MOVING TOWARDS A UNIFIED ZOROASTRIAN CALENDAR
A WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY IN 1992

Yair yanm hushitim yazmaide, saredha ashavana ashahe ratavo yazmaide.
[Yasna Hapianhaiti—8]

Haurvato rathvo yair yayao hushitoish saredheibyou.
[c.f. Yashi—IV, Khordad Yashi]

We revere the seasons which come at the proper time. We also revere the
correct and right solar year.
[Free English rendering by Pallan Ichaporia]
EDITORIAL — THE WAY AHEAD

In September, Zoroastrians will converge on Vancouver to attend the N.A. Congress. The theme "Looking Ahead to the 21st Century" could not be more timely. Of all the topics on the agenda, though, only two relate to the youth. For three days, attendees will participate in discussions, workshops and meetings, and with their spiritual batteries recharged, return home to resume their daily routine.

Zoroastrians living in the mainstream of N.A. life, march 'in sync' with the N.A. heartbeat, sharing the same dreams, goals, hardships, and concerns. Life in the 'fast lane' has produced an American younger generation, whose attention has not been held by any organized religion. As the pace of life quickens, it can profoundly dislocate family relationships in both personal and religious spheres. Since we are everywhere surrounded by the mainstream, the same social forces are bound to affect us. In fact, they affect the younger generation even more so. The North American-born generation of Zoroastrians is our primary concern, since they do not have the same exposure to old-world religious values that we, their parents brought with us from India and Iran in the sixties and seventies. Armed with these values, we got ourselves educated, settled down and have families. Today, with the graying of the first generation, it is time to pause and take stock of our future. We ask ourselves: Who are we? What is our heritage? Are there any lessons from our past history that can benefit and guide us?

If we fast-forward a mere seven years, we step into the 21st century. Many of today's familiar faces of young Zoroastrians will be married and have families. My son Jamshed will be thirty years old. . . . Enter the second generation of North American-born Zoroastrians! . . . How will members of this generation cope with life in their fast lane? Will they resonate with their elders? Will they possess the cultural and religious values needed to survive as a community? Will they serve as torchbearers to perpetuate the Zoroastrian faith on this continent?

The answers to many of these questions can be found in how we prepare today's youth to face tomorrow's challenges. Through the millennia, Zoroastrian identity and religious culture have been our ANCHOR TO THE PAST, OUR COMPASS TO THE FUTURE. As Farhang Mehr in his excellent book The Zoroastrian Tradition, [see Book Review] explains, the dwindling of the world Zoroastrian population is related to the low fertility rate, great mobility, and non-admission of outsiders. These characteristics combined with alienation from their traditional culture and lack of a native religious context in their new hometowns, have created many concerns. Herein Dr. Mehr has given us the answers. Our religious culture must be an integral, inseparable part of our daily lives and we must know and practice the basic tenets of our great faith. We must be united in our resolve to establish a strong foundation for our community to grow and prosper in the future.

We must open at an accelerated pace, a dialog with our youth who will soon be our replacers, our community's leaders of tomorrow. We must address their fears, concerns and show them the way ahead. In this context, we need to develop a plan to have an ongoing dialog with the youth of today to get their feedback and their greater involvement in community affairs. The important thing is to make a meaningful start — to take the first step — at the Congress. Refinements to the plan can then follow at the various Youth Congresses.

As we approach the 21st Century, a future of accelerating change awaits us. We have only a brief period to devise a roadmap for the community, to instill in our youth traditional Zoroastrian values and to unite them as a community. I feel certain, that given an opportunity and proper guidance, the youth will respond to the challenge!

Adel Engineer
Editor, Articles and Letters

NEWS FROM THE SECRETARY

The 1992 FEZANA annual general meeting will be held on September 3 and 4, 1992, preceding the Eighth N.A. Zoroastrian Congress in Vancouver, B.C. It will be at the Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr, on September 3, from 9.00 am to 6.00 pm, and will continue at the Vancouver Trade and Convention Center on September 4, from 9:00 am to noon. Associations may send one or more delegates to the AGM; others may attend as observers.
Associations are reminded to follow up on the action items following the last AGM:

- Verify that 1992 annual dues are paid up.
- Submit nominations for the offices of President, Treasurer and Assistant Secretary.
- Submit names of 5 nominees for the process for resolution of substantive religious issues.
- Collect census forms from individuals in your area and submit the package to FEZANA.
- Distribute ZYNA Youth Directory forms to youth in your area.

Dolly Dastoor
Secretary, FEZANA

ON THE NORTH AMERICAN SCENE

Shaping Our Future in North America

Of the total population of 280,000,000 in USA and Canada, we estimate 10,000 are Zoroastrians. This translates to one Zoroastrian in 28,000 — a mere drop in the ocean, and very alarming! We ask ourselves: How do we ensure our survival, and the survival of our children as Zoroastrians? In this milieu, are our communities going to last? Do we have a short and long term plan? Do we realize that living in N.A. at this point in time presents us with unique opportunities, not only for ourselves, but also for fellow Zoroastrians in Iran, India and Pakistan.

Are the local associations able to respond to the needs of their community? How about those Zoroastrians in remote areas, where there is no association or place of worship? Are we doing enough to assure an adequate number of enlightened and knowledgeable religious leaders (Mobeds)? Have we planned for an International Center? Have we thought of resolving the acceptance/conversion question?

Five years ago, you created FEZANA as an umbrella organization to help resolve some of these questions. To achieve this goal, FEZANA has to be given the authority to act. Most of all, it needs our continued, undivided spiritual and financial support. It is time for all of us to come together to make this a reality. If you have an idea or plan to accomplish this worthy task, please let us know, because we all share the same noble goal — survival and a bright future for all Zoroastrians, which in turn would lead to a better world for all mankind.

Keikhosrow Harvesf, M.D.
Chairperson, FEZANA Finance and Fund Raising

Settling in the USA

It is September 1989, and we are anxiously waiting at San Francisco airport for the arrival of the first group of our fellow Zoroastrians, who are to be resettled in the USA. The pilot program, PS4000, started 18 months earlier with the US State Department, was finally bearing fruit. A few weeks later, at the Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr in Los Angeles, it was one of the most beautiful moments of our lives to see the happiness and hope in the faces of these newest N.A. Zoroastrians. They tell us their memories about their trip to the USA. They talk about the hard times and all the help they received from fellow Zoroastrians. They talk of their hopes and aspirations for their future. And we tell them of the good and bad they can expect in this big, beautiful, democratic country that is now our home.

That day, and many others have passed. PS4000 was successfully completed in September 1991 to the full satisfaction of the State Department. We can all be proud that every individual is now well settled and a productive member of the society. Each was privately sponsored without any financial support from the government.

Through the successful implementation of this program we have introduced our community in a very positive way to the US government. Our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to all those who made this entire process so successful, especially Dr. A. Adler and Mr. Joseph Coleman of the State Department, who spent 18 months with us day and night, to bring this program to life. We hope to continue this effort not only for future resettlement but also to get recognition and help for the newest community of Zoroastrians recently discovered in Tajikistan.

Farshid Salamati
Vice President, FEZANA
Chairperson, Special Task Committee, FEZANA
The popularity of the annual Z-Ski trips has grown. 28 youth attended the Winter 1991 trip at Jay Peak in Vermont. Everyone had a great time. Some of the skiers learned how to snowboard, while others were just getting the hang of learning how to buckle their boots, getting on and off the chair lift, and most important of all, how to stop! One evening we went out for a Chinese dinner and dancing just over the Canadian border. Other evenings, everyone was too sore to go out, so we got gallons of ice cream and watched movies and discussed life and religion into the night. The 1992 ski-trip is being planned for Quebec City. All Zoroastrian youth are invited, whether they are skiers or not.

Ferzeen Jungalwalla
Sudbury, Massachusetts
(508) 443-6858
Futurevision, Prophecies and Predictions
India's star astrologer and member of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington, Bejan Daruwalla was the main speaker at the conference on "Futurevision, Prophecies and Predictions of the 1990s and Beyond", sponsored by the Association for Research and Enlightenment, (which was founded by the famed American psychic Edgar Cayce).

Daruwalla's predictions on world events appear in astrology columns in newspapers in India, the Middle-East and the USA. His recent predictions about the release of Nelson Mandela, Mrs. Thatcher's downfall, and the victory in the Persian Gulf have all proven accurate. His latest book Star Signs, Numerology, and Chinese Astrology, includes material on world events, numerology, annual forecasts, and star signs.

[From Zoroastrian News, Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington, December 1991]

PASS IT ON ...
To help reach a wider readership to this Journal, after you read it PLEASE PASS IT ON TO A FRIEND

ZYNA Youth Directory
A 1992 youth directory "Zoroastrian Youth of North America" is being compiled. All youth are invited to submit their entries in the format shown below. To help defray publication costs advertisements and donations (suggested $10 per youth) will be appreciated. Send to: Jehangir Shroff, Helping Hands Zoroastrian Youth Communication Network, 1201 Demaret, Houston, TX 77055, tel: (713) 461-7140.

ZOROASTRIAN YOUTH OF NORTH AMERICA
DIRECTORY ENTRY FORM

NAME: ___________________________
ADDRESS: _______________________
_______________________________
PHONE NO: (____) ________
EDUCATION: ____________________
MARIED/SINGLE: _______ BIRTH DATE: ___________
PROFESSION/HOBBIES/INTERESTS: ________________________________

North American Census
I am very disturbed at the lack of cooperation from some Associations in the census effort. For too long, we have bluffed our way without proper facts and figures. Having lived in the West for over a quarter of a century, I am truly convinced that the West has progressed mainly because it has gathered factual information and marshalled it towards future goals. To survive and flourish here, we need to be better informed. Rather than make an emotional appeal, I appeal to your intellect to promptly forward the requested data, instead of questioning its usefulness. Census forms have been distributed to each Association. Associations are urged to collect data from their geographical area and make a special effort to count those in remote places. Individuals who have not received the form are requested to contact their nearest Association or Minoo Patel, FEZANA Census Committee, 138 LeMoyne, Oak Park, Illinois, 60302, tel: (708) 383-8985.

The "Father of Arizona" — a Parsi Initiate?
Charles Poston, born on April 20, 1825, was a man whose vision and enterprise earned him recognition as the "Father of Arizona." By turns, he was a lawyer, explorer, miner, author, and politician. In between, he was an authority on
desert reclamation, a gunslinger (enough to be included in a list of the southwest’s classic pistoleers), and a student of Oriental religions. As a young man, Poston went West to seek his fortune, and found a country that would inspire him for the rest of his life.

In 1869, Poston, as commissioner of the US in Asia, traveled to China and India. In Bombay he became absorbed in the tenets of the Parsi community, and “became a Parsi initiate under the sponsorship of the son of an Oriental philanthropist”. In 1871 he traveled to France, where he wintered in the old royal suburb of Versailles. It was probably then, that he prepared a volume called *The Parsis*. This dissertation was published in London in 1872, and reissued later as *The Sun Worshippers of Asia*.

By 1877, Poston was back in Arizona. “Seeing a chance to propagate the Parsi religion, he published an American edition of *The Sun Worshippers of Asia* and even went to the extent of selecting a nearby butte as the site for a Zoroastrian temple. His own resources did not enable him to do more than start a road up to the chosen location. He did however, write to the Shah of Persia requesting funds in the name of Zoroaster. This was yet one more of Poston’s grandiose schemes that never came to fruition.


