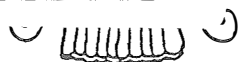


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THE ZARTHUSTI EXPERIENCE: CELEBRATION OF LOVE AND MARRIAGE

*Sakheni vazyamnabyo kainibyo mroami
khshmaibyacha vademo mencha i manzdazdum
vaedodum daenabish abyasta ahum ye vangheush manangho
asha ve anyo ainum vivenghatu tat zi hoi hushenem anghat.*

ZARTHUSTRA'S ADVICE TO MARRYING COUPLES:

*I speak these words to maidens and young men uniting in marriage
and appeal to you to bear in mind, understand in your inner selves,
constantly practice the love of good thoughts.
Let each of you strive to surpass the other in righteousness
which shall indeed bring to each rich rewards.*

[Gatha Vahishtoisti, Y.53.5, translated by T. R. Sethna, 1966]

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EDITORIAL

Tying the Marriage Knot

A few years ago, all of Bombay was talking about the wedding of the rich diamond merchant's daughter. Guests had been flown in by private jet from around the world to share in the festivities. In a city where it is not uncommon to see lines of people waiting to buy a bag of rice or a bottle of cooking oil, guests in the thousands were wined and dined and the whole city, so it seemed, celebrated. While displays of such opulence are few and far between, rare is the bride who does not dream of making her wedding day the most memorable.

Until a few decades ago, Parsi weddings were celebrated by the whole 'mohla' (neighborhood). The bridegroom, dressed in a white 'dagli' (coat) and shining black 'pugree' (hat), would arrive for the wedding on a horse, in procession with family, friends and of-course the 'Nankhatai Band' in their full regalia. The arrival of the bride and groom is celebrated with equal fanfare by the Iranis. As they approach the wedding hall, loud music is played, and guests greet them with an exuberant chorus of screams. Brides in the Far East arrive in a palanquin carried by eight men, festooned with garlands of flowers.

While most brides around the world, including Zarthus-tis, wear white, the traditional color for Hindu brides is red, which is considered to be an auspicious color symbolizing flowers, or sometimes green, symbolizing trees. Her family presents her with the gold "Mangal Sutra" pendant to be worn at all times as a sign of her marriage. The traditional Chinese bride also wears red - a bright red satin wedding tunic, with a crown of red satin, gold and pearls on her head.

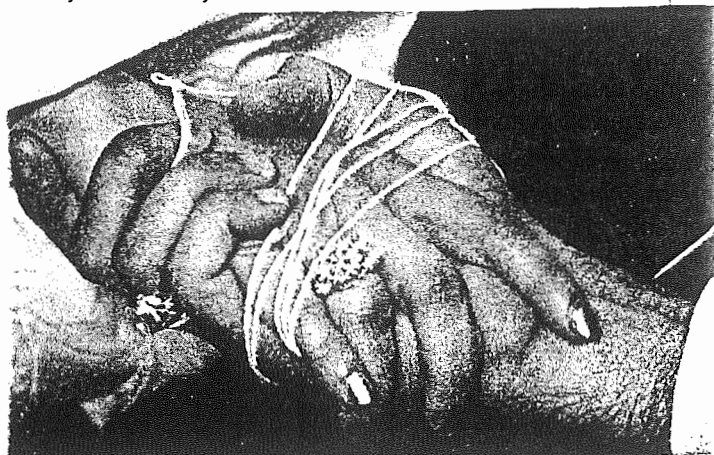
Several other cultures, besides Zarthus-tis, also solemnize their weddings in the presence of a fire. The Hindu bride and groom take seven steps (for the seven stages of life) together around the central fire, which is considered to be a representation of God. Iranian children walk in front of the bridal couple carrying a mirror (from now on there is no looking back) and a candle (to light the way).

History records some unique wedding customs. In Central Africa, where feminine beauty is identified with obesity, the bride-to-be is fed with sweet and fatty foods and allowed no activity for weeks, to achieve that corpulent pulchritude for her proud bridegroom. Whereas in Western societies, she will undergo weeks of dieting to fit into that one-size-smaller wedding dress.

A ring is integral to almost all wedding traditions. According to a sixth century *Treatise of Spousals*, "the form of the ring, being circular, that is round and without end, importeth that their mutual love should flow from one to the other, as in a circle, continually and for-

ever." The custom of wearing the ring on the left hand, fourth finger (though in some European countries it is worn on the right hand and the left hand reserved for widows), is an old English belief that there is an artery that runs from that finger, and that finger alone, straight to the heart. Another more plausible rationale is the fact that the fourth finger is the most protected. It is the only finger that cannot be extended except in the company of a neighboring finger. All the rest can be singly stretched. It's true, try it!

After the wedding festivities are over, most traditions have special ways of giving the newly married couple a happy send-off. One custom that I think is very symbolic comes from Iran. After the wedding festivities are over, friends and family accompany the couple to the bridal chamber. But at the door, they hold on to her, until the groom's side gives her a gift, usually a piece of jewelry or a gold coin. That certainly makes more sense than the American custom of tying old shoes and tin cans to the couple's car as they drive off for the honey-moon. Anyone know where that came from?



The phrase "Tying the Marriage Knot" is, according to *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* from the "Parsi custom of binding the hands of the bride and groom with a sevenfold cord, seven being a sacred number", referring to the Parsi Ara-antar ceremony. The Christian custom of throwing rice on the bride is also attributed to Hindus or Parsis, in whose weddings the couple is showered with rice and rose petals by the officiating priest.

But, isn't it Marriage on which we should expend our energies (and our purses)? And not just the Wedding? So why all this hoop-la over the Wedding Day? But on the other hand, why not? After all, besides your Navjote, there are only two other moments in your life when you are the center of such attention. One is at birth, but how many of us savored, or even remember that moment? And the other is at death. And by then isn't it too late?.

Roshan Rivetna
Publisher, FEZANA Journal

FROM THE PRESIDENT

NAVROZE MUBARAK 1364¹ YZ! A time to reflect on the achievements of the past, a time to reflect on who we are and where have we been, what paths have we followed and where do we wish to go, a time to reflect on how we want to enter the next millennium. Do we want to drift into it, or do we want to follow a road map which we have drawn for ourselves, a map with clear goals and objectives? Do we want to be just a religious minority or do we wish to be known for more? As a community we have to reflect and decide. As equal partners of a Federation, we need to participate in the drawing of this road map.

Reflecting, we have much to be proud of. Our scattered Zarhusti community across North America felt a need to group together, to synergise, to give a voice to our aspirations, and we gave birth to FEZANA in 1987. In the short span of 7 years much has been achieved, many instruments have been started to bring about cohesiveness e.g., our combined efforts to develop a mission for ourselves, a unified calendar, and our demographic profile, help to the Zarhusti refugees from Iran, the Journal, the congresses, the Olympics, the business network, the youth network, the womens' network, our presence at the Parliament of World's Religions and other International meetings and more. But the most important achievement is that we are talking to each other, respecting diverse views, we feel comfortable with each other, we support each other and draw from the strength and talents of each other.

And after reflection comes resolution. Where do we go from here? How do we prepare our road map? First we need to resolve that each and every one of us, children and adults, to the best of our abilities, must learn and understand the history and doctrine of our religion, and the sociologies of the times which led to different practices and interpretations. Religion is expressed and practiced in a social context and not in a vacuum, we must learn to separate "the wheat from the chaff".

Our religion suffered two major blows — once with the destruction of knowledge under Alexander, and again with the destruction of our scriptures under Islam. Do we want to repeat this destructive process? *Do we want to go down in history as having inflicted a third blow on ourselves by neglecting religious education and knowledge due to sheer apathy? To move forward we need to constantly look back to our past for if we do not stand on solid ground we will fall for everything along the way.*

1. The year of Yazdegard Shahriyar, the last Zarhusti emperor, is 1364. The year 1374 is the Islamic year used in Iran, and has nothing to do with Yazdegard Shahriyar. This misconception needs to be corrected.

As we start 1364 YZ and prepare for our future let us resolve to learn, understand and appreciate our heritage. And what better way to do so than to visit the land of the origin of our religion and absorb the ambiance of the historical sites and see how our co-religionists lived and are still living. Once we know the terrain we have to travel and the destination we have to reach, we can start building the road, one mile at a time. Till then

Dolly P. Dastoor
President, FEZANA

ON THE NORTH AMERICAN SCENE

FEZANA Education Committee

Zoroastrian Congresses in North America and elsewhere have served a manifold purpose. They have provided a congenial and wholesome setting for scholarly discourse on the one hand, and on the other, highlighted positive community interaction that has matured into a grass-roots call for action and dynamic leadership. This call is all the more imperative today as the Zarhusti community interacts and grows within the dynamic structure of a pluralistic culture of diverse ethnic backgrounds and divergent religious and moral beliefs. A need for articulate communication in the ensuing, multicultural interaction has become a significant objective. An objective that stems from the stimulating intellectual curiosity of discriminating minds. It is enhanced through an abiding conviction that only knowledge and acquired wisdom can satisfactorily enable collective counsel and empower our youngsters to use informed judgment in the decisions they make.

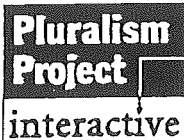
A consensus has emerged in North America to place the religious education of children, youth and adults as the highest priority. Upon this consensus, through the establishment of The Education Committee for adults and children, is based one of the more practical frameworks of leadership with which FEZANA hopes to empower its membership. This Committee — Chair, Kayomارش Mehta, and Co-Chair (Children's Education), Villy Gandhi — has been charged with the responsibility of providing in North America a central repository of educational curriculum to help define the scope of religious education, suggest guidelines, and provide necessary resources and materials for individual members and Member Associations to draw upon as needed.

At the present time, to begin our efforts, the Committee solicits the help of teachers and educators of children, youth and adults, of Member Associations. Relevant information is needed regarding respective curricula, agendas of past seminars and conferences, and a relevant bibliography of reference materials and educa-

tional resources. Furthermore, Associations are requested to submit names and addresses of the coordinators of their religious education programs so that they may be individually contacted at a future date.

The Committee also hopes to provide opportunities for religious educators to attend stimulating workshops and network with others in the field. The first of such opportunities is being planned for the Labor Day weekend, September, 1994. Details will follow. Please direct curriculum information and letters of interest in the workshop to Kayomars Mehta, 8122 Circle Drive, Palos Hills, Illinois 60645, Tel: (708) 974-1238.

Pluralism Project – Zarthustis in Multi-Media CD-ROM about World Religions



The "Pluralism Project" of Harvard University, with a grant from the Lilly Endowment, is producing a full-color interactive CD-ROM incorporating video, audio, text and images of the religious landscape of the U.S. This dynamic educational instrument, for use in schools and colleges and with the potential for reaching a large audience around the country, will document the changing contours of American religious demography, trace the histories of the various traditions in the American context, and explore the issues and implications of this new multi-religious reality for American pluralism.

The CD-ROM will include an entire section on Zoroastrianism. FEZANA has been approached to provide information and serve as advisor for this section. Information, in the form of narratives, photographs, videos, is needed on: A) Zoroastrianism in America, including a time line, issues facing the community, profiles of notable American Zarthustis, and profiles of major Associations; and B) Zoroastrianism the Tradition, including an introduction to the history, theology and practices, a historical world time line, holidays and rites, and expressions of the faith such as music, art, dance, food and dress.

This information will be an invaluable record of our history in North America, even for our own archival purposes. Rohinton Rivetna and Dolly Dastoor have requested the help of Zoroastrian Associations and individuals in gathering this data. Please send the information to Rohinton M. Rivetna, 5750 S. Jackson Street, Hinsdale, Illinois 60521, Tel: (708) 325-5383.

CHECK YOUR ADDRESS LABEL...

Is your subscription due? Check the address label on the back cover of this issue.

Let's Get Involved—Public Relations Needed

One area where the North American Zarthusti community needs a lot of work is Publicity and Public Relations. We need to get better known, better respected, and better represented.

Public relations are essential to ensure a positive perception of our community in North America. Publicity and public relations, if properly orchestrated, would have tremendous benefits and payoff. First and foremost, it will instill a sense of pride in our youngsters, and help them to step out and be counted. Second, it will help to correct many misconceptions about our religion that exist today in the media, popular literature, and even in the academic world. And it will give our small community more clout.

FEZANA President Dastoor is very keen to form a strong Publicity Committee. She is looking for public relations, media and advertising professionals for this Committee. One of the first activities of this committee will be to prepare a publicity package to be distributed to FEZANA Members for use whenever an Association is called to speak about or explain our religion to others. So please, if you have one of these talents, or if you know someone who would be valuable on this committee, call Dastoor at (514) 656-2036.

Hinnells' Study of Parsi Migration to North America — Family and Marriage Patterns

Professor John R. Hinnells and a team of researchers (Rashna Writer, Hustasp and Perviz Bhumgara, and Shirin Patel) conducted an in-depth survey of the experiences of the Zarthusti communities in Britain, America, Canada, and Australia. These communities were then compared with communities in the older settlements in Karachi, Hong Kong and Kenya. The findings are presented in a paper published in *South Asia Research* [Vol. 14, No. 1, Spring 1994]. The detailed findings were presented at the Katrak Lectures at Oxford University in 1985, and will be published by Oxford University Press in 1995.

The study was conducted from carefully-prepared survey questionnaires, accompanied by selected in-depth interviews. A little over 900 questionnaires were returned from North America, which represents a statistically significant sample of the Zarthusti population in the 1980s. The respondents were predominantly (87%) Parsis, mostly from India (but about 32% of these were born in Pakistan, E. Africa, the West, and the Far East) — only 13% stated they were born in Iran.

Migration Patterns: The American migration started in the 1960s, accelerated in the 1970s, and appears to have declined somewhat in the 1980s. Nearly 69% of the respondents came in the 1970s. The study found that due to the perceived opportunities provided in a

country or city, different groups tend to migrate to specific places. For example, postgraduates to Chicago and New York, scientists to America in general, businessmen to Houston, and retired people to California. Once a pattern is established, it is often reinforced through chain migration of not only friends and relatives, but also business and educational contacts.

Age and Marital Status: The American Zarthushti population in 1985 had roughly equal percentage of members below the age of 36, between 36 and 45, and above 46 years. Of these, roughly 55% were male, 18% were single, and 14% intermarried. Compare this to the 'older' communities of London (U.K.) and Karachi, where 35% and 27% of the population were found to be single. The London community expressed the view that its members faced problems in finding suitable partners; although it seems this should be more of a problem in the scattered populations in North America than in U.K.

Marriage and Intermarriage: Figures indicate that intermarriages occur most frequently in the 'scattered groups' rather than in centers such as Chicago, New York, and Toronto. In Toronto, the Zarthushti community is "very well-organized in terms of religious classes and social functions, factors facilitating and encouraging intermarriage." Houston, where intermarriage rate was also found to be low, was singled out as a special case due to a large proportion of its population having come from Karachi in family groups rather than alone as students. In California, in spite of the large number of single students, the intermarriage rate was found to be the lowest in the U.S.A. This was attributed to the large Iranian population there, with an extensive network of extended families to facilitate in-marriage.

Family and Marriage Patterns: The study found that about 33% of the respondents lived alone or in a nuclear family unit (husband, wife and children). The remaining 67% lived in 'extended' families much like in India or Iran, with relatives living in the same city, allowing frequent contact and socializing. Even for the nuclear family groups, the interviews indicated that a well-developed network of friends and acquaintances was present throughout North America. One of the subtle messages of the study is that finding a Zarthushti marriage partner is much easier when there is a network of relatives, interconnected family groups or access to a social or quasi-religious local Association.

The author points out that "in America [the U.S.A.], more respondents want to assert their Zoroastrian-ness rather than their American-ness, because the latter is associated with the threat of the 'melting-pot culture' which is thought to erode distinctiveness. In contrast, the high profile 'multi-culturalism' of Canada is seen as non-threatening and therefore more respondents were willing to identify themselves as Canadians,

that is, citizens of the country of abode, not of birth." These perceptions may have complex and hitherto unexplored implications on 'approval' or 'disapproval' of intermarriage. The approval seems more a matter of resignation than that of conscious decision in its favor. The disapprovals stem partly from the fear of assimilation and partly from the threat of out-conversion of the Zarthushti spouse to a different religion.

Conclusion: More than anything, this study illustrates the complexity of factors which affect the developments of different patterns of beliefs between and within communities. They illustrate the falsity of simple explanations or blanket generalizations.

This study was done prior to 1985, when FEZANA was not even born. Now we have the wherewithal to conduct a more extensive and relevant survey in North America, which, with the Hinnells study as a model, should yield rich dividends of understanding our emerging culture and patterns; and thereby point the way toward more fruitful planning for our future.

IN COMING ISSUES...

Themes for future issues of the Journal will be:

Summer (June) 1995: The Creation Story

Fall (September) 1995: Ancestral Heritage —
Places of Pilgrimage (Udvada, Pir Sab ...)

Letters and articles on these themes are invited. Submission deadline is April 1 for Summer issue, and July 1, for Fall issue.

FEZANA

**HISTORIC RESEARCH AND PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
and
PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE**

Announce a forthcoming special publication
on

ARCHEOLOGICAL EVIDENCES OF ZARATHUSHTRIAN SETTLEMENTS

Original, researched and referenced articles of no more than 20 double-spaced typewritten pages can be submitted to Dr. Pallan Ichaporia, 253 South 4th Street, Womelsdorf, PA 19567

Deadline for submissions is July 1, 1995. Acceptance of articles for publication will be based on the decision of a Special Advisory Committee, which will be final. Authors will be required to conform with format and editorial recommendations of the Committee. For details on the format and discussion of the subject matter, please contact Dr. Ichaporia at (610) 589-5419, e-mail: JPQG61A@prodigy.com.

North American Zoroastrian Census/Directory Data Sheet

All individuals over the age of 18, must complete a separate form.

I. Census Information (Confidential)

	Self	Spouse (if married)
Place of Birth		
Sex (Circle one)	male / female	male / female
Religion (Circle one)	Zoroastrian / non-Zoroastrian	Zoroastrian / non-Zoroastrian
Age: (Circle one)	<input type="checkbox"/> 70 and higher <input type="checkbox"/> 60 to 69	<input type="checkbox"/> 70 and higher <input type="checkbox"/> 60 to 69
	<input type="checkbox"/> 50 to 59 <input type="checkbox"/> 40 to 49	<input type="checkbox"/> 50 to 59 <input type="checkbox"/> 40 to 49
	<input type="checkbox"/> 30 to 39 <input type="checkbox"/> 18 to 29	<input type="checkbox"/> 30 to 39 <input type="checkbox"/> 18 to 29
exact age (optional)		

CHILDREN:

CHILDREN:

	Name: _____	Name: _____
Place of Birth	_____	_____
Sex (Circle one)	male / female	male / female
Religion (Circle one)	Zoroastrian / non-Zoroastrian	Zoroastrian / non-Zoroastrian
Age (Circle one):	<input type="checkbox"/> 18 or higher	<input type="checkbox"/> 18 or higher
	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 to 17 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 to 15	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 to 17 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 to 15
	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 to 9 <input type="checkbox"/> 0 to 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 to 9 <input type="checkbox"/> 0 to 4
exact age (optional)		

	Name: _____	Name: _____
Place of Birth	_____	_____
Sex (Circle one)	male / female	male / female
Religion (Circle one)	Zoroastrian / non-Zoroastrian	Zoroastrian / non-Zoroastrian
Age (Circle one):	<input type="checkbox"/> 18 or higher	<input type="checkbox"/> 18 or higher
	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 to 17 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 to 15	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 to 17 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 to 15
	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 to 9 <input type="checkbox"/> 0 to 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 to 9 <input type="checkbox"/> 0 to 4
exact age (optional)		

II. Directory (Optional) Information

(circle yes to include the information in the directory, otherwise circle no)

NAME: _____, _____ / _____
last name first name, MI spouse name, MI. (if married)

[yes/no] HOME ADDRESS: _____

[yes/no] HOME PHONE NO: _____ HOME Fax: _____
and/or e-mail: _____

[yes/no] Name of the Zoroastrian Association membership if any: _____

	<u>SELF</u>	<u>SPOUSE</u>
[yes/no] Originally from		

[yes/no] Profession

[yes/no] Business or
Employer _____

[yes/no] Address

[yes/no] Business Phone:

[yes/no] Bus. Fax / e-mail _____

North American Directory Project

The North American Directory Project is off and running. Coordinators are gathering information that will facilitate several ongoing FEZANA activities:

- (1) North American Zoroastrian Directory;
- (2) Demographic (census) studies;
- (3) Business/professional network;
- (4) Youth network.

"To make the project succeed, we need the cooperation of EVERY-ONE, whether they are members of an Association or not", says Noshir Langrana, Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Rutgers University, and main coordinator of the Project. "At the very least, the Directory will enable people to get in touch with 'lost' friends and relatives to improve networking", says FEZANA President Dolly Dastoor.

Networking is the key to our survival, growth, and empowerment. The directory will not contain confidential information like age or place of birth, but the complete database will provide a clear, statistically reliable demographic picture to chart our course into the 21st century.

We now have the tools, the people, and the will to do it. The project committee includes Noshir Langrana (NY/NJ); Anahita Sidhwa (TX), Minoo Patel (IL), and Mehran Sepehri (CA). Data collection methods, confidentiality concerns, and types of information needed have been discussed and worked out with the Associations and on the Zoroastrian e-mail network. The result is this form.

Please complete the form (make additional copies to give to other Zarthustis who may not be getting the Journal) and return them to your local Association or to:

Noshir Langrana
19 Brookfield Way
Robbinsville, NJ 08691
Tel: (609) 275-9154, or e-mail:
langrana@maya.rutgers.edu
DO NOT DELAY—DO IT TODAY!

Rocky Mountain Zarthustis

The Denver area Zarthusti community, numbering less than 30 has been informally organized since Navroze 1993 as "The Rocky Mountain Zoroastrian Association" under the leadership of Rumi Engineer (President), Bucky Amaria (V.P. and Treasurer) and Dolly Tarachand (Secretary). Most members are well-settled professionals; the Damania family owns an Indian grocery store.

A large number of the Denver community made an enthusiastic showing at the recent FEZANA trip to Crestone, Colorado, 3 1/2 hours away, to evaluate the possibility of building a Zarthusti center there.



Bucky Amaria (front) with family: invitation to Denver

With customary Zarthusti hospitality, Bucky writes: "If any of our young adults want to come to Denver for a skiing weekend, they are cordially invited to our house. They'll have a place to stay, food to eat and plenty of young adults their age for company."

Zoroastrianism Among Twelve Major World Religions at Peace Abbey

Every morning the staff, students and friends of the school at the Peace Abbey, in Sherborn, a suburb of Boston, gather around the 'Peace Table' for the ritual of the 'Blessing Bowl' and recitation of prayers for peace. The bowl has special significance, for it was filled with olive branches and offered to the heads of the twelve major world religions, who had gathered in Assisi, Italy in 1986, at the invitation of Pope John Paul to pray for world peace. To this day, the prayer recited by Dr. Homi Dhalla, the Zarthusti delegate at the Assisi event, is recited daily at the Peace Abbey, and stands on a pedestal along with prayers of other faiths. It reads:

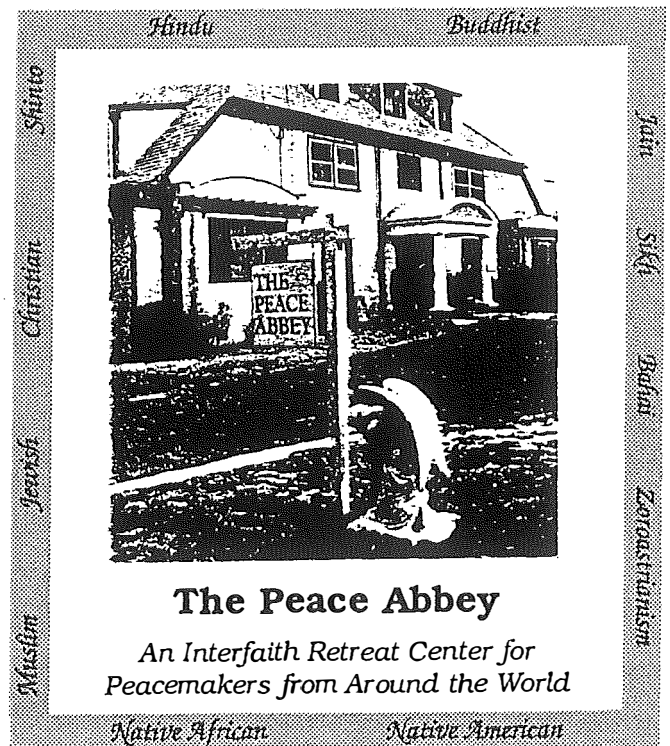
We pray to eradicate all misery in the world,
That understanding triumph over ignorance,
That generosity triumph over indifference,
That trust triumph over contempt,
And that truth triumph over falsehood.

I solemnly dedicate myself to the truth
And to the true spoken word, and true action.
I dedicate myself to reason which causes peace
And teaches self-sacrifice.

Through the cooperation of all the peoples of the world
May we all be one in justice,
And may we all benefit from each other
And help those in need.

Through Good thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds
Make in me a peaceful attitude towards all,
Seeking to renew my life and make it as You wish it
A life of truth. *Yasna 60.5*

The Peace Abbey dedicated by Mother Theresa in 1990, is committed to world peace through prayer, non-violence and social activism. The inspiration for its formation came to its founder, Louis Randa, at the 1986 Assisi event. The Abbey also runs a school for children who face life challenges.



The Peace Abbey

*An Interfaith Retreat Center for
Peacemakers from Around the World*

On October 2, 1994, the 125th anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi, the Abbey inaugurated the "Pacifist Memorial" featuring an eight-foot statue of the Mahatma, located on Main Street in Sherborn. During a recent visit, to the Abbey, Rohinton Rivetna presented the Abbey with a portrait of Zarthustra, which is now displayed alongside other sacred symbols.

Zoroastrianism at Stanford

The Zarthusti faith is now accepted and recognized as a member of the Religious Council at Stanford University in California. The Zarthusti community of Northern California thanked Maneck Bhujwala for "representing the Zoroastrian community and for educating others through interfaith discussions." [From ZANC Newsletter, December 1994].

Oxtoby Seminar in Toronto

Professor Willard Oxtoby offered a 13-week seminar on Zoroastrianism at the University of Toronto in January 1995. Members of the community were invited to audit the classes.

Assimilation and Preservation of Identity : ZSO Task Force Report

- "Unless miraculously saved, the community is in real danger of losing its identity, characteristics, and individual existence over the next couple of generations. If our demographic numbers are lost, then all else that we are currently engaged in doing will also die a natural death.
- "Unity within the community is essential if we are to meet this challenge together. We cannot afford to be divided into camps of 'blind orthodoxy' or 'rabid liberalism'.
- "There is a crying need for a strong religious revival movement within the community, with a deeper appreciation for our history, culture and heritage."

These are the conclusions reached by a five-member panel (Ervad Yezdi Antia, Homi Homji, Dr. Jamshed Mavelwalla, Vispi Patel and Keki Shroff), formed by the Zoroastrian Association of Ontario to study the problem of assimilation and preservation of our Zarthusti identity in North America. Their analysis and recommendations are summarized here.

The Problem. The assimilative processes in our host societies include the influence of peers on our children and the influence of the all-pervasive media on everyone. Even though these processes are overwhelmingly strong, their effect is largely unseen because we fit comfortably in our new setting, having already westernized ourselves in India, Pakistan and Iran before migrating to the west. And because of our adaptiveness, we are in danger of becoming homogenized in the melting pot of other North American communities to the point of losing our distinct identity.

Apart from the extremely low birth rate, several historical events seem to have restricted the population growth of our community in the mother countries. These include population decimation due to massacres as well as natural calamities like famines and plagues. Other factors in India and Pakistan include an aging community, fall in marriage frequency, education and

advancement of women, advent of prosperity and desire to afford higher education to a smaller number of children, late marriages, and urbanization.

While some of these factors hold true in North America, the absence of regular social interaction within the community significantly increases the risk of being assimilated by the dominant host culture. Contacts between families are few and far between. The transfer of the religion and values to children is not automatic through the community.

The increasing trend towards mixed marriages, a phenomenon not peculiar to North America, is a further cause for concern, especially as there is a perception that even in the absence of significant social barriers in North America, the offspring of such unions tend to drift away from the community.

Their *recommendations* are:

1. A detailed census and demographic survey should be conducted by FEZANA every two years.
2. More youth must serve on governing bodies of FEZANA and Member Associations.
3. Parents should take pro-active role (e.g. through subtle match-making) in encouraging children to marry early and within the community.
4. Intensive education program should be launched to raise awareness of threat of impending extinction.
5. Booklets, tapes, video materials for all ages on history, religion and culture should be distributed.
6. A central Zoroastrian Information Service with a stock of publications, periodicals and pamphlets must be established in a central location.
7. Constant and frequent social interaction, especially between youth, must be creatively organized.
8. Parents must be provided with suggestions regarding daily routines and observances that would impart a distinctive flavor and identity to a Zoroastrian household.
9. There should be closer interactions between Zarthustis from Iran and India.
10. The issue of survival should be kept in the spotlight with 'Open Forums'. Other communities (e.g. Jewish) should be invited to come and share their experiences.
11. Appreciation of the role of Mobeds should go beyond the expressions of verbal gratitude to more tangible means of support.
12. Organizations and individuals must take part in Interfaith activities to provide higher visibility and respect for the Zoroastrian faith.
13. A community action plan must be developed, based on scientific assessment of socio-religious needs.

Whither Crestone?

As memories of Crestone linger in the minds of those who visited last October, [*FEZANA Journal*, Winter 1994] the question that is being asked is: "What is next? What are we doing with the offer of the 40-acre plot offered by Hanne Strong of the Manitou Foundation?"

Fil Bagwadia of Denver has now collated the comments of those who made that trip; the report will be presented to Member Associations for discussion. In the meantime, Neville Rustumjee, a young architect from the Denver area is gathering site specifics such as a topographical map, availability of utilities, proposals for survey, code requirements, etc. The Denver area Zarthustis, being the closest to this property, are being encouraged to take the initiative in this project.

Mrs. Strong desires at Crestone the presence of each of the major faith traditions 'with unbroken lineage' and Zoroastrianism, of all faiths, certainly fits that bill. She has set herself that goal, however long it takes; and as such, the offer will remain open indefinitely. It should be noted that she does not make a distinction between followers of the faith, whether they are of Western or Eastern origin, as long as the faith is of 'unbroken lineage'. Neither does she require that the representation be by the 'apex' body of the faith — thus the Christians are represented by the Carmelite order, the Buddhists by the Zen order, and the Hindus by the Aurobindos.

One way we may evaluate the gift, is on the basis of its intrinsic value, detached from its religious surroundings. What value does it have for North American Zarthustis in terms of a retreat, or a learning center, or a youth camp, or a meeting place or...? In time we shall have the answers. Contact: Rohinton Rivetna, Tel. (708) 325-5383.

Calendar Reform

To date, eight Associations in North America have held meetings and referenda on calendar reform. The Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania and New Jersey (ZAPANJ) held a referendum on the adoption of a unified Zarthusti calendar on February 12, 1995. Ervads Jehan Bagli and Adi Unwala gave a summary of the pros and cons and responded to questions from the audience. Rustum Kevala pointed out the discrepancy in the reckoning of the current year in the Iranian National Calendar, which counts its years from Prophet Mohammed's flight from Mecca, and not from the date of accession of Yazdegard II.

The discussion centered on alternative ways of correcting the *Kadmi* and *Shenshai* calendars for past neglects, while preserving the spiritual links with the rituals and places of worship in India and Iran. The results of the ballot will be sent to the FEZANA secretariat for discussion at the Annual General Meeting in September 1995.

COMING EVENTS

Youth Congress

The Seventh North American Zoroastrian Youth Congress (ZYC95) will be held at Stanford University, June 30-July 4, 1995. [See *Youthfully Speaking*, this issue]. Contact: Darius Kasad at (415) 591-2813 or write to ZYC95, P.O. Box 8004, Stanford, CA 94309.

