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ISSUES OF THE NEXT GENERATION GROWING UP IN NORTH AMERICA

*Yavanem humanenghem, hvachanghem, hushyothnem,
hudaenem astaya. Yavanem ukhdo-vachanghem astaya.*

*The youth of Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds
Stand firm in the duties of the good (Mazdayasni) religion.
(Such) youth stand firm in the duties of uttering holy words (prayers).*

[Visperad, Karda 3.3, transcription and translation by Dr. Pallan R. Ichaporia]

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EDITORIAL

*Reduce Politics, Increase Respect,
for a Harmonious Future*

It happens everywhere. From student councils to corporate America, politics is a way of life. As human beings we cannot eliminate politics, because it grows whenever relationships and egos interact. Unfortunately, politics exist within religion as well, and sadly enough, the Zarthusti religion is no exception.

We speak of the issues and problems confronting Zarthustis at congresses each year. Yet what do we achieve? Before academicians and scholars present their views, and we struggle to search for answers within ourselves, we must first confront the problem of personal politics. It is the evil prohibiting our search for answers.

Why do we ostracize and gossip about certain individuals for believing in principles they feel are correct and appropriate for the survival of our religion? Why do we place so much of an emphasis on appearance? What happened to the meaning of the word RESPECT?

It is time we stopped forming cliques and gossiping about each other. By doing so we are letting personal differences interfere with progress. If we as a community in North America are to prosper and grow, and preserve the religious identity we all share, we must look within ourselves and stop looking at others.

Let's work together to reduce personal politics within our communities, and then sit down as equals to discuss the issues that we must. Zoroastrianism is based on individuality and free thinking. Having respect for one another is a sign of maturity, no matter how old or young, rich or poor, fat or skinny, Zarthusti or non-Zarthusti, Irani or Parsi, male or female you are!

Jim Engineer

Youth Editor, FEZANA Journal

Address Change

The address of FEZANA, and President Rohinton Rivetna, and FEZANA Journal publisher, Roshan Rivetna, has changed to 5750 South Jackson Street, Hinsdale, Illinois 60521, Tel: (708) 325-5383.

FROM THE FEZANA PRESIDENT

*Strengthening Our Bonds in the
New Year, 1363 YZ*

NAVRUZ MUBARAK! *May each passing year strengthen our bonds and bring us closer and closer together. May we be one in spirit however diverse our thinking and may we together rise as one of the foremost faith communities in North America!*

My prayer and my wish for Zarthustis in North America can be a reality in less than a decade. We have the resources and the potential. We have a glorious heritage, the envy of all. By the grace of Ahura Mazda, we also have the spiritual strength, the moral fabric, and the physical resource, both human and material — in fact there is nothing that we lack!

For FEZANA to be an effective body, it must have a strong financial base. At the present time, many a project has to be denied, and many a worthy need turned away, for lack of funds. Member Associations have directed FEZANA to pursue the collection of endowments from individual donors. Accordingly, endowment funds have been set up for: Welfare, Religious Education, Student Aid, Properties and General. As an affluent North American Zarthusti community, collectively we have the capability to finance our future. We also have the responsibility to share our fortune with our less fortunate fellow Zarthustis. Just a few dollars per month per family would add up fast. A simple proposal by Dr. Rustom Kevala [see below] brings home the power of financial compounding.

Eight years ago, at the Los Angeles Congress, we willed ourselves into existence as a united North American community. We now must will ourselves into working as a team to rise to be the foremost faith community in North America within a decade. Acting individually, we will survive, but collectively, we shall climb those promised heights.

Most exciting to me is seeing our next generation in North America growing up to be such a strong and involved group of exceptionally fine young men and women. FEZANA is working on restructuring the FEZANA Youth Committee, to facilitate the building of an infrastructure within which they can work as a team across North America. This generation of young Zarthustis have excelled themselves in all walks of life. It warms our hearts

to see them at the helm of our organizations, planning and executing momentous congresses, olympics, educational camps, seminars and trips — all with such professional aplomb. With these increased interactions, they are making lasting friendships and beginning to find life partners.

To the youth of North America I say that if you continue on the path you have taken thus far, we of the older generation can pass on the torch with confidence, knowing that in your capable hands it will shine brighter than ever before in our history!

Rohinton M. Rivetna
President, FEZANA

"Life affords no greater responsibility, no greater privilege, than the raising of the next generation."

C. Everett Koop, M. D.
Former Surgeon General of the United States

A Million Dollars for the Next Generation

Current laws in the US allow you to put away as much as \$2,000 per year in tax-deferred Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs). If at the age of 18, you started putting only \$50 a month in such a tax-deferred account that compounded at 12% annually, you would amass \$1,377,000 by age 65! At 10%, you would have a million dollars at age 70. These rates of return are possible today with judicious investments in US and International stocks and bonds. Even the safest US Treasury bonds can return 8 to 10% when managed by a competent investor. Financial planners strongly urge everyone to start saving in such tax-deferred investments as early as possible. The magic of tax-free compounding is truly awesome.

FEZANA, due to its tax-free status, also enjoys the benefits of tax-free compounding. If 500 families donated \$10 or more per month to FEZANA starting in 1994, FEZANA would have over \$1 million in its treasury by Navruz 2005! Sooner, if more families participate. U.S. donors would also enjoy a tax-deduction in their income taxes. This is but one way to provide a solid base for the next generation.

We propose to call the fund raising drive the "FEZANA MILLION DOLLAR FUND" which will compound and be available for use by the next generation. As the fund develops, Trustees will be set up, to manage the funds to obtain the highest rates of return, consistent with safety. It will be the legacy of the first generation North American Zarthustis to the next generation. Zarthustis with investment expertise who would like to help manage the Fund are invited to contact the Chairperson of the Funds and Finance Committee, Kaikhosrow Harvesf, M.D., at (904) 388-3597.

All are invited to participate in this fund to the maximum extent possible. Pledges may be made for one year, five years, or longer periods. To start the ball rolling, the President of FEZANA, the Chairperson of the Funds and Finance Committee and the Chairperson of the Information Receiving and Dissemination Committee, have each pledged \$50 per month.

Your pledges earmarked for the "FEZANA Million Dollar Fund" should be sent to Framroze Patel, Treasurer, FEZANA, 9 South Circle, Woodbridge, NJ 07095. Arrangements can be made for a direct bank-to-bank transfer.

PLEASE ...

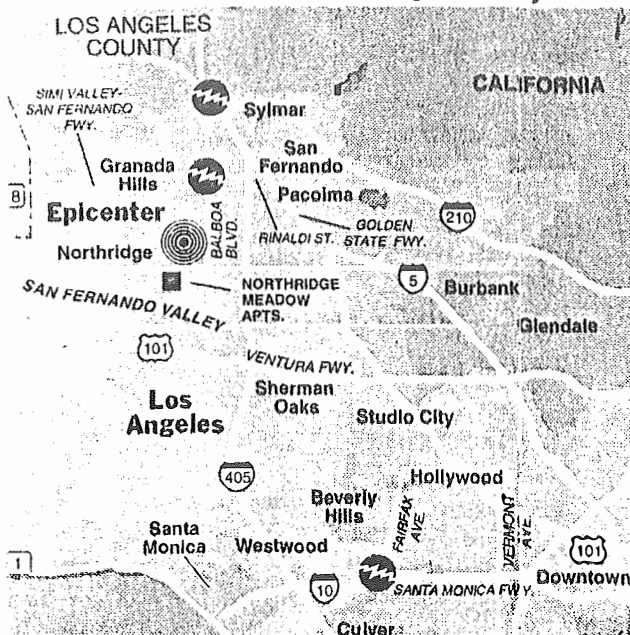
Support the FEZANA Journal with your subscriptions and advertisements.

ON THE NORTH AMERICAN SCENE

Endowed Chair for Indian Studies

The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, D.C. has started an initiative to establish an endowed Chair in Indian Studies. CSIS is considered to be the premier foreign policy think tank in the world today. Its staff of 160 scholars and practitioners work in a dozen program areas that span the globe, but do not include India. India is now the twelfth-largest economy in the world. The increasing importance of India in global commerce now requires a dedicated program area. Once established, the Chair will go far toward improving the political, economic, and commercial ties between India and the United States, and influence the intellectual agenda, and help to focus Washington's attention on India. At present, CSIS has only four endowed Chairs, including a Japan Chair. Contact: Mr. Parameswaran at CSIS, Tel: (202) 775-3184.

Los Angeles Area Zarthusti Families Survive the 'Great Quake of '94



Scores of Zarthusti families were among the thousands who were rudely jolted out of bed at 4:31 am, on Monday January 17, as the violent earthquake (6.6 on the Richter scale) ripped through Los Angeles. They will never forget the thunderous sound of the quake, of glass shattering, walls crumbling and the shock of fear and helplessness as the lights went out and they were plunged into darkness. The "Great Quake of 94", believed to be the most powerful to hit the Los Angeles area in a generation, left large areas of the city without water and power, crumpling freeways, leveling buildings and lighting scores of fires.

The Rustom Guiv Dar-e-Mehr in Westminster, just south of LA, was not affected. About 100 Zarthusti families who live in the San Fernando Valley suburbs of Tarzana, Sherman Oaks, Woodland Hills, Valencia and others, were impacted the most. Of these, the 14 families who live in the Northridge area of the Valley, which was the epicenter of the quake, suffered the greatest damage, ranging from broken glass and china, to severe structural damage to their homes and apartments. Most were without water, gas or electricity for many days. A few homes have been rendered uninhabitable. Many have moved out, staying with family or friends, afraid or uneasy to return. To date, no organized relief effort has been mobilized. If a need is identified, please contact FEZANA.

Many more are suffering 3 and 4 hour commute times to work each day, as the city strives to rebuild crippled overpasses and highways, some of which were among the busiest in the world. With the grace of Ahura Mazda, injuries among Zarthustis have been minimal, mostly bruises and scratches, the most severe being broken knees suffered by an elderly gentleman, during a fall.

The 'Great Quake of 94' has passed, but it has left in its wake, 55 dead and over 20,000 homeless and injured. Damage is estimated to be in excess of the staggering figure of 30 billion dollars. The job of restoring the city will take months and years. But many are just grateful that they are alive and unhurt.

Network Reaches Out to Students

The FEZANA Small Groups Committee is forming a 'Students Network' in North America to reach out to Zoroastrian students who have recently arrived in North America from India, Pakistan, Iran or elsewhere, especially those who may not have family or friends here, and make them a part of our growing community in North America. The Network will help these students get in touch with a Zoroastrian Association, or Group, or family in the vicinity of the school of their choice. Regrettably, the network is not in a position at this time to provide financial aid. Students wishing to avail of this service, who are either already here or are planning to come, may contact Mahrux Motafram, FEZANA Small Groups Committee, 4703 Orange Grove Way, Plam Harbor, Florida 33563, Tel: (813) 785-6409.

Self-Realization Society of Ontario Invites Members

It was some time in 1987, that a devout Zarthusti couple, learned Priest Dinshaw Punthakee and his enthusiastic wife, Narsys, realizing the need to gainfully utilize the precious time of the parents who brought their children to the ZSO Religious Education Classes, were inspired to establish a Society, where the adults could avail of their sincere efforts to bring the deep philosophy of the Zarthusti faith closer to their hearts. Thus was born "The Self-Realization Society of Ontario - Canada".

The Society, which was later granted permission by the ZSO to use the premises at the Mehraban Guiv Darbe Mehr in Toronto, invites "any true Zarthusti, who is willing to follow the Path of

Righteousness" (Asha, Virtue, Purity), with a heroic heart" to participate in the Divine Discourses, on Sundays from 9:00 to 12:00, to partake in the *Humbandagi* and *Chasni*, and "experience the Divine presence of the Lord and Master, and the pure joy of His proximity."

The Society offers a series of five booklets, *Experimental Prototype of the Wisdom of Tomorrow*, which explain the deep philosophy concealed in the scriptures of the Holy Prophet Zarthustra, culminating in the very simple, yet most sacred "Message of the Master". Another series of eight booklets deal with the pure metaphysical aspect of the universal esoteric knowledge, based on the teachings of the Master, and explain how each human can reach his ultimate goal of Self Realization."

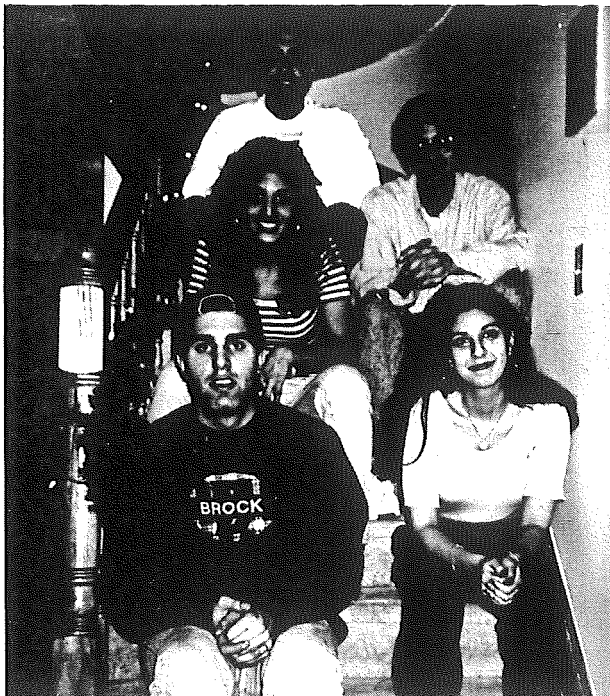
Contact: SRSOC, Meditation Centre, 16 Ravine Drive, Dundas, Ontario, Canada L9H 6K7, Tel: (416) 627-4492.

THE GARDEN OF LIFE

Pure Hearts are the Gardens
Divine Thoughts are the Roots
Humble Words are the Flowers
Noble Deeds are the Fruits!

Fashion Show in Toronto

Fashion Show organizers: (from top) Ron Patel, Rahnuma Panthaky, Khush Panthaky, Daniel Patel and Aban Gazdar.



[Some inaccuracies in the writeup of Fashionation '93 in FEZANA Journal, Winter 1993 are corrected in the report printed below].

A fun filled evening, "Fashionation '93", the first of its kind, was arranged by the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario, and presented by the youth, under the umbrella of the Entertainment Committee. It was with their invaluable support, guidance and cooperation that the show was such a spectacular success. The fashion show, with about 50 models, uniquely exemplified both Western and Indian wear. It was organized entirely, to the last detail, by the youth: Ron and Daniel Patel, Aban Gazdar and Khush and Rahnuma Panthaky.

The five of us especially wish to thank our parents, Cawas and Gul Patel, Sam and Dhun Gazdar and Jal and Meher Panthaky for believing in us and for giving us the love, help and confidence we needed. It was truly a night to remember by all involved, both on and off stage, and by the audience of over 250.

Aban Gazdar
Mississauga, Ontario

Mobedyar Program Offered By Kankash

Six young Zarthushtis, Arash Fooladian, Shahram Khosraviani, Ramin Parsi, Arash Shahzadi, Farhang Shahzadi and Vishtasp Soroushian, have been selected to be candidates for the "Mobedyari" program, recently initiated by the Council of Iranian Mobeds (Kankash). A 'Mobedyar', is an associate priest and will help the Mobeds in performing religious duties. Traditional duties of a Mobed have included performing the various Jashans, Gahambars, Sedreh-Pushis, and other ceremonies. The Kankash realizes that the Mobed of tomorrow accompanied by the Mobedyar, will, in addition, also help conduct religious classes, seminars, camps and correspondence courses, publish educational materials, pursue studies in Zoroastrianism, be role models for Zarthushti youth, and become teachers of Zoroastrianism at local colleges.

Each Mobedyar will take anywhere from six months to three years to complete his training. They will be given a scholarship to continue their religious education and get a degree in religion.

[From Payk-e Kankash, Winter 1993].

Better Health Through Natural Hygiene

Dr. Sidhwa, founder and Director of *The Hygienist*, a journal that promotes better health through natural hygiene, will be in the U.S. to deliver a lecture to the American Natural Hygiene Society, in July 1994. For over three decades, Dr. Sidhwa, noted author and seminar leader, has been involved in teaching "the art of living in harmony with the universal laws of life" to more than 25,000 non-Zoroastrians in the U.K. FEZANA members interested in availing of this unique opportunity to learn more about natural hygiene, and how it can be applied in your life, contact: Meher Dadabhoy Amalsad, Tel: (714) 895-3097.

COMING EVENTS

Invitation to Support 1994 Congress in Philadelphia

Ninth North American Zoroastrian Congress

VALLEY FORGE (NEAR PHILADELPHIA) PENNSYLVANIA

JOIN US

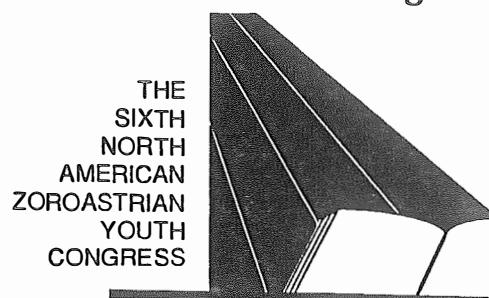
JULY 1-3, 1994

Porus Cooper and Arnavaz Sukhia, Chairpersons of the Publications Committee of the 1994 North American Zoroastrian Congress to be held in Valley Forge, PA, June 30 to July 3, 1994 [see details in this issue], are inviting businesses, Associations and individuals to support the event financially. They write: "To commemorate this event, a beautiful glossy brochure is being printed, in which we hope to showcase a wide variety of businesses and services. May we count on receiving an advertisement for your business? (Ads range from \$50 for a business card to \$2,500 for the back cover) Could we interest you in sponsoring one of our speakers or workshops (for \$1,000)? We promise that your message will be well read, widely received and will become part of a cherished memento in our community, and across the continent. Contact: Porus Cooper, 114 Randle Drive, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034, Tel: (609) 427-4481.

Mobeds Council Annual Meeting

The North American Mobeds' Council will hold its Annual General Meeting on Easter weekend, April 1-2, 1994, in Montreal. All mobeds of North America are invited. Contact: Kobad Zarolia, Tel: (905) 542-9885.

Chicago Plans 1994 Youth Congress



a celebration of zoroastrian education

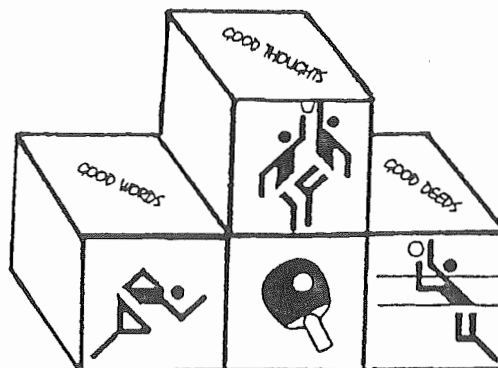
The 1994 North American Zoroastrian Youth Congress is being planned by the youth of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago, in Chicago, August 11 - 14, 1994, at the Marriot Hotel, in Schaumburg, Illinois, near Chicago. Further information is in *Youthfully Speaking* in this issue of FEZANA Journal.

1995 Youth Congress In Northern California

The Zoroastrian youth in Northern California will host the 7th North American Youth Congress in September 1995 (Labor Day), at the Stanford University campus. The Persian Zoroastrian Organization and the Zoroastrian Association of Northern California will be co-sponsors. Contact: Mehran Sepehri at (415) 988-8875.

Young and Old Invited to Zoroastrian Olympics this Summer

The next Zoroastrian Olympics will be held on the July 4th weekend in 1994, in California. All Zarthustis, both spectators and participants, are invited from around the world. Donations to support this effort will be gratefully accepted. Contact: Bijan Khosraviani (408) 226-6030.



AROUND THE WORLD

Delhi Parsi Anjuman Celebrates Parliament of World Religions*Delhi Zarthushtis: at Mahatma Gandhi's Samadhi*

A group of Zarthushtis from the Delhi Parsi Anjuman joined delegates of the conference held in New Delhi by the Inter-Religious Federation for World Peace, in a march from the Red Fort to Mahatma Gandhi's Samadhi. This Conference was a curtain raiser for the Parliament of the World's Religions. One of the speakers was Dr. Homi Dhalla, who also attended the Chicago event.

Zarthushti in Latvia

Russian astrologer Pavel Globa has attracted enough of a following in Riga, Latvia, to open an "Avestan Astrology School" there. His prophesy show, entitled "Flight Over the Abyss", packed one of Riga's biggest concert halls with eager fans. Among his prophesies are: Ignalia Power Station in Lithuania would explode in March or April 1996; and America's 44th President will be the last one and the country will experience a crisis in 2003-2004.

Mr. Globa also announced to the Latvian press: "I am an Assyrian by birth. My faith is Zoroastrianism, the oldest existing religion in the world."

Justice Sidhwa Elected on UN War Crime Tribunal

Rustom Sidhwa of Pakistan, a retired High Court judge, was elected by the UN General Assembly to serve on a tribunal that will try accused war criminals from former Yugoslavia. The court will try

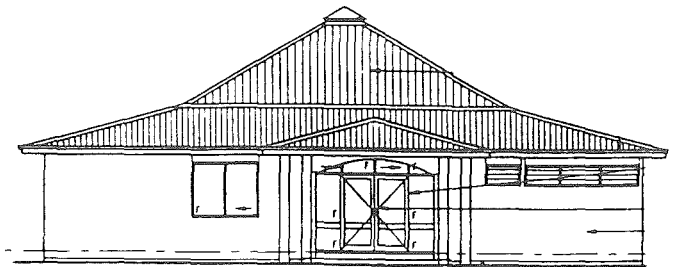
people accused of murder, rape, torture, "ethnic cleansing" and other atrocities committed since 1991, during the Serbian campaign against Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The Pakistan mission to the United Nations lobbied hard for Justice Sidhwa, to obtain a seat on this tribunal. 41 jurists from 38 countries had been nominated. After secret balloting, the 15-nation UN Security Council, established a shorter list of 23 candidates, each from a different country. Of these the 184 member General Assembly elected 11 to serve a four year term on the tribunal. This is possibly the most important legal position in the UN system, after Chaudhry Zafrullah served as a judge on the Hague-based World Court in the mid-Sixties. Justice Sidhwa is the first cousin of Dr. Phiroz Dastoor of Toronto.

[Pakistan Times, August 21, September 18, 1993]

Darbe Mehr Down Under

SECTION A - A



NORTH ELEVATION

Zarthushtis in Sydney, Australia are well on their way towards the construction of their Darbe Mehr. Tenders are being called by their construction engineers. The community has raised a total of \$341,600 to date. Another \$30,586 is still urgently needed. Contact: Gulu Bilimoria, President, Australian Zoroastrian Association of N.S.W., P.O. Box 6154 Shopping World, North Sydney, NSW 2059.

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THE NINTH NORTH AMERICAN ZOROASTRIAN CONGRESS
PRESERVATION OF ZOROASTRIAN CULTURE AT THE TURN OF A GENERATION
Sheraton Valley Forge Hotel, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania
(Near Historic Philadelphia, the City of Brotherly Love)

Preliminary Program

Thursday, June 30 to noon, Friday, July 1, 1994

FEZANA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- Reports by Board Members and Committee Chairpersons
- Discussion of Resolutions and New Business
- Elections

Friday, July 1, 1994

1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

WORKSHOPS:

Women's Forum, Youth, Business and Entrepreneurship, Education

7:00 p.m. to Midnight

Young Adults Social Hour at The Palace of Asia

Saturday, July 2, 1994

9:00 a.m. OPENING CEREMONY

- Invocation, Lighting of the Diva
- Welcome - Mr. Jimmy Bharucha, President, ZAPANJ
- Inaugural Address - Ms. Freny Ranji, Congress Chairperson

9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

SESSION 1- HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF ZOROASTRIANISM FROM ANCIENT TIMES TO SASSANIAN EMPIRE AND THE PERIOD AFTER MIGRATION FROM IRAN

- Doctrinal Variation Within Zoroastrianism in Ancient Iran, *Dr. Jamshed Choksey, Princeton, NJ*
- Middle Persian to Sassanian Empire, *Dr. Pallan Ichaporia, Womelsdorf, PA*
- Zoroastrianism in Exile: Renaissance and Approaching Glory, *Mr. Farrokh Vajifdar, London, U.K.*
- A Youth Perspective of Our History, *Ms. Shahin Bekhradnian, London, U.K.*

2:00 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.