**New Weapon Against Job Discrimination**

The US Congress this fall enacted the Civil Rights Act of 1991, a major bill designed to combat discrimination. This Act strengthens protections against sexual harassment and other discrimination against women, people of different religions, and people with disabilities. In case of litigation, plaintiffs will have the right to have juries hear their case and receive compensatory and punitive damages for intentional discrimination. However, businesses with fewer than 15 employees will remain exempt from the measure. Complaints may be filed with the EEO Commission, 2401 E Street, NW, Washington, DC 20506.

**COMING EVENTS**

**Eighth North American Congress Program**

[Other Congress Information next page.]

The Congress program will be on the theme: “Looking Ahead to the 21st Century”:


Session 2: “Adopting a Unified Calendar” — P. Ichaporia, J. Bagli.


Session 5: “Focus on Education” — S. Engineer, M. Khodavandi, F. Shahradi, E. Eduljee.

Session 7: “World Zoroastrian Organization” — S. Captain, D. Tamboli.


Session 8: “Change” — Youth Team(s)


**Children’s Art Competition**

A children’s art competition will be held in conjunction with the Eighth N.A. Zoroastrian Congress in Vancouver, 1992. Children up to 16 years are invited to submit paintings, drawings, etchings and collages on the following themes: (a) Looking ahead to the 21st century; (b) Most memorable Zoroastrian event in my life; or (c) Family or community life.

Upto three pieces of artwork may be submitted, not to exceed 24” X 24”. There will be two prizes in each of three age categories. Submit entries by June 30, 1992 to: Bella Tata, #401 - 840 Broughton Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6G 2A1.
THE EIGHTH NORTH AMERICAN ZOROASTRIAN CONGRESS

Mailing Address:
#401 - 840 Broughton Street, Vancouver, British Columbia V6G 2A1, Canada

"LOOKING AHEAD TO THE 21ST CENTURY"
September 4 - 6, 1992
Vancouver Trade and Convention Center
Vancouver, British Columbia

Program

Thursday Sep 3:
9:00 - 6:00
FEZANA Annual General Meeting — Day 1 (at the Darbe Mehr)

Friday Sep 4:
8:00
Registration
9:00 — 12:00
FEZANA Annual General Meeting — Day 2
2:00 — 4:30
Workshops (Youth, Business, Women, Education, Canadian Zoroastrians)

Saturday Sep 5:
7:30
Registration
8:55 — 4:30
Opening Ceremony, Congress Sessions 1 — 4
6:00
Banquet

Sunday Sep 6:
8:55 - 7:05
Congress Sessions 5 — 11, Closing Ceremony

Registration Fee
(Canadian Dollars)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Package*</th>
<th>Full</th>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Congress Only</th>
<th>Banquet Only</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Registration (before Jul 15)</td>
<td>$125</td>
<td>$105</td>
<td>$85</td>
<td>$60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Late Registration (Jul 16 - Sep 2)</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td>$120</td>
<td>$95</td>
<td>$65</td>
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<tr>
<td>On Sep 3, 4, 5 subject to availability</td>
<td>$170</td>
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* Includes all workshops/sessions; buffet lunch Sep 5 and 6; coffee/tea; and banquet.

Souvenir Booklet Advertisement Rates

| Business card | $ 50 | Double page | $ 750 |
| Patron | $100 | Back inside cover | $3,000 |
| Quarter page | $150 | Front inside cover | $4,000 |
| Half page | $250 | Back outside cover | $5,000 |
| Full page | $400 | (Canadian Dollars) | |

Travel and Hotel Arrangements
For hotel, fares and tours, including cruise to Alaska, contact Vancouver travel agents:
R.Daroowala (604)980-0531; F.Amrolia (604)584-1411; S.Mehrabani (604)984-7122; M.Deboo (206)353-3438.

Children’s Art Competition
(See FEZANA Journal this issue for details).

Community Awards
Deadline for nominations was March 21, 1992. Awards will be presented at the Banquet.

Registration packages are available from your local Association, or call: (Vancouver area code is 604):
Chairperson: Bella Tata, 681-5250
Vice-Chair: Mehraban Zartoshty, 988-1839
Awards: Bella Tata, 681-5250
Finance:Farrokh Namdar, 926-7300
Hospitality: Perviz Madan, 980-3402
Program: Soonoor Engineer, 324-9365
Public Reins: Kashmira Dastur, 524-4343
Secretariat: Shirin Sethna, 421-7591
Mazdayasnie Connection Camp
Ervad K. N. Dastur will conduct a religious camp, May 2 - 9, 1992 in Oceanside/Carlsbad, California. Participants will learn about the religion — tenets, truths, meaning of life, ceremonies, traditions, history and culture; and how to integrate religion into their complicated daily lives. Fees are $225 (adults) and $135 (children under 12). Contact Siloo Mehta, Mazdayasnie Connection, 9528 Walker, #5, Cypress, CA 90630.

1993 Parliament of World's Religions
Held in Chicago in 1893, as part of the World Columbian Exposition, the "1893 Parliament of World Religions" marked the beginning of interfaith dialog in the modern world. In the words of a contemporary observer, it was "perhaps the most important religious gathering ever assembled."

A hundred years later, this event will be celebrated with the "1993 Parliament of the World's Religions" in Chicago, August 27 — September 5, 1993. The Parliament will be an assembly of religious and spiritual leaders, exhibits, concerts, performances, workshops, interfaith discussions, worship services at local temples, mosques, churches, synagogues, and shrines.

Special interest group sessions will be held on: prayer, sacred music and art, traditional values, history of religions, women in religion, theology and pluralism. Conferences on Critical Issues will include: the earth (environment and conservation); the human community; economics and justice; science and technology; and power, politics and liberation.

Call for Papers
The global Zoroastrian community needs to present its very best for this event. Zoroastrians interested in presenting a paper contact: Rohinton Rivetna, 626 West 56th Street, Hinsdale, Illinois 60521, (708) 325-5383.

Zoroastrian Olympics
Los Angeles will be the host for the Zoroastrian Olympics, July 3 - 6, 1992. The program will include team games and individual competitions as well as social activities, tours and sightseeing, a beach party, dinner cruise, dancing and more. Youth and adults alike are invited to participate or just come and enjoy the fellowship and fun. Contact: Bijan Khostraviani (408) 972-0509.

4TH ZOROASTRIAN OLYMPICS
1992 LOS ANGELES

Surti James Bond
The popularity of the natak (comedy) presented by the Zoroastrian Association of California in 1991, has prompted them to sponsor the murder mystery and comedy "Surti James Bond", by Diniar Contractor and troupe, at the Aviation Auditorium, Redondo Beach, California, on May 30, 1992. Tickets from $10 to $40. Contact: Aban Commissariat, (310) 475-5624.

Council for a Parliament of the World’s Religions
ENTREPRISE

As a service to readers, Zoroastrian businesses are listed in this section. Please support our Zoroastrian entrepreneurs.

Rusi Gandhi Realty
Rusi Gandhi, 6051 North Lincoln Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60659, tel: (312) 973-7714.
Specializing in real estate sales, Florida properties and hotel/motel investment.

RV and Associates
Rusi Vaghaiwalla of the Chicago area, has started his own Financial Consultancy, Income Tax and Accounting business. He will welcome your business. Call: (708) 759-2637.

Sudreh and Kustis
Sudrehs and kustis, hand-made by Parsi Zarthushti ladies in Gujarat according to Zoroastrian rites, are available in various sizes and fineness from: Jer Daboo, Sorab Manor, 6 Walton Road, Colaba, Bombay 400 039, India.

Investments for Not-For-Profit Organizations and Individuals Approaching Retirement

Erosion of a not-for-profit organization's capital due to inflationary environment is a big risk. These organizations have a fiduciary duty to their members to preserve the capital risk-free and at the same time enhance the growth capital. Search for investment instruments that fulfill these objectives is difficult with low yielding CDs and Treasury Bonds. The elderly during, or approaching retirement are faced with a similar dilemma.

A viable alternate that has been successfully used for decades by Corporate Pension Funds, Retirement Trust Funds of Government, Public and Private Corporations, and Profit Sharing Plans, is investments in Mutual Funds.

The basic concept of Mutual Funds is: "A group of organizations or individuals" with "common goals and objectives" in financial gains, form a pool of their financial resources, and invest in a group of companies. They offer: (a) Liquidity, (b) Flexibility, and most important of all (c) Security, by virtue of diversification.

Mutual Funds offer a variety of objectives and goals ranging from "Aggressive Growth", to "Growth and Income", to "Income" only. They may be invested in local (USA) or foreign markets. Their investment modes may be equities, bonds, convertible securities, real estate or treasury instruments. Some Mutual Funds may specialize in certain sectors of the economy, such as financial, transportation, communications, health care, technology or utilities. Others may specialize in certain geographical sectors.

Based on their mode of operation they may be classified as open-end (sold only through the fund companies that operate them), or closed-end (sold in the open market similar to stocks, through brokers). Open-end Mutual Funds are further classified as No-Load, Low-Load (charging between 2 to 4.5% brokerage fees), and Load (charging between 5 to 8.5% brokerage fees).

The most important factor in selecting a Mutual Fund is to set an objective and a Goal, then find a matching fund. For organizations and individuals near retirement, the obvious objective is preservation of capital, and the goal would be growth of capital, in excess of the rate of inflation, with minimum investment risk. The most suitable type of fund for these principles would be Growth and Income type of fund; or if current income is secondary, then Growth type of fund. For stable long term investment approach, investment in Equity Mutual Funds is most appropriate. The cumulative return on various investment vehicles over the decade of the 1980s is shown:

<table>
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<th>Investment</th>
<th>Return (%)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Stocks (S&amp;P 500)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corporate Bonds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treasury Bonds</td>
<td>227%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treasury Bills</td>
<td>134%</td>
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<tr>
<td>INFLATION</td>
<td>65%</td>
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</table>

Financial rewards are always in proportion to the risk. An educated risk is healthy in the process of growth of the individual and the community. Questions and comments, contact: Jehangir K. Shroff, 1201 Demaret, Houston, TX 77055, tel: (713) 461-7140.

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HOMI DAVIER AND RUSTOM ENGINEER

Travel $avers$, Inc.
3933 Westheimer, Suite 222
Houston, Texas 77027
Tel: (713) 850-0808
Interface for NRI Scientists and Technologists

The Government of India has established a new program called INRIST (Interface for Non-Resident Indian Scientists and Technologists), which acts as a point of contact between NRIs and organizations in India. The goal is to mobilize expertise of NRI professionals and entrepreneurs to set up collaborative projects and joint ventures in India. NRI experts wishing to consult in India under this program please send bio-data and proposals to: INRIST Center, CSIR Complex, NPL Campus, Pusa, New Delhi 110 012.

Pegasus Products, Inc. — a Success Story

Started by Farrokh Patel in a rented 800 sq. ft. warehouse in 1980, with one part time helper, Pegasus Products today occupies a 13,000 sq ft building in an industrial complex in New Jersey, and employs a staff of 40 people. Products include vinyl swimming pool liners, pool safety covers, hazardous chemical bags, tarpaulins, environmental control liners, and much more.

Having built this manufacturing facility single-handed, 'from scratch', Farrokh says it has not always been smooth sailing; in fact at times, it has been very very tough. But today, Pegasus Products, Inc. (34 Columbus Road, Somerville, NJ 08876) is doing a brisk business. Farrokh lives with his wife Gool and three teenage daughters in Millington, New Jersey.