Council of Iranian Mobeds — Annual Function and Sudreh-Pushi Hamegani

The annual function of the *Sudreh-Pushi Hamegani* (public Navjote ceremony) of Zarthusti youth, and celebration of the establishment of the Kankash-e-Mobedan (Council of Iranian Mobeds of North America) will be held on Saturday April 22, 1995 at 4:00 pm at the California Zoroastrian Center, Dar-e-Mehr Rostam Guiv, in Westminster.

The program will include a Jashan ceremony, Sudreh-Pushi Hamegani, appointment of new Zarthusti "Torch-Bearers" and other interesting programs. Refreshments will be served. All are invited. Contact Fariborz Shahzadi by Fax at (714) 582-6468.

FEZANA Annual General Meeting

The 1995 FEZANA AGM will be held September 2-4, 1995, hosted by the Zoroastrian Association of Kansas. A workshop for teachers of religious education is being planned for the same weekend. Contact FEZANA Secretary Ketayun Kapadia at (609) 795-0946.

Zoroastrian Religious Camp 5

Ervad K. N. Dastoor will conduct a religious camp, at a picturesque location in California, in Summer of 1995. It is an opportunity for young and old alike to relive the Zoroastrian heritage, history and culture. Contact Siloo Mehta at (714) 995-8765.

American Academy of Religion

The next annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion will be held in Philadelphia, PA, November 18-21, 1995. It is hoped that the topic of the influence of Zarthusti thought in the Dead Sea Scrolls is discussed, and hopefully recognized, at this meeting. The deadline for submission of abstracts was March 1. Contact Rohinton Rivetna (708) 325-5383 for more information.

1996 North American Congress

The Persian Zoroastrian Organization (PZO) and Zoroastrian Anjuman of Northern California (ZANC) will host the Tenth North American Zoroastrian Congress on the July 4th weekend, 1996, in San Francisco. It will be co-chaired by Manoucher Mobedshahi, President of PZO and Peshotan Irani, President of ZANC. Contact Mobedshahi at (415) 673-1776.

World Zoroastrian Congress in Bombay

The Sixth World Zoroastrian Congress is planned for early January 1996, in Bombay, to be organized by the Federation of Zoroastrian Anjumans of India. Contact FEZANA President Dolly Dastoor (514) 656-2036.

Conference on Yashts in Florida

A conference on *Yashts* is being planned as part of the Zoroastrian Scriptural Studies Series, hosted by the newly organized Zoroastrian Association of Florida, in Winter 1995. The 3-day conference, which will include round table discussions and presentations, will explore the origins of the *Yashts* and provide insight into their religious significance, theology and philosophy. Very few Zoroastrians know about the *Yashts*. This conference promises to be a great experience for students and scholars alike. The Floridian Zoroastrians are planning to roll out the red carpet and make this a memorable experience for all.

Students of Zoroastrianism wishing to read a paper at the conference may submit an abstract, not exceeding 150 words, by June 30, 1995, to Dr. Pallan Ichaporia, 253 South 4th Street, Womelsdorf, PA 19567, Tel: (610) 589-5419.

AROUND THE WORLD

First Zarthusti House of Worship in Southern Hemisphere

"Raise your glasses! Ring the Bells! Our dream of the 1970s has seen the light of day today!", were the sentiments expressed at the inauguration of the Arbab Rostam & Morvarid Guiv Darbe Meher, near Sydney, Australia on July 24, 1994, the first Zarthusti place of worship in the southern hemisphere.

The idea of "a place of our own" for the Australian Zarthustis, was born in 1978. This led to the concept of a Darbe Meher in 1984 following a visit to San Diego and a meeting with Arbab Rostam and Morvarid Guiv, who had already donated towards Darbe Mehers in New York and California. Finally in 1985 a pledge for

The Arbab Rustam and Morvarid Guiv Darbe Mehr, on 5 acres of land, at Annangrove, near Sydney, Australia. "In 1968 some of us pioneered the formation and planted the first seeds of our Association, when there were only 5 or 6 families in Sydney", says long-time resident Sam Kerr, "At present we are nearly 800 and rising, mainly by migration and slowly by birth. Our numbers hope to reach 1,000 by the year 2001."

[photo: Sam Kerr]

\$100,000 was received from the Guiv Trust, with the condition that the Australian Zoroastrian Association (AZA) acquire a property for the Darbe Meher, and the donation could be used only for its construction.

In 1985, with the Ostowari family as the major Australian donor, along with liberal community support and available Association funds, five acres were purchased at Annangrove. The funds were transferred to Australia but it took another year and a half to get the funds released to the Association (though a portion of the amount is still withheld by the Guiv Trustees).

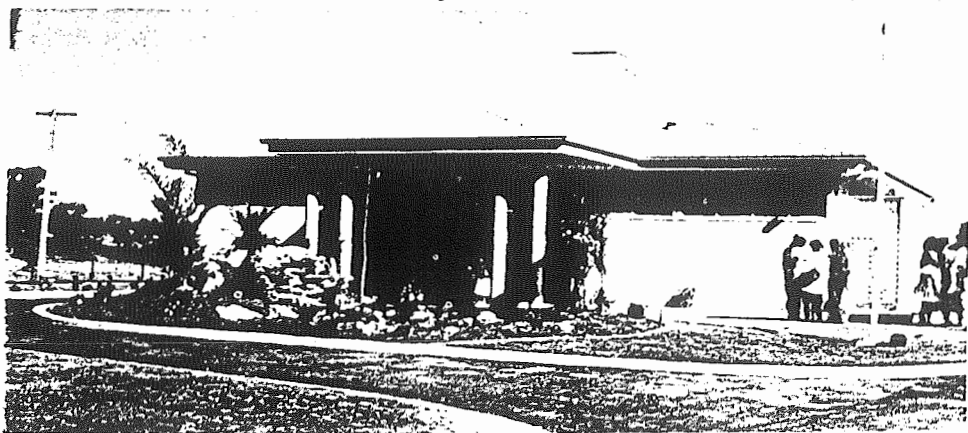
Still short of funds, Mehraban & Fereidoon Zartoshty of Canada, well known for their benevolence, were approached. Their assistance and generosity brought another \$91,424. Other major donors were: the Ostowari Family (\$78,927), overseas donors including the Zoroastrian Charity Funds of Hong Kong, Canton and Macao (\$22,870), Australian donors (\$120,577), AZA funds (\$40,000), bringing the total to \$624,307, which just covered the cost of the project.

When it looked like the project was ready to take off, problems were encountered with council approvals and the AZA had to go to court to establish their democratic rights to have a Zoroastrian House of Worship (at a cost of \$48,330, donated entirely by the community).

After the successful court case, it was all systems go. Again with the unanimous support from the community, planning and design commenced in late 1992. By December 1993, all the tenders were in, and construction commenced in January 1994. The work was completed, just two weeks before Inauguration Day.

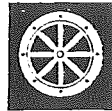
The Souvenir acknowledges "all the AZA members for contribution of time, money and effort over the past years to convert this concept to reality". A special pat on the back was awarded to all past and current office bearers, especially Noshir Irani, Purviz Kolsawalla, Peshotan Katrak, Ernani Giambuzzi, Shirley Mahableshwarwalla, Boman Kalapesi, Tim Desai and Gulu Bilimoria. Jal Taraporewala was thanked for his help towards the design of the Darbe Meher.

[From Inauguration Souvenir, July 24, 1994]



Human Rights Day Celebrated at Zoroastrian House, U.K.

The United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. To commemorate that event, and the 1995 U.N. Year of Tolerance, the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe, with The United Nations Association and Amnesty International, hosted a Service of Observance on December 10, at Zoroastrian house in London.



Mobeds from U.K. opened the interfaith ceremonies with the Atash Niyaishe and Doa Tandarosti, and lit The Amnesty Candle from the Atash. Following a Welcome Address by Rusi Dalal, President of ZTFE, representatives from the Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish Muslim and Sikh faiths offered prayers and lit The Candle. Witness speakers from Rwanda, Bosnia, the Ahmadiis and the indigenous people of Central America shared their experiences, as the service remembered all who were victims of persecution because of their religious or ethnic background.

WZO Pilgrimage to Iran

The WZO is organizing a pilgrimage to Iran, April 12-26, 1995, including visits to Tehran, the historical site of Tagh-e-Boostan in Kerman, Susa, Persepolis, Pasargadae, Shiraz, the shrines near Yazd, archaeological site of a 1500 year old Fire Temple near Isfahan, and much more.

The cost, excluding air fare, will be 650 pounds sterling (double occupancy) or 850 pounds for single persons. Contact S. F. Captain, 25 Willow Close, Bishops Stortford, Herts, CM23 2RY.

The Iran Experience with ZS

Bombay-based Zoroastrian Studies is arranging 2 14-day religious pilgrimages to Iran. Khojeste Mistree, the educational consultant will join both tour groups. Participants will relive the historical legacies of Kings Cyrus, Darius, Ardeshir and Shapur in Tehran, Shiraz, Pasargadae, Naqsh-e-Rustom, Mt. Damavand, Persepolis and more. Experience the spirituality of the Zarthusti Pirs (shrines), and the special sacred fires of the faith. Tour A (April 8-22, 1995) will cost \$1400, including all travel, boarding and lodging within Iran. Tour B (May 6-20, 1995), intended for those willing to rough it out, will cost \$900. Airfare to Tehran is not included. Contact Khojeste Mistree, Zoroastrian Studies, 136 Bombay Samachar Marg, Bombay 400 023.

World Council of Zoroastrian Federations Update

Since the 5th World Zoroastrian Congress in 1991, effort has been under way to get the Zoroastrian Federations in India, North America, Europe, Iran and other pockets of Zarthustis communicating with each other. After many drafts and much discussion, two alternative proposals for a formal organization linking these Federations have been developed. These are, at present, being reviewed by the Federations. It is sincerely hoped that this organization evolves prior to the next World Congress in 1996. With Zarthustis spread across the globe, and Associations and Federations on every continent, connecting them formally and opening channels of communication is the obvious next step.

Rohinton M. Rivetna

FEZANA External Affairs

GLOBAL ESSAY COMPETITION

The K. R. Cama Oriental Institute, the World Zoroastrian Organization, and the Zartoshty Brothers Charitable Foundation have announced an essay competition, open to all* on the topic:

"But for Them, Zoroastrianism Would Have Been Extinct in Iran"

Essays must be original (not published anywhere before), in English or Persian, not to exceed 25 typed double-spaced pages. Name, address and age must be written on a cover letter, and should not appear on any pages of the essay.

First Prize: Rs. 25,000

Second Prize: Rs. 20,000

Third Prize: Rs. 10,000

Consolation Prize: As recommended by Judges

Submit essays by July 30**, 1995 to Jt. Honorary Secretaries, K. R. Cama Oriental Institute, 136 Bombay Samachar Marg, Fort, Bombay 400 023, India.

* Note that there are no age limits now.

** Note the deadline has been extended.

Neville Wadia — Reverting Back to Zarthusti Roots

In a landmark decision, five out of seven High Priests of India agreed to accept octogenarian Neville Wadia, patriarch of the illustrious Wadia family of ship-builders and industrialists, back into the Zarthusti faith. Following a purificatory *nahn*, Mr. Wadia was initiated with the Navjote ceremony on September 24, 1994. Excerpts of the exchange of correspondence between Wadia and the seven High Priests is reproduced below:

In spite of my being brought up in the Church of England, I have all my life, and particularly lately, been a strong believer in the teachings of Lord Zoroaster, particularly because of its emphasis on good thoughts, good words, good deeds, and charity.

Ever since I finished my schooling in England, I came back to India. I have since then felt, and have been accepted by the community, as a Parsi, irrespective of my religion. My own roots are purely Zoroastrian, and under certain circumstances which were beyond my control, this deviation has come into my life. So my desire is to come back into the original Zoroastrian fold. I have always tried to follow the teachings of Zoroaster and act accordingly...

For many years, I have not only regretted that I am not a Zoroastrian, but had a strong desire to resume the religion of my ancestors, and I felt more a Zoroastrian than the religion in which I was brought up... So I went to visit Dasturji Kotwal to explain my desires to become a Zoroastrian, and after considerable discussion he said he would be in favour of my having a *nahn* or ablution bath. After that and suitable prayers, I could put on my *Sudreh-Kushti* and be like any other Zoroastrian. He said Navjotes were limited to children up to the maximum age of 15. He told me I would then be free to enter Agiaries and Atash-Behrams ... I also inquired whether if I died in Bombay, I could be taken to Doongerwadi like any other Zoroastrian, to which he confirmed that that would be perfectly in order...

I am, therefore, writing this letter to each one of you, asking you to support the suggestion of Dasturji Dr. Kotwal and accept me into my own ancestors' Zoroastrian faith...

Neville Wadia
April 11, 1994

Dasturji Hormuzdiar K. Mirza and Dasturji Dr. Kaikhushroo M. Jamasp Asa wrote, on April 19th:

"...It has been stated in the Persian Rivayats that it is proper and allowable to take back a Zoroastrian man or woman who wishes to revert to his/her religion which he/she has abandoned under certain circumstances and accepted an alien religion. Your letter carries terms of solution laid down by Dasturji Kotwal. We do agree with the said terms but we firmly believe that the navjote ceremony should be performed as an exceptional case. In fact the *nahn* ceremony (sacred ablution) precedes the Navjote ceremony proper..."

Sardar Dasturji Hormuzdiar Noshirwan Dastur (on April 28th) and Dasturji Noshirwan M. Dastur (on May 11th) concurred with the above statement.

Dasturji M. Meherjirana wrote, on May 2nd:

"...I am extremely sorry that I am most reluctantly compelled to disagree with the suggestion mentioned in your letter. I say this with profoundest respect and admiration towards your esteemed self. The suggestion is based on a traditional rule that no Navjote can be performed at your venerable age. That far, there is an anxiety to preserve a tradition. But to say that *nahn* can be substituted for a Navjote ceremony is a much larger breach of the tradition. Perhaps your august presence and a sincere anxiety to help you have placed a glossy cover on this grand contradiction... the matter revolves around two traditions. One is that, no Navjote can be performed and the other is that *nahn* cannot be a substitute for Navjote... What 'suitable prayers' are to be recited after the *nahn* are not specified in your letter. In any case, no tradition has come down regarding such prayers. The two traditions put together, thus create an impasse."

In a second letter, on May 27th, *Dasturji Dr. Firoze M. Kotwal* wrote:

"...You are an octogenarian, and speaking from the scriptural point of view the Navjote ceremony would be the most farcical element in the entire process of your coming back to the Zoroastrian fold. What you have to do is to undergo a *nahn* or ritual ablution, perform your own Navjote yourself with proper ceremonial rites prompted by a competent priest, and finally recite the '*patef*' or penitentiary prayer before a high priest..."

Dasturji Kaikobad P. Dastoor wrote, on August 9th:

"In reply to your above letters, I have to inform you that I cannot agree to your request to convert you in the Zoroastrian Religion, as the same is not permitted in our religion."

In another letter, *Dasturji Dr. Firoze M. Kotwal* wrote:

"...I have given more thought and consideration to your wanting to embrace the noble Zoroastrian faith. I wish to reiterate that in recent Parsi history, yours is a unique case of desiring to return to the faith of your ancestors. I have made an exception to my stated beliefs and doctrinal position due to the very strong mitigating circumstances" ... "After much reflection and thought, I have come to the conclusion that it would be in your best interests to perform the full Navjote ceremony as you have expressed to me in your discussions. I am concerned that if a ritual exception of not performing the full Navjote ceremony is made in your case as an exception, then a dangerous precedent might arise which other vested groups may seek to exploit in the future; this in turn, I believe, would result in wrong inroads being made into the ritual life of our community. As a traditional high priest, I do not want members of our community to seek alternative forms of rituals, since we must preserve, at all costs, the ceremonial sanctity of our religious heritage."

The Navjote was performed on Saturday, September 24, 1994, at the house of Mr. Nusli Wadia (Beach House in Bombay), by a Zoroastrian priest, witnessed by a very few close friends.

[Excerpted from unedited correspondence between Mr. Wadia and the High Priests, reproduced in *Parsiana*, October 1994]

BOOKS AND SUCH***Taraporewala's Divine Songs of Zarathushtra***

The Divine Songs of Zarathushtra by Dr. Irach J. S. Taraporewala, is an exhaustive volume of 1166 pages, giving a philological study of the Gathas of Zarathushtra. It gives the text, with literal translation into English, a free English rendering, and full critical and grammatical notes. Available at US\$45 or CAD\$55 from Council of Iranian Mobeds of North America, P.O. Box 22911, San Diego, CA 92192.

THE HERITAGE OF ZARATHUSHTRA — A NEW TRANSLATION OF THE GATHAS

By Helmut Humbach and Pallan Ichaporia

Published by Universitätsverlag, C. Winter, Heidelberg, Germany,, ISBN 3-8253-0251-2, 107 pp., 1994, \$30.

This is a notable translation of the Gathas by Professor Dr. Helmut Humbach and Dr. Pallan Ichaporia. The former is the eminent scholar

of linguistics, particularly of the ancient Indo-Iranian Traditions and the latter is the perceptive scholar of the Zoroastrian Traditions. Prof. Humbach's earlier work, a translation in two volumes of the Gathas in German followed by English rendition is addressed to the interested and informed public. Dr. Ichaporia's knowledge of the Avestan, Pahlavi languages and later Zoroastrian traditions has made valuable contributions in making this translation cohere with the framework of Zoroastrian thought.

The main characteristics of this translation are its avowed effort to be close to the original Gathic language. Thus in terms of its objective of valid literal translation, it achieves success and makes a significant contribution, and the reader must be prepared to bring to these translated verses attention and reflection to gather the meaning the prophet intended, especially with the valuable footnotes. The recent advances in the ancient Indo-Iranian linguistic and particularly the

Avestan language, applied in this translation have resulted in some interesting results. Students of the Gathas familiar with the known translations of this century and before, will find this book rewarding, particularly since some theological issues will have to be recast. Some of these ideas are being applied in studies of their implications to the later scriptures by Dr. Ichaporia.

The study of the Gathas is significantly promoted by this linguistically responsible translation. No student of the subject can afford to neglect it.

By Professor Kaikhosrov D. Irani
New York, New York

UNDERSTANDING THE GATHAS — THE HYMNS OF ZARATHUSHTRA

By Dinshaw J. Irani

Edited with an Introduction by Kaikhosrov D. Irani

Published by Ahura Publishers, Inc., 253 S 4th Street, Womelsdorf, PA 19567, U.S.A.

ISBN 0-9638045-0-2, 87 pp., 1994

This book is an outgrowth of lectures delivered by the late author (father of Professor Kaikhosrov D. Irani) to young Zarthusti audiences in the 1930s. The lecture notes were never published and were recently compiled and edited as an introductory guide to the Gathas for the non-scholarly public. The book is not meant to be a systematic introduction to the study of the Gathas, but to bring the reader closer to the thought, expression, ideas and topics in the Gathas.

In his excellent introduction, Kaikhosrov Irani maintains that "the Gathas are in a very condensed style of versification, and standard grammatical construction is more absent than present." This, in my view, makes it difficult for the average person to appreciate the philosophical vision of the prophet simply by reading the verses. Fortunately, the author has amplified each chapter with background notes and explanations to enable the serious reader to better appreciate the spirituality underlying its ethical message.

Those who seek an understanding of the Gathas will find in this book a good introduction to the sacred Ha's.

Book review by Adel Engineer

Helmut Humbach • Pallan Ichaporia

The Heritage of Zarathushtra

A new translation of his Gathas



Universitätsverlag
C. Winter
Heidelberg

"VOICE OF ZARATHUSHTRA" VIDEO FILM

Produced by Homi Sethna, Bombay

This 40-minute documentary visually and orally portrays the *Gathas* of Zarathushtra. In lucid terms it explains the moral and ethical basis of the Zarthusti faith, and the philosophy underlying the religion. The film also presents ceremonies — Navjote, Wedding and Funeral rites, and should be of interest to both Zarthusti and non-Zarthusti audiences.

To order, please send a check for \$30 US, made out to "FEZANA", to Rohinton Rivetna, 5750 South Jackson Street, Hinsdale, Illinois 60521, Tel: (708) 325-5383. If not in stock, allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

First Persian Cultural Festival in Sydney

By Dr. Mehraban Shahrivini
 Publisher, Pake-E-Mehr
 Vancouver, British Columbia

Beautiful Sydney, Australia, was the setting for one of the most magnificent Persian Cultural Festivals held anywhere in the last 15 years. From October 28th to November 6th, 1994, Sydney became the Mecca for Persian cultural scholars. Hosted by the Persian Cultural Foundation of Australia, the theme of this memorable event was "Mehergan: the Celebration of Peace, Love, Harmony and Thanksgiving."

The festival attracted some 50 representatives from North America, Europe, Iran and the host country, Australia. With a total attendance figure for the entire festival duration of over 4,000, it was by any standard, a resounding success.

The grand opening of the festival on October 28th was attended by 800 people in the historic Sydney Palace. Distinguished speakers at the Commencement Ceremonies were: the Minister of Multicultural Affairs, the head of the Opposition Party, the Head of the Theology Department of the University of Sydney, Chairman of the Persian Cultural Foundation, all from Australia, and Dr. Nodooshan, retired Professor of Humanities at Tehran University, from Iran.

One of the many emotional moments was the raising of the "Derafsh-E-Kaviani", the ancient Sassanian Dynasty flag, which was followed by a historical account of the flag by Dr. Aryamanesh.

The renowned Sydney Opera House was the venue, the following evening, for a spectacular performance of traditional Persian music with a collaboration of grand symphony orchestra and contemporary Iranian vocalists and bands.

The unveiling ceremony of the bas-relief sculpture of Cyrus the Great, attended by 500 people, was held at Bicentennial Park in Homebush Bay. This work is a replica of the original found in the ancient Persian Empire's capital city, Pasargadae, in present-day south-west Iran. In addition to various Australian dignitaries, this writer also had the privilege of delivering a talk on "Statesmanship and Autobiography of Cyrus the Great". The talk focused on Cyrus's commitment to human rights, multi-culturism, and freedom for those ethnic groups that were forced into captivity and slav-



Shahrivini: speaking at the unveiling of the Cyrus bas-relief

ery by the Babylonians. Cyrus the Great issued the first charter of human rights known to mankind, in Babylon, almost 2,500 years ago. Today this cylinder is kept in the British Museum in London. The ceremonies concluded with a talk by the Mayor of Sydney, a recitation of a beautiful poem by Ms. Tooran Bahrami, and a report by Dr. Parsi on the many flags displayed behind the podium.

Over 40 speakers presented topics ranging from Ferdowsi's masterpiece "*Shah-Nama*" to various aspects of Persian culture, literature, history, language, religions, philosophy and rituals. Some of the notable speakers were Dr. Vahidi of Iran, Dr. K. Aryamanesh of France, Professor A. Partov of Los Angeles, Dr. S. Shahbazi of Oregon, and Professor I. Parizi of University of Tehran.

Following the closing ceremonies, when the Chair of the Persian Cultural Foundation presented representatives with memoranda, there was a warm reception for the visitors at the Darbe Mehr of Sydney. The local Zarthusti community showed its affection and hospitality for which we are very grateful.

For five days, daily and nightly seminars, exhibitions, artistic performances, art shows, and multi-cultural bazaars, all proved that the great Persian culture of old is still alive, indestructible and undeniable!

جشنواره جهانی مهرگان در استرالیا

xxxxxxxxxx

مهربان شهروینی، ونکوور

از ۲۸ اکتبر تا ۶ نوامبر ۱۹۹۴ جشنواره جهانی، مهرگان از سوی "بنیاد فرهنگ ایران در استرالیا" در شهر سیدنی برگزار شد.

در این جشنواره جهانی وزیر چندفرهنگی استرالیا و چند نماینده مجلس و شهردا رسیدنی و ۵۰ نماینده از کشورهای اروپایی و آمریکا و کانادا و ایران حضور داشتند. فشرده‌ی برنامه‌های جشنواره بشرح زیر است:

(۱) شامگاه ۱۲۸ اکتبر آیین گشایش جشنواره با حضور ۸۰۰ تن در کاخ باستانی "کرزن" برگزار شد. در این جا وزیر چندفرهنگی و نماینده گروه مخالف دولت در مجلس و رییس دانشگاه علوم دینی دانشگاه سیدنی و رییس بنیاد فرهنگ ایران در استرالیا و دکتر ندوشن از ایران - سخنرانی کردند. یکی از جالبترین مراسم در این گشایش نمایش پرچم کاویانی بود که در زمان ساسانیان وجود داشت و تاریخچه آن وسیله دکتر آریا فنش گفته شد.

(۲) شامگاه ۱۲۹ اکتبر کنسرت بزرگ ایرانی در اپرای سیدنی در حضور ۱۸۰۰ تن ایرانی و خارجی انجام گرفت.

(۳) روز ۳۰ اکتبر بگاه ۱۰ با مداپذیده برداری از کورش بزرگ در پارک بی سن تنیال در حضور ۵۰۰ تن، برگزار شد. در این مراسم نخست وزیر چندفرهنگی و سپس نماینده مجلس سخنرانی کردند و پیرده برداری شد. پس از آن نگارنده زندگینامه و فرمانروایی کورش را در ۲۵۰۰ سال پیش بر مردم و آزاد کردن متجاوزان از ۳۰ هزار یهودی که در اسارت با بلیها بودند و از اعلا^{میه} حقوق بشر و استوانه آزادی کورش که هم اکنون در موزه

بریتانیا موجود است گفتگو کردم و متن اعلامیه خوانده شد. آنگاه شهردا رسیدنی و سپس خانم شهریار ی سروده کورش را خواند و در پایان دکتر پارسی تاریخ پرچمهای موجود در مجاور تندیس کورش گزارشی جالب بیان کرد.

(۴) روز ۳۱ اکتبر تا ۵ روز، با مداپذیرین و شامگاه سمینارهای جشنواره در دانشگاه دینی بریاست پروفیسور کرومپ برگزار شد که رویه مرفته ۴۰ سخنرانی انجام گرفت.

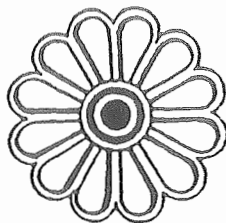
در بین سخنبا، دکتر اردکتر وحیدی از ایران درباره ی فاسفه زرتشت "زرتشت فرزانه سده ۲۱" و سخن نگارنده درباره گاتها و گفتار دکتر آریا منش درباره حقوق زن در ایران باستان و دکتر شهبازی درباره تخت جمشید و استاد پرتو درباره ریشه زبان پارسی در روز نخست وجود داشت. در روزهای بعد، سخنرانی درباره شاهنامه و ۳۰ گفتار درباره فرهنگ و ادبیات ایران ایرانشد.

(۵) روز ۶ نوامبر مراسم پایانی و پخش هدایا از سوی رییس بنیاد فرهنگ ایران ب برخی از سخنرانها و برخی نمایندگان نیکه از سراسر جهان به سیدنی آمده بودند. ضمنا:

روزی که شب ۶ نوامبر بگاه ۳۰ پس از نیمروز در مهر استرالیا حضور یافته و با همکیشان پارسی و ایرانی - دیدار و گفتگو کردیم و چند سخنرانی، از آن جمله گفتار خانم کیتی مسالا و دکتر سام کرانجام و بعد پذیرایی - بعمل آمد که در اینجا از انجمن زرتشتیان استرالیا - سپاسگزاری مینمایم.

اینک استوانه آزادی کورش و نقشی که بخط میخی با بلی روی آن حک شده است و دو عکس یکی مربوط بسخن نگارنده دریای پیکره کورش و دیگر گروهی از همکیشان در مهر راضیمه این نوشته مینماید.

Graphic interpretation of the Lotus Flower, symbol of the Sydney Festival. It was used by the Japanese, Chinese, Indians, Assyrians, ancient Egyptians, and the Persians to convey the message of love, hope and harmony.



Cyrus the Great Memorialized in Sydney

The ten-foot high monument, a replica of the bas-relief of Cyrus found in Pasargadae (c. 580-529 B.C.) that was unveiled in Sydney during the Persian Cultural Festival last October [see page 14], will be seen by thousands, as it remains on permanent display at Bicentennial Park, close to the Olympics Complex being constructed for the Olympics in the year 2000.

A conqueror who controlled the greatest Empire ever seen in the history of the world, Cyrus is recognized for his policy of tolerance and conciliation. His dedication

to what is now known as 'multi-culturism' is mentioned in the Old Testament, and is conveyed in the bas-relief. The two horns of the crown are mentioned in the Bible in the dream of Daniel, the design of the Crown has Egyptian elements, the costume is Babylonian, while the wings are Persian. The posterior aspect of the sculpture depicts Australia's commitment to multiculturalism with representations of the various ethnic groups that make up that continent. On top, a map of Australia is shown with the Cylinder of Human Rights, issued by



Cyrus the Great in Babylon in 521 B.C., and considered to be the first Charter of Human Rights.

The metallic Achaemenid Eagle, the oldest intact flag ever found in the world, and the Fravahar, were among the exhibits at the festival, tracing the evolution of the Iranian flag through history.

For one brief, shining moment, through spectacular performances of dance, music and song, the multicultural bazaar, and exhibitions of handicrafts, photography, Persian carpets, miniature paintings, and more, Australians got a glimpse of the glory that was Persia.

[From materials submitted by Dr. Sam Kerr, Randwick, Australia].

Zoroastrianism

By Dr. Pallan R. Ichaporia
Womelsdorf, Pennsylvania

Glimpses from the author's forthcoming treatise "Influence of the Religion of Zarathushtra on the Dead Sea Scrolls"

Millar Burrows translates in his book *The Dead Sea Scroll*, a passage from the chapter *Manual of Discipline* *:

"He created man to have dominion over the world and made for him two spirits that he might walk with them until the appointed time of visitation, they are the spirits of truth and of error. In the abode of light are the origins of truth and from the source of darkness are the origins of error. In the hands of the prince of light is the dominion over all sons of righteousness, in the ways of light they walk. And in the hands of the angel of darkness is all the dominion over the sons of error, and in the ways of darkness they walk.

"And by the angel of darkness is the straying of all the sons of righteousness, and all their sin and their iniquities and their guilt, and the transgressions of their works are in his dominion, according to the mysteries of God until his (man's) time, and all their afflictions and the appointed times of their distress (are) in the dominion of his enmity ...

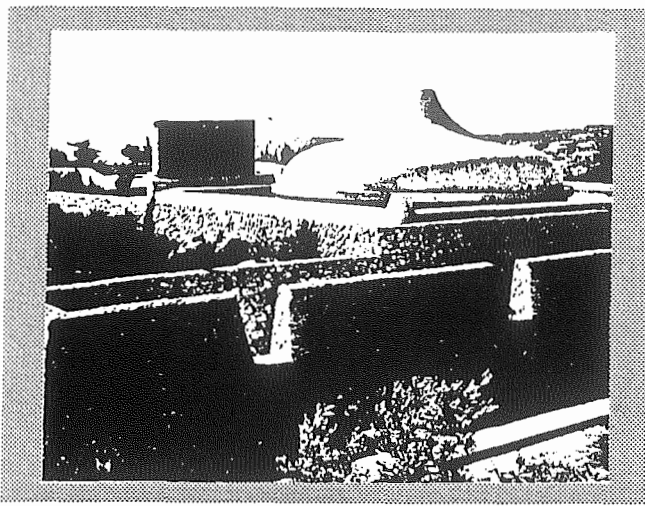
"In these two spirits are the origins of all the sons of man ... In the way of two spirits, men walk ... But God in the mysteries of his understanding and his glorious wisdom has ordained a period of ruin and error, and at appointed time of punishment he will destroy it forever. And then shall come out forever the truth of the world."¹

Reading this from the *Manual of Discipline*, now redefined as *The Rule of the Community*, [for the historical background of The Dead Sea Scrolls and how the Texts were discovered from different caves of Qumran, readers may refer to the forthcoming treatise by this author], an average Zoroastrian may rightfully say that this is the Gathic doctrine of the two spirits, Spenta Mainyu

* The *Manual of Discipline* is now called *The Rule of the Community*, where *community* refers to the Qumran Community known as Essenes, a Jewish sect.

