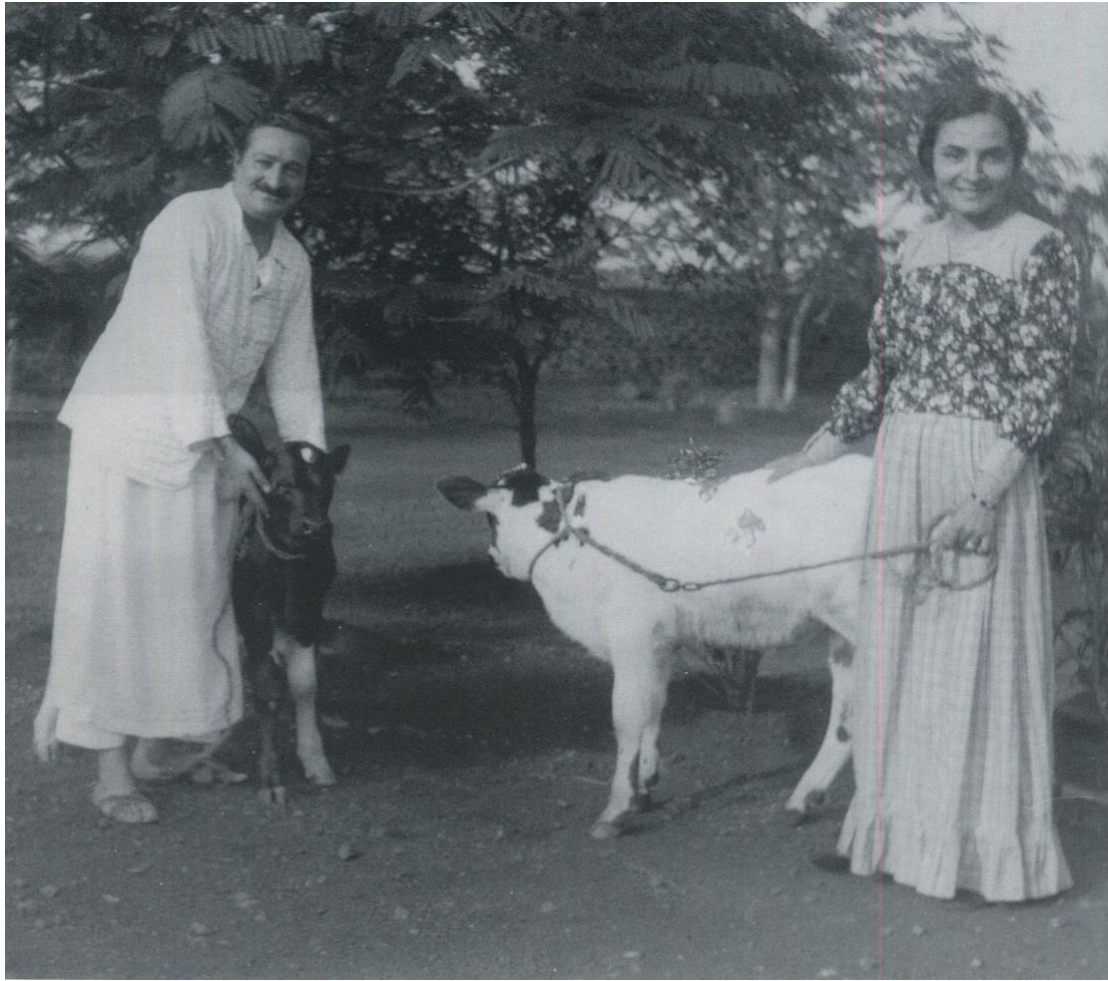




Meher Baba on an outing with His women mandali in the 1940's. (From left to right) Rano, Mani, Khorshed, Mehera and Baba.



*Meher Baba and Mehera with English calves on Meherabad Hill in the early 1940's.
The black calf later pulled the New Life Caravan.*



Mehera and Meher Baba at Mehera's birthday celebration near Meherazad in the 1940's.



Mehera holding Cracker on the steps of Florence Hall in Mahabaleshwar, 1947.



Meher Baba and Mehera with Cracker in the Florence Hall compound, Mahabaleshwar, 1947.



Meher Baba and some of the women mandali being pulled in a wagon behind Elizabeth's car on Meherabad Hill in the late 1940's (from left to right) Kaku (Vishnu's mother), Baba, Valu, Khorshed, Mehera, Mani, Norina.



