is difficult to plot a history of the community on the scant information that has reached us. We know that a dak̲-ma was built there in 1654 (Patel, p. 3), a *dar-e mehr* in 1727 and another in 1760 (Patel and Paymaster, I, pp. 27 41; Patel, pp. 7, 14), and an Anjuman dak̲-ma was consecrated in 1833 with 5,000-6,000 Parsis having gathered to celebrate (Patel, pp. 3, 71). There were violent incidents involving Parsis and Muslims in Broach. In 1702, a Parsi called a Muslim a *fakir* (mendicant), and the nawab gave the Parsi the choice either to convert to Islam or be executed; he chose death and his memory continues to be honored in prayers in Broach (Patel and Paymaster, I, p. 22). In 1857 there were Parsi-Muslim riots in Broach. It was alleged that a Parsi (B. S. Bharucha) had entered a mosque; in retaliation two Parsi agiaris were desecrated, and some Parsis were killed, including the *panthaki* (a senior *mobed* who allocates priestly duties in his panthak), and the fire was extinguished. Bharucha himself was violently assaulted and then dragged through the streets. Five others were also killed (Patel and Paymaster, I, p. 728; other Muslim-Parsi riots occurred in the area in 1851 and 1874, see Palsetia, pp. 187-89). By way of contrast, the only indication of Parsi-Hindu relations is one Kamdin R. Bhagat (d. 1815), known as Bhagat (pious), because of his singing of Hindu Bhajans. A Hindu officer visited him weekly to venerate a pippal tree in his grounds (Patel and Paymaster, I, p. 130).

References are made to various charitable donations to Parsi enterprises in Broach in addition to dak̲mas and *dar-e mehr*s and two gardens (*baug*s) built there. Fardunji Kohiyar established a reading room and a scientific society there in 1831 (Karaka, II, p. 40). C. N. Cama funded a Zoroastrian girls' school

in Broach in 1865 and another one was established by J. N. Petit in 1884. There is also a reference to Jeejeebhoy Dadabhoy Zoroastrian School (Patel and Paymaster, II, p. 146, III, pp. 245, 686). The main Parsi business was in the cotton industry, which until 1800 was the main item of export to China, and, after 1813, there was a 600 percent increase in export to Britain (1800-50; see Guha, 1982, pp. 20-21). In the early 1880s, Rastamji Manakji of Broach invested in a large tract of land to grow cotton, which developed into a flourishing business (Karaka, I, pp. 100-1); in 1892 D. F. Ginwalla and four other Parsis were appointed to a committee of the newly established Cotton Ginning Association, and Darashah R. Dalal, a Parsi of Broach, was director of two mills (d. 1895). B S. Ginwalla, a resident of Broach, opened a ginning factory and also served as a Commissioner of Broach Municipality (d. in 1900). Another Broach leader, Hormusji N. Jambusarwalla (d. 1901), owned two ginning factories at nearby Jambusar (Patel and Paymaster, III, pp. 535, 801, IV, p. 47). Dosabhai Framji Karaka (II, p. 259) considered the Parsis of Broach to be second only to those of Bombay in terms of wealth.

A number of Parsis held senior posts in wider Broach society. Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy (not the later Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy) was broker for the British in 1680 (Guha, 1982, p. 8). Dastur P. A. Kamdin was first-class *monṣef* (sub-civil judge) in the years 1837-54. He was succeeded in this post in 1877 by his brother, Dinshah P. Kamdin, and in 1864 C. C. Sabavala was made deputy collector and magistrate (Patel and Paymaster, II, pp. 9, 104), as was Khan Bahadur Bomanji E. Modi in 1883. Mancharshah D. Vakil, a leading advocate in Broach, was widely respected in the legal profession, a trustee of Broach Parsi Punchayet, and a delegate of the Surat Matrimonial Court (d. 1896). Edulji M. Contractor was a large landowner and a member of the municipal board and of the district local board (d. 1901; Patel and Paymaster, III, 570, IV, p. 42). Clearly the Parsi community in Broach was more important than details in available sources indicate. The 1881 Census recorded the total of 3,042 Parsis in Broach, 1,444 males and 1,598 females.