** The Dead Sea Scrolls are also called *The Qumran Text* (as they were found in the caves overlooking Wadi Qumran, an ancient settlement) to differentiate them from *The Temple Scrolls* which are 27 feet long (the longest among all the Scrolls), and not an Essene document, but composed by other Jews.

and the Dead Sea Scrolls



The Shrine of the Book in Jerusalem, where the seven intact scrolls from Cave 1 are housed.

and Angra Mainyu. However, the glaring difference between the Gathic doctrine of ethical dualism and *The Rule of the Community* from the Dead Sea Scrolls is 'predestination' as opposed to the free choice found in the Gathas, but the Gathic 'Brilliant-Making — restoration and renovation of the world to perfection at the final turn of events' is echoed in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Zoroastrianism has deeply influenced Judaism² during and after the Babylonian captivity and the likeness between the *Dead Sea Text* (sometimes also called the *Qumran Texts* **) and the Gathic conception of the nature and origin of evil (it exists from the beginning of the primal creation — Y45.2) points to direct borrowing in *The Rule of the Community*. But this fact has not been brought forth fully in the scholarly world, and although the theology of the Scrolls is compared often with the Old Testament by Biblical scholars, the Zoroastrian influence is doubted³. Through its profound influence on Judaism, Zoroastrianism also influenced Christianity and then Islam. Duchesne-Guillemin has pointed out: "Moulton found it difficult as a Christian to admit a large Iranian influence on his religion."⁴ Richard Fry disagreed strongly on any influence of Zoroastrianism and he wrote in 1962 that the textual analogies like the pair 'children of light and children of darkness' are lacking in Zoroastrianism and the occurrence of Iranian loan-words proves nothing about religious influence and then ends up with a question: "May not the unorthodox Jewish beliefs of the Essenes* be traceable to the soil of Palestine?"⁵ But he has failed to notice that Iranian literary sources had made their mark on *Second Isaiah*. Another scholar, D. Winston has affirmed that "*Qumran material is definitely of Iranian origin*".⁶ The author's forthcoming article has dealt fully with the influence of the Gathas and the *Damdad Nask* (which is a lost Nask

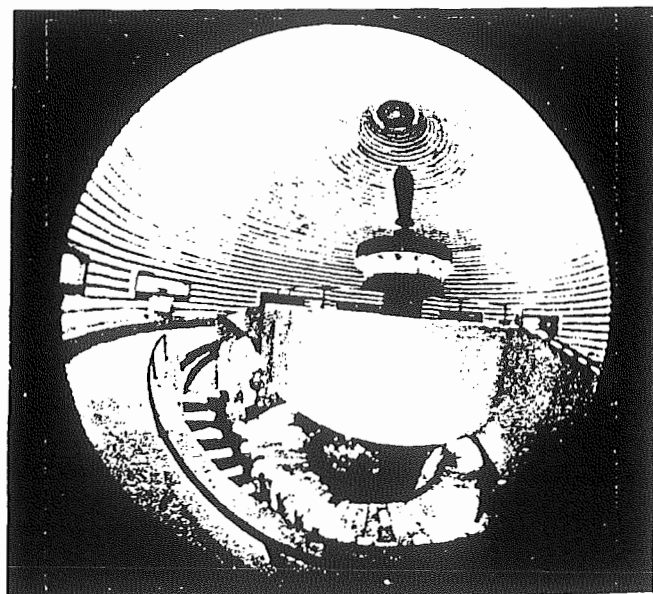
but it's Pahlavi rendition exists in *Bundahishn*, written in the 9th century C.E.) on the *Qumran Text*, with ample examples to answer the enigma of the survival of a pure Gathic doctrine up to the time of *The Rule of the Community*.

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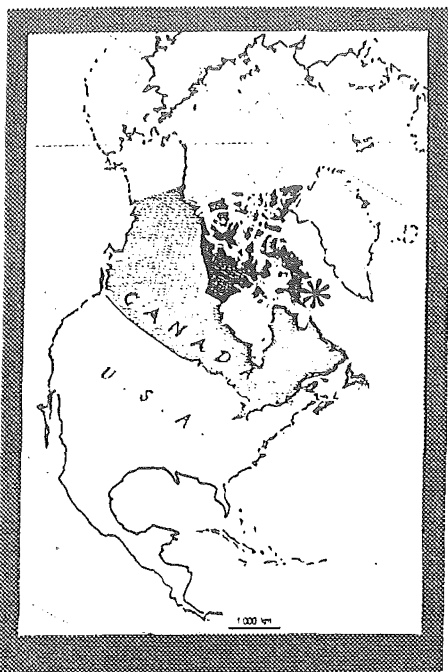
1. Millar Burrows, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 1955, pp 374 seq.
- For *The Rule of the Community* see the Princeton Theological Seminary Dead Sea Project's Vol. I, 1994.
2. R. C. Zehner, *The Dawn and Twilight of Zoroastrianism*, 1961, p.51.
3. James Barr, *The Question of Religious Influence*, Journal of the AAR, July 1985.
4. Duchesne-Guillemin, *The Western Response to Zoroaster*, Oxford, 1958.
- For full details on the subject, see *Influence of the Religion of Zarathushtra on the Dead Sea Scrolls* by Ichaporia (forthcoming).
5. Richard Fry, *Reitzenstein and Qumran Revisited by an Iranian*, Harvard Theological Review, 1962, pp 261.
6. D. Winston, *The Iranian Component in the Bible, Apocrypha and Qumran*, 1966.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The photos of *Shrine of the Book* were taken during field research in Jerusalem and the author's presentation at Irano-Judaica III Conference in 1994. The sources put at the author's disposal by Professor Shaul Shaked are acknowledged and appreciated.



Interior view of the Shrine of the Book in Jerusalem



* Iqaluit, on the Southern tip of Baffin Island is gateway to the Eastern Arctic regions.

On Top of the World

2060 km from the nearest Zarthusti (in Montreal, Quebec), Noshir Panthaky and his wife, Jai describe their life with the Inuit people in the town of Iqaluit in the Northwest Territories (dark shading on map) in the Arctic region of Canada.

A Land that Stirs the Soul

The Northwest Territories of Canada is a land that stirs the soul and captures the imagination. Vast, unspoiled, diverse and unforgettable, it is a land of geographic wonders and infinite naturalist opportunities. With its clean air and pristine waterways, wide open spaces and an abundance of extra-ordinary wild life and unusual plant life, the area has been recognized as one of the last great wildlife refuges left on the planet. The region exemplifies 'arctic', with its icebergs, sea ice, seals, whales, walrus, musk ox, caribou, polar bears, foxes, wolves, and sea birds. It can also boast of having the second longest river in North America, the MacKenzie, and 9% of the world's fresh water.

Iqaluit, a One Road Town

Originally an architect from Bombay, Noshir Panthaky moved to the Northwest Territories in June 1994, with his wife, Jai, from Toronto, to take up a position as Project Officer with the Government of the Northwest Territories. They are possibly the 'northern-most' Zarthustis in the world!

At a latitude of 64° north, the town of Iqaluit that the Panthakys calls home, located on Baffin Island in the Northwest Territories (NWT) of Canada, is just a few miles south of the Arctic Circle, at 67°. Both the geographic North Pole (point at which all longitude lines converge at the top of the globe) and the magnetic North Pole are located in the NWT. Iqaluit has one main road going through the town. All others are dirt roads. The whole place is nothing but dust, dirt, rock, stones and hills. There are no trees here, and the ground is perma-frost a few feet below the surface.

Since Baffin Island is not connected to mainland Canada (it is separated by Hudson Bay), all necessities are flown in daily, and costs are high. Two liters of milk cost \$6.97, and a loaf of bread is \$2.75. When the Bay starts melting in late July, some ships come bringing heavy materials, equipment, building supplies, etc., but within a few months it freezes again. Even in summer, in June, temperatures are around 10° C, windy and chilly, and there are over 16 hours of daylight. In January, the mean temperature is -30°C, with only a half hour of daylight every day.

With only 3,500 inhabitants, Iqaluit is the largest community in the Eastern Arctic. People come here from other communities and outpost camps to find employment and opportunity. It has one of the busiest airports in the North, servicing and fueling aircraft on the polar route to and from Europe. Besides the local language, Inuktitut, English and French are also spoken, and all three languages are taught in the local schools.

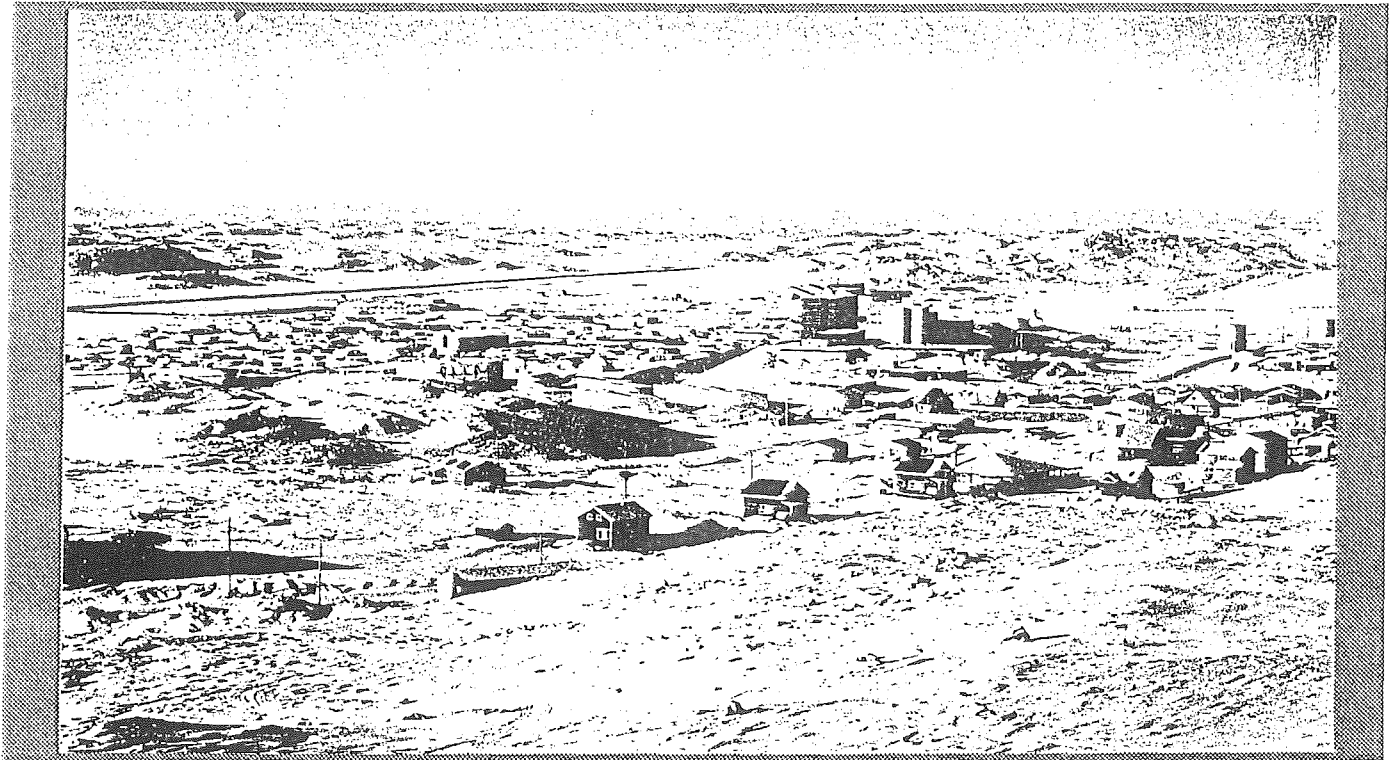
Sustaining a Way of Life Changed Little for Thousands of Years

The Inuit are an ancient people, who have until recently lived according to tradition, sustaining a culture that has changed little for thousands of years. European and Southern influence is so recent that there is much about life here that is often painfully new. There is a very strong bond between the Inuit people and their land. They have always been with the land. They own the land, they have always owned the land, but it is for *everyone*, to hunt and fish and enjoy. Besides Canada, Inuit people are also found in neighboring Greenland (belonging to Denmark), Russia and Alaska.

Historic Land Claim Settlement

With the passage of a bill in the Canadian House of Commons in June 1993, the Inuit of Canada North took a large step to regain control of their lives and their ancestral homeland. A new territory of 'Nunavut' (or 'Our Land') will be created by April 1, 1999, encompassing about 20% of Canada in the Eastern Arctic region. Though the creation of the Territory of Nunavut is a new chapter in Canada's confederation, the story of the Inuit who live there is an ancient one, going back thousands

Aerial view of Iqaluit, where the Panthakys make their home, in a one-bedroom apartment on the top floor of the eight-storeyed building, the highest structure in town. This is the scene that greeted Panthaky when he flew in for his interview. Before he arrived, he was told two things: "Do not expect to see any trees when you get off the plane, and bring sun-glasses, for the sun here, reflected off the ice and snow, is very strong."



of years of continuous habitation. The Inuit will receive \$1.17 billion for land claim compensation to establish their new form of self-government to administer this staggering chunk of North America. The capital of Nanavut has still to be chosen. Iqaluit, in the heart of the circumpolar world, and gateway to the Eastern Arctic, is a strong contender. Life in this northern land is a

change for this Zarthusti couple who grew up in the warm climate and hustle and bustle of Bombay. Says Panthaky: "We all think the North is a cold place, but actually we think it is warmer than most in terms of the human heart. People are always smiling here. And we are grateful to Ahura Mazda for the job."

[By Roshan Rivetna based on materials by Noshir Panthaky]

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PERSONAL PROFILE

A Great Upsurge to Come

Astrologer Bejan Daruwalla predicts important changes — an 'evolution' and a 'revolution' for Zarthustis in 1995.

Prediction for North American Zarthusti Community

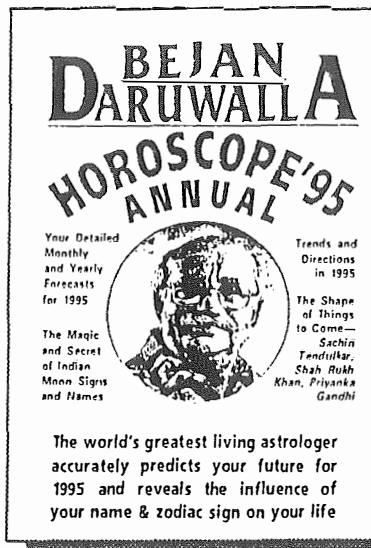
The voice on the phone was flamboyant and deliberate. With only this author's birthdate and whatever else (vibrations?) he picked up from my voice on the phone hundreds of miles away, astrologer Bejan Daruwalla proceeded to tell me, with uncanny accuracy, that he saw a lot of movement for me in 1994-1995. Had I recently moved to a new house? Feeling rather silly, because this die-hard scientist does not "believe in such things", I sheepishly admitted that I had moved to a new home six months ago. He went on to say he saw a lot of "form, design, color, hospitality" and one more house change coming — was I perchance planning a "renovation" or a "redecorating"? Those who visit our house these days know about the stacks of remodeling plans on our dining room table!

Justifiably impressed, I asked Daruwalla to give me his prediction — not for me, my family or friends, but for the whole North American Zarthusti community nonetheless. A few days later he called back.

A garrulous man, and obviously a seasoned showman to boot, Daruwalla went on at length about the prospects for our community: "December 9, 1994 to January 3, 1996 will be a very important period for Zarthustis. During this time, Jupiter, the planet of religion, will come in the sign of religion, namely Sagittarius. Sagittarius is a fiery sign, and Zarthustis revere fire, so for us it is a pivotal turning point.

"When I talk, I get a vision", he says, and goes on with the prediction, faster than I can write it down: "I see ceremonies, rituals, rites — important changes. I see tolerance, people coming into the faith. A great upsurge and research in our religion is our destiny. This will not be trouble-free, but the bottom line is — it will happen. I am very positive about this prediction. I am 99.99% sure. It will happen. No doubt about it. Laws, rules, customs will undergo evolutionary and revolutionary changes, and Jupiter will be the harbinger. These changes will be a thousand-fold for the good. This is a launching pad for Zarthustis in 1995. What we do in 1995 will have a glorious result in 1996-1998."

India's Star Astrologer



A full-time, practicing astrologer, psychic, lecturer and columnist, Daruwalla, 63, lives in Virginia with his American wife, Wilene, who is his most ardent admirer and handles all his paperwork. An erstwhile professor of English in Ahmedabad, India, he left for Bombay when the passion for astrology consumed him. A prolific writer, his annual series of pocketbooks: *Bejan Daruwalla Horoscopes* are in great demand (at \$4 to

\$10 each). Daruwalla published *Star Signs*, *Numerology*, *Chinese Astrology* in 1991, and is a regular columnist for dozens of newspapers and magazines in India and U.S.A. He is also available for consultations, in person or by mail.

Fusing Western and Eastern Astrology

So what makes him tick? In *The Best of Bejan Daruwalla, Horoscope 1994* he writes: "Western astrology has the lead in character delineation, experimentation, insights into the psyche of an individual. Indian astrology specializes in the pin-pointing of events and happenings. I try to fuse both. Also, as a supplement I use tarot cards, I-Ching, dice, numerology, palmistry, ESP and more. My art is the art of synthesis. No one method is superior to the other." In an interview with news magazine *Bombay*, [July 22, 1989], he said: "It comes to me in a flash. I see one planet rotating. I see waves on the wall. For a second, I step into the man's body, then I am out again. I know everything about him. I can see it clear as day. But of course, I don't have an explanation for all this."

Daruwalla is currently collecting data for a research paper on "The Bowl of Jamshed", which was used by King Jamshed for predictive purposes. Anyone having information about this ancient king and seer is requested to contact Daruwalla at 3606 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22201, Tel: (703) 243-1010.

By Roshan Rivetna

for Zarthustis

Among the predictions that have earned Daruwalla a reputation as India's star astrologer are: his forecast that the Arabs would lose in six days in the Arab-Israeli war; a year before Sanjay Gandhi died in a plane crash, he had predicted "danger by accident" for him; he predicted the death of the Indian mystic Rajneesh; the rise of Benazir Bhutto; the premiership of Indira Gandhi and her fall; the deputy premiership of Morarji Desai; the fall of President Marcos; tough times for Gorbachev and Margaret Thatcher; and President Bush's victory in the Persian Gulf. His 1988 prediction of the release of Nelson Mandela from South African prison was off by only 34 days.



Photo from Bejan Daruwalla

Bejan Daruwalla's analysis of FEZANA:

"FEZANA is getting better and brighter. It has boundless energy and enthusiasm and intelligence. Actually, it is a ball of divine fire lighting up the sky. By the 'kabala' it will be 27 (F8+E5+Z7+A1+N5+A1). The number 27 officially means 'The Sceptre' — power, authority, command, productive intellect, rewards, harvest are its attributes and due results. All this our FEZANA will have."

Astro-Numero Analysis of O. J. Simpson:

"O.J. vibrates to 8 (O7+J1). This number is full of the gravest warnings for the future. It foreshadows disasters ... O.J. has Saturn, the planet of constriction, rigidity and possessiveness, placed in Leo. Result? Confusion and chaos. It might end in tragedy. There will be dramatic twists in the trial from 1994-1996. His anguish will subside by April 1996, for then Saturn will leave Pisces..."

WEDDING TRADITI

A Glimpse of Zarthusti Wedding Customs and

Marriage is a highly favored institution in the Zarthusti tradition, and cause for celebration by family, friends and the whole community. A happily married man and woman, with progeny are viewed as Ahura Mazda's best soldiers on this earth, as He works to move the world towards Perfection.

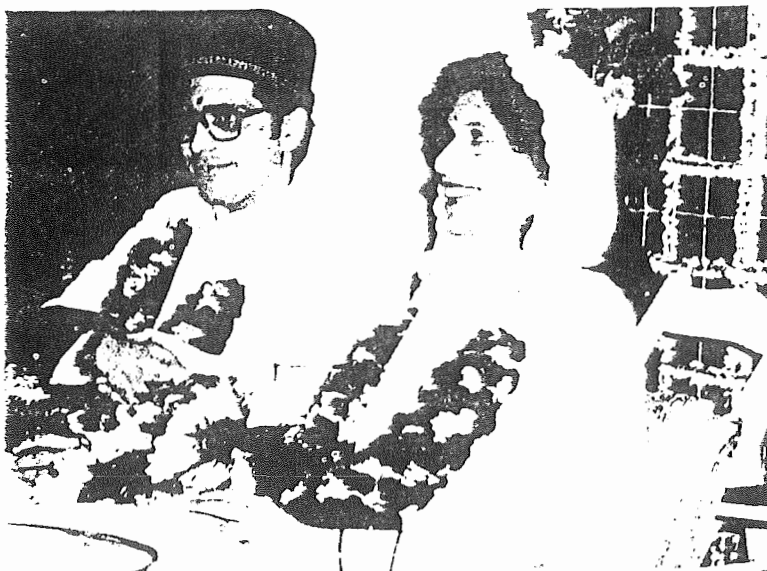
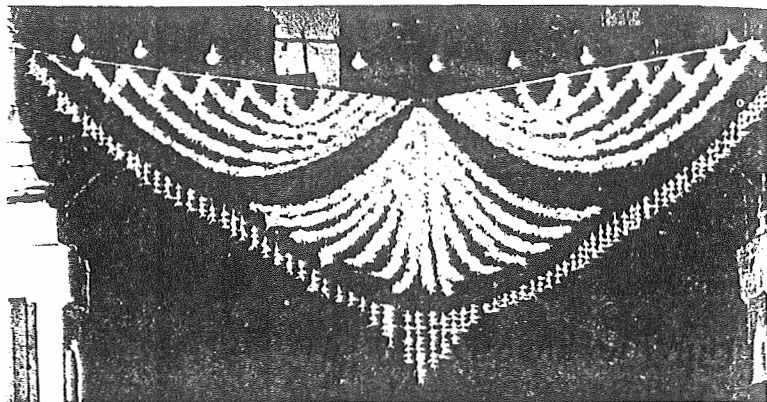
The Very Ground on Which a Married Man Lives is "Happy"

"That place is happy, over which a righteous man builds a house, with fire, wife, children, cattle and good followers...", says Ahura Mazda [Vendidad III.1] in reply to Zarthustra's query: "Which is the second place on earth that feels happy (the first being the House of Worship). He goes on [Vendidad IV.47]: "Indeed, I recommend hereunto thee, a man with wife above a man who grows up unmarried, a man with family above one without family, a man with children above one who is without children." Marriage is recommended in the Zarthusti faith, even for priests, for it is believed that there is a greater likelihood for a married person than an unmarried one, to be able to withstand physical and mental afflictions and to lead a religious and virtuous life [Vendidad IV.48]

From ancient times, marriage has been considered to be the most important event in one's life. In Persia, the State encouraged married life. Herodotus [Book I, p136] mentions that "next to prowess in arms, it is regarded as the greatest proof of excellence to be the father of many children. Every year the King sends rich gifts to the man who can show the largest number: for they hold that number is strength." Even to bring about a marriage is considered to be very meritorious, and an act of atonement for a sin.

Origin of the Ceremonies

After the vicissitudes that have befallen the community over hundreds of years, it is difficult to determine which of the present several marriage customs are originally Zarthusti. Since the exodus from Iran to India over 1,300 years ago, a large number of the rituals (e.g. the *Kunkun* or red pigment on the forehead), have been picked up from the Hindu sister communities. Nevertheless, the strictly religious part of the ceremonies, where the priests take part, are pretty much of ancient Persian origin.



ONS

Ceremonies



Resource Materials on Traditional Parsi Zarthusti Weddings

The following publications are gratefully acknowledged for providing source material for this compilation on Parsi wedding customs and ceremonies

PARSI CUSTOMS FOR THE AUSPICIOUS OCCASION OF MARRIAGE

By Perin Naval Hormusji

50 pp, in Gujarati, Rs. 10 plus shipping.

Published by the FKS Foundation, 808 Bombay Lodge, Khodadad Circle, Dadar, Bombay 400 014.

This valuable book gives detailed, step by step descriptions of traditional Parsi ceremonies and customs leading to the wedding day, such as the *Dahi-Machli*, *Mandavsaro*, *adarni* and more. It serves as an excellent planning guide when preparing for a wedding.

Proceeds from the sale of this book will be used by the FKS FOUNDATION for educational and medical aid to the needy in India. An appeal for this worthy cause is reproduced in this issue [see p.62].

The author is very grateful to ERUCHSHAW AND JERBAI MASTER of Concord, North Carolina and JALOO CAPTAIN and RITA ENGINEER of Boca Raton, Florida for painstakingly translating the book from Gujarati to English; that translation has formed the basis for a major portion of this article.

THE RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES AND CUSTOMS OF THE PARSEES

By Ervad Shams ul Ulama Dr. Sir Jivanji Jamshedji Modi

500pp, hardcover, Reprint 1986, Rs. 45 plus shipping.

Published by Society for Promotion of Zoroastrian Religious Knowledge, Noble Chambers 'B', 4th Floor, Parsee Bazaar Street, Fort, Bombay 400 001.

Besides a detailed exposition on marriage this exhaustive and authoritative volume by the illustrious priest and scholar, Jivanji Modi also covers ceremonies and customs of birth, Navjote and funerals, as well as other inner and outer liturgical services.

THE ZARATHUSHTRIAN CONCEPTION OF MARRIAGE AND THE WEDDING SERVICE

By Dastoorji Dr. Sohrabji Hormuzdji Kutar

High Priest of U.K. and Europe

Available from Dr. Mrs. Shirinbanoo Kutar, c/o WZO, 135 Tennison Road, South Norwood, London SE25 5NF, U.K.

This six page article gives an overview of wedding customs and ceremonies, with their religious significance

A SHEHENSHAI WEDDING CEREMONY

Two-page article by Lt. Col (Retd.) Homi Neku, New York.

Wedding Preparations — Selecting an Auspicious Day

The new moon day, or the first day of the month, Hormazd, or the twentieth day of the month, over which Behram, the angel of victory presides, are generally considered to be auspicious for the engagement ceremony and the wedding day.

First Thing in the Morning — Chalk, Toran, Sev and Dahi

First thing in the morning on all auspicious days (such as weddings, birthdays and New Years day, Parsi homes are cleaned and decorated with *chalk* (powdered lime) and *torans* (garlands of fresh flowers). Elaborate designs of white and multi-colored chalk powder are stenciled or applied with special pierced tin boxes at the doorsteps and entrances. Flower *Torans* (roses, fragrant jasmine and white tube-roses are specially favored) are hung at every door.

All special days start with a family breakfast of *sev* (fried thin vermicelli) sprinkled with lots of fried raisins and slivered almonds, a bowl of freshly prepared *dahi* (sweet yoghurt), and fried fresh fish (*magan boi* is especially favored, but catfish tastes just as good). The table is also laden with a variety of sweet-meats — heart-shaped *penda*, *barfi*, *sooter-fani*, and more. Good music plays through the house all day. A *divo* (oil lamp) is always lit on festive occasions.

The Engagement Ceremony

The families of the bride and groom play a very major role in all the ceremonies that precede the wedding, for the marriage bonds not just the couple, but both families as well, and it is a time of rejoicing for all.

The commitment to get married is initially formalized by both families at the *Rupeeve Pehravanoo Ceremony*, where the boy's family presents a 'packet' of Rupees to the girl, and in return the girl's family reciprocates with a packet of an even larger amount to the boy. Remembering always that for all occasions, gift amounts must end in 1, such as 11, 21, 51, 101, 151, 201...

On the morning of *The Engagement Day*, 5 or 7 ladies from the groom's family, dressed in their best saris leave for the bride's house carrying the *sés* and the *Dahi-machli* tray.

The Sés Tray should contain the following items:

- The conical *pado*, filled with round sugar *patasa* sweets, festooned with a garland of flowers.
- The *gulab-dani*, filled with rose-water, for sprinkling on the flowers.
- The *pigani*, filled with the red *kunkun* powder paste, for making the *tili* (red mark on the forehead)

The silver *sés* tray (top right) forms an integral part of all festive occasions. The *Dahi-machli* tray is on the left.



- A whole coconut.
- A *pan* (betel leaf), a *sopari* (betel nut), a *kharak* (dried date), a whole almond with the shell, a piece of whole turmeric, a small bowl of sweet yogurt, a few pieces of *sakar* (large sugar crystals), and a handful of rice.
- A few silver coins, including one for the *divo*.
- A diamond engagement ring for the bride.
- A garland of fresh flowers for the bride.
- An envelope of cash for the bride.
- A full set of clothes for the bride, including a sari, blouse, petticoat, *sudreh*, *kusti*, red *cheetals* (glass bangles)

The Dahi-machli (yogurt and fish) tray should contain the following:

- 3 or 5 fish, either fresh or almond marzipan molded into a fish shape.
- A bowl of sweet yogurt.
- A small bowl of dry *kunkun* powder.
- A pound or so of *sakar* (large sugar crystals).
- A second set of clothes, and/or jewelry for the bride.
- A small garland of flowers.

The *machli* (fish) is quite prominent in Zarthusti rituals, as a symbol of good luck — just as the fish swims in the

vast ocean, surviving hazards, it is hoped we too will live and prosper in this world.

On arrival at the bride's house, the groom's party is welcomed at the front door with the *Achoo-michoo Ceremony*. The bride's family has prepared a silver *thali* or tray with the following items in it:

- 1 egg.
- 1 pan, sopari, kharak, and rice.
- 1 whole coconut.
- A small glass of water on a small silver plate.

The bride's mother circles the egg seven time over the heads of the arriving group of women and breaks it on the floor to their right. The same is repeated with the pan, sopari, kharak and rice together; and again with the coconut. Finally, a small amount of water is poured into the plate with a few grains of rice, and again, after circling it seven times, it is poured first on their right and then on their left side. A handful of rice is then showered on the group. They now enter, stepping in with their right foot first, of course.

After some preliminary hugs and kisses between the families, the engagement starts. The bride steps with her right foot, onto the *Patlo* (a flat wooden stool made from one plank of wood, and decorated with five chalk designs). The groom's mother gives the bride a tili, first on the right foot, then on the left, and then a big round one on the forehead, encrusted with grains of rice. She is then presented with the set of clothes and a coconut, and given a small piece of *sakar* and a spoonful of yogurt to sweeten her mouth, and a sip of water. She goes inside and changes into her new set of clothes — all but the saree. Returning to the *patlo*, she is helped

The engagement ceremony: exchanging rings



into her engagement saree by the women, accompanied with the singing of traditional wedding songs in Gujarati. A few grains of rice, sprinkled with rosewater are tied into a knot at one end of the sari (*sarino ched tadho karvano*). She is garlanded, and presented with red glass bangles, a silver ring, a coconut, *pan*, *sopari*, silver coins and packet of cash. She is then presented with the *Dahi machli* set of clothes. With a spoonful of yogurt and *sakar*, she is showered with blessings by all. One silver coin from the *sés* is placed in the *divo*.

After a round of refreshments — *sev*, *dahi* and sweet-meats are a must, along with sandwiches, cakes and more, the groom's mother is presented with a set of clothes (*sasu dakharna*), which are later handed over to the bride. One fish from the *Dahi-machli* tray is set aside, and a packet of cash put in it's place. Every member of the groom's family is presented, on the *patlo*, with a packet of cash, a garland and a coconut, along with more blessings. It is now time for the groom's party to return to their house, with the *sés*, *Dahi-machli* trays, the new clothes, all the cash envelopes, and the bride.

The ceremony now continues at the groom's house. Once again, with fresh *Achoo-michoo* trays, the groom's mother welcomes, first the groom's party, and then the bride's party of 5 or 7 women who arrive now, laden with their *sés* and their *Dahi-machli* trays. The *sés* ceremony is now repeated. This time the bride's mother presents gifts to the groom on the *patlo*: cash envelope, set of clothes, cash envelope for the *Dahi-machli*, a silver ring, a garland, a bouquet, coconut, and blessings amidst showers of rice.

It is now time to exchange engagement rings. The bride joins the groom on the *patlo*. The groom first puts her ring on her left hand and the bride follows with his ring on his left hand. The bride's party is now presented, one by one, with cash envelopes, a coconut, a garland and more blessings. One silver coin is placed in the *divo*. Another round of refreshments follows.