Meher Baba's birthday celebration on Meherabad Hill in 1948. (The women mandali were staying at Rusipop's, Ahmednagar while the main house at Meherazad was being re-built.) (From left to right) Meheru, Mehroo Dastur, Naja, Soltoon, Goher, Khorshed, Daula, Mani, Mehera, Goolu Dastur, Baba, Soona Masi, Katie, Jalu Dastur.



These photos of Mehera with Sheba were taken during their stay in Satara in the mid-50's.



These photos of Mehera with Sheba were taken during their stay in Satara in the mid-50's.



Mehera and Meher Baba with Sheba in Satara in the mid-50's.



Mehera standing outside the west window of the main house sitting room, Meherazad, in the late 50's.



Mehera holding Bhooty in front of the main house, Meherazad in the late 50's.



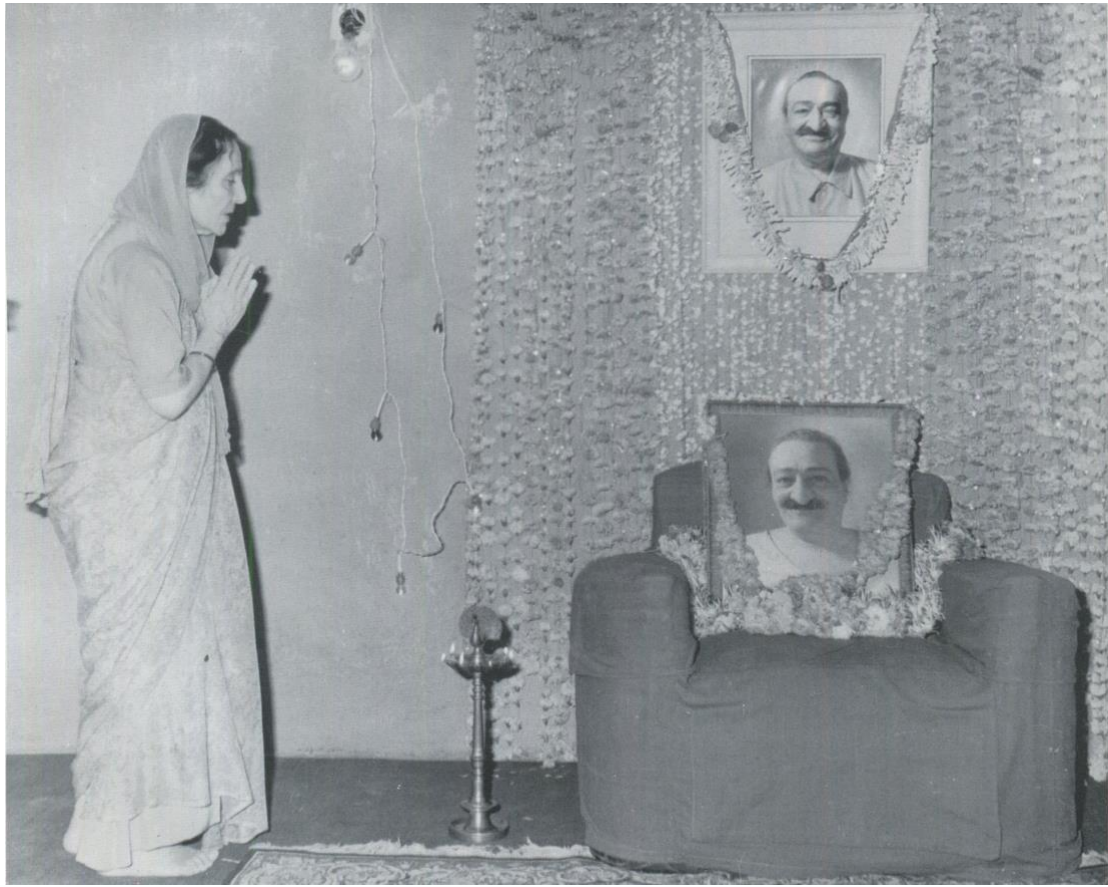
Mehera holding Baba's favourite cat, Pegu, at Guruprasad, Poona in the 1960's.



Meher Baba with (from left to right) Mehera, Meheru, Goher, Rano and Naja photographed by Mani in the garden at Meherazad in the 1960's.



Mehera and Mani at Meher Baba's First Amartithi on January 31, 1970. On this occasion Mehera said, "O Beloved One, our Beloved Avatar Meher Baba! We Your loving children, have gathered today at Meherabad to fill our hearts with Your Love on this most sacred Hill on earth where Your Man-Form rests. We have also come to pay our homage to You and to greet You in the hearts of Your lovers."



