

HOMAI VYARAWALA: India's first woman photojournalist

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ABSTRACT

In a setting ridden by deep rooted antiquated gendered social evils integral to patriarchy, a significant breakthrough was the very slow growth of formal education for women under the Raj which marked the commencement of their long arduous journey towards empowerment besides making them harbingers of change. In the Bombay Presidency, the Parsi community played a significant role in being and bringing about this change. Homai Vyarawala (1913-2012), a Parsi, and India's first woman photo journalist is an impressive example of this change wherein she makes a space for herself in the male dominated public domain in the colonial era. This paper is an attempt at assessing her work and personality in the historical context of her times and its challenges.

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Nineteenth century Gujarat was a complex pluralistic entity under the aegis of British colonial rule. In fact, plurality is integral to Gujarat in view of its geo-spatial features and fascinating historical experience that goes way back to antiquity whereby multifarious groups numerous migrated as pastoralists invaders, traders, merchants, fugitives, preachers and proselytisers and settled herein at different points of time. Thus inevitably pre-colonial society in Gujarat evolved into a complex plural structure. On the one hand, was the hierarchical *varna* stratified Hindu society classified into a complex mesh of divisions, further subdivided into numerous endogamous units. Alongside this was the Muslim component, which was less heterogeneous, nonetheless composed of multiple ethnic and sectarian sub-divisions structured into a relatively loose hierarchy in view of the regions' rich legacy of maritime commerce, rule of Delhi Sultanate, Gujarat Sultanate and the Mughals, influence of *Sufism* and the *Ismaili* ideology. Interspersed within these, were the Parsis and other minuscule components drawn from areas outside the region and the Indian sub-continent.¹ The tribal society had its own diversities. While social mobility was relevant, its magnitude and pace were not uniform. The social status of an individual was largely defined by the caste and religious affiliation in which he or she was born. Deep rooted contradictions and discrepancies inherent in the rigid caste stipulations were aspects that continued to define the broad socio-cultural milieu around the beginning of the nineteenth century. Antiquated evils integral to patriarchy, superstitions, and traditionalism were glaring realities. Seclusion, female infanticide, child

marriage, dowry, sati, harsh prescriptive norms for widows, among certain groups were established institutions.

Women were at large denied formal education, rendering them illiterate and subordinate to the male both within the confines of their home and the public domain. Education was largely through socialisation. Both caste and gender were a social bane.² Colonial documentation is very graphic in its narrative in this regard. While these are concerns that remain somewhat relevant even in present times, British intervention besides its numerous legacies served as an important harbinger of change in relation to the position of women.

By 1820, Gujarat came under the complete control of the British and was a part of the Bombay Presidency and remained so until 1960.³ A total of 396 states many of which were erstwhile chieftaincies, were constituted into native states under the aegis of British colonial rule. Though overwhelmingly within colonial paradigms, establishment of British paramount power in the region marked transition to a new era guided by its 'civilising mission'. Legitimacy was gained from the English population at home through the self-proclaimed role of 'civilizing' the natives by initiating reforms which represented the enlightenment spirit of the British.⁴

Among various reformist legislations, an important inevitable breakthrough was in the realm of education. Though minuscule and a long-duree phenomena in terms of its impact, education is indeed accepted as a powerful tool for the socio-economic emancipation and empowerment of women.⁵ Education enables women not only to gain more knowledge about the world outside her home but helps in building

¹ Sheikh, Sameera. Forging A Region: Sultans, traders and Pilgrims in Gujarat 1200-1500, New Delhi, Oxford University press, 2010, Misra, S.C. Muslim Communities in Gujarat: Preliminary Study in their History and Social Organisation, New York, Asia Publishing House 1964; Desai, Neera. Social Change in Gujarat (A Study of Nineteenth Century Gujarati Society), Vora Publishing House, Bombay, 1978. These are important works on the social identities in Gujarat.

² Shirin Mehta, Women and Social Change, Rawat Publications, Jaipur, 2009.