Zoroastrians in the Armed Forces

DR. (MRS) SILLOO KAPADIA is in the US Navy for the last three years in the Medical Corps, and holds the rank of Commander. Having completed her medical studies in India, she was until recently a pathologist in a Pittsburgh hospital. She is at present stationed in Washington D.C.

Daughter of Silloo and Behram, SHERNAAZ KAPADIA is an ensign in the US Navy, studying for a medical degree at Temple University, Philadelphia. When she was accepted into the Navy, Shernaa was given the Oath of Allegiance by none other than her mother!

KURUSH MORRIS, son of Fred and Zahver Morris of New Jersey, lieutenant in the US Navy for the last three years, is currently serving on the USS Stark. Before joining the Navy, Kurush received his B.A. from the New York Maritime college. He is an Eagle Scout and a recipient of the Good Faith Emblem in Zoroastrianism.

AROUND THE WORLD

Association of Inter-Married Zoroastrians

A group of Parsi Zoroastrians married to non-Parsi’s have formed the Association of Inter-Married Zoroastrians, the main object being “To assert, establish, agitate for, protect and safeguard the rights, privileges, benefits available to Zoroastrians married to non-Zoroastrians...” All Zoroastrians married to non-Zoroastrians are eligible to become Members. Others who sympathize with the aims and objects may become Associate Members. There is a one-time life membership fee of Rs. 1,000 for Members and Rs. 300 for Associate Members. Contact: M/s. Desai, Berjis & Chinoy, 143, Sir P. M. Road, Fort, Bombay 400 001, tel: 2862434.

THE HELPING HANDS ZOROASTRIAN YOUTH COMMUNICATION NETWORK COMMITTEE OF NORTH AMERICA

PRESENTS

NAVZOTE MASTER

A COMPOSITION OF SELECTED AVESTA PRAYERS WITH THEIR MEANINGS

BY

MEHER DADABHOY AMALSAD

“A Unique Approach for Infants and Toddlers”

NAVZOTE MASTER IS RECORDED ON INVISIBLE SPEAKER SYSTEM “SOUND RETRIEVAL SYSTEM”, WHICH ENHANCES THE LEARNING POTENTIAL OF THE CHILD BY MANY FOLDS. THIS TECHNIQUE HAS BEEN TESTED ON AN INFANT, AND HAS PRODUCED EXCEPTIONAL RESULTS, WHICH ARE DEMONSTRATED INSIDE THIS PACKAGE FOR YOUR REVIEW.

PLEASE CONTACT YOUR COMMITTEE OR GROUP FOR OBTAINING A COMPLETE PACKAGE OF NAVZOTE MASTER FOR YOUR FAMILY.

A minimum suggested donation of $15.00 (US or Canadian) is recommended for NAVZOTE MASTER. The proceeds from this donation will be used directly by ZOROASTRIANS TO SERVE ZOROASTRIANS for educational, medical, and Youth Leadership Development Programs.

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: FEZANA — HELPING HANDS

GIVE YOUR CHILD A GIFT OF PRAYER
<table>
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<th>Jashan</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fravardin</td>
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**FASLIC CALENDAR 1992 (1361 YZ)**

**SHENSHAH CALENDAR 1992 (1361 YZ)**
MOVING TOWARDS A UNIFIED ZOROASTRIAN CALENDAR

A WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY IN 1992

Perhaps the only religious community that embraces three separate calendars, Zoroastrians in 1992 will be presented with an opportunity to move towards a "unified" calendar. In the articles that follow, the authors explore various facets of this issue, from historical, religious and communal perspectives.

Compiled by Roshan Rivetna

EVALUATING THE NEED

Throughout Zoroastrian history, attempts have been made to intercalate the Zoroastrian calendar to synchronize it with the solar year. The ancient Zoroastrians, in their wisdom, recognized the difference (of about 5 hours and 45 minutes between the 365 day calendar and the solar year) and over the centuries, made various attempts to intercalate. Dr. Bagli [FEZANA Journal, March 1991] and Dr. Vafadari [this issue] trace instances in history when corrections were made, and describe the genesis of the various calendar systems. We are now close to the twenty-first century, and our miniscule community embraces three different calendars:

Shenshahi: Has 12 months of 30 days, plus 5 extra Gatha days. It gets out of step with the solar year by about 1 day every four years.

Kadmi: Identical to the Shenshahi, except it is exactly 30 days (one month) ahead.

Fasli (or seasonal): Intercalates by adding one day (Avaradad-Salgah) every fourth year, and keeps in step with the earth year, as well as with the Gregorian calendar. Almost all Irani Zoroastrians follow this calendar.

In the year 1992 and for the four years following, the days of the month for all three calendars will coincide, though the months will be different. This happens only once every 120 years. From 1992 to 1995 we will be presented with an opportunity that will not recur in our lifetimes. On this continent, Zoroastrians are making a new beginning. Whatever we do, or fail to do, will have a lasting effect on future generations.

Over the next few months we need to explore this matter in depth within the Associations and in the Mobed Councils. A session on the calendar has been planned for the upcoming Vancouver Congress and the FEZANA AGM. The questions we need to address are:

• Should we move towards a unified calendar? Or should we maintain the status quo?
• If there is a need to unify, which calendar should be selected?
• What are the impacts of such a move?
• How should such a transition be effected?

There are two approaches to this issue. One approach is to promote the adoption of the selected calendar (the Fasli being the rational choice) as the official calendar for FEZANA, and encourage Associations and individuals to move towards the same. However, the final choice is up to each Association and each individual. An alternative approach, as proposed by Dr. Bagli below, is to 'unify' the three calendars, by making a collective decision to apply a one-time 'correction' to bring all three Navroze Days (Roz Hormuzd and Mah Fravardin) to March 21, and then apply periodic intercalations, to maintain them 'in synch'. This approach would need consensual agreement from the Mobed Councils, Associations and individuals.

Let us look carefully at all sides, and collectively choose a direction that has the blessings of the entire community.

Rohinton Rivetna
President, FEZANA

1992 SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE, PLEASE

Though the Journal is produced by volunteer staff, it depends on your subscriptions and donations to cover the cost of printing and mailing. Please send your 1992 donations today.
THE WHY, WHAT AND HOW ABOUT A UNIFIED CALENDAR

Zoroastrianism, a religion that is so devoutly dedicated to the creations of nature has many of its prayers directed towards the praise of and tribute to the elements of nature — the sun, moon, fire and water. The religion enjoins that all these elements be represented when rituals such as Afringan, Baj and Jashans are performed. The Law of Asha — the perfect immutable order or righteousness is the very basis of the functioning cosmos.

It is therefore not surprising to note that the days for observances of the cycling seasons in nature through the year, are held in utmost reverence and dedicated to the creator. To keep the adherents constantly aware, these days are incorporated into the religious calendar. The celebrations of these high feasts, Gahambars dedicated to Ahura Mazda and the Amesha Spentas was a strict obligation believed to have been laid down by Prophet Zarathushtra. The pastoral community of early Zoroastrians depended on these seasonal changes for their very life, and devoutly celebrated these festivals with religious services at the proper time of the year as changes of the seasons set in, and always initiated their new year with the beginning of spring on the day of the spring equinox.

Why the Need for a Unified Calendar

Today there are three NoRuz (New Year) days within a year due to three different calendars, and because of the constant backdrift in two calendars, the days of gahambars are in disarray with natural order, their importance is totally lost, and the understanding of our religious calendar is in complete shambles. This is a strong enough reason why the community should seriously consider the question of a unified calendar. Clearing up this confusion for an orderly understanding should be an important rationale for a religion that is based on the principle of fundamental truth and righteousness.

The perpetuation of three calendars in theory demands performances of religious rituals in triplicate through the year. The limited resources of the priesthood on this continent, simply cannot fulfill such a task. Consequently, having three systems of computation is often a deterrent to the celebration of some of the important observances. Shenshahi and Qadimi calendars are largely followed by the Zoroastrians from India. In contrast Iranian Zoroastrians follow the seasonal Fasti reckoning. This difference is one of the major barriers to the unification of the two commun' groups. A unified calendar will go a long way to improve the situation. Harmonizing the rituals with the introduction of a unified calendar, will result in more synergy between the two groups, leading to a better understanding of the cultural differences. It can also open the door to a dialog between the priesthood of the two groups to understand the differences in the performance of rituals and promote the development of synchronous ritual practice. Conformity in ritual performances of Iranian and Parsi mobeds, and improved understanding of the two cultures can potentially enhance the possibility of a merger of the two Mobed Councils and generate a strong and unified communal base.

A single unified calendar will provide a rational explanation of the doctrinal concepts embodied in the calendar, to the inquiring youths. Understanding the implications in the organization of the calendar can stimulate the perception of the younger generation towards the religious importance of the computational system.

Finally, it is vital that dates of important events in the history of Zoroastrianism on this continent be recorded for posterity in terms of the Zoroastrian day, month and year. For example, critical dates of the formative events in the growth of FEZANA should be recorded in our Roz and Mah, and Yazdegardi year. With the practice of three calendars, such record is scrupulously avoided, thus losing the spiritual, religious and cultural fringe of these occasions.

The Proper Choice

The next obvious question is which of the three calendars is most suited for adoption on this continent? It is sufficiently clear that in an effort to revive our primal religious tradition, our new year must inaugurate on the day of the vernal equinox. Only then will all the high devotional festivals of Gahambars recur in their proper locations. The chosen calendar should also mark the period of the observance of Gah Rapithwan as prescribed in our tradition, from spring to autumn, from Mah Fravardin to Meher. Finally all these must be prevented from drifting backwards with the help of a firm and practical intercalation needed for a solar year. Of the three — Shenshahi, Qadimi and Fasli — reckonings, the first two have no practical mode of intercalation. These calendars do not maintain the days of Gahambars, or the periods of observance of Rapithwan in correct location. Because of consistent drift backward,
the new year day cannot be held constant on the
day of the vernal equinox.

The calendar of Fasal or seasons, is the only one
that fulfills all the above requirements. Fasli is the
only calendar that has built within it a mode of
intercalation that can firmly hold the day of
NoRuz, and the days of Gahambars, in their
proper locations and also define the correct period
for the observance of Gah Rapithwan. In principle,
the Fasli calendar is no different from the
other two, except for the addition of one extra day,
AVARDADSALGAH, every four years. Our
ancestors did just that by intercalating their lunar
calendar with the addition of a month every six
years, before the erroneous confusion set in after
the change to the solar year in Sassanian times.
Finally, the roz of the Fasli calendar always over­
laps with the same day of the Gregorian calendar
year after year. Thus Roz Hormuzd of Mah Fra­
vardin always coincides with 21st March.

How Can We Transition?
The mode of transition to a unified calendar
should be considered as an "adjustment" rather
than a "change". It must be realised that all the
three calendars are identical in their content of
365 days, 12 months of 30 days, and the five
Gatha days at the end. On March 21, 1992 Roz
Hormuzd of all the three calendars will overlap.
That day will initiate Mah Aban, Adar and Fravardin
of the Shenshahi, Qadimi and Fasli calendars
respectively. This overlap of the first roz occurs
only once every 120 years. For those who under­
stand the importance of this adjustment, it is a
relatively simple matter to start observing Mah
Fravardin (Fasli) in place of Aban (Shenshahi).
This would involve passing over the Shenshahi
months Aban to Spendarmad. A similar adjust­
ment was made by the Qadimi mobeds when they
passed over Mah Adar of the year 1114 Y.Z.
(1745 A.D.) to initiate the Qadimi calendar (Dastur
Hoshang Memorial Volume, 1918, pg. 143).