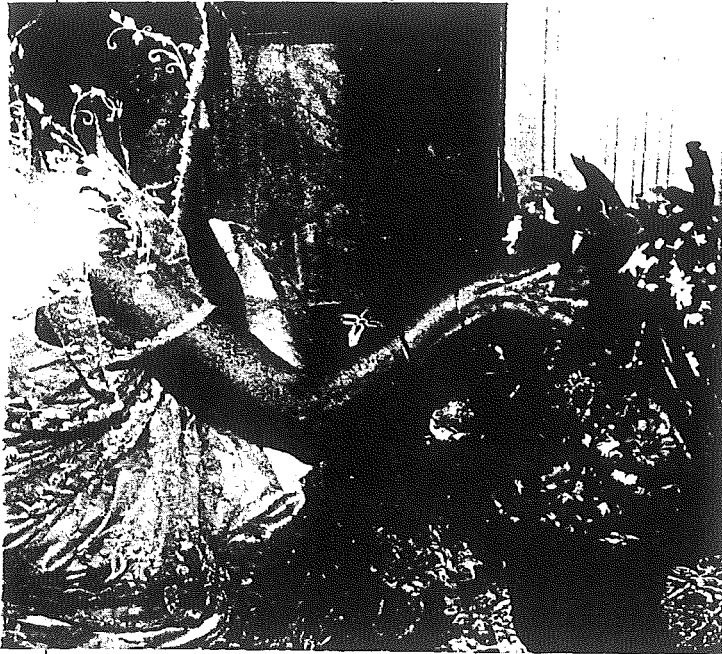
That evening, the bride and groom go to the bride's house for dinner, where another round of *Achoo-michoo* and *sés* follows, with another cash gift to the groom. He is also presented with a gold coin, a garland, bouquet and sweet-meats [Continued on p.26].

Most marriages begin on the presumption that they will last. Gypsy men, however, begin married life after agreeing to "Swear you will leave this woman when you discover you no longer love her!" An American, Glynn de Moss Wolfe, held the record for loving women and leaving them. He was married 19 times to 17 women. But Theresa Vaughn of England reportedly had 61 husbands without polygamy.

[From Karachi Banu Mandal Newsletter, February 1995]

Pre-Nuptial Ceremonies: Mandavsaro, Adarni, Varadh-pattar and more...

Wedding festivities generally last for four days, with the *Mandavsaro* and *Adarni* on the first day, the *Varadh-pattar* on the second and third days and the finale, the wedding, on the fourth day.



At the Madavsaro ceremony: planting a branch

At The Madavsaro Ceremony a branch (usually of a Mango tree) is planted at the bride's home, symbolizing the start of a new life together for the couple. A young male relative donned in a red turban accompanied by four ladies, all garlanded, with *tilis* on their foreheads, do the honors. The ground is decorated with chalk; *kharaptoo*, a paste of turmeric (for good health) and rice flour, is applied on the door-posts. The branch is planted in a clay pot decorated with *kunkun*. Seven gold and silver coins (or sequins), a *pan*, *sopari*, *sakar*, almond, *kharak*, rice, wheat, turmeric, and a spoonful of yogurt, are also placed in the pot, all the time reciting *Yatha Ahu Vairyo*. An egg, and then a coconut are circled seven times over the tree and smashed on the ground. The coconut water is poured over the tree. The ladies tie a string seven times around a coconut and hand it to the bride, who places it in a copper vessel. Fragrant incense is passed around. The ceremony is then repeated with the groom, at his house.

The Adarni Varni Ceremony, usually held in the afternoon of the same day, is when gifts, mostly from the bride's family, are exchanged. First, women from the bride's family visit the groom's house, bearing the gifts:

- A new silver *sés* (*Soparani Sés*) with new clothes for the groom — suit, shirts, materials, *feta* or hat, shoes, a shawl and more; a gold wrist watch (for

Adarni); gold shirt buttons (for *Diva*); and a small packet of cash (for *Gor Rupeeya*).

- A set of four cooking pots filled with wheat in the first, dry sev and sweet *patasa* in the second, brown sugar (*gor*) and a coconut in the third, and *pan*, *sopari*, *kharak* in the fourth; all decorated with *kunkun* and garlanded.
- A set of saris each for the bride for the *Adarni*, *Varni*, *Diva*, *Gor Rupeeya* and *Teda*; and a set each for the groom's mother (*Sasuna*), and sister. A small amount of cash should be tied into a knot in a corner of each sari.
- A silver tray laden with five *dar-ni-poris* (rich pastry with split-pea filling) and four sweet, white *patasas*, conveying a long life, full of sweetness.

After an *Achoo-michoo* welcome at the door, the gifts are presented; a silver coin is placed in the *Divo* and, refreshments are served. The groom's family now visits the bride's home. After an *Achoo-michoo* welcome at the door, the groom's mother presents the bride with jewelry (all but the earrings, which are presented to the bride by her father-in-law at the wedding) and a set of saris each for the *Adarni*, *Varni*, *Diva*, *Gor Rupeeya* and *Teda*. She then presents a set of clothes to the bride's mother (*sasuna*). A coin is placed in the *Divo*. The ceremony ends with refreshments for all. Through the day, and on the following days, the bride's family will send to the groom's house items of furniture, linen, household items and more clothes for the couple. Two wedding chairs and a lamp are sent to the wedding hall.

The Varadh-pattar ceremony is performed by the family priests at the Fire-temple the day before the wedding, with a recitation of the *Baj* and *Satum* prayers, invoking the blessings of departed loved ones (*Asho-Farohars*) on the bridal couple. The groom's family distributes *varadh-vara* (sweet cakes) to family, friends and the poor.

The Wedding Day

In deference to the promise made by our Parsi forefathers to the Hindu rajah Jadiv Rana on landing in India, Parsi weddings are held after sunset, and in olden times, were repeated after midnight, but this latter practice has been discontinued. It is believed that the evening is the time when day and night (light and darkness) unite together, melting into each other, and so it is hoped the bridal couple will unite together in prosperity and adversity.

The wedding starts with the purificatory bath (*nahn*) for both the bride and groom, with the recitation of prayers by the family priest. This can be done at home. Then, dressed in her white wedding sari, jewelry, and a big garland of fresh flowers, carrying a bouquet and a coconut, she arrives at the wedding hall. Her father-in-law presents her with earrings (*khole lidhani butti*).



Before the nahn: a moment of prayer and contemplation.

The Wedding Ceremony

The groom is welcomed to the flower bedecked wedding stage by his mother with the *Achoo-michoo*. The bride comes next on the arm of her father, and is welcomed by her mother. Family members and one 'witness' from each side stand behind the couple. Two

Meanwhile, the groom arrives, also dressed in a white suit (*dagli*), wearing a big garland and carrying a bouquet, a coconut and a shawl. The bride's mother presents the groom with a ring (*ara-jyani*). The bride's sister symbolically washes the groom's hand and feet in a silver bowl of water (*verbadoo*), the groom drops a coin in the bowl. Close Relatives of the bride and groom exchange packets of cash. Both fathers-in-law are presented with shawls. The bride's brother is presented with a gold ring.

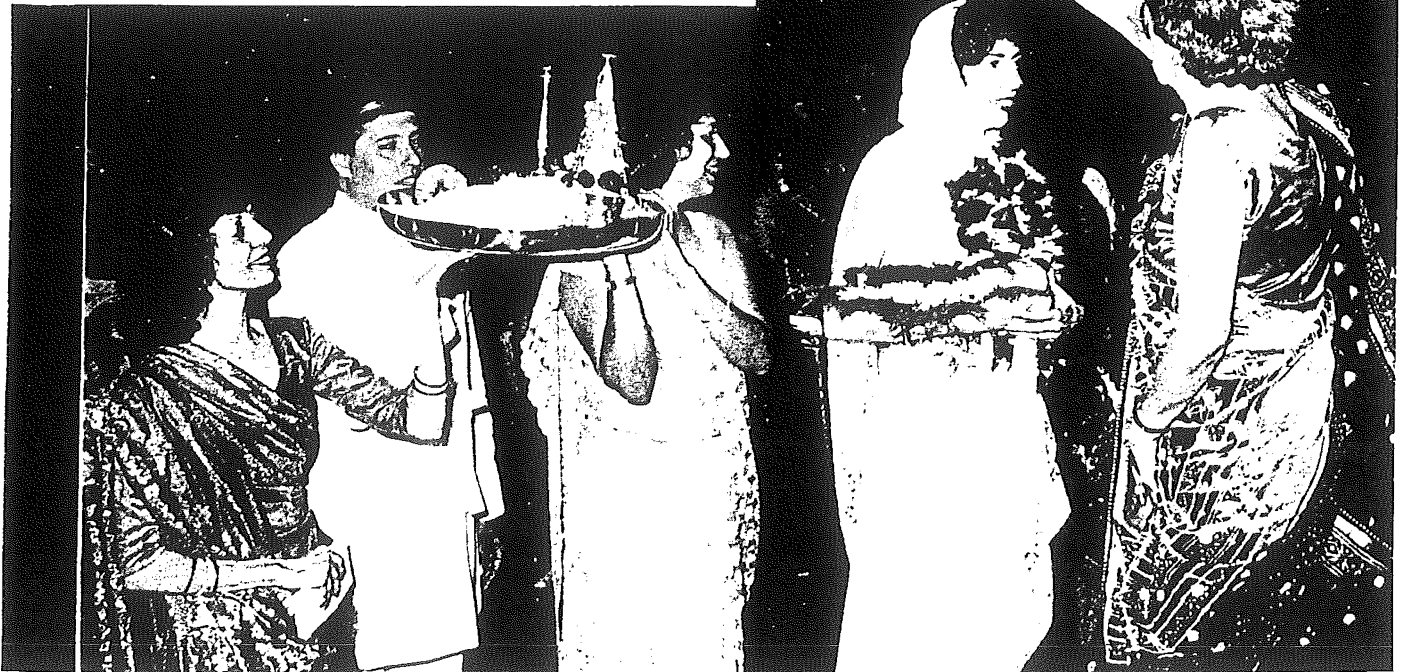
officiating priests stand in front. The symbolic uniting of the couple is performed with the *Ara-anter Ceremony*. With a white cloth separating the couple and tied at the end with a knot, the priest fastens the right hand of the bride and the right hand of the groom with seven rounds of cotton, which is then passed seven times round their chairs. This is called *Hathevaro* (hand-fastening). The curtain is then dropped, and the couple shower rice on each other. The one who throws first is considered the 'winner', and will be the foremost in loving and respecting the other. Family and friends applaud, for now they are united, and the couple now sit side by side for the rest of the ceremony, and thenceforth in life.

The strictly religious parts of the ceremony — the affirmations, the admonitions, the blessings, and finally, the exchange of rings, follow (see next page).

Weddings are celebrated with great éclat, with elaborate floral decorations, twinkling lights, a band, and feasting for a guest list, often in the hundreds. For a wedding is a time for celebration for all.

Compiled by Roshan Rivetna

[Acknowledgement: Wedding photos from Rumi and Kashmira Jamsetjee, Cyrus and Aban Grant and Cyrus and Bakhtavar Press].



The bridal party, carrying the *sés* is welcomed by the mother-in-law (right) with the *Achoo-michoo* ceremony

The Wedding Ceremony—'Ashirwad'

By Dr. Kersey Antia

Bringing About Frashokereti

Ahura Mazda is represented on this earth by men and women who are regarded as fundamentally essential in furthering His work on earth. This makes the procreation of mankind through the bonds of marriage a very meritorious act. One cannot really be a true Zarthusti unless one fulfils one's most important mission on this earth — procreation and raising of pious children who will bring about Frashokereti (renovation, resurrection). Celibacy is therefore discouraged. Even priests should marry, and only married priests, therefore were enjoined to perform weddings.

Asho Zarthustra, himself a married man, emphasizes the spiritual significance of marriage in the Gathas [Yasna 53.3-6] on the occasion of his daughter, Pouruchisti's wedding:

"May He grant you him (a husband)
who has moorings in the Good Mind,
And is in unison with Asha and the Wise One.
Therefore follow the directions of your native intellect.
Bear these words in mind. Then you will attain
The (blissful) existence of Good Mind.
May each of you surpass the other in righteousness,
For this will prove advantageous for each.
These things are exactly true (for) men
And exactly (true for) women.
Deceit may appear attractive and advantageous,
But it alienates one from one's person (soul)...
Happiness departs from those who are deceitful...
By any association with them, you will destroy your
mental (spiritual) world ..."

Thus, the tradition of giving admonitions and benedictions at the wedding comes directly from the prophet himself.

The Affirmations

An assembly of family and friends, as well as 2 officiating priests, are a must, for any Zarthusti wedding to be solemnized, along with the mutual consent of the couple. The couple is asked, not once but thrice, if they are marrying of their own free will and if either one of them suggests otherwise, the ceremony cannot proceed. Free will lies at the very basis of the Gathas, and so it is natural that the wedding is also based on free choice. This part of the ceremony can be translated as follows:

May the Lord be pleased.

Truth is good. Truth is best. Truth is happiness.

Happiness comes to those who are good
for the sake of being good.

May the Creator Ahura Mazda bestow upon you: progeny,
plenty of income, sincere friendship, a body with a handsome

The marriage ceremony starts with affirmations and commitments from the bride and groom, in the presence of family witnesses. The priests (left) then offer advice and admonitions followed by blessings and a benediction, as they shower the couple with rice and rose petals



face and a long life of one hundred and fifty years. On the day ____ of the month ____ of the year ____ in the town of ____, this gathering has met in accordance with the law and custom of the Zarthusti religion to give this woman ____ as wife.

The head priest asks the groom's 'witness':

Have you agreed to take care of ¹ ____ all through her life?

The groom's witness replies:

Yes, I have agreed.

The head priest asks the bride's witness:

Do you sincerely pledge with truthful thought, word and deed, and for the promotion of righteousness, to give this woman in marriage to ____ for life?

The bride's witness replies:

Yes, I have given the pledge.

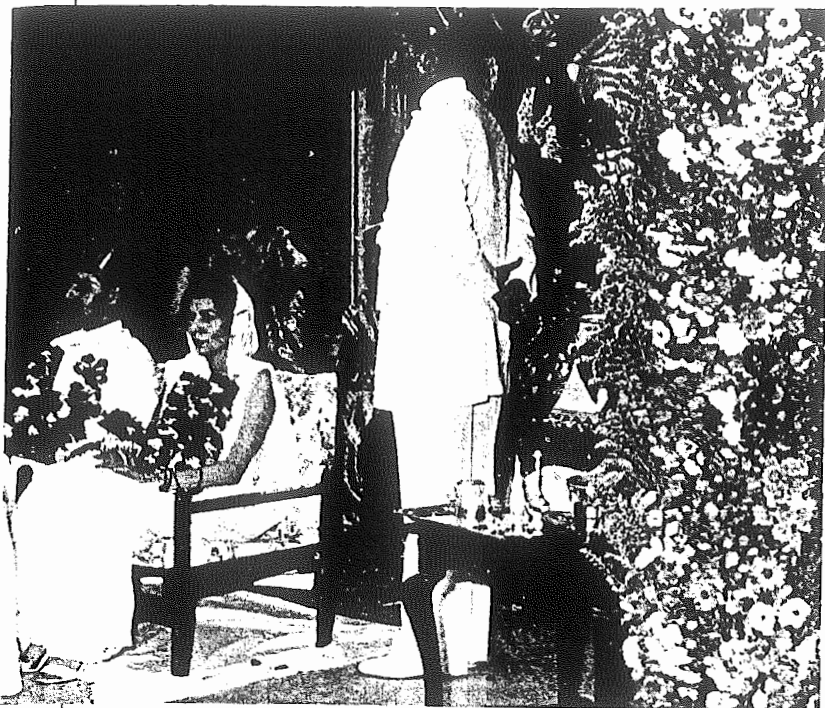
The head priest enquires of the bride and groom:

Have you chosen this lifelong commitment with true thinking — "Pasandey Kardam"?

The bride and groom reply:

Yes, we both have chosen so.

1. The Pazand ashirwad calls for 2000 Dirams of pure white silver and (only) 2 Dinars of real gold of Nishapur coinage, while the Pahlavi ashirwad refers to 2000 gold Dinars [K. N. Kanga, 1859] — apparently a mistake in transcription, as it is too excessive an amount even for our own times. It is unclear as to who is required to pay this amount. The Pazand suggests it is the bridegroom, while in the Sanskrit, which follows the Pazand for the Parsis, it is the bride, denoting a Hindu influence. The Pahlavi and Pazand term (*Ba Paemane*) could stand for both "contracting to pay or receive". And the Sanskrit "with coins" (*Suwarnamih*) denotes both "along with coins" as well as "in exchange of coins". In any event, most of the Parsis and their priests do not know Zand Avesta and this clause is neither understood nor practiced by them.



The Admonitions

Two priests, who are traditionally the bride's family priests, offer advice and admonitions to the couple:
 In the name of Ahura Mazda,
 May both of you experience joy and progress in life.
 Be ever full of glory (*Khoreh*),
 Be ever full of good blessings,
 Be ever full of growth and prosperity,
 Be successful, be learned in practicing righteousness,
 Be worthy of performing good deeds.

Think thoughts that reflect the good mind,
 Speak words that reflect good speech,
 Do acts that reflect good action,
 Drive away all evil thoughts,
 Look down upon all evil words,
 Scorch all evil actions, denounce sorcery,
 Proclaim yourselves to be Mazda worshippers.

Do your work with an attitude of perfection,
 And be prompt in doing your duty,
 Accumulate wealth righteously,
 In the presence of elders, be truthful and obedient
 In the presence of friends,
 Be humble, respectful and benevolent.

Do not slander, do not be angry,
 Do not commit sins to avoid shame,
 Do not be greedy, do not harrass anyone,
 Do not practice the evil of jealousy,
 Do not be arrogant, do not show false pride,
 Do not give in to lust,
 Do not misappropriate someone else's wealth,
 Keep away from another's wife.

Perform your own work with diligence,
 Do good to those who are pious and virtuous,
 Do not quarrel with a revengeful person,
 Do not be a partner with an avaricious person,
 Do not keep the company of a slanderer,
 Do not associate with a person of ill repute,
 Do not have anything to do with an ignorant person,
 Follow the principle of justice even with your enemies,
 With friends, be guided by their preferences,
 Do not enter into argument with a quarrelsome person.

Speak in a mature manner before an assembly,
 Before kings, speak with moderation,
 Be more illustrious than your father,
 Do not in any way displease your mother,
 Ensure your salvation by following Truth,
 Be of immortal body like Kae Khushru,
 Be intuitive like Kaus,
 Be brilliant as the sun, be pure as the moon,
 Be renowned as Zarthustra, be strong as Rustom,
 Be fertile as the earth (governed by) Spendarmad,
 Be as much in unison with friends, brothers, wife and children, as the body is with the soul.

Always be of good faith and good character,
 Recognize Ahura Mazda as the Lord,
 Praise Zarthustra as the spiritual leader,
 Denounce Ahriman as an evil being.

Blessings in the Name of the Angels For Each Day of the Month

May you secure Ahura Mazda's friendship and help,
 May *Behman* (Good Mind) grant you good thoughts,
 May *Ardibehest* (Best Truth) bless you with good speech,
 May *Shahrevar* (Desirable Rule) lead to worthy achievement,
 May *Spendarmad* (Beneficent Piety) grant you wisdom,
 May *Khordad* (Perfection) bestow sweetness and amiability,
 May *Amardad* (Immortality) give you fertility.

May *Daepadar* (Divine Illumination) bestow gifts upon you,
 May *Adar* (Inner Fire) give you ever-increasing splendor,
 May *Ardivisur* (Water) grant you immaculate purity,
 May *Khurshid* (the Sun) grant you dignity fit for a king,
 May *Mohr* (the Moon) bless you with a generous, giving nature (like the cow),
 May *Tir* (Star Sirius) guide you to right charity,
 May *Gosh* (Animal Kingdom) make you abstain from sin.

May *Daepmeh* (Divine Justice) bestow gifts upon you,
 May *Mehr* (Angel of Justice and Light) grant you power to hear with justice,
 May *Sroasha* (Hearkening) lead to obedience, protection,
 May *Rashne* (Truth) make you advance in truth,
 May *Fravardin* (Divine Essence in Man) lead you to progress in spiritual strength,
 May *Behram* (Enemy Smiter) grant you triumph,
 May *Ram* (Peace) make you revel in spiritual ecstasy,
 May *Govad* (Good Atmosphere) give you speed and power.

May *Daepdin* (Divine Conscience) bestow gifts upon you,

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انتشارات مزدا

May *Din* (Conscience) grant you wisdom and enlightenment,
 May *Ashishvang* (Blessing) grant you treasures, great glory,
 May *Astad* (Justice) grant you treasures of great talent,
 May *Asman* (Sky) make you highly industrious,
 May *Jamyad* (Earth) grant you regularity that go with time
 and space,
 May *Marespand* (Prayers) give you good insight,
 May *Aneran* (Endless Light of Heaven) give you soundness
 of body.

May you be worthy of attaining the height of lustre,
 May you remain worthy of (spiritual) enlightenment,
 May you be enlightened with all good thoughts, all good
 words and all good deeds,
 May the worst of worst evil never reach you,
 May the worst of worst evil never reach us.

Let the community, inspired and invigorated (by the Prophet's
 teachings) lend support to the Zarthusti men and women,
 and to the furtherance of good thought, which leads to the
 desirable prize (salvation). I pray for the mighty prize of
 Truth, which is highly prized by Lord Ahura Mazda (Himself).
 May God grant this person splendor and glory, strength of the
 body, health of the body, victory of the body, abundant happi-
 ness, progeny with inborn wisdom, longest life and the best
 heaven of righteous people, bright and full of happiness.

Afrin Buzorgan — Blessings Naming Illustrious Ancestors

This blessing is in the name of Hormazd the Creator.
 May you fulfil your desires, just as Hormazd the Creator
 fulfilled His with regard to His creation.
 Be auspicious and most excellent like Kae Khushru,
 Be full of truth and justice like the Angel Meher,
 Be a vanquisher of enemies like Zarir,
 Be of good religion like Shiavax, be holy like Vishtasp,
 Be strong like Sam, son of Nariman,
 Be full of vigor like Rustom; and be an excellent lancer
 like Aspandiar, patron of the religion.
 Be a wise foreteller like Jamasp,
 Be innocent like the righteous Fravashi,
 Be charitable like the Angel Teshtar,
 Be gentle like the rain, be far-seeing like the sun,
 Be a doer of good deeds like Zarthustra,
 Have a long life like Zarvan (Ruler of Time),
 Be fertile like Spendarmad, the Mother Earth.
 Have many connections like the river with many tributaries,
 Be well stocked up, like (during) the Winter season,
 Be happy like the Spring season,
 Be fragrant like musk, be precious like gold.
 Be readily acceptable like the *Deram* (silver coin),
 Be efficient like Hormazd in His own creation.

May you both and the whole assembly enjoy a long life of a
 thousand years. May you make all those who serve you
 happy. May you enjoy high status, and be recognized to be
 as delightful as the pure basil (marjoram) and amber. May
 you be blessed with pious children who will preserve your
 country and defeat the enemy, and foster peace.



Doa Tandarosti — Benediction

The officiating priests shower the couple with rose
 petals and rice from a silver tray, as they recite the *Doa*
Tandarosti benediction.

In the name of God, the merciful, the forgiving and the com-
 passionate. With the help of God, to the bridegroom _____
 and the bride _____ may there be a life of a thousand years
 full of health of body and soul. May there be glory along with
 righteousness.

O! Omniscient Creator, may delight, joy, comfort, happiness
 and goodness reach them and may they have higher glory,
 power, law of good authority, courage and victory. May there
 be good result with the aim of knowledge of the good Maz-
 dayasni religion. May there be lawful union and children and
 long life, glory and progressive development of the soul.

O! All-knowing God, may Zarthustra's religion be prosperous.
 O! God of all the world, with your help, may the bride-groom
 and the bride have the longest of long life, health and happi-
 ness lasting for a thousand years.

May you assume the leadership of the worthy person for
 many years and for many ages. May there be thousands and
 thousands of benedictions. May the year be auspicious, the
 day blessed and the month happy. For many days, for many
 months, for many years, may the functions of the Yasna ritu-
 als, the Nyiash prayers and acts of charity be fittingly per-
 formed.

Keep all good deeds imbued with a sense of righteousness
 and importance. Health be unto him, goodness be unto him,
 excellence be unto him. May this my wish be in accord with
 the will of the Ameshaspands.

The ceremony ends with the bride and groom exchang-
 ing wedding rings. Then friends and family come to the
 stage and wish the newly-weds happiness.

The Iranian Marriage Ceremony

By The Council of Iranian

By Mobed Fariborz Shahzadi
San Diego, California

The Zarthusti Iranian marriage ceremony is a very tradition-rich ceremony open to additions and changes (except to the prayers). The place where it is performed or the area where it is performed has a strong influence on the basic ceremony. Therefore, the following does not represent the way in which all Zarthusti Iranian marriages are performed, but Iranian Mobeds and Mobedyars in North America have now standardized the protocol below and will abide by it.



The Engagement

The engagement ceremony in the least, consists of exchanging engagement rings.

It is usually performed at the house of the bride where the relatives of the groom present a decorated crystal sugar cone (*Ghand*) and clothes for the bride, as well as any other gifts. The bride and groom exchange rings.

The Wedding Ceremony

The actual wedding ceremony consists of six parts:

Part One: Set the Stage

On the day of the wedding, the relatives of the bride visit the groom's house carrying at least:

- A tray of dried fruits (*lork*)
- A tray of white candy (*shirini*)
- One sweet pomegranite (or an apple)
- A piece of green cloth.
- A set of new clothes for the groom
- Persian berry (*senjet*)
- Dried thyme (*avishan*).

Family members may also include intended jewelry and clothes as gifts.

The wedding ceremony may take place in the house or at a public place where the bride and groom are accompanied by their relatives.

Part Two: Mobed(s) Get Ready

The ceremony can be performed by a single Mobed or accompanied by a Mobed or Mobedyar. (Mobedyars cannot perform the ceremony alone).

In a separate room, the Mobed(s) pray the prayer of the conscience (*Sroush Vaj*) and perform the Koshti with Koshti (*Avastayé Koshti*) prayers.

Part Three: Get Confirmation from Bride and Groom

The Mobed(s) should assign seven adult members in the audience to be witnesses of the ceremony.

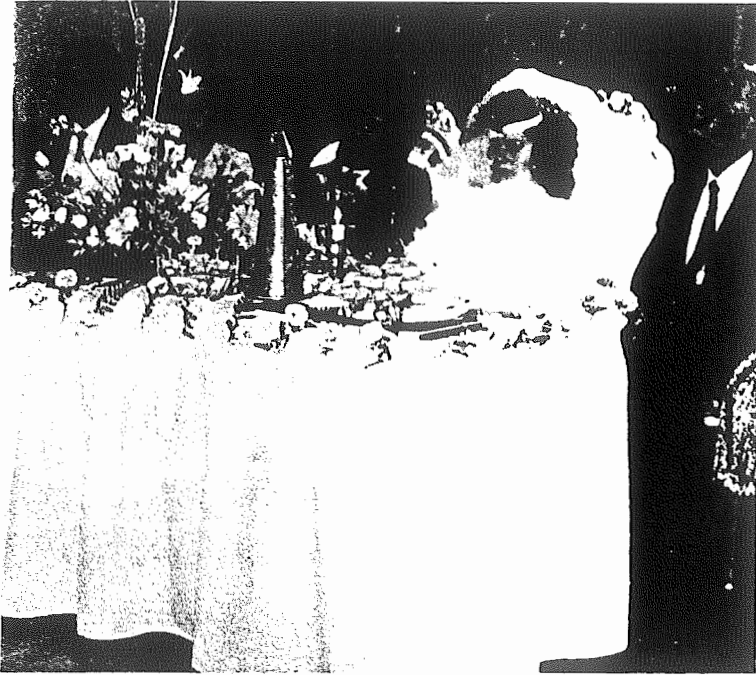
Throughout the ceremony the bride and groom sit next to each other, facing the Mobed(s). The bride first, and then the groom are asked whether they accept each other in marriage without any reservation (*see the attached questions in the prayer/advice section*).

Part Four: Give Advice to the Bride and Groom

The Mobed(s) should now read the nine verses of the advice and get the commitment of the couple on all the points. This includes appointing a day of the month for charity and a person who will be their counselor in the future, if they ever get involved in a quarrel or misunderstanding. The Mobed(s) should recite the section in

Performed in North America

Mobeds of North America



which the couple is advised to live by the qualities of the Ameshaspands (divine attributes).

Part Five: Ask the Couple One More Time

The Mobed(s) should ask the couple one more time if they agree to this union with each other.

Part Six: Bless the Couple

The Mobed(s) now hold a tray of rice mixed with flower petals and dried thyme (*avishan*), and shower them on the couple during the 'requesting health and prosperity' (Doâ Tan-dorosti) prayers

APPENDIX

Prayers for Part Three: Get Confirmation from Bride and Groom

Bênâmé Izadé Bakshâyandé
Bakshâyashgaré Mehrâban

Emruz, ké Anjomané, pay-vandé zanâshui,
bé raveshé, deené, vahé, Mazdyasni, dar injâ
barpâ-ast, man, ké mobed (name of Mobed) hastam,
bé gavâhiyé, Dâdâr Ourmazdé,
Râyumand-o-Kharumand,
bé gavâhiyé, Amsha-span-dâné Piruzgar,
bé gavâhiyé, Mehr-o-Soroosh, o-Rash-né râst,
bé gavâhiyé, Fra-vaharé Ashoo Zartooshté Espentamân,

bé khoshnudié Pedar-o-Mâdaré Aroos-o Dâmad,
bé gavâhiyé, vahâné in Bâzm,

(Face bride) Az shoma (name of bride) dokhté,
(name of bride's father and mother) ml-porsam,
ké (name of groom) Pooré,
(name of groom's father and mother)-râ,
bé dâd-o-âeené, deené, vâhé, Mazdyasni,
bé ham-tani-o, ham-ravâni, bé hamsariyé khod, mi-
paziri? (When she says yes the audience shout the fol-
lowing greeting: Hobeyro-Hobeyro-Hobeyro ... shabash)

(Face groom and recite: Az shoma .substituting the names of
the groom's family). The appropriate English translation:

Today, in the presence of Ahura Mazda and the
witnesses of this Assembly, I, Mobed (name of Mobed)
ask you (name of groom) son of (name of groom's father
and mother), Will you accept (name of bride) daughter
of (name of bride's father and mother)
to be your beloved wife, to be physically and
spiritually united, in accordance with the laws and
customs of the Zartoshti religion? (When he says yes,
everybody should give them a big hand).

Bé kho-jas-tégi, va farkhon-dégi,
man, va hamé vahâné in Anjoman,
az Ourmazdé tavânâ, arzoo-mandeem,
ké, bé een payvandé zana-shooi,
pâ-yandégi-o, ostovâri-o, Mehr-o, khoshi-o,
shâd-kâmi, avâ, af-soo-niyé, farzandâné vâh,
va khâsteyé farâ-roon, va deer-ziveshni,
va sar-anjâmé neek, ar-zani bé-dârad.

We pray to Ahura Mazda, that this marriage be
blessed with love and happiness. We ask Ahura
Mazda to guide you both on the path of Asha,
which is the path of Righteousness and Peace.

Prayers for Part Four: Give Advice to the Bride and Groom

Eenak, chand andarzé, bâysteyé deeni ast,
beshnaveed, va dar zendegâniyé kheesh, bé-kâr
banded, tâ shâ-veyé, khoshnou-diyé, Ahura Mazda,
va Neek-bakhti bâshad.

Now I would like to give you both advice which is
based on the teachings of our Prophet Asho
Zartosht.

Nâ-khost, setâyesh, va niyayeshé

Dâdâr Ourmazd hast.

Cherâ ké mâ, ajdâd, va dah-shâné kheesh,

az har gooné arzani dâshtë ast.

Ahura Mazda râ, dâdâré harvesp-âgâh dâneed,

va bé âyeené, deené vah, bé paras-tesh eesteed.

First, pray to and praise Ahura Mazda, our all-knowing God. He has blessed us with all GOOD things.

Dovom, bé payam-barié, Ashoo Zartooshté Espen-temân, avi-gamân beed,

va bé deené, vahé, Mazdyasni, ostovar mâ-need,

Har âyiné, be ashooi, va râsti, garâ-eed,

va bé andishé-o, goftâr-o, kerdâré neek dar jahân zeeveed.