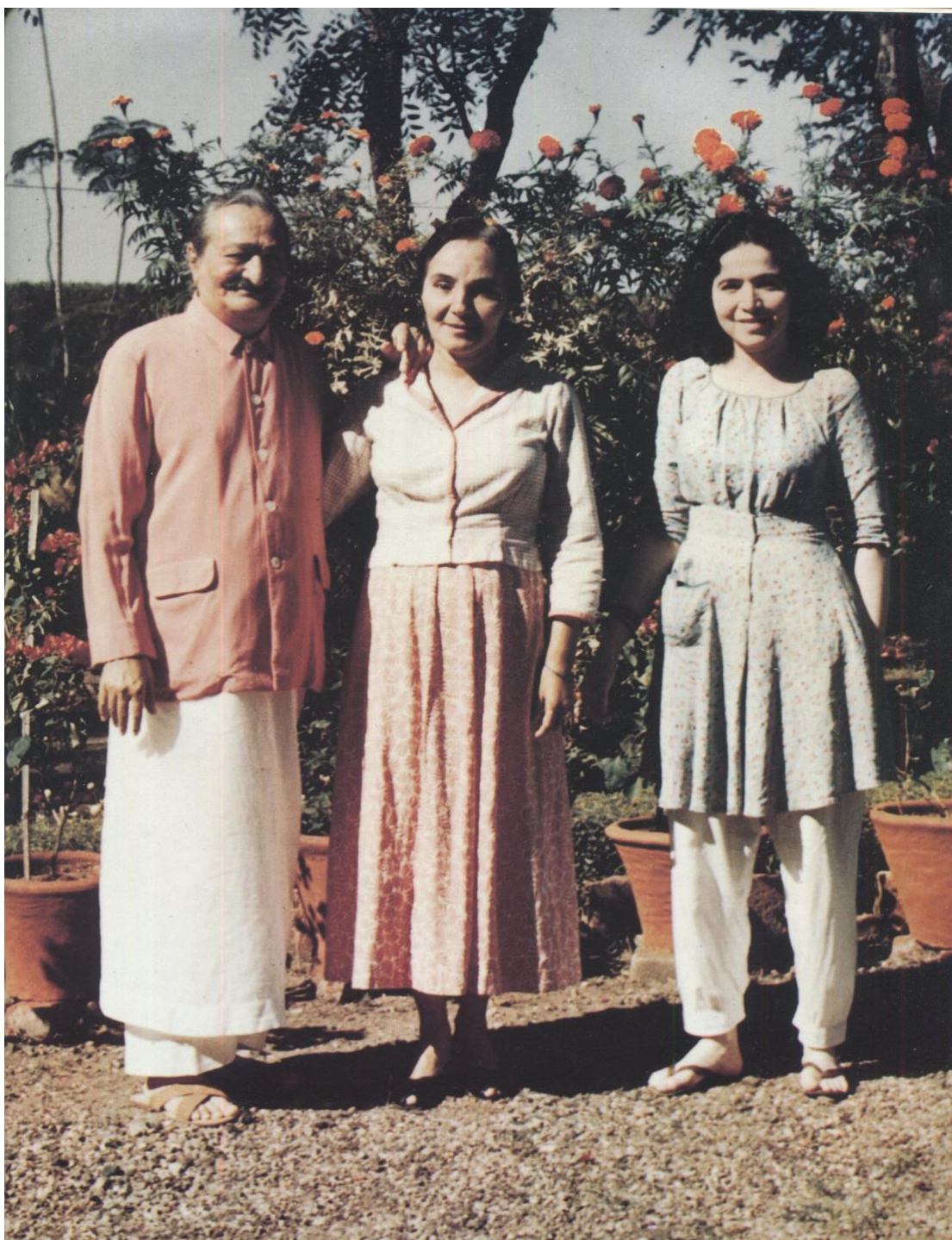
During the 1970's, the Avatar Meher Baba Guruprasad Memorial was inaugurated in Poona by Mehera. The chair used by Meher Baba for numerous darshan programmes, is in the centre of the Memorial room.

*Mehera on her verandah at Meherazad
in the 1970's shares memories of life
with her Beloved Baba with His lovers
from all over the world*





Mehera on the verandah of the main house at Meherazad in the late 70's.



Meher Baba, Mehera and Mani in the Meherazad garden during the 60's.