Other Parsi Centers in Gujarat and Beyond. One of the oldest structures outside the centers already covered was a daḵ-ma at Ankleswar that was consecrated in 1517. A daḵ-ma was built in Cambay in 1534, where a *dar-e mehr* was also consecrated around this time (Patel, p. 2). A daḵ-ma was built in Damaun in 1697 to replace another one that was said to be a hundred years old (Patel and Paymaster, I, p. 848; Patel, p. 120). Bulsar was probably a more important settlement than is now apparent. The Parsis there acquired their first priest in

1631, and a daḵ-ma was built in 1645 (Patel and Paymaster, I, pp. 13, 843). In 1731, the Parsis exerted sufficient influence on the Gāēkwād to exempt them from the religious poll tax (Patel and Paymaster, I, p. 28); a year later, the holy Irān-šāh fire was kept there for two years on its way to Udwada and a second daḵ-ma was opened in 1777 (Patel, p.14). Parsis settled in Thana to the south in 1774, where a daḵ-ma was opened in 1781 (and another in 1841), and C. R. Patel funded there a *dar-e mehr*, a daḵ-ma, and a *nasā-ḵ-āna* (lit. house for corpses, where funeral ceremonies took place; see Patel and Paymaster, I, pp. 51, 59, 87).

Religious buildings were erected in many Gujarat towns and villages in the mid 19th century thanks to the wealth earned by Parsis throughout the Bombay Presidency. The opening of a daḵ-ma indicates a sizable population, because the complexity of the structural design and the associated consecration costs require a number of community members resident in the area to justify the time and expenses. Burial grounds cost less but were rarely opened in the Bombay Presidency, only in more distant and smaller settlements. In the period 1770-1895, 120 daḵmas were consecrated, almost all in Gujarat. Twenty-four burial grounds were purchased, with all but one outside the Presidency (e.g., Tellicherry on the Malabar Coast in 1793; Cochin in 1823; Macao in 1829; Delhi, Lahore, Multan, Peshwar, Rawalpindi and Sukkur all in 1842; Colombo 1846). The few daḵmas opened in distant climes were Calcutta (1822) and Aden (1847), two centers with wealthy leaders. A study of the pattern of funeral grounds gives both an indication of periods of financial prosperity for the Parsis and when and to where they migrated for business. Temple building similarly gives an indication of wealth and migration. In the period 1770-1895, 150 temples were built (and a further 19 in the following fifteen years). The first to be built outside the Bombay Presidency were in Deccan Hyderabad and Calcutta in 1839, but no more were built until one in Rajkot in 1875. As many early temples had to be rebuilt, sometimes with new splendid buildings, the extent of charitable donations is even greater than it first appears (Giara, pp. 1-7). In broad terms the pattern tended to be that communities first made provision for funerals and then built temples and subsequently dharmsalas. In the 1850s, the region was opened up for travel with the introduction of the railways, and so numerous dharmsalas were built. The Great Indian Peninsula railway was opened in 1850 and the Bombay-Thana railway was opened in 1853. Such developments boosted the trade of Bombay and of the hinterland, thereby stimulating much travel. In 1866, for example, with the opening of the Bombay-Baroda railway, new

dharmsalas were built at Grant Road in Bombay (given by Rustom Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy), Bandra (Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy), Dahisar (C. F. Pareck), Pardi (Rustom Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy), Udwada (Dowager Lady Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy), Bulsar (B. M. Wadia), Surat (C. F. Parekh), Sion (C. F. Parekh) and Broach (Rustom Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy; Patel and Paymaster, II, p. 202; for details on charitable building works, see Hinnells, 1985, pp. 290-326; on temples, see Giara, 2002).