³ . S.B. Rajyagor, History of Gujarat. New Delhi: S. Chand, 1982, p. 391.

⁴ Harald Fischer-Tiné, Michael Mann Colonialism as Civilizing Mission: Cultural Ideology in British India, Anthem Press, London, 2004

⁵ <http://www.unfpa.org/gender-equality>

confidence and positive self-esteem, social status and professional pursuits and economic independence. It imparts courage and inner strength to face challenges in life. Education especially of women has a major impact on health and nutrition as an instrument of developing a sustainable strategy for population control. Moreover educated women can play an equally important role as men in nation building.

This paper is an attempt to examine the role of Parsis in the growth of women's education and highlight the impact of the same as is exemplified in the impressive career and dynamic personality of Homai Vyarawala 1913-2012 India's first woman photo-journalist. While Homai's work has received considerable attention and applause both across the media and in the art world, a fair assessment of her professional contribution lies in the historical context within which she chose to opt and pursue her profession with great passion and diligence. This is particularly significant in view of the challenges experienced by women seeking professional space in the male dominated public domain in colonial India. A note on the Parsis here may be relevant.

Parsis are the descendants of Zoroastrians of Persia. In wake of religious persecution by the proselytising Arab conquerors they chose to seek refuge, migrated and settled in South Gujarat in the 8th century A.D. Parsis were among the earliest Indian communities to be closely associated to the British and get anglicised. They were at the forefront in both acquiring and imparting western education.⁶ Polly Noshir Chenoy explains their anglicisation as a conscious concern and strategy of a fugitive migrant community for survival by adaptation though seeking to maintain their distinct cultural identity. This was clearly manifest since the outset when they adopted Gujarati as their mother tongue and also agreed to the condition that their women folk would don saris instead of their traditional Persian attire.

Ever since the sixteenth century, Surat had been increasingly attracting Parsis with its rise as the Mughal entrepot. By the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Surat became the largest Parsi settlement. The Europeans preferred the Parsis to act as their "brokers" because they had knowledge of the languages and of the land they were living in. Eckehard Kulke says "close contact with the Europeans gave the Parsees the 'know how' of European trade and business organization and so laid the foundation for their subsequent economic and social rise under English rule".⁷ Once the Portuguese relinquished Bombay to the British in 1661, Surat gradually lost its importance as a major trade centre, and Bombay attracted the Parsis from their various settlements.

In Bombay Parsis were foremost of all Indian communities with regard to female education. Dosabai C. Jassawala became the first Parsi girl to attend private English school founded by Mrs. Wood in 1842⁸ The 'Student's literary and Scientific society', founded by Dadabhai Naoroji and other progressive reformers in 1848-49 had 475 Parsi female students out of a total of 740 girl students. The first English medium school for

girls was established by a Parsi, Manockjee Cursetji, in his own residence, Villa Byculla, on 1st September, 1863, a period when Indian women were mostly confined to their homes. The school was named The Alexandra Native Girls' English Institution and had 13 pupils to begin with. One of its most illustrious alumni was Madame Cama, the famous nationalist who is credited for giving India its first national flag. Towards the end of 19th century, over 1000 Parsi girls had already received secondary education.⁹ Avnabai Mehta and Navabai Mehta in 1891 joined Grant Medical College as first women students. An ardent advocate of female education and welfare, Meherji Tata, founded the National Council of Women, which was later affiliated to International Council of Women. She was the leader of the first Indian delegates at its meeting in Geneva in 1927.¹⁰ A consequence of English education among Parsi women was their Anglicisation. They were encouraged to adopt the English style and mannerisms, then perceived as a symbol of being refined. Parsi ladies participated actively in sports. Lady Meherbai Dorab Tata played competitive tennis all over Europe in her sari while Lady Serenbai Petit was the first Indian woman to fly a plane solo in 1929.¹¹

Homai Vyarawalla 1913-2012, India's first woman photo-journalist was a product of this era and social milieu. It is indeed commendable, that she was the only professional woman photojournalist 1939-1970.¹² Her contributions were formally recognized when she was honoured with the Padma Vibhushan, the second highest civilian award by the Government of India.¹³ A pioneering woman in the world of Indian photo-journalism, primarily a male domain, Homai has come out with impressive work, photo chronicling the latter part of the Indian freedom movement and the transition towards an emerging independent India. She worked for numerous journals- Current, Onlooker, Bombay Chronicle, The Illustrated Weekly of India and Time Life.