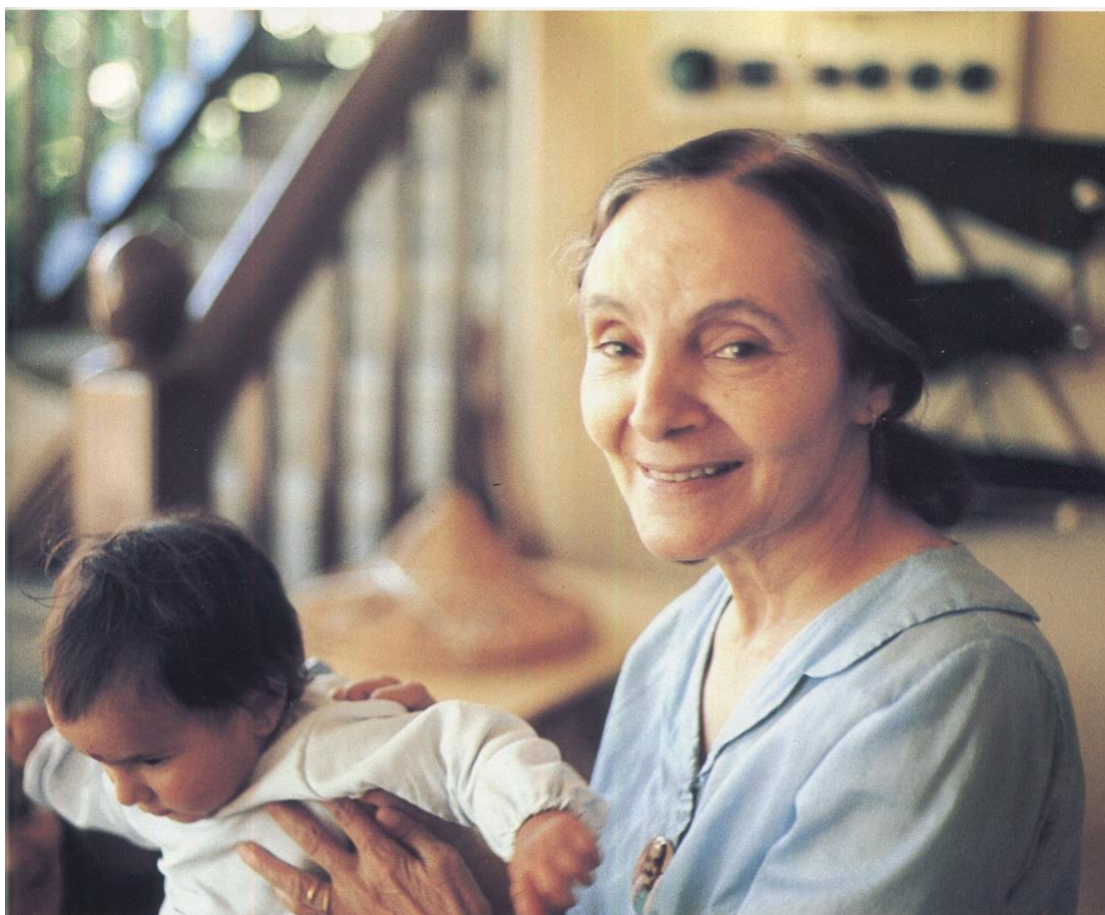
Mehera sitting on her verandah at Meherazad in 1972.



Mehera sitting on her verandah at Meherazad in 1972.



Mehera looking out her bedroom window at Meherazad in 1974.



Mehera holding a baby on the verandah of the main house at Meherazad in 1974.



Mehera with Mani and Kitty Davy on the Meherazad porch in January 1977.

*Views of Mehera's garden and main
house taken in the late seventies*





Mehera shows framed photographs of Meher Baba to visitors at Meherazad in January 1977.



Mehera sharing stories of Beloved Baba sitting on the main house verandah at Meherazad in 1974.