This proposed adjustment of five months will
correct and improve the overall understanding of
the religiosity of the calendar, and thereby pro­
 mote unification. It will make a monumental con­
tribution to revive a tradition and eliminate the
confusion, that has our revered festive days
including NoRuz day, totally out of tune with
nature for centuries.

This important adjustment must be so organized
that it presents a unified effort of FEZANA, all
associations of N.A. and the Mobed Councils.
Knowledgeable individuals, through their
associations should convene efforts to arouse and
cultivate the importance of the religiosity of the
calendar among the grass roots community, and
motivate the respective organizations to make the
move towards adaptation. Now is the time to
pave the way for future generations through refor­
mation of our religious calendar, to establish
UNITY of the Zoroastrian community on this con­
tinent.

Dr. Jehan Bagli
Princeton, New Jersey

GENESIS OF THE THREE CALENDARS— A
HISTORICAL REVIEW

The ancient Iranians, like other agrarian civiliza­
tions, based their system of counting days on the
relationship between the sun and the earth. This
is the foundation of the 'solar calendar'. The solar
calendar following the seasons is today called the
Fasli system. On the other hand, some communi­
ties such as the early Jews and Arabs based their
calendar on the rotation of the moon around the
earth, creating the 'lunar calendar'. With 12 lunar­
nations in a year, (the lunar cycle being about 29
and a half days), this calendar drifts 11 days each
year.

Like the Egyptians, the ancient Iranians had 12
months of 30 days each. This system was an
improvement over the lunar, but still drifted 5 to 6
days every year. So an extra 5 days were added
to make the year 365 days. During the early
Achaemenian rule (550 - 330 B.C.), both Babylon
and Egypt were incorporated into the Persian
Empire. The Babylonians used a 'lunisolar' calen­
dar system. The 12 lunations formed the basis for
the 12 months, but were increased every so often
to bring the first day of the New Year to fall in the
spring. This intercalation to correct the drift was
performed in various ways. One method was to
intercalate seven months (7 X 30 = 210 days)
every 19 years to correct for the 11 days per year
drift (19 X 11 = 209 days) of the lunar calendar.
The Achaemenians saw fit to follow the solar
calendar (30 X 12 = 360 days) and apply an inter­
calation of one 30 day month every 6 years.

In the 4th century B.C. Alexander marched over
the lands of the Achaemenians. The Greeks had
a great respect for the 'wisdom of the East' and
borrowed many local customs. These were
passed on to the Romans and formed the
ingredients of early European civilizations. Fol­
lowing in the footsteps of the Achaemenians, after
the victories in Egypt, the Roman Emperor Julius Caesar, in 46 B.C. introduced a 365 day calendar for the Romans embedding his own name in the seventh month (July). This is known to us as the Julian calendar.

**Significance of the Months**

Under Parthian rule the calendar was basically Achaemenian, but was continually under political and local transformations. In 230 A.D. Ardeshir Babak, founder of the Sassanian Empire made the 365 day year the official state calendar. Reverting back to the pre-Alexander Zoroastrian tradition, the 5 extra days were named after each holy section of the Gathas. Every one of the 30 days was given a religious name. Of the 30 names, 12 were also the names of the 12 months. When the name of the month and day coincided, that day was celebrated with a feast and Jashn. Some of the Jashns celebrated by the Achaemenians are mentioned in the Old Testament, and were officially declared as State holidays by the Sassanians. These 12 Jashns become even more significant if they coincide with the seasons. The month was split into 4 parts — a close parallel to the Semitic system of 'weeks'.

The first seven days were named after the Ame-sha Spentas. The 8th, 15th and 23rd days are Daepadar, Daepmeher and Daepdin; they precede Adar, Meher and Din respectively. The vernal equinox, the first day of spring, was taken to be the first day of the year, and was called Nou Rooz (New Day).

**Introduction of the 'Leap' Year**

The early Sassanians applied an intercalation of one month every 120 years to their 365 day calendar. Subsequently, it was found that this system was impractical — a drift of 30 days was too long a dislocation from the seasons. In about 510 A.D. the Sassanians introduced the simple 'leap year'. Their method was to add one extra day after the five Gatha days once every 4 years. The extra day was named Avaradad Salgah, literally meaning 'extra given by God'. This created the Fasli, or seasonal system. The group who adhered to the old one month intercalation every 120 years, are what we know today as the followers of the Qadimi (old) calendar.

In Europe in 1582 under Pope Gregory XIII the accumulated difference between the Julian and the true solar calendar amounting to about 10 days, was corrected, giving birth to the Gregorian calendar, in common use today. After the fall of the Sassanians in the 7th century A.D., the Moslem lunar system took a footing in Iran. Finding the large drift of the lunar calendar unacceptable, eminent astronomers were commissioned by the Moslems to produce a practical calendar. In the 11th century, Khayyam, a professional mathematician, astronomer and poet produced the Jalali calendar, which was a total reversion to the pre-Moslem Fasl system.

The Parsis, who migrated to India about 1000 years ago must have followed the Qadimi system. Unfortunately the intercalation was overlooked and during their long sojourn in India they intercalated only once. This system came to be known as the Shenshahi (Royal) calendar.

After centuries of neglect, the Nou-Rooz has now drifted behind by 7 months, and comes in August instead of March 21. The followers of the Qadimi system in Iran have also neglected the intercalation for about 1000 years, and they are eight months behind. A complete drift of one solar year takes approximately 1500 years.

**Uniting In 1992**

In 1992 March 21st, the first day of spring will be Hormazd Roz in all the three systems. Why not take this opportunity to call that day the unified Nou Rooz for all Zoroastrians. There are about 50 million Moslems in Iran who celebrate this day as their official start of the year and they are proud of this unique Zoroastrian heritage. All the Bahai's use the first day of spring as the beginning of their new year, again derived from the ancient Zoroastrian calendar. Time has come for Zoroastrians to unite and put past errors behind them. In 1992 (1361 Y.D.) Mazdeans all over the world could unite and live in harmony once again for the first time since the coronation of Yazde-gard III in 631 A.D., by adopting a unified system.


**COUNCIL OF IRANIAN MOBEDS VIEW**

The Kankash-e-Mobedan (Council of Iranian Mobeds) agrees with Mr. Vafadari on uniting to have the FASLI calendar instituted in 1992. We are ready to work with any organization to facilitate the adoption of the Fasli calendar. We do not want to wait another 600 years to unite.

On behalf of the Council, I sincerely thank Dr. Jehan Bagli for his efforts in providing articles, comments and authentic evidence regarding the
three calendars. By shedding light on the calendars and their historical background, he once more proves that the Fasli system is the most precise and accurate. Unifying into one Fasli calendar is the most plausible, sensible and meaningful way to put order into the confusion that has been generated over the past 800 years. It is not only desirable, but necessary in the interest of perpetuation of the religion of Asho Zarthosht, that we make this change, which will surely bring about more harmony, unity and cooperation among the Zoroastrian community.

As this is an important issue, it is suggested that Zoroastrian Associations world-wide unify their calendar. FEZANA can provide informative materials, in order to be able to choose and make possible the transition to the Fasli calendar.

Mobed Bahram Shahzadi
for Council of Iranian Mobeds of N.A.

CALCULATIONS AND INTERCALATIONS

Do you know ...
— That January 1, 0001 was a Saturday?
— That September 2, 1752 was Wednesday? The next day was Thursday, September 17, 1752, by a Decree of Declaration by Pope Gregory XIII. This correction was made in order to bring the calendar in line with the solar seasons. This is the current world calendar, also known as the Gregorian calendar.
— That the century year ending in double zeros, although divisible by 4 is not a leap year unless it is also divisible by 400? Hence the years 1800 and 1900 were not leap years, but the year 2000 will be.
— That the Gregorian intercalation and correction was necessary because all years ending in double zeros in the year 1700 and before, were celebrated as leap years?
— That the revolution of the earth around the sun completes in 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes and 46 seconds?
— That the spring equinox (Jamshed Navroze) falls on March 21 in the Eastern Hemisphere, but on March 20 in the Western Hemisphere, except in every leap year when it falls on March 21. In the year 1752, the spring equinox was on March 10.

— That computer technology has made it possible to create contemporary Gregorian, Fasli and Shenshahi calendars from the year 0001 to 9999. A copy of any one year of the three calendars may be ordered, with a $2.00 donation payable to FEZANA from Minu Patel, 138 Le Moyne, Oak Park, Illinois 60302, tel: (708) 383-8985.

Can you help? Did the year 0001 B.C. precede the year 0001 A.C., or was there an intervening year 0000?
Minu Patel
Oak Park, Illinois

OF MONTHS, YASHTS AND THE SEASONS

Although the most microscopic community, Parsis have the dubious distinction of having three calendars: Shenshahi, followed by 81%; Kadmi, followed by 6%; and Fasli, followed by 10% (based on a survey of delegates at the Fifth World Zoroastrian Congress, reported in “The Number One Problem”, Parsiana, August 1991).

Which is the correct calendar to follow? About a decade ago, this author while translating some difficult portions of the Gathas, some Yashts and Niyahses for Mr. T. R. Sethna’s books, also translated the names of the present Parsi calendar months, keeping in mind the Yashts dedicated to each of these so called archangels and angels, and compared them to appropriate Christian months, corresponding to the Fasli Sal Calendar which starts from March 21st each year. Remarks are based on events observed in lands once parts of the Zoroastrian Empire, as also what individual Yashts have to say. These findings are summarized in the table:

IN COMING ISSUES ...
The themes for future issues of the Journal are:
August 1, 1992: “Ecology and the Environment”;
November 1, 1992: “Looking Ahead to the 21st Century”
February 1, 1993: “Zoroastrian Religious Education”

Letters and articles are invited. Submission deadline is two months prior to the issue date.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Avestan Meanings Related to Yashts</th>
<th>Christian Months</th>
<th>Remarks &amp; Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fravardin</td>
<td>Farohars of departed</td>
<td>Mar21-Apr19</td>
<td>Vernal Equinox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ardebhehsht</td>
<td>Asa-Vahista Archangel over fire and light</td>
<td>Apr20-May19</td>
<td>Heat, less sickness, wheat harvest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khordad</td>
<td>Haurvatat Archangel over water and winds</td>
<td>May20-Jun18</td>
<td>Cloudy, rainy, windy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tir</td>
<td>Tistrya, angel over rain</td>
<td>Jun19-Jul18</td>
<td>Rain, sowing millet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amardad</td>
<td>Ameratat Archangel over vegetation</td>
<td>Jul19-Aug17</td>
<td>Meadows turn green</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shehrevar</td>
<td>Xsathra Vairya Archangel over metals</td>
<td>Aug18-Sep16</td>
<td>Metals, tools for harvesting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meher</td>
<td>Mithra Angel over light</td>
<td>Sep17-Oct16</td>
<td>Autumn Equinox Daylight starts decreasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avan</td>
<td>Aredvi Sur Angel over water, floods</td>
<td>Oct17-Nov15</td>
<td>Clearing canals after floods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adar</td>
<td>Atat Angel over fire</td>
<td>Nov16-Dec15</td>
<td>Colder days Hearth fires burning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daye</td>
<td>Dedication to Ahura Mazda</td>
<td>Dec16-Jan14</td>
<td>For prayers in Ahriman who created winter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahman</td>
<td>Vohu Manah Archangel over animal kingdom (cattle)</td>
<td>Jan15-Feb13</td>
<td>Feed cattle Due to snow cold, animals can’t be grazed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspandarmand</td>
<td>Spenta Armalti Angel over earth</td>
<td>Feb14-Mar15</td>
<td>Earth revives after cold/snow Five days for prayers for dead</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A similar comparison of the Christian months with the Shenshahi and Kadmi calendars makes no sense. Besides, if one compares the dates fixed in Afringan-e-Gahambar, only the Fasli calendar turns out to be correct. The word ‘Fasal’ means a crop and also a season, and Gahambars are seasonal agricultural festivals occurring in Iranian lands.