The Parsis enjoyed a high public profile throughout the region. Those who became members of the British Parliament made extensive tours of Gujarat on their visits to India: Dadabhoy Naoroji (1886, 1893, and 1906) and Muncherji Bhownaggree in 1896-97. A number held high office in various towns. Dadabhoy Naoroji, for example, before his work in England, was dewan (prime minister) of Baroda in 1874, and Muncherji Bhownaggree had, at the Maharajah's request, drawn up a new constitution for Bhavnagar in 1887. Saklatvala toured India in 1927 while he was a member of parliament. As Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy (first baronet) had toured Gujarat distributing largesse, so too did others. In 1862, for example, Rustom Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy toured Gujarat starting at the Portuguese settlement of Damaun, where his arrival was greeted with a salvo of thirteen guns; the mayor and people of the town turned out to greet him, and he received similar welcomes at Udwada, Bulsar, Navsari, Baroda and Surat (Patel and Paymaster, II, p. 50). Various Parsis distributed charitable aid to many centers throughout Gujarat, but their charity was not restricted to Parsis or to areas where they might attract the notice of the British. Their generosity also extended to remote areas far from their own settlements when the need was noticed. Rustom Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy was honored by the king of Portugal for funding an English language school at Damaun with a Portuguese name. He also opened English schools in Navsari, Bulsar, and Billimoria in 1864. Gujarati Parsis gave 164,493 rupees to the Bengal Famine Relief fund in 1866; Readymoney gave 50,000 rupees to a mental asylum in Sind in 1871, and D. M. Petit built a leper hospital at Ratnagiri in 1875. In 1894 the family of J. N. Petit funded a new ward for Matunga Lunatic Asylum. Khan Bahadur Naoroji P. Vakil funded on ophthalmic hospital and dispensary at Ahmedabad, which was run by the government but named after him (Patel and Paymaster, II, pp. 125, 127, 204, 370, 522, III, pp. 480, 783).

Parsis held important official posts in scattered areas and some of them held senior positions. The brothers Vicaji and Pestonji Meherji oversaw the land

and sea revenue collection of the North Konkan in the early 19th century. They cleared jungles and built roads and bridges for the transport of cotton (500 bullock carts of cotton annually) to Bombay and established a mint at Aurangabad, but they finally went bankrupt because the Nizam government failed to repay loans provided by the brothers (Guha, 1982, pp. 27-29). PestonjiB Kotwal was first appointed overseer of Surat Municipality, then assistant secretary in Ahmadabad Municipality, then chief police inspector there; he was then made paymaster in Bulsar and finally became police superintendent in Nizam State (Patel and Paymaster, III p. 596).

PARSIS ON THE "FRINGES" OF THE BOMBAY PRESIDENCY

Poona. Although there are some hints of earlier Parsis in Poona, the main period of their arrival was post 1818, when the British took control of the city from the Marathi Peshwas following the battles of Kirkee and Yeraoda in 1817 and Koregaon in January 1818. Previously, the Parsis had been suppliers to the British forces in Sirar and moved with them to Poona. One known individual was J. M. Chinoy who had opened a shop at Shirur camp and in Poona in 1814 (d. aged 100 in 1891, see Patel and Paymaster, III, pp. 365-66), and thus he was an eyewitness to the wars between the Peshwas and the British. At Poona, Parsis started as shopkeepers supplying the Europeans (a then common synonym for British), but one of them, Khursetji Jamsetjee Mody (1755-1815), achieved high office in this early period. Mody joined the service of the British Residency at Poona in 1800, rising to the position of native agent to Colonel Sir Barry Close, Resident at Poona, a position he held for ten years. He came to the attention of the Maratha Peshwa Bajirao II, who made him revenue commissioner of the Carnatac. Mody faced plots from some Marathas who accused him of corruption before the Peshwa. These charges were unsubstantiated, but when Elphinstone was told that Mody was plotting with the Marathas against the British, Elphinstone demanded that he choose between the two positions, and he chose to continue with the British. Fearing for his life, Mody planned to leave Poona, but was poisoned the day before his planned departure (Darukhanawala, I, pp. 137-38; Karaka, II, pp. 40-41).

The first known Parsi edifices in Poona were two dak̲mas, one built in 1825 and a larger one built in 1835 (Patel, pp. 40, 76). From approximately 1835, it became known as the "monsoon capital" of the Presidency, because government and the wealthy spent the monsoon period in the hills, away from the heat and humidity of Bombay. In 1838 Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy funded a dharmsala near Poona for travelers of all communities (Patel and Paymaster,

I, p. 330). In 1840 he had a *jašan* (celebration with liturgical services) performed in Poona and announced plans to build a *dar-e mehr* there, though his correspondence suggests he only made his first visit in 1841 (Patel and Paymaster, I, p. 380). In 1843 the Patel *dar-e mehr* was opened, followed a year later by that of Jamasetji Jeejeebhoys (Patel, p. 97; Giara, pp. 128, 126). The Patel Agiari appointed as its first dastur a son of a Navsari dastur, Dastur Jamaspji Edulji (on the Poona branch of the JamaspAsa lineage, see Jamasp Ashana, pp. 41-152). As with the Bombay branch of the lineage, several of them were born and studied in Navsari, although they went on to later to Poona. Dastur Jamaspji Dastur was the high priest of the Deccan and active in the period 1824-46. He was one of the dasturs to whom various *anjuman*s (association, assembly) turned for guidance on the consecration of agiaris and dak̲mas (see below).

After Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy's 1841 visit to Poona, he started planning a scheme for extensive water works (drought rather than monsoon floods were the problem for Poona; there were droughts in the following years, severe droughts indicated by an asterisk, 1823, 1824*, 1825*, 1832-38, 1844-46* 1862-67, 1876-77*, 1896-97*, 1899-1902*). The scheme took ten years to complete because of conflicting advice from different European engineers and the lack of governmental support. Letters in the Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy files in Bombay University Library indicate his growing exasperation (vol. 366, letter dated 11 November 1850, Cursetji Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy to Captain Studdert at Poona), but by 1850 Jamsetjee Jigibhoy speaks of his "annual visit to Poona" and in 1851 his heir, Cursetji Jamsetjee Jigibhoy, refers to his father traveling to Poona more often (Letters, vol. 353, letter dated 17 December 1850, and vol. 366, letter dated 24 May 1850).

An important early figure among Poona Parsis was Jamshedji Dorabji (Naigumwala), who was contractor for building the railway to Poona, including the stretch over the Ghats, which was opened in 1855. *The Gazetteer of Bombay City and Island* (I, pp. 344-45) points out the enormous difficulties involved in laying this line, but does not even mention its Parsi contractor (Karaka, II, pp. 253-57; Darukhanawala, I, pp. 198-99)

Another important early Parsi figure in Poona was Pestonjee Sorabji who started as a shopkeeper but then obtained the lucrative contract for carrying mail, eventually from Poona to Bombay, Aurangabad, and Nagpur. He is said to have kept 500 horses for the mail system. He maintained the mail during the Sepoy Revolt (the first war of Indian Independence) in 1857 and was made

Khan Bahadur by the British for his efforts. His two sons, Sardar Dorabjee and Sardar Nowrojee, started the Poona-Deccan Paper Mills Co. Ltd. and built a cotton factory in 1885. Sirdar Dorabjee also started a bank and an ice factory in Poona. He was active in civic affairs and in 1884 was the first elected president of the Poona Municipality, a post he held for several years, and in 1895 obtained a seat in the Bombay Legislative Assembly. The brothers worked together in their business, and when the older brother died, Dorabjee was elected president of Poona Municipality and was also given a place on the Bombay Legislative Council (Darukhanawala, II, pp. 140-51; Diddee and Gupta, pp. 155-58).

The earliest Parsi settlers in Poona were traders, but increasingly more became professionals, lawyers and doctors especially. In part this was because of the educational facilities of Poona that dated back to the early times of Hindu priestly centers there. In the second half of the 19th century, Parsi benefactors donated much to educational institutions. One of the early benefactors was Rustom Jamsetjee Jigibhoy who, for example, in 1863 gave 1,500 rupees to a convent school in Poona, and a further 1,000 rupees for student residences at Poona College; in 1864 Sir Rustam Jamsetjee Jigibhoy gave 100,000 rupees to the Deccan College in Poona; in 1865 C. J. Readymoney funded the building of an engineering college and in 1869 gave money for a science college; in 1878, Behramji Jeejeebhoy founded a medical school in the city; and in 1889 Sir Dinshah M. Petit gave a large plot of land for a bacteriological laboratory as part of the Science College (Patel and Paymaster, II, pp. 73, 128, 162, 654, III p. 315, 757). The Sardar Dastur Noshirvan School for Zoroastrian girls, mainly attracting students from middle class families, started in 1893; Zoroastrianism was included in the syllabus and daily prayers were said (Patel and Paymaster, II, p. 412). Until 1947, when it had to become inter-communal, it had the reputation of being one of the best schools in the Presidency. It also had boarding facilities for students coming from afar. A school for boys was not opened until 1912, because it had been thought that there were better provisions for boys' education in the 19th century (Patel and Paymaster, V, p. 1; see also Oturkar, p. 94). This focus on educational charity continued into the 20th century, when Sir D. J. Tata (1859-1932) and Sir R. J. Tata gave 15,000 rupees for the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute in Poona and a further 25,000 rupees to the Institute for a Persian and Arabic Department (Patel and Paymaster, V, p. 67, VI, p. 4; Oturkar, pp. 98-99). In 1930 Sir Dorabji Tata Trusts gave 15,000 rupees per annum for five years to establish a Tata section in agricultural economics at the Gokhale Institute for