Homai had been living alone and in total anonymity in Baroda through the last three decades. She was 'reborn when the Delhi based photo historian Satish Sharma started searching for her'.¹⁴ In 1993 an exhibition of her work was held

⁹ Kulke, p. 33

¹⁰ Kamerkar, M & Dhunjisha, S. 2002. From the Iranian Plateau to the Shores of Gujarat: the Story of Parsi Settlements and Absorption in India, Mumbai, Allied Publishers private., limited., for The K. R. Cama Oriental Institute. Pp 1-17.

¹¹ Luhrmann, T. M. 1996. The Good Parsi: Fate of a Colonial Elite in a Post-Colonial Society, USA, Harvard University Press, pp. 42

¹² It is noteworthy that photography as we understand it presently began as late as 1830s in France when Joseph Nicéphore Niepce used a portable camera obscure. Photography in India was introduced in colonial India. The Bombay Photographic Society was formed in 1854 with 200 members. Similar bodies were formed in Madras and Calcutta in 1856 tied to the colonial regime. The East India Company declared photography to be the most accurate and economical means of recording the architectural and archaeological monuments for official records, travellers etc.

¹³ Daily News and Analysis(DNA), Sunday, Jan 15, 2012, Vadodara

http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report_india-s-1st-woman-photo-journalist-homai-vyarawalla-dead_1637908

¹⁴ The Times of India, Ahmedabad, Tuesday, January 17, 2012; Partha Chatterjee, A

Legend's Lens. An obituary in Frontline, Vol. 29, Jan. Feb. 2012

<http://www.frontlineonnet.com/stories/20120210290211300.htm>

⁶http://homidhalla.com/downloads/early_empowerment_parsi_women.pdf

⁷ Eckehard Kulke, The Parsees in India: A Minority as Agent of Social Change, Vikas Publishing House, Delhi, 1978, p. 33.

⁸ Zarine. R. Sethna, Education among the Parsi Women and its Consequences on the Community, Research Process 1(2)July-December 2013, pp. 46-57 © Social Research Foundation, p. 49

at Max Muller Bhavan. She was persuaded by the Parzor Foundation, dedicated to the preservation of Parsi-Zoroastrian culture and heritage, to share her memories and photographs with the world in the form of a book. Parzor Foundation in collaboration with UNESCO chose Sabeena Gadihoke of the Jamia Millia Islamia University as the researcher and writer for this project.¹⁵ Thus came forth Sabeena's outstanding biography on Homai Vyrawalla Entitled '*India in Focus: Camera Chronicles of Homai Vyrawalla*' which unravels the exciting story of India's first woman photo-journalist.¹⁶ In 2010, the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi in collaboration with the Alkazi Foundation for the Arts organized an exhibition of her work.¹⁷

Homai was born on 9th December 1913 in a modest parsi family in Navsari, South Gujarat. Her father was an actor and director with the Urdu-Parsi theatre in Mumbai where she grew up and studied. While her primary interest had been painting and music she graduated with an Honours degree from Bombay University and a Diploma in Art from the famous J.J School of Art. Around this time she came in contact with her husband Maneckshaw Jamshetji Vyrawala, an accountant working with the Times of India who was interested in photography. In an interview she recalled that he did his own developing. "He had no facilities, no electricity. He would go under the four-poster bed blocking possible light leaks with blankets and develop his films. He would then make contact prints and send the best pictures to Kodak for larger prints."¹⁸ Photography soon caught Homai's fascination, and thus commenced her professional journey as a press photographer and photojournalist. She started taking pictures while Maneckshaw became more of a darkroom person, developing her exposed film rolls and making photo prints from them often assisted by her.¹⁹