The Pahlavi Bundahishn, XXV-20 states: “The auspicious month Farvartin, the month Artavahist and the month Horvatat are spring; Tir, Amerodat, and Satvarori are summer; Mitro, Avan and Ataro are autumn; Daë, Vohuman and Spendarmad are winter”, which agrees with the Fasli calendar and also with the above table.

The present observance of Rapithvan Gah from Shenshahi calendar is from September 1st to June 27th, but the days during this period are never larger than nights, and praying for Rapithvan (heat, summer) seems to be at the wrong time. If one compares this to the Fasli calendar, the praying of Afringan Rapithvan makes sense as one sees that the length of the day starts increasing.

Prayers prayed at false times and days may not be in proper perspective of Asho Zarathushtra’s teachings, but each has his or her choice to select according to their own unbiased illuminated mind. Is that not what the Gathas (Ys 30.2) tell us?

Pallan Ichaporia
Wolmensdorf, Pennsylvania

[For details interested readers may read Appendix I developed with my late co-worker Mr. T. R. Sethna, in his book "Teachings of Zarathushtra", Karachi, 1975.]
CALENDAR FOR NORTH AMERICA

The question of Zoroastrians following one calendar, instead of the three currently used, has surfaced from time to time for almost a century. Opinions on the subject of reconciling this issue are quite often diametrically opposed, probably because they involve matters of faith and tradition besides mere logic.

Historical Practices

There are diverse views as to whether the Sassanians ever used the practice of intercalating every four years and if so, how the intercalary day (the so-called Avardad Salgah) was treated [Dastur, 447; Doctor, 10]. We are told the four-year practice fell into disuse since it was found to be extremely difficult to reconsecrate all the implements used in the rituals every four years. So before the last 150 years of the Sassanian rule, the 120-year intercalation rule was implemented.

With the Arab overthrow of the Sassanian Empire in 641 A.D., the practice of intercalation was more or less forgotten until the year 1006 A.D., when Roz Hormuzd and Mah Farvardin coincided with the vernal equinox and four 120-year intercalations became due. At that time it was decided to make the change and the five Gatha days which were at the end of Mah Avva were shifted to the end of Mah Aslandarmad [Mirza, 443]. It was then realized that it would become virtually impossible to continue this practice in the future because of the stringent ritual demands, which could not be practiced in the prevailing political climates both in Iran and in India.

For this reason, a special ceremony, known as the Sandad, was performed to 'seal' the then seasonally correct calendar. We are told that the Sandad ritual lasted for a month after which the Fasli religious calendar ceased to exist and became the Shenshahi calendar which carries on to this day [Doctor, 8]. Around 1125 - 1131 A.D., however, the Parsis in India managed to perform a further 120-year intercalation, while the Iranian Zoroastrians did not, thus throwing their calendars off by one month. This difference was noticed, almost by accident, six centuries later, bringing about the existence of the Shenshahi and Kadmi calendars in India.

Question of Priorities

At a time in N.A., when due to various pressures our very survival is threatened, the question of calendars fades into the background. Also, the day-to-day priorities of our community here are different from those that our Parsi ancestors experienced when they landed in India. The main reason for our recent migration is economic betterment, while that for our ancestors was the preservation of their religious and social culture. Religion to us has almost become a weekend activity. With relatively few exceptions, we are unaware of the day or the month of our own calendar, leave alone the question of arguing about what should or should not be the correct day. The question of performing elaborate rituals, whether it be every four years or 120 years, does not really arise. The only driving force for this debate seems to be a unified Zoroastrian image which we can present to our upcoming generations and to the rest of the country. If these reasons are considered worthwhile by an overwhelming majority of our community members for giving prominence to the Fasli calendar and if this move will strengthen our chances of safeguarding our faith and identity on this continent, then we would be justified in going ahead.

Transitioning Without Polarization

The main question then arises as to how we can transition without causing resentment or polarization among community members. There are staunch adherents of the Shenshahi and Kadmi calendars in this country and it will not be possible for FEZANA or any other such body to make them change by decree. The most that FEZANA could expect to do is to start giving more prominence to the Fasli calendar in its own affairs while still recognizing the other two. If FEZANA can be seen to be working towards unity among ourselves and preservation of our faith and identity, then people would, of their own accord, want to gradually fall in line with its direction. If FEZANA decides to dictate to the individual Associations, then there is a real risk of fragmenting the community at the Association levels.

By the same token, while many Shenshahi and Kadmi mobeds may not object to participating in religious ceremonies held on days according to the Fasli calendar, as is commonly done in India, they are not obliged to
pray in the Fasli Roj-Mah if they do not wish to. Some of them may feel they are being disloyal to the Agiary or Atash Behram where they were ordained. Their wishes must be respected.

Preserving Our Faith and Identity
The preservation of community fellowship should be of primary importance. The basic point about the calendars is a religious one, that we remember with devotion all seasons and all watches of the day. The seasons are not uniform across the world, nor are the days and nights. What is important is not that we are all observing the same ceremony at the same time everywhere in the world, but that we share the same religious convictions and commemorate the spiritual significance of each season, month and hour [Kotwal, 158]. Let us not forget that the vast majority of our community members in India follow the Shenshahi and Kadmi calendars. Let us not appear to be driving a wedge between our two communities. If we must make a change in this country because we feel it will improve our chances of preserving our faith and our identity, then let us do our best to explain this to all concerned and seek their blessings. We wish FEZANA luck in this undertaking.

Jal N. Birdy
Corona, California


THE CALENDAR — A GATHIC VIEW

To a Zoroastrian, the calendar is a very integral and intimate part of the religion. It is our religious compass — if you take it away, you are lost at sea, ritually speaking.

Sacred Implements — the Alat
We do not know what Asho Zarathushtra wanted as the basis of our calendar. In His Gathas, He does not give any significance to Alat (sacred implements used by a priest after appropriate consecration based on the Roj or day, and Mah or month). The only thing that matters to Him is to become God-like through actions, words and worship. This being so, the importance of Alat is not in consonance with His Gathic emphasis on human endeavor to realize the divine in us. He even denounces priests who would teach otherwise.

The issue is more complex for those Zoroastrians in India who are strict traditionalists, and for those Mobeds who perform the Alat Kriya (prayers), because Mobeds belonging to different Panths (sects) follow different Alats. While each sect followed its own Alat, and Mobeds of one sect did not collaborate with those of another, how do we know which sect and its Alat was the true one? And what should we make of the Mobeds of different sects merging together nowadays, even in Bombay?

On this continent we have no Mobeds who perform the Alat Kriya, nor does it seem feasible in the foreseeable future to have such Mobeds here, unless we establish an Agiary or Atashbehram. Dasturji Kotwal clearly advised us (Chicago, 1980) that we cannot establish them here because Alat cannot only be transported by land; and therefore on this continent we have to be satisfied with the establishment of only Dar-e-Mehrs. If we cannot have Alat here, at least we are fortunate in having the Gathas as our guide, and we can rediscover the real message of Zarathushtra — working on our inner being so that it reflects God’s as much as is humanly possible.

Fasli Calendar Reflects Gathic Teachings
The Fasli calendar reflects Gathic teachings and is in agreement with various natural phenomena that inspire us to fulfill our obligations to God and His universe.

Emphasis on living in ecological harmony with the universe is clearly deducible from the Gathas. Fravardin Yasht maintains that Zarathushtra was born in the early spring, if not on Navroze. Zarathushtra, being the world’s first environmentalist, clearly perceived the danger of Man working against God and His creation, if we did not live in harmony with nature. He enjoins us to be a positive agent for the environment and bring it to perfection — Frashokereiti. To follow a
calendar that works against His exhortations is to follow later priests but not Zarathushtra. Our children wonder why we celebrate our New Year months later when we know it falls on the vernal equinox, which signifies a renewal in mother nature. And they wonder why we celebrate the different Gahambars (e.g. for planting and harvesting) when it is not that time of year. Iranian Zoroastrians have turned Fasli since 1920. As they are such a large portion of our population here, it would be so nice if we all celebrated Gahambars, etc. together on the same day.

Zadsparam, Bundahishn [Ch. 25] and Dadestane Dini mention two calendars, one revolving and the other fixed, and clearly advise that we follow the fixed, which is the Fasli calendar. The revolving calendar is the one that unfortunately came into being after we forgot the practice of intercalation, or insertion of one extra month every 120 years. It should be emphasized that the moment we forgot the intercalation, all the Alats in use then became ineffective as they were no longer synchronized with the calendar.

Making an Enlightened Choice
Any calendar requires willing adherence, especially in the case of an ancient people with such long standing traditions as the Zoroastrians. People should not be forced into following a particular calendar. Rather they should be thoroughly educated on this issue and encouraged to make their own enlightened choice. Albeit, even the wrong calendar can still lead to right practice, if one follows the essential Gathic philosophy, which is far more pivotal to our religious being, than any calendar. For instance, even if no calendar other than Fasli ever existed, it would still not be applicable south of the equator. But the Gathic teachings are universal.

An enlightened choice would point to the Fasli calendar as the true calendar for N.A. Our situation here is not at all governed by the issue of Alat. Our Mobeds essentially perform ceremonies that do not require Alat, and could even be performed by Behdins (laypersons), especially in the absence of priests. Even if we ever establish Alat here in one location, the same scenario would still apply to all other locations.

Since even the strict traditionalists agree that Behdins could follow the Fasli calendar if they so wish, there is no reason why Mobeds cannot also do so here, as they cannot perform the Alat Kriya here anyway. Nor can they maintain all the requirements for such ceremonies as covering their head with a white turban or cap at all times, not eating or drinking out at all, not traveling by train or plane, staying away from contact with non-Zoroastrians or menstruating women, using nirang or gomes, and other such observances. Even in Bombay, which is the heart of orthodoxy, such strict observances are not maintained. Dasturji Kotwal himself has granted more and more latitude to Yozdathregar priests (those who perform Alat Kriya) under his own jurisdiction.

For these reasons, it will be perfectly appropriate for our Mobeds to study the issue and make their own enlightened choice and feel free to pray in the Fasli Roj-Mah if their conscience so dictates, provided they respect others’ right to make their own independent choice. Regardless of what calendar we choose, we must strive to be worthy adherents of Asho Zarathushtra and His unparalleled emphasis on our environment as embodied by our calendar. Amen!

Dr. Kersey Antia
Orland Park, Illinois


**READERS' FORUM**

**Unified Zoroastrian Calendar**

I agree with Dr. Jehan Bagli's article ("Choosing a Unified Calendar — a Timely Concern", FEZANA Journal, March 1991). There are many like minded individuals on this issue. Further discussion will be of no avail. I propose ACTION, to form a common platform for the like minded to get together.