Second, accept Asho Zartosht as our prophet and have a firm belief in our Zartoshti religion. Follow the path of Truth and Righteousness. Lead your life following the principles of Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds.

Sevom, bé ravân-shâdiyé, gozash-teh-gân,

va dastgeeré niyaz-mandân, dar yashtanê

Gahanbar, kootahi mâkoonid.

Andar Panjeh va Farvardin-gân ké roozé vee-jé, hamé

ravânân hast, az daroon, va myazd-o, âfareen-gân,

onché dast-ras bâshad, béja âreed, tâ hamâ

ravanân khosh-nood band, va dorood feres-tand.

Third, during Gahanbars and at all times, help the needy. Hold memorial services for, and always remember those who have passed away.

Chaharom, âeené, roozé, va sâlê

gozashteh-gan, va khish-vandân-râ, anjâm daheed,

va az dastgiri-yé, bee-ava-yân, onché dast-ras

bâshad, be-koo-sheed, ché ke Khoshnu-diyé méinu-ân,

andar kâr-o, kerfâ, geeti-tân ast.

Fourth, remember to pray to the souls of your departed family members. Also help the poor and needy regularly to the extent you can afford.

Panjom, gâmi, bee-Sedreh-o-Koshti, ma-naheed,

va farzandân-râ, Sedreh pooshâneed,

va Koshti bandeed, tâ andar ham-âgâh, bé dâdé,

deené, vah, bé setayeshné, Dâdâr Ourmazd, eesteed.

Fifth, live by the meaning of the Sedreh and the Koshti. Teach your children its message and remind them to wear it always. Make them follow Zartoshti religion and believe in our God Ahura Mazda.

Sishom, as pedaro, mâdaro, ostad, sepasdâr beed,

va gerâmi-shan dâreed, ché ke-khoshnu-diyé

Ourmazd, khoshnu-diyé, een seh tan ast.

Sixth, respect your parents and your teachers and be appreciative of their good teachings.

Haftom, az Mehr Izad, Verahrâm Izad, ya Ashtâd Izad,

yeki râ, bar gozee-need,

va andar on rooz, bé-setâyeshé Ourmazd,

va bé, dâd-o-dadesh pardâ-zeed,

tâ on Izad, negah-bâné-tân bâshad,

va az har vanâh-o-kaji, avaj dârad.

Seventh, pick a day from the three Zartoshti days Mehr Izad, Verahrâm Izad or Ashtad Izad. On that day of each month, make sure you help some needy person. (Make them select one of those three days).

Hashtom, dar zende-gâni,

bâyad râhne-mâyé dânyâi, bar gozineed,

tâ dar hamé kâr, az ou dastoor khâheed,

che ké dânesht, parâkandé ast,

va kâr bi-rahna-mouniyé dâná, nik farjâm na-bâshad.

Eighth, in times of trouble in your life, you should have one person who will guide you and show you the way out of your troubles. Please select and name that person that both of you can count on to resolve your differences. (Wait for the name).

Nohom, Ourmazdé Har-vesp-tavân, ké mardom-râ,

bé niruyé dânyâi, va gu-yâi, az har da-heshé gity,

bartar âfareed, dâdash, mardom doosti ast.

Pas mardom-râ, may âzâreed, nâ bé manesh,

nâ bé govesh, nâ bé konesh.

Beegâné, ké farâ-rasad, jâyi va khorakesh dahid,

va on-râ, az goros-negi, va teshnegi, va sarmâ,

nigah-dârid. Ava zeer-dastân va ketarân,

mehrabân beed, sâlârân va meh-tarân-râ,

gerâmi dârid. Va bé dâd-o-âyeené, am-shâs-pan-dân,

ké foru-zé-gâné, Ourmazdé, pâk-and, râh poo-eed,

tâ Dâdâr Ourmazd, as shomâ, khoshnud bâshad.

Ninth and final advice, Ahura Mazda gave Mankind speech, the Good Mind, and a conscience. Use your Good Mind to be kind to all of Ahura Mazda's creations. Use your conscience to prevent harm to people.

(Advice to live by the qualities of Amshâ-spandans)

Dâd-o-âyeené Bahman amshas-pand

âshti-o neek andishi-eest.

Keenevarz-o-razm-kâm mâbasheed

neek-khâ-o-vahmanesh beed, badi mânokid,

va piramooné badkârân magardeed dânesht

andoozeed

va kheradmandi peeshé konid farhang goshtareed

va dojmaneshni barandâzeed avâ doshmanân

bé dâd koosheed avâ doostân neeki varzeed

chârpâyâné sood-mandrâ khoob negahdâri koneed

va kar aptadmâneshân mafarmâeed.

Dâd-o-âyeené Ardibehest amshâs-pand

râsti-o pâki hast.

Daroon-o-borooné khod râ payvasté pâk dâreed

az kaji va nâpâkee pahrikhtâr beed

ashooi setâyeed va bé dâdé ashâ râh pooyeed

ché ké râh dar jahân yeki ast va ân ashoo-ist

bé maneshné neek maneed goveshné neek goyeed

bé koneshné neek varzeed
avâ ham digar yek del-o-yek zabân beed
az dorooog va sogand va jadooï gorizlan beed
âtash ké andar geeti mehr-o-ashoirâ némâyandé hast
gerâmi dâreed va bé nesâ-o-palashti may-â-lâyeed.

*Dâd-o-âyeenê Shahrivar amshâs-pand
nirumnadi-o-khish-dari ast.*

Andar râhé sarvari va tavângari kooshâ beed
Shahryarân-o-sarvarânê dâdgar râ farmân bareed
va gerâmi dâreed az farâ rooni-o dorostkâri
khâsté andoozid Hootakshâ-o-khish-kâré beed
az beekâri va gedâyi doori gozineed
bar khâstéyê kesân dast mayâzeed rashh ma bareed
zar-o-seem-o-mes-o rooyê âhan ârzeez-o-berenj pâk
negah-dâreed tâ zang nâ zanad va bé kêr âyad.

*Dâd-o-âyeenê Sependarmazd amshâs-pand
foroutani vâ Mehrabâni ast.*

Andar giti air-manesh va foroutan beed
avâ ham-deegar doostâro mehrabân beed
tarmaneshni va khodpasandi makoneed
hu-cheshmbeed kheeshvandânê mostamad-ra nang
madâneed va az khâsteyê kheesh yârishân daheed
amoozeshgâh-o bimârestân va deegar bonyâdhâyê
neek nâheed va chon zameen howdé va bordbar
beed zameen râ pâk-o-âbadân dâreed.

*Dâd-o-âyeenê Khordad amshâs-pand
khorrami va âbadâni ast.*

Delé khodrâ khorram va tané khod-râ pâk dâreed
ché pâkiyê tan ashooiyê ravân ast
nâsepaâsi mâkoneed va andoohgeen mâbasheed
gity bé cheshmé neek beeneed
va bé dâdé Hormazd khorsand-o-sepasdâr beed
âbâdi sâzeed va shâdee afzâyeed âb ké shâveyê
khorrami va âbadâni ast har âyeen pâk dâreed
pareedi-o-nasâ andar âb may-afghaneed tan-o-jâmê
dar âbê ravân mâshooyeed kâreez
kaneed-o-zameenê khoshk râ boroumand sâzeed.

*Dâd-o-âyeenê Amordad amshâs-pand
tan-dorosti va deer zeveshni ast.*

Tané khod-râ dorost-o-tavânâ dâreed
az doroj-o-paleedi doori koneed
khané-o-zâmé-râ pâk va bi-âlayesh dâreed
âb ârmisht va istâdé khosk-kaneed
vâ jâyash keshtzâr koneed dâr-o-derakht afzâyeed
darakhté javân mâboreed, bar-o-meevé nâ-rasidé
mâ cheenid, dâroo-o-darmân bé arzaneeyân daheed
va dard-mandân va oftâdegân-râ parastâr beed.

Prayers for Part Five: Ask Couple One More Time

Shoma ké (name of bride) âya (name of groom)-o
bé dâd-o-âyeenê deenê vahé Mazdaysni
bé khoshnoudi ba ham-tani va ham-ravani paziroftid?
(wait for a yes answer)

Shoma ké (name of groom) âya (name of bride)-o
bé dâd-o-âyeenê deenê vahé Mazdaysni
bé khoshnoudi ba ham-tani va ham-ravani paziroftid?
(wait for a yes answer)

We pray once again to Ahura Mazda to give you both
the strength and love to take care of each other and
always be happy and smiling in your life. I Mobed
(name of Mobed) hereby pronounce you husband
and wife.

Khasnaothra Ahura Mazdao - Ashem Vohu (1)

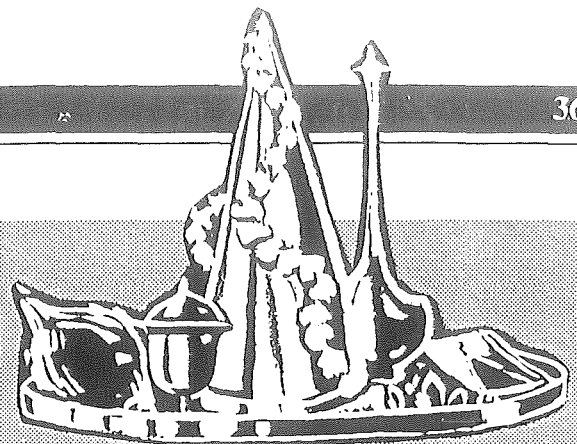
Prayers for Part Six: Bless the Bride and Groom

Recite the Dôa Tan-dorosti prayers.



SOMETHING OLD SOMETHING NEW

By Dina Gandhi McIntyre, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania



Ses: sketch by Mehroo / Wadua

In September 1993, our oldest son, Richard Jehangir McIntyre, got married to a lovely girl, Suzanne Irwin. For months before the wedding I wracked my brains, trying to figure out a way that would make Rich both happy and proud, and make Suzanne, and my husband Dick's side of the family, feel a part of it too. I wanted to bring to the wedding some of the neat things about Zarathushtra's teachings, without being preachy. I wanted to bless them without sounding dumb. But above all, I wanted them to enjoy the Zarathushtrian part of the festivities.

I concluded that there was one happy ceremony, that I had loved from childhood, into which I could blend the old and the new, and which would accomplish most of my objectives — the *sés*. But not just any ordinary *sés*. A *sés* that would give spiritual meaning to each material act. A *sés* that would link to each material act, a spiritual teaching of Zarathushtra's from the Gathas. I thought this blending of the material and the spiritual would be a neat way to demonstrate to them that in Zarathushtra's view, the material and the spiritual are both good, both part of one design. I also wanted them to understand that it was not enough for us to ask God's blessings for them, but that they, in turn, had to bless each other, and bless their world with their words and actions.

At once, I mobilized The Family. My cousin Jenny from California brought the garlands. My cousin Aashish from Connecticut brought her *sés* implements and red paste for the *tili*. My sister-in-law Silla brought chalk tins from India to make the chalk designs. And I worked on crafting a spiritual blessing for each act of the *sés*, which would bless my beloved children, and at the same time give them the precious gift of some aspects of Zarathushtra's teachings. On the morning of the wedding we assembled the *sés* on two silver trays—the garlands, 2 coconuts and silver coins marked with red paste, nuts, dates, rice, we had no *pan* leaves, so we substituted fresh green oak and maple leaves (for strength, long life and sweetness), a dish of sweet yogurt, some rock candy, the *sés* implements, and a lighted *diva*. We held the *sés* on our patio, with summer flowers all about us, and sunlight filtering down through the leaves of the shade trees. We washed our

patio floor, made a circle of chalk designs, into which Rich and Suzanne stepped, and this is how it went. As I performed each material act, I recited the corresponding spiritual blessing. And the structure of the blessings corresponded to an ancient Iranian poetic technique of starting and ending with the same idea — a technique that appears in the Gathas as well.

A garland of flowers was placed around each of their necks;
May God Bless You,
May you bless each other,
May you bless the world in which you live;

In each of their hands was placed a coconut, nuts, green leaves, silver coins, some rice and rock candy;
May He be generous to you,
May you be generous with each other,
May you be generous to all living things;

They each received a spoonful of sweet yogurt with a piece of rock candy in it;
May He sweeten your lives,
May you sweeten each other's lives,
May you sweeten the lives of all whom you touch;

A red mark (tili) was placed on the forehead of each one, rice was pressed to it, and, with a cracking of knuckles on my temples, rice was showered over them both;
May He instruct with good thinking
the course of your direction (Gathas Y50.6),
May He give you understanding and
enduring strength to lead a good life
[Gathas, from Y43.1 an 2].

Hugs and kisses.

God Bless You and Keep You.
We love you.

After I was done, all our relatives blessed them in turn with good wishes, rice showers, hugs, kisses, and presents. We next decided, by unanimous vote, that my younger son, John Dinshaw, looked in dire need of blessings as well, so into the chalk circle he went (right foot first, naturally), and got *tilied*, blessed, hugged and kissed, by parents, aunts, uncles and cousins. My family next decided that Dick and I looked as though we could use a blessing or two, so we were ordered into the chalk circle and got blessed, hugged, kissed and

showered with presents in turn. We then put *tilis* on everyone's forehead for good luck — Bajajs, DeVitres, Ghandys, McIntyres and Sheridans, all got *tilied*, with much laughter and good fellowship. That last act turned the sés blessing from a spectator event into something that bound us all together into one family, as participants. It was like magic, the change that it made in the mood of the gathering.

After the wedding was over, and the photographs of the sés were developed, I made a little book for Rich and Suzanne, so that they would have a permanent remembrance of their Zoroastrian wedding blessing. In this book I described what went into the sés trays, the blessing itself, and pasted photos of the sés and the family. I added a little introduction, and a conclusion as follows.

"A sés is a blessing that is given on all good occasions — birthdays, weddings, et cetera. It combines the giving of material things with spiritual gifts (blessings) because in Zarathushtra's teachings, the material and the spiritual are both good, both part of one Design, each with its part to play in bringing about God's Good Rule. A central feature of Zarathushtra's teaching is a happy blending of rugged individualism, with a sense of community. To illustrate: on the one hand he teaches that each individual must choose for himself or herself (after reflecting with a clear mind) how he/she will think, speak and act (individualism). On the other hand, he teaches that God lives in each one of us.

So in a very real sense, we are all part of the same whole (the community). The individual and the community, also, are both part of one Design, each important in its own way. This complementing of the individual and the community is reflected in the sés blessing. Each person who performs a sés is free to give whatever verbal blessings he or she chooses (individualism). And everyone gets in on the act (the community spirit). The blessings I chose were selected to illustrate the meanings of the material symbols of the sés. And the fourth blessing is a paraphrase of Zarathushtra's own words as they appear in the Gathas. You may have noticed that when you were

blessed, you stood in a circle of chalk designs. Chalk designs were also placed on either side of doorways, stairways, and any other place that seemed good. I never knew what these chalk designs stood for until my brother Sarosh explained that in ancient days, before pesticides were invented, people used to sprinkle lime around the house to keep the crawling bugs out, because crawling insects (it was believed) would not cross a barrier of lime. The chalk decorations are a remnant of that ancient custom. One final thought. On the path of spiritual progress, or growth, one of the first steps is justice. Being fair. But an even higher step is generosity. So be fair. But go a step further. Be generous to overflowing. God Bless You Both, Always."

Did the Sés Ceremony exist in Zarathushtra's day? We don't know. Certainly, some of its material components (like the *tili*) have a distinctively Indian character. Our creative ancestors probably took certain symbols from ancient Iran (flowers, candy, green leaves, coins, lighted divo), and added to them certain symbols which they picked up from their Indian neighbors to come up with the sés as we know it today. It is a law of nature that all material things change. But the core of spiritual values has remained unchanged through the millennia — as valid today as it was in Zarathushtra's day. And our many times great grandchildren will find these values equally valid a thousand years from now, if we transmit these beautiful ideals to them by word as well as by example.

Zarathushtra's advice to brides and grooms is as valuable today as it was when he gave it on the occasion of his daughter's marriage, more than 3,000 years ago in the Vahishtoishiti Gatha:

*"Let each of you try to win the other with truth
And what's right, and you will both be winners"
(Y53.5 McIntyre paraphrase of Insler translation)]*

I have studied the Gathas for more than ten years now, and I still continue to find new ideas in them. But for all those years of study, I could not answer my cousin Aashish's questions: "Why do we crack our knuckles when we do the rice showers?" Does anyone know?



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Perspectives on Marriage

A cross-section of community members talk about their marriages

Best Thing That Ever happened To Me

If I want to shock my American friends, the surest way is to tell them that my husband and I were married exactly four weeks from the day we met. That is guaranteed to evoke a "What! You must have been crazy to do that!" and have their eyes pop out. To my American friends who 'dated' for months or years before deciding to take the final plunge, it sounds ridiculous that anyone would take such a big step after knowing the man for such a short time. However crazy they may think me to be, from my point of view, marrying Bomi was the smartest thing I ever did in my life!

My husband, Bomi, came to Chicago in 1969 to obtain his Master's degree in Engineering and decided to settle in the U.S.A. In 1973, he returned to Bombay with the intention of finding a 'life partner' and settling down. My mother-in-law was asked to check around and inquire about prospective brides for him. While in Bombay, he was introduced to several young women, including me. We met each other at a mutual friend's home. Even though I agreed to meet him, I was determined not to like him or have anything to do with him. After all, I was an educated and liberated young woman who was determined to marry for love. Another big drawback was the fact that he was settled in U.S.A. and, coming from a very close-knit family, I had no interest in leaving my family and friends to live in a country where I knew not a single soul.

All that changed the minute I saw Bomi. Contrary to the 'hippie' image of him I had drawn in my mind, Bomi was clean-cut, even by Bombay standards. What really got me, were his warm, sparkling eyes and his 'loochha' (puckish) smile when he introduced himself. By the time I left, I was definitely 'interested' in him. Therefore, when he asked me out a few days later, I was interested in discovering whether we had anything in common. By the time our first 'date' ended, I was already halfway to being in love and he now tells me that he had already decided that I was the one he wanted to marry. However, we went out several more times before he popped the question and by that time I was crazy about him.

Getting everything organized for the wedding while continuing our courtship was not an easy task, but we finally made it. This does not mean that I did not have any doubts. I had doubts about everything: whether our feelings for each other were strong enough and

would they last; doubts about leaving my family and friends; doubts about whether I would be able to adjust to settling down in a country where I knew absolutely no one. Sleep was a long time coming most nights then, but when I was with him, he made me feel safe and protected. The doubts and apprehensions continued even after we were married, and grew upon Bomi's return to Chicago.

Twenty-one years and three children later, we are even more in love than on the day we exchanged our vows, and I can now look back on my doubts and apprehensions with a smile. That is not to say that we have not been faced with challenges along the way.

Like in all marriages, we both had adjustments to make, giving a little, taking a little. However, our common backgrounds and upbringing helped us in rearing our children. We have tried to make them independent and self-reliant while attempting to instill in them a pride in their Zoroastrian background and heritage. Even though my own children say that romantic as our whirlwind courtship was, they would not have the guts to go the same route in choosing a spouse, I still feel that meeting and marrying Bomi was the best thing that has ever happened to me.

Bachi Damkevala
Naperville, Illinois

Marriage — Always a Work in Progress

"Do not quarrel with the revengeful. Never be a partner with an avaricious man. Do not be a comrade of a back-biter. Do not join the company of persons of ill fame. Do not cooperate with the ill-informed. Do not enter into any discussion with persons of bad repute. Speak in an assembly after mature consideration. Speak with moderation in the presence of kings ..."

Graduation advice from a parent to an adolescent? Sage words to a young man or woman about to embark on a career?

Not really. The advice, delivered in ancient Pazand, is part of the priestly *ashirwad*, or benediction, directed at the marrying Zarthusti couple.

Being not familiar with Pazand, it was only recently, upon encountering a translation, that I realized the

import of the litany I had heard showered upon me and Hutokhshi as we were married.

What an unusual setting for such counsel, I concluded. On second thought, how typical of the beautiful practicality of our faith.

Yes, the couple should enjoy a long and happy married life. Yes, may they be blessed with numerous healthy and happy children. But the way to ensure all this, the *ashirwad* suggested to me, is to *please use your common sense, to please be just as wise and sensitive in dealing with each other and your children as you should be with the rest of the world*. One need not subscribe to the *ashirwad* literally to appreciate its intention.

Certainly, the best and most fulfilling aspects of any marriage are the effortless and unplanned words and actions that emanate from loving feelings for each other, feelings often translated into the simple desire for each other's company, the sharing of meals, outings, tasks, etc.

And certainly, marriage is a special relationship, sustained by emotion rather than calculation.

Yet as the benediction suggests, marriage in some ways is no different from any other relationship and has to be tended carefully, constantly and diligently to be fulfilling.

So no gesture of affection, no expression of endearment, is trivial in our home. Our older son Malcolm is the latest to join in what has become a family game, and one day I hope little Burjis will, too. This is how it goes: any one of us, at any time, for no rhyme or reason, is apt to break the silence by saying, "Hey, I forgot to tell you something." To which the other will look up in what is now well-rehearsed puzzlement. "I love you," the perpetrator of the prank will go on after the pause, drawing the response, "I love you, too."

I hesitated to put this down on paper because it sounds so corny; I never imagined I'd be the one saying such things. I can only say that it's not so corny when I can see my spouse's or son's face light up during the little routine. And I know it has a similar effect on me.

Is this a particularly Zarthusti thing to do? I wouldn't know. I can't even recall what prompted me to start it. It just seems to fit my concept of our religion as one that is simple and practical. Do whatever works for you, it seems to tell me.

I for one, sustain myself every day with aphorisms. Whether it's the mainstay of our faith — *Humata, Hukhta, Huvereshta* — or something ascribed to lesser authors. Let me share one that I have long cherished and have found to be particularly meaningful now that I'm a father. It is titled "Children Learn What They Live."

IF a child lives with criticism, he learns to condemn,
IF a child lives with hostility, he learns to fight,
IF a child lives with ridicule, he learns to be shy,
IF a child lives with shame, he learns to feel guilty,
IF a child lives with tolerance, he learns to be patient,
IF a child lives with encouragement, he learns confidence,
IF a child lives with praise, he learns to appreciate,
IF a child lives with fairness, he learns justice,
IF a child lives with security, he learns to have faith,
IF a child lives with approval, he learns to like himself,
IF a child lives with acceptance and friendship,
He learns to find love in the world.

These are simple verities that could have come out of the Avesta, which itself offers innumerable simple verities: be righteous and truthful, live virtuously, help the needy, act wisely, and so on.

Oh, my wife and I have strayed from these ideals more often than either of us cares to count. Harsh words, petulance and inconsiderate behavior are not utter strangers in our household. What always helps us recover quickly from such setbacks is that we've left room for human foibles. Neither of us, nor our children, have to be on perfect good behavior every waking moment to be deserving of each other's affection. *Marriage, we have concluded, is always going to be a work in progress.*

Porus Cooper
Cherry Hill, New Jersey.

Parsi-Persian — the Difference is More Than the Food or Rituals

Somebody once asked me: "What is your culture?", to which I replied: "It's agri-culture." Regarding my wife's culture, I am still learning about it. I was raised in Karachi in a traditional Parsi family. I came to the U.S. for higher education, completed my studies and married Kataykoon Pooladzandi, a Zarthusti settled in the U.S. for ten years, whose fundamentals were developed in a very conservative family in Tehran. During eight years of our fruitful marriage we have experienced distinctive differences in our cultures that have truly spiced up our married life. I'm proud to say that ours was the first Parsi-Persian wedding in Southern California. The ceremony was unique because it was a blend of rituals and customs. The food served was American to please both communities.

It does not take a rocket scientist to figure out the distinctive differences in food and culture, but the greatest challenge came in our marriage when we had to raise our wonderful daughter, Anahita. I had a different perspective from my wife's, both being raised in different parts of the world. I must admit that our perspectives did not jive, there was a lot of rock 'n roll. It took some time and energy before the two perspectives started

doing the waltz. This is an important consideration if one decides to marry outside the fold.

The next challenge was developing a good relationship with our parents-in-law. My wife could not relate to certain things my parents were doing. I basically had a language barrier with them because I don't speak Persian and they did not speak, understand or comprehend either English or Gujarati effectively. This at times caused certain misunderstandings.

I personally have not had any earth-shaking problems in my relationship. There are a lot of similarities in our moral and ethical values. We share the same professional disciplines and standards. We try to respect each other's viewpoint. In spite of the roller coaster rides we experienced in our marriage due to cultural differences, if somebody would still ask me to rate my wife on a scale of 1 to 10, I would without any hesitation give her a resounding 11!

Keep in mind that the key to our successful marriage lies in the fact that we are always looking for :*"Unity Within Our Diversity."*

By Meher Dadabhoy Amalsad
Westminster, California

Thoughts on Being a Zoroastrian-Jewish Family

I'm Zoroastrian and my husband's Jewish. It's not until someone asks about his religious heritage, though, that I think of him that way. I think of him as a friend, a partner, a father. When he infuriates me (yes, it happens), I see the differences between us accentuated, and then I see us as coming from two different worlds, the communication lines between which are disturbed by ungodly static.

It's then that I think of him as being American (rather than Jewish) and myself as not. Perhaps his Jewish identity does not loom large in my mind because it does not loom large in his. Perhaps it's because he's lox and bagels variety Jewish rather than *yarmulke* variety Jewish. Perhaps it's because his sense of being seems to center around a cultural identity rather than a religious identity, although we both realize how closely entwined the two often are.

As everyone who's been in a marriage knows, it can be wonderful, but it's never easy. A marriage between people of two different cultures poses its own unique challenges. Is it any easier because Judaism and Zoroastrianism share so much history?

Maybe what we have in common does somewhat raise the comfort level between the two cultures. It's probably not politically correct to say this, and I don't mean to trivialize, but what strikes me as one of the strongest

connections between the Jewish and Zoroastrian communities, and the one that blurs many of the distinctions (at least on face-level), is that our people look so much like each other, and they share certain cultural archetypes. A 'bawa' nose, after all, can only find its true match in a Jewish nose. The stereotype of the Jewish mother with her overbearing maternal attention is paralleled by the stereotypes of Alamai or Sirinbai domineering their progeny with doting pride. The ancient but familiar rhythms of our dasturs' chanting in Avesta reminds the Jewish ear of the rabbi's resonant Hebrew chants.

Of course, there's the question of the children. Their bi-cultural heritage enriches their lives in numerous ways but it also complicates things. Having decided together to raise them as Zoroastrians, the responsibility of doing so falls solely on me. It's a daunting challenge. Their sense of identity can't help but be different from that of their Zoroastrian-American peers. Their friends don't eat *sev* on some festive occasions, light a *Menorah* on others, and put up a Christmas tree to boot.

My friends sometimes ask me what my life would have been like if I'd married a Zoroastrian. I will never know. I feel pretty lucky to be in a marriage where I have the partner I need and want, and can still be who I am. And as husbands and wives of all cultures and religions know, a lot of commitment and some luck have much to do with being happy together.

Zarine Weil
Oak Park, Illinois

A Perspective on Mixed Marriages

Being a part of a mixed marriage can be a very enlightening experience. I have grown exponentially since meeting Cyrus. I have had the pleasure of meeting some of the most well-spoken, generous people I know. I have traveled to foreign places and tasted other cultures. Most of all, I have discovered that underneath we are not all that different. I am richer for the experience.

I have tried several times to verbalize an answer to the question: "What are the sacrifices and challenges faced by people in a mixed marriage?" What I thought was going to be an easy question to answer, turned out to be very difficult. Since I nor my spouse have ever been in another marriage, it is hard to say what makes this one different. All I have to go on is my observation of relationships around me and my instincts.

Our marriage is a little different than most — our entire relationship has been a little different. We had to talk about specific issues early on, before marriage was even a thought. We had to discuss and accept the similarities and differences in our religions and our upbringing.

ing. We had to decide if we could handle the potential criticism that sometimes follows a mixed relationship. We had to think about our families, how we would raise our children and what our priorities were. And when we decided to get married there were *two* cultures to consider. We had to think about how we could combine our family and religious traditions.

Communication in a mixed marriage is a little different. There is a real need for the couple to discuss things at a deeper level. In order to understand each other's perspective, you must understand what shaped that perspective and determine if it is still valid or not. This leads to long, sometimes frustrating, necessary conversations. Communications with other family members changes a little bit too. All couples go through some of this.

There are always those who will argue that a sacrifice must be made in the religious and cultural upbringing of children. However, it is not a sacrifice to raise children in a different religion from your own. I want our children to grow up in a spiritual environment, with exposure to numerous perspectives. And it is not a sacrifice for children to grow up learning about a culture and religion unfamiliar to others. Diversity only adds to their intelligence and understanding of the world.

Marriage, of any kind, takes work. There must be love, mutual respect, trust and acceptance by both parties. The couple must be open-minded, free-thinking and honest with themselves and each other. When these things hold true, the marriage will be strong, regardless of cultural or religious background.

By Cathy Bamji
Silver Springs, Maryland

The Best Years of My Life

I grew up in Bombay, in a middle-class family. I had a happy childhood. My parents always praised my abilities and guided me in my quest for knowledge. Moreover, as a Parsi, I felt that I had special status among the Indians.

I had attended a very good boys' school. I had finished engineering college; for boys only, in those days. My encounters with girls were limited to family, neighbors, and occasionally, sisters of my school friends. I had vaguely thought of having girl friends. But every time I tried to screw up the courage to ask a girl out to go to the movies with me, I felt I would be rejected. I knew that her parents would object; or our mothers would start consulting astrologers to see if our signs were compatible. So I went to the movies with other boys, and contented myself by just watching the romance on the screen. Or we went to *The Jewel Box* to sip espresso and watch the girls walk by. I longed to be in Amer-

ica, where boys and girls had such a wonderful time together. And I dreamed of the Parsi girls who would line up to marry me after my triumphant return to India.

So in 1967, with the help of Parsi charities, I came to the richest country in the world. I had enrolled in the business school at the University of Michigan. It was September. The grass was green, the weather cool and invigorating. *The evenings were downright cold.*

Then, during the spring semester, I met Judy. She wanted to know all about me, about India, about the Parsis. She thought I was cool: a graduate student who knew everything. I thought I was hot: a very handsome dude, with the world in his palms. *The evenings suddenly got very sultry.*

She was only 19; but she knew the real world. She wanted to get married right away. I was flattered. She said two can live as cheaply as one. We would have enough to live on from my assistantship and her library job, and even have some money left over! I agreed. And she would cook, clean, and care for me so that I could study hard and finish my degree. *I loved her for wanting me so much.*

Judy's parents were devout Protestants. They were concerned about their daughter's future with an Indian. I explained that I was a Parsi, a Zoroastrian, and if there is only one God, I believed in the same God as the Christians. I was a descendent of Cyrus, the Anointed One. Judy would be free to practice her own beliefs. I agreed to go to church a few times, and I found the sermons quite to my liking. The hymns were inspiring. I could see that this was a great society. I wanted to become American in every way. *Now I too wanted to get married right away.*

We were married by Judy's pastor in her parents' home. My college-mate Mahmud, was my witness. We moved into a one-bedroom apartment near the college, and then I wrote to my parents what I had done. My poor mother, she never did understand why I had to get married so soon. She wrote that I was only 24! If she had known, she would have found someone for me in Bombay. I wrote back: "Don't worry. Judy is very much like a Zoroastrian. And we love each other." My dad wrote back that that was fine, *but will I be returning to India now?*

Everything went great for 10 years. I got a job with Ford. We had two children — Jimmy and Jasmine. I became a U.S. citizen. We had a detached home with a 2-car garage in Dearborn; and a busy social life — with neighbors, Judy's church friends, P.T.A. We took vacations. We went camping. We had parties, new cars. We visited India and Europe. *We were living the American dream.*

Then it happened! I still remember that day — my 35th birthday — when I realized that it really was a dream. I

had lost touch with my family, my school friends, my own being. I was not getting anywhere in my career. I had no real friends of my own. My wife wanted our children to accept Christ. She said I was not such a good example to them. And unless I became a Christian, how would we be together in heaven? A few more years went by. We had different ideas about raising children; disciplining them. I considered "man" as basically good. Judy thought the world was corrupt and sinful. We went for family counseling. *My dream was unraveling.*

I turned 40. I began longing for the good old days, my carefree friends, my caring parents, my roots. Judy said she still loved me. *I wondered if her idea of love was somehow different from mine.*

We thought a change in scenery might help. I changed jobs. We moved to a suburb of Los Angeles. My son got beaten up at school. My daughter went out of control. More counseling. I knew there was a Zoroastrian Center there. I wanted to learn about my religion. I wanted my children to meet other Zarthusti children. Why couldn't my children be like the Zarthusti children at the Center? Loving, thoughtful, and achieving? *Was it the religion, the culture, or the upbringing?*

But it was too late. Jasmine didn't fit in because she was a blond. Jimmy didn't care for the prayers that he didn't understand (but he did like the food!). Judy said that the Zarthustis have a lot of nerve; coming to this country and being so openly racist. And why did I look so happy talking with the Parsi ladies in Gujarati? I began studying the Gathas. I began to go to the meetings without my family. *And I began to find myself.*

Today, Judy and I have been divorced for five years. I have an old car and live by myself in a small apartment in the city. But I have found peace and happiness in my work, in my surroundings, my new friends. My children say that they love me, understand me, and want my help in achieving their potentials. Judy is happy back in Michigan, preparing to be a Methodist minister.