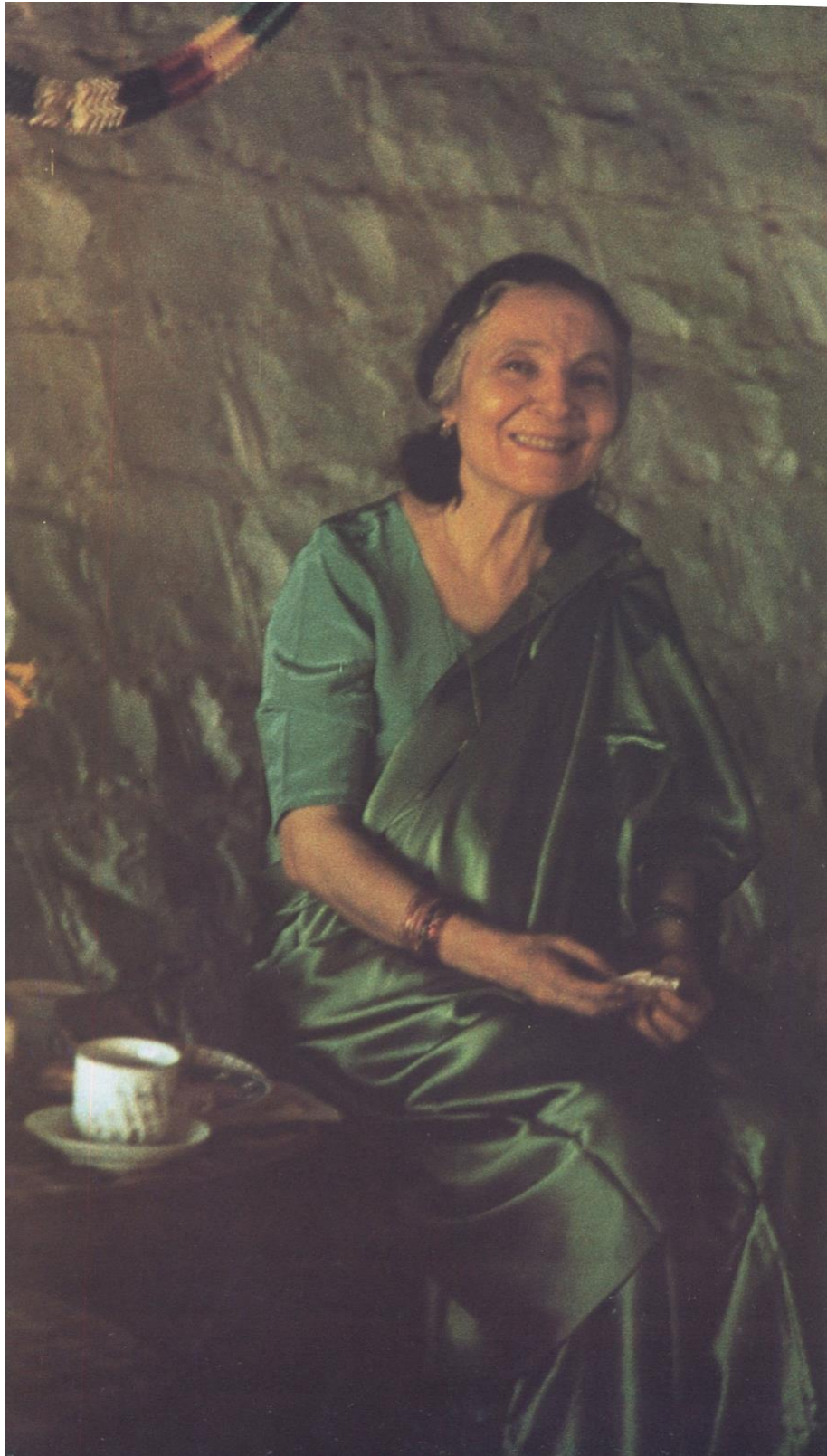
Mehera at Baba's gadi under the 'tin shed' on Meherabad Hill in 1976.



Photo taken of Mehera outside Meher Baba's Samadhi in the 1970's.



Mehera feeding Dhun Satha who suffered from muscular dystrophy since childhood.



Mehera at her birthday lunch celebration under the 'tin shed' on Meherabad Hill taken in the 1980's.



Mehera in her garden at Meherazad during the late seventies.

Beloved Avatar Meher Baba Ki Jai!



GLOSSARY

Agra Kuti: literally, "First Hut"; the original name given to the small structure in Lower Meherabad which later came to be known as Baba's "Jhopdi "(see jhopdi).

Akbar Press: the home in Ahmednagar of the extended family of Eruch Jessawala, one of Meher Baba's resident men mandali.

Arangaon: a small village five miles outside of Ahmednagar, near which Meher Baba established Meherabad.

arti: a devotional song or prayer with a refrain or theme which expresses the yearning for the offering of oneself to the One worshipped; the performance of devotional songs or prayers.

Avatar: literally "descent of God"; the term refers to the appearance of God in human form which constitutes The Advent.

Baba House (India): the house owned by Meher Baba's parents, Sheriar and Shireenmai Irani, on "Dastur Meher Road" in Poona, where Baba periodically resided; during the early 1920s when the Perfect Master Upasni Maharaj was preparing Baba for His ministry as the Avatar, owing to the agony Baba experienced from being brought down from the Bliss-state to awareness of Illusion, Baba often secluded Himself in His room at this house and knocked His forehead against a particular stone which protruded from the floor.

MEHERA

Baba House (U.S.A.): the house built for Meher Baba at the Meher Spiritual Center in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, which He referred to as His "home in the West"; Baba stayed there during each of His three visits to Myrtle Beach in 1952, 1956 and 1958.