Prepare a Fasli calendar commencing on March 21, 1992 in English with Zoroastrian Roz and Mah. It should be of good quality, free of advertisements. Distribute these calendars free to the entire community of N.A., with a strong message suggesting that all Zoroastrians unite under a common flag. Business houses and philanthropists should be approached for donations. I would be prepared to donate $100. The need for a calendar exists. Why not a Fasli calendar?

_Noshir R. Sidhwa_  
_Houston, Texas_

**Darb-e-Mehr or Atashkada?**

Darb-e-Mehr (Portal to Mehr) should be used instead of Atashkada (Fire Temple or the Abode of Fire). Mehr implies good values that may originate from the sun, enlightenment, light, truth, clarity, virtue, knowledge and wisdom, rather than the disk of the sun. In Yazd, Zoroastrians always used the term Darb-e Mehr or Dar-e Mehr or Bar-e Mehr, but never Atashkada.

The problem with Atashkada arises because the meaning of Atash (Fire), as a symbol, metaphor and a philosophical idea are usually forgotten. Instead something new, that is the 'worship of fire' is introduced. Ancient Zoroastrians held fire: (a) as a metaphor and symbol of many meanings synonymous with the above-stated meanings of Mehr; and (b) analogous to the metaphoric symbolism of the cross or the stone of Kaaba for Christians and Moslems. Therefore saying Zoroastrians are fire-worshippers is analogous to saying Christians are cross-worshippers or Moslems are stone-worshippers!

_Rostam Keyan_  
_Rosemont, Pennsylvania_

_Zoroastrians in China..._

Zoroastrianism, the official religion of the Sassanian Empire, seems to have arrived in China early in the 6th century, probably as a result of diplomatic contacts with Persia. There are known to have been four temples in Ch'and-an, two in Lo-yang, and others in K'ai-feng and in cities along the Silk Road. There are a few references to Zoroastrian temples as late as the 12th century.

More intimate relations between China and the Persian kings came about in the early years of the T'ang dynasty (618 - 907 A.D.). The last Sassanian ruler, Yazdegard III, who was hard-pressed first by the western Turks, and then by the Arabs, sent an embassy to China asking for assistance. After he was killed, his son Peroz took refuge in Tokarestan, where he obtained the support of the local Turkish ruler. After the Chinese defeat of the western Turks in 659 A.D., when a short-lived administration was set up in the conquered territory, Peroz was recognized as governor of Po-ssu, on the eastern borders of Afghanistan. He was unable to hold out against the advancing Arabs, and took refuge at the T'ang court around 670 A.D.

There is evidence that descendents of refugees from the Sassanian Empire were still serving as soldiers at Ch'ang-an, the Chinese capital, in the 9th century. The large quantities of Sassanian coins discovered in Chinese territory are evidence of the continued importance of Iran in China's western trade after the Sassanians had supplanted the Parthians in Persia. The coins of 12 different rulers, from Shapur II to Yazdegard III have been recovered, some along the Silk Road to Sinkiang, and others at Hsi-an, Lo-yang and many other places in China.


**Zarathushtra or Zoroaster?**

I have some observations about the use of the words Zoroaster, Zoroastrian and Zoroastrianism in the Journal. At this time, when we are trying to make ourselves visible to the rest of the world, we should use the authentic names — Zarathushtra, Zarathushti and Zarathushti Din.

Zara-thush-tra translates to Golden Shining Star. The Greeks abbreviated it to Zoro-aster or
Golden Star in the Greek language ("Zarathustra and His Teachings", Dastur Khurshed S. Dabu). The followers of the religion are known as Zarathushtis, and the religion that Zarathushtra spread is the Zarathushhti Din, and not Zoroastrianism, which is essentially a Western nickname.

If we are to maintain our cultural heritage, it is important that we maintain the original form. There are many instances of Parsis changing their names, eg. from Phiroze to Phil, Jehanbux to John, and so on. This will obliterate our ancestry. Had our ancestors adopted Hindu names when they came to India, we might not have preserved our identity as a Zarathushti community, which seems to be one of your objectives.

Jamshed Udvadia
Lansing, Michigan

Zoroastrianism and Christian Origins
I am a Roman Catholic priest of the Diocese of Dallas, and have been involved in the educational ministry for most of my twenty-eight years in the priesthood. My first encounter with Zoroastrianism was during my years of graduate studies in theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. There had been occasional references to it in various courses in scripture and church history, but when I began my thesis on the origins of messianism, I was led directly to the Zoroastrian doctrine of the saoshyants. After ordination, I was called upon to explain to various groups the changes that were then transpiring in Catholicism following Vatican II. Because of the very conservative outlook of many local Catholics, I decided to do presentations solidly grounded in history to demonstrate that the changes being made were well-founded rather than capricious.

Understandably, the area of greatest interest to all was that of Christian origins. As I prepared my courses, it became obvious to me that I would need to approach the Zoroastrian elements in a much more direct and systematic way. Much to my surprise, this proved to be all but impossible! No local universities offered course on the subject, and every bibliographical reference was either out of print or otherwise unobtainable. But I persevered, and have now acquired some volumes, mostly historical, literary or theological in character.

Considering the enormous impact of Zoroastrianism on world history and the development of most of the major religions, I have been increasingly interested in learning of its contemporary situation and practice. It seems particularly tragic to me that in these times, when regard for truth in public life, a crisis in education, concern for the environment, a search for a world-affirming faith, and an eroding work ethic, that a religion which has had them all for 3,500 years should be so unknown to the world at large and so reduced in numbers.

Richard C. Weaver
Dallas, Texas

Roots of Iran
I would like to quote some facts from the very recent history of the Zoroastrians of Iran, as presented in "The Zoroastrians of Iran — Conversion, Assimilation or Persistence," by Janet Amighi [AMS Press, New York 1990, ISBN 0404626033, $75].

Ms. Amighi writes [p. 229]: "When rioters attempted to destroy symbols of pre-Islamic Iran, such as Persepolis and Pasargade, they were contained by Moslem leaders, Ayatollah Mahalati and others [Beeman W., "The Religion and Politics in Iran", Yale University Press, 1983]. In 1979, Ayatollah Sadeghi, speaking in Yazd, proclaimed: "Zoroastrians are the roots of Iran. We, Moslems, are like the branches of a tree. If our roots are cut off, we shall shrivel up and die." In the same year the nationalist leader, Bachtiar held a meeting in Los Angeles on the day of the fall festival, Mehergan, in tribute to the true nationalism. Thus all major factions, though opposed to each other, either enthusiastically or reluctantly, accept Zoroastrians as a symbol of Persian nationalism [Kestenberg-Amighi, American Anthropological Society, Washington 1980].

In 1975, [p. 230] forty Moslems in Abadan, primarily employees of the Iranian Oil Company, wishing to convert to Zoroastrianism, had Mobed Shahmardan from India, perform the initiation rite for them. They called themselves Mazdiyasna (an ancient term for Zoroastrians, not well known among Moslems). Ms. Amighi speaks of her meeting with one of these converts, who said: "We are Iranians, not Arabs. Why should we accept the religion which was forced upon our ancestors?"
In the epilogue [p. 363], Ms. Amighi says: "Zoroastrians, like other Iranians, were affected by the spirit of religiosity. Three thousand Zoroastrians attended the 1979 Jashne Meher­gan fall festival, a record number. Close to 200 students enrolled in Fravahar religious classes. In 1979, 80 Zoroastrians underwent the Sudreh Pushi initiation rite ... these are all record numbers. By 1984 [p. 366] ... the concept of Zoroastrians being 'najes' has been ignored and once again Zoroastrians command respect." She writes [p. 229], the "representation of Zoroastrians as loyal and honest people spread throughout North Tehran" and [p. 228] the "association of Zoroastrianism with pure Persian nationalism was accepted by many Iranians."

As can be seen from the few quotations I have given (although there are many more) even the leading Ayatollahs have spoken favorably for the Iranian roots of Zoroastrianism.

Pallan Ichaporia
Womelsdorf, Pennsylvania

Who Is a Zoroastrian?
In historical retrospect, when Zarathushtra proclaimed his vision of a perfecting world, he did not pick and choose his followers on the basis of their current faith, or caste, or color or racial descent. He accepted universally whoever was intelligently and individually ready by choice, to pursue his vision of one God, Ahura Mazda, and the path of Asha, and was willing to discard his/her existing beliefs and faith. Thus he accepted Iranians of all shades and even Turanians, the traditional enemies of Iran, and to some extent even Brahmins from India (Chandra Gachha).

This broad outlook, often tinged by subsequent political exigencies and recurrent forays from other concurrent faiths, as well as a strong ecclesiastical reversion towards indulging in pre-Zoroastrian ritualism, and new ceremonial impositions, continued through Achaemenian and Sassanian dynasties — sometimes heavily theocratic with the connivance of royalty, but it never stopped the inclusion within the religion of numerous subjugated races of a variety of faiths; nor did it stop the royalty marrying princesses of different races. In fact we even sent missionaries abroad, to spread our religion in China and other states. On their return we honored these missionaries as heroes and even today continue to pray: Doad deen beh Mazdayasnan aghahi ravi gofaranghani baad; hafta keshvar ramin, aidoon baad; man ano avid shudan ... "May the knowledge, extent and fame of the commandments of the excellent Mazda worshipping religion ever increase over the world, over the seven regions (continents); may it be so ..."

However, things changed when the Parsis left Iran for India and found themselves no longer within a Zoroastrian milieu. So they started building social walls of separation from the overwhelming Hindu and Muslim masses, for good reason, lest they be absorbed and lose their identity in the continental culture. With partition of India and a general acceptance of secularity and freedom of religious practices for minorities, this fear is now extinct; yet we keep our guard up, allow no 'acceptance' within the religion but continue to pray for its spread 'over the seven regions'! We are always slow to comprehend and to change.

Strangely, despite the social walls still standing, young Parsis are marrying out at a prolific rate. We are fast losing our demographic count, since conversely we will not accept spouses from other religions. With the shift of Parsi population to the West, intermarriages have become even more frequent. Will that jolt our orthodox community into bringing in new reforms and stop the drain? Chances are that orthodoxy is so sanguine and well entrenched in India, that as usual with Parsis, it will not change until it is too late. They have the backing of the priestly class, which survives on orthodoxy and practice of rituals, ignoring the pure ethical message of the Prophet.

In answering the question "Who is a Zoroastrian?" the orthodox will continue to state "born of both Zoroastrian parents and Navjote in traditional sense", never mind the many initiates who flout all Zoroastrian principles in life and revere Sadhus, saints and shrines, some even encouraging practice of black magic.

The enlightened liberals will accept children born of mixed marriage where one parent is a Zoroastrian (preferably father) and followed by a regular Navjote; but will not accept the non-Zoroastrian spouse. That can only generate dissension within the family.

The Iranian Zoroastrians have already advanced to the stage of accepting those historically pedigreed Zoroastrians who wish to revert to our
faith, based on certain guidelines, selective rules and requirement of ethical standards in line with Zarathushtra's prescriptions. This method is good and creditable and saves us from a drastic demographic reduction ad absurdum.

But to really save ourselves from this predicament, we have to take bolder measures and drastic reforms, NOW, before it is too late. That is the function of the radical reformist, to whom a Zoroastrian is an individual who:

- Believes in one God Ahura Mazda;
- Intelligently and by choice accepts the religion propounded by Prophet Zarathushtra and enshrined in the Gathas;
- Renounces all other religions and beliefs;
- Undergoes the Sudreh-Pushin ceremony to publicly announce his acceptance of, and obligations to, the Zoroastrian religion;
- Throughout his life follows the principles of Asha;
- Works towards perfecting the Universal Society by actively advancing Good Thoughts, Words and Deeds and actively resisting all forms of evil; and
- Believes in Divine Judgement of one's actions in this life, which will guide his/her destiny in life thereafter.