Homai started her professional career in the 1930s, a major breakthrough in an exclusively male domain. It is pertinent to mention that this feature continues to be largely valid in view of the professional 'hazards'- technical skills, erratic working hours in the field, bulky equipment to name few. In an interview given to Preeti Verma Lal, recalling her early days, Homai stated 'I remember my first shot as a photographer, in 1938. A group of women from the Women's Club in Bombay had gone for a picnic party and I photographed them. My first published pictures were in the Bombay Chronicle a whole range of pictures, for which I was paid one rupee in cash for each.'²⁰

¹⁵ It was during this time I had the honour of interacting with her when she visited and made a presentation of her work at the department of History, the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda,

¹⁶ Sabeena Gadihoke, *India In Focus "Camera Chronicles of Homai Vyrawalla"* published Mapin/Parzor, 2006. Versions of this article have appeared in *Indian Horizons*, ICCR, Vol 54, No. 4, Oct-Dec 2007 and *India Perspectives*, Ministry of External Affairs, Vol 22, No. 3, June-July 2008. The pictures in the slide show are largely from here.

¹⁷ Sundaram, V. (2006), Homai Vyrawalla: India's First Woman Photo Journalist, New York: <http://www.boloji.com/index.cfm?md=Content&sd=Articles&ArticleID=906>

¹⁸ Partha Chatterjee

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ Ibid

At the onset of World War II, Homai started freelancing for the Illustrated Weekly of India. The editor Stanley Jepson used to give her weekly assignments. In those days, for a dainty, small built, sari clad woman like Homai, taking photographs in field situations was quite challenging – her large-format Speed Graphic camera with a composite wood, steel and aluminum chassis, used to weigh more than six pounds. Taking each photograph with this heavy weight equipment was indeed an impressive feat.²¹

In 1942, Homai moved to Delhi along with her husband where they worked for the British High Commission, then known as Far Eastern Bureau of British Information Services. Hereon, Homai was a regular feature at all major ceremonies – both, government or private. During the next 25 years came forth her best work as a press photographer and photo journalist. Her photographs outline the story of an emerging nation. She was present at almost all the key moments of those years: the meeting at which leaders voted for Partition, departure of the last Viceroy Lord Mountbatten from India, the first flag hoisting ceremony at the Red Fort on 15th August 1947, the first Republic Day parade, funerals of Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Lal Bhadrur Shastri. The one tragic moment she deeply regrets having missed was the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi whose prayer meetings she often attended.²² In her interview to Sabeena, her biographer, she elaborated thus: "I remember I had planned to go to the prayer meeting on that fateful day. As I prepared to go to Birla House that evening, my husband hurriedly called me back, suggesting we go for the next day's prayer meeting. When I received the terrible news I was stunned and struck by conflicting emotions. As an individual I was deeply saddened by the assassination. At the same time my professional self, agonized over not being on the spot, though being so near. My husband wouldn't forgive himself for calling me back."

Armed with her Rolliflex camera, Homai was present in the centers' and corridors of power. Between 1945-1970 she had the unique opportunity, normally given to very few press photographers, of catching on the camera great historical events and personalities ranging from Lord Mountbatten to Marshall Tito, from Queen Elizabeth to Jacqueline Kennedy, from Khrushchev to Kosygin, from Eisenhower to Nixon, apart from Atlee, Nasser, Chou En Lai, Dalai Lama and a host of others who have been closely associated with shaping the contours of history in the Twentieth century. She also took many delightful photographs of Nehru, Indira Gandhi and the other members of the Nehru Gandhi family. Besides this were pictures of ordinary people, and the diplomatic society of