SESSION 2 - DOCTRINES AND RITUALS IN ZOROASTRIANISM

- Doctrines of Zoroastrian Religion, *Mr. Khojaste Mistree, Bombay, India*
- Significance of Zoroastrian Rituals, *Ervad Dr. Jehan Bagli, Princeton, NJ*
- Zoroastrian Rituals and Festivals in Iran, *Mobed Mr. Keikhosrow Mobed, Chicago, IL*
- A Youth Perspective on Doctrines and Rituals in Zoroastrianism, *Ervad Ratansha Vakil, Ledgewood, NJ*

7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Cocktail Hour

8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Banquet, Awards Ceremony and Entertainment

Sunday, July 3, 1994

9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

SESSION 3 - EFFECTIVE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- The Scope and Structure of Religious Education in North America, *Ms. Villy Gandhi, Glen Rock, NJ*
- Filling Our Needs, *Ms. Dina McIntyre, Pittsburgh, PA*
- Zoroastrian Thought and Liberal Education, *Dr. Natalie Vania, Stanford, CA*
- The Future of Priesthood in North America, *Mr. Cawas Desai, Yardley, PA*
- Insight into Our Gathas *Ms. Khurshid Khurody, Cambridge, MA*

THE NINTH NORTH AMERICAN ZOROASTRIAN CONGRESS

THEME
"PRESERVATION OF
ZOROASTRIAN CULTURE
AT THE TURN OF A
GENERATION"

1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

SESSION 4 - FOCUS ON OUR YOUTH

FUTURE OF ZOROASTRIAN COMMUNITY IN NORTH AMERICA

- Report by Chairperson and co-Chairperson of the Youth Workshop
- Dialogue With Zoroastrian Youth

Moderators: Ervad Dr. Jehan Bagli, Princeton, NJ, and Ms. Khurshid Khurody, Cambridge, MA

Panelists: Ms. Shernaz Bamji, Ph.D. Student, Neurobiology
Mr. Farobag Cooper, Music Director, Chicago Philharmonic
Ms. Shenaya Deboo, Student, Politics & Environmental, Studies
Mr. Jimmy Engineer, Youth Editor, FEZANA Journal
Ms. Susan Abadian-Heifez, Ph.D. Student, Political Economy
Midshipman 2nd Class Murzban Morris, US Naval Academy
Ms. Shehernaz Joshi Verahrami, National Law Center, George Washington University

- Mechanisms for Resolution of Issues (Tentative title)
- Dr. Khushroo Shroff, Cherry Hill, NJ

5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Closing Ceremony

- Reports from the Workshop Chairpersons
- Report from FEZANA President
- Vote of Thanks - Ms. Ketayun Kapadia, Congress Co-Chairperson
- Passing of the Torch to the Representative of the Tenth North American Congress

Notes:

- There will be time set aside for Questions/ Answers and Panel Discussion at the end of each Session
- Lunches will be provided on Saturday and Sunday
- Tours have been arranged to:
Atlantic City, July 1 at 5:00 p.m. (cost \$16)
Philadelphia Historic Tour, July 1 at 10:00 a.m. (cost \$17)

Registration:

	Full Package*	Full Time Student	Congress Only	Banquet Only
Before April 30, 1994	\$110	\$ 90	\$80	\$55
May 1 to June 29	\$125	\$100	\$95	\$65
At the Door	\$140	\$110	\$110	

* Full package includes all workshops/ Congress sessions, buffet lunches, cocktail hour, and banquet

Hosted By:

Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania and New Jersey
Mr. Jimmy M. Bharucha, President
179 Wentworth Lane, Rosemont, PA 19010

Congress Chairperson:

Ms. Freny Ranji (609) 854-2251
726 White Horse Pike, Collingswood, NJ 08107

Travel & Hotel Arrangements:

Air Fares: Contact Homi Davier, Capricorn Travels, Tel: (713) 270-5519
A block of rooms have been reserved at the Sheraton Valley Forge Hotel, Tel: (215) 337-2000
at a discounted rate of \$75 per night (four persons per room occupancy).
Baby-sitting facilities available upon request.

COVER STORY

Issues of the Next Generation

Growing Up In North America

In October 1993, FEZANA sent a letter to all associations suggesting that they hold workshops to formulate statements of the issues affecting the North American Zarthusti community, as seen by the youth as well as by the older generation. This would be the first step in prioritizing the issues that we need to start addressing. Reports from associations and some individuals are presented below. Other associations are urged to send in their input for future publication.

ZAGNY Young Zarthustis, Youth and Adults Voice Concerns

The Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York (ZAGNY) celebrated the 16th anniversary of its Darbe Mehr on December 5th with a Youth Seminar. Members of the Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania and New Jersey (ZAPANJ) also came, via a chartered bus. Speakers included Ali Makki (*Application of Gathic Manthras to Our Daily Living*), Dina McIntyre (*The Buried Treasures in the Gathas*), and Prof. Kaikhosrov Irani (*Significance of Ashem Vohu and Ahunavar*). After the talks, three groups were formed to discuss the issues of the next generation: Young Zarthustis, 5 to 13; Youth, 14 to 25; and Adults.



"Young Zarthustis" in discussion at ZAGNY seminar

THE YOUNG ZARTHUSTIS' CONCERNS were presented by Vistasp Soroushian, Kaizad Cama and Nicole Davar. Their main concern is to get correct information in a simple manner. They felt

that the libraries often do not have relevant material, and even the encyclopedias have incorrect information about the Zarthusti religion. They need simple books to explain their religion to their friends. [Mr. Freddy Patel stated that the second edition of *The Religion of the Good Life* booklet is forthcoming, and may meet some of their needs.]

THE YOUTH GROUPS' CONCERNS were expressed by three youth.

Freddy Davar said that the youth were in favor of acceptance and conversion into the Zarthusti faith. "We need every Mazda worshiper we can get", he said. Rather than diluting our faith, they feel that it will give it more meaning if we teach our beliefs to others.

Aysha Ghadiali stated that we must have only one calendar. There is no reason to continue to have three separate calendars because they are being followed in India.

Semoneel Tarapore expressed concern that "We continue to decrease to the point of non-existence." She said that her great grandparents had 8 children, her grandparents had 5, and her parents had 3. She wants to do her part by having at least 3 children (applause)! Other common concerns of the youth are in the areas of customs, dating and marriage. When the Gathas are taught to 13-16 year-olds, often the interest is not there. They want something that deals with their lives now. "Religion becomes important in the mid-20's, when you start thinking about your life."

*Zarthushti Youth:
maintaining
friendships
across
the
country.*



THE ADULT DISCUSSION was led by Lovji Cama and summarized by Rustom Kevala. The concerns can be roughly divided into two areas: preservation of our faith and culture, and fear of assimilation into the American culture.

Preservation of Our Faith and Culture

- We need to preserve our ethnicity, inculcate pride, and keep the young people together.
- We need to be better known in the US through publicity, word of mouth, and distribution of books and literature to schools, universities and libraries.
- Apathy of parents towards the need to spend time, money and effort to teach their children about the religion is a major problem. This eventually will lead to exogamous marriages.
- We need to find ways to make the non-Zarthushti member of a couple feel welcome and thereby keep the whole family from going away to a different religious group.

Fear of Assimilation

- Our ancestors adopted Indian culture to survive, while holding on to their Iranian roots. This kept the Parsis as a distinct minority in India. Will a similar approach work in North America?
- Exclusivity may not be the answer. Exogamous marriages actually give us the benefit of greater genetic diversity, so long as the family adopts Zarthushti religion, rituals and culture.
- Ultimately, we need to come to terms about defining who is a Zarthushti? Are we going to remain an ethnic religion? Can our state of

mind and way of life be preserved through the next generations in North America?

Voice from Northern California

Dr. Natalie Vania reports that the Bay Area Zarthushtis have started a youth group which is meeting regularly. The "Northern California '95 Youth Congress Planning Committee" has met several times at Stanford University to discuss the '95 youth congress. About 40 people have been coming and the group is slowly formalizing into an effective planning team. She says: "What's been especially exciting for us is the chance for Iranian and Parsi Zarthushtis to work together and get to know one another more fully. In February, we will sponsor a "Zoroastrian Fun Night" with activities such as traditional games, youth stories, Zoroastrian Jeopardy, dancing and traditional snacks.

Zarthushti youth here feel a need for more of a forum to discuss (to talk, not to resolve!) their concerns, and hopefully, our activities will help them fulfill this need. Several have particularly wished to explore responsibly, the great host of puzzles they confront in the issue of marriage. Also very high on their priorities is education about the Zarthushti religion, and so it is terrific that the Chicago '94 Youth Congress will address it. I am sure that people here, in time, will come to feel more connected with FEZANA, as they learn more about the fine activities such as the Journal ..."

The ZSBC Workshops

The Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia held two workshops, one for the youth and one for adults. Bella Tata, who coordinated both workshops, writes: "There is so much we have to do to make this community in North America feel

that major concerns will be addressed in one way or another. Decisions are always hard to make. But sometimes we have to make them hurriedly in order to avoid deterioration. I see that FEZANA will have to play a very major, active role, particularly with the dissemination of information ..." The workshops were conducted by Shirin Abadi (youth) and Armaity Hathidaru (adults).

THE YOUTH ISSUES ARE:

Intermarriage:

- They are not welcome once they marry outside the religion.
- They (especially the women) believe that the mobeds refuse to perform their children's navjote once they have intermarried. If men and women have equal status in the religion, why is there a difference between performing the navjote for children of a Zarthusti father versus a Zarthusti mother?

Conversion:

- Unless conversion is allowed (for individuals who prove themselves knowledgeable and worthy of being Zarthustis), the religion will die out.
- The religion is a universal religion. However, there is hesitation when it comes to informing others about our religion, in case they turn out to be interested in converting. Then what?
- Some converts (children of intermarriages) may be a greater asset to the community, since they choose this religion, and are not simply born into it.

Lack of Interest:

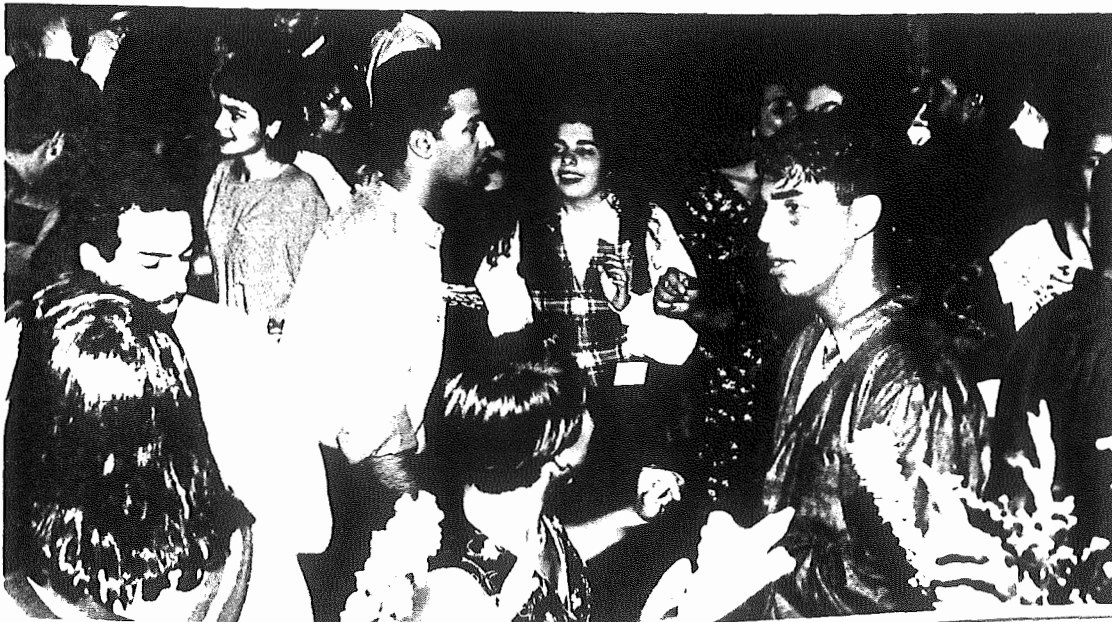
Certain religious aspects are enforced upon them without any given logical reasons. They want to know why things are done the way they are. What are the meanings behind certain rituals. What do some prayers mean? They need motivational speakers to explain things to them, otherwise they are losing interest in the religion.

The youth want answers to these problems. They feel that at any Congress people just talk about the problems without looking for solutions. Many felt that education is the answer to building a stronger Zarthusti community. *We need educators!*

THE ADULT'S CONCERNS ARE:

- *Identity of Future Generation:* Zarthustis should be encouraged to take pride in who we are. FEZANA should promote the awareness of the religion.
- *Education:* Education scholarships for deserving (not needy) children should be set up. FEZANA should have a fund to provide scholarships based on meeting certain qualification criteria.
- *Religious:* FEZANA should establish an Education Fund for training mobeds. Mobeds need not be from a certain class only.

There should be as many full-fledged agiaries as possible with resident Mobeds to attend to the fire, so that families with their children can come as often as they like to pray and strengthen the Zarthusti spirit in their children.



Zarthusti Youth:

Getting to know each other at recent Congress

As it is impractical to get sandalwood from India for our prayers, can FEZANA recommend a substitute in North America?

- *Bonding — Marriages and Intermarriages:* A pen-pal service could be set up by FEZANA within North America so that Zarthusti children and youth can develop long distance relationships and bonding. A computer network was also suggested to achieve this.

Encourage our youth to meet and understand the basic philosophy of Zoroastrianism as related to the realities of life. Everything should be done to encourage marriage within the community and to help people get together in order to form this permanent bond.

- *Business and Entrepreneurship:* A fund should be set up to provide loans to youth to start their own businesses, to encourage the entrepreneurial spirit. Each and every Zarthusti should pay a certain amount on a regular basis to give a helping hand to Zarthustis starting their own business ventures, on the condition that these loans are "repayable" when the business is established.

FEZANA should look into some form of education or a networking system to encourage the entrepreneurial spirit.

ZAPANJ Summarizes Concerns:

President Jimmy M. Bhuracha of the Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, reports the adults' assessment of the issues as follows:

- There is a lack of uniform materials available for religious education.
- How do we identify ourselves as Zarthustis in the US, where most people have not even heard about our existence and religion.
- Matrimony: the children of mixed marriages, whether the father or mother is a Zarthusti, should be accepted as a Zarthusti.

Formal and positive steps should be taken to ensure that our youth of marriageable age have access to each other.

- Make sure we have an adequate number of Zarthusti priests in most geographical areas to perform marriages, navjotes, jashans, and death prayers. Perhaps we need to initiate more youth through the navar ceremony.
- We should have more formal places of worship.

- FEZANA should have more centralized powers and authority to implement social and religious reform for the benefit of the majority.

The youth coordinator, Khushrav Nariman, reports that: "The overall experience of this meeting was a very positive one, as it started the youth thinking about matters that are of relevance to them. We will continue these discussions at the Youth Workshop planned during the 9th North American Congress this year ...". Their concerns are:

- *Interfaith Marriages:* Discriminating between children of a Zarthusti father and a Zarthusti mother is wrong. In fact, the mother's influence is generally stronger than that of the father, and so it is more likely for children of Zarthusti mothers to follow her religion. This issue has global relevance, but it is more urgent in the North American context.
- *Future of Our Religion:* How do we keep our religion alive, especially when our numbers are so small in North America? We face the risk of dying out as a religion if we do not adapt with time and make changes as required to keep our religion dynamic.
- *Maintaining Our Identity:* How do we preserve our identity while still fitting within the larger cultural framework of American society? Rather than religious persecution, complete religious freedom and acceptance by the American society may result in total assimilation and a loss of identity. Historically, the fear of persecution has resulted in the Zarthustis striving to maintain their identity, which has brought them closer.
- *Education:* The youth want to know more about our religion — the significance of its rituals and practices. This is much harder in America because exposure to the religion by way of places of worship and interaction with other Zarthustis is much less than, say, in India.

Wake Up, Fellow Zarthustis

As a young Zarthusti, I have grown up in the Bay Area and find it has really never been any great advantage to be one. We need to consider the future, and not dwell on the past, if we are going to leave our mark on this nation and continent.

The causes and efforts for community improvement should focus on our surroundings here, and not on India, Pakistan or Iran, where our brethren have already established themselves.

If we do not wake up soon, the present generation of young Zarthustis will be totally lost for the future. We need to establish programs here and now that will hold our affiliation to the community.

Some worthwhile examples would be organizing social evenings for the young at our otherwise boring events. Perhaps a game room, so they would go without feeling obligated to do so just to retain the family unity. Another sore point is the total lack of interest in setting up a Scholarship Fund within the U.S. for American Zarthusti youth. Almost every community that wishes to retain its identity has some provisions for assisting its own youth in the pursuit of higher education.

I urge you fellow Zarthusti to wake up before it is too late if you wish to have successful generations of Zarthustis to follow in the footsteps of our forefathers. We exist in a society in which we could totally lose our identity in this giant melting pot that is AMERICA!

Rezwan Pavri
Pleasant Hill, California
[From ZANC Newsletter]

Los Angeles Youth Coordinator Voices Concerns



The Zarthusti community is a drop in the ocean of the American community. For the drop to exist in the ocean, the internal cohesive forces within the drop should be in balance with the external forces from the ocean (i.e. the external forces should never exceed the internal cohesive forces, and vice versa). Some major issues, as I see it are:

Divisions Within the Community: The Los Angeles community has many divisions (e.g. Persian-Parsi, cultural, and conservative-liberal religious divisions). These create subtle but fortified barriers in our community. They do not provide for an open and healthy atmosphere in which the youth can grow. They weaken our community's cohesive forces.

Excessive or Lack of Education: The community must find a way of teaching, but not over- or under-teaching Zarthusti values (i.e. internal cohesive forces) to the youth such that they offset and balance out the American values (i.e. external

forces) the youth learn from various media forms. Currently, Zarthusti values are taught to the youth in one of two ways — excessively (dogmatically) or not at all.

Pride in Our Community: To be proud, but not arrogant, of who you are and where you come from (i.e. internal cohesive forces) is an important tool for you to shape your future. The youth needs to be proud of itself and its forefathers. There is pride within our youth community, however, there is still room for improvement. True unity within our community and a more balanced, Zarthusti education are some of the solutions to this issue.

Aspi M. Jijina
Los Angeles Youth Group Coordinator

Perspective from New Orleans

The Zarthusti community is becoming smaller. Zarthusti girls and boys are marrying outside the community, possibly due to:

- Lack of eligible mates in America; uneven ratio of eligible men and women; many Zarthustis therefore remain single.
- Conversion and adoption are not allowed.
- Children of Zarthusti women marrying outside cannot be brought into the Parsi faith.

Suggested solutions are: Change will only lead to further dilution of our customs and faith. Conversion and adoption of people from another faith is not a good idea. Make your youth aware of problems of inter-racial marriages. Encourage them to mix with others from within the community.

Most Zarthustis do not practice their religion correctly and on a regular basis.

- Zarthustis do not pray regularly.
- They do not pray correctly (i.e. don't cover their heads, etc.).
- They pray half-heartedly, maybe because of pressure from their parents.
- They do not wear their sudrehs and kustis.
- Sudrehs are not made correctly or are being altered for the sake of fashion.
- Some parents are poor role models since they do not wear their sudreh and kusti.
- Prayers cannot be said during each gah.
- Many Zarthusti customs are being lost. The divo, chalk and lobban is not done daily.

- Rules of menstruation are not followed.
- Living in the American society where Zarthusti customs seem strange and different and therefore difficult to practice.
- Lack of knowledge of customs and reasons for following them.
- Controversies regarding the calendar, adoption, conversion and other issues, maybe splitting the community.

Suggested solutions are: Hold classes and educate people regarding Zarthusti customs and the reasons behind them. Instill pride in our faith and religion. Some adaptations may be necessary; adaptations for the good of the religion may be acceptable rather than change for individual convenience. Make changes that will unite the community, rather than divide it. Make changes as a community and not as a personal convenience.

Lack of Priests

- Lack of priests in the Zarthusti community.
- Priesthood is not a profitable profession.
- Priesthood is transferred from father to son in an Athornan family.

Suggested solutions are: Set up a good pay scale for priests. Set up schools where priests are taught not only the principles of the religion, but also, how to impart that knowledge to others. Set up retirement benefits for priests. Teach children to perform ceremonies that can be performed by Behdins (e.g. Jashan). Encourage youth to become priests even part time.

Meher Banajee
Kenner, Louisiana

Thoughts from Houston

Kaemarz Dotiwala and Magdalena Rustomji are the coordinators of the Youth Group (ZYGH) sponsored by the Zoroastrian Association of Houston. Arish Rustomji prepared this report. ZYGH members have enacted and discussed real life situations faced by members. The prevalent issues have been:

- More effective communication with adults.
- Religious education in a language which is understood, and with methods that are age-appropriate.
- Acceptance of families that have married into the religion.

- More opportunities to meet Zarthusti youth in camp-type environments.
- More understanding and mutual appreciation between Irani and Parsi groups.
- Acceptance and encouragement of women into the priesthood.
- Support and understanding of socio-cultural conflicts faced by Zarthusti youth in mainstream society.

At a workshop on January 15, ZYGH used a list of questions to survey the concerns of the group.

List and rank the issues that concern you:

1. Inter-racial marriages.
2. Conversion and prejudices (navjote ceremony not performed of inter-caste marriages, tower of silence forbidden to Parsi women married to non-Parsis)
3. Need for education, understanding of religion.
4. Lack of free discussion and communication, clash between Iranis and Parsis.
5. Low population of Zarthustis worldwide.

One recommendation I would make to FEZANA:

1. Raise money for scholarships.
2. Listen to young Zarthustis.
3. Standardize curriculum for youth, educated people.
4. More Youth Congresses, summer camps.
5. Include birthdays in FEZANA Journal!

What bothers me about the Zarthusti community:

1. Too many social interests, too much gossip, division between Iranis and Parsis.
2. People are prejudiced, inflexible and rigid. Adults do not take youth seriously.
3. 'Zoroastrian' is not the correct name, use 'Mazdi Yasni'.
4. Lack of motivation. Zarthustis do not contribute enough monetarily.

As a Zarthusti, my greatest worry is:

1. It is difficult to meet Zarthustis of the opposite sex.
2. Marrying out of the religion.

3. Non-Zarthushtis not able to convert to our religion, even though our community is dying.

Zarthushtis' greatest strengths are:

1. Close-knit communities.
2. Discipline within religion; high morals, ethics; good thoughts, words, deeds.
3. Good minds (educated community).
4. Adaptability to society.

Pennsylvania Zarthushtis' Concerns

Farhad Cama submitted the report from the Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania. Topics on the minds of the "over-30's" are:

- Need standardized educational literature.
- Need for a home for elderly and retired Zarthushtis.
- Not knowing the value system of the majority of people living in the U.S.A. puts us at a disadvantage. Should we learn more about Christianity, to be able to function in America?
- Because of cultural diversity in America, and lack of Zarthushti religious awareness and activities (rituals), how do we ensure that our children will remain within the Zarthushti fold?
- Children of mixed marriages — are they welcome to participate in Zoroastrianism if they so wish? Do they have the opportunity to do so?

Issues of concern to the "under-30's" are:

- Interracial marriages. Will offsprings be fully accepted? Will spouses be accepted?
- Availability of education of religious issues outside of India.

Report from Chicago

Kamalrukh Katrak submitted the report from the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago. The concerns of the youngsters (upto 18) are:

1. *Sudreh and Kusti*. Teasing from peers complicates 'life' and 'style'. Need more knowledge to explain why it is worn.
2. *Intermarriage, dating non-Zarthushtis*. Limits choices severely. Creates constant resistance from parents and puts heavy strain on friendships. Elders force the issue due to fear of the community dying out.

3. *Reciting prayers without understanding*. Faith cannot take root without understanding. The feeling of *wanting* to pray is overridden by *having* to pray.

The concerns of the Young Adults (17-30) are:

1. *Parenting* by the first generation for the second generation is a challenge. the first generation does not have a clear understanding of the philosophy behind the religion and its cultural evolution.
2. *Religious education*. Apprehensive that our generation will be the cause of the death of the community and religion, due to lack of knowledge about rites and rituals.
3. *Large number of associations cropping up*. The formalities and red tape involved with each association creates more division than togetherness. Communal and religious aspects are lost in the sea of establishment of the association.
4. *Unification of the calendar*. Hearing about is being an issue, but not knowing why, is the cause of frustration. It is on the agenda at practically every congress. The issue needs to be addressed in the context of how it will affect the next generation in North America.

The concerns of the adults (30-60) are:

1. *Decline in population worldwide*, due to cross-cultural marriages, late marriages, and declining opportunities for the youth to meet.
2. *Well-being of Dar-e-Mehrs*. Apprehension that the coming generation will not be able to maintain the standards of cultural and religious ambiance. Consequences will be the loss of belonging, identity and support in times of adversity.
3. *Ignorance of language of Avesta* results in lack of involvement or active participation in religious activities.
4. *Lack of participation in inter-religious and general community activities* makes us seem very restrictive and narrow-minded about prevalent religious and non-religious issues.

The issues of the elders (over 60) are:

1. *Commuting and traveling*. Constant dependence on others. Inability to drive results in loss of independence and curtailment of activities.
2. *Prohibitive expense of health care insurance*.

The Home News

Central New Jersey

PUBLISHED AT NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J.

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By JEFF SCHLEGEL
Medill News Service

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — On the surface, 19-year-old Murzban "Murzy" Morris of Spotswood has it made. College free and a guaranteed job after graduation.

But there's a downside, too. Up at 6 a.m., standing in formation in the early morning hours, strict disciplinary rules, rigorous academic demands and restricted personal freedom. Being a midshipman at the U.S. Naval Academy isn't for everyone. Indeed, it's a mark of Morris' life that he charts his own course.

"You just have to put up with this stuff sometimes," said Morris, a sophomore, or third classman, at the academy. "You get what you want to take from it. I feel good about this place."

Still, early in his Annapolis career, Morris has reason to feel good about this place. Though small compared with most of his fellow midshipmen, mild-mannered and unfailingly polite — you get the feeling he might call you "sir" even if it weren't required by academy fiat — Morris has made the Commandant's List for solid academic, athletic and overall performance. He's also been recognized by his peers and his superiors for his leadership ability.

But Morris is distinguished in another, less evident way: he's a Zoroastrian. "I'm perhaps the first Zoroastrian at the Naval Academy," he said. "I'm certainly the only one here now."

"When I tell people what my religion is, nine out of 10 say 'Zorowhat?'" Morris said. "I get the same initial reaction here, but then people show a real interest in finding out what it's all about."

Zoroastrianism, founded in Persia sometime between the sixth and ninth centuries B.C., eventually found its way to India, where Morris' parents were born. A religion with many similarities to Judeo-Christian philosophy and beliefs, Zoroastrianism is described by Morris as a "religion of the free mind."