Homi B. Minocher Homji
Weston, Ontario

Help for the Tajiks
This is to inform you of the very exciting visit I had this year to Tajikistan. In this newly independent republic, out of 5 million, 2 to 3 million are of original ancient Zoroastrian ethnic stock. They have been suppressed during the communist regime, but now the country is independent and they want to re-establish the Zoroastrian religion with official State backing. They are very proud of their Shahnamah history and culture.

The Tajiks seek the support of Zoroastrians around the world to help develop their country. One such project is to produce a film in Persian/English on Zarathushtra. They are requesting a donation of equipment — Betacam Sony Model No. BVW-400P and 50 Betacam model cassettes. In exchange they will give Zoroastrian College the rights to distribute their Shahnamah films around the world. They have made movies, including one in Persian called "Homage Unto Ahura Mazda." May I request your support for this project. The WZO has agreed to contribute part of the cost.

They would also like to arrange exchange visits between families N.A. and Tajikistan — and they do give right royal hospitality! They also want to export cotton and silk garments and cloth to USA and Europe. and are looking for Zoroastrians interested in bringing ready-made garments from Tajikistan and distributing in USA under the Tajik label.

In March 1992, an official goodwill delegation of the Tajikistan Friendship Society, of about 20 scholars, historians, archeologists, TV and Film Studio persons, is visiting India to celebrate Noruz. They have invited Zoroastrian priests to Tajikistan to do mass Navjotes to restore their old faith to the Tajiks.

Dr. Meher Master-Moos
President, Zoroastrian College, Bombay, India

Study Center in North America
The migration in large numbers of Zoroastrians has added yet another aromatic ingredient to this potpourri of rich cultures and heritages. In the early years after immigration, our apprehensions and priorities revolved around acclimation and survival. Immigrants of the fifties, sixties and seventies, having successfully achieved this, are now turning their focus to progress, prosperity and propagation! The multicultural, multi-ethnic milieu is aptly suited to this goal; the only requirement being our own zeal, diligence and industry.

We have already experienced a religious and cultural awakening with the formation of twenty-some Associations and the umbrella organization, FEZANA. Free interchange of thought (Humata) and words (Hukhta) are taking place among the various communities in N.A. and world wide. Interfaith and intercultural activities are creating awareness of contemporary Zoroastrianism among our host communities who once had resigned Zoroastrians to encyclopedias, museums and research libraries.

The crowning of this Zoroastrian renaissance, with the creation of a Chair of Zoroastrian Studies in Universities, is the next step forward. Let
us concentrate our energies towards the first one, in the Midwest which, hopefully, will blossom into many more. Time is now ripe to bring this Humata to Huvereshta, before we enter the 21st century.

Two major resources are needed to achieve this goal: finances and expertise. Financial commitment of about a million dollars can be pooled together from various sources within the community. I am convinced sufficient scholarship and expertise also exists amongst us. Our first step is to bring both these resources to the drawing board. Hence I am requesting all interested persons to communicate with FEZANA leadership and commence this dialog (Hukhta).

Minu Patel
Oak Park, Illinois

PLEASE GIVE FROM THE HEART ...

How are They Doing Now?

BURZIN SHROFF, 24, victim of the tragic accident that left him paralyzed from the waist down, is undergoing a rigorous six-month rehabilitation program, learning to adjust to his new life in a wheelchair. Being alone, and away from family and friends, he will welcome visitors and letters. Contact him at: Midbucks Medical Center, International Spinal Injuries Rehab Center, 119/121 Wendover Road, Aylesbury, Bucks HP21 7LW, tel: Wendover (0296) 21719.

KHUSHNUM KHAMBATTA, 12, who won our hearts last year as she underwent a long series of surgeries for osteo-sarcoma, at the Sloan Kettering Institute, NY, is undergoing follow up chemotherapy at the Hindujah Hospital, Bombay. The high doses have been an ordeal and caused violent reactions, but the spots on her lungs appear to be dissipating, the prosthesis is holding, and Khushnum is now walking with crutches. The family remembers all the hundreds of Zoroastrians that cared and helped; to all of them they send their deepest gratitude.

HORMUZD NOWROJEE, the four-year old who came to Miami Children's Hospital for surgery to correct congenital heart malformation, is now back in Bombay. In January, he underwent the first stage of "Fontan" surgery, — the superior vena cava was diverted directly to the lungs, bypassing the heart. This has increased his oxygen supply, he is not as "blue", not panting as much, and his chances of cardiac failure have been reduced. Due to the high risk involved, doctors have advised that the second stage of surgery, where the remaining blood supply, is diverted to the lungs, be attempted a year or two later. The trust fund is still open for his second surgery. Feroza, Hormuzd's mother thanks all the well-wishers who made the surgery possible.

Tajik Fund

As a result of a series of lectures in the US by Tajik professors, Parvonah Jamshedi and Akbar Tursunzad, the Tajik Fund has been established by the Foundation for Iranian Studies to promote the Persian script in Tajekistan. They need compatible computers, printers and software that can function and be serviced in Tajekistan. If you have expertise in this area, or to make a financial contribution, please contact: Mahnaz Afkhami, 4343 Montgomery Avenue, Suite 200, Bethesda, MD 20814, USA.

Airline Ticket Available

Zoroastrian wishes to donate one airline ticket, for travel anywhere in the world, for genuine medical need. Contact: Zoroastrian Association of North Texas, 7516 Kingsmill Terrace, Fort Worth, Texas 76112, tel: (817)457-3264.

Student Aid Fund

The erosion of the value of the rupee has left several students in American universities in urgent need of financial help. FEZANA has received appeals from four students. One of them is a 'straight-A' graduate student in Electrical Engineering, at the University of Texas. Being a foreign student, he is not allowed to work off-campus, and has to compete for the limited number of on-campus jobs. Donations will be gratefully accepted. Please send checks payable to FEZANA marked "Student Aid" to: Dinshaw Joshi, Welfare Committee, 4515 Willard Ave, #1609-S, Chevy Chase, MD 20815.
Zoroastrians keep ancient flame alive

By SCOTT GORMAN

When Behram Deboo discusses Zoroastrianism, he wants people to know he and his fellow believers do not worship fire.

"It is not idol worship," says Deboo, a local Zoroastrian leader. "We have to have some kind of symbol. Fire is the universal energy, the being or Ahura Mazda (the supreme being) is light, the glow of the human heart."

Many scholars also see traces of Zoroastrian teachings, where the spirit of good, Spenta Mainyu, does battle with his opposite, Angra Mainyu, for the souls of man. The Zoroastian sect went even further, exonerating Ahura Mazda of all responsibility for the world's evils by their belief in Ahram, the personification of evil.

The wise ones selected the spirit of life, the way of Zarathustra. Others followed darkness and evil. It shows us there has to be some opposite way. There can't be love without hate. But some misunderstand this. It is the spirit you choose."

Whatever the time frame, it is an accepted fact that Zoroastrianism predates Christianity by many centuries. Similar to Christianity, Zoroastrianism teaches a belief in one God (Ahura Mazda), believes life is a struggle between good and evil, and mandates adherence to good thoughts, good words and good deeds.

According to the Indian-born Deboo, many of the elements of Christianity found their antecedents in Zoroastrianism.

"The idea of a messiah, the virgin birth, resurrection of the dead, the idea of hell and heaven, all can be found in Zoroastrianism," he says.

Many scholars also see traces of the Christian concept of Satan in certain Zoroastrian teachings, where the spirit of good, Spenta Mainyu, does battle with his opposite, Angra Mainyu, for the souls of man. The Zoroastian sect went even further, exonerating Ahura Mazda of all responsibility for the world's evils by their belief in Ahram, the personification of evil.

The wise ones selected the spirit of life, the way of Zarathustra. Others followed darkness and evil. It shows us there has to be some opposite way. There can't be love without hate. But some misunderstand this. It is the spirit you choose."

Among those who misunderstand, Deboo says, was the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) who in his "Thus Spake Zarathustra" wrote that "God is dead" and argued that religion could no longer serve as the foundation for human moral conduct.

"That is a disservice to Zoroastrians," Deboo says.

Seeking to preserve their heritage and safeguard it from that sort of misunderstanding, local Zoroastrians met recently in the Marysville home of Al and Gitty Dabestani to organize their community and perhaps establish a place of worship.

Many exist in Vancouver, B.C., some of the largest Zoroastrian community in the region. But even there, no Fire Temple, or primary place of worship, exists. Temples in North America are lesser temples called House of Light.

"But you can light the oil lamp and pray anywhere," Deboo says, a characteristic Zoroastrianism shares with other diasporic religions such as Judaism.

Although she is a Christian, Marysville's Gitty Dabestani thinks it is important that her children learn the religion and culture of their father, Al.

"They need to know so they can pass it on to their children," Dabestani says. "Otherwise, it could die. This is the oldest religion in the world."
**Parasi General Hospital**

After some bureaucratic delays, two machines have now been installed at the Parasi General Hospital, Bombay. Dr. Ruby Malva (8-01 115th Street, College Point, NY 11356) thanks the fifty families across the US who raised about $21,000 to make this possible.

**Acknowledgements**

FEZANA most gratefully acknowledges the following donations since the last publication. Donations will be deeply appreciated for the FEZANA fund categories: Welfare, Religious Education, Student Aid, Properties, Helping Hands (ZYNA), General, or for a specific appeal.

**For Welfare (Medical Aid - Hormuzd Nowrojee):**

- Tahamtan & Gordafir Aresh, CA ($1,000), California Zoroastrian Center, CA ($100), J. S. Cama, TX ($25), Farhad & Huty Contractor, PA ($50), Naju Sorabi Daruwalla, CA ($25 + $21), Behli Hansotia, TX ($10), V. S. Kakhbad, TX ($15), Viral Karai, VA ($25), Dhun May ($100), Mehli & Tehmina Mehta, CA ($25), Burjor & Erika Bargaliwala, MD ($20), Phiroze & Kathleen Riveta, AZ ($51), Ratansha Vakil, MD ($101), Adi & Arnaz Vakaria, LA ($25), Verson & Prochee Wheeler, CA ($21).

**For Welfare (Medical Aid - Burzin Shroff):**

- Bahram Atasb, CA ($20), Sam & Pourich Bhatena, MD ($101), Farokh & Maneck Contractor, LA ($100), Kamran Behrooz, TX ($25), Zoroastrian Association of North Texas ($1,000).

**For Welfare (Gujarat Farmers):**

- Cyrus Austin, AZ ($51), Sam & Pourich Bhatena, MD ($201).