And at last, I know what Zarthusti love is. It is a love that does not judge, demand, or seek a reward. It is a love kindled by the flames of friendship, contentment and peace — flames that are deliberately lit from the eternal fire of being. *Love is friendship set afire!*

[Name withheld upon request]

Parsi Marriage Law in India

In the U.S.A., laws are generally applicable to all persons regardless of their religious affiliations. By contrast, a number of other legal systems have laws which can only apply to specified religious and ethnic communities. In India, separate laws on personal matters

such as marriage, divorce and inheritance have been enacted for Christians, Hindus, Muslims and Parsis.

The historical reasons for the Parsi laws are interesting. At one time, all religious matters were handled by Parsi priests, but criminal and civil matters were entrusted to a Panchayet. The Panchayet had the authority to impose penalties, such as excommunication, fines and even public beatings with shoes. Later, the British set up a legal system for the Presidency towns of Bombay, Madras and Calcutta, under which Parsis were subjected to English law. For Parsis outside the Presidency towns, the courts tried to apply laws based on Parsi customs. If no customary law was found, English law was applied. In 1835, the eldest son of a wealthy Parsi tried to deprive the other children of property by claiming the entire estate under the English law rule of primogeniture. Alarmed by this development, the Parsis appealed to the Legislative Council, which passed a law in 1837 to deny the son's claim.

Pleased by this success, a Parsi Law Association was formed to study Parsi customs and to suggest the enactment of Parsi laws on marriage, inheritance and succession. The Association developed draft codes and in 1865 two statutes on marriage and divorce and inheritance were passed.

Parsi Marriage Law is now contained in the *Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act, 1936*, as amended in 1988. The Act defines a "Parsi" as being a "Parsi Zoroastrian". In keeping with the then custom of infant marriages, the 1865 law did not directly prohibit them, but required the parents or guardian of a person under 21 years of age to consent to the marriage. Now, under the changes made in 1988, the required ages for a valid marriage are 21 years for a male and 18 years for a female.

Two other important conditions must also be met. The parties must not be related to each other in any of 33 ways, called prohibited degrees of consanguinity and affinity, laid out in a schedule to the Act. Secondly, the marriage must be performed according to the Parsi form of ceremony called *ashirwad* by a priest, including a Dastur or Mobed, in the presence of two Parsi witnesses.

At one time, polygamy was practiced by some Parsis, but a majority of the community objected to the practice. The Panchayet tried to regulate such marriages by insisting that such unions must receive its prior approval. A prohibition was thus placed in the 1865 law and a Parsi cannot remarry in the lifetime of his spouse, unless the marriage is properly dissolved. A bigamous marriage is subject to penalties provided in the Indian Penal Code. A priest who conducts a bigamous marriage ceremony may be imprisoned or fined.

After the *ashirwad* is completed, the marriage must be certified by the officiating priest. The certificate must be

signed by the priest, the partners to the marriage and the two witnesses. The certificate is sent to a Registrar who enters it on a Register.

A Parsi marriage can be terminated in two ways. First, if the marriage is not consummated due to natural causes, either party may seek a Decree of Nullity. In such a case the law supposes that there was no lawful marriage from the start. Secondly, either party may also seek a Divorce on several grounds, including pregnancy of which the husband was ignorant of at the time of marriage, adultery, cruelty, causing 'grievous hurt', desertion, and ceasing to be a Parsi. A number of conditions are applicable under each ground for divorce. Since 1988, a divorce may also be obtained by mutual consent of the parties on the ground that they have been living separately for a period of one year. The parties must show that they could not adjust to each other and have not been able to live together. A divorce by mutual consent cannot be obtained during the first year of marriage.

Several courts, known as Parsi Chief Matrimonial Courts (in former Presidency towns) and Parsi District Matrimonial Courts (in other areas) have been set up to hear cases of nullity, divorce, etc. In the Presidency towns, the court is presided over by a High Court Judge, assisted by five delegates who act as jury. The law is applied by the Judge and questions of fact are decided by a majority of the delegates. The delegates are Parsis who are appointed for a term of ten years by the government after taking into account the opinions of the local community.

The system of fact-finding delegates has been criticized by the judiciary and the community. It is claimed that in some cases 'perverse' decisions have been reached by delegates. The delegates occupy the same position as an American jury, although the jury system has long been abolished in India.

Kersi B. Shroff, Derwood, Maryland

[Shroff is an attorney specializing in International Law at the Library of Congress]

Health Hazard! Mixing Little Kids with Older Parents

Just like most Zarthushtis, baby-boomers in the U.S.A. are marrying later and generally delaying having children to enjoy their prosperity longer. But this has resulted in some unexpected problems. Backache is the most common complaint of anybody doing the heavy lifting of parenthood. "By the time you are 40, there are all kinds of accumulation of muscle imbalances and postural problems that make the spine more vulnerable than when you are 25," says Christine Hughes, a physical therapist in Portland, Oregon.

Not only do the parents need to be physically strong and limber, but they also need faster reflexes to duck the unexpected blows and sudden movements of the children that can result in cut lips or black eyes.

Marrying late and having children after 30 is nothing new to Parsis in India and Pakistan, where all Parsi homes have *ayahs* and servants to do the heavy work and caring of children. In America, things are different. *The only solution is to marry early, and have all the children before the mother turns 30.*

On Doing the Right Thing in Marriage

A SERMON BY ASHO SPITAMAN ZARATHUSHTRA

BY SHAHYAR NOUSHI

The Purpose and Necessity to Marry:

"Woman was created to become a mother,
Man was created to become a father,
Those who look upon me as their preacher
Of Ahura Mazda's Divine Laws
Prayer and communion is of a grade higher,
When two, in Holy Wedlock, do so together."

Why Marry Within the Community:

"Your faith is strengthened when you marry your kind,
For you can pray together and solace find
In ceremonies and rituals jointly participating,
The noble religious customs following and respecting,
And in your personal lives prime purity maintaining."

Companionship in Marriage:

"A man who has lived a devout and pious life
And dies righteously, owes much to his good wife;
Two human souls who feel they are joined for life,
They, in their sorrow, each other strengthened.
In their good fortune together rejoicing,
To each other in all pain ministering,
And with such cherished memories at last parting."

Hints for a Better Marriage Relationship:

"Marriage is undoubtedly a True Road to Paradise,
To be True, a marriage must quickly compromise
Differences of opinion, and also must proceed from
Common sympathy and oneness of feelings and thoughts.
For the love of unity, amity and harmony,
Both together shall never get angry,
So that if none Angre Mainyu takes over,
The other keeps quiet, and in Spenta Mainyu takes cover."

Role of the Matchmaker:

"Twice blessed are those married and who
Help others, the lonesome, to do so too;
Credit or any earthly reward should not be sought,
Than greater the honor and merit in heaven be got."

Role of the Parents:

"With the accumulated wisdom from their fore-fathers,
Very fortunate are they who have parents to guide,
Doubly unlucky who their sound advice set aside;
Even after wedlock, their parents' ongoing counseling,
Helps surmount stormy tides, marriage vows always abide."

[From Rathastar, Newsletter of the Zoroastrian Association of Victoria, Australia, May 1994]

Youthfully Speakin' G

Generating Dialogue, Communication and Networking among Zarthusti Youth in North America

California Dreamin' "

STAGE SET FOR 7TH N.A. ZOROASTRIAN YOUTH CONGRESS

The Seventh North American Youth Congress promises to be an exciting event for the Zoroastrian Youth. The Congress will provide an excellent opportunity for the youth to learn our history and religion, and exchange ideas about our culture. With the theme "Bridges to the Future," we hope to focus this Congress on ways to uncover and overcome challenges facing Zoroastrian Youth as we look to the future.

This fun-filled meeting will be held at Stanford University, California, from June 30 to July 4, 1995. Accommodations will be provided for four nights, and we encourage participants to stay with us on campus to foster togetherness and have a great time.

Highlights

The organizing committee has ensured four days of Zoroastrian bonding through . . .

- *Interactive sessions*
- *Expressive presentations*
- *Educational skits*
- *Trips in the San Francisco Bay Area*
- *Pulsating social events*

Take an Active Role in the Congress

The organizing committee would like to give youth an opportunity to deliver a 20 minute speech on a topic related to Zoroastrianism. We also plan to have 4-6 educational/entertaining presentations prepared by youth throughout North America. This presentation can be done by an individual or group; it can be a skit, song, or anything you can think of.

Those interested in either the speech or the presentation should submit a one page abstract to the ZYC95 committee by April 15, for consideration.

Attendees to ZYC95 are invited to submit a textual/visual display on some aspect of Zoroastrian life they wish to share with other Zoroastrian youth as part of a Bulletin Board Exhibit. And if you have a special talent LET US KNOW! This is your chance to participate in our talent show.

Program Book Advertisements

As part of the Congress, we will publish and distribute a program book to the 300+ attendees and local residents. This book will contain information about daily events, speakers, discussion papers and articles. We encourage you to place an advertisement in the program book. By advertising you will help provide a quality program that is affordable for the Zoroastrian youth.

The deadline for advertisements is May 26, 1995. Prices for ads are as follows:

Business Card	\$60	Half Page	\$150
Quarter Page	\$100	Full Page	\$250

A Final Thought . . .

To make this Congress a success, the ZYC 95 organizing committee urges all Zoroastrian youth to attend and take an active role in this Congress. It has been a unifying experience for the Persian and Parsi youth of Northern California who have managed to put this action-packed program together. We hope that this Congress will provide enlightenment, and many lasting memories of the Summer of 1995.

If you have any questions about the Congress, speeches, presentations, or advertising, please write or call:

ZYC95
P.O. Box 8004
Stanford, CA 94309

Darius Kasad 415/591-2813
Shahryar Aryani 408/248-2491
e-mail: zyc95@least.sun.com

ZYC Organizing Committee

sign-up now by registering on next page!



1995 Zoroastrian Youth Congress Registration Form

The 1995 Zoroastrian Youth Congress will be held at Stanford, California from June 30th to July 4th. Our theme is "Bridges to the Future". This Congress provides an opportunity for young Zoroastrians to learn our history and religion, exchange ideas about our culture, and help chart the future of the community. The target age for participants is between 14 to 35 years. Please fill out this registration form and mail it to: **ZYC95 Registrar, 6 Somerset Court, Belmont, CA 94002.**

The registration fee includes all meals for Saturday, Sunday, Monday, breakfast and lunch for Tuesday, all the programs plus a souvenir gift. The registration fee with accommodation also includes 4 nights stay at a Stanford University dormitory. For more information please contact Darius Kasad @ (415) 591-2813 or Shahryar Aryani @ (408) 248-2491. The cost of registration is as follows:

<u>Date (postmarked)</u>	<u>With Accommodation</u>	<u>Without Accommodation</u>	<u>Cancellation Charge</u>
Prior to 5/5/95	\$230.00	\$180.00	No charge
Between 5/6/95 and 6/5/95	\$260.00	\$210.00	\$70.00
After 6/5/95	\$330.00	\$280.00	No Refund

Note that there are only **300 spaces** available at this Congress and these will be filled on a first come first-served basis, so please register early. A confirmation letter will be sent to you by 6/15/95. To provide higher quality program, we ask for your generous donation (tax deductible in the U.S.).

Mr./Mrs./Miss First Name, Middle Initials, Last Name	Birth Date	Vegetarian	Accommodation Required	Amount
Donation towards the cost of congress				
TOTAL (make check payable to ZYC95)				

MAILING ADDRESS: _____ TELEPHONE (HOME): _____
 _____ (WORK/FAX): _____
 _____ E-MAIL: _____

Name and telephone number of the person to contact in case of emergency: _____

Are there any special medical requirements for any of the registrants? _____

This portion must be filled in for participants under 18 years

WE HEREBY GIVE PERMISSION TO THE ZOROASTRIAN YOUTH COMMITTEE 95, THE PARTICIPATING PHYSICIAN(S) AND HOSPITAL(S) TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE IF NECESSARY.

SIGNATURE OF PARENT(S)

DATE

Youthfully Speakin' G

Generating Dialogue, Communication and Networking among Zarthusti Youth in North America

UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

Perceptions of Love & Marriage in the Nineties

by Jim Engineer
Youth Editor

My secretary's name is Lisa. She's 22-years old, cultured, an Amway fanatic, and my good friend. Her boyfriend, Trevor, proposed to her on December 24, 1994 and the two are scheduled to wed this August. Now a bride-to-be, Lisa often fills me in on the details and challenges she faces in preparing for her wedding. I listen intently because I plan to be engaged this August to my girlfriend Rashna. Over the past two months I have been intrigued by the differences and similarities in my engagement to Rashna, and Lisa's to Trevor.

For example, we don't plan to be married until 1999 compared to Lisa's plans to tie the knot this summer. But there is a far greater difference in our premarital situations in that Lisa is forced to plan her wedding alone because her parents are divorced. To make things worse, her once-wealthy parents poured their money into lawyers fees so they could sue each other in court, and Lisa happens to be living with Trevor making their marriage unperformable at their local Christian Church.

I, like Lisa, am also in love with my future fiancé. My parents are still married, and have become good friends with Rashna's parents. Although I will soon live closer to Rashna (instead of 800 miles away in Chicago), I have no immediate plans to move in with her.

Without questioning the societal and religious perceptions of living together, I believe Lisa and I both have one critical element of premarital bliss in common -- we LOVE our future spouses dearly. We also both had a desire to meet someone of our own religious denomination and social background.

I don't believe in forced marriage just because someone may be a Zarthusti, but do believe in finding someone with the same cultural upbringing and values as myself. I find most Zarthustis today in North America to be quite accepting of non-Zarthustis and their offspring, but we seem to be far from the zenith of pure love and acceptance for our fellow human beings. There are some Zarthustis who

have a difficult time even accepting their fellow Zarthusti brothers and sisters for who they are.

Although it is our nature to be judgmental, we must learn to be totally accepting of each other and our neighbors. It's time to stop focusing on the materialism associated with an individual, and more accepting for who that person is inside. Unfortunately, I venture to guess there are more unhappy Zarthusti marriages in North America than we think, consisting of couples who may have married for the wrong reasons. I sometimes think the option of divorce in our North American community is more shunned upon than even premarital sex or living with someone before marriage.

The bottom line in marriage is developing an **unconditional** bond with another human being. Falling in love is easier than people think. As we co-exist in a sea of diversity, the chances of falling in love with a non-Zarthusti is greater. I consider myself to be lucky to have found someone who loves me as much as I love her. The fact that she is a Zarthusti is frosting on the cake, because I care about the progression of our faith and share the same religious beliefs and cultural identity. Unfortunately, however, many of us choose to erect social barriers that tend to limit the search for a partner to specifics, such as M.B.A. degrees and green cards. Life is too short to dwell on materialistic attributes.

Youthfully Speaking is the official youth section of the FEZANA Journal. Letters to the editor should be limited to one typed page, and articles to two typed pages, due to high volume and limited space. Special topics or article suggestions will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Any questions, comments or feedback? Call or write to:

Jim A. Engineer,
1959 Bristol Court,
Naperville, IL 60565
708/983-7792

Youthfully Speakin'G

Generating Dialogue, Communication and Networking among Zarthusti Youth in North America

What Does Marriage Mean To You?



Nerina Rustomji, 21, Houston

"A covenant bond between two people sharing their lives and dreams, expressing their personal solitude and enhancing their self-identities."



Bijan Khosraviani, 32, California

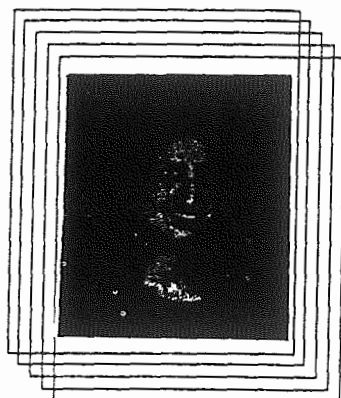
"A marriage is an understanding between two people who may come together with different personalities, opinions, culture, religion, and marriage. Through time they share themselves with each other and experience the good and bad, and build a good new united way of living."



Zubin Panthaki, 23, Quebec

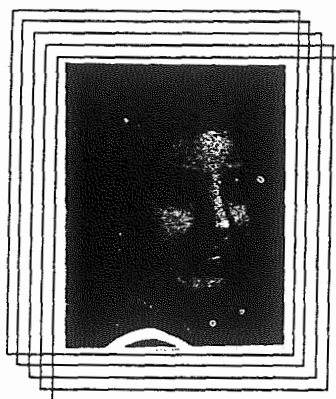
"Marriage is a commitment between two best friends promising that their love for each other will get stronger every day, as they share their lives."

"In short, marriage to me is: understanding, responsibility, trust, compromise, communication, solution, sharing, commitment, covenant, love, art, beauty, honesty, happiness . . . Just Do It."



Rashna Ichaporia, 18, Womelsdorf, PA

"Marriage is when two people love each other enough to make a commitment to one another. It's something a couple needs to work hard at, and to keep lively. You have your ups and downs, but in the end love should conquer all."



Susan Kaboly-Zadeh, 20, Vancouver

"Marriage is a funny thing. Most people in a relationship say, 'you can't live with 'em, and you can't live without 'em!' Marriage also means when both parties are content with themselves, their lives and finally each other, enough to contribute 100 percent to their relationship by totalling it to 200

percent, and not just a 50/50 gamble. A real marriage is what happens after the festivities, when both parties wake up the next day to begin their lives together, yet at the same time apart."

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Bear Consciousness II

Brian's Quest

Editor's Note: The following is a continuation to *Bear Consciousness* by Shariar Shariari of Vancouver Canada (FEZANA JOURNAL Spring '94). The essay was reprinted in *Parsiana* at the request of that publication's editors.

The hero of our story, Brian the young bear, was living with his family and the newly migrated bear community in the New Forest. While he was trying to bring about some social change within his community, Brian felt discontented with what he was doing. He felt that there must be more to life than just this. He was thinking about social change, but was not convinced that this was a goal in itself. He was looking for a higher purpose, a deeper reason for his existence.

In his efforts to find his path in his life, Brian started to learn about many different ideologies and concepts. First he started his search for a working socio-political system, but soon discovered that there are many things in life that defy logic or even common sense. Political systems left him disenchanted. The sciences of statistics, psychology and sociology left many questions unanswered.

In his quest to find his purpose and path in life, Brian turned to the various non-conventional and even occult schools of thought. He began to experience and learn about different systems ranging from astrology to numerology to palmistry. He was intrigued by the various psychic powers demonstrated by clairvoyants and healers. At one time Brian thought that he may have found his calling in life; that his purpose was to develop these powers within himself and help others in their lives.

But something deep down within Brian was still dissatisfied. He knew that there must have been something else in his life. Yet he did not know what it was or how he would find it. He did not even know how he would discover what was missing in his life.

Brian had heard: 'If you don't know where you are going, you will never get there!' and he sincerely believed this. He was desperately anxious to discover his path.

In his search for the non-conventional, Brian came to find out about mystical schools of thought and some secret brother-

hoods. He would spend hours at the forest libraries, away from other bears, trying to find out more. He found some of them totally bigoted and absurd while others were temptingly profound and sincere. He even considered joining one or two, since his thirst for finding out more had become insatiable.

But Brian was still dissatisfied.

Brian came to find out about some teachings of the Eastern forests which had by now become popular in his forest. He started to learn about Bear Meditation (B.M.) techniques and other methods of going within himself. He found some of these trials enjoyable and useful, yet others simply did not work for him. He tried to use the techniques that did work on a regular basis, but as the forest life would have it, it was not always possible.

By this time, Brian had become more conscious of his physical health too. He would run through the forest on a regular basis to make sure he would get enough exercise. He had also realized that over-indulgence on honey and other delicacies was not necessary or wise. He had adopted a moderate eating habit and had been feeling lighter, more energetic, and generally healthier. Brian also discovered that he had become more aware of his body and his surroundings. He was now more sensitive to what was happening in his body and could easily sense whether he was experiencing any physical discomfort. He had also become generally healthier.

Again to find out more about his *raison d'être*, Brian tried to expand his higher sensitivity to his body and physical surroundings, to include his mind and awareness.

He started attending Yoga classes. He found them great because he discovered things about his body that he did not know before. He was now able to control some of the muscles in his body that he did not know he had. He was more in control and aware of his breathing. He could relax more easily and could sleep better.

But still there was something missing in his life.

see "Consciousness" . . .

Youthfully Speakin' G

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Consciousness . . .

Brian started studying some of the other religions in the forest and decided to find out what they said. He also tried to learn more about the religion that his parents and other bears brought from the old jungles.

Brian found out that most of these religions were trying to describe the same thing in different ways. The religion of the lions had described the forest from the point of view of action, courage, ferocity and purpose. It also recognized and respected the various powers within the forest.

The bees had described the forest in its abundance and giving nature, yet did not ignore the elemental forces and dangers that existed there. The deer had described the forest in its gentle and loving nature, and how when fate would have it, it was time to give in to the forces of the forest.

The owls were describing the forest's mysteries and wisdom, and how there are many ways, during the day and at night,

It had become apparent to him that the purpose of his life was not only to make himself immortal in the form of his grandcubs and great grandcubs, but also to have done his best in bringing about a world that was better and more progressive than before and closer to perfection.

in wakefulness and in dreams, to be aware of the forest and become one with it.

Brian also discovered that the bears emphasized the fairness and orderliness of the forest. How everything had a cause and a reason, and how each bear had to act responsibly and accept the consequences of his actions. How idleness would lead to decay and how fear would lead to paranoia. How good thinking, action, honesty and fairness would lead to prosperity and happiness.

see "Consciousness" . . .

Survey Results

Here are the latest results of the ZYNA survey of youth perceptions in North America. Also distributed to associations via mail, the survey was designed to measure the pulse of the Zarthusti youth community. Specifically, the survey focuses on the parameters that govern the organization of congresses (maximum and minimum age, frequency, and programming). The following results have been obtained and registered as of February 14, 1995:

Total # of surveys received . . . 145

Mean Age 23-years-old

Mode Age 17-years-old

Median Age 23-years-old

Youth congresses should be held . . .

66% once a year

20% twice a year

14% twice a year

The minimum age of congress attendees should be . . .

64% 14-15

14% 12-13

14% No minimum

The maximum age of congress attendees should be . . .

42% 34-35

23% 30

17% No maximum

11% 31-33

Should there be an youth/adult congress?

55% Yes

40% No

Which activities should increase? . . .

33% more social Issues

26% more social time

22% combination religious/social

19% more religious education

How much are you willing to pay?

58% Max cost \$100-\$200

30% Max cost \$200-\$300

Any interest in other activities: skiing, beach, etc.?

41% Only with religious & social activities

37% If I had the money.

19% If there were no religious teaching

Any interest in attending a world congress?

54% No

35% Yes

Ask your local association for a survey and

FILL ONE OUT!

Youthfully Speakin' G

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Consciousness . . .

But Brian was still not satisfied. All of these teachings were abstract notions. Even though Brian agreed with most of them intuitively and accepted them instinctively, he was still looking for something more concrete and substantial. He was missing an awareness, a light, a knowing, yet he did not know what.

He had noticed that in the bear community, some of the elders were more serene and joyful. They enjoyed a deep sense of satisfaction in their lives, and this showed in the sparkle in their eyes, the glow on their faces, and the heavenly and kind nature of their smiles. Brian decided that he should talk to some of them to see what they had found in their lives, and how they had acquired their wisdom.

One day Brian started asking Grandpa Bear what was the most precious thing in his life. Grandpa Bear said that he was blessed with 3 grandcubs, and they were the highest bliss in his life. Only upon further probing, he explained to Brian that when his first cub was born, it was a wonderful experience. He had created a new life out of nothing. That he saw some aspects of himself in his cub. It was as if he saw continuity of himself in his cub.

But when his first grandcub was born, it was a feeling that defied words. It was not just a sense of continuity in his life, but a sense of immortality. It had become apparent to him that the purpose of his life was not only to make himself immortal in the form of his grandcubs and great grandcubs, but also to have done his best in bringing about a world that was better and more progressive than before and closer to perfection. Not just for his grandcubs but for all Bear Kind.

That his purpose in life was to help nature with the process of creation and evolution, physically, mentally, and spiritually.

That his honest efforts in trying to achieve this and his blessing in seeing his grandcubs was the main cause of his serenity and bliss. Brian kind of understood but needed time to digest this.

One day, Brian heard that his aunt bear had passed away. Almost immediately tears came to his eyes because he remembered that aunt bear was another one of the serene

and blissful bears. Brian always thought of aunt bear as an angel among bears in the forest and loved her very much. Now she was gone for ever.

At her funeral, Brian went to see the body of aunt bear. When Brian looked at aunt bear's face, everything made sense. Everything with the body was the same as before, except that aunt bear was missing the light in her face. It was as if life itself had left her body. Her soul was no longer there.

Brian realized that there was more to his life than just his body and his mind. There was an elemental life force. A sustaining and self preserving energy. Something that was different from everything else, yet it was a part of existence. Now he realized what people meant by soul or spirit.... It was that energy that gave life to him, and gave purpose to his life. It was that part of him that occupied his body and mind as a passenger, wishing to consciously participate in the act of living.

Brian also realized that other bears had their individual souls too. But probably most of them were not aware of it either, just like Brian had not been. He also realized that maybe the lions had souls too. So did the bees, the tigers and the cobras. Maybe even the trees and other plants in the forest. Who knows maybe even the forest had a soul too.

Brian realized that he had a responsibility to his soul. To look after it, nurture it and love it. To recognize it and respect it. And to do the same with the souls of other bears.... and the lions and the bees and the cobras. Also the trees and the plants and the forest.... and it all made sense.

He now realized that he had the responsibility of doing the right thing for the sake of doing right. No other reason was necessary. Without realizing it, Brian had become a spiritual bear.

Shahriar Shahriari
Vancouver, Canada

READERS' FORUM

This column is a forum to present information 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.

Obedience to Husband...?

Mrs. Farangis Shahrokh expressed dissatisfaction of "righteous woman ... obedient to husband" from my translation of Geh 9.4 [FEZANA Journal, Winter 1994, p.57]. I would like to give three more translations from world-renowned scholars in support of my translation. Shamsul-Ulema Dastur Dr. Peshotan Sanjana's translation reads [Collected Works, p. 512]:

"We honour the pious lady who is straightforward in her mind, speech and action, who is worthy of respect for her accomplished education, *who is obedient to her husband*, who is chaste and devoted to her guardian (parents) as Armaiti and as other female angels are devoted (to the Deity)."

Professor Lawrence Mills has translated the same passage [Sacred Books of the East] as:

And we sacrifice to the holy woman forward in good thoughts, words and deeds, receiving her instructions well, *having her husband as her lord*, the holy, and such as Armaiti ..."

Mills' translation ("husband as lord") of course does not mean that the woman is in slavery! A. H. Bleeck [Avesta-The Religious Book of the Parsis: Khordeh Avesta, p.20] translates the passage as:

"The pure woman we praise, who especially thinks good, speaks good, does good, lets herself be ruled well, *obeys the master, her husband ...*"

One is free to choose whichever interpretation one likes. But one must understand that our holy scriptures were composed in ancient times and trying to find the so-called modern 20th century Western values in them is an exercise in futility. Perhaps in the ancient Avestan period, obedience to one's husband was considered a virtue!

Dr. Pallan Ichaporia
Womelsdorf, Pennsylvania

I support the views expressed by Mrs. Farangis Shahrokh (FEZANA Journal, Winter 1994). It is difficult to accept that our religion, wherein good thoughts, good words and good deeds are paramount, could advocate the subordination of women.

With regard to our 'Towers of Silence', if, as Ms. Shahrokh points out, our traditional practice is on the decline, let us remember that it is perhaps the most conservation-oriented method, at least where nature's agents (the sun, or scavengers) are present.

...Congratulations on the excellent Winter 1994 issue, with its articles on the soul-stirring *Shah-Nameh*.

Ms. Perveez Randeria
Durban, South Africa

Message of the Master

We were very impressed to read the views of the youth [FEZANA Journal, Spring 1994] expressing their desire to know the truth about our *Nek Mazdayasni Din*, if this knowledge is made available through some reliable source, appealing to their intelligence, and based on reason and logic.

Whereas it is not possible for us to approach each and every such sincere seeker individually, we believe that it may be possible for us to disseminate this sacred knowledge of the deep philosophy concealed in our holy scriptures gradually, through the medium of the FEZANA Journal. We are enclosing *The Message of the Master*, which is the main theme upon which the deep philosophy of our religion is based, to be printed in the Journal. We shall be grateful if you will serialize a few subjects from the books in the E.P.W.O.T. series, in future issues from time to time, for the benefit of all those sincere seekers, young and old, who may be anxious to read, study, understand and practice our pure religion, with full faith (not blind faith), trust, belief and confidence in the words of wisdom of our Master, Asho Zarthustra.

Dinshaw Punthakee
Self-Realization Society of Ontario

[Due to constraints of space, FEZANA Journal cannot commit to serializing lengthy essays/books. To obtain copies, contact Mr. Punthakee at 16 Ravine Drive, Dundas, Ontario, Canada L9H 6K7, Tel: (905) 627-4492].

THE MYSTIC FIRE

I prayed before the mystic fire,
I prayed and gazed anon;
The flames they switched and leaped and danced
And soon, as though in a golden trance,
The flames and I were one.
Gone were the sorrows of yesteryears,
Gone were the petty crippling fears;
A radiant stillness enveloped my being,
A warmth and peace beyond all reckoning.
I saw the others deep in prayer,
Their faces radiant in the ruddy glow,
And in the darkening gloom
Of that inner sacred room
I knew why, through the ages, Man
Before the fire had bowed in prayer.

Soonoo Engineer
Vancouver, British Columbia

[Poem conveying the author's experience as she prayed in a Fire Temple]

Zoroastrian or Zarthusti Center?

While the appeal for the proposed cultural center in Houston [FEZANA Journal, Winter 1994] is correctly addressed to all "Zarthustis", the center is named Zoroastrian Heritage and Cultural Center. The word Zoroastrian is a derivative of Zoroaster, which is the Greek distortion of the original Persian name of the Prophet Zarathushtra.

We Zarthustis are proud of our names of Persian origin and would not lightly allow a Purvez to be called Paul, or a Silloo to be called Sue. Why then would we permit Zarthustis to be called Zoroastrians (a nickname of Greek origin) or the religion Zarthusti Din to be called Zoroastrianism? By the way, Zoroastrianism is a 6-syllable jaw-breaker compared to Zarthusti Din, which is only four syllables. Literary people agree that shorter words are more effective.

I would request that the Zoroastrian Association of Houston consider the question of changing the name to Zarthusti Heritage and Cultural Center.

Jamshed R. Udvadia

*Founder of Zarthusti Religion Classes in the Detroit area
Lansing, Michigan*

Ritual Vs. Philosophy: Either, Or, or And?

For the ancient Chinese philosopher Hsun Tzu, the life of ritual practice was paramount: "The meaning of ritual is lofty indeed." He believed all aspects of human culture properly conformed to a complete, intricate, and unchanging set of elaborate rituals. For the contemporary Zoroastrian, ritual performance is increasingly being set against philosophical insight into the religion: this opposition is unnecessary.