Politics, and two years later Sir Cusrow and Sir Ness Wadia founded the Naoroji Wadia College, which is now a constituent college of Poona University (Patel and Paymaster, VIII, p. 90; Oturkar, p. 88). In 1943, Sir Dorabji Tata Trusts provided funds for a college of commerce, and a year later gave 8,309,000 rupees for a national chemical laboratory (Oturkar, pp. 102-4). Several Parsis were prominent academics, for example, C. D. Naigumwala, who was made professor of Experimental Physics in 1882 at Poona Science College, and in 1900 became director of the Poona observatory (d. 1938; Patel and Paymaster, VIII, p. 450).

From the mid 19th century, Poona became not just the "Monsoon capital," but also the center of social life for Bombay's wealthy families. Some of the most splendid residences were owned by such Parsi families as the Adenwallas, Jeejeebhoys (esp. Rustomji Jeejeebhoy), and the Petit family, where they came for "the season," away from the monsoon (Diddee and Gupta:, pp. 153-54, 192-93). Functions held in their mansions attracted many high-ranking British officials and other prominent personalities, including the governor of Bombay, Aga Khan, the Nawab of Surat, the Persian consul, the Duke of Edinburgh, the Maharaja of Indore, and the Gāēkwād of Baroda (Patel and Paymaster, I, p. 623, II, pp. 73, 322, 459, 476, III, p. 300). Parsis had shared a gymnasium (*gymkhana*) with the "Europeans," but after disagreements over the use of certain facilities, the Parsi landlord asked the Europeans to leave, and the tennis courts and other sporting facilities were thereafter exclusively used by the Parsis, who also took over the neighboring Fountain Hotel from the Europeans (Franks, pp. 114-15).

Parsi charity in Poona was not confined to education, but, compared with Bombay, it was distributed more inter-communally, partly because of social mixing; and partly because the community itself was mostly affluent with few of its own members in need of charitable aid. In addition to the education benefactions noted above, several Parsis also supported the Albert Education Library Institute in the Cantonment (Moledina, p. 72). Dinbai, widow of N. M. Petit funded two leper wards in the David Sassoon Asylum (Patel and Paymaster, II, p. 124, III, p. 442). In 1896, J. H. Mody donated ten cottages for use as a sanatorium at Lonavla, near Poona, and Pestonji Limjibhoy served for 25 years as secretary of the Poona Panjrapole (Patel and Paymaster, III, pp. 581, 701).

Although the dastur-ship in Poona had not had the seniority of that in Navsari, it was nevertheless an important post. Dastur N. J. JamaspAsa was twice