**For FEZANA Journal:**

- Anonymous ($51), Anonymous ($25), Marzban and Guloo Austin, ONT ($12), Kamran Behrooz, TX ($8), S. S. Bamji, ONT ($12), R. P. Billimoria, ONT ($12), Minoo & Jeroo Chinoy, MI ($11), Willim Cumming, CA ($8), Al Dabestani, WA ($50), Najo Darowalla, NY ($8), A. N. Daruwalla, CA ($8), Sheriar & Gover Dehmehri, NY ($8), Mehroo Nariman Desai, PO ($12), Nooshin & Hooshang Farahmand, NY ($8), Parvez & Farida Guzder, MD ($15), Dhun and Aban Gazdar, ONT ($24), Pallan Ichsoparia, PA ($20), Darush Jahanian, VA ($8), Dr. Iraj Jahanian, MO ($8), Viral Kanga, IL ($8), Dr. Rustam Kevala, MD ($25), Susie Kunstek, ONT ($12), Bejan & Perviz Malbari, CA ($20), Rohinton Marker, LA ($8), Byram Mistry, ONT ($12), Jehangir & Olivia Moped, IL ($8), Viral Patel, TX ($8), Roda and Les Pavri, BC ($50), Joseph Peterson, MN ($8), Minoo & Zarine Press, IL ($25), Dr. Frey & Dara Sagar, NY ($8), Gustad Sagar, ONT ($40), Bahram & Banu Shahzadi, CA ($8), Adi & Arnaz Vakaria, LA ($10), Richard & Zarine Weil, IL ($8).

**For Helping Hands (ZYNA):**

- Farhad & Huty Contractor, PA in loving memory of their father Darashah S. Randeria ($501).

**For Student Aid:**

- Dinish & Goolchur Joshi, MD ($101), Adi Mehta, IL ($10), Sheroo Daruwalla, IL ($21).

**For General Fund:**

- Porsus Dadabhow, IL and three others, for Interfaith Calendars ($30), Mehraban & Faridoon Zartoshty, for Zoroastrian participation in Parliament of World Religions ($500).

Zoroastrian Association of Alberta, for Interfaith Calendars ($100).

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**BOOKS, TAPES AND OTHER MATERIALS**

**Avesta Dictionary**

The Parasi Panchayet of Bombay and Dr. Purviz Kolsewalla have prepared the first computerized Avesta-English and English-Avesta dictionaries. They are available on three 5 1/4" high density diskettes, can be downloaded on an IBM PC and printed using a laser printer. To order send $10 US to Dr. Purviz Kolsewalla, 16 Tension Avenue, Cambridge Park, NSW 2747, Australia.

**Songs and Prayers — ZS Cassettes**

Zoroastrian Studies, Bombay has launched two cassettes. "Khushali Na Geet Ne Garba — Songs for Festive Occasions" (Rs. 55) brings you the joyous melodies of traditional Parsi music.

"It's Navjote Time — Songs 'n Prayers" (Rs. 95) is a two volume cassette to teach children kusti prayers for the Navjote ceremony, with simple translation of the prayers, special newly composed Navjote songs, as well as step-by-step audio-commentary on the Navjote ceremony itself. Contact: Zoroastrian Studies, K. R. Cama Oriental Institute, 136 Bombay Samachar Marg, Bombay 400 023.

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**MANNA OF THE ANGELS: TRADITIONAL PARSI RECIPES**

by The Karachi Zarthosti Banu Mandal, Karachi, Pakistan, 1991, 214 pp., Rs. 400 ($25 US)

If you're naive enough to believe that Parsi cooking is restricted to endless variations on the
**THE ZOROASTRIAN TRADITION**

**AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ANCIENT WISDOM OF ZARATHUSTRA**

by Farhang Mehr, 138 pp, © 1991, $13.95
Element Inc., 42 Broadway, Rockport, MA 01966, tel: (508) 546-1040

Dr. Mehr outlines the living spirituality of Zarathustra using doctrinal beliefs as propounded in the Gathas and presently revered by Zoroastrians worldwide.

Doctrinal divergencies, ambiguities and misinterpretations abound in any revealed religion due to a multiplicity of factors and the Gathas are no exception. Over time, the Greek principles have been reinterpreted, modified and distorted in the Avestan and Pahlavi writings giving rise to three phases in the history of the Zoroastrian tradition. First is Aryan Mazdaism, second Magian Mazdaism (or Younger Avestan tradition) and the third politicized or Sassanian Zoroastrianism. This volume focuses on the doctrinal beliefs of practicing Zoroastrians with reference to Aryan Mazdaism. Identifying his method of investigation, Dr. Mehr examines the seven revolutionary concepts that constitute the core of the Zoroastrian doctrine. These concepts have, over millennia, affected man’s philosophy of creation and mode of life.

The first two chapters discuss the concept of Ahura Mazda, monotheism, the principles of prophethood and the method of revelation. Chapter three investigates the principle of Asha - eternal divine law - the foundation of Mazdaism. The principle of moral dualism and the nature of Spenta Mainyu (augmentive and creative spirit) are then explained. This is followed by the law of consequences - reward and punishment - a concept that later appeared in Judaism and other revealed religions. The final chapter explains the principle of Frash-Kreti. (final triumph of good over evil), the refreshment of the world toward perfection.

As a succinct treatise on Zoroastrian philosophy, this book deserves a place on every Zoroastrian bookshelf. As a reflection of our religious heritage, it is commendable that the work is authored by one of our very own Zoroastrian scholars.

Adel Engineer
Editor, Articles and Letters
Zoroastrian gentleman, 34, 6' 0", computer programmer analyst, settled in Canada for over 25 years. Interested in cross-country skiing, swimming, bicycling, photography, chess. [M92-4]

Professional Zoroastrian male, 37, 5' 6", working in the computer field in the US, is interested in corresponding with a suitable Zoroastrian female, with a view to matrimony. Please send photograph and full biodata. [M92-5]

MILESTONES

FEZANA Information Receiving and Dissemination Committee maintains records of births, navjotes (sudreh-pushl), weddings, deaths, and other major events such as graduations, navar and martab ceremonies, and other honors, since the days of the earliest known Zoroastrian settlers on this continent. Please send information (see Journal, May 1991 for details) to: Dr. Rustom Kevala, Chairperson, FEZANA Information Receiving and Dissemination Committee, 16525 Comus Road, Dickerson, MD 20842, tel: (301) 972-7295.

Organizations and individuals publishing newsletters, compilations or commentaries are requested to send one copy regularly to the above address.

The following notices are provided from recent publications of Zoroastrian Associations:

Births
Grant Cyrus, a son, to Ann and Faroukh Arjani of California, on August 29, 1991.
Babraham, a boy, to Delaram and Rostam Kavoosi of Vancouver, B.C. on October 20, 1991.
Nadia, a girl, to Shahrzad and Sorab Irani, in Ontario, on September 5, 1991.
Izad Mehr, a boy, to Gulnaz and Shahjahan Sootodian, in Montreal, in September 1991.
Sabrina, a girl, to Phiroze and Mehrshid Irani of Vancouver, B.C. on November 13, 1991.
Brahnam, a boy, to Mahnaz and Farrokh Firozgari of Houston, Texas, on December 2, 1991.
Tina, a girl, to Munira and Farrokh Siganporia of Chicago, sister to Farrah, on February 7, 1992.
Justin, a boy, to Patty and Farahmand Kadkhodaian, brother to Armand, in Chicago on February 8, 1992.

Navjote (Sudreh-Pushl) Ceremonies
Laila, daughter of Kersy and Delna Dastur, at their home in McLean, Virginia, on October 5, 1991. The Navjote was performed by Dastoor Unwala and Karanjia of New Jersey.

Jamshed, son of Dina and Sheriar Khory of Alberta, Canada, on August 11, 1991.
Dilshad and Urvaksh Patel of the metropolitan Chicago area, in Bombay, on December 20, 1991.
Vinifer, daughter of Nergish Pardiwalla, at the Arbab Rustam Guv Darbe Mehr in Chicago, on August 24, 1991.
Shera, daughter of Vera and Sarosh Bharucha, in Ontario, on July 6, 1991.
Ramin, son of Tehmasb and Manijeh Mandigian, in Ontario, on November 23, 1991.
Shergy and Shahzad, son of Hoshi and Kim Mehta, at the Arbab Rustam Guv Darbe Mehr, in Chicago, on November 30, 1991.

Weddings
Shaheen Kamran, daughter of Khodamorad and Banoo Kamran of Potomac, Maryland, to Jamshid Foroutan of Gaithersburg, Maryland, on September 1, 1991. A party was held at the Moustache Cafe in McLean, Virginia, to celebrate the event.
Yezdi Antia of Germantown, Maryland, was married to Pervin Dholoo of Bombay, in Rockville, Maryland, on September 26, 1991.
Ardeshir, son of Rustam and Gohar Banoo Keypour, to Gita, daughter of Shahriar and Shirin Sotoudehnia of Toronto, on October 24, 1991.
Dina, daughter of Sheroo and Minoo Bhatena, to Khushroo, son of Banoo and Adi Kanga of Bombay, on September 28, 1991.
Khosrud, son of Moti and Russi Bulsara, to Darlin, son of Shirley and Clifford Tooth, in Toronto, on October 19, 1991.
Jemi Nusserwanji Ankesara to Veera Behram Khajotia, in Mississauga, Ontario, on November 17, 1991.
Raymond Bhada and Bakhtawar Elavia were married in Canyon Country on December 28, 1991.

Deaths
Khoshidbanoo Mobedsheh, mother of Meherbai Kaboly-Zadeh and mother-in-law of Aftatoon Kaboly-Zadeh, of Vancouver, B.C.
Sanvar Bavafa, in California. Condolences to the Mavanadadi family.
Rustomji Bhumarga, father of Soli and Hushtasp of Winnipeg and Binaifer Patel of Mississauga, Ontario, in Winnipeg, Canada, on January 18, 1992.
Na'riman N. Guzdar, of Seattle, on December 17, 1991. He is survived by his wife Perin and his three sons Rohinton, Parvez and Yezdi and their families.


Pesi Sukhia, father of Sarosh (and Nancy) Sukhia of the New York area, in Karachi, Pakistan, on September 18, 1991.


IN MEMORIAM

John Engineer

John Engineer, 25, of Vancouver, B.C. was killed in a tragic accident while piloting a twin engine Aztec airplane, in December 1991. A licensed pilot, John was preparing for a career as a commercial pilot, when the tragedy struck. Condolences to his wife Patricia, his uncle Aspy Engineer of California, former Indian Chief of Air Staff, and to his uncle Homi Gilan of Vancouver.

Robe., Baird McClure, 1900 — 1991

Medical missionary Dr. Robert McClure, was a long time, true friend of the Zoroastrian community in Ontario. During his colorful life span, he spent many long years as a missionary doctor in China, worked with lepers in India, and assisted volunteer relief efforts in Burma, the Gaza Strip, Borneo, Peru, Zaire and the Amazon River. Always forthright, he never failed to impress on the Canadian public, the honesty and integrity of the Zoroastrians, and always gave them a reference we would be proud to live up to. Deepest condolences to his wife Amy, his uncle Aspy Engineer of California, and to his uncle Homi Gilan of Vancouver.

ASHTAD KOTWAL of Ontario obtained a Boy Scout merit badge for First Level Religion-in-Life.

DINA DADABHOY, daughter of Pors and Zerin Dadabhoy, was named National Semifinalists for 1991. The Westmont (Illinois) Progress writes: "Dadabhoy is a member of the national Honor Society, president of Key Club, vice-president of Future Business Leaders of America, member of her class board, and member of Peer Helpers. Dadabhoy plans to attend Northwestern University and major in pre-medicine."

NATASHA DASTOOR, daughter of Dolly and Phroz Dastoor of Brossard, Quebec, was one of four young women awarded scholarships of $750 by the South Shore branch of the University Women's Club in 1991. Natasha is pursuing pre-medical studies at McGill University.

EDDY SHROFF received Precinct 3 Star Award from Harris County (Texas) Commissioner Steve Radick for Good Citizenship. [Manashni, Houston, January 1992]