Our most brilliant and erudite philosopher explains shying from reliance on ritual to understand the religion by telling us that "after all, he is a philosopher" [Calgary, 93]. Surely Zoroastrians need philosophy, i.e. clear, analytic thought and long range insight into the complexity of thought to understand the theology and doctrinal implications of the religion. This is badly needed. Without a "Back to the Gathas Cult", we remain utterly shallow in grappling with the utterly pristine message of the Prophet of the life of the good mind, lived for the Truth of how the world may be. Yet ritual too, it is thought, encodes faith while informing us as to the actual lived practice of the devout.

As the Zoroastrian devout have often had an impoverished philosophical and humanistic insight into their faith, the encoded life of ritual has provided sustenance of the religion and the people: good. Also, ritual not only encodes the deep meaning of the faith, but pro-

vides a visible culture through which diverse people partake in a common bond as fellow followers. You do not have to know someone within the audience of a Jashan to feel good that, like yourself, they too are giving homage to the Wise God. So ritual holds us together. Yet we allow ritual to also divide us. Ritual is just like anything else — it has its good side, and when neglected or abused, has its bad side.

For example, the strict exclusiveness, a long standing ingrained aspect of our culture, historically understandable and even efficacious in protecting us as a people, can easily become a weapon of Zoroastrian insecurity and paranoia. We are so small, so fragile, that we invest ourselves in the thought of our superiority and weld our exclusion to reinforce insecurity. Yet genetic endowment itself never suffices for living the life of the good mind, and one not raised in the tradition of Zoroastrianism can develop genuine, thorough, deep love of the Zoroastrian message and way of life and be gently guided in the ritual performance of the religion. Which would you rather have beside you at a Jashan — a Zoroastrian by genetic endowment who may be fuming at having to put up with a quiet and serene ceremony, or an intrigued, honest, thinking, genetically-diverse inquirer who has begun feeling drawn to the ceremony? Rituals and philosophy can be used in two ways: for good or for bad, and those secure in Zoroastrian ideology needn't fear the good way of our rituals.

Zoroastrians have a big job. With very little personal space for it, Zoroastrians must attain some depth in the understanding of their religion. No tool, philosophy or ritual should be ostracized from the arsenal of an attack on our ignorance of who we are, were, and will be. Some of us enjoy the philosophy more so and some of us enjoy ritual more so, but we do not have an "either-or" choice between the two. We have an "and" and can use it.

Dr. Natalie Vania

Mountain View, California

Visit to Crestone, Colorado

Reflecting upon last October's visit to Crestone, Colorado ("Daydreams or Destiny?", FEZANA Journal, Winter 1994), I was very pleasantly surprised to see the magnanimous offer of the Manitou Foundation, of the parcel of land for setting up a Zoroastrian community center. The principal purpose of this center needs to be determined, as well as the approach to be used for funding the project.

Crestone is certainly very scenic, with the rugged Sangre de Cristo mountain range looking down on the valley. Crestone offers many unique opportunities for rest and relaxation as well as quality time for reflecting upon the teachings of Zarathustra amidst a calm and scenic

environment. However, like any worthwhile endeavor, it is fraught with difficulties, in particular the up front sacrifice required in terms of time and money, and then the ongoing care and maintenance.

To consider a project of this type it is essential that the organizers inform and engage as much of the community as possible in the planning process. I applaud Fil Bagwadia's efforts in drafting the community questionnaire. Once the questionnaire results are compiled, and additional input received, a plan can be developed and proposed to governing bodies of the Associations for adoption and implementation. With the initial site visit and the questionnaire, we have made the correct first steps in pulsing the conscience of the community.

There are also a few fundamental questions (about the terms and conditions, purpose of the center, the site, access road, water, sewer, electric tie-in, legality of the deed capital investment requirements ...) that require official response from the Foundation.

My personal assessment of this project is that additional information must be secured and assuming a favorable response, the community should then move forward to set up an establishment. Ideally this establishment should serve the community's needs of religious awareness and awakening, and social and recreational purposes.

*Navroze Amaria
Denver, Colorado*

Thoughts on Crestone

Imagine an agricultural valley surrounded by the sharp peaks of two branches of the Colorado Rockies. Nestled against the mountains lies the little town of Crestone. Here, in this land of beauty, grandeur and majesty, lies an opportunity for Zarthustis to create a permanent establishment. There exists a chance to bridge the ever-present chasm that divides our community and show Zarthustis the world over that our great community can indeed unite for a common goal.

In considering this gift, our community must evaluate the worth, both monetary and otherwise, of building in the wilds of Colorado. Why should we join this spiritual community that is the goal of Hannah Strong? I will try to give my opinions and describe the direction I hope this project takes.

I believe the project is worthwhile and can be completed in a reasonable amount of time, because our community realistically has no set meeting place where people can converge and talk, discuss and relax. Summertime conferences and conventions gather at hotels in large cities. While these are convenient, they lack the beauty and serenity that Crestone offers, and are not as conducive to philosophical and religious discus-

sions. Additionally, Crestone offers a variety of outdoor activities — hiking, mountain biking, camping and white-water rafting in the summer, and snow-shoeing and skiing at the nearby Monarch Pass in the winter.

We must, none the less, remain vigilant against grandiose ideas. Building at Crestone will be technically challenging. The facility must be kept small with the ability to expand. The Zarthusti site is on a hill overlooking the valley. The roads are rough and practically non-existent. Utilities stop about a quarter mile away. Thus the larger the project, the more expensive and unmanageable it becomes.

Why do we wish to build at Crestone? If one's answer is: "Because the land is free", please stop reading, go home and evaluate what has just been said. The whole idea seems to create a retreat of sorts for learning and meditation. Hanne Strong's vision is to have a place where the religions of the world can get back in contact with the roots and initial tenets of their respective faiths. Talking of mystics and mysticism, Mrs. Strong wishes to include Zarthustis in a group of Catholic monks, Zen Buddhists and Hindu spiritualists. Zarthustis do not belong to this category; and due to our small numbers and the reality of life in twentieth century North America, we must remain wary of titles such as 'mystic'.

Here is my proposal. Initially we would need one hall-type building containing a meeting room, a bedroom or two, a kitchen and bathroom. Summertime 'youth' activities could be held here with the meeting room providing extra sleeping room. The area around the building could be cleared for camping. As time progressed, and our Crestone lodge became well known and used, additional chalets could be built.

But how would such a place be maintained? An idea I truly liked would be based on the honor system — e.g. if a family came to Crestone for a week, if they used up the firewood, they would then be responsible for replacing it. In other words "You use it, you replace it."

In summary, I feel that building at Crestone is a good idea. It allows for a permanent retreat for not only North American, but world-wide Zoroastrians. The vision of Hanne Strong is not consistent with the way we live our lives as North American Zarthustis. We could choose to build a retreat and use it merely as that. Do not get me wrong, please. The facility would accommodate religious purposes also. Jashans could be held at Crestone regularly as could yearly conferences. This would serve Mrs. Strong's agenda as well as our own. And in the awesome grandeur of the Colorado Rocky Mountains, our community could become whole again.

*Meherab Amaria
Denver, Colorado*

Thank You! Thank You!

The Winter 1994 FEZANA Journal is fantastic! I sincerely compliment you for the tremendous work you put into it. The whole community owes you a debt for bringing our heritage into focus in our present day hustle and bustle, and for providing news of our fellow Zarthustis all over North America. Thank you! Thank you!

*Yasmin Vania
Springfield, Illinois*

Conflict of Ideas

Many are scandalized or saddened by the fact that Zarthustis appear to be a house divided against itself. There should indeed be alarm if this disunity produced lack of mutual charity — as it has, alas, sometimes done. But there need be no alarm about the fact of disunity itself. For the truth is that any great idea or movement, anything that appeals to people of every sort and is genuinely universal, is going to fragment.

Anything that absorbs the mind and is intellectually stimulating will provoke division, anything with emotional springs of action will appeal variously to different facets of the human psyche. Great political ideas, like religious ones, always split up into orthodoxies and heresies, though there may be occasions when brute force is able to deliver deceptive sequences of stability or uniformity.

Because Zoroastrianism is entrusted to the agency of men and women it shares the experience of other movements in the world, and is subject to the same historical influences. Ideas that are held with passion and conviction are defended at high cost, and are taught to children as truth — not as vague possibilities. Who today teaches children about the evil of communalism as if it were a tentative hypothesis?

So Zoroastrianism has the capacity to inspire passionate differences precisely because it is a living idea. The terrible fact is that when people stop quarreling about religion it will mean that they will no longer regard it as of ultimate value. This is all very difficult for the modern mind; in the Western culture and ilk the trend is to put welfare and material security and personal happiness above ideas.

Divisions among Zoroastrians arise from many causes. Some relate to variations of human personality itself; one person may like formal worship and another, informality. Differences of social status have obtruded upon the life of Zoroastrians. There are tensions between liberal interpretations and those who adhere to traditional belief, though these tend to produce lapses from the faith altogether rather than institutional divisions.

The historic disunity of the Zoroastrians was caused by incompatible understandings about the nature of the transmission of Zoroastrianism itself, about how the "people of Zoroaster" may be defined, and what is the nature of religious authority. These, however, are all signs of vitality.

Zoroaster spoke of the world as a place of discord, where even families would divide for his sake. And so it is.

*Furhok Keikushroo Tangree
La Roche-sur-Foron, France*

Magical Things Can Happen

In some Zoroastrian communities, there is an abundance of religious, cultural and social functions. Shouldn't this be true of all the communities?

It is upsetting that only some Dar-e-Mehrs organize functions such as the 'mehmoonees' (tea-parties) and 'Poetry Night', where Zoroastrians are invited to partake in a glorious evening of joy, sorrow, sadness and mainly memories of their past in their homeland. This is a night where readers share sacred poems of poets like Khayyam and Ferdowsi, with the eager listeners who enjoy reminiscing, by candlelight. We should not forget that it is also enjoyable for youth who did not grow up in Iran, to come and experience a part of their culture, during one of these special nights...

These are times that we must keep alive, for they remind us that we are "*Hamsehkoot, Hamsehдах, Hamdardee, HamKhoda, Hambahman, Hamjodab ...*", or "(We are of one) Peace, Voice, Pain, God, People's, and (together in one sense yet at the same time) apart." Unity, prosperity and preservation will not emerge until we re-explore them physically, and not just verbally as we have been doing for a long time.

Magical things can happen to get our communities off to a fresh and positive start, by experiencing and learning new methods and having fun trying them.

*Susan Kaboly-Zadeh
North Vancouver, British Columbia*

International Sacred Literature Trust — a Clarification

I wish to correct the mis-statement published in the FEZANA Journal [Fall 1994, p.49], which reads: "The Trust has identified *The Divine Songs of Zarathushtra (Gathas)* by Piloo Nanavutty, as the Zarthusti contribution to this series ...". Please print the enclosed letter to clarify the issue...

[Excerpts of the letter from Mrs. Jungalwalla to Dr. Kerry Brown, of the International Sacred Literature Trust, dated August 18, 1994, are reproduced below]:

"Pray forgive me if this letter causes you any disappointment. The 'heavy editing' which the Trustees felt was necessary to make my Gatha translation flow easily, has made me realize the translation is moving away from the original text. I am therefore, withdrawing my manuscript submitted for publication to the Trust ..."

Mrs. Piloo N. Jungalwalla
New Delhi, India

Choral Masterpiece of the Gathas

...I believe the Gathas should be recorded and the recordings made widely available. But in which form should they be recorded? I have been informed that the Council of Iranian Mobeds has recorded the Ahunavad Gatha in recitative form with plans to record the entire Gathas; Dr. Kersey Antia has recorded the entire Gathas; Dr. Jafarey has begun a process to determine the authentic way of chanting the Gathas, and once that is established, he would like them sung in the original Avestan as well as in modern-day Persian, hopefully accompanied by string instruments. I applaud all these efforts. One in English would be very instructive. But which translation?

The motivation is to chant, to listen, to understand, to explain and to be inspired by the most important words in Zarthusti scriptures. My dream is to have a choral masterpiece composed, with the Gathic verses in the original Avestan as the text, and performed, accompanied by a full orchestra on the lines of Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *Mass in B Minor*, or Haydn's *Creation*. Such a composition would attract a wider audience, one that would come to know of our glorious religion. This monumental task could be undertaken by FEZANA, maybe with the help of WZO.

Khershed P. Cooper
Fairfax, Virginia

How Wide is the Gender Gap?

Chance that a man is color blind:	1 in 25
Chance for a woman:	1 in 50,000
Chance that a man will become a high-ranking executive:	1 in 11
Chance for a woman:	1 in 20
Percentage of men who snore:	53%
Percentage of women:	23%
Percentage of men who like the way they look in the nude:	68%
Percentage of women:	22%

BUT...

Chance that a man will be struck by lightning:	1 in 1,800,000
Chance for a woman	1 in 1,800,000

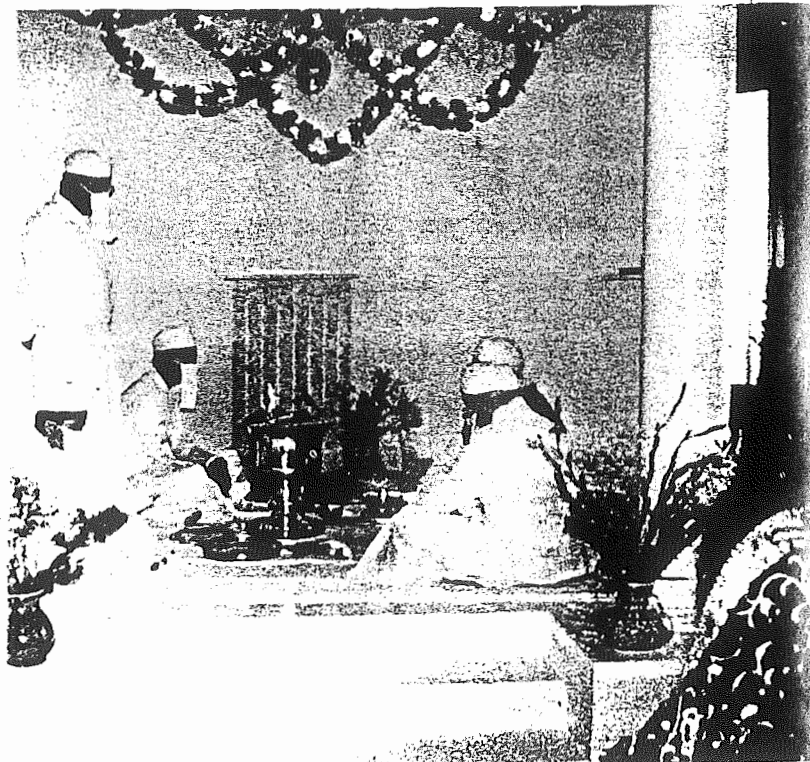
Network with 'Aussies'

We Aussies [from Sydney, Australia] are quite cut off (by time, distance and climatic variations of our Southern Hemisphere) from the rest of the Western world and the major Zoroastrian settlements outside the Indian subcontinent, where most of the activities have been occurring.

I have always been of the opinion that if we Zoroastrians are to continue to survive, prosper and progress, readiness to communicate with eagerness and sincerity, when an individual or a group of (far-flung) Zoroastrians want to reach out, must remain the prime ethical priority. The frustrations that some of us have, residing in our huge isolated land mass of Australia (it is as big as the U.S.A. without Alaska but with a population of only 17 million) when this does not happen, even after multiple attempts, is very difficult to explain in vivid terms. I appreciate, then, the opportunity for open communication and networking, provided by your FEZANA Journal ...

I am enclosing a photo of the Jashan ceremony at the inauguration ceremonies of the Arbab Rustam and Morvarid Guiv Darbe Mehr, on July 24, 1994.

Dr. Sam Kerr
Randwick, Australia



Jashan at the new Darbe Meher in Sydney:

Mobeds (left to right) Ervads Beghzad Bana (their most recent, young initiate), Tim Desai, Meherzish Kerkeria, Dr. Peshotan Katrak and Jal Pavri.

TRADITIONAL WEDDING FEAST

The Irani wedding feast is an exciting assortment of chicken, lamb, beef, fish and vegetarian dishes. Some favorites are: *

- *Shirin pullav*: Persian rice with saffron, garnished with orange peel, pistachios and almonds. Also on the menu could be Persian white rice and *Sabzi Pullav* (green dill rice).
- *Fessenjan*: chicken or meatballs in a sweet and sour gravy of pomegranate juice and walnuts.
- *Jujeh Kabobs*: barbecued chicken or lamb.
- Baked fish.
- *Ghormeh Sabzi*: beef and vegetable stew with red kidney beans.
- The meal ends with *Bamieh* and *Zoulbia* (pastries sweetened lightly with syrup), or *Baklava* or cake.



Young and old enjoy the Parsi wedding banquet, traditionally served on banana leaves, on long banquet tables.

A typical Parsi wedding banquet menu is shown here:

- *Rotli* (unleavened bread), *Murambo* (white pumpkin preserve) and *Gajar-meva achar* (dried fruit pickle).
- Fish: *Patrani Machhi* (chutneyed fish, usually pomfret, in banana leaves) or *Parsi Fish Sas* (pomfret cooked in a tangy white sauce).
- *Sali-gos*: beef or lamb stew with raisins, dried apricots and deep-fried, shredded potatoes.
- *Laganshala*: sweet and sour mixed vegetables and dried fruit stew.
- *Chicken Farcha*: breaded spicy fried chicken.
- Veal or Lamb *Pullav* (saffron rice) and *Masala Dar* (spicy split peas)
- Parsi Custard (rich milk pudding) and *Kulfi* (pistachio icecream).

PATRANI MACHHI (CHUTNEYED FISH IN BANANA LEAVES)

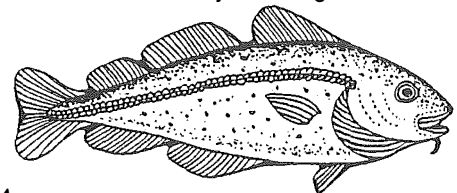
1 1/2 lbs pieces of pomfret or filet of flounder or catfish
4 banana leaves or 8 pieces of 8"x12" aluminum foil
2 tsp oil
2 T. vinegar
String for tying. Salt to taste.

Wash and dry fish. Rub with salt and set aside. Wash and dry banana leaves and remove center stem to make 8 pieces. Place leaves top side up and grease lightly with oil. Generously coat each filet with coconut chutney, and place on the center of the leaf. Fold over the two long sides, then the 2 short ones, till the fish is wrapped completely. Tie each package with thin string. In a large dutch oven, heat one cup of water. Add vinegar. Place a vegetable steamer in this dutch oven. Place the wrapped fish in the steamer. Cover and steam for 15-20 minutes, turning once. Serve the packets on a platter. Serves 8.

Coconut Chutney

1 cup flaked, sweetened coconut
1/4 lb. bunch of fresh coriander, washed
4 hot green chillies
2 cloves garlic
1 tsp. cumin seed
1 tsp. sugar
1/4 cup lemon juice
Salt to taste

Blend all ingredients together at high speed for 2-3 minutes, till ground very fine. Add a little water, if necessary. The chutney should have the consistency of cottage cheese.



LAGANSHALA SWEET AND SOUR MIXED VEGETABLE STEW

2 onions, chopped
1/2 c. oil
1/2 c. each, diced potatoes, sweet potatoes and carrots
1/2 c. shelled green peas
1/4 c. diced bell peppers
or substitute one 20 oz. package of frozen mixed vegetables
2 cloves garlic, 1/2" piece ginger root and 1/2 tsp. cumin, blended to a paste with a little water.
1/2 tsp. each turmeric, chilli powder & curry powder
2 tomatoes, diced
Dried apricots and raisins
3 T. each, vinegar and brown sugar
Salt to taste.

In a large frying pan, saute the onions in a little oil and set aside. Add more oil as needed and stir-fry all the vegetables, each separately. Remove vegetables onto paper towels. To the remaining oil in the pan, add ginger-garlic paste and powdered spices and stir briefly over low heat. Add sauteed onions, diced tomatoes and cook 2-3 minutes. Add the stir-fried vegetables and cook for 10 more minutes. Mix in the apricots, raisins, vinegar and brown sugar and cook for five more minutes. Serves 6.

LAMB OR VEAL PULLAV

3 cups long-grain Basmati rice
 2 large onions, chopped
 1/4 c. corn oil
 4 cloves garlic, and 1/2" piece ginger, chopped
 2 lbs. veal or lamb cubes
 1 c. yogurt
 3 cardamoms, 4 cloves, 1" cinnamon stick, 10 peppercorns
 8 c. water and salt to taste
 3 medium potatoes, peeled, cubed and fried
 1/2 tsp. saffron, soaked in juice of 1 lemon
 6 mild green chillies

Garnish: 1/2 c. raisins, fried in butter
 4 boiled eggs, quartered
 finely sliced onions, deep fried till crisp

Soak rice in cold water for one hour. Drain. In a large frying pan, brown chopped onions in oil. Add garlic, ginger and veal or lamb cubes. Saute for 15 minutes. Add yogurt, salt, cardamom, cloves, cinnamon and pepper. Add two cups of water and cook on low heat, covered (30-40 minutes_ until meat is tender and a thick gravy remains.

In a separate pot, boil 6 cups of water, add rice and salt and cook for 5 to 10 minutes, making sure that rice is only half-cooked. Drain rice in colander. Add the saffron-lemon mixture and toss the par-boiled rice, until some of the rice is colored yellow.

In a roasting pan, arrange half of the meat, fried potatoes and rice. Repeat the layers, ending with the rice on top. Place chillies vertically at intervals. Cover tightly sealed, and cook in 300° oven for 30 minutes. Garnish, and serve hot with Masala Dar. Serves 8.

MASALA DAR

1 lb. toovar dar (yellow split peas), washed and soaked
 1 small bunch fresh spinach, washed & coarsely chopped
 3 hot green chillies, 1 large onion, and 1 potato, diced
 1 small eggplant, peeled and cut in large pieces
 Few sprigs fresh coriander and mint, washed and chopped
 2 lbs lamb or veal cubes, washed
 1/2 tsp turmeric powder
 Salt to taste
 1/4 cup oil
 2 onions, chopped fine
 1/2" piece ginger root, 6 cloves garlic & 2 tsp. cumin seed, blended to a paste with a little water
 1 1/2 tsp. chili powder, 1 1/2 tsp. sambhar powder, 4 tsp. dhana-jeera powder, and 1 tsp. garam masala powder.
 2 medium tomatoes, chopped
 2 lemons, cut into wedges

Place dar in a large, heavy pot with the vegetables, meat, salt, turmeric and 6-8 cups of water. Bring to a boil on high heat. Lower heat to medium. Skim off froth. Cover tightly and cook till meat is tender, 45 minutes. Remove meat and set aside. Mash dar through a colander, or puree in blender.

In another pan, fry onions in oil till golden brown. Add blended and powdered spices and saute. Add tomatoes and cook 10 minutes. Add tomato mixture and meat to the dar. Add 1 cup of water, if necessary. Cover and simmer for 20 minutes. Serve with pullav. Serves 6-8.

CHICKEN FARCHA

8 pieces chicken thighs and drumsticks
 Marinade of 2 cloves garlic crushed, 1/2 tsp. cumin
 3/4" ginger root, 1/2 tsp. pepper, salt, 1 T. lemon juice
 4 eggs and 1/2 c. bread crumbs or more
 1 c. corn oil

Remove skin and wash chicken and dry. Make 2 slits in each piece. Marinate in ginger-garlic mixture overnight. Beat eggs with fork. In a 10" frying pan, heat oil. Coat chicken with breadcrumbs, dip in egg and fry in hot oil for 2 min. on each side till golden brown.

DRIED FRUIT PICKLE

1 1/2 lbs. each, dried apricots and dried figs, cut in pieces
 1/2 lb. each, golden and dark raisins; 1 lb. dates, pitted
 6 cups wine vinegar
 1 lb. dark brown sugar
 2 tsp. each, cardamom, clove, cumin, cinnamon powders
 3 T. chilli powder, Salt to taste
 1 lb. carrots, finely julienned or grated
 2 (16 oz.) cans mango pulp
 2 oz. mustard powder

Soak dry fruits in 3 1/2 cups vinegar overnight. Remove fruits and discard vinegar. Place 2 cups vinegar in a large dutch oven. Add brown sugar and powdered spices. Cook 10 minutes, stirring constantly. Add dry fruits, carrots, salt and mango pulp. Cook till mixture thickens. Remove from heat. Mix mustard in 1/2 cup vinegar and add to the cold pickle. Store in airtight jars, in a cool place.

PARSI CUSTARD

13-oz. can evaporated milk or quart of whole milk, reduced
 8 oz. heavy cream
 5 T. sugar
 3 eggs
 1/2 c. almonds, blanched and slivered, pinch of nutmeg

Pre-heat oven to 350°. In a bowl, beat eggs. Add cream, milk and sugar. Mix well. Add almonds. Sprinkle with nutmeg. Bake in greased glass dish at 350° for 30 min., then at 250° for 15 min. more. Cool and refrigerate. Serves 8.

PISTACHIO KULFI

2 cups heavy cream
 1 cup whole or evaporated milk
 1 can sweetened condensed milk
 2 T. each, unsalted pistachios and natural almonds, ground
 1 drop green food color
 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract and pinch of ground cardamom
 12 kulfis molds or 3-oz. plastic cups

In a bowl, mix all ingredients. Fill cups 3/4 full. Cover cups with plastic wrap and then aluminium foil. Freeze. To serve, unmold and slice onto dessert plates. Serves 12.

.....
 Above recipes from *An Adventure in Exotic Parsi Indian Cooking*, by Nergish Karanjia and Nergish Unwalla, 45 Carlton Avenue, Marlton, NJ 08053, (609) 983-6239. Discounted price: \$9.95 + \$2 shipping.

ZARTHUSTI ENTERPRISE

Villas for Rent in Orlando

Three-bedroom villas, beautifully furnished with TV, telephone, microwave, washer-dryer and more, are available for rent on a weekly basis, in Orlando, Florida, conveniently located, just 20 miles from Disneyworld. Contact Jalco Captain at (407) 487-4343.

*Shouting from the Rooftops —
"My Daughter Has Made It"*

I always feel so proud when I read of achievements of Zarthustis all over the globe, but when somebody close to you reaches such a height of achievement, your pride knows no bounds and you want to shout it from the rooftops: "My daughter has made it!"

Our family immigrated to Canada in 1967 and my eldest daughter Delna was 3 years old. Thereafter we had two more daughters, and we now have a wonderful son-in-law, Barry. I couldn't ask for a better life and thank Ahura Mazda every day for the many blessings He has bestowed upon us in this great country.

Of course, we all have dreams... but not in my wildest dreams did I visualize my daughter becoming an 'animator' and the owner of one of the fastest growing companies in North America. Barry and Delna have often tried to explain to us in simple language what their company, *Bardel Animation* does, and all I have understood is that the cartoons we see on the screen are not the stroke of an artist's paintbrush. It takes a lot of work, a lot of labor, and a lot of cells to make a split second of a screen that we see flash before us.

Delna has always wanted to be her own boss. She has achieved that absolutely on her own merits and hard work, with all the support and prayers from us, but financially every penny and all the brains are from this husband and wife team. Animation is becoming big business in North America. Now is the time to get on the band-wagon. They would love to hear from prospective investors and from youth interested in learning more about the field. Contact them at (604) 669-5589.

When the newspaper [see next page] hit the stands and was sold out within the day, we could not believe what we saw. They had not told us about their interview, and when you see your daughter looking up at you from the news-stands, it was the proudest moment of our lives. We picked up 5-6 copies of the paper. I just felt I had to send it to your magazine...I think they deserve the recognition and so does the community for producing yet another Zarthusti youth who has lived up to the legacy of our forefathers.

Sheraz Bhesania
Vancouver, British Columbia

Profile Delna Bhesania & Barry Ward

Ward and Bhesania: anxious to do their own production

Barry Ward and Delna Bhesania—known as Bardel Animation—opened their doors, hit the big time, fell on their faces, and bounced back to start again. Just like in the cartoons.

By Ian Edwards

Good-natured bickering seems to propel the colourful marriage and business partnership of Barry Ward and Delna Bhesania, the principals behind Bardel Animation and Zoo, their two-and-a-half year-old daughter.

Converging in a no-man's land between their terrarium-like offices, one floor above a swarm of 34 animators, they nit and pick, correct and challenge, sigh and roll their eyes as they draw out the story of their animation company.

It's quite a story: since it was founded in 1987 with a \$2,000 investment, Bardel has grown into one of the largest animation houses in Vancouver, fulfilling service contracts for companies like Toronto-based Nelvana Ltd., the largest animation company in Canada, and MGM/United Artists in Los Angeles.

In funky heritage-building digs on Richards, Ward and Bhesania have staked out their territories. He, 41, is the creative one who shows clients the artistic enthusiasm their projects need; she, 29, is the business negotiator with the entrepreneurial bent. Together, they oversee a company that generated \$1 million this year in a fragile but growing local industry that depends on a favourable U.S. dollar exchange and a rich talent pool of drawers and painters.

"Animation, until recently, has been suffering the Dark Ages," says Ward, who's the first to admit Bardel was lucky in its timing. "In the last eight years, it's really started to pick up. It's gone from a cottage industry to a real industry—almost all of it service, rather than indigenous. Eight years ago when we opened in Vancouver, there were three other animation studios and now there are probably a dozen."

BUSINESS IN VANCOUVER

NOV. 29-DEC. 5, 1994

Ward already had an extensive résumé in animation-production management when he and Bhesania opened Bardel in a 700-square-foot studio. Bhesania, who had been involved in child care and recreation, was only 21. Their story quickly became one of early success and frightening failures.

At the time, producers from La Jolla, California, were looking for a Vancouver company to draw a series based on the star orca at Seaworld Park. Bardel was commissioned to render *Shamu, The Beginning*, one half-hour show.

"We were real hard workers," remembers Bhesania, "and the industry here was so fresh, they thought okay, we'll come up here, they'll work really hard, they won't be as jaded and faded as Los Angeles and we'll have all this talent to mould and create. Good premise. And it did work, and they got excellent product up here."

"*Shamu* really changed us from an ink-and-paint service company to a full-service production facility over the year," says Ward. Bardel expanded to 3,000 square feet and 70 people, and *Shamu* succeeded in attracting the producers of *Tiny Toons*, a high-quality cartoon project

space. "We just started again. We've always been able to roll with the punches."

"We're an accordion operation," echoes Ward.

The setback was temporary. Their experience and a hot local industry have saved Bardel from oblivion. In rebuilding the company, Ward and Bhesania have racked up new animation credits including work on the feature *Bebe's Kids* for Hyperion Animation Company/Paramount Pictures, *Rappin' Smokey*, a 1993 TV commercial featuring Smokey the Bear for Baer Animation in Los Angeles, the series *Animated Tales from the Crypt*, *Little Wizards*, *Problem Child* and *Phantom 2040*, plus commercials for cereals like Sugar Smacks, Frutti Pebbles and Cocoa Crisps.

Currently, they are working on eight 30-second spots for ABC's Monday Night Football, a job contracted through Cornell/Aboud, a commercial production company in Studio City, California.

Pat Burns, coordinating producer for all animation work contracted out by Nelvana in Toronto, jobs out about 25 per cent of her company's animation work to companies like Studio B and Bardel.

Burns says that while job security is a bit shaky, the outlook for Vancouver's industry is very good, brightened by the city's proximity to Los Angeles and a quality of life that attracts talent. "They know that subcontracting is precarious, so developing their own properties is crucial to their future."

Bhesania acknowledges the observation. "We can't go any further as a service company. The natural progression is to do our stuff. We'll still service all the clients we have now, but we'd like to start developing our own product so that we'll own a piece of what we do."

They have a project on the go: *The Witch's Apprentice*, the story of two kids and their adventures with a good witch, has attracted an American co-producer. But the deal is waiting on the provincial govern-

Fravahars Forever

"I have always been attracted to the Fravahar, (or Fravashi or Farohar), the oldest symbol of the Persians", says Pasha Hatefi. "We know so little about it. So, I studied all the materials I could find, and tried to make a 'perfect', most precise, most carefully designed, Fravahar. Then I thought this beautiful symbol must be presented in a most practical way." And that is how "Pars Art" was born.