honored by the government. In 1867 he was made Khan Bahadur for his work in the “Indian Mutiny” and two years later was awarded a gold medal for his social contributions (Patel and Paymaster, II, pp. 238, 263). In 1867 he had three wells dug in Poona for use by Hindus, Muslims, and Parsis, a major benefit in drought afflicted Poona (Patel and Paymaster, II, p. 222). He was recognized as the senior priest of all Parsi communities in the Deccan; and was succeeded by Sirdar Khan Bahadur Shams-ul Ulema Dr Hoshang Jamasp. After working in the police department and serving as Dastur at Mhow, he became professor of Oriental languages in the Deccan College, Poona, in 1874, and High Priest of the Deccan in 1884. In 1886, he was given honorary M.A. and Ph.D. degrees by the University of Vienna (Patel and Paymaster, II, pp. 32, 133, III, p. 13, IV, pp. 162, 166). For eight years of service in the Municipal Corporation he was made Companion of the Order of the Indian Empire (Patel and Paymaster, II, pp. 529, 630, III, p. 200, IV pp. 1, 19). When he died in 1908, his *uthumnā* ceremony (the ceremony of the departure of the soul held on the third day after death) was attended by Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, the Vada Dastur of Navsari, and the deputy (*naib*) dastur of the Wadia Ātaš Bahrām in Bombay, a reflection of the esteem in which he was held (Patel and Paymaster, IV, p. 18). When later that year Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy died, it was the new Poona Dastur, Kaikobad Aderbad, who proposed the main motion to recognize the new Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy (5 Baronet) as leader of the Parsi community, a role given only to someone highly respected in the community (Patel and Paymaster, IV, pp. 27-28). Another member of the priestly JamaspAsa family, Ervad Meher Hoshang Dastur JamaspAsana, was made Khan Bahadur in 1899. Dastur Sardar Kaikobad Adarbad Dastur Noshirwan presided over the first of the Zoroastrian conferences organized by Dastur Dhalla in 1910. These annual conferences became associated with reform movements, but at the first one Dhalla was seeking the support of all sections of the community, including the Orthodox. The invitation to preside at the conference may therefore be taken as a marker of widespread respect (Patel and Paymaster, IV, p. 85). In 1911, he was made Shams-ul Ulema at the Delhi Coronation durbar on the visit of the new British monarch, George V, a prestigious religious recognition (Patel and Paymaster, IV, p. 63). He was also a dastur that faced Orthodox anger. In 1911 he and Dastur J. JamaspAsa of Bombay performed the *naujote* of the second daughter of R. D. Tata and his French wife, and then in 1914 he went to Burma and performed the *naujote* of Bella, an adopted non-Parsi, which provoked a court case in Burma and then was laid before the Privy Council in London (Palsetia, pp. 251-75). Faced with an outcry, he made a public promise not to undertake such an act again (Patel and Paymaster, V, p. 10), but his attitude to

intermarriage, indeed conversion, remained unchanged as reflected in a paper that he read at a conference of world religions held in London in 1924. He asserted that Zoroastrianism was the only religion appropriate for all communities in the world and argued that its tenets were applicable to modern times (Patel and Paymaster, VI, p. 173). Before and after him, Poona Parsis had generally been seen as Orthodox, but he appears to have been an exception to the rule. The high priestly lineage continued to display academic interests in this city famed for its scholarship. Naturally, not all members of the lineage became dasturs; some went into business, some worked for the Nizam, while others entered British government service.

A distinctive feature of the Poona community was the number of Iranian Zoroastrians who arrived there as refugees. It is difficult to give many details because most were not wealthy or powerful. Several opened tea-shops and restaurants (Diddee and Gupta, p. 235). They moved from Bombay to avoid the monsoons, but many appear to have faced, if not discrimination, a rather patronizing attitude from Parsis. An exception to the general lack of information on the Iranians in Poona is Aspandyar N. Khairabadi, who died in 1899 at the age of 116. He had been orphaned at an early age and worked in a tailor's shop before opening his own shop, but then moved into farming. He married at the age of fifty-two in 1837, and migrated to Bombay in 1858 to escape persecution. He moved on to Poona, where he worked at the funeral grounds, Dungerwadi, for sixteen years, a lowly level of employment, but it is said that all Poona Parsis went to his funeral (Patel and Paymaster, III, p. 741). At the turn of the century there were 1,900 Parsis in Poona (*Gazetteer* on Poona, p. 181).

Karachi. A daḵ-ma was opened in Karachi for the first time in 1848, a larger Anjuman daḵ-ma was opened in 1875 (Patel and Paymaster, I, p. 501; Patel, pp. 128, 217-18, 224) and this may be taken as evidence of the early stages of a community as opposed to a few individuals who had settled as suppliers to the British forces in Sind. The first temple was opened in 1849 (Patel, p. 132) and a second in 1869. One important early settler was Ardashir C. Wadia, who, after he retired as chief engineer of the Bombay dockyard, was appointed chief resident engineer of the Indus Flotilla Company in Karachi in 1861, the start of Pakistan's major port. Between 1891 and 1894, Parsis in Sind started three newspapers, one of which, *Sindh Vartman*, was an influential paper (Patel and Paymaster, III p. 379). A remarkable feature of early Parsi history in Karachi is the speed with which community institutions, religious and secular alike, were