By emphasizing the power of good thoughts, good words and good acts, Zoroastrians assume a positive outlook on life and are taught by example to follow the right path. But they don't preach or exhort. The decision to follow the right path rests solely with the individual.

"You're given a mind that should be used through education and learning," Morris explains. "In our temple, there's always a fire burn-

ing. The idea is to make the flame burn brighter. People should get involved, to make things better."

Zoroastrian emphasis on education helped Morris qualify for Annapolis' tough entrance standards, which emphasize strong scholastic achievement, extracurricular participation, and moral character. Only 1,240 men and women were accepted from 12,268 applicants for 1992's incoming class.

Activities helped

Morris' laundry list of activities from his Spotswood High School days — captain of both the soccer and winter and spring track teams, band, Eagle Scout, student council president — is what the academy loves to see. "It helped that I went to a small school," he said unassumingly.

So instead of going to Rutgers University, Carnegie-Mellon or other schools with his friends, Morris chose a different path.

"Some of my friends were a bit surprised," Morris recalled. "They don't expect smart people to give up five years of their life after graduation. Some were confused, some were happy."

Feelings about the military can differ strongly among friends. "In general, the attitude among my friends is good," Morris said. "Some of my friends have personal values and ideas that are different, so we don't bring up the military when we get together. It all depends on what you see and what you value."

But Morris, by his decision to attend Annapolis, clearly values his role and what it represents. "It's like when I wear my uniform back home at the mall," he said, "I no longer feel like a 19-year-old punk, but I get a lot more respect around town than without it. It just stands out."

One slowly changing value making news in the Navy is its attitude towards women. While things have gotten better since Annapolis first admitted women in 1976, "there will probably always be a level of discrimination because of the way people think," Morris said.

But Morris feels this will be less prevalent as time wears on. "With my age group, we've been more accepting of women here. We don't know any other way."

Midshipmen spend a lot of time in classrooms, labs and extracurricular activities, as all students must engage in either varsity or intramural sports. Morris' activities include soccer, volleyball, the martial art aikido and membership in the Japanese-American Club,

which observes and discusses the differences and similarities between Japanese and American cultures.

Unlike weekends that begin at many college campuses on Thursday night, weekends for Morris and other third classmen don't start until Saturday noon. Even then, sophomores only have eight weekends per semester to leave campus and let loose.

Morris wishes he had more free time, but he accepts this as the price for fulfilling his goal of attending Annapolis. "I was 99 percent sure by my sophomore year of high school that I wanted to come here," Morris said.

"I always had admiration and respect for the military," he said. "I like being out on the ocean, and my older brother Kurush is a lieutenant in the Navy and he's the one who pointed me toward the academy," although he didn't attend it himself.

But while most midshipmen yearn to fly fighter jets or command naval vessels, Morris sees a different future, a medical career. The school's emphasis on math and science allows Morris to pursue a pre-med track with his chemistry major.

Goal-oriented

"My goal is to go to medical school after graduation, hopefully at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda (Md.)," he said. "I would like to be a trauma surgeon with the Navy or the Marine Corps."

Failing that, Morris would like to join the Marine Corps as an infantry officer or the Navy as a flight officer or a nuclear surface ship officer.

Morris believes that education at Annapolis extends beyond academics. "The teamwork and support for each other are the most important things you can get from here," he said.

Morris also cites the lessons in integrity, moral character and self-discipline as key components of the Annapolis experience.

"I always had personal discipline, but I was always jumping around doing this and doing that," he explained. "The academy forces you to set goals and priorities."

Being goal-oriented has helped Morris rise to the top of his company class.

"He's definitely recognized as a leader by his classmates," said LT Cmdr. Rodney Adams, the regular officer assigned as Company 5's adviser. "He was chosen to be his class company commander."

In this role, Morris oversees the plebes and all third classmen in Company 5 and is responsible for

making the assignments his class needs to do to achieve its goals.

Even in his home away from home, his sponsor family in Annapolis, Morris stands out. Midshipmen from outside the Annapolis area have a home where they can go with a family in town, a place "where they can talk with people without being evaluated, a place where they can escape from the restrictive environment and intensity of the academy," said Morris' sponsor father, Guy Shampaine.

"Murzy is more level-headed than most midshipmen," Shampaine said.

"Most midshipmen go a little crazy when they get away from that restrictive atmosphere," he said. "Murzy keeps things in perspective. He's more mature, he just kind of chills out and relaxes."

Does Morris have any regrets over giving up personal freedom now and at least five years after graduation?

"I think everyone has second thoughts," he said. "But the longer I stay here the more I realize this is where I want to be."

Peacetime military careers can serve as stepping stones to lucrative civilian positions. But as the Persian Gulf crisis demonstrated, the possibility of war and the requirement to put one's life on the line is never too far away.

"It enters my mind once in a while," Morris said. "Some Zoroastrians say that fighting is wrong, but you have to decide that what you're doing is correct. It's free will, you can't push your views on others and you don't have to accept the ideas of others."

"I can see no wrong in standing up and fighting for your country."



Murzban Morris

As the Youth See It

First World Zoroastrian Youth

The First World Zoroastrian Youth Congress was held September 4-6, 1993 at the Ruston Guiv Dar-e-Mehr in Westminster, California, just south of Los Angeles. The congress was organized and hosted by the Helping Hands Zoroastrian Youth Communications Network Committee of FEZANA, in cooperation with the youth committees of the California Zoroastrian Center, the Traditional Mazdayasni Zoroastrian Anjuman, and the Zoroastrian Association of California. It was attended by over 490 people from Australia, Canada, Germany, India, Mexico, Pakistan, United Kingdom, and the US. By all accounts it was a resounding success.



Congress Executive Board: (Back row) Meher Amalsad, Chairperson, Darius Gandhi, Bahram Goshtasbi, Sarosh Motivala, Arman Sassani and Khushrow Machhi. (Front row) Scheherezade Arash, Behnaz Shahzadi, Kamal Dastur, Ara Anoshiravani, Kashmira Variava, Zubin Gandhi and Zarir Bhandara.

First World Youth Congress is Born

The concept for the Congress was actually aired in 1991 by Meher Dadabhoy Amalsad. In July 1992, a Congress Executive Board was formed to spearhead the project. In November 1992, the Board was expanded to include youth members from the three local southern California associations. Two adults from each of the three associations also participated as mentors and provided guidance, and funds. Meher, chairperson of the Executive Board, writes: Working together as a team with youth and adults actively involved, was an interesting experience. There were times when we did go through roller coaster rides without Disneyland or Magic Mountain, but these have provided us with very valuable and educational insights ... It was not easy, but I commend each and everyone

involved for exercising the spirit of give and take to achieve our ultimate purpose."

The theme of the Congress was "*Unity, Preservation and Prosperity of Zoroastrianism in the 21st Century.*" It started on a very positive and inspirational note gearing towards *prosperity*; then stepping into *perservation*, and eventually focusing on *unity*. It provided an opportunity for our youth to learn something about our Good Religion; and even more important — were able to develop new friendships and strengthen the bonds of old ones. In fact, parting was the saddest part of the Congress for many of the delegates.

The next World Zoroastrian Youth Congress will be held in the United Kingdom in 1996.

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The concept for the Congress was actually aired in 1991 by Meher Dadabhoy Amalsad. In July 1992, a Congress Executive Board was formed to spearhead the project. In November 1992, the Board was expanded to include youth members from the three local southern California associations. Two adults from each of the three associations also participated as mentors and provided guidance, and funds. Meher, chairperson of the Executive Board, writes: Working together as a team with youth and adults actively involved, was an interesting experience. There were times when we did go through roller coaster rides without Disneyland or Magic Mountain, but these have provided us with very valuable and educational insights ... It was not easy, but I commend each and everyone

involved for exercising the spirit of give and take to achieve our ultimate purpose."

The theme of the Congress was "*Unity, Preservation and Prosperity of Zoroastrianism in the 21st Century.*" It started on a very positive and inspirational note gearing towards *prosperity*; then stepping into *perservation*, and eventually focusing on *unity*. It provided an opportunity for our youth to learn something about our Good Religion; and even more important — were able to develop new friendships and strengthen the bonds of old ones. In fact, parting was the saddest part of the Congress for many of the delegates.

The next World Zoroastrian Youth Congress will be held in the United Kingdom in 1996.

Prosperity for Zoroastrians

Aadil B. A. Palkhivala
Washington, USA

[Aadil is currently the Director of "Yoga Centers" in Washington. Until 1991, he had a business law practice.]



We need prosperity in all field of our daily life: mental, physical, emotional, financial, and spiritual. The state of prosperity is reached when there is an inability to feel lack in any part of our being. *Mental prosperity* is the ability to use our minds for creative thought and problem-solving. But we must be

flexible, be able to see other people's viewpoints and instantly make necessary changes in our own viewpoint without compromising our innermost beliefs and values. It requires the achievement of a state of thoughtlessness and stillness in the mind. Rested brains are more creative.

Physical prosperity is achieved by strong, healthy bodies. Most of us have lost the ability to be still for any given time. Physical prosperity demands that we be able to be still at will in our bodies, as well as be at peace in the stillness, so that it is not forced.

Emotional prosperity is achieved when we genuinely care about and love those we come into contact with. When we have *financial prosperity*, we can, at any moment, give away all we have and start again from scratch. Good deeds, Kunashni, Huvareshta, bring wealth.

All the above combined, with the addition of the constant, undeniable, and absolute knowledge that God is with us at every moment and in every thing, is *spiritual prosperity*. When we achieve this, our thoughts, words, and deeds will become Light, Purity, Ashoi. I challenge you to step into your potential. Go deep inside you, and dig and dig ever deeper till you find the reason for your life. I request you to let go of your doubts and fears, and simply and powerfully, live it.

GIFT SUBSCRIPTIONS AVAILABLE

Remember — FEZANA Journal makes an excellent gift for family, friends and students away from home.

Quest for Excellence Through Youth Leadership

Shahriar Shahriari
British Columbia, Canada



[Shahriar holds a Master's degree in mechanical engineering from the University of British Columbia. He is currently involved in projects ranging from development of microwave technology to marketing broadcasting technology in developing countries.]

Webster's dictionary defines 'excellence' as surpassing goodness. One of the many different and independent ways of achieving excellence, is through righteous leadership. In order to lead people, one needs to be sure of his or her own beliefs. These beliefs must be based on a sound foundation of Truth and Righteousness. This is Zoroastrian Leadership. There are many questions that need to be discussed. Let us look at a few.

Should we have a structured leadership or a very loosely defined and fluid leadership, or should we have no leadership at all? What can the past experiences of leadership in our community teach us? Are there any merits in having a centralized

leadership in the North American or global context? Or are we better off with a decentralized and locally oriented leadership? Finally, we need to ask: do we have any natural leaders amongst us? And perhaps most importantly, as individuals, can we muster the leader within us?

Zoroastrian Youth in Motherland Iran — Preserving Zoroastrian Identity in Volatile Times

Mandana Mehryeen
Tehran, Iran

[Mandana earned a BS in Architecture from Tehran University in 1990. She is active in many Zarthusti activities and belongs to the Zoroastrian Youth Association (Kanoon Javanan) and Fravahar Organization.]



Young Zarthustis in Iran are very proud of their beliefs and customs. They are constantly striving to learn more about their religion and participate further in their community. However, in a politically volatile time, and a religiously oppressive environment, it is very difficult to operate and maintain comprehensive and continuing Zarthusti youth activities.

The Community in Iran.

Information gathered by Rashid Shahmardan indicates that the total Zarthusti population in Yazd, Kerman, Tehran, Shiraz and the rest of Iran around 1850 was a scant 8,000. It is impressive that even then, the Zarthusti communities had a higher literacy level (about 42%) than the rest of the population. Perhaps the first Zarthusti organization to save and help the community in Iran during that time was established in 1855 by Maneckji Sahib from India. He and other dedicated Zarthustis initiated cultural and social activities. By 1891, there were over 10 schools devoted to Iranian youth by Zarthustis. In that year, the population was about 9260. The population stabilized during the following decades, and their activities and numbers grew steadily. By 1963, it exceeded 17,000. It may be assumed that this growth has continued during the last thirty years, reaching a high of 18,000.

Youth Groups in Iran. These have been active in Tehran for about 20 years, and in the small towns of Kerman and Yazd, for at least 200 years. During difficult times especially, youth groups have been a nucleus for coping with external and hostile pressures and reiterating Zarthusti devotion. The largest such group, Sazman Javanan of Fravahar, is supported by experienced members with a life-time commitment. Its most important contribution is religious classes for students 7 - 18.

Preserving Zoroastrian Identity: Having worldwide communications among Zarthusti organizations in different countries is essential. This could be achieved by creating an International Zoroastrian Center, which would be in touch with other scientific and cultural international organizations.

The ultimate goal is to bring together the young and determined Zarthustis with new talents and ideas. This will foster unity among all Zarthustis, and will indicate that we are an active, successful, and noble community, on our way towards a radiant future for the benefit of posterity.

What Makes You a True Zarthusti, and Is Zoroastrianism Different from Other Religions?

Nawzer J. Mistry
Ontario, Canada

[Since the age of two, Nawzer has lived in cities across Canada, Portmoresby, Papua New Guinea, and Brindisi. He received the Presidential award for scholastic achievement after graduation from the Defense College near Brindisi. He has a degree in Architecture from the Technical University of Nova Scotia. He enjoys model-making, drawing, reading, music and traveling.]



While the concept and process of blending into a larger host community may appeal to some individuals, we need not accept all the thoughts, culture, ideals, and conventions of the larger, in this case "western" civilization and consequently lose our identity. By the same token, wherever and whenever possible, the word "Zoroastrian" should be replaced by the correct term "Zarthusti".

But who is a true Zarthusti? If someone were to read some books and articles about our religion, and believe in Humata, Hukhta, Huvareshtha, do they become Zarthusti? If someone were to practice the virtue of charity, do they then become Zarthusti? Is charity the lone hallmark of a Zarthusti? Are we the only philanthropic community? How is our religion uniquely special, different? Is it the respect we have for all the other religions, considering them to be equal but distinct? Since all the religions are equal, then is there anything to be spiritually gained by changing the name of one's own religion?

If our ancestors had lost faith and converted to other religions they might have had much easier lives. If their survival, and that of the religion could have been assured by simply discarding unnecessary outward symbols of the faith, would they not have done so? Our traditions and rituals consisting of prayers and wearing of the Sudreh and Kusti are fundamental to our religion.

It is not only the virtues of charity, the concept of ecology, and the practice of *Humata, Hukhta, Huvareshtha* that are unique to the Zarthusti faith. It is also the practice and preservation of our unique traditions and rituals of sudreh kusti, concept of purity, not proselytizing and practicing religious ceremonies such as *Dokhme-nashini, Nirangdin* and *Ijeshne* among other things which set us apart as Zarthustis.

Unity and Preservation of the Zarthusti Community in the Twenty-First Century

Farishta Dinshaw
Karachi, Pakistan

[Farishta was sponsored by the Karachi Zarthosti Banoo Mandal. She is involved in introducing environmental education in schools. She also teaches religious classes for 10 to 14-year-olds at the Friday School for Little Zarthustis. She has published a book for children: *Thar Ki Ek Larki (A Girl from Thar)*.]

In the last half century, the socio-cultural identity of Zarthustis has altered considerably, to a great extent, because of the large numbers of Zarthustis emigrating to the West from Iran, India, and Pakistan. This change cannot be compared to the one that took place over twelve hundred years ago, when Zarthustis fled Iran to seek refuge in India, because today the basic motive for resettling in a foreign land is not freedom from persecution but economic prospects.



Just as the Irani Zarthustis became Parsis in India, a new breed of Zarthustis has emerged in the West, with a distinct life style of its own. As they assimilate into the fabric of any nation, they adopt their customs, language, costume. However, we cannot afford to integrate totally — unless we want to lose centuries of heritage. Somehow, in some

way, we have to find the means to unify this widely dispersed community if we are to preserve its distinctive individuality in the centuries to come.

Communication is the key to unifying this widely dispersed community. This is not too difficult in this era of satellite transmissions and computer networks. But we need a centralized world body that will network with Zarthusti associations throughout the world and act as a clearing house of information. Some of the functions of such an organization could be:

- Maintain a directory of names and addresses of Zarthusti organizations throughout the world.
- Compile a global census, with annual updates.
- Maintain a reference library of publications on the Zarthusti religion, history and community.
- Produce a global newsletter.
- Commission books and films on Zarthusti religion and history for worldwide distribution.
- Establish a Zarthusti museum, for relics and artifacts that bring life to dull facts in history books.
- Facilitate seminars, sports events, art exhibitions, traditional *nataks* and other such activities.
- Organize summer camps for Zarthusti youth.
- Raise funds for and share expertise with needy Zarthustis.
- Raise funds for medical, archaeological, and other research, especially in diseases to which Parsis are susceptible.

The logistics of forming a world body will naturally need to be worked out. I do not see it happening overnight. It is always easier to say that "This should be done" and "That should be done". So, instead of passing on the responsibility onto someone else's shoulder, on behalf of the Karachi Zarthusti Banu Mandal, I volunteer to act as a link with the Zarthustis of Karachi, Pakistan.

The Role of Education in the Consolidation of Zoroastrian Identity in the New World

Rashna Writer
London, U.K.

[Rashna was born in Calcutta, India. She received a Ph.D. in International Relations from the London School of Economics in 1979. She received awards as a British Commonwealth Scholar in 1972, and as a Fellow of the British Institute for Persian Studies in 1987-89. Her recent book, *Contemporary Zoroastrians, an Unstructured Nation*, [see Book Review, this issue] was published by the University Press of America in late 1993. She has been interviewed on the BBC World Service, and on the French and German media.]



Education will play a central role in ensuring community unity and in preserving its identity in the fast-approaching 21st century. Education implies an acquisition of knowledge and understanding of the Zoroastrian heritage — its ancient roots, its long and illustrious history, and its greatest contribution to mankind, viz. the teachings of our Prophet Zarthustra. Awareness of our antecedents will engender self-awareness as a people.

It is the absence of this self-awareness, our having lost touch with who we are, which is one of the chief causative factors in the present malaise besetting the community. After nearly a thousand years, Iranian and Parsi Zarthushtis living in North America, Europe and Australia, are being reacquainted. But while we attempt to bridge linguistic, cultural, social and religious distances that have sprung up between Parsi and Iranian, the magnetic influences of American/Canadian/British society wait to fill the void. Quite naturally, the young are the most susceptible to these outside influences. The best way to circumvent a possible exodus of our youth from our community is to educate them in the intrinsically Zarthushti heritage which will engender a Zarthushti ethos in them. This will, over time, consolidate community identity and lay the foundations of a secure future for our small group into the next century.

Iran and India, which have been the main centers of Zoroastrianism over the past thousand years

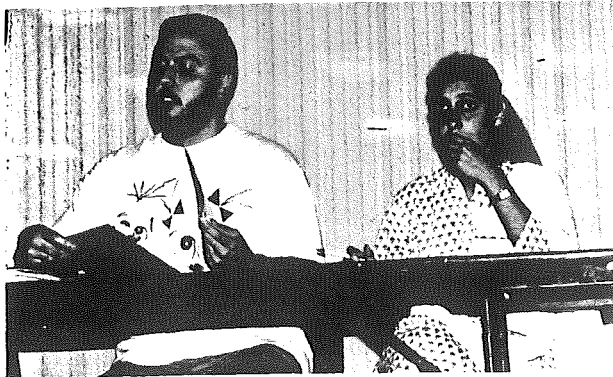
are fundamentally different cultures. Hindu India and the subsequent British *raj* with its Christian overtones have left an imprint on the Parsi minority. Similarly, the various Muslim dynasties that have presided over Iran have more by way of compulsion and mockery curtailed the full expression and practice of their faith by Iranian Zarthushtis. The Parsis of India emphasized ritual observances which gave them a sense of cohesiveness and community. The Iranians clung to their sense of history and their links with the very soil of Iran to help them through the difficult centuries.

The process of migration to North America and elsewhere will result in further re-interpretation of tradition. The Zarthushti religion, it can be assumed, will be altered in time. The community will have to undertake critical analysis of its traditions in light of their new environment. This, in turn, will be influenced by their perception of how the world views them.

My research appears to show fairly conclusively that the older Zarthushtis, both Iranian and Parsi, carry with them a heavy baggage of cultural prejudices. Right now, there is a danger that these are being conveyed to their children. The Zarthushti community in North America is estimated at 10,000 souls. A further subdivision of that into small factions of Parsis and Iranians makes it an arithmetical nightmare of diminishing numbers. There is no option: Parsi and Iranian Zarthushtis must come together; talk together, and build together for the future. They do not have the luxury of failure.

There are at least four different but complimentary methods of addressing ourselves to the question of bringing Zarthushti education to Zarthushtis. The first is the establishment of education classes for religion, history and language. Second, given the dispersal of our community throughout the world, correspondence courses should be developed. Third, since we live in an audio-visual age, the few talented Zarthushtis amongst us should be supported to put on film dramatized episodes of the *Shah Nameh*, for example, or the lives, achievements, etc., of specific Persian kings and Zarthushti men and women to implant a sense of pride, especially in our young. And fourth, we need to train trainers. Our Anjumans and private funding bodies ought to encourage the intellectual pursuit of Zarthushti studies so that a generation of Zarthushti teachers may be produced to go out and teach in their turn, their co-religionists.

No doubt, changes will occur. The practice of Zoroastrianism will alter to fit in with the local surroundings. But the essentials of Zoroastrianism, of this most splendid heritage we are so fortunate to be in possession of, will be retained, so that future generations yet to be born may inherit what is their right. Let us not shy away from the task of re-educating ourselves of our heritage as a means of safeguarding our future.



On panel: Deboo (U.K.) and Khurody (U.S.A.)

Close Encounters With Education of a Zarthustrian Kind

Malcolm Minoos Deboo
London, U.K.

[Malcolm has lived in London since 1969, and currently serves as the honorary librarian of the Zoroastrian House in London. He is a member of the team which started the Zarthustrian Education Project in the U.K. in 1990. In 1992 he received the Dadabhai Naoroji Centenary Medalion for promoting religious education.]

Our community today, on the eve of the 21st century requires both sexes to be knowledgeable in our religion, heritage, and culture; thus ensuring unity, preservation, and prosperity into the 21st century and beyond. We are declining not due to lack of numbers, but due to limited knowledge of our 3 R's: Religion, Roots and Racial Identity.

Take the issue of conversion and intermarriage. After debating it a 100 years, we have not reached a concrete decision because we do not have a mechanism or a governing structure to ensure that we reach a satisfactory conclusion. Take the issue of the calendar. 99% of our community knows that we have three calendars, but over 95% do not know the names of the days and months and their significance to Zarthustrianism.

With single-minded determination and perseverance, we can reverse this decline within one

generation. All of us, including our parents, need to have *Close Encounters with Education of a Zarthustrian Kind*. We as a community must undertake a three-phase objective and name it "*Operation Humata, Hukhta and Huvereshta*." *Operation Humata* would educate young people upto age 16 on the basic tenets of our religion, heritage and culture. Classes must be scheduled on a weekly basis. *Operation Hukhta* will be the intermediate phase, concentrating on ages 16-21. This is the vital age group that needs to be able to confidently answer questions on our religion, heritage and culture and ultimately defend Zarthustrianism intellectually.

Today's youth are tomorrow's parents. The education must include not only the Gathas and Kusti prayers, but also cuisine, music, and art, which are unique to our community. Lastly, *Operation Huvereshta* is the advanced phase of Zarthustrian education, aimed at the over-21's. This will provide us with intellectuals and visionaries to carry out the necessary revitalization of the Zarthustrian religion. And even the over-40's must be educated because not only do they form the current leadership of our Anjumans, but they, as grand-parents can help educate our new generation, thus continuing the cycle. We must also include the non-Zarthustis in this education, because we need them to have a better understanding of our manners and habits to allow us willingly to prosper and perpetuate in their midst.

Zoroaster on Education

Khursheed N. Khurody
Massachusetts, U.S.A.

[Born in Bombay, Khursheed went to boarding school in Stowe, England; then back to India for a year of social and community projects. She has B.A. from the University of San Francisco, during which time she won an award from State of California for social service to Vietnamese refugees. Khursheed is currently at Harvard University, concentrating in South Asian literature.]

3,000 years ago, the Prophet Zarthustra brought forth a profound vision consisting of a new world view and a new way of life. His teachings and moral philosophy encompassed many ideas; education was prime among them. We know of Zarthustra's teachings through the Gathas. Through them, we learn of Ahura Mazda, creator of all that is good, and of his Holy Spirit, Spenta

Mainyu, who is distinct and yet one with God. We learn of Asha, the universal Truth, in accordance with which existence evolves in perfect harmony. And we learn of Zarthustra's three-fold ethic of Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds.

Wisdom and enlightenment are a critical part of Zarthusti theology and philosophy. Education must 'enlighten', that is its primary purpose. "Listen with your ears to the best things", says Zarthustra [Ys.30.2], "Reflect with a clear mind, man by man for himself, upon the two choices, being aware to declare yourselves to Him before the great Retribution (the time of Final Judgment)." Also [Ys.30.7] he says, "To this world He (that is Ahura Mazda) came, with the rule of good thinking and of Truth..." Thinking and reflection, essential to education, are called to attention again and again. The ethico-religious system of Zoroastrianism is one of the earliest attempts to stress the importance of thinking and learning. Thus the responsibility of educating oneself lies at the very heart of the Zarthusti faith.