Babajan High School: originally Hazrat Babajan School, it was a school established by Meher Baba in 1925 in Lower Meherabad for the children of Arangaon village, many of whom were untouchables; it was named for Hazrat Babajan of Poona, one of the five Perfect Masters of Baba's time; sometime after it was started, the school was extended to become a high school.

Behram Roj: Behram is the "archangel of protection" in Zoroastrian lore; one of the five auspicious days of the month according to the Parsi calendar.

bhajia: a traditional Indian snack food made from very thin slices of vegetables dipped in a batter of chick-pea flour and deep-fried.

Book, The: refers to the book written in the 1920's directly by Meher Baba which contains many of the secrets of Creation; it is the only book written in Baba's own hand. This book remains unpublished.

Brahmin: a Hindu who belongs to the priestly caste.

chapati: an unleavened soft, pancake-like, whole-wheat bread which is cooked on a heavy iron frying pan; commonly made throughout most parts of India.

chutney: a condiment or relish usually made from fruits or vegetables and seasoned with various spices and herbs.

daaman: literally, "the hem of a garment"; the meaning is derived from the idea of a child holding on to the "daaman" of its mother's skirt for safety and security; "holding the daaman" with regard to Meher Baba means obeying Him completely.

dacoits: roadside or country bandits.

dak bungalow: a government rest house, originally established by the British as a place for officers serving and travelling in India to rest and collect their mail; ("dak" means "mail").

Glossary

dal: refers to dishes prepared from whole or split lentils; also refers to the lentil beans themselves.

darshan: literally, "sight," refers to a sight of the Master; it also refers to the act of seeing, folding of hands in adoration of or bowing at the feet of one's Master to express devotion to the one worshipped.

dhansak: a traditional Parsi dish made from at least three different types of lentils (dal), a special masala mixture, vegetables such as pumpkin, tomatoes, and onion, and which can also include meat, such as mutton or lamb and is served with browned rice.

dharamshala: a free rest house for travellers.

dhuni: a fire, usually in a small pit, which symbolises the purifying inner fire of Divine Love; Meher Baba lighted a "dhuni" at a particular spot at Lower Meherabad on a number of occasions, and He instructed one of His close disciples to ensure that this dhuni be lit on the twelfth of every month.

East-West Gathering: a large darshan programme for Meher Baba's lovers from both the East and the West held at Guruprasad in Poona, in November, 1962.

Ekadashi: the eleventh day of every fortnight, according to the Hindu almanac; considered an auspicious day.

fakir: one who chooses the life of poverty in devotion to God; an itinerant monk.

Family Quarters: the name given to accommodations used by various members of Meher Baba's mandali and their families from the mid 1920s; it was located near Meherabad on the outskirts of Arangaon, at the site of what is now the "Meher Health Centre."

gadi: literally, "mattress"; it refers to a sofa-type lounge seat used by Meher Baba.

ghat: an ascending or descending mountain pass; also refers to a range of hills or mountains.

ghazal: a poetic composition, especially in Persian or Urdu, best exemplified by the poetry of the Persian Perfect Master Hafiz.

MEHERA

gilli-danda: an Indian outdoor game which Meher Baba occasionally played. It involves a wooden rod (danda) and a puck (gilli) which is struck by the rod.

God-realised: one who continuously experiences the "I-am-God" state of Infinite Consciousness.

Gujarati: native language of Gujarat state, India; a language adopted by Zoroastrians as well.

gul mohur: the Indian name for a species of the Poinciana tree, it is a shade tree noted for its beautiful scarlet flowers; "gul" means "rose" and "mohur" comes from the Hindi word for "peacock."

Guruprasad: literally, "Gift from the Guru", it is the name of the palace which the Maharani Shantadevi of Baroda gave exclusively for Meher Baba's use in the late 1950s and 1960s; Baba used it regularly for large darshan programmes and during the hot summer months of April through June.

Hindu: a follower of Hinduism, the predominant religion in India.

Hormazd Roj: "God's Day"; the first day of each month according to the Parsi calendar; particularly auspicious.

Irani: emigrant from Persia (now Iran) who came to India in the 19th century to avoid persecution because of their Zoroastrian religious beliefs; "Irani" is a common surname of such persons and their descendants, simply meaning "from Iran."

jai: short for "jaya", which literally means "victory"; it is a common form of greeting in India when followed by one of the Names of a Divine Incarnation, such as "Jai Ram" or "Jai Baba."

jhopdi: (sometimes spelled "jhopri" or "zopdi") literally, "a hut"; it specifically refers to the small structure which Meher Baba had constructed at Lower Meherabad in 1924 for His work and in which He began His silence on July 10, 1925.