²¹ Ibid

²² In interview to Sabeena

Delhi at its social best-fancy dress parties fox hunts and frivolities.²³

An important quality of Homai was her thorough professionalism. She maintained a distance from her subjects and refused to be over-awed into hero worship. This perhaps distinguishes her from the average photojournalist, who, given fame and experience, would have been too willing to drop names and claim proximity with the great and mighty. In an interview given to R.C Rajamani, Homai's remarks to a question if she had talked to the Mahatma during her long stint in the capital were surprisingly casual and matter of fact way, she said: "No, never. Yes, he scolded me once she recalled "No, no. no. No blinding flash, not again," shouted Mahatma Gandhi, as the Parsi photographer, a woman in her early thirties, clicked her camera using a big bulb for flash. "Gandhiji was a trifle annoyed as he came out of a prayer meeting on that winter evening."²⁴ Her biographer Sabeena Gadihoke says: "She is an incredible person, a great role model." Despite her credentials of fame and celebrity status, Homai has never gone abroad until her 'rebirth', a fact hard to believe about one belonging to such a glamorous field.²⁵

That Homai opted to be a professional press photographer is amazingly impressive in view of photography being quite a recent development. Photography came to India in the 1840s and by 1869 all the Presidencies of the States of Bombay and Madras had sponsored photographers for snapping Indian views in the field. Catalogues of the prints made by great commercial photographic firms of the 1870's and 1880's like Bourne & Shepherd, Johnston & Hoffman, Bourke, Saxe etc. appeared in the market throughout the British Empire. By the end of the 19th century, many aristocratic Indian men were attracted and started taking to photography though largely as a hobby.²⁶

After 1910, Indian women from the elite classes also started taking an interest in photography.²⁷ Among the early women pioneers were Mira Chaudhuri (1905-1994), Indira Dey (1912-1992), Manobina Roy (1919-2001), Debalina

Mazumadar (1919) and Rajendra Kunverba (1920-2000). However, they were all amateurs and remained so, for whom photography was a personal hobby unlike Homai. She got interested and soon it became her profession. She elegantly moved around dressed in a Sari with her bulky equipment trying to capture her characters in action with subtle skill and often taking great risks. Eunice D Souza refers to an interesting incident recalled by Homai which highlights her passion, commitment and professional skills. General Ayub Khan had stopped in India on his way to Dacca in 1959 to meet Pandit Nehru at Palam. "This was the day," says the commentator, "when Homai's georgette sari was a bother. There were about thirty-five photographers milling around and their feet were pulling her sari down. As she sat down to take a low-angle shot in order to make Panditji (who was smaller built than the General) look more imposing in her frame, she felt it tear. Ayub Khan, noticing her struggling to get up after shooting from between the legs of the photographers, turned to Nehru and remarked, "How very un-chivalrous all these photographers are. They are not allowing the lady to get up." To which Nehru chuckled and replied, "That's all right. That's the way she works. She wants to take the picture like that."²⁸

A survey of the experiences and early history of professional working women in colonial India may help in contextualizing Homai. It provides an insight on that era and its social moorings- traditionalism, caste, class, religion and gender taboos, colonial underlining's were among the numerous challenges which working professional women inevitably had to surmount. Initially medicine and education were the two professions which attracted women.

The medical profession as a career option for women in the late nineteenth century is an important reference point. Though there was a growing demand for women medicine professionals, the journey for aspiring women in this direction was a long drawn battle. Combating gender and the multiple social constraints involved in medical education was just half the battle won. Women doctors often had to encounter further challenges in pursuing their professional careers too.

Kadambini Basu, one of India's first woman doctor starting her practice in 1888. Besides being a successful doctor, accounts testify that she was a devoted wife and mother. While she was fully supported by her husband Dwarkanath Ganguly, she was personally involved in managing her home and children. Kadambini was also one of the first delegates to the Indian National Congress. In spite of this profile, the orthodox magazine *Bangabasi* called her a whore²⁹. Though she won a libel case against them,

²³R.C Rajamani, Witness to History, Homai Vyarawala, India's First Women Professional Photographer, Spectrum, The Tribune, March 19 2006.