Zarthustra's religion is marked by its simplicity and timelessness. The divine plan of achieving perfection is both individual and universal. Therefore, our task in life is to listen to our innermost self, think, reason, reflect, and learn. In short, our task is education — both individual and universal.



Homavazir, Shahzadi and Damkevala: on panel

Promoting Unity, Preservation and Prosperity in the 21st Century

*Armaity Homavazir
Ontario, Canada*

[Armaity, 20, is studying at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario. She is involved in an Earth Action group and an Indian Society. She plans to start a Dinosaur Appreciation Club, more than just the Jurassic Park experience!]

In order to be proud of our identity and ancestry, we must raise the level of awareness amongst us. Priests are the backbone of any religious establishment. As a community, it is critical that we support our priests. We should allow training for young Zarthustis who are spiritually and mentally inclined to become priests, and not only for those born into the priestly family. A priest should be a well trained individual with skills and ability to advise community members in spiritual and religious matters.

Religious education must begin at home. Simple things like having the family pray before meals, Jashans at home, and celebrating festivals in traditional manner can cultivate an interest and respect for religion. Parents should strive to bring their children to religious events on a regular basis. Standardized textbooks on prayer and practice are needed for all ages.

To promote awareness within our community and the North American society, we must hold a Zarthusti History Day. We must actively pursue unity and integration between our Parsi and Irani Zarthustis. Both groups are rich in culture and teach one another a great deal. In some families, grandparents and grandchildren are no longer able to communicate because the children cannot speak the mother tongue. At least one language other than English must be spoken at home. How can we preserve the unique essence of our past if we cannot even speak our own languages?

Ironically, we have been inclined to change the most in environments where we have been pressured the least. Now is the time to decide. Should we maintain our ancient practices or adapt to other cultures? We must focus our energies inward to reestablish our old traditions. Let us unite and show the world what it is to be a Zarthusti.

Youth Organized to Unite New Generations

*Farhang Shahzadi
California, U.S.A.*

[Farhang, 19, a biology major at University of California, Irvine, is a founding member of Sigma Pi fraternity, and plans on becoming a dentist. He plays an active role as an editor of Payk-e-Kankash, and is a coordinator at the Kankash religious camps.]

The Council of Iranian Mobeds (Kankash-e-Mobedan), is playing an important role in uniting

and educating Zarthusti youth of North America. Semi-annual camps and one-day seminars have been held in Orange County, as well as in the scenic Dar-e-Mehr in San Jose. The camps are structured to bring the children together in peaceful, natural surroundings. The San Jose Dar-e-Mehr is secluded on a mountain top; this is perhaps symbolic of Asho Zarthust's seclusion in his quest for knowledge.

Total cooperation is necessary between the children, who are encouraged to help in cleaning up and preparing the meals, in addition to religious classes. Team sports and activities are part of the agenda. All Zathustis, not just Iranian, are welcome. The language of the camp is not Farsi, but English. Seminars cover the same material as do camps, but the class material is condensed into a single day instead of a week. Usually, classroom activities are followed by some type of group activity such as bowling or miniature golf.

The Council also provides books, correspondence courses, and prayer tapes and is always available to the Zarthusti community to perform religious services and provide answers to the tough questions facing the religion today.

I am proud to be a Zarthusti and I will put forth great effort in helping my religion succeed and prosper. I cannot achieve this goal alone, and depend on organizations such as the Kankash, to ensure a bright future for all Zarthustis.

An Epiphany

Diana Damkevala

Illinois, U.S.A.

[Diana is a sophomore honors student in Political Science and History at Northern Illinois University. She is a student advocate in the University Judicial office, and an active member in the Residence Hall Association and the University Honors Committee. She also volunteers her time to an adult literacy program, the county women's abuse shelter, and the DeKalb County Nursing Home. When home in Naperville, she is an active member of the Chicago Youth Group.]

My faith is anchored deeply in the Zarthusti religion. I was born and raised in the U.S., surrounded by the upper middle class families who were lucky if they went to church on Easter or the synagogue on Yom Kippur. It was not until I was detached from this safe setting and in my first year of college, that my religion was finally challenged.

My best friend in college is a staunch Catholic. We share many of the same values: we are both very close to our families and friends, and we both have faith in our religions. It is the strength of our convictions that prompted many discussions on the similarities and differences between our religions. Both religions share a deep love for humanity and the environment, the concept of good prevailing over evil, and the idea that the soul is immortal.

Moving on from these points, we began with the basics — defining God, religion, and prophet. To the Catholic, God is love; in Zoroastrianism, God is justice, truth, righteousness and light (we know this from the Law of Asha). To the Catholic, religion is based on faith and faith alone; in Zoroastrianism, religion is based on faith and good acts. Jesus Christ was God in human form; Zathustra was a messenger of God.

We both began to question our religions. We were so scared that we decided to end our discussions on religion because we wanted to maintain our spiritual connection with God without interference and doubt. But in doing so, I realized that my faith was stronger than it had ever been. In defending my religion, I learned the beauty of the philosophy of moral dualism, free choice, and justice; that the Zarthusti life is a life of action and a strong sense of duty; the Zoroastrianism unites body and soul; that Zoroastrianism outlines the attainment of perfection through the Amesha Spentas; that the aim of Zoroastrianism is to achieve happiness. I realized that any type of faith that goes unquestioned is blind.

The goal of a Zarthusti is to be illuminated and enlightened. I believe my discussions with my friend have lit that spark. They gave me insight, intuitive understanding, *epiphany!*

IN COMING ISSUES ...

Themes for future issues of the Journal are:

Summer: Jun 1, 1994: "Zarthusti Way of Life: beliefs, rituals and aspirations"

Fall: Sep 1, 1994: "Zarthusti Women: past and present"

Letters and articles are invited. Submission deadline is Apr 1 (for Spring issue) and Jul 1 (for Summer issue).

Youthfully Speaking

*Generating Dialogue, Communication and Networking
among Zoroastrian Youth in North America*

Listening & Respecting are keys to continuity

by Jim A. Engineer
Editor

I am glad to see an issue of the FEZANA Journal dedicated to youth. I am grateful to Sheriar Sheriari for submitting an essay to the Journal that presents the Zoroastrian way of life in North America in a unique, innovative and meaningful way. I am also excited about a community in New Orleans, La., that wants to inform the rest of the Zoroastrian community in North America about its activities, goals and the challenges it faces. But remaining positive and optimistic should not cloud the vision and issues at hand. I wrote an editorial on page 2 of this publication that clearly indicates the way I feel as a Zoroastrian youth in North America. Although everyone has an opinion, I would like to know how many people share in my sentiment.

I feel personal politics and a general lack of respect for another person's point of view tend to drag communities down, prevent-

ing positive change and increasing red tape within a system. Additionally, I feel many influential leaders within our religion have lost the meaning of the word "respect," not for the youth, but within their own circle of influentials.

In reading Shariar Shariari's *Bear Consciousness* essay, the word "listen" bears strong meaning. Without listening to others we can not formulate educated opinions on complex issues, our judgment becomes clouded and one-sided, and we

end up losing respect for one another.

These are some of the things I think we youth should think about as we prepare for the 6th North American Zoroastrian Youth Congress in Chicago. Adults attending the Ninth North American Zoroastrian Congress in New Jersey should also listen and respect one another as well. An absence of these basic human attributes will clog our communities with confusion, red tape and a frustrated next generation. ■

Chicago Youth Congress Speaker Topics

Meaning of Zoroastrian ceremonies (Jashan, Navjote, Wedding, Death)	Assimilation of Zoroastrianism to a North American culture
Symbols: Fire/light, Farohar, Sudreh/Kusti, Topee	
Translations of daily prayers	
Zoroastrian holidays	Differences and similarities between Parsi/Irani cultures
Influences of Zoroastrianism on other religions and how other religions have influenced Zoroastrianism	
Priest continuity - Navars in the U.S.	Evolutionism vs. Creationism - What do Zoroastrians believe in?
	Miscellaneous - Speaker may submit subject of own choice for consideration

Youthfully Speakin' G

*Generating Dialogue, Communication and Networking
among Zoroastrian Youth in North America*

6TH NORTH AMERICAN ZOROASTRIAN YOUTH CONGRESS

CHICAGO!



"A CELEBRATION OF ZOROASTRIAN EDUCATION"

Proudly hosted by the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago

Speakers

The organizing committee is currently accepting applications for speaker positions at the Congress in the form of synopses and outlines for review.

Requirements:

- o 15 - 20 minutes in length
- o Understandable to youth
- o Based on **one** of the subjects listed on the preceding page.

Moderators

The organizing committee is currently seeking moderators to facilitate discussions at the Congress.

Please review the following requirements to be a moderator before submitting a letter of application:

- o Under 35 years of age
- o Articulate
- o Creative
- o Diplomatic
- o Knowledgeable of current Zoroastrian issues

Advertising

Program advertising is now available to interested businesses, contributors, community organizations, and anyone looking to make their services or themselves known. What better way to reach the Zoroastrian youth community in North America! available rates:

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Youthfully Speakin'G

*Generating Dialogue, Communication and Networking
among Zoroastrian Youth in North America*

Bear Consciousness

*The following is an essay submitted to
Youthfully Speaking from Sheriar
Sheriari of Vancouver, Canada.*

Once upon a time, in a deep jungle there was a community of bears. They lived happily for a while, until the jungle began to get hotter and hotter. The global warming was having its effect.

A group of bears got together and decided to migrate to a cooler forest further north. So they decided on a date, packed their belongings and moved to the new forest. The forest was far from any human community, so there was no chance of any child wandering into their house and eating their porridge or sleeping in their bed.

A few years later, when the cubs had grown and become teenagers, they started doing their own things. They started moving around in the forest and playing with other animals. They made friends with lion cubs, and tigers and hyenas, and even with snakes and bees. They did things that worried their parents considerably.

Initially, the papa bears and mama bears kept quiet and accepted things, because they were worried that their teenage cubs may not listen to them and may reject them altogether. However, after a while, in some of the parties and gatherings, papa bears and mama bears started sharing some of their concerns with each other.

Also by this time, the population of the bear community had grown substantially, because other bears from other jungles had migrated to this cooler forest and started to settle down with the original immigrants.

One day, some bears decided to form a society which they called the "Bear Society" (BS for short). They started to organize social gatherings and get together. Sometimes their cubs would attend, other times they would just go off and do their own things.

The members of BS decided that to attract the interest of the cubs, they should organize special events just for them, and sincerely went about doing so. This was very good and many cubs attended. They met a lot of other bear cubs and made lots of friends. After a while the cubs decided to form their own club which they called "Cub Club" (or CC for short).

Brian who was a young cub, became an active member of the CC and helped a lot to get the cubs together and do things they all enjoyed. But he noticed that after a while, BS members who were very impressed with the success of the CC, decided to use it to educate the cubs about the bear way of life and bear beliefs.

Gradually, there was a shift in the activities of the CC and many of the cubs, including Brian lost interest. The CC declined drastically, and the cubs separated into their own small groups. BS members got very concerned that because of the decline of the CC, they may never be able to

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Bear Consciousness

gather the cubs together, and the bear community as they knew it would die.

In the meantime, the cubs who had now become young adult bears, went about with lions and tigers and other friends they had made in the forest.

One day papa bear and mama bear were invited to a dinner party at a friend's house, and they asked Brian to join them. Brian who was away from the bear community for some time, agreed. After dinner everyone began discussing the CC and the cub problems. The discussions continued for nearly an hour, and everybody was commenting on what were the problems of the cubs, what were the solutions, and why these solutions have failed in the past. Brian very patiently listened to all the discussions until they finally ended. He realized that although was the youngest bear in that party, not one bear asked him about what Brian thought were the problems, or if he had any solutions.

On the way back home, Brian was thinking to himself that this was exactly the problem of the BS. Although everyone discussed the problems of the BS and CC intensely and sincerely, not one bear thought of asking the cubs to define their problems or come up with solutions. Brian was thinking that if they are not willing to ask or listen, then how in the forest are they going to solve these problems?

This thought had consumed Brian until he

decided it was time to take action. He called some of his old CC friends and got a small group together. They decided that they would attend the next Bear Seminar organized by BS and voice their opinions.]

At the BS seminar all the now elder bears were pleasantly surprised at this resurgence of Cub interest, and were excited that this was going to be a good seminar.

After some formalities, somebody suggested that since so many cubs were present, they should discuss the cub issues. In their excitement, all the bears unanimously agreed. After some initial discussions, one of the bears suggested that they should ask the cubs what they think. Brian thought to himself 'at last they are asking, but now the question is are they also listening? and perhaps most importantly, are they willing to trust us to leave our problems to us to solve with our own solutions?'

Brian got up and started to tell the bear assembly about some of his experiences. He said:

'As I understand many of you are concerned that the cubs are not living the way you used to in the old jungles. You are also concerned why we are all drifting away from our community and making friends with our enemies the lions, the tigers and the cobras. You are concerned that we have become selfish and only think of ourselves, that we are apathetic and don't care any more. We understand your desire to rectify these situation.

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'We also understand that your efforts in helping us are frustrated, and in spite of all the energy and good intention that you put into it, you are not getting anywhere. Even perhaps things are getting worse day by day.

'I remember the initial days of the CC and how successful it was. I remember how I met many of my friends who are here today, at those meetings. I remember all the fun that we had together. I also remember how things began to deteriorate, because you wanted us to live as you thought we should.

'Well, today I want to share some of my thoughts with you. You may or may not agree with them, but I am asking you to listen to them. I mean really listen to them.

'The forest that we live in today is not just another jungle like the ones you used to live in. The old ways may or may not be applicable here. You want us to be cautious about our old enemies, the lions and the tigers. You want us to go on picking berries, catching fish and destroying bee hives for their honey. But I want to tell you that if there is one thing we can learn from history, it is that history no longer repeats itself.

'What was right and normal when you were cubs is no longer the case. I want to tell you that I am not the only cub who thinks this way. There are many other cubs who share the same understandings with me. There are also lion cubs and tiger cubs and other animals who think similarly. Today we have learned

how to live with the lions and the tigers.

'One day I even walked up to a bee hive and started talking to one of the bees. He told me how frustrated they were because every time they made a hive, a bear came along and destroyed it for its honey. That they were spending most of their time building hives, not making honey which is what they really enjoy doing. So I made an agreement with him that I would protect their hive, and they would give me half of the honey they produce during the time that they save by not building new hives. Now they are all happy and peaceful, and I get more honey that I ever did using the old ways.

'You see, the forest is no longer the same old jungle. Our real enemies are not the lions or the cobras or the bees. Our real enemy is the pollution created by man, the global warming and all those other things that are destroying our forest with all the animals in it. If we don't recognize these realities, we are doomed to be destroyed with the forest that we live in.

'The cubs of all animals today, have realized that the forest is different, and they have become friends. They realize that we are interdependent and the only way to live happily and prosperously is by cooperating with each other. Even if this cooperation means dramatic change from what we have historically been used to.

'The cubs also recognize that some of you mama bears and papa bears do not have the same perspective as we do. We are not asking you to change your ways or beliefs. All we

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—Bear Consciousness—

ask is don't try to force feed us with solutions to the problems that you see. Many of these problems are not any issue for us. And many of the things that we see, you do not even understand.

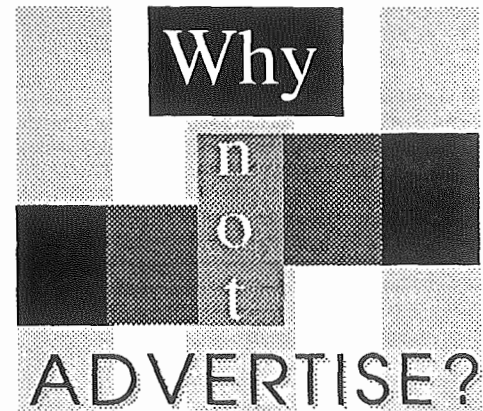
'All we ask is please listen to what we say, try to understand them, even if you don't agree with them, and then let us come up with our solutions and let us implement them. You see, you have no choice, because sooner or later we will be running the community and we will implement our solutions anyway.

'What we are asking you is to let us have a free hand and a head start, because every day that passes with us patiently waiting for the right time, we lose one day of action, and the problems get one day worse. The forest will be diminished by one more day, and another species will become extinct forever.

'Finally please understand that we are not blaming you for the problems. It is man who is causing this devastation. I plead with you to understand us and have faith in us that we will do a good job of solving our problems. Maybe in the process, we the cubs, will be so united and active that your problems will also disappear.

*One way or another,
to be continued in years to come.*

*Shariar Shariari
Vancouver, Canada*



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A Historical Look At Navruz



MEMORIAL TO THE KINGS

The celebration of *Jashne Navruz* was an ancient Iranian custom which started from the time of King Jamshed. In *Hom Yasht* and in the *Vendidad* he is described as a great king. In his reign there was no misery of any kind. Winter and Summer balanced, the climate was perfect and people enjoyed excellent health, very long youth and longevity. Peace, Joy and Justice prevailed in the Golden Age of King Jamshid's rule. Firdausi has written:

"His splendid throne, around which all the people crowded, lost in amazement at his glory and prosperity. On Jamshid, they scattered precious jewels, and called that day 'The New Day'. It was the beginning of the New Year, on the day *Hormazd* in the month of *Fra-vardin* (or March) when the body was relieved from fatigue, and the mind from anger or vexation, that the nobles, to express their delight, prepared a banquet of wine, and called for musical instruments and sweet singing minstrels. From this time an auspicious festival of the same kind has continued among us — a memorial of the ancient kings."

The Iranian kings who followed Jamshid continued the practice of celebrating the day. They divided the celebration into six parts on six days. The Sassanian kings visited all classes of people and lavished presents on them, and on the sixth day, he spent with his friends.

The following account, by European traveler, Sir William Yaosli, in 1823, gives an idea of how Navruz was celebrated in ancient times:

"On New Year's Day, the moment the Sun entered Aries, there was a canon salute and an orchestra started playing. There was music and rejoicing all day long. The next day at 10 in the morning, the King sent trays of treasure to the English Ambassadors as gifts along with gold and silver pieces to be distributed among officials. People exchanged gifts, distributed fruit, flowers, dry fruit and the place echoed with "*Navruz Mubarak*" greetings. Four o'clock in the afternoon, there was a spectacular religious ceremony and on the seventh day we were invited to watch rope dancing feats and wrestling contests. On the eighth day, with horse racing and a spectacular procession of decorated

500 camels, and 6 elephants, the Shah himself on horseback entered a tent and sat on a throne and the English Ambassador sat on the carpet beside him and talked to us with real warmth."

All this reminds me of the Navruz celebrations we used to have in Tehran during the Shah's reign: those happy Iranian faces, merry-making, *Sezdah Bedar*, (the 13th day when celebrations end and people go out for picnics), the traditional table, shopping sprees, the crowded colorful streets and those good old times!

[Excerpted from *The Mazdayasnie Connection*, April 1993, by Silloo Mehta]

IN A COSMIC SENSE

According to the Fasli calendar, Navruz is celebrated on March 21st as the first day of the New Year. It also represents the day of Vernal Equinox when day and night are approximately equal all over the earth. However, when the earth finishes her journey around the sun, the exact time may vary (it may not necessarily be March 21st). The moment it enters into another cycle around the earth, the New Year begins.

In a cosmic sense, Navruz is the first day when the Cosmic Fire was created by the First Big Bang! From that instant, the birth of the universe took place; Space and Time emerged in relation to celestial expansion. New Year, thus represents notions of Space, Time, Matter and Energy.

According to tradition, Zarthustra received his first revelation on this day [*Zoroastrian Studies, Bombay*]. Symbolically, it represents the victory of the forces of Light over the forces of Darkness. It is also time to settle disputes, to reaffirm faith in Ahura Mazda and Zarthustra, and to renew Hope, Joy and Peace.

According to Firdausi, Jamshid who ruled over the land of Aryana-Vaejah for nearly 700 years, founded the festival of Navruz. It is believed by scholars that King Jamshid might have lived

*FEZANA Journal wishes all Zarthustis throughout the world
A VERY HAPPY NAVRUZ*

*May the community continue to prosper and work towards
becoming a vibrant, enlightened and
united world community.*

around 9,000 B.C. Ahura Mazda forewarned Jamshid of the impending danger of devastating winter which would destroy the homeland of the Aryan people by glaciation. He was instructed to build a 'vara' (enclosure) to protect the best species of animals, plants and other creatures, along with the best of men. When the deluge was over, Jamshid celebrated this day as the day of Hope, Joy and Peace. He performed a votive *Jashan* and offered prayers to God. The last glaciation in the Northern Hemisphere took place about 11,000 years ago [*Encyclopedia Britannica*, Volume 18], i.e. in 9,000 B.C. So this festival could be over 9,000 years old.

Navruz, in recent times, is also observed by non-Zoroastrians in Iran and adjacent countries. One of the reasons why Sultan Jalalludin Malikshah, King of Iran, on the advice of his Vazir Omar Khayyam, instituted this day in 1079 A.D. as the New Year Day, was to recultivate the spirit of the Iranian culture and heritage which was imbibed in the hearts of the Iranian people.

[From Newsletter of the Zoroastrian Society of Washington State, 1992]

CHAHAR SHAMBEH SOORI

On the last Wednesday of the outgoing year, Iranians perform special rituals called *Chahar Shambeh Soori*. In Farsi, *Chahar Shambeh* means Wednesday, and *Soori* means red, referring to fire. According to legend, one should burn away all the bad luck of the outgoing year over a fire. Therefore, the youth gather kindling in the morning of *Chahar Shambeh Soori*. At sundown, a fire is prepared for everyone to jump over and the crowd chants phrases such as: "your redness is mine and my yellowness is yours" to the flames. This is a symbolic exchange of good health (redness of fire) with poor health (yellowness of the individual).

The ritual of jumping over the fire originated more than 2,500 years ago. It was noted and recorded by the Greeks when Alexander conquered Iran. Historians do not know why Wednesday is chosen to perform this custom. But they confirm that when scientist and poet, Ommar Khayam developed the solar calendar in the 13th century, they started to celebrate this ritual regularly on the last Wednesday of the year.

[Excerpted from Persian Cultural Publication of Iranians Settled in PA, NJ and DE, by Nancy Yermian, March 1993, courtesy of Meher Soroushian]

HAJEFYROUZ AND AMOU NAVRUZ

The traditional "heralds of Navruz" *Hajefyrouz* and *Amou Navruz* have started appearing at North American Navruz functions in recent years. The Zoroastrian Association of Northern California Newsletter describes their arrival at the Navruz function in the San Jose Atash Kadeh thus:

"The program soon took on a steady drum beat, and lo and behold! There was a dancer, enrobed in red satin, with a black painted face, gyrating and playing to the audience. He was like the Pied Piper who held the audience at rapt attention. He was Hajefyrouz. After this performance, in sailed a bewhiskered, regal looking man (quite like a Victorian Santa Claus) dressed in flowing green robes with a sack on his back. He beckoned the children to follow him around. He was Amou Navruz (Uncle Navruz). He distributed gifts to all the children and wished them a Happy Navruz. Hajefyrouz and Amou Navruz are traditional Persian characters bringing joy and gifts to the children of the community on Navruz Day. No sooner were the gifts distributed than, POOF! they disappeared, not to be seen till next year!"

*From the FEZANA
RESEARCH AND PRESERVATION COMMITTEE ...*

*The Ahunavar Prayer —
Yatha Ahu Vairyo*

The *Ahunavar* is the most frequently recited prayer in the Zarthusti liturgical tradition; and justifiably so. It encapsulates much of the message of the Prophet Asho Zarathustra in the Gathas. Its interpretation requires some effort at clarification, because it is in an extremely condensed form. The prayer consists of a three-line verse, containing three propositions:

1. *As the Lord is chosen, so also is chosen the fundamental judgment, in accordance with Truth itself.*
2. *Actions following therefrom being generated by the Good Mind (*) are dedicated to Lord Mazda,*
3. *By whose authority is appointed the rehabilitator of the dispossessed righteous.*

The first line states that Humanity chooses the One it recognizes as Lord through the enlightenment of Truth (Asha); and it is through the realization of the same Truth that Humanity accepts the fundamental judgment, i.e. Faith, commitment to promote Asha. The second line states that actions according to Truth come from the activity of the Good Mind; and such actions constitute a proper dedication to Lord Mazda. The third line declares that it is through Divine authority that the appointment is made of one (Zarathustra) to rehabilitate the righteous who have been dispossessed in this unjust world. Thus leading to a worthy society.

The implications of this brief invocation are many and complex. The righteous life is living according to Truth, i.e. the ideal order of existence. But accepting Truth (Asha) is a human choice. When we make that choice, we have accepted Ahura Mazda, the founder of Truth, as the Lord, and we become Mazdayasnis. Choosing to live a life according to Truth implies using the Good Mind, for it alone recognizes where Asha is fulfilled and where it is not. It also implies that a novel form of religiosity, i.e., dedicating our good actions arising from the Good Mind to the Divinity. This teaching coming to us from the divinely appointed mentor will result in a just society.

In the later symbolic development of Zoroastrianism, particularly in the creation story appearing in the *Bundahishn*, we have an interesting account of the first appearance of this verse. The story is

set in primordial times before the creation of the world. There Angra Mainyu confronts Ahura Mazda threatening the sovereignty of the Lord and His future creation. At this time, Ahura Mazda Himself recites the *Ahunavar*. Angra Mainyu, despite his lack of intelligence, understands that his cause is lost, and falls back in a stupor. This dramatic story incorporates profound insights captured by the writers of the *Bundahishn*. When Truth is grasped by the Good Mind, then it must prevail, for it will be the choice of "those who can choose", namely, humans. The mind, when uncorrupted, accepts Truth and rejects Falsehood. Thus in the long run Truth (Asha) must prevail, because Truth can only be seen as Truth.