Jubbulpore: now known as Jabalpur.

kafni: a long ankle-length, shirt-like garment sometimes worn by Meher Baba and His companions during the "New Life".

Glossary

kaka: father's brother (paternal uncle).

kaki: father's brother's wife (paternal uncle's wife).

Kali Yuga: one of the four "yugas" or ages according to Hindu tradition, the "Kali Yuga" is the one in which ignorance of spiritual truth is at its height.

Kamli coat: a coat made from a coarse woolen blanket which, patched innumerable times, Meher Baba wore almost continuously over a period of years; now on display in the Museum Room on Meherabad Hill.

kebab: a small ball of seasoned minced meat which is fried or broiled on a skewer.

Khushru Quarters: the name of the compound in Ahmednagar originally the family residence for some of Meher Baba's disciples including Adi K. and Rustom Irani, their mother Gulmai, and Sarosh Irani; it is now known as "Meher Nazar" and is the place where the offices of the Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust are located.

mali: gardener

mama: mother's brother (maternal uncle)

Mandali Hall: a large room in Meherazad, originally a make-shift structure used as a garage and later a stable which was later used by Meher Baba to conduct His day-to-day work with His men mandali; the same name also refers to a hall in the main bungalow at Lower Meherabad where Baba met with His mandali.

mandali: literally, a sanskrit word meaning a group or company of people with similar interests; it is a term Meher Baba used to refer to His intimate disciples.

Manonash: literally, "annihilation of the mind"; it is the name Meher Baba gave to one of the phases of His work during the "New Life."

Manzil-e-Meem: literally, "the House of M," in this case meaning "the House of the Master"; the residence in Bombay which Meher Baba used for His work with His mandali in 1922-1923.

MEHERA

Marathi: Indian language spoken primarily in the Indian state of Maharashtra.

masaji: mother's sister's husband (maternal aunt's husband).

masala: a mixture of freshly ground spices and other seasonings.

masi: mother's sister (maternal aunt).

mast: (pronounced "must"), a God-intoxicated person on the spiritual path.

matha banu: a square piece of white muslin folded into a triangle which was once used as a hair covering by traditional Zoroastrian women.

Meher Manzil: the name of a house in Ahmednagar which originally belonged to Adi Irani (Baba's brother); it is located near the Parsi Tower of Silence.

Meherabad: the place established in the 1920s by Meher Baba as His headquarters, near the village of Arangaon, Ahmednagar District, the site of many phases of Baba's work. Avatar Meher Baba's Samadhi is located atop Meherabad Hill.

mullah: Islamic priest.

Museum Room: one of the rooms created on the ground floor of Meher Retreat on Meherabad Hill which was originally the West Room where some of the women mandali resided. It now serves as a museum for articles used or worn by Meher Baba.

Muslim: a follower of Islam, the religion founded upon the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed.

naan: an ovenbaked Indian flat bread made from white flour; a Muslim specialty.

Navjote: confirmation ceremony for Zoroastrian children.

Nawab: a title of a Muslim prince.

neem tree: a drought-resistant evergreen tree, common in India, the leaves and bark of which are noted for their medicinal qualities.

Glossary

Parsi Fire Temple: place of worship for Zoroastrians.

Parsis: descendant of Persian Zoroastrians who emigrated from Persia (now Iran) to India many centuries ago to avoid religious persecution (see also "Iranis").

Pathan: someone from the region near the northwest frontier of India, now in Pakistan.

Poona: now known as Pune.

Post Office: one of the original buildings on the land where Meherabad was established; it had been a post office for the Arangaon region during the early British Raj before being used by Meher Baba and His disciples for lodging; it was eventually disassembled and the stones from the building were later used in the construction of what would become Avatar Meher Baba's Samadhi.

prasad: literally, "gift from God"; a gift of Love from the Master to the seeker, usually edible but not necessarily so.

Prem Ashram: a unique "School of Love" for imparting spiritual knowledge to young boys of various religious backgrounds founded by Meher Baba at Meherabad in the 1920s.

pulao: rice, spiced with special seasoning such as saffron, usually combined with a vegetable or meat, chicken, fish, or eggs.

Pumpkin House: ("Bhopla House") the first house in Poona of Sheriar and Shireenmai, Meher Baba's parents, where young Merwan lived as a child; so named because of a pumpkin-shaped stone situated at the entrance to the house.

pardah: literally, a "curtain", a veil; specifically, the veil worn by Muslim women to cover the face; it also refers to a state of seclusion or being hidden.