The Hatefis: displaying their work at the "Pars Art" stall at the Zoroastrian Congress in Philadelphia.

Working from their home in Virginia, the husband and wife team of Pasha and Suzanne Hatefi produce their works of art — on china plates, vases, tea-pots, cups and saucers, wall-hangings, T-shirts and more. With self-taught skills, they transfer their designs of the Fravahar, and other Persian motifs, to white porcelain pieces that they purchase, paint in brilliant colors and gold, and fire in a kiln, to make them washable and permanent. Their work is displayed at the California Zoroastrian Center, and can be ordered from "Pars Art" at (703) 471-3934.

"My dream and desire is to write a book about the Fravahar in English and Farsi", says Hatefi, who is collecting information on the symbol. He is looking for Fravahar designs, pictures, artifacts or logos used by merchants and businesses. He says: "Any object, or picture, or piece of information will be very helpful."

WHO NEEDS DISNEY? HOW BARRY WARD AND DELNA BHESANIA BOUNCED BACK IN THE ANIMATION BUSINESS

overseen by Steven Spielberg. That led to a contract for 65 half-hour episodes, worth millions in painting fees, and a bigger company. But the volume of work almost crippled Bardel.

The number of painted cells required for each weekly episode jumped from 15,000 to over 20,000. Bardel was able to paint 2,500 cells a week. By comparison, Taiwanese suppliers can produce 23,000 cells by using 800 painters in a week.

Bardel was going bankrupt. "We ate up our margin on the extra cells," says Bhesania. After one show, the company stepped away on good terms from the *Tiny Toons* contract in 1989.

"We shrunk from 7,000 square feet and 90 people to me and Barry in an office as big as that," she adds, pointing to her glassed-in hundred-square-foot work

ment's decision on the British Columbia Film Incentive Program (BCFIP). That program, which would rebate about 20 per cent of a producer's audited expenses, is modelled after the five-year-old Ontario Film Investment Program (OFIP) that has drawn the bulk of Canadian English-language film, television series and movies-of-the-week to Toronto. A BCFIP decision from B.C.'s Culture Minister Bill Barlee is imminent.

"It could be the start of our company, after eight years, to produce with somebody who's capable of making a U.S. presale for us," says Bhesania. "It would be a chance for companies in Vancouver to start owning some of their product. It would be a chance for our industry to become indigenous and self-reliant instead of dependent on service work from the U.S." ♦

STAY CONNECTED WITH THE COMMUNITY

Read the FEZANA Journal. For a few dollars, the Journal makes an excellent year-round gift for family, friends and students away from home. The first issue will be sent with a gift-note in your name.

SURFING IN CYBERSPACE —

Cruising on the Information Superhighway

Recently, Noshir Langrana, located in New Jersey, asked for suggestions for the FEZANA Census Project to the "Zoroastrian Discussion Group" on the Internet with a single keystroke on his computer. Instantly, 250 eager Zarthushtis all across the U.S., Canada, France, U.K., Holland, India, Australia, and Singapore, grabbed the message and started sending their responses, concerns and comments back to Langrana. In two days, he received more responses than he had received in the past six months by sending letters to associations and making phone calls across the country.

There are 6,000 discussion groups on Internet, called 'newsgroups'. These include 'aliases', 'USENET News', 'Internet News', and 'Bulletin Boards'. These groups are generally unmoderated and anyone who has access to Internet can participate. But the large number of such groups, and the extremely large number of Internet users (in the millions worldwide) makes it arduous to find what you are looking for, unless you know the exact address of the group. Several software packages, such as Mosaic and Netscape, are now available to make browsing through these newsgroups, called 'surfing', easier.

Fortunately for Zarthushtis, there are two newsgroups that are easily accessible: "The Zoroastrian Discussion Group" (Z.D.G.) and "The Zoroastrian Religion" (Z.R.).

The Z.D.G. is an alias administered by Mehrdad Khosraviani, a computer professional in Silicon Valley. In 1987, he set up an alias on Internet. Any e-mail message sent to the alias is automatically inserted into the mailboxes of all members of the Z.D.G. Recently membership has grown significantly, and today there are over 250 members. Anyone can send messages to the alias via the Internet address:

zoroastrians@least.eng.sun.com

or

sun.com!least.eng!zoroastrians

But unless you become a member of the Z.D.G., you will not receive any messages. Your first message should therefore request Khosraviani to include your e-mail address on the membership list. Membership and other questions may be sent to:

mehrdad.khosraviani@eng.sun.com

The Z.R. is an open newsgroup with no formal membership requirements or moderator. From Internet, you must first access USENET, and then access the newsgroup by its address:

alt.religion.Zoroastrianism

Spend a little time reading these newsgroups. Not all messages may interest you. But once you become familiar with one or the other newsgroup and get to know some of the 'regulars', or find someone you had met at the last Youth Congress, you will want to access it every few days just to keep in touch and feel connected.

Both Macintosh and DOS systems will work. If you are on one of the educational servers, you can access Internet directly. If not, the easiest way to get into Cyberspace is to subscribe to one of the on-line services such as America-on-line, Prodigy, CompuServe, Netcom, or Delphi. These services make it relatively easy to surf on the Internet without complicated keystrokes. A recent survey by Wall Street Journal indicated that America-on-line probably gives the best combination of services and cost today. Prodigy provides the best connection to the *World Wide Web* (WWW), a system of colorful, graphic screen displays (called "*home pages*") that link the vast quantities of information on the Net. The Stanford Zoroastrian group has just put together its own home page. If you have access to WWW, you may want to view it at:

<http://www-leland.stanford.edu/group/zoroastrians>

Once you are on the superhighway, there is no additional cost for connecting to anyone anywhere in the world. (The on-line services may charge a nominal amount if you exceed a certain allowable time per month). But be careful. Just like with the U.S. postal service, once a message is posted, it cannot be withdrawn. It is always prudent to compose and edit your message off-line before sending it on.

There is no censorship in Cyberspace, so anyone of any religious persuasion may exchange information freely. But very few squabbles or disagreements arise. That is because all users are aware of Internet etiquette, or '*Netiquette*'. Remember, once you post a message, it will be instantly read by hundreds or thousands of persons. And if you even accidentally insult anyone, you will be skating on thin ice.

By Dr. Rustom Kevala

Love is Life's Wealth

Love is life's wealth,
Ne'er spent, but ever spending;
More rich by giving; receiving by bestowing;
Love's life's reward, rewarded in rewarding.

Sir Walter Scott

JOBS

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

How to Get Around a Boss Who Blocks Your Career Path

You know your work is hot stuff. But your boss doesn't always agree. In fact, she or he may belittle your talents, give you few chances, and ignore your pleas for advancement. What do you do?

Career consultants recommend that first, you must look objectively at yourself. Maybe you are indeed not ready for promotion. But if you really think that your boss is blocking you unfairly, the consultants warn against confronting him/her or going to his/her superiors. A better way would be to strike up casual conversations with upper management — in the elevator, in the hallways, or at the golf club. If you get on good terms with them, you may be asked how things are going, or you may learn a thing or two about your boss. But it is not always possible to get chummy with your boss's bosses.

The best way, it seems, is to quietly spread the word to your co-workers, customers, even your subordinates (but not to your boss) that you are dissatisfied, looking for another job, or talking to headhunters. The *I Ching* tells us that life is conditioned and unfree. *The superior man surrenders to the concept of limitation — of being able to differentiate between that which he can affect and that which he must accept.* If you are qualified, you will land a better job. Or things suddenly get better when your boss "decides to take early retirement." In any case, your career remains safe and your pride remains intact.

Looking for Home-based Work

A retired Zarthusti in the Houston area wants home-based work in book-keeping, typing, etc. Advertisements have proved to be rip-offs. Please contact through Kaemarz Dotiwalla at (713) 565-1042.

Live-in Housekeeper Wanted in NC

An elderly Parsi couple in poor health in Charlotte, North Carolina would like to employ urgently a Parsi lady as a live-in caregiver-cum-housekeeper to assist them with medical care, meals and other housekeeping chores. The family will provide free room and board and a salary (negotiable). Interested applicants are requested to call the couple's daughters Zarine at (704) 821-4129 or Pearl at (201) 228-9602.

Good news for Computer Professionals

A survey by William M. Mercer, a New York consulting firm, found that 69% of computer-service and software companies intend to add staff this year. More than 50% of electronics, telecommunications, retail, legal, accounting and consulting firms also plan to add staff this year [*Wall Street Journal*, January 10, 1995].

PERSONALS

Would like to trace whereabouts of friend from Karachi, SANNU DOSABHOY MISTRY, in his mid-sixties, believed to have settled in U.S.A., possibly Florida, for over 40 years. Anyone with information, kindly call (collect) Mrs. Gulmoher Gandhi at (510) 934-7239.

MATRIMONIALS

FEZANA maintains a matrimonial file and will coordinate the initial contacts between interested parties. FEZANA does not assume any responsibility for verifying credentials. Contact Roshan Rivetna (see back cover for address).

Young man, 29, graduate, good-looking, 5' 10", sober habits, desires matrimony with Zoroastrian girl. Call (610) 589-5419.

Young lady, 27, good-looking, high school graduate with steady job, domestically well-trained. Call (610) 589-5419.

Gentleman, 52, well-settled, with a good job in Canada. Never married. Interested in meeting Zarthusti lady. [M95-1].

Gentleman from Texas, 40, Business Administration degree. In USA for 20 years. Enjoys fishing, traveling, reading. Would like to meet easy-going, responsible woman. [M95-3].

Female, 37, in U.K., lively personality, Masters degree from Oxford in French, in teaching profession. Loves reading, movies and traveling. Would like to correspond with cultured, well-settled, professional gentleman, with excellent sense of humor. Contact friend, Khurshid at (609) 768-8351. [F95-4].

Gentleman, in private aviation business, 46, 5' 9", well-settled, interested in sports, music, travel, citizen since 1979. [M95-5].

Professional gentleman, 42, 5' 6", CPA, chartered accountant, divorced, well-settled in service on West Coast, very out-going, good athlete in early days. Interested in girl 30-35. [M95-7].

Slim, very good-looking lady, 57, 5' 5", widow with grown, well-settled children. Very good-natured, caring, nurturing person in good health. Interested in meeting gentleman, view matrimony. [M95-8].

Invitation to Singles — "Club-Zed"

For Zarthustis in North America looking for 'soul-mates', (and most unmarried Zarthustis between 21 and 91 probably are), the resources are very meager, and the obstacles immense. For those over 30 supporting themselves and living alone, herculean efforts are needed over a long period of time to find an 'acceptable' match. Our community is so small and spread out and has so many built-in cultural barriers that even with the best of intentions, many end up marrying someone from the vast pool of eligible non-Zarthustis.

A proposal has been put forward to FEZANA to form a Zarthusti Singles Club — "Club-Zed", open to all ages. The only requirement for membership would be that one is unmarried. The idea is to provide an opportunity to meet others and have some fun. *Club-Zed* will complement the Youth Groups and Matrimonial Columns we rely on today. It will organize picnics, outings, camping trips, and workshops for its members in different geographical areas. Camaraderie and lack of pressure will result in the development of friendships and open interchange of ideas. Workshops may be geared towards setting life-goals, discussion of ethics and beliefs, or on effective communication with the opposite sex.

Club-Zed members will be able to network by phone and e-mail. It will be up to each individual to form friendships and explore interests, compatibility, and life-goals. (Recently there was a story in the newspapers about a librarian from Lackawanna, N.Y., who married a librarian from Australia after nine months of courting long-distance on the Internet.) The club will also provide ideas to local associations for encouraging singles' get-togethers. Eventually, even counseling may be made available for bereaved and divorced individuals.

What do you think? Is this a good idea? Responses may be sent to the Chairperson, FEZANA Journal by mail, phone or e-mail.

Correspondence Marriage Works! I believe Singles Club is an excellent idea. I found my husband by corresponding with him. We were pen pals for one and a half years. On my vacation to India, I went out with him for some time, and we decided to get married. We have been happily married for the past 13 years, and have a 10-year-old son now, with the grace of Ahura Mazda.

The concept of correspondence worked well for us. The e-mail club is one step ahead than what we did to find each other. I feel sad about my friends who have not married because they have not found suitable life partners from the Zarthusti community. I hope the Singles Club is the answer. Good Luck to Club members! May you find your true life partner from this group, and may our community multiply thousand-fold!

—Diana Dadachanji, Pennsylvania

PLEASE GIVE FROM THE HEART...

Donations will be deeply appreciated for the FEZANA fund categories: Welfare, Religious Education, Student Aid, Properties, Youth, FEZANA Journal, General, or for a specific appeal. Donors should refer to the broad criteria for eligibility of donations to FEZANA for tax exemption in U.S.A. and Canada, as indicated in FEZANA Journal [Winter 1994, p.60-61]]. Donation checks, payable to "FEZANA", may be sent to the address in the appeal, or to Dinshaw Joshi, FEZANA Welfare Committee, 4515 Willard Avenue, #1609-S Chevy Chase, MD 20815, Tel: (301) 654-6250.

FKS Foundation Renders Laudable Service to Needy

With a small band of dedicated volunteers under the leadership of Mr. F. K. Sholapurwala, the Bombay-based FKS Foundation has embarked on an ambitious welfare program for the needy. It's agenda includes: providing medical aid, running a Homeopathic dispensary; distributing milk powder, tonic and foodstuffs; encouraging sports and athletics; promoting communal harmony and goodwill; financial help for deserving students and physically handicapped; encouraging the arts/literature and small-scale industries, and providing emergency aid during natural calamities. Please note that this charity is not limited to Zoroastrians, but is open to all, without distinction of caste or community. Donations for this worthy cause may be sent to Dinshaw Joshi [see address above].

WZO Medical Benevolent Fund

The World Zoroastrian Organization (WZO) of London has established a "Medical Benevolent Fund" with a target of £250,000 to assist Zarthustis seeking, in foreign countries, specialized medical and/or surgical treatment, not available in their own countries. WZO invites donations from U.S.A. and Canada. Proceeds will be used to assist Zarthustis who are unable to finance the heavy medical costs involved for such treatments outside their country, either on their own or even with assistance from charitable organizations. Donation checks payable to FEZANA Welfare Fund and marked "WZO Medical Benevolent Fund" should be sent to Dinshaw Joshi [see address above].

Zubin Irani Medical Bills

Mr. & Mrs. J. K. Irani of Bombay have appealed to FEZANA for donation to pay off a large outstanding bill of Rs. 80,925 from the Hemophilia Society of Bombay who treated their late son Zubin for cancer through Factory VIII injections for fourteen months. In spite of

the treatment, Zubin passed away in September 1993. Through sale of their personal assets and funds donated by friends and charities in India, the Iranis paid off a large part of the Rs. 461,000 bill. They have appealed for donations from Zoroastrians in U.S.A. and Canada to clear the outstanding medical bill. Checks payable to "FEZANA Welfare Fund" marked "Mr. & Mrs. J. K. Irani" should be sent to Dinshaw Joshi [see address above].

Acknowledgements

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For Welfare:

Anonymous (\$45); Hosi & Pervin Amroli, CA (\$50); Cowas & Daisy Antia, MD (\$125); Cyrus F. Austin, AZ (\$201+\$251); Dhun Batlivala, IL (\$20); Fareydoon & Persis Behrana, LA (\$50); Maneck and Mahrukh Bhujwala, CA (\$100); Dr. & Mrs. N. Camay, CA (\$51); Darci Cooper, IL (\$150); Behram & Gulmoher Gandhi, CA (\$10); Behram & Fareida Irani, TX (\$101); Jim & Homai Jagus, PA (\$250);

Hoshi & Anahita Tamboli, FL, in celebration of a Jashan on October 15, to bless their home (\$151).

Kerbanoo Cooper, Roda Avari & Freny Cooper, FL, in celebration of a Jashan to bless their home (\$101).

Religious Education:

Toxy Cowasjee, Pakistan (\$10); Hoshang & Katy Khambatta, CA (\$50); Burjor & Perviz Patel, IL (\$10); Behram & Katie Pastakia, MD (\$10); Timothy R. Smith, CA (\$10); Hormuz & Yasmin Vania, IL (\$10).

Jaloo Captain, Rita Engineer and family, of Boca Raton, FL, in the name of "mushkil-ashan" (\$51).

North American Mobed's Council (\$200);

For Student Aid:

Fareydoon & Persis Behrana, LA (\$50); Jim & Homai Jagus, PA (\$250).

For General Fund:

Noshirwan Cowasjee, UK (\$5); Alayar Dabestani, WA (\$1000); Shahrokh & Gool Mehta, NY (\$21); Jehangir & Khurshid Rudina, MN (\$31).

For FEZANA Journal:

M. Aidun & Esfandiar Pourbahrami, BC (\$36); Anonymous (\$1500); Australia (\$15); John & Firozi Alercia, NC (\$8); Bejan Anklesaria, IL (\$20); Yezdi F. Antia, MD (\$8); Parviz Ardeshirpour, NC (\$8); Tehemtani Arjani, CA (\$100); Porus Austin, CA (\$15); Cyrus Austin, AZ (\$20); Khurshed & Mahrukh Avari, NC (\$8); Joseph & Pearl Ball, NJ (\$10); Pesi & Viloo Balsara, BC (C\$15); Soli & Farida Bamji, ONT (C\$20); Firdaus Bamji, NY (\$10); Zubin Bamji, SC (\$10); Dinshaw & Hutoxi Bardoliwalla, NJ (\$8); Sam & Daraius Battliwalla, ONT (C\$26); R. K. Bhada, NM (\$8); Sarosh & Veera Bharucha, ONT (C\$12); Pervin Bhatena, ONT (C\$30); Behram & Zareer Bhatena, CA (\$8); Bharucha Developments, CA (\$10); Hormuzd Bhaya, CA (\$8); Dara & Farida Bhesania, ONT (C\$25); Sheraz & Behram Bhesania, BC (C\$20); Maneck Bhujwala, CA (\$8); G. N. Billimoria, IL (\$8);

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(\$8); Rashna & Adil Pooniwala, IL (\$8); Rusi & Piroja Press, NJ (\$25); Cyrus & Arnavaz Presswalla, ONT (C\$12); Minoo & Zarin Press, IL for D. Bharucha (\$20); Keki & Mehroo Printer, ONT (C\$15); Rohinton Randelia, NJ (\$8); Jehangir & Khurshid Rudina, MN (\$13); Behruz Rustomi, IL (\$8); Maria Magdalena Rustomji, TX (\$11); Purvez Rustomji (Coating Engineers, Inc.), TX (\$100); Vispi & Pervin Sagar, TX (\$16); Mahinbanoo & Sohrab Sassani, CA (\$20); Arnavas & Hoshang Sethna, TX (\$20); Cyra Sethna, ONT (C\$12); Zarir & Roshan Sethna, TX (\$11); Shervin Shahriari, BC (C\$12); Farida & Houshmand Sharyari, IL (\$8); Jehangir & Avan Shroff, TX (\$20); Kersi B. Shroff & Alberta Bertuzzi, MD (\$15); Nozer & Norah Singpurwalla, VA (\$8); Veera & Meherji Siganporia, PA (\$12); Farangis Shahrokh, CA (\$20); Timothy Smith, CA (\$8); M. Sodawaterwalla, KS (\$11); Thomas & Maharukh Stazyk, OH (\$25); Pervez & Mani Surkari, TX (\$12); Rohinton & Viloo Surty, CA (\$8); Kashmira Sutaria, TX (\$8); James & Avi Swain, GA (\$8); Bella Tata, BC (C\$51); Eric Tata, SC (\$10); Erich & Havovi Tavadia, MI (\$8); Katy & Viraf Udwadia, NJ (\$10); Dara Umrigar, TX (\$12); Sheila Unvala, ME (\$10); Cyrus Umrigar, NY (\$30); Shahrokh Vafadari, UK (\$60); Ratansha & Nitash Vakil, NJ (\$8); Rustom & Zarin Vania, MD (\$8); Sorab Vatcha, CA (\$16); Sam Vesuna, ONT (C\$25); Richard Weaver, TX (\$25); Ethel & Sharon Wehrle, NM (\$8); Freny Writer (\$10); Parvin & Parviz Yeganegi (\$130); Susan Yeganegi, CA (\$8); M. Zartoshty, BC (\$100).

MILESTONES

FEZANA maintains records of births, navjotes (sudreh-push), weddings, deaths and other major events such as graduations, nava and martab ceremonies and other honors. Please send full information with photos to Dr. Rustom Kevala (see back cover for address).

Births

Xerxes Darson, a son, to Soonoo and Daraius Billimoria of Ontario, on December 28. Grandson to Goola and Hoshang Mavalwalla and Mehroo Bomanshaw Billimoria.

Humin, a daughter, to Arnavaz and Ervad Jamshed Dhabbar, of Toronto, on September 3.

Sarah Nicole, a girl, to Benaifer and John Devine of Silver Spring, Maryland, on September 28. Grandparents are Nargis and Shahrukh Kermani of Olney, Maryland.

Nasha, a new sister for Aryeneesh, to Havovi and Kaemarz Dotiwalla, on December 3, in Houston, Texas.

Neda, a daughter, to Farzaneh and Daryoush Ejbari, of Toronto, on September 18.

Ashram, a boy, to Shahin Kamran and Jamshid Foroutan of Rockville, Maryland. Grandparents are Khodamorad and Banoo Kamran of Bethesda, Maryland.

Shanaya, a daughter, to Aban and Cyrus Grant, of Elmhurst, IL, sister to Karl, on December 15.

Armaity, a daughter to Shernaz and Jamshid Minwala, of London, Ontario, on November 10.

Cyrus, a son, to Freny and Syavux Patell, in Bristol, PA, on October 6. A brother to Cyrus, and grandchild for Soonie and Bahadur Patell of Toronto.

Jehan, a son, to Hufirish and Rohinton Patel of California, grandson to Perviz and Cowas Patel, on October 22.

Nima, a son to Shahnaz and Ader Rostami, in Seattle, on November 19. He joins his sister Michelle, uncles, aunts and grandparents living in the Seattle, Tacoma and Bellevue, WA.

Avvan, a girl, to Bepsi and Pesi Sanjana of Michigan, on December 14.

Jason, a son, to Rati and Eddie Writer of Ontario, on November 27, brother to Jamie, and grandson of Katy and Maneck Khambatta, and Freny and Hosy Writer of England.

Navjote (Sudreh-Pushi) Ceremonies

Shara, daughter of Noshir and Khurshid Challa, and sister of Sheeroy, in Houston, Texas, on December 18.

Jimmy, son of Hoshang and Kashmira Daruwalla of Gaithersburg, Maryland, on December 30, in Bombay.

Abad, son of Kashmira and Gev Mahava of Alberta, in Bombay, on January 20

Zubin, son of Tehemton and Farida Mistry of Gaithersburg, Maryland, on January 4, in Bombay.

Freja, daughter of Feroze and Maharukh Motafram of Wisconsin, in Bombay, on December 27.

Cyrus and Malcolm, sons of Marazban and Khorshed Vandrevalla, in Bombay on December 21.

Farhad, son of Kodarham and Irandokht Shahryari; husband of Linda; and father of Mitra, Aria, Deena, Faranak, and Kiyan Paul, in Sterling, Virginia, on September 25. The Sudreh-Pushi was performed by Mobed Bahram Shahzadi of California.

Mitra, daughter of Farhad and Linda Sharyari of Sterling, Virginia, on September 25. The Sudreh-Pushi was performed by Mobed Bahram Shahzadi of California.

Five students from the religious class in London, Ontario had their Navjotes performed: Abtin Buiki-Azadi of London, Ruzbeh and Zubin Jasavala of Cambridge; and Farzan and Fareedoon Wadia of Woodstock.

Three ZAGNY area children had their navjotes performed recently: Rashna Clubwalla, Sheherazade Dubash and Mark Lelinwalla.

Engagements

Rustom Dubash of Shreveport, LA, is engaged to Niloufer Balaporia of Vancouver, B.C. The wedding is on April 22 in Vancouver.

Lyla Batlivala of Texas and Sam Todywala of Florida celebrated their "rupeeya-pervanoo" ceremony in October.

Tenaz Turner of Dallas, Texas, received "that special ring" from Farhad Sahiar of Dayton, Ohio.

Weddings

Coover Chinoy son of Dr. Minoo and Jerroo Chinoy of Flint, MI, to Roxanne, in Bombay, on December 31.

Jehangir Daruwalla, son of Soona and Adi of Calgary, and Catherine Lloyd, at the Darbe Mehr in Toronto, on July 23,

followed by a reception in Calgary. The newly-weds will be working in St. John's, Newfoundland, as physiotherapists.

Phiroze Sethna to Brandy, in Denver, Colorado, in August.

Azita Yeganegi, daughter of Parviz and Pari, to Raiomand Parsi-Feraidoonian, son of Homai, in Vancouver, B.C. on November 25.

Anniversaries

Mahabanoo and Nariman Rivetna of Montreal, Quebec, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on November 16.

Deaths

Behram Behrami, brother of Meherban Roshanravan of North Texas, in Bombay, in December 1994.

Khodadad Demehry, 78, husband of Homyune, father of Shahpour (Shahnaz) and grandfather of Orang and Negin Demehri of Vienna, Virginia, on October 20, in Yazd, Iran. He is survived by 2 other sons, 2 daughters, and 5 other grandchildren.

Nariman Dastoor, father of Dr. Yezdi Godiwalla of Brookfield, Wisconsin, and Adil Godiwalla of Texas. Burial was at Elm Lawn Cemetery in Chicago.

Mother of Khushroo and Lovji Hakim of New York, in India.

Perin Jamsetjee, wife of Noshirwan, mother of Bachi (Bomi) Damkevala and Rumi (Kashmira) Jamsetjee of Chicago area, grandmother of Diana, Zarine, Persis, Tanaz, Roshni and Darium, in Bombay on November 19.

Rashni Moigani, 43, daughter of Piroja Moigani of Silver Spring, Maryland.

Homai Mistry, 80, wife of late Hoshang Mistry, mother of Dinyar, Parvez and Khurshid Behramfram (Richmond, B.C.), in Bombay on November 6.

Dr. Khosrow Namdaran, 95, husband of Gohar, father of Farin, Farshid, Farzin, Farhad and Farrokh (West Vancouver, B.C.), and 14 grandchildren, in Belmont, CA., on October 20. A self-made man of many talents (he was a physician with a passion for writing poetry), he built the Namdaran Hospital in 1948, one of only a couple of privately owned hospitals in Iran at the time, and established the Namdaran Foundation to help the blind and handicapped. For 40 years he served on the board of the Tehran Zoroastrian Anjuman, until he left in 1980 to settle in California.

Simindokht Rashid, mother of the Goshtasbi family of Alberta, on October 20, in Tehran.

Manijeh Darabshaw Sarkari, mother of Kersi and Arnavaz, Aspi, and Pilloo Engineer, of Ontario, on January 7.

Ervad Behramgore Ratanshaw Vakil, 75, husband of Katy, father of Khorshed (Jamshed) Unwala of Philadelphia and Ratansha (Nitash) of New Jersey, in Bombay on December 11, 1994. Ervad Vakil, a lawyer, came to Singapore from Tientsin, China, in 1948, when the communists overran China. His business interests included textiles, travel, and transport. He founded the Singapore Parsi Association in 1952, and served as its President for several years. As High Priest of Singapore, he conducted religious classes and performed ceremonies for Zarthustis throughout Singapore and Malaysia. Behramgore suffered a stroke a few years ago, which left him partially incapacitated. Only last September, he and his wife moved to Bombay after a fond farewell from the Singapore Zarthustis.

EVENTS AND HONORS



Zarin Dastur

ZARIN DASTUR, daughter of Amy and Maneck Dastur of Los Angeles, received a scholarship award for the rest of her studies (in physiological science) at University of California in Los Angeles, based on her scholastic and extra-curricular performance.

Sushmita Sen, who was Miss India, and Miss Universe 1994 presented the awards, at the "Scholarship Award Night, organized in collaboration with MAZDA TRAVELS.



Sushmita Sen



India's beauty queen, Miss Aishwarya Rai, was crowned "Miss World" at a glittering pageant in Sun City, South Africa, on November 19. It was a proud moment for India, to place its delegates at the pinnacle of both the Miss World and Miss Universe contests in 1994.

ZARINE DOTIVALA, assistant registrar at Rutgers University in Brunswick, New Jersey, was uniquely honored for her 20 years of service. The U.S. flag was flown for her on the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. at the request of Bob Franks, member of Congress. Dotivala received a degree of Master of Education from Rutgers in 1982. [From Parsiana, October 1994].

JEHANGIR KARANJIA was honored on September 9, by the Fraternity Ahuramazdyar of Ontario, for "service

to the Zarthushtis of Ontario and life-long dedication to civil aviation in India and Pakistan." He has also been honored by Ceylon for organizing Ceylon's civil aviation; by Canada for investigating the loss of the Canadian Pacific Comet at Karachi; and by Pakistan, with the "Sitara-e-Khidmat" Imperial Services Order.

DR. JAMSHED MAVALWALA, Professor of anthropology at the University of Toronto, was elected Vice-President of the Executive Board of the North American Interfaith Network (NAIN), comprising of 250 members from major religious groups in Canada and the U.S. Since arrival in Toronto in 1969, he has been Committee Chair of the Ontario Council on Multiculturalism, served on

the National Council of Christians and Jews Board for two decades, and was Chairman of the World Conference on Religions for Peace (Canada) in which capacity, he led two delegations — to Kenya and China. Twice elected President of the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario, and convener of the First North American Zoroastrian Congress in 1974, he was awarded the Lifetime Excellence Award at the North American Zoroastrian Congress in 1992.

CYRUS MISTRY, son of Jehangir and Arnaz Mistry graduated with honors from Novi High School, Novi, Michigan. He was Valedictorian for his class, debator, pianist, and thespian. He was also involved in social service activities. He has won the Michigan Alumni Scholarship, Cornell University National Scholarship,

and the National Honor Society Outstanding Service Award. He plans to study medicine/medical engineering at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland. [From Parsiana, October 1994].

SORAB MISTRY has been appointed Senior Vice President, Asia Pacific, of Tara Sinha McCann-Erickson, which is in charge of Coca Cola's advertising account. He returns to the Coca Cola account after a 10-year stint with J. Walter Thompson in Toronto. [From Fed Newsletter, October 1994]

DR. DHUN NORIA, chief of clinical pathology at Scarborough Grace Hospital, was appointed to the Chair of the Metro Toronto District Health Council by the Lt. Governor of Ontario. The Council serves as an advisory board to the Minister of Health. Its parameters include 44 hospitals, 1500 community agencies, and 66 long-term care facilities — catering to the needs of 4.8 million

people, and involving a health-care expenditure of \$6 billion. At the present time, the Council is involved in restructuring of the Metro Toronto Hospital systems.

ZUBIN PANTHAKY, student at McGill University in Montreal, won the Faculty of Medicine's Campbell Howard Prize for 1994 for consistent excellence in written reports in clinical medicine.

Kahlil Gibran ... On Marriage

Here Love begins to render the prose of Life into hymns of praise, with music that is set by night, to be sung in the day. Here Love's longing draws back the veil, and illumines the recesses of the heart, creating a happiness that no other happiness can surpass but that of the Soul when she embraces God.

Marriage is the union of two divinities that a third might be born on earth. It is the union of two souls in a strong love for the abolishment of separateness. It is that higher unity which fuses the separate unities within the two spirits. It is the golden ring in a chain whose beginning is a glance, and whose ending is Eternity. It is the pure rain that falls from an unblemished sky to fructify and bless the fields of divine Nature.

As the first glance from the eyes of the beloved is like a seed sown in the human heart, and the first kiss of her lips like a flower upon the branch of the Tree of Life, so the union of two lovers in marriage is like the first fruit of the first flower of that seed.

"Beloved, before me stretches a life which I can fashion into greatness and beauty — a life that began with our first meeting, and which will last to eternity. For I know that it is within you to bring forth the power that God has bestowed upon me, to be embodied in great words and deeds, even as the sun brings to life the fragrant flowers of the field."

[From The Treasured Writings of Kahlil Gibran]



FEZANA JOURNAL

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