This is not only a deep insight into the relation between Truth, i.e. the ideal form of existence, and the ethic of the life striving for the good. It is also a message of unbounded religious optimism. If Truth must prevail as the only acceptable choice of thinking beings, then the world will be perfected; and evil, which is applied falsehood, will be eliminated.

Because so much of Zarthusti thought is encapsulated in these brief lines, and because of the story of its employment by Ahura Mazda, the *Ahunavar* has been taken to be a spell, a recitation providing protection against evil. Actually, it is a 'manthra' which means 'thought-provoking statement', according to Dr. A. Jafarey, an interpretation which I find eminently acceptable. And the *Ahunavar* is certainly a thought-provoking verse. But more than that, this recitation coming to us from the earliest days of the religious tradition generates a resonance in the religious sensibility of the believer, its distilled philosophy striking the mind, and its optimistic affirmation inspiring the heart with moral confidence.

*Professor K. D. Irani
New York, New York*

(*) The 'Good Mind' is the divinely-endowed ability of a human to comprehend the Ideal Truth (Asha), and compare it with the reality that he or she encounters.

"The Gathas of Asho Zarathushtra, Translation and Transcription of Ahunavairi and Vahistolshti Gathas" by Dr. Pallan R. Ichaporia, is available for \$10 (plus shipping) from the author at 253 South 4th Street, Womelsdorf, PA 19567

Meaning and Significance of the Avestan Word 'baga'

[A short summary of an article to appear later in the proposed Scholarly Research Journal of FEZANA.]

The Avestan word 'bâgâ' has been translated differently by various translators, but the main rendition is always as 'God'. Insler [*The Gathas of Zarathustra*] has changed it into the feminine 'Goddess'. He translates Ahunavaiti Gatha, Ha 32.8 as: "Even Yama, the son of Vivahvant was tried for these sins ... by swearing 'the cow is goddess.'" Here gâus bâgâ is rendered as 'the cow is goddess'. This is not widely accepted because it "presupposes a Golden Calf worship, otherwise unattested in Yima mythology" [I. Gershevitch, 1989], and may be a reflection of a Jewish background. Insler goes on to explain that the "cow is worshipped as a goddess by the Aryans", which is equally unacceptable, as Yima (Jamshid) has been noted for his pride in announcing himself as a god of the world, and subsequent fall.

The word bâgâ can be interpreted as (1) a title of a pious king, or (2) sorcery reprobated by the Magians. In support of the first meaning, we find that the Achaemenid Old Persian bâgâ is equated with the Akkadian *ilu* the Semitic word for divinity. There we also find the Old Persian MAÏŠTA. BĀGĀNAM. which is translated as 'greatest of Gods'. It has sometimes become a royal title and in lower value could be a prince or lord.

The second meaning of 'sorcery' can be seen from the Greater Bundahishn [T. Anklesaria, p.207]. The word *bg*, *bay* occurs as a synonym with *yâtukih* which means 'sorcery, magic, wizardry'. The word 'jâdu' in Indo-Aryan languages is derived from 'yâtu'. Furthermore the cognate Buddhist Sogdian *βγνpt.ω-* and (fem), *βγνpt. 'nēh* also mean sorcerer and sorceress.

Dr. Pallan R. Ichaporia
Womelsdorf, Pennsylvania

Fravardin Yasht: Its History, Place, Time and the Probable Date of Asho Zarathustra

Where Was It Composed? Fravardin Yasht was composed in the Eastern parts of the Iranian lands and is probably earlier than the westward migrations of the Iranian tribes. This is based on the internal evidence within the yasht itself. There is not a single indication of any word pertaining to the geography of the western lands, except perhaps only one word *mazainya* (an adjective) having a

western element. All the other ethnic and geographical references are to Central Asia, maybe the modern day Afghanistan and some parts of North-Western Pakistan.

When Was It Written? The yasht is pre-Zoroastrian, but composed much later, after the passing away of Asho Zarathustra. The Assyrian history on Parusa dates from 844 BC and Madui from 836 BC [Burrow, *Proto-IndoAryan*, p. 138]. Thus the western migratory movements cannot be later than 900 BC and so the yasht cannot be placed later than this date.

Date of Zarathustra from the Yasht. There are seven generations of righteous Zarthustis, the leading personalities of their times, mentioned in this yasht, giving us a time-span of at least 170 years. One can clearly find the seven generation of *Ahum.stut*, *Saena*, *Zigri*, *Vitkavi* and *Utayuti*. Thus we have $900 + 170 = 1070$ years. We can add to this at least 200 years when *Saena* appeared with 100 disciples. This gives $1070 + 200 = 1270$ years BC. This is the possible date of Zarathustra as seen from this yasht.

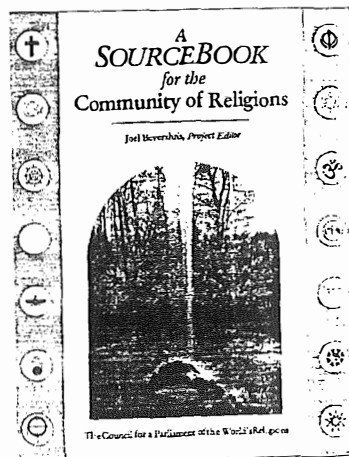
Dr. Pallan R. Ichaporia
Womelsdorf, Pennsylvania

BOOKS AND SUCH

A SOURCEBOOK FOR THE COMMUNITY OF RELIGIONS

Joel Bevershuis, Project Editor, paperback, 256 pp., 1993, \$15.00 (plus \$3.50 Postage)

Published by the Council for a Parliament of the Worlds Religions P.O. Box 1630, Chicago, Illinois 60690, or call (616) 452-1828



The SourceBook forms a primary resource for and about the Parliament of the World's Religions, held in Chicago in 1993. It covers the legacies of both the 1893 and the 1993 Parliaments; goals and visions for 1993; and the critical issues facing our times.

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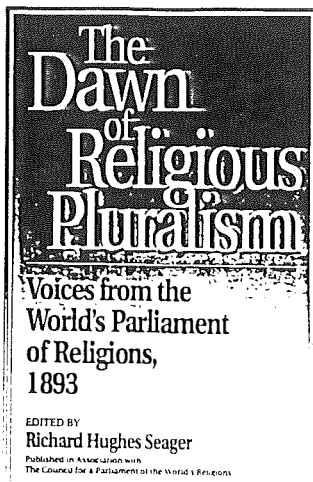
beliefs, relations with other religions and responses to important issues. Many other articles and essays document powerful ideas and historic movements; these materials also portray the ongoing conversations among leaders of religious bodies, scientists, poets, activists, philosophers, educators and political leaders.

Packed with essays, scriptures, declarations, quotations, sources and inspiration, *SourceBook* is designed to reinforce the goals and inspire the vision of the Parliament of the World's Religions. One underlying theme expressed many times in the *SourceBook* is that humanity must give birth to bold visions and substantive change, guided by ancient wisdom *and* by the enlightened application of contemporary knowledge.

**THE DAWN OF RELIGIOUS PLURALISM:
VOICES FROM THE WORLD'S PARLIAMENT OF
RELIGIONS, 1893**

Edited by Richard Hughes Seager, with a foreword by Diana Eck, 512 pp., 1992, ISBN 0-8126-9223-3, paperback, \$28.95

Open Court Publishing Company, 407 South Dearborn, Chicago, Illinois 60605, Tel: (312) 939-1500.



On September 11, 1893 the bell at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago sounded ten times, symbolizing what were then considered the ten great religious traditions of the world. Religious men and women of many faiths gathered together on the platform around a Roman Catholic

cardinal dressed in scarlet and seated on a high chair of state. The near-ecstatic crowd repeatedly burst into tumultuous applause, waving handkerchiefs and mingling tears with smiles.

The 1893 Parliament of Religions was the first event of its kind in the history of the world: a gathering of representatives of numerous world religions for an exchange of views. This volume contains a selection of 60 representative introductions and notes, including a reprint of the paper *The Religious System of the Parsees*, by Jivanji Jamshedji Modi. Richard Seager is lecturer on the study of religion at Harvard University. Diana Eck

is professor of comparative religion and of Indian studies at Harvard University.

DASTURAN DASTUR FIRST MEHERJIRANA

by Rusi Framroj Besania, 44 pp., 1993, Rs.25/-

Translated into English and published by Marzban Giara, 667 Lady Jehangir Road, Dadar, Bombay



Last year the world celebrated the centenary of the 1893 Parliament of World's Religions. Four hundred years ago, the Moghul Emperor Akbar was the first to summon a parliament of religions at his court. This slim, illustrated volume, traces the life and achievements of Dasturan Dastur First Meherjirana, the first Vada Dasturji in India, selected by the Navsari Zarthusti Anjuman. In 1576 A.D.

Dastur Meherjirana joined other religious leaders — Muslims, Brahmins, Jains, Christians — at the court of Akbar.

He so impressed the emperor with his knowledge and eloquence, that Akbar started revering fire at the royal palace, performed Jashan ceremonies, adopted the Zarthusti calendar based on the sun's movements instead of the prevalent lunar calendar, and according to some scholars of that period, adopted the *sudreh*. In 1581, 14 Jashan days, including Navroze, were declared public holidays. The book further traces the story of the descendants of the first Meherjirana, down to the present 16th heir to the *gaadi* (priestly chair).

North America Telephone Directory

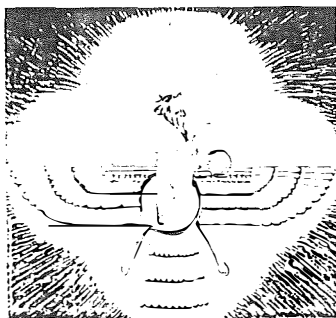
The California Zoroastrian Center is pleased to announce publication of the 1994 edition of the *North America Telephone Directory*, around March 21, 1994. Donations and advertisements are being sought from individuals and businesses, to help defray publication costs. All Zarthustis will automatically have a place reserved to display the name, address and telephone number. Contact California Zoroastrian Center, 8952 Hazard Avenue, Westminster, California 92683, Tel: (714) 893-4737.

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The unique design shown here was prepared by Sheroo Daruwalla of Chicago, to commemorate the Parliament of the World's Religions. It depicts symbols of the various faith traditions (the Zarthusti kusti can be seen in this design). Sheroo will be happy to entertain special requests for custom designed cards at a very reasonable price. Please contact her at 4325 N. Dayton, Apt. 305, Chicago, Illinois 60613.

Navjote (Sedreh-Pushi) Book for Children



I AM READY
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'SEDREH-PUSHI'

I am Ready for my Sedreh-Pushi (Initiation) by Mobed Fari-borz Sohrab Shahzadi is an excellent primer for young Zarthustis getting ready for 'Sedreh-Pushi'. This 42 page book, with text in Farsi and English, is liberally illustrated with glossy color pictures by Firoze Avari. It is available, free of

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The K. R. Cama Oriental Institute announces two new publications:

1. Journal of the K. R. Cama Institute, No. 58, with articles by F. Vajifdar, Professor Richard Fry and Mr. S. Setudeh-Nejad.
2. *The Kayanians*, by Arthur Christensen, translated into English by (late) F. N. Tum-boowalla.

Individuals who are interested in purchasing these and a large selection of other books on Zoroastrianism and Iranian studies may contact Mrs. H. N. Modi, Trustee and Jt. Hon. Secretary, The K. R.

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This 40 minute documentary visually and orally portrays "The Gathas". It explains the moral and ethical basis of the Zarthustrian faith and the philosophy underlying the religion as propounded by Zarthustra. There is a commentary in English recounting the early primitive beliefs leading to ancient organized religion and the arrival of Zarthustra, the first prophet to propound a reflective religion. The Gathas are recited in Avesta and in English.

The video is not only an introduction for interested students, but may also appeal to young people who are frustrated with the material world and are in search of a simple all pervading humanism. The film presents the doctrine and its application to the ceremonial aspects, which should be of particular interest to non-Zoroastrians. The video is available for \$35 from Homi D. Sethna, 72 Ashoka Apartments, Rungta Lane, Bombay 400 006.

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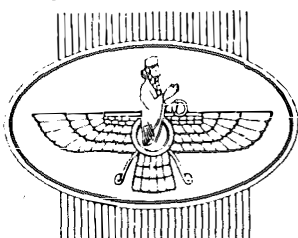
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READERS' FORUM

This column is a forum to present information, views and opinions. Letters (under 600 words) may be submitted to the Editor, Articles and Letters. The Journal reserves the right to edit letters for clarity and space.

History is So Dead and Dry. But Your Religion is a Living Flame ...

Thank you so much for helping us see the ancient ceremonies of your religion at the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago. Ahmed and I loved every minute of it.

I think you Zoroastrians are too critical of each other. Do you realize you have kept the home fires of your faith burning longer than any other in the world?

You should somehow share your faith with students of history and civilization. History is so dead and dry. But your religion is as alive as a living flame! If only history students could be indoctrinated, not as potential converts to your faith, but as students of what it means to be a human being in the fullest sense of the word. We remain your admirers.

Angie and Ahmed Kooros
Chicago, Illinois

Response to "Brickbats from Bombay"

In your Winter 1993 issue, you printed a full-page excerpt from an article in *Jam-e-Jamshed*, by Mr. K. N. Dastoor. The note above the article indicates that this article was a "stray brickbat" regarding the representation of Zarthustis at the Parliament. However, the article contains such severe distortions of Zarthustra's religious conceptions that some correction is called for.

In the article, there is a group described as "Liberal", "Progressive" or "Non-conformist". After various remarks about this group, it is stated that "they propagate that the Gatha is the only genuine Zoroastrianism". A little later, some individuals are considered as belonging to a "Gatha-alone cult". In the tirade against the group, there are phrases quoted, entirely and misleadingly out of context, from my article in *Spenta* of last year.

I do not hold the view that the Gathas alone constitute the religious literature of the faith. In fact, the adult discussion sessions at ZAGNY, chaired by me, have spent several months of discussion of the full Yasna, six months on the Vendidad, and the last year on the Yashts. Of course the Gathas, being the words of the Prophet, are the foundation texts of the religion. In spite of the point emphasized by Mr. Dastoor that there is a variation of opinion on translating the Gathas, and indeed there are some (very few) unclear meanings of words and syntax in several places, the general import of the Gathas is for the most part agreed upon. In any case, the Gathas present a religious vision of extraordinary depth and power toward the spiritual civilization of humanity.

It is however in his presentation of the message of the Gathas, that his remarks are truly reprehensible. This message he formulates and ascribes to some "they", presumably the "Liberals", and since the only name appearing in the paragraph is mine, to me. The message is: decide by your good mind ... and, he proceeds: if your good mind tells you to

light a cigar before Atash Padshah, do it; if your good mind tells you to engage in illegitimate sexual activity, do it; and so on.

This is certainly not the message of the Gathas, nor indeed, my interpretation of the Gathas. The Good Mind is a divinely-endowed faculty which grasps the Truth (Asha), and directs its implementation, which we are inspired to do by Spenta-Armaiti. In almost every writing of mine on the subject I have presented this view, hence it is very difficult to understand how Mr. Dastoor came to provide this perversion.

There are several other errors and emotive misdirections, but those we can leave to the discerning judgement of readers. The tone of the article is arrogant, the content of most judgments misleading, particularly when facts could have been obtained, if there was a genuine interest to do so. I believe it was Pascal who said that the *amalgam of ignorance and arrogance is particularly resistant to reason*.

Professor K. D. Irani
New York, New York

More on "Brickbats" ...

In the article "Who is Representing us" by respected Ervad K. N. Dastoor [*FEZANA Journal*, Winter 1993], some remarks were made about the organizers of the First World Zoroastrian Youth Congress, which need to be clarified.

The Congress was organized by the Helping Hands Zoroastrian Youth Communication Network Committee of FEZANA, in cooperation with the Youth Committees of The California Zoroastrian Center, the Traditional Mazdayasni Zoroastrian Anjuman, and the Zoroastrian Association of California. The above three Associations actively participated in the organization of this Congress. The Congress provided them an opportunity to work together in the spirit of unity for our community. To the best of my knowledge, none of the representatives of these Associations have demonstrated any attributes that could be classified as GAC — *the "Gatha Alone Cult" or Craze*. Every attempt was made to focus on the central theme of the Congress: "Unity, Preservation, Prosperity of Zoroastrianism in the 21st Century."

There were no intentional attempts made to break or stifle any "TR-Class" opposition by fair or foul means in this Congress. On the contrary, we had Dasturji Dr. Firoze M. Kotwal who was instrumental in enlightening our youth on the religious beliefs and customs of the Parsis. By the way, just for the

record, two of the above three Associations who have been labeled as "GAC", have been instrumental in encouraging the good work of Ervad K. N. Dastoor on the North American continent.

I conclude with a quote from Dr. Wayne Dyer: "When you judge someone, you do not define them, you define yourself."

May Ahura Mazda guide Ervad K. N. Dastoor.

Meher Dadabhoy Amalsad, Chairperson,
First World Zoroastrian Youth Congress

"Brickbats" is Affront to Scholars

What purpose did you have in printing such a fescennine article? [*"Who is Representing Us?" by K. N. Dastoor*]. It is true that in the USA, the privilege of the First Amendment prevails, however, the shortsightedness of printing such an article in the journal of FEZANA, which represents the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America, brings the level of the publication to the stature of a tabloid publication.

In the quoted article, there is nothing but the evidence of ignorance and fanaticism; and consequently an affront to those scholars who have committed themselves and their life-time to scholastic service to our religion and community. The only conclusion one can draw is the lack of editorial and publication knowledge and experience to have a clear policy for a publication that reflects the thoughts and efforts of the Zoroastrian communities of North America who are mostly progressive and enlightened.

Farangis K. Shahrokh
Anaheim, California

Network Address Correction

[The publisher regrets typographical errors in the Internet addresses in Mr. Bhujwalla's letter in *FEZANA Journal*, Winter 1993. The corrected addresses are reprinted below].

To get on the Zarhusti alias (distribution list), send an electronic mail message on Internet to Mehrdad Khosroviani who administers the alias. Send the mail to the Internet address:

mikey@auspex.com

or

mikey@parinaz.auspex.com.

When your Internet address has been added to the alias, you will receive any messages sent to zoroastrians@parinaz.auspex.com. You can also send mail to the above address for distribution to all Zarhustis around the world who are on the list.

LOOKING BACK

The Flying Engineers

A Brother Remembers

Homi (Engineer) Gilan, of Vancouver, B.C. recalls his early days growing up with his parents and eight brothers and sisters, in India. A truly inspiring story, brothers Aspy, Minoo, Jangoo and Rointon, rose to become the legendary "Flying Engineers", making this illustrious family one of a handful in the British Empire with three sons awarded the "Distinguished Flying Cross."

A Bit of a Heartwarming Family History

Maneck Irani was a simple soul, mild and self-effacing by nature, no different from millions of good mothers the world over. And yet, to her family, this quiet lady of the sweet and compassionate temperament possessed a supernatural power that none of us have been able to fathom to this day.

One episode particularly stands out in my memory — that unhappy afternoon in May 1930, when Father and I returned from Drigh Aerodrome in Karachi after congratulating Manmohan Singh on the completion of his successful solo flight from England to India. There had been no news for days from my brother Aspy Engineer, who, flying the same route, had clearly been beaten in the race for the "Aga Khan Prize" of ₹500 for the first Indian to fly solo between England and India. Imagine our surprise when Mother, on learning of Singh's arrival quietly remarked: "I am so glad he has arrived safely ... *but Aspy will win the prize.*" Shortly thereafter, we sighed with relief to learn that he would be landing at Karachi the very next day. Mother was there to welcome him with the time-honored ritual of the coconut, *tila* (red mark on the forehead), and rice, to celebrate the *successful* occasion. Now Mother had never been known to be wrong in her predilections in the past. *But this one flew into the face of reality*, a sort of fait accompli! We tried to be patient when she kept insisting on a palpable impossibility ... until a telegram from the Royal Aero Club, London,

advised Aspy that he had been awarded the Prize. Singh had been disqualified on a technicality!

Mother believed implicitly in "kismet", or destiny. In her daily communion with God, she could sense with uncanny accuracy whenever important events were in store for her loved ones. At the time of the above episode, she had received strong positive responses of joy. "That's why Aspy *had to* win the Prize", she told us, adding "Besides, in this case, a 40-year-old prophecy made it a near certainty that he would win the Aga Khan's ₹500."

She proceeded to wistfully relate a bit of heartwarming family history. Her father, Rustom Aga, was the Persian tutor to the young Aga Khan, who, like others, soon developed a signal admiration for the venerable old man. As a token of his high regard, the Islamic Prince sent him a chest full of gold coins — more money than Grandpa had earned in his whole long life of unremitting struggle. Despite the entreaties of his large family, and the earnest pleas of the Prince himself, Grandfather had steadfastly refused to touch the munificent gift as a matter of "high principle". In frustration, the Aga Khan had turned on the proud patriarch with a prophecy: "Master Saheb! Perhaps you will not accept what is mine today, but someday, if not you, then a descendant of yours will." Grandfather was profoundly touched, and had replied, "If he is worthy of it, then my soul will be happy. Amen!" "So you see", Mother concluded, "Aspy *had to win* to make Grandpa's soul happy!" The Aga Khan himself was completely taken

aback to learn that, out of hundreds of millions of Indians, Aspy Engineer, the winner of his £ 500 Prize, was the grandson of his Persian tutor of revered memory; and his eyes dimmed with tears that his impulsive prophecy from a distant past had indeed come to pass.

Mother Believed in the Power of Her Prayers

Standing as a sort of Guardian Angel over her flock, Mother's life was full of forebodings of disasters to be countered as best she could. When she sensed that her prayers would be unavailing, she steeled herself to face the inevitable.

Thus, a week after Aspy won the Prize, Mother wanted him to postpone a mere hop of 600 miles from Karachi to Bombay. This was totally unexpected from one who had bade "God-speed" to her green son of just 17 summers, and with just 17 hours of solo experience, as he set forth in his frail single-engined Gipsy Moth to cross the seas, the deserts and continents. She wanted him to postpone the hop until the Farohars were repainted on both sides of the newly-silvered fuselage. However, there was no time to do this, as Aspy had to

take off to be in time for the Governor's reception in his honor in Bombay. We returned from the airport, to find Mother in an agonized state, praying feverishly. Later, when we received a telegram from Bombay inquiring why Aspy had not turned up for the reception, we feared the worst, and as usual, turned to Mother for solace. But we took heart on seeing the tranquility on her face. It definitely ruled out a tragedy.

Aspy had crashed midway, near the little town of Bhuj, and was lucky to be alive. Had he taken the normal precaution of buckling up his "safety" belt, he would have been crushed in the telescoped cockpit. Instead, he was flung out of the cockpit and knocked unconscious, but suffered no serious injuries. Aspy himself *could not explain what force prevented him from buckling up in his moment of danger* — perhaps it was Mother, through her fervent, non-stop prayers, reaching across space to protect her son.

Mother Continued to Foretell with Amazing Accuracy, Many Events that Came to Pass



17-year-old Aspy Engineer, (center, with garland) on arrival at Karachi Airport on May 11, 1930, having completed a solo flight from England to India within 28 days, in his Gipsy Moth airplane. Also in the photo are (from left) Homi (in dark suit), Minoo (in white short pants suit), father Merwan Irani, mother Maneek Irani, Ronny (in shorts), Aspy, and Jamshed Mehta, Mayor of Karachi (in white "dagli").

As the first Indian to accomplish this, Aspy was awarded the coveted Aga Khan Prize of £ 500. The only other qualifying competitor was young J. R. D. Tata, flying in the opposite direction from India to England. Although JRD clocked a faster time, he was a later starter and Aspy narrowly edged him out.

Surely by now, one would imagine, we would think thrice before disregarding Mother, however irrational her advice might appear to be. Unfortunately, we had yet to learn our lesson ... when Aspy decided to compete for the Second Aga Khan Prize, this time for the first Indian to fly between India and South Africa.

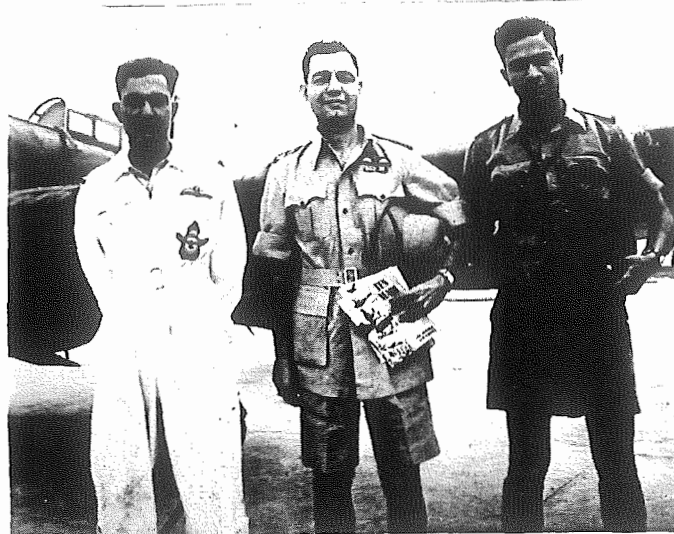
While preparations were being made, his main competitor, Murad, suddenly took off from Karachi. There was little time to lose, if Aspy was ever to overtake him. Imagine our dismay when Mother pressed hard for postponement for another 24 hours — otherwise, she insisted, Aspy would be in great danger. Despite grave misgivings, Father backed Aspy against further delay. So, once again, the dear lady retired to her Zend-Avesta to plead anew with the Infinite to protect her son.