established. In sixty-one years (1849-1911, by which time numbers had grown to 2,411), they started two dak̲mas (1848, 1875), two temples (1849, 1869), two schools (1859, 1880), four housing projects (1854, 1889, 1903, 1911, i.e. establishing homes for the poor and widows long before such moves started in Bombay), two charitable dispensaries (1882, 1887), a dharmsala (1888), a social and sports center (1894), a maternity hospital (1909), and a Young Man's Zoroastrian Association (1910; Hinnells, 2005, pp. 204-12; Punthekey, passim). There were two factors at work: first, from the onset of the arrivals there was an intention to establish a community; second, as traders, they had the funds to provide these resources. Initially, they were suppliers in the Afghan wars (q.v.), but later were engaged in other trades, notably liquor. They were instrumental in the development of Karachi as a major trading center. In addition to Wadia's role at the port, others pioneered the tramway network (Hormusji J. Rustomji in 1884), and the establishment of the Chamber of Commerce (Ardashir and Co in 1860); Edulji Dinshaw and Son were one of the largest firms in Karachi during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. A fund was started in 1888 to aid Iranian Zoroastrian refugees, several of whom, as in Poona, opened teashops.

Education was a key focus of Parsi life in Karachi. By the 1880s, the number of boys and girls attending school were approximately equal, evidently a case of gender parity in the educational sphere years ahead of its time. They were also leaders in higher education; for example, in 1885 Edulji Dinshaw, H. J. Rustomji, and J. H. Kothari established the Sind Arts College. It is a tradition that continued into the 20th century with the funding of the Dinshaw Engineering College, which later became a university. Dastur M. N. Dhalla (1875-1956), following his M.A. and then Ph.D. at Columbia University (1904-08), established a religious educational program that, inspired by his own deep devotion, resulted in wider and more comprehensive knowledge and practice of Zoroastrianism among the community at large.

As in other centers, Parsi charity, though primarily donated to communal causes, was also inter-communal. The major figure in this was Edulji Dinshaw, whose main charities were devoted to medical concerns: a women's hospital in 1891, and especially as the main donor for the establishment of the Lady Dufferin Hospital, Karachi's largest (Foundation stone laid 1894, see Patel and Paymaster, III, pp. 363, 495).

PARSIS IN 20TH CENTURY INDIA

The Industrial Revolution in 19th-century India had its impact on Gujarat with, for example, the building of cotton ginning factories in Broach. Most of the major developments, however, were in the city of Bombay, which gradually resulted in an increasing concentration of the Parsi community in the metropolis; however, at the start of the 20th century the majority of Parsis still lived elsewhere. A major force for change and migration had been the assumption of rule in India from the East India Company by the British Parliament and the Crown in 1858, after the Indian Mutiny. Although power rested ultimately with the company's Court of Directors in London, prior to 1857 effective influence was exercised by the people of India at a local level. It was knowledge of local or specialized trade (e.g., cotton) that gave individuals influence with the company. After 1857, influence had to be exerted in London on members of parliament, which meant that people had to be able to argue in Western terms that required, above all, a legal education. This national and international perspective gave increasing powers to the major conurbations such as Bombay, which prompted Parsis and others to move to these centers. The trend resulted in increasing urbanization, which also led to fragmentation as communities grew in new centers, such as Delhi and Karachi. This concentration on Bombay continued through the 20th century (see TABLE 1).

The Table highlights the fact that significant change occurred after Independence (on the early 20th century Parsi migrations, see Pithawalla and Rustomji). Migration to Bombay was mainly undertaken by young, active males with the result that rural communities increasingly consisted of the elderly and the disabled. The problem was exacerbated by some of the socialist policies of the government after Independence. First, under Mahatma Gandhi's influence, prohibition was introduced, and, as most Parsis in Gujarat had made their living from the toddy production, many became unemployed. Landowners were restricted in what they could do with their land if they had tenant farmers, and further, defined by a list, to whom the option to buy should be given. A third factor was nationalization of public transport, a business many Parsis had turned to. As a result, from the late 1950s rural Parsis became increasingly impoverished (Shah, passim; Mistry, passim; Vajifda, passim; Marshal, passim; Bhaya, passim).

The picture painted is usually one of Parsi decline in the 20th century, but it must be borne in mind that from their Bombay base some Parsis, notably the Tatas and the Godrej families, exerted a major influence on the industrial revolution. The Tatas started India's steel industry, and its major airline until

it was nationalized, and donated considerable funds to scientific research in particular. Their political role and educational achievements have been discussed in the entry on Bombay (see BOMBAY i. THE ZOROASTRIAN COMMUNITY). Parsis of India contributed substantially, in proportion to their numbers, to the British war effort in both World Wars, both through financial donations to equip the forces and in terms of lives lost (Hinnells, 2000, pp. 288-90; Dalal, passim; for their role in Pakistan, see ZOROASTRIAN DIASPORA).