²⁴Ibid

²⁵Ibid

²⁶V. Sundaram,

²⁷Sabeena Gadihoke, Homai Vyarawala: A Retrospective, New Delhi, August- October, 2010

http://ngmaindia.gov.in/ce_homai-vyarawalla.asp

The Lady in the Rough Crowd: Archiving India with Homai Vyarawala, artetc. News and Views, January 2012

<http://www.artnewsnviews.com/view-article.php?article=the-lady-in-the-rough-crowd-archiving-india-with-homai-vyarawala&iid=20&articleid=496>

The Home and Beyond, Domestic and Amateur Photography By Women in India(1930-1960), Excavations/Sarai Reader, Shaping Technology,2003

http://www.sarai.net/publications/readers/03-shaping-technology/061_069_sgadihoke.pdf

²⁸Eunice de Souza, Homai Vyarawala's biography - Camera Chronicles: India's first photojournalist, Mumbai Mirror, March 2011: <http://www.mumbaimirror.com/article/45/20110324201103240549144351b99141e/Homai%E2%80%99s-camera-chronicles.html>

²⁹Malavika Karlekar, "Kadambini and the Bhadraklok," EPW 21, No. 19, April 1986 pp. ws25-ws31; Karlekar, Voices from Within: Early Personal Narratives of Bengali Women, Delhi Oxford, University Press, 1991pp.175-82

widespread antagonism towards emerging professional women is well illustrated.

Sexual harassment has been an all-time bane. In a society steeped in the traditional patriarchal mind set, colonial prejudices and wherein legislative and legal provisions for women working in the public domain were highly inadequate, women were exposed to extreme adversities. The case of Dr. Miss Ahalyabai Samant, Director of the municipal dispensary of Nadiad, Gujarat pertinently highlights this dimension. She was abducted and assaulted by Dr. Balabhai Harishankar Bhatt, the municipal councillor. The district and session's judge sentenced Dr. Bhatt to one year in prison. However the chief justice of the High Court overturned this decision and simply fined Bhatt ruling:

*If women engaged in professional work come out in the open world they must adopt the standards of ordinary men and women of the world. They cannot expect to retain the hyper-sensitive notions of modesty which their ancestors in purdah may have possessed.*³⁰

In comparison to Hindu women, the lot of Anglo Indian and Christian women was better. Besides being larger in number they were at an advantage both in obtaining scholarships and subsequent employment in medical profession. Hilda Lazarus b.1890 at Vizagapatnam, the first Indian woman appointed to the Women's Medical Service in 1917 was an Indian Christian (her grandparents who were high-ranking Brahmans had converted to Christianity long before she was born). Her experiences were less cumbersome.³¹

It is significant to note that Homai was a successful professional who worked in this very social milieu. Moreover, her profession was primarily based on field work which till date attracts few women. While her husband Manekshaw was a constant inspiration, an important factor which moulded her personality and facilitated or probably softened the constraints experienced otherwise by women hailing from the traditional 'bhadrak Hindu' families was her Parsi family background.

Since their arrival in India, the Parsis were an adaptable and assimilative community. While continuing to profess their faith, they chose to adopt numerous local cultural traditions, dress language etc. A prudent sense of adaptability and display of loyalty to the political authority helped the community not only survive but also preserve their identity and religion.³²

In colonial India, the Parsis not only became highly anglicized but flourished successfully as westernized elite. They adopted British or Western manners, habits, style of living besides the English language. In their temperament and outlook, they were more aligned to western thought and

culture than to traditional Indian ways and manners.³³ The Parsis can be seen to have chosen freely their adoption of British style, education and political orientation. They can be seen to have accepted the colonial ideology of progress and superiority, of Westernization as a means to advancement, and of the British as an agent of positive change. The ramifications of this identity and collaboration with the Colonial masters are also multidimensional.³⁴ These are particularly significant in relation to their womenfolk- western lifestyle, dressing, culture, education, etiquette etc. This made the Parsis a liberal and progressive minded community and harbingers of change.