It was very close indeed. Aspy ran head-on into one of the severest storms ever to hit the Persian Gulf. Buffeted madly, with fuel running short and uncertain bearings, Aspy was driven to land in near zero visibility, with none of the modern gadgets to guide him. His luck held as he gingerly descended, till he found to his consternation that he had landed in water! If so, this was the end. Resignedly, Aspy waited for the misty waters to envelop him, and started saying his prayers.

Then the miracle happened. The plane refused to sink. He had actually landed in a shallow marsh *on the very edge of the Persian Gulf* not far from the oil city of Abadan. Perhaps this providential escape was in response to Mother's incessant appeal to the Almighty. To add irony to the situation, Murad also crashed about the same time; and the following day, which Mother had begged for, dawned clear and bright on the Persian Gulf!

As evidence of Mother's astonishing prescience multiplied, I found the supernatural aspect somewhat bewildering. She continued to foretell with amazing accuracy, many events that came to pass. Amongst these were Aspy's parachute escape from a burning plane in 1933, the date and tragic death of Father in 1935, and above all, the safety and success of my five brothers in the Armed Forces on the front in World War II.

Indeed she ended up as one of a handful of mothers in the British Empire with three sons awarded the "Distinguished Flying Cross."



The three "Distinguished Flying Cross" sons, photographed together at a chance meeting during World War II (from left) Minoo, Aspy and Rointon.

Air Marshal Aspy M. Engineer



Aspy with Gipsy Moth: his devout mother was supremely confident that her son, a mere 17 years old, would successfully cross the seas, the deserts and the continents in this flimsy 85 m.p.h. Gipsy Moth, because he would be protected by the two Farohar guardian angels painted on either side of the cockpit.

Aspy, the eldest of the Engineer brothers, was a true pioneer of Indian aviation, and architect of the fledgling Royal Indian Air Force, later to become the Indian Air Force. His impact was such that even a quarter of a century after he retired, he is still remembered with appreciation by an incoming Chief of Air Staff, who wrote: "I have no hesitation to say that I have inherited an Air Force which can be considered professional by any standards. The credit for this essentially lies with you ... I have just assumed command of the Air Force and could not think of anything better than to seek your guidance and blessings."

At the tender age of 17, he gained world attention when he won the Aga Khan Prize for the first Indian to fly solo within 28 days between England and India. On graduation from the Royal Air Force College in Cranwell, England, he was recognized as the "best all-round pilot". In 1942, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for gallantry and leadership. As Managing Director of Hindustan Aircraft, Ltd., he initiated several new programs, including the design of the new supersonic fighter-bomber, "The Marut", and the production of "Vampires" and "Gnats".

All his life, Aspy moved among Maharajas, Kings, Viceroys, Governor-Generals, Ambassadors and the national and international elite. His wife, Ruby, was once complimented by the American Ambassador's wife for hosting one of the finest salons she had come across.

After retirement in 1964, Aspy was posted as the Indian Ambassador to the glittering court of the Shah of Iran, where he was especially welcomed because of his Iranian ancestry. Later, Aspy became Director of a major Oil Company in Tehran. He then emigrated to USA, and now, as "Mr" A. M. Engineer, lives quietly in California.

Captain Jehangir Engineer, Indian Air Lines, Wing Commander, R.I.A.F.

The illustrious life of Jangoo Engineer, was brutally cut short on September 19, 1965 when two Pakistani Sabre Jets cornered a small twin-engined, 5-seater plane, and after a one-sided battle in which the giant Sabres did all the attacking and the mosquito did all the dodging, finally shot it to bits in the air. That tiny aircraft had six people in it, including the Chief Minister of Gujarat and his family. The pilot was 49-year-old Captain Jehangir

Merwan Engineer, Chief Pilot of the Government of Maharashtra. All six perished. In a letter to Pakistan's Air Marshal, his brother Homi Gilan wrote: "War is a dirty business, but even so, I would hope that certain minimum codes of chivalry are displayed by officers ... I am writing about the shooting down of a hapless little airplane ... My brother, ex-Wing-Commander, R.I.A.F. was the pilot of that plane and was murdered ... I do hope that this semi-fratricidal war involving ex-colleagues, will really end soon, and that innocents on both sides are spared further tragedies".



A distinguished pilot, with a 30 year career in civilian and military aviation, "Jangoo", had taught himself advanced stunt flying, and was the star of the R.I.A.F. wartime aerial displays. Of an accident during one of these displays, that Jangoo miraculously survived, brother Homi writes:

"I believe Mother's Farohars were around during the dare-devil I.A.F. displays. When his plane crashed at Bangalore, everybody thought he was dead, until they disentangled his body from the wreckage — the Farohars had made certain that his vital organs were protected, and Jangoo was only rendered unconscious."

In another close shave, he was on a lone "Hurricane" patrol in the Bay of Bengal to report Japanese presence, when he felt "something was wrong", and violent vibrations shook his aircraft. He looked to the right to find a Japanese airman grinning from inside a dread "Zero", the pride of Japan's air power. To the left was another Japanese, also grinning from another "Zero". They allowed him to dive and escape though they could have shot him down in a second. But the Japanese had the 'Spirit of Bushido', which made it sinful to take advantage of a weak opponent. Again, feels Homi, "The Farohars were watching over him."

Jangoo was one of the first commercial pilots when he joined the pioneer Tata Air Lines in 1936. He was the only commercial pilot in India to answer the call of the R.I.A.F. for wartime pilots in 1942, as a volunteer. He promptly proceeded to win the R.I.A.F. armament competition, including, among other things, precision bombing and gunnery.

Although this fearless pilot's heart was set on combat duties on the Burma Front, his superiors decided to utilize his vast flying and administrative

experience on the home front, thus denying him the opportunity to emulate his three brothers in being awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, although all conceded that he was the best and most fearless aviator of them all.

Padma Bhushan Air Marshal Minoo M. Engineer, PVSM, MVC, DFC



As Commander-in-Chief, Western Command, the field commander, Minoo Engineer took the full brunt of the surprise dawn attack by the US-equipped Pakistan Air Force in 1971, with minimal losses, due to brilliant planning, before issuing the ringing order of

the day, to unleash a furious counterattack that rendered the P.A.F. ineffective, before turning his attention to help the Indian ground forces towards a quick and easy victory. A grateful nation bestowed the highly distinguished Padma Bhushan honor on him.

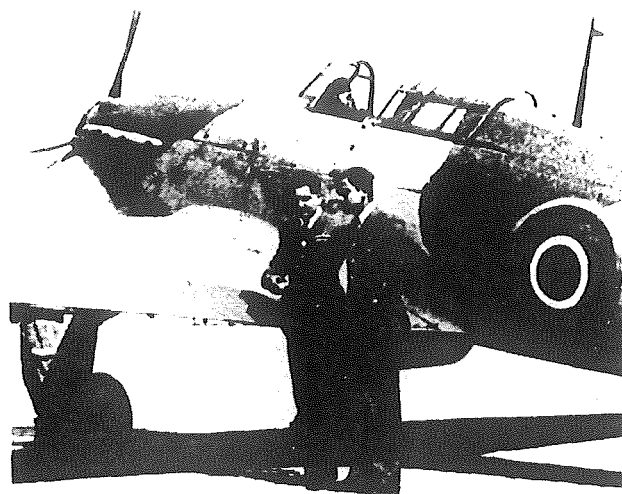


For Minoo Engineer: the last salute, July 1992

To this day, Minoo remains the most highly decorated officer in the history of the I.A.F. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross in World War II on the Burma Front, the Mahavir Chakra in 1950, the P.V.S.M. in 1962, and the Padma Bhushan in 1965.

After he retired, Minoo was the Managing Director of a leading advertisement company, until his death, at age 71, in Bombay, in July 1992.

Air Commodore Rointon M. Engineer, DFC



Rointon (right) with Hurricane aircraft, Burma, 1943

Rointon (Ronny), youngest of the Engineer brothers, was a daredevil pilot who earned recognition for his exploits on the Burma Front during World War II. It is worth mentioning that unlike their U.S.A.F. and R.A.F. colleagues who flew the latest state-of-the-art aircraft, R.I.A.F. pilots had to make do with the vulnerable, obsolete "Hurricane" fighters, far slower than the Japanese "Zero" fighters. Rointon saw extensive action over the dense jungles of Burma till the end of hostilities in 1945. He was one of the few R.I.A.F. fighter pilots to be awarded the British "Distinguished Flying Cross" for gallantry and daring. Among his other achievements is that Ronny became the first R.I.A.F. officer to become the boxing champion of the Air Force.

A born leader of men, with a commanding personality, Ronny was well set on his way to the top, when at the early age of 45, he resigned to emigrate to Canada, in 1969. On arrival in Montreal, he volunteered as a transport pilot responsible for ferrying essential supplies to the war zone of hard-pressed Biafra, Nigeria. These were dangerous missions under extremely difficult conditions, including being sniped at, and landing with the minimum of help from ground lights. Unlike several of his colleagues who lost their lives, Ronny's luck held, although once grazed by a bullet, aided no doubt by his superb airmanship.

In 1970, Rointon moved to Vancouver, B.C., and did a stint as a helicopter pilot flying in the interior of British Columbia. He died, unexpectedly, at the age of 60, of heart failure, in 1984.

Calendar Reform

Two Scholars' Views

In this issue, FEZANA Journal presents views on the issue of calendar reform by two noted scholars. Khojeste Mistree, of Zoroastrian Studies, Bombay, says "in the interests of scholarship and the Truth, it is best to state my findings and conclusions, which may not be in consonance with those who wish to promote the Fasli calendar, in North America, or indeed globally". Farrokh Vajifdar, of London, U.K., has written a response to the article by the three High Priests [FEZANA Journal, Fall 1993] to "correct certain misinformation and misrepresentations." Due to shortage of space, only excerpts are presented here. Full texts will be included in the information package to be distributed by Dolly Dastoor of FEZANA, to the Associations.

THE ZOROASTRIAN CALENDAR DILEMMA: TO CHANGE OR NOT TO CHANGE

Shortcomings of 'Fasli' Calendar

The idea of unification on any level, physical, psychological or spiritual is, indeed, desirable. However, from the evidence gleaned so far, it certainly does not seem possible that a unification can be achieved by making the Fasli calendar 'numero uno', as it has many doctrinal and ritual shortcomings ... Why then, in a nutshell, is the Fasli calendar unsuitable for adoption?

1. It does not have the ritual continuity which a calendar gives to ritual life of the community.
2. It does not have the *alat* which is at the very foundation of all rituals, as without an *alat*, there is no spirituality left within the ritual dimension.
3. All the consecrated fire temples including those in Iran (pre 1939), have an *alat* or ritual continuity which stems from a source, dating back 1363 years. Surely, this is a unifying factor, if ever there was one, albeit at a subtle spiritual level.
4. The Fasli Atash Kadeh in Bombay has no chronicled *alat* of continuity, as neither the Shenshai or Kadmi high priests gave them the same. If the *alat* was made, afresh, we come to a chicken and egg situation ... Might one be wrong in postulating that the Fasli fire was made minus this all-important component? If on the other hand, they have an *alat*, where is the evidence to prove this, particularly, as it was consecrated, allegedly, within the life time of Zoroastrians living in Bombay today.
5. Merely because the Fasli calendar links well with the seasons, is not a good enough reason, in the opinion of the writer, to reject a religious calendar which has been used in the consecration

process of over 98% of our fires, globally.

6. Nothing prevents Zoroastrians on a personal level, from celebrating NoRuz in the spring and partaking in the seasonal gahambar festivals as they do, today. But this should not lead one to conclude that the Shenshai/Kadmi calendars are ineffectual and therefore, expendable.

7. Importantly, the mode of intercalation with regard to the Fasli calendar is specifically proscribed (rejected) in an important treatise, as the *Dinkard*. Why then, should one accept the Fasli calendar which has a proscription against it, and whose origins are strongly linked to Muslim sources of the 11th century AC? Should one adopt a religious calendar from the days of a Seljuk king who promoted a civil solar calendar in which NoRuz was the 'New Day' from which point onward land taxes were sought from Zoroastrian farmers? Let us not ignore the fact that the mechanics and basis of the Fasli calendar stem from Islamic Iran and which was re-enforced under Reza Shah Pahlavi in the mid-nineteen twenties with his re-emphasis of a civil solar calendar with Zoroastrian day and month names.

8. Finally, according to the FEZANA Newsletter [*FEZANA Journal*, May 1992] an overwhelming majority of Zoroastrians do not follow the Fasli calendar; if that be the case, can unification be justified, even in North America, by adopting a calendar so full of scriptural and ritual lacunae? The choice indeed, is yours, fellow Zoroastrians.

Observations and Recommendations

In the opinion of the writer:

1. *It does not seem desirable to adopt the Fasli calendar at the expense of the other two calendars for:* (a) the Fasli calendar is not suitable for ritual

purposes. (b) It does not have a proper intercalatory mode, as the Gregorian calendar is not in consonance with the Zoroastrian texts and hence this system of time reckoning was rejected in the past, by the faithful. (c) Seasonal considerations, important as they may seem, should not be allowed to override other factors. (d) Whilst the Zoroastrians did seek calendar reform till Sassanian times, thereafter, a system of time-reckoning seems to have been established which has now become the norm, for over 1300 years; to reject this richness and continuity seems unnecessary and misplaced if an alternative solution is indeed available.

2. Importantly, the Shenshai calendar should be modified and used as the sole calendar for unification, if indeed, unification is perceived through the adoption of one calendar for North America. For this to happen, the following should be implemented:

- The appropriate intercalation should be sought in order to restore the New Year (NoRuz) to the spring with the calendar starting from Hormazd Roz, Fravardin Mah.
- The prescribed mode of intercalation should be 30 days (one month) to be added every 116 or 120 years. If this is undertaken in the right manner, whilst adhering to the religious and ritual requirements, then not only will there be one calendar, but all our *alat* (ritual implements/items) which are used as the basis for all our liturgies will be preserved through an unbroken chain of ritual continuity fused into a spiritual togetherness, as has been with the Shenshai/Kadmi calendars whose sources of *alat* are linked.

3. If the Faslis do not accept this position, then the status quo should be maintained, in order to continue the ritual transmission of the faith, founded upon the *alat* of the old Shenshai/Kadmi mode. The present practice of celebrating two New Years, one in spring and the other in autumn, may

in fact be more in consonance with what is stated in the texts, namely, of early Zoroastrians celebrating two New Years. It would be divisive for the Zoroastrian community globally, if the North American Zoroastrians went ahead and adopted the Fasli calendar, unilaterally.

4. It is paramount that the FEZANA leadership should encourage greater discussion and scholarship before any referendum is sought on this issue, so that any solution arrived at, is primarily based upon the texts and the consensus of "informed opinion" amongst the members of the community.

If unification is indeed the clarion call for change, then this unification should be of the hearts and minds of our people, for the friendship and amity of our people, for a spirit of tolerance and harmony amongst our people and for the upholding of Truth and Justice amongst our people. If all these qualities can be brought together, then this indeed would be the true unification of the worshippers of Mazda.

Khojeste Mistree
Zoroastrian Studies
Bombay, India

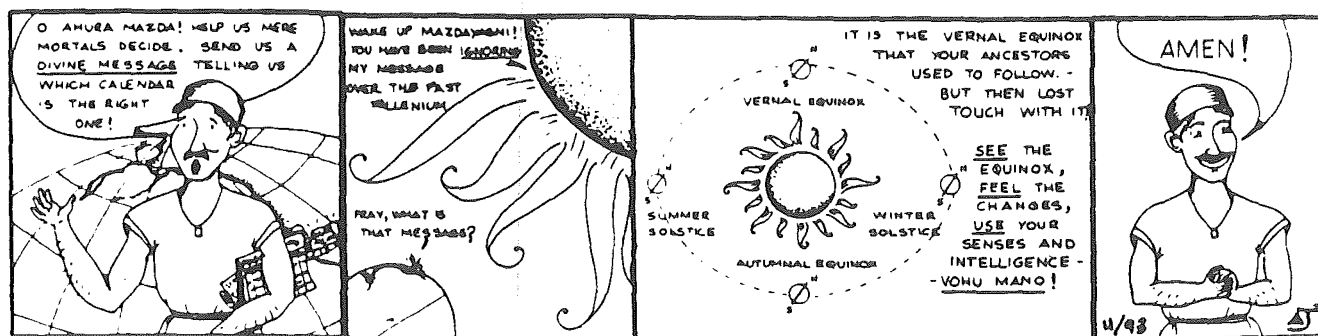
UNTIMELY CALENDARS

The Bundahishn Evidence

For purposes of our response to the article by the three respected High Priests, we must consult a chapter of the *Bundahishn* which carefully details the early Avestan calendars, titled *On the Religious Year*. In reference to the Old Avestan calendar, it states: "From day Ohrmazd, month Fravardin to day Aniran of month Mihr, is *summer of 7 months*. From day Ohrmazd, month Aban to month Spandarmad onto end of the five supplementary days is *winter of five months* ... The

THE ZARTHOSHTI DILEMMA

The Jay Squares



[From ZANC Newsletter, December 1993]

priests fulfill the regulations about a corpse (i.e. funerary rites) and other things by this reckoning of summer and winter." Regulations on the observance of the Gah Rapihwin follow.

On the subject of seasons, this *Bundahishn* chapter is precise: there are four three-monthly seasons. Fravardin, Ardibehesht and Hordad are Spring; Tir, Amardad and Shahrevar are Summer; Mihr, Aban and Adar are Autumn; Din, Vohuman and Spandarmad are Winter.

Intercalations

With reference to the fractional day which makes up the full revolutions of the sun about the earth's seven regions (as the ancients saw it!): "The sun comes from the sign of Aries (Warrag) into which it proceeded in the beginning (of the year), back to that (same) place in 365 days and six short periods (= zaman i khwurdag) which are one year."

We obtain our authority for intercalation from the *Denkard*, where the calendar which has "hours moving from year to year" consist of six hours and fractions of an hour at end of the 365 days which make up the full year. "In 4 years these are 1 day; in 40 years, 10 days; in 120 years, 1 month; in 600 years, 5 months; in 1440 years, 1 year ... The time of the year's origin is Spring, when the sun reaches the first lunar mansion Parispar or Aries." Disaccord with the calendar results in the neglect of the seasons. Here the *Denkard* instructs that days should not be intercalated until they form a complete month (i.e. every 120 years). Neglect of the seasons makes the seasonal observances and religious rites fall into desuetude: they are now kept to their seasons by mathematical reckonings.

We do not know for certain when the last month-intercalations were made. We cannot ensure that a satisfactory agreement may be achieved for the reinstalling of this 120-year system. We do, however, have two parallels to work by: the Common Era Gregorian calendar with its leap day every four years (except for the years 4000, 8000 and 16000: thereby an excess error of one day would occur in 3,323 years!); the other is the so-called Fasli system with its Avarad Sal-Gah which keeps pace with the Gregorian without disturbing any religious observances despite the claims of some!

The High-Priests Observations are Somewhat Puzzling

Somewhat puzzling is the rather rushed statement that a double intercalation (addition of two months) "did not hamper religious rites and observances at all"! Surely then, how much less would the timid

insertion of one day in four years disrupt religious ceremonial? And what, pray, is a "sowing harvest" (Fallacy No. 8)?

The question of *bhantar* is similarly arbitrarily dealt with: we are told that the set bundle of chants are the only requisites, this being "the real spirit of Zoroastrianism". Try pulling off that one on the Irani Zarthustis! Our early information suggests that to package fixed prayers around what are observably moving festivals is to invite extreme scepticism especially when they are in all seriousness explained as time-honored!

A curious confusion is implicit in Observation (d). The average understanding of historical dates and "continuity of past events" (whatever that means!) is woolly to say the least ... the unpalatable truth is that without the painstaking labor of generations of scholars who have sifted the evidence from foreign historical data, no reconstruction of our true history would at all have been possible. We would forever be going around regaling one another with the most improbable and fantastic notions to be served up as a "history", which indeed some of us do to this day. Why then should a calendar with a time-reckoning based on the vague year be capable of registering this history?

Solutions to Quirks

The so-called Fasli system is too easily dismissed by our priestly triumvirate as "defective and quixotic" without any serious objection being lodged in support of such arbitrariness. If a calendar attempts to keep pace with the earth's revolution around the sun and makes up for the annual quarter-day deficiency through an intercalation which happily keeps pace with the Gregorian intercalation of the quadrennial leap day, it cannot be either defective or quixotic. It is a move towards Order: something inculcated by Zoroastrian doctrine!

To use the fears of some about the lapse in prayers for their departed, occasioned by adoption of the Fasli system, specifically regarding death on the Avarad Sal-Gah, is callous exploitation. The sensible answer is to observe the anniversary on the March 20s of common years. Birthdays falling on February 29th are not automatically canceled for the three intervening common years! Try as we might, we cannot see any real difficulty in annual commemorations. The wilful perpetuation of an error of neglect from the remote past should not be used to condemn a system which has realized such error and does something about it.

Another old saw is that of the inversion of seasons for those unwise enough to have made their new homes in the Antipodes. Again we see in this a deliberately instigated fear in those easily troubled by such eristics. The Northern Springtide corresponds quite naturally to the Southern Autumn, the sowing season of one with the harvest of the other. Is it not in the spontaneous nature of Zarthustra's wonderful system to celebrate the bounty of the Creator without haggling over the exactitudes of a mechanical ritualism? Or does the Antipodean have to be awkward about it and celebrate the sowing festivities when all those about him are reaping the harvest?

The Alat Question

Then, of course, arises the Alat question. We would ask the learned co-authors a counter-question: Do they sincerely and genuinely believe that man-made implements in pursuance of religious objectives meant for spiritual uplift, can really become deconsecrated through time differentials occasioned by geographical shifts? If their answer is in the affirmative, we will forego the pleasure of receiving its explanation and instead refer them again to the *Bundahishn* compiler who long ago came to terms with the difficulty when he declared "herbadan wizar i nasa ud abarig tis hamin zamestan az en oshmarag kunend." If therefore, it was good enough for the early priesthood to adjust its religious functions, then it cannot be too difficult for our modern-day religious representatives.

To strive towards a unified calendar would not prohibit the following of other preferred systems. Nobody can or should deprive others' rights of worship or interfere with their beliefs and practices. We ask them in turn to display a constructive and progressive attitude towards those who so wish to embellish their ancient inheritance. Let it be understood that we wish to progress in a spirit of Truth and Tolerance. We ask them to take cognizance of the declaration of our Holy Zarthustra when he urged: "Let him that knows speak knowledge; let the unlearned cease to deceive!"

Let us rise to the challenge of the new, not relapse into empty evocations of the old. We ever bear in mind the adage that whilst "a novel opinion is not necessarily right, or an old opinion necessarily wrong", we have to quest after the Renovation — in Truth, Harmony and Stability.

Farrokh Vajifdar
London, U.K.

Alberta Zarthustis Conduct Calendar Referendum

As per the resolution passed in the FEZANA AGM in Vancouver in September 1992, the Zoroastrian Association of Alberta conducted a calendar referendum. The ZAA voted favorably in recommending the use of the Fasli calendar (with one extra day every four years) for all FEZANA activities. The breakdown of the results are as follows:

Votes for Shenshai:	22	(26.5%)
Votes for Kadmi:	0	
Votes for Fasli:	35	(42.2%)
No Preference:	15	(18.1%)

Zarrin R. Bharucha, ZAA President,
Edmonton, Alberta

Calendar Survey by ZANC

The Zoroastrian Association of Northern California held a discussion on the three Zarthusti calendars at the September 1993 Sunday School. A survey was passed out to the attendees (about 30). *The results printed here are to be interpreted as only representative of those who attended the meeting (about 30 persons) and chose to fill out the form.*

- Are you in favor of a unified calendar for the Zarthosti community?
 - Yes = 8(40%) • No = 11(55%) • No answer = 1(5%)
- a) Are you in favor of using a calendar that has intercalation?
 - Yes = 9(45%) • No = 9(45%) • No answer = 2(10%)
 b) If "Yes" to above question, which method of intercalation do you prefer?
 - 8(89%) = Add a day (About every 4 years)
 - 1(11%) = Add a month (About every 120 years)
 - 0(0%) = Other: _____
- For the community functions, which calendar would you like the association to follow?
 - 4(20%) = Fasli/Dini-Sal (an intercalated calendar)
 - 10(50%) = Shehenshahi (Non-intercalated)
 - 0(0%) = Kadmi (Non-intercalated)
 - 4(20%) = No opinion, any one is fine
 - Other: 1(5%) = Not Sure; 1(5%) = No Answer
- Which calendar do you personally use for your birthdays and anniversaries?
 - 3(15%) = Fasli • 10(50%) = Shehenshahi
 - 0(0%) = Kadmi • 3(15%) = Gregorian (Western)
 - Other: 2(10%) = Shehenshahi + Gregorian;
1(5%) = Fasli + Gregorian
1(5%) = No answer

The First Mazda Light

A Unitarian Universalist Looks at Zarthustrian Theology

by

Wallace P. Rusterholtz
Chicago, Illinois

Zarthusstra, the First Theologian

During my service in World War II, I was fortunate to be stationed for nearly three years in Iran. While there, I met some extraordinary people who are Zoroastrian. I tried, while in Iran and since then, to find out all I can about their religion. What I learned is worthwhile, and I want to share it.