In the 20th century, Parsis throughout India have shown an increasing interest in their own history. This began in the 1890s with the new building for Irān-šāh at Udwada (Patel and Paymaster, III, pp. 426, 491; Patel, pp. 422-29). In the early years of the 20th century, roads and a dharmsala were built to cater for the growing number of pilgrims (Patel, pp. 471; Patel and Paymaster, IV, p. 3), and in 1921 a thanksgiving *jašan* was celebrated to mark the 1,200 year anniversary of the consecration of Irān-šāh (Patel and Paymaster, VI. p. 20). In 1917 the Bombay Parsi Panchayat agreed to fund a memorial column at Sanjān to commemorate the Parsis' arrival in India. This was publicly unveiled in 1920, when three trainloads of Parsis came from Bombay and one from Surat. Additionally, large numbers came from surrounding villages to attend the public *jašan* and a dharmsala was built nearby for pilgrims (Patel and Paymaster, V, p. 79).

This sense of history has been developed both by the large number of books about the community written from within, and by formal bodies and institutions that, although based in Bombay, have much wider influence. The monthly magazine *Parsiana* started in the 1960s but was taken over in the early 1970s and transformed into a professionally produced magazine that circulates among Parsi communities throughout India and the Diaspora. It includes articles on both religious and secular matters and periodically runs a series reproducing important earlier texts such as the judgment in the 1906 legal test case on intermarriage. Another Bombay based organization with both a national and an international role is *Zoroastrian Studies*, which was started in the 1970s by Khojeste P. Mistree, who had studied Zoroastrian studies at Oxford. Its primary function is to educate young Zoroastrians in their religion, but it also runs classes for adults and has become involved in wider policy issues, representing the Orthodox voice on such matters as intermarriage and funerals. It pioneered religious pilgrimages to Iran, and Mistree often visits diasporic communities, giving lectures and seminars (Hinnells, 2005, pp. 106-9).

In 1972 an umbrella body called “The Federation of Parsi Anjumans of India” was formed, linking all Parsi anjumans and panchayats throughout India. The ex-officio chairman is the chairman of the Bombay Parsi Panchayat with the chairs of Delhi and Calcutta as vice-chairs. The aim was for the larger groups to support smaller anjumans in social concerns, but religious affairs are avoided in the hope of steering clear of dissension. The intention is to support smaller groups which do not have the resources to maintain properties. It has no effective powers but functions as a debating body.

All the demographic studies of Indian Parsis report an aging and numerically diminishing community (Hinnells, 2005, pp. 44-54). With their high educational levels of achievement, and consequent success in professional lives, more Parsis, men and women alike, are postponing marriage or remaining single to pursue their chosen careers. The long-term problem of care for the elderly in the community causes concern, but the most contentious issue remains the acceptance of those who inter-marry and their spouses and offspring. Some argue that, unless they are accepted into the fold, the community will eventually die out, while others argue that intermarriage will erode the distinctiveness of the community. The disputes are extensive and bitter.

There are other contentious issues, notably regarding funerals. Where a dak̲-ma does not exist, then burial or cremation is accepted as necessary, but in the 1990s a virus destroyed the vulture population in Bombay. There was fierce debate over possible alternatives. At first one group planned, with the aid of a veterinary specialist, to build a large aviary to breed vultures, but that proved impractical, costly, and vulnerable to the re-emergence of the virus. Solar panels have been tried to speed the decomposition of the body, but it seems that the ancient practice of exposing the dead is under threat in India. The calendar debates, fuelled in the early 20th century by the introduction of the seasonal (*faṣli*) calendar which accords with the Gregorian, are not a matter of debate in India.

One striking feature of Parsis in the 20th century is their increasing interaction with the diaspora. As more have migrated overseas, so the diaspora communities have grown in size, wealth, and influence. Parsi leaders travel to much of the diaspora, and overseas funds aid such projects as housing colonies in Navsari and the Parsi General Hospital in Bombay. Debates in the old country and the new world take on an international perspective in a way that was not the case before the 20th century.

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