An examination of early women's writing is illustrative of the distinct position of Parsi women and their outlook. Gujarat was among the pioneers in the field of women's journal in India. Stree Bodh-spelt Stree Bodhe in English originally-was the first journal for women in India which was published in Gujarati continuously from January, 1857 until the 1950s.³⁵ This was an initiative of Mumbai based Parsi social reformers like Behramjee Gandhi, Sorabjee Shahpurjee Bengali etc. Ke Khushroo Kabarajee was its editor. The aim of this journal was to propagate English education besides westernize and modernize Parsi women. The main thrust herein was the presentation of the Victorian image as the role model for women. It is significant that a pioneering role in the initial development of Stree Bodh, was largely the contribution of three Parsi women- Putalibai Jahangir Kawasjee, daughter-in-law of Kabarajee, her mother Jarbai Dhanjeebai Wadia and Shireen Kabarajee, Ke Khusrav's daughter. Subsequently the Parsi preponderance was undermined with the inclusion of non Parsi reformist like Karsandas Mulji, Mangaldas Nathabhai and others in its editorial board.³⁶ Stri Mitra was another Gujarati Journal which was initially an initiative of and was dominated by the Parsis. Gradually the complexion of promoters and contributors and audience became more heterogeneous.

Though Homai came from a modest family it is important to note that being a Parsi, socialized and gave her a liberal outlook and societal ambience, an advantage in comparison to her 'Bhadrak' Hindu counterparts who had to face multiple challenges in seeking professional space in colonial India.

However this is not to undermine her individual daunting spirit and personality which makes her remarkably unique. She was passionate about photography and journalism. In an

³³ POLLY NOSHIR CHENOY, ANGLICISATION OF THE PARSIS, ZOROASTRIAN. NET, 22ND JANUARY, 2010:

A. <http://tenets.zoroastrianism.com/angl33.html>

³⁴ Jesse .S. Palsetia, Partners in Empire: Parsi British Relations in Colonial India Assessed, Manohar Delhi, 2008; T.M. Luharmann, The Good Parsi: The Post Colonial 'Feminization of a Colonial Elite, Man, New Series, Vol. 29, No. 2, une 1994, pp. 333-35; Amalendu Guha, Role of Parsi Seths, 750-1850, Economic and Political Weekly, Nov. 1970, pp. 1933-36.

³⁵ Sonal Shukla, Cultivating Minds: 19th Century Gujarati Women's Journals, EPW, Vol. 26, No. 43 October 1991, pp. ws 63-64

³⁶ Shirin Mehta, Women journalism in Gujarati: A Study in Expression of Gender Perception (1850-1920), in Kirit K. Shah and Radhika Seshan ed. Visibilising Women, Facets of History Through a Gender Lens, Kalpaz Publications, Delhi, 2005, pp.89-90

³⁰ Geraldine Forbes, Women in Modern India, Cambridge University Press, Delhi 1998, pp159-167; quoted from "Professional Women and professional Standards," Indian Social Reformer, 41, August 1, 1931, p. 761

³¹ Ibid

³² Delphine Menant, Les Parsis, vol. II, Translated M.M. Murzban (Madras: Modern Printing Works, 1917), p. 9

interview she recalls using her bicycle during the midnight in Delhi. "I never faced an incident of eve teasing". She lived her life with great courage strength and dignity. According to her biographer, Sabeena, she lived life on her own terms- in spite of being offered handsome prices for some of her prized photographs; she chose to donate her entire work to the Alkazi Foundation for Arts. She was surviving on a meager pension of Rs. 3000 from a Life Insurance Corporation policy. While in her nineties, she lived independently managing on her own. She attended to everything in her house personally- driving, tending the plants, cutting her hair, stitching her clothes, cooking washing sometimes even carpentry and plumbing and minor electrician jobs besides hand crafting articles- . In her words," celebrating womanhood is not about glamorous clothes or beauty; it is about a philosophy of life".³⁷

³⁷ Prerna Shah, Times of India, Thursday, Jan. 19 2012
http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-01-19/people/30639694_1_first-woman-photojournalist-homai-vyarawalla-patan