Sacred Thread Prayers: traditional prayers recited daily by Zoroastrians at which time they tie a symbolic "sacred thread" around their waist over a sadra (see sadra).

sadhu: a Hindu seeker or pilgrim; sometimes an advanced soul.

sadra: a thin muslin shirt traditionally worn by Zoroastrians; Meher Baba adapted the sadra into an ankle-length garment which He regularly wore.

MEHERA

Sai Darbar: ("darbar" means "sacred court") a large, temporary hall-like structure which was built at Meher Baba's request in 1926 at Lower Meherabad; it was primarily used by Meher Baba for giving darshan to large numbers of people; it was named in honor of Sai Baba of Shirdi, one of the five Perfect Masters of Baba's time.

samadhi: meditative trance; absorption; union; it also refers to the tomb or tomb-shrine of a spiritual master, e.g., it specifically refers to the Tomb-Shrine of Avatar Meher Baba.

Sarosh Manzil: the residence in Ahmednagar of Rustom and Adi K. Irani's parents, Kaikhushru and Gulmai Irani (who also owned Khushru Quarters), where Meher Baba stayed during the time of the marriage of His disciple Rustom to Mehera's sister, Freni.

Seclusion Hill: a small hill adjacent to the Meherazad estate about nine miles outside of Ahmednagar; Meher Baba used the hill on various occasions for His work; at one point during the "New Life" he had two huts constructed on top of it for His work in seclusion.

Sindhi: a person from Sindh, previously a region of northwestern India, now in Pakistan.

sitar: an Indian stringed instrument of the lute family derived from the more ancient vina.

Table House: a small cabin-like structure built at Meher Baba's request in 1925 at Lower Meherabad; Baba used it for various aspects of His work, most notably the writing of "The Book".

toddy: sap from the toddy (palm) tree; it is a tonic when taken in the early morning, but after sunrise the liquid ferments into a mild intoxicant.

tonga: a two-wheeled horse-drawn carriage often used as a mode of transportation.

tongawalla: the driver of a horse-drawn carriage.

Tower of Silence: a circular tower used by Zoroastrians for the disposal of their dead.

Glossary

umar tree: a large tree commonly found throughout India and Pakistan, noted for its clusters of small red figs.

Urdu: a language which combines the elements of Hindi and Persian; it is the national language of Pakistan, and is also used by Muslims in India.

victoria: an elegant four-wheeled doorless English carriage named for Queen Victoria.

wada: a mixture of mashed potatoes and seasoning, combined with other vegetables such as peas, which is rolled in a batter of chick-pea flour and deep-fried.

wicket: in the game of cricket, the sticks at either end of the playing field.

Zoroaster: the earliest known Avatar for this cycle of time; His teachings, the Avesta, the bible for Zoroastrians, stress "Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good Deeds."

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To Mani S. Irani, Meher Baba's sister and Mehera's life-long companion, who understanding the significance of the life of her Brother's beloved, in May 1970 told Mehera, " There are certain events in your life which are very important for the world. Though material has been gathered about Baba, people will also want to know about your life." Mehera agreed to let Mani tape-record her narrating some stories of her life, which Mani has lovingly shared. And so the seed of this book was planted. Mani has also given other invaluable help.

To Elaine Cox whose many contributions to this book include design and production for the book, cover and maps. And to Wendy Lieberman who assisted with the mechanicals.

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And most of all to Beloved Meher Baba who tangibly helped me and all those who have selflessly worked towards the preparation of this most extraordinary book. His Presence has been felt in every aspect of the making of this edition. The Beloved One has given us the opportunity to record the life of His dearest Mehera as narrated by her over the years while sitting on her porch at Meherazad. My deepest gratitude to Beloved Baba for His Love and the privilege He has given me to meet Him, to know Him and to share in His work.

NAOSHERWAN ANZAR

This book would have not been published without the wisdom and guidance of Arnavaz N. Dadachanji, one of Meher Baba' s close women mandali. Her deep love for dearest Mehera inspired her to work unsparingly to create this book. It has been her deep desire that this book be pleasing to Beloved Baba and His dearest Mehera, and, consequently, she has personally supervised the entire book down to the smallest detail, deciding the format of the book, gathering tapes of Mehera from Baba-lovers, choosing the photos, correcting the manuscript, directing the book's design and giving constant support to those helping her. Through her efforts Baba has made this book a reality.

NAOSHERWAN ANZAR

Register of Editorial Alterations

Page 168, para 1, line 3, inoculated changed to inoculated

Page 184, para 4, line 2, rainfall changed to rainfall