Zoroastrianism was the religion of Iran until Islam arrived from Arabia twelve hundred years ago. It developed, like Hinduism in neighboring India, from the ancient Aryans' worship of nature in central Asia. Some of these Aryans moved south into India. Other tribes migrated southwest into Iran about 1500 BC. They took their primitive nature worship there, and it continued to evolve with time and in the different physical environments of India and Iran. Northern India is a lush, humid, fertile country where life was easy and comfortable. So in India the Aryan nature worship developed into Hinduism with its emphasis on contemplation, passivity, *being* rather than *doing*. In Iran, however, nature is harsh and extreme. Much of the country is arid and barren. So for the Aryans in Iran, life was a struggle and challenge. In Iran, their nature worship became more active and practical. Instead of the tolerant monism of India, Iran developed a religion of a competing dualism of good and evil forces. This, according to George Foote Moore of Harvard, strongly influenced Judaism, Christianity, and our more practical and realistic western outlook.

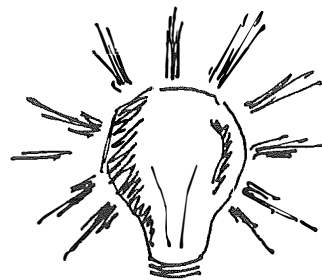
Zarthusstra Presented Moral Insights that are Still Valuable

Zarthusstra greatly reformed and elevated the old Aryan nature worship. He presented ideas and moral insights that are noble and still valuable. Jacques Duchesne-Guillemin of the University of Liege, calls him "in the full sense of the word, the first theologian." Scholar Simone Petrement declares that "if there is an abstract and

philosophical religion, it is indeed his." The philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche invoked Zoroaster in *Thus Spake Zarthusstra*; but I see no connection between Nietzsche's notion of the superman and Zarthusstra's religion.

The Gathas, the core of Zoroastrianism, are remarkably similar to the Psalms of the Old Testament, which date from around the same time. The rest of the scriptures (the Avesta), much of which has been lost, consists of later additions. Some of these are a revival of the more primitive nature worship. Others are elaboration that clouds the original scripture with claptrap and superstition, much as Jesus' teachings have been obscured by the tradition and dogma of the church.

Symbolism of the Flame Inspired General Electric Company to Name Its Electric Lamp "Mazda"



Zoroastrians have been called fire-worshippers. But fire is simply a symbol to them of righteousness, like our Unitarian flaming chalice, which symbolizes enlightenment or truth. This symbolism of the eternal

flame inspired the General Electric Company to name its electric lamp for Ahura Mazda.

Two Eternal Powers of Good and Evil Manifest Themselves in the Spiritual and Physical World

What are the main doctrines of Zoroaster? The first is that there are two eternal powers, good and evil. These manifest themselves in both the spiritual and physical world. The good is summed up in the One God, Ahura Mazda, whom Zoroaster considered the lord of wisdom, truth, and goodness, and the creator of the universe. This is a

nobler idea of God than we find in the Old Testament, except in the book of Isaiah. I have a hand carved symbolic representation of Zoroastrianism that I bought in Teheran. It is a copy of ancient stone carvings. The wings and body of an eagle symbolize elevation; the large ring, eternity; the small ring, the sun as the source of light; the head of a man, wisdom.

Zoroaster believed that along with Ahura Mazda, the power of good, there is also the force of evil. He called this spirit of evil, Druj or the Lie. Later followers of Zoroaster added Ahriman as the active agent of evil. He was responsible for the existence of evil in the world, and may be the original of the Hebrews' Satan.

Humankind has the Responsibility to Ensure Victory of Good Over Evil

Zoroaster's second main idea is that the world is a battlefield where good and evil struggle for supremacy. Scholars differ regarding Zoroaster's concept of this struggle. Some, like George Foote Moore, think that he believed that right is certain to triumph in the end. On the other hand, others, like Henning believe that Zoroaster considered the outcome uncertain.

This brings us to Zoroaster's third main idea: that humankind is a "third force" capable of tipping the balance between the forces of good and evil. Thus Zoroaster seems to recognize our importance in both the moral realm and the real world. As Henning states it: "How different Zoroaster's man is from the cringing primitive who runs to his witch-doctor to beg for protection; or from the trembling believer of the contemporaneous religions of the Near East, who approaches his god with fear and civility! He is a proud man who faithfully serves the side he has freely and deliberately chosen, but who remains conscious of the value of his support and of his own value." Zoroastrianism emphasizes human responsibility more than other great religions do. We are not the masters of our fate, for we are up against tremendous forces of both good and evil. But with our efforts we can tip the balance and make the good triumph. We are not subject to the whims of gods who can nullify our best efforts by their caprice, as with the religions of the ancient Greeks, Hebrews, Christians and others. Good and evil are steady forces, according to Zoroaster. Humankind has both the free will and the strength to ensure the victory of good over evil.

This is a rather humanistic religion in its most ancient setting, even though Zoroaster was a

theist. If Henning is right, Zoroaster considered us as necessary to God as God is to us for the final triumph of the good. This partnership of God and Man puts far greater value on humankind and our efforts, than do earlier and most later religions. Among the founders of great religions, perhaps only Buddha and Confucius, who lived a little later, were more humanistic than Zoroaster.

No Other Religion Sets So High a Value on Productive Labor

More than traditional Christianity, Zoroastrianism teaches an active, practical approach to salvation and the good. Professor Moore wrote: "No other religion has set so high a value on productive labor as being the service of God." Not creed, you see, but deed!

For Twenty-five Hundred Years, Zoroastrians Have Been the Most Honest Group of People in the World

If the acid test of religions is "by their fruits ye shall know them," as Jesus declared, then Zoroastrianism is indeed a noble religion. For twenty-five hundred years, Zoroastrians have been the most honest group of people in the world — and incidentally the most prosperous people in their part of the world. In India, the Parsees, as the Zoroastrians are called there, are economic leaders. Christian missionaries whom I knew in Iran assured me that anyone, regardless of race or creed, can count on anything said by a Zoroastrian. Surely Zoroastrianism has a message for us today, when personal, corporate and political honesty and integrity are at a low ebb but more necessary than ever. What better motto could we have than Zoroaster's central precept, "Good thoughts, good words, good deeds"!

May our little electric Mazda lamps, which can instantly illuminate the dead of night, be more than a mere convenience for us. Whenever we light one, may it become like the eternal flame of Zoroaster, whose followers for so long have been the most honest people in the world.

[Excerpted from Religious Humanism, Spring 1993, submitted to FEZANA Journal by Dolly Dastoor, Montreal. Wallace Rusterholtz is a retired college professor and author of American Heretics and Saints, a series of biographies of American liberal religionists and humanists. He is an active layman in the First Unitarian Church of Chicago.]

Zoroastrian Mysticism and Illumination

by

*Daryoush Jahanian, M.D.
Kansas City, Kansas*

Mysticism is the science of discovery of truth and recognition of God.^{[1] [2]} There are two ways of fulfilling this goal, one through illumination of the mind and reason, the other, by the means of spiritual refinement of vices and attainment of virtues which lead one to the state of illumination. The impetus for treading this path is not reward of heaven or fear of hell, but merely the love of God. The goal is to envision the Beloved and unite with Him as Saadi spells out:^[3]

Man can reach the point
To see the Divine entity
Note how eminent is mankind's dignity

There is no meditation or ceremony in this path; the only line of communication with God is Love.

Mystical words are often analogical and allegorical and in such cases should not be inferred in physical and material vocabulary; rather, they must be construed in spiritual and abstract terms with a wide range of connotations. For example, 'fire' may denote fire of love, mind, truth and divine light. An ordinary poem may have a profound meaning and broad range of interpretation:^[3]

Every thread divided, then united by a knot
Is one again, but at the middle has a knot

refers to a restored friendship that still carries indignation (the knot).^[4]

Mysticism

Zarathustra in the Gathas, alludes to the divine mystic lore [Y.48.3]^{[5] [6] [7]} and longs for the acquisition of divine knowledge [Y.50.9]. He teaches that the attainment of wholeness and immortality leads one to the illumination whereby God is realized [Y.34.11]. Relation between man and God is based on love [Y.46.2, 44.1]. One should review the words of Zarathustra repeatedly

to perceive the true love of man for his God: "I am longing for your vision and communion [Y.33.6], come to me in person and in sight [Y.33.7], rise within me [Y.33.11]." ^[8]

One should note that the mysticism of the Gathas is devoid of asceticism and hermitage since in practical life, God is realized by service to humanity and active participation in the promotion of the living world:

"How a munificent man who strives for promoting the power of house, district or land with righteousness, can be like You, God." [Y.31.6] ^[8]

"By the deeds performed in God's service through righteousness and wisdom, the meek and oppressed persons of God are protected." [Y.34.5] ^{[6] [7] [8]}

"The reward of happiness is given to those who serve the community with their deeds of good mind and promote the divine plan of wisdom through communal righteousness." [Y.34.14] ^[8]

But engagement in this process is by willingness and freedom of choice since even the Divine Dominion is a chosen one. [Y.51.1]. ^[8]

Illumination

During the life of nations, various concepts have been developed which over the generations, have been expanded. They are rooted in the national culture and psychological aspects of life. Examples are concepts of mind reading in India and illumination of mind, in Iran, but the difference is that the latter, like many Persian mystical concepts stems from the Gathas of Zarathustra. Illumination is a power of mind which can be attained through meditation [Y.43.15] and profound concentration, but it may not be attainable by everyone. Zarathustra defines it in the best term as "vision through the mind's eye, in Y.45.8. It can also be viewed as

"inner conception." [9] Hatef, an eighteenth century Persian poet in his famous mystical poetry, reflects of illumination when he says: [3]

Look through the heart's eye, to see the Existence
To envision what is the Invisible Essence.

Sohravardi, in this context contends: "After I have made my discoveries through illumination, I search for reasons to explain them, and even if those reasons were discounted, I have no doubt about the accuracy of my findings." [9]

In the teachings of Zarthustra, illumination can be attained through mental strength and spiritual excellence; in this set up, fire is the means of illumination for the discovery of God, which in the Persian mysticism, is the fire of love. In the Gathas, although the impetus is love, fire indicates the bright mind whereby God is realized. Here, it is imperative to clarify Y..29.8 by quoting Jafarey: [10] "In the west (Abrahamic religions), God discovers man and appoints him prophet; in the east (Zoroastrianism and Buddhism), it is man who discovers God and Truth," and in Y..29.8, it is Zarthustra who through *Vohu Manah* (bright Mind) realizes God. This is quite contrary to the efforts of several authors who have presented this Yasna as Ahura Mazda appointing Zarthustra as prophet. Even Y.44.11 which often has been translated as Zarthustra having been chosen as the first teacher, literally means the prophet recognizes God first and denies others. [5] Only in Y.31.2 the prophet declares that he as a teacher is ordained [5] or known [9] by the Wise Lord to teach the hitherto unheard words [Y.31.1].

'Fiery Test' is a spiritual refinement process by which the righteous and wrongful are differentiated, [11] and those who pass have attained wisdom, strength and serenity and belong to God [Y.30.7] [8]. This is a very hard undertaking in which one requires laborious work, tolerance and perseverance. As in alchemy, gold stone is purified in the oven, in the words of Shams: [12] "the lover too should reside in the fire of oven, as gold." [13] The process is called by Zarthustra the 'Fiery Test' in which vices are refined and virtues attained as a 'molten metal'.

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13. Razi, H., *Ghotbeddin Ashkevari*, bi-monthly Fravahar, No. 334, in Persian.



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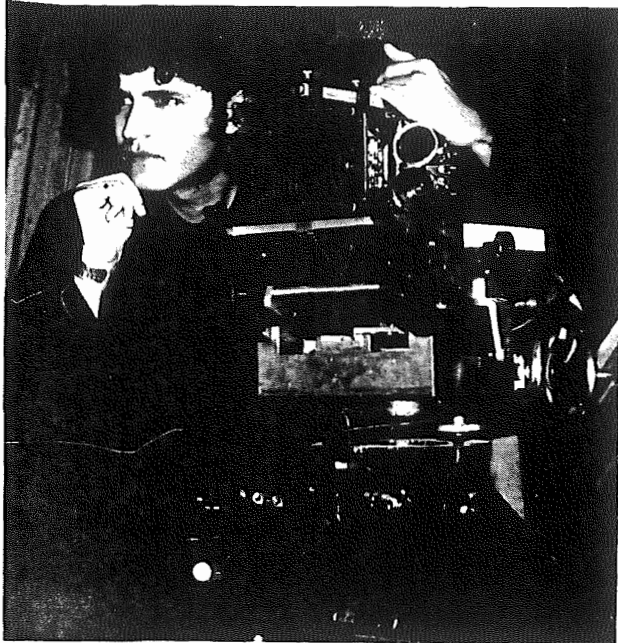
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PERSONAL PROFILE

Kaizad Gustad — Budding Screenwriter-Director

Kaizad, 25, remembers his grandfather's open-air theater in the small town of Wadi, Karnataka, in South India, where hundreds of villagers came every Thursday to see a movie. Later, his family built a full-fledged cinema hall where Kaizad was the manager and projectionist. It's no wonder that he was influenced by the focus of the moving picture and the power of its message. He later honed his film-making skills by working in various capacities on productions in India, Hong Kong, and Australia. He furthered his film education at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. Since arriving in New York in 1991, he has completed several short films. He is also the author of five feature-length screenplays. He has already sold three of these in the US and abroad.



Gustad: celluloid in his veins

Most recently, Kaizad wrote the screenplay for and directed *Corner Store Blues*, a 48-minute feature focusing on the trials and tribulations of an aspiring Blues musician in "Little India" in Jackson Heights, New York. The film was shot on location at a corner store in Queens. It was produced by Michalene Milne, a principal partner in Providence Entertainment, a newly-formed, independent production company based in New York. The entire production, from script to final print, was completed in just one hundred days on a budget of \$20,000.

The premiere screening of *Corner Store Blues* was at Anthology Film Archives on September 25, 1993. The film was screened at the Independent Feature Film Market, New York, in October, and at the Fort Lauderdale International Film Festival in November. It was shown all across Canada on National Vision TV on January 14. The producers are in negotiation for further territories in France, Germany, UK, and India.

Kaizad has now embarked on a new and very exciting venture to set up a film and television production entity titled, appropriately, KISMET (or "destiny"). Mahesh Naithani, a businessman in Princeton, New Jersey, and President of KISMET, says: "It is our belief that a well-made and well-accomplished film that tells a contemporary progressive Indian story, with a commercial crossover potential, will function both at the box office and towards changing the plethora of negative images about India that we constantly see on the big screen and on television."

A substantial amount of money and support have already been created towards the first production: an English-language international film called *The Storyteller*, written by Kaizad. The production budget for *The Storyteller* is set at \$2.2 million. Among those who have already signed on are Channel Four of England (maker of *My Beautiful Laundrette*, *Salaam Bombay*), Goldcrest (maker of *Chariots of Fire*, *The Killing Fields*, *The Mission*, and *Gandhi*), and the National Film Development Corporation of India. Substantial investments have been made also by several prominent Americans of Indian origin, including one Zarthusti. That these organizations and individuals have put their money, faith, and hopes on young Kaizad Gustad, is indeed very heartening.

The Storyteller is the story of a Parsi boy, Gustad, who has celluloid in his veins. At twenty-two, he comes to New York to pursue his dream of becoming a "magician" — to find his life in the magic of movies. Along the way, he learns the hard lessons of life and love in the big city. He falls head-over-heels for a stunning young woman, only to discover the impossibility of ever winning her ... By the time he is sixty, Gustad is deep in a life he deplors. He barely manages to make ends meet as a taxi-driver, and is married to a woman who continually berates him for his day-dreaming. Finally, he decides to return to India in hopes of reclaiming the magic of his youth. Standing on the parapet of the now decrepit outdoor cinema that

had fueled his childhood imagination and ambition, he meets himself again as a young boy of ten. The elder Gustad now assumes the role of *The Storyteller* to recite one last, crucial tale — the tale of his own life — so that *we might go back and live our life again, correct our mistakes, be faithful to our dreams*. It is now up to the younger Gustad to seize the opportunity and free both himself and the storyteller from the torment of their future. But how is he to know the right path? *Listen to your heart ... It will tell you. Because I dream, I am.*

The cast will be almost entirely made up of Zarthusti characters. So far, Roshan Seth (Nehru in Attenborough's *Gandhi*) and Shabana Azmi, who has starred in many Indian and International films (*City of Joy*, *Ankur* ...) have agreed to appear in lead roles. Zarthustis in North America have an excellent opportunity to be part of this production venture. Who knows? Today, *The Storyteller*, tomorrow, *Rustam and Sohrab!* The only thing we really know is that Kaizad is off to a flying start.

[For more information about KISMET, or *The Storyteller*, contact Rustom Kevala at (201) 338-9663].

PLEASE GIVE FROM THE HEART ...

Appeals for Student Aid

Donations for student aid projects will be gratefully accepted, and distributed as appropriate by the Helping Hands Committee. Send checks payable to "FEZANA" marked "Student Aid", to: Meher Amalsad, 15842 Villa Nova Circle, Westminster, CA 92683, Tel: (714) 895-3097.

Appeals for Welfare

Donations for welfare projects will be gratefully accepted, and distributed as appropriate by the Welfare Committee. Please send checks payable to "FEZANA" marked "Welfare", to: Dinshaw Joshi, 4515 Willard Ave, #1609-S, Chevy Chase, MD 20815, Tel: (301) 654-6250.

Orthopaedic Surgery. 36 year old Zubin Mahuviewalla, has undergone 5 operations at Bombay's Parsi General Hospital, since his accident in March 1990. He has now been advised to undergo an "uncemented replacement arthroplasty of the hip joint" at the Newcastle Clinic in the U.K. It is beyond the means of this middle-class family, who own a modest automobile workshop, to come up with the estimated costs of \$13,500.

Indore Dokhma. Funds are being solicited for the protection and upkeep of the Dokhma, that serves the 200 Zarthustis in Indore. Costs for litigation against encroachers, fencing, plantations, wells, and general upkeep are estimated to be about Rs. 5 lakhs (\$15,000).

Reconstruction of Daman Agiary. Trustees of the Shree Daman Vapi Parsi Zarthosti Anjuman are appealing for funds to reconstruct the 150 year old Daman Agiary building, which is in a sadly dilapidated state. Total cost is estimated at Rs. 12 million. President Dosabhai Oliaji writes: "We humbly request all benevolent Zarthustis to help us in this noble cause, and in return receive the blessings of this old and sacred fire."

Bombay Hostel Anniversary. The Parsi Student's Hostel Association is raising funds for the improvement of the Hostel, established in 1937. It is run under the auspices of the Bombay Parsi Panchayet, and provides accommodation for 58 out-of-town college students.

ZAPA Youth Set Shining Example

CYRA F. M. CONTRACTOR, SHIREEN F. CAMA and DILSHAD A. BALAPORIA, of the Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania are setting a shining example, with their endeavor to help a needy Parsi child in India. They are raising money by doing odd jobs and providing services for community members and neighbors, to support this child. We applaud their Zarthusti spirit, and hope that their initiative will inspire other youths to embark on similar projects to help the needy.

Acknowledgements

FEZANA 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 Youth, FEZANA Journal, General, or for a specific appeal. Checks may be sent as requested in the appeal, or to: FEZANA, 5750 South Jackson Street, Hinsdale, Illinois 60521.

For Welfare

Cyrus F. Austin, AZ (\$175); Kamran Behrooz & Saghar Javanshir, TX (\$10); J. S. Cama, TX (\$20); J. H. Dudha, TX (\$10); Behram & Fareida Irani, TX (\$101); Dinshaw & Goolcher Joshi, MD (\$50); Cowsie & Jerroo Malva, CA (\$21); Shahrokh & Gool Mehta, NY (\$21); Pervez & Dhun Mehta, TX (\$150); Tehmtan & Aloo Mistry, MD (\$25, \$40); Feroze & Anahita Sidhwa, TX (\$200); Dick & Sherroo Vazir, FL (\$50); Jim Jagus, PA (\$500).

For Religious: Education:

Kamran Behrooz & Saghar Javanshir, TX (\$10).

For Religious: Education:

Naju Daruwala, CA (\$25); Firoze & Pravina Gandhi, CA (\$10); Feroze & Maharukh Motafram, FL (\$10); Dr. Farrokh Mistree and Dr. Janet Mistree, GA (\$10); Shirin Jagosh, Nova Scotia (\$10); Dick & Sherroo Vazir, TX (\$50).

For Helping: Hands:

Shahrokh & Gool Mehta, NY (\$21).

For FEZANA Journal:

We gratefully acknowledge receipt of about 75 subscriptions this time, but due to lack of space only donations are acknowledged here. For subscription records, please check your address label.

Khodaram Afarin, IN (\$10); Najoo Amalsadi, TX (\$10); Jehan & Freney Bagli, NJ (\$20); Mehelly Bam, TX (\$21); Farokh Bhada, SC (\$20); Roshan & Perin Bhappu, AZ (\$18); H.K. & Meher Banajee, LA (\$25); Jal Birdy, CA (\$21); A. Chohan, ONT (\$15); Dr. R. C. Cooper, Singapore (\$20); Najoo Daroowalla, NY (\$20); Sherroo Daruwalla, IL (\$15); Kashmira & Khushrav Dastur, BC (\$15); Dara & K. D. Deboo, WA (\$25); Malcolm Deboo, U.K. (\$15); K. Desai, QE (\$15); Homi Dordi, U.K. (\$11); Khushro & Armaity Elavia, MD (\$11); Soonoo & Rukhshana Engineer, BC (\$24); Nooshin and Hooshang Farahmand, WA (\$20); Shahrokh & Bachi Ghaswala, IL (\$30); Dr. K. Harvesf, FL (\$24); Bejan Irani, IL (\$20); Farieda & Behram Irani, TX (\$10); Dr. Daryoush & Mahin Jahanian, KS (\$25); Yasmin Jangi, CA (\$31); S. A. Jokhi, WA (\$10); Dinshaw & Goolcher Joshi, MD (\$50); Shahrukh & Nargis Kermani, MD (\$15); Yazdi & Charlotte Kharas, TX (\$10); Cyrus & Yasmin Kotval, AZ (\$10); Noshir & Dinaz Langrana, NJ (\$20); Sharook & Sheila Madon, IL (\$15); Sorab Mama, TX (\$10); Hoshi & Kimberly Mehta, IL (\$30); Jehangir & Olive Mobed, IL (\$20); Ardeshtir Mistry, TX (\$10); Jehangir & Goolcher Morris, PA (\$20); Parvez & Pari Mukadam, MN (\$10); Payk-e-Mehr, BC (\$101); Minoo & Zarin Press, IL (\$25); Rusi & Peroja Press, NJ (\$25); Viraf Reporter, NJ (\$25); Gustad & Avan Sagar, ONT (\$ Feroze & Anahita Sidhwa, TX (\$25); Erach Songadwala, IL (\$20); Armita & Bahram Soroosh, NJ (\$15); Sorab Vatcha, CA (\$10); Parviz & Susan Varjavand, CA (\$16); Dr. M. Darius Vohman, GA (\$50);

For General Fund:

Shirin Jagosh, Nova Scotia (\$20); Rustom Kevala, MD (\$25); Dr. Tony Larson, WI (\$20); Tehmtan & Aloo Mistry, MD (\$25); Roda J. Pavri, BC (\$25); Pesi & Aban Vazifdar, IL (\$25);

Sudrehs Made to Order

Coomi Pesi Cooper will sew sudrehs to order for males, females and children. Contact Coomi at (609) 427-4481.

JOBS

Submissions and inquiries for this column may be made to: Dr. Rustom Kevala (see back cover).

Obstetrician Desires Affiliation

A Zoroastrian Board certified obstetrician - gynaecologist, currently in an active solo practice in the Midwest, is looking for an association with the same or a multi-speciality group. Willing to relocate. Call (419) 472-8900. [J94-1].

Mobed from Athornan Madressa Seeking Position in USA or Canada

25 year old qualified mobed from the Athornan Madressa, Dadar, Bombay, is seeking a position as a priest in USA or Canada. He has a B.E. in Instrumentation Engineering from Bombay University, and comes highly recommended by Ervad Ramiyar Karanjia, and Ervad Rustom Panthaki, Principal of the Madressa. [J94-2]

Ph.D. in French Seeking Job

Young Parsi lady with Ph.D. in French (University of Virginia) is looking for a suitable position. Also experienced in editorial work (in English) in publishing companies. Contact Hutoxi Hathi at (804) 979-5543 or (212) 932-3946. [J94-3].

Employment Assistance

The Zoroastrian Society of Ontario has formed an Employment Assistance Subcommittee, to provide help and advice in seeking employment. Contact Chairperson, Niloufer Mama at (905) 457-1543.

Corporate Positions Available

A large Chicago area manufacturing corporation has positions available. Contact Kayomars Mehta at (708) 974-1238.

(1) *Credit Manager*, requiring B.S. or M.B.A. with 10+ years of commercial credit experience.

(2) *Production Artist* in graphic arts to prepare computer-generated art work.

(3) *Customer support manager for Latin America*. Minimum requirement is B.S. in food science, microbiology. 3 - 5 years experience needed with fluency in Spanish or Portuguese.

Are You a Techno-MBA?

According to the January 31, 1993 issue of *Business Week* MBAs who also have engineering and computer skills are suddenly 'red hot' in the U.S.A. Call them Techno-MBAs. "At business schools from Wharton to Berkeley, a new kind of MBA is

emerging: one with dirty — and sometimes wet — hands. These types of managers are made to order for the new horizontal corporation — people who not only understand the basics of marketing, accounting and finance, but also have a feel for computers and the other technologies that help companies deliver their products and services. Right now, they number only about 3,000 of the 75,000 MBAs who graduate each year ..."

"Recipients of Northwestern's three-year-old master of management in manufacturing got twice as many job offers — five per student — as regular MBAs. At Texas, where 25% of the 400 new MBAs left school last spring without a job, the 25 graduates of the business school's Informational Systems Management program averaged 3.5 offers each, most of them in the \$50,000 range ..."

MATRIMONIALS

FEZANA maintains a matrimonial file and will coordinate the initial contacts between interested parties. FEZANA does not assume responsibility for verifying credentials; respondents are urged to make proper checks before entering into any obligations. Please contact Roshan Rivetna (see back cover).

Attractive, open-minded Parsi lady, 36, 5' 5", looking for stable Parsi gentleman, unencumbered by the past, who like me, has professional education, honesty and integrity, traditional values, good sense of humor, and is emotionally and financially stable. I enjoy working out, cooking, swimming, dancing, romantic candlelight dinners, walks, traveling, movies, trips to the mountains, camping and those special quiet times. I believe a relationship starts with a friendship first. Please call (403) 461-5729. [F93-9].

Dentist, male, 41, 5' 11", greying hair, U.S. citizen, divorced, 3 children, artistic, does oil painting and pottery. Loves the outdoors, owns motorboat and house on riverfront. [M94-1].

Male scientist, from New York state, visiting California, Toronto and Europe. Enjoys outdoors (hiking, cross-country skiing, swimming), dancing (contra, ballroom, jitterbug), gardening, traveling. Would like to meet caring, affectionate, intelligent female with happy disposition. [M94-2].

Handsome professional male, Financially and emotionally secure. Enjoys music, photography, fine dining and traveling. Would like to hear from

sincere, caring, mature and fun loving individual who would appreciate reciprocation of same from me. Call Rustom at (318) 798-2281 or daytime (318) 227-4129. [M94-3].

Slim, attractive lady, 30, 5' 2", working as secretary in Canada, enjoys traveling, tennis. [F94-3a].

Athletic, handsome male, 35, 6' 2", Ph.D. with engineering, good family. Enjoys sports, music and traveling. [M94-6].

Mechanical Engineer, male, 28, 5' 10", M.Tech., non-smoker, non-drinker. Enjoys sports, outdoors. In England since 1975, but often visits family in U.S.A. Interested in meeting Parsi girl from good family. [M94-7].

M.B.A. male, 32, 5' 10", C.P.A., well settled in business finance. In U.S.A. for 10 years. Athletic, enjoys sports, traveling, tennis, International foods, [M94-8].

Physician, Zarthusti lady, late 40s, 5' 6", would like to share loving, caring and fun-filled relationship. [F94-9].

Good looking, slim lady, 37, 5' 4", in doctorate program, from good Bombay family. Loves traveling, music, outdoors, piano, theater, fond of children and animals. Would like to meet professional gentleman with similar interests. [F94-10].

Soft-spoken, good looking lady, 37, 5' 5", M. Com, working in reputed company in Bombay, brother well settled in U.S.A. Good natured and loving personality. [F94-11].

Pretty and slim, 27, 5' 2", B.S. with computers, parents well settled in U.S.A. Widowed in 1992 with two small children. Plays piano, soprano singer, studies French language, artistic, good home maker. [F94-12].

Male, 30, well-built, 5' 7", fun loving, outgoing, computer science degree from University of Houston, working for a New Jersey computer consulting firm. Looking for attractive, outgoing, mature, well educated woman. Call (908) 572-3931. [M94-13].

Cultured lady, over 50, intelligent, educated, well-established, God fearing, considered good looking. Variety of interests including nature walks, the outdoors, traveling. Seeks marriage minded thorough gentleman, over 55, as life partner. Widowers OK. [F94-14].

Executive Secretary, female, 33, 5' 5", well settled in U.S.A. for 5 years, B.Com. Fun loving, good home maker, loves cooking, traveling, enjoys music, happy disposition. [F94-15].

MILESTONES

FEZANA maintains records of births, navjotes (sudreh-pushhi), weddings, deaths, and other major events such as graduations, navar and martab ceremonies, and other honors. Please send full information to Dr. Rustom Kevala (see back cover). Photos of navjotes, weddings and other celebrations are invited, and will be published as space permits.

Births

Burjis, a boy, to Hutokhshi and Porus Cooper of Cherry Hill, New Jersey, on October 6. Burjis has an older brother, Malcolm.

Delsheen, a girl, to Behnaz and Jehangir Dahmubed, of Smyrna, Georgia, on December 6. A sister for 3 year old Justin-Kaiwan.

Shahnaz, a girl, to Mahrukh and Khushroo Fitter of Huntington Beach, California, on August 4.

Tania, a girl, to Rubina and Farshid Khan of Houston, Texas, on October 16. Nasha, a girl, to Perveen and Minoo Katrack, of California, on December 11.

Jeandiar, a son, to Medea and Esfandiar Kalanter, of Ontario, on November 13.

Veesta, a daughter, to Camelia and Dr. Shahradd Mavandadi, of Ontario, on September 5.

Kyrus, a boy, to Zareen and Kaiyomarz Mohta of Northern California, on October 6.

Viraf, a boy, to Maneck and Khushrav Nariman of New Jersey, on September 8.

Zara, a girl, to Arbez and Hoshang Patel of Arlington, Texas, on May 31. [The editor regrets errors in this announcement in the last issue].

Farokh, a son, to Marook and Phil Sidhwa, of Ontario, on April 15.

Meher, a girl, to Dr. Rusi and Navaz Taleyarkhan, in Oakridge, Tennessee, on May 28. Meher has two older sisters, Pervin, born in Pittsburgh on November 27, 1986, and Manaz, born in Pittsburgh, on November 14, 1987. The Taleyarkhans live in Knoxville.

Jamsheed, a boy to Nancy and Mehrdad Yazdani, of Texas, on September 21.

Navjote (Sudreh-Pushi) Ceremonies

Kershaw, son of Rukshan and Jehangir Bulsara, of Ontario, on May 1.

Alicia, daughter of Soonu and Zubin Dotiwala, of Ontario, on September 4.

Zubin, son of Arnavaz and Rohinton Eduljee, of Chicago area, in Bombay.

Jamshir and Malcolm, sons of Khushroo and Farida Lakdawala, at the Saher Agiary in Bombay, on December 3.

Nina Mehta, daughter of Dhun and Pervez, in Dallas, on August 7.

Zubin, son of Viloo and Nidhi Thakkar, on October 23, in Kitchener, Ontario.

Navar Initiations

Ervad Zarvan Karanjia, son of Zarin and Ervad

Neriosang Karanjia, and Ervads Hoshi and Neville Vazifdar, sons of Aban and Ervad Pesi Vazifdar, were ordained as priests at Navar ceremonies in Bombay in January 1994. All are from the Chicago area.

Ervad Farzad Mirza, son of Kety and Freddy Mirza of Ontario, in Bombay, on December 11.

Weddings

Farzad Aidun, son of Faraidun and Manijeh Aidun of Manassas, Virginia, to Farnaz Khorrami, daughter of Ardeshir and Parvin Khorrani of Bethesda, Maryland, on August 28. Farzad and Farnaz make their new home in North Potomac, Maryland.

Dr. Roshan and Perin Bhappu, in Tucson, Arizona, on March 21.

Rubin Engineer, son of Minoo and Gool Engineer, to Suzanne Hillary Ward, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Barry Ward, in Vancouver, B.C., on September 4.

Khushrow and Hilla Machhi, of California, in Bombay, in December 1993.

Dr. Jimmy Mistry, of Ohio, and Nancy Funk, also of Ohio, in Bombay, on December 6, 1993.

Farhad Khushroo Patel, son of Dr. Khushroo and Dr. Roda Patel, of Northbrook, Illinois, and Susan Anne Hallenbeck, in Saint Paul, Minnesota, on January 22.

Shiraz Khushroo Patel, younger son of Dr. Khushroo and Dr. Roda Patel, and Michelle Dawn Christensen, in Maple Grove, near Minneapolis, Minnesota, on March 19.

Bahram Shahryary, son of General Khodarahm and Irandokht Shahryary of Sterling, Virginia, with Mandana Dehghanian, daughter of Mondegar and Parvin Dehghanian of Alexandria, Virginia, on August 7. Bahram and Mandana live in Arlington, Virginia.

Hormoz Diniary to Sharareh Soltani, at the Rustom and Morvarid Guiv Darbe Mehr, in Barnaby, B.C. on September 4.

Deaths

Arnavaz Arjani, 79, of heart failure, in Philadelphia, PA, on December 21, mother of Tehemton (Dogdoe) Arjani of Los Angeles, CA, Kobad Arjani of Hackensack, NJ, Neville (Anita) Arjani and Freny (Jamshed) Ranji of Philadelphia, Dolly (Nari) Balsara of Miami, FL, and Jer (Filli) Udvadia of Chicago, IL.

Erach Bharucha, father of Viraf (Rashna) Bharucha of Austin, in Bombay in May 1993. Rashna also lost her father, Noshir Mehta, in Bombay in September 1993.

Homai Bomanji, mother of Peshotan and Mehernosh, sister of Khorshed Patell and Godrej Khursigara of Toronto, in Multan, Pakistan, on November 6.

Professor Dinshaw (Bandy) Burjorjee, in Shanghai, China, of a fatal illness, in November 1993. Prof. Burjorjee was appointed to a prestigious post at the University of Shanghai in 1991. Prior to that he was in Washington, DC, in the mid-1970s and on various assignments in USA and India. There was an outpouring of grief on his sudden demise, from family, friends and colleagues, in Shanghai and the USA, who all held him in high esteem. Ashes will be interred at Rock Creek Park Cemetery in

Washington. He is survived by his wife, Lucille and daughters, of Machias, ME.

Perviz Confectioner, 66, wife of Adi, mother of Zarir, Vira Okuda, Darayus and Kolly Confectioner of Northern California, and sister of Sheroo Mistry and daughter of Alamai Mistry of Bombay, on November 16.

Mehera Rustom Dastur, mother of Ardeshtir Dastur of Toronto, grandmother of Dilnavaz Pohowalla of Oregon, and great-grandmother of Firdosh, Neville and Persis, in Mhow, India, on December 1.

Sheriar Irani, 66, husband of Jer, father of Khodu, Boman, Aban and Parvin, of heart failure, in Fullerton, California, on June 20.

Faramroze Jesung, 85, father of Nariman and Noshir of California, in Surat, on July 27.

Tehmi Karkaria, mother of Gev, of Montreal, Quebec, on September 29.

Jerbanoo, mother of Nergish (Phiroze) Irani of Chicago area, in Bombay, on December 19. Mother of Amy (Jimmy) Makujina of Northern California, in Bombay, on September 24.

Fareedoon Mava, of Dadar Parsee Colony, Bombay, on December 31, father of Viraf Mava of Ottawa and brother of Eruch, of Toronto, Ontario.

Jamshed Mehta Meherwanji, Jehangir and Ratanshaw of New York area, in Karachi on September 25.

Dhun Manijah, mother of Khursheed Engineer and Nusserwanji Manijah of Ontario, in Karachi, on September 16.

Khurshed Minwala, brother of Soonoo Mama, Purviz Saher and Villie Homji of Toronto, in Karachi, on September 25.

Gohar Ghaibi Oshidari, 65, mother of Siros of Vancouver, BC, and Mobed Ardeshtir Oshidari, in Kerman, Iran, on August 22.

Bahram Ostad, 85, husband of Ketayun, father of Mahnaz, Behnaz, Kourosh, and Goshtasb, in Tehran, on August 22. Gostasb lives in Chatsworth, California, and is past President of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington. Kourosh also was a long-time resident of the Washington, DC area, but had returned to Iran in 1992.

Soonu Pagdiwala, sister of Shirin Dastoor, aunt of Phiroze and Noshir Dastoor, Perin Soli Pardiwala, Katy Freddy Mirza and Sheroo Minoo Bhatthena, of Ontario, on September 8.

Dr. Noshir Toddywalla, in a tragic car accident near his home in Cincinnati, Ohio. Noshir, in his early forties, was struck by a pickup truck, as he left for work in his car on the morning of November 11. Noshir is survived by his wife Barbara, parents Rusi and Rhoda, and brothers Aspi, Adil and Ronnie. The Toddywallas have no children. Ervad Neriosang Karanjia and Ervad Pesi Vazifdar, priests of the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago, performed the funeral and "dasma" ceremonies. Ironically, five years ago, almost to the day, Ervads Karanjia and Vazifdar, had performed Noshir and Barbara's wedding ceremony in Chicago.

Pheroza Vania, wife of Tehmurasp, mother of Darab,

Nilufer, Dhan Divecha of Toronto, Keki of Ohio, and Bannu Shrikhande of Madera, California, in Madera, on September 12.

OBITUARIES

Ardeshtir Jahanian — a Lifetime of Service

On January 21, 1993, the Zarthusti community of Iran lost one of its active members, Ardeshtir Jahanian, at the age of 86. Born in Yazd, Iran, he moved at a young age, with his brothers to Tehran, where they established business together, dealing in leather, cement, ice and oxygen. The brothers also became active in an agricultural enterprise. In 1950, they founded Goodorz Hospital in their home town, Yazd. They went on to establish endowments for the treatment of those who could not afford services on their own. A little later, the Laal Maternity Hospital was annexed to the Goodorz Hospital.

In Ardeshtir's public service, he was elected as a vice-president of the Zoroastrian Association of Tehran and, in this capacity, was instrumental in organizing the First World Zoroastrian Congress in Tehran.

Ardeshtir was a writer for Hookht magazine for thirty years, since its founding by Dr. Rostam Sarfeh and later served as its publisher. He was also the author of several publications: *The Life of Zarathustra*, *The Religion of Achaemenians*, *The Seven Articles*, *The Twenty-One Articles*, *Historical Events*, and *Ferdowsi's Advisement*.

Six months prior to his death, his service to the Zarthusti community was acknowledged at the Mehrgan Festival, where Ardeshtir was awarded a recognition plaque by the Zoroastrian Association of Tehran.

Ardeshtir is survived by a large family of illustrious Zarthustis: sons, Dr. Iraj Jahanian of Missouri, Dr. Daryoush Jahanian of Kansas, and Dr. Fariborz Jahanian of San Jose, California; and daughters, Iran Soroushian and Paricher Zeinabadi of Los Angeles, and Homa Jamshedi, Shirin Khodavandi and Laal Soroushian in Iran.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

To all our subscribers and advertisers. We deeply appreciate your donations to help towards the high cost of printing and mailing.

Jehangir Ratanji Dadabhoy (J.R.D.) Tata, Epic Figure in Indian Industry

J. R. D. Tata, 89, towering figure in Indian industry, passed away in his sleep on November 29, in Geneva, Switzerland. He was on holiday in Geneva, where he suffered a kidney infection. He is survived by his wife Thelma. The body was cremated and laid to rest in the family mausoleum at Pere la Chaise in Paris, where Mr. Tata's parents, Ratanji Tata and his French wife, Sooni, are cremated. The ashes of two of his brothers are also there. The renowned cemetery is the last resting place of famous personalities such as Oscar Wilde, Chopin and Jim Morrison.

Born in Paris, on July 29, 1904, J.R.D. was the product of two continents. His father, R. D. Tata was a cousin of Jamsetji Tata, who gave India the steel and hydroelectric industries. In 1902, R. D. Tata's marriage to a French girl, Suzanne Briere (who later changed her name to Sooni) created a sensation, because R. D. Tata not only married outside the faith, but took the revolutionary step of having his wife converted to the Zarthushti faith.

In pursuit of his childhood dream of flying, in 1929, J.R.D. became the first Indian pilot, with the serial number "1" on his license. A year later, the 26-year-old J.R.D. competed for the Aga Khan Trophy, offered for the first Indian to fly between India and England. When he landed at Aboukir in Egypt, he found that Aspy Engineer, the other contender, who was flying in the opposite direction, was stranded for want of a spark plug. J.R.D. sportingly parted with his and they continued their respective journeys. Aspy beat him by a few hours!

In the early 1930s, a daring Englishman, Nevill Vintcent came to India offering joy rides. He suggested to J.R.D. that they start an airline. And so, with an initial investment of Rs. 200,000, the country's first national carrier, Tata Airlines, renamed Air India in 1946, was conceived. One October morning, in 1932, a single-engined Pussmoth plane took off from Karachi with a load of mail for Bombay. As the plane hummed and rose, the pilot said a word of prayer. India's first airline was inaugurated, with J.R.D. at the controls.

THE NEW YORK TIMES OBITUARIES TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1993

J.R.D. Tata Dead; Indian Industrialist And Benefactor, 89

BOMBAY, India, Nov. 29 (AP) — J. R. D. Tata, the Indian industrialist and philanthropist, died today at a hospital in Switzerland. He was 89.

His company, Tata Sons Ltd., said he had had a kidney infection for several weeks.

A confidant of prime ministers, Mr. Tata was one of India's most influential figures.

He joined Tata Sons, a holding company, in 1922 and became chairman in 1938. The family empire makes products as varied as hand soap and trucks, and runs the Taj chain of luxury hotels.

More than 80 companies and 250,000 workers come under the Tata umbrella, and together they generate annual revenue of \$4.5 billion. A large share of the company's profits have gone to charitable trusts for welfare, education and medical research.

Mr. Tata founded the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, a leading research center in India.

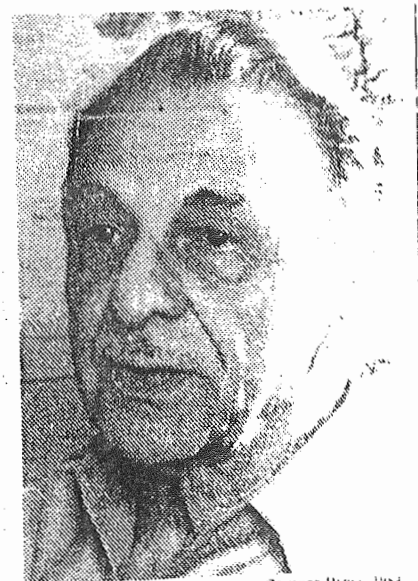
A Start in Aviation

Two years ago he was awarded India's highest civilian public service award, the Bharat Ratna, or Jewel of India. An early advocate of family planning, Mr. Tata received the United Nations Population Award in 1992.

Mr. Tata was the first man in India to qualify for a private pilot's license. He formed the Tata Aviation Service in 1932, and it grew into Air India, the state-owned international airline.

Jehangir Ratanji Dadabhoy Tata was born in Paris in 1904 to R. D. Tata of Bombay and Pauline Suzanne Genevieve Tata. His grandfather, Jamshedji Nusserwanji Tata, founded the Tata enterprises in 1877 after he studied cotton spinning in England. His sons took over the mills and in 1907 started the Tata Iron and Steel Company, with capital raised from 8,000 Indian investors.

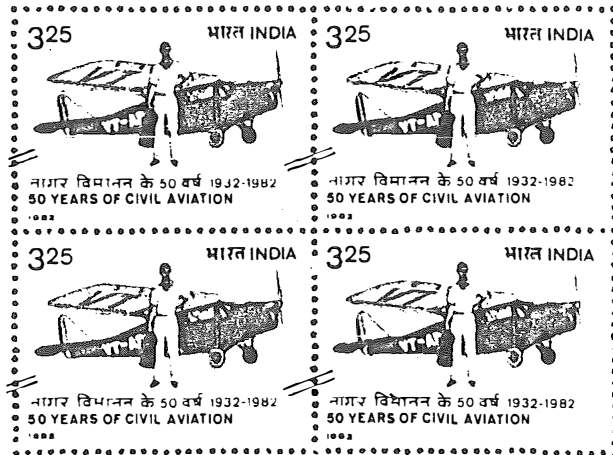
Mr. Tata is survived by his wife, Thelma. He is to be buried at the Père Lachaise cemetery in Paris.



J. R. D. Tata

Exactly fifty years later, 78-year-old J.R.D., took the controls again in a historic re-enactment. Tata flew from Santa Cruz Airport to Karachi in his tiny, propeller-driven, single-engined de Havilland Leopard Moth, an aircraft similar to the wood and fabric Puss Moth he had flown as a young man of 28. Carrying a packet of mail in 1932, Tata's flight had heralded the birth of an airline that now spans five continents. This time, too, Tata carried a green Tata Airlines mailbag.

J.R.D. commemorative stamp to mark 50 years of Civil Aviation in India.



As Chairman of Air-India for over fifty years, J.R.D. was loved and respected by all. He was a perfectionist. His rule for business success is: "Strive for perfection and you will reach excellence." Asked what his secret of success in business was, he replied: "No secret, it is long hours. I used to put in 70 to 75 hours a week of work."

In 1992, J.R.D. became the first Zarthusti to be awarded the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award. At a special reception by the Bombay Parsi Punchayet, speakers bore witness to Tata's courtesy, respect and sensitivity to the suffering of others; to the quest for perfection which drove lesser people to the wall; to his zest for life; to his reverence for human liberalism; and to his ultimate Zoroastrianism.

[References: *Times of India*, November 30, 1993; *Parsi-ana*, March and December 1982, and April 1992; "Encounters with the Eminent", by Russi M. Lala, published by India Book House, Bombay; "Aircraft and Engine Perfect: The Story of J.R.D. Tata", by Murad Fyze.



EVENTS AND HONORS

The Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia held its Annual Sports Day, on August 29, at Confederation Park, Burnaby, BC. From the 30 or so enthusiastic participants, special trophies for maximum points were won by KHODARAM FOROUGH (over 14), SANDRA NANAVALY and MEHRABAN POULAD-NOSHIRVAN (10 - 14), AMITIS KHOSANDI (6-9, girls) and RISHAD DAROOOWALA (6-9, boys).

The Seventh Annual Parsi General Hospital Fund Raiser, was hosted by HOMAI and ARVI KASAD, of Northern California, on October 16. Donations of about \$6,000 have been collected so far.

Plaques of appreciation were given to Ervads KOBAD JAMSHED and JIMMY MAKUJINA in grateful recognition of priestly services to the Zarthusti community of Northern California, on November 6.

Dr. KERSEY ANTIA, of Chicago, was on the Jerry Springer show on NBC-TV on October 11. Dr. Antia, a psychologist, counseled a couple with a history of marital violence, on this one hour show, with a live audience of over 200 persons, and a TV audience of thousands. He also appeared on a two hour radio talk show on January 13, with Milt Rosenberg on the Chicago's WGN, with religious leaders from three other faiths.

RUSTUM E. BANKWALLA, 65, Chairman and Chief Executive of the progressive Forbes Group of nine companies, is one of the seven nominees of the Government of Pakistan on the Central Board of Directors of the State Bank of Pakistan. His son Viraf has settled in Bethesda, Maryland.

SAM BHADA, General Manager of St. James Court Hotel in London, will run in the 26-mile London Marathon, to raise funds for the new premises of the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe.

BOMI DAMKEVALA, President of the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago spoke on "The Life and Teachings of Zarthustra" at the All-Religions' Founders' Day, in Westmont, Illinois, on November 21. He also spoke at the Interfaith Thanksgiving observance in Chicago. KAYOMARSH MEHTA, also of the ZAC, offered prayers at the DuPage Interfaith Thanksgiving Service in Lisle, Illinois.

SHEROO DARUWALLA was recently honored by the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago for her long and dedicated service to the Zarthusti community of Chicago. She was presented with a clock.

UNICEF Ontario has thanked PHIROZ DASTOOR of Toronto for remaining a "very special friend" by his continual support and assistance to its Halloween campaign.

PAUL (PERVEZ) ENGINEER of Hayward, California, has been promoted to Regional Vice President of Primerica Financial Services.

RUSI GANDHI was the Chief Guest at Chicago's Diwali celebration on November 13. Rusi was presented with a plaque and a certificate of appreciation for outstanding and dedicated service to the Indian community.

NAZNEEN IRANI, who has a perfect record for school attendance [*FEZANA Journal, Winter 1993*], was also honored by the Kiwanis Club of Leisure World, at a luncheon in Wheaton, Maryland.

YEZDIAR HOMI KAIKOBAD has been elected to the national Assembly of Pakistan.

AFREEN KAYANI was selected for the Alief Hastings School Swim Team, in Houston, and will be entering inter-school competition.

DR. VERA MEHTA is in Bosnia and Croatia, doing humanitarian work under the auspices of the United Nations. Vera's task is to assist women and children who have been victims of the war.

KATY MULLA was presented with a Certificate of Recognition by Mayor Hazel McCallion of Toronto, for her valuable contribution as a member of the Committee for Pakistan's Independence Day celebrations. She has been Director of the Multicultural Society of Pakistani Canadians for a number of years.

VIRAF REPORTER, of Hoboken, New Jersey, has been appointed Manager of the Foreign Exchange Market Segment of Dow Jones Telerate, Inc. He joins the company's Americas Group at Harborside Financial Center in Jersey City.

BAPSY SIDHWA received the prestigious Laila Wallace Readers' Digest Award for writing in New York on January 10, 1994. Bapsy recently launched her latest book, *The American Brat* about an innocent, 16-year-old Parsi girl, Firoza Ginwalla, Pakistan, who comes to the United States. Bapsy is also the author of *The Bride*, *The Crow Eaters*, and *Cracking India*, which won the 1991 Literature Prize in Germany. Also in 1991, Bapsy received the "Sitara-i-Imtiaz", the highest honor in the arts in Pakistan. [*Manashni, Houston*].

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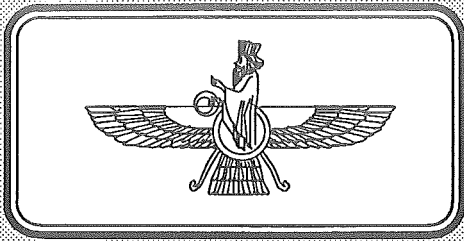
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