



OUR ANCESTRAL HERITAGE LINKING THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

*Kemna Mazda, mavaite payum dadat, hyat ma dregvao
Didareshatta aenange, anyem thwa-hmat athrashcha
Mananghashcha, yayao shyothanaish ashem thraoshcha
Ahura tam moyi danstwan daenyai fravaocha.*

*When evil marks me as the object of its assault,
Who shall be the protector of one like me?
Who but Thy Sacred Fire and Thy thought
Verily through their powerful force shall Truth and Righteousness
Come into their own. O Ahura, bring this to full realization.*

[Yasna 46.7, translation by Dinshaw J. Irani, see "Books and Such", this issue]

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10th North American
Zoroastrian Congress
San Francisco Bay Area
1996



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EDITORIAL

*Our Ancestral Heritage —
'Alat' and the Religious Calendar*

In my opinion, the development of our religion is suffering because we cannot accept a common culture; be it Parsi, Iranian, or North American. There is some validity in the hope that the next generation of Zarthustis in America will not have the problems and the differences that the present generation of 'foreign-born' is facing. It generally takes two or three generations for a new culture to develop and mature.

Scott Peck, in his best-seller *The Road Less Traveled*, says: the most important factor in the development of the religion of most people is their culture. During the past thousand years, our religion developed separately in the cultures of India and Iran. Today, the younger generation is immersed in the North American culture, while members of the older generation are still clinging on to the Parsi and Iranian cultures in which they were brought up. No wonder family ties are strained and we are isolating ourselves into polarized camps for or against various beliefs, cultures and languages. We are still struggling to identify ourselves to ourselves.

The Glue that Binds Us

So what is going to bind us all together; keep us together for the next two or three generations until we come to terms with our American Zarthusti culture? The glue of any culture is its ethical values, rituals and celebrations. Fortunately, the ethical values brought from our different homelands are very similar. In fact they are no different from the core values of the Judeo-Christian culture in which we now live. That is why we have been so successful here in our business and professional pursuits.

But our rituals and celebrations, the very essence of our religious culture, are very different for the Parsis and the Iranians. We must do all we can to bring together, preserve and enhance our seasonal festivals: the gahambars, our monthly jashans and parab; and most importantly, our high holy rituals of purity and consecration. A common calendar is a necessary step in the development of common religious rituals that would not only bring us all together but also preserve our connection with our glorious religious and ritualistic traditions.

A common calendar can bring us a common awareness of our festivals and celebrations, and give true meaning to our Gahambars and Jashans. This would

be a logical step in the development of common religious rituals that would not only bring us all together but also preserve our connection with our glorious religious and ritualistic traditions.

Linking the Past with the Present

Our religious calendar is the metronome that keeps our daily lives in rhythm with our communal and spiritual lives. Unfortunately, we have almost forgotten the reason for the calendar. And many among us do not see the need for all the fuss that is being created about preserving the Shenshai and the Kadmi calendars that are our only links with our 'alat' and the few remaining consecrated places of worship in India and Iran. The literal meaning of alat has been given as 'religious utensils and implements'. But its true significance is in the unbroken ritualistic traditions that have endured for centuries in our consecrated shrines and temples. I would translate alat as 'treasure'. It is the only treasure we have been able to keep through the vicissitudes of time.

It is obvious that the Shenshai and Kadmi calendars need to be corrected to bring them in step with the natural rhythms and cycles of our seasonal festivals and our rituals like the Rapithwin that are linked with the seasons. And since our alat, our holiest Atash-Bahrams, and our most revered Dasturs are in India and not in America, we must look towards our Indian co-religionists to make the necessary corrections by performing intercalations to help bring us all together. If they are unwilling to do what is needed, then we don't have any choice except to adopt the Fasli calendar to continue our progress.

The Final Link

FEZANA President Dastoor's message [next page] is clear: "the next strategic step in our spiritual growth as a community is to consecrate a Holy Fire on this continent — an Agiary." All those who have been to an Agiary or Atash-Bahram will know what she is talking about. The purity and the ambiance of a consecrated place of worship is something that cannot be described or explained. The Agiary will give us the wherewithal to perform our high rituals. These rituals will be the final link that is needed to bind our religious community together on this continent. To be meaningful to everyone, the alat and the rituals in the Agiary must be linked to a unified calendrical system in sync with the seasons in North America; and if possible, also with our priceless alat in India and Iran. I think that *resolving the calendar issue in the right manner is the key to our salvation*. It is not an impossible task. Let us aim to resolve this important issue at the earliest opportunity.

Rustom Kevala

Chairperson, FEZANA Journal

FROM THE PRESIDENT — ON CONTINUITY

Continuity is by definition an inter-generational issue. Children become parents, parents become grandparents, and the strengths of the links between generations can have a profound effect on the strength of the links of successive generations to the Zarthusti way of life.

The vision, foresight and generosity of Arbab Rustom Guiv, Morvarid Guiv and Mehraban Guiv, gave the Zarthustis of North America their first link to continuity. In the short history of less than 30 years on this continent, 8 Darbe Mehrs have been established. This is a remarkable achievement and the community is forever indebted to this magnanimous family.

Having a place of worship anchors us to the soil, gives us a sense of belonging, helps us to grow, and set down roots. From strong roots grow strong trees. The Darbe Mehrs have served us very well as Community Centers and Dadgahs and will continue to do so for years to come.

The next strategic step in our spiritual growth as a community is to consecrate a Holy Fire on this continent — an Agiary. This would enable us to celebrate higher Zarthusti liturgical ceremonies performed both in Iran and India over the centuries, e.g. *Pavmahal*, *Baj*, *Yasna*, *Nahan* for *Navars*. Religious rituals and ceremonies are part of our heritage, our traditions and our history which need to be preserved and passed on to our children for continuity.

Immediately several questions come to mind: How much will such an undertaking cost? How much would it cost to build and maintain the physical structure? Can it be built here and where will it be located on this continent? How much will it cost to maintain a full-time mobed to satisfy the spiritual needs of the community? Who will be able to enter the Agiary and who will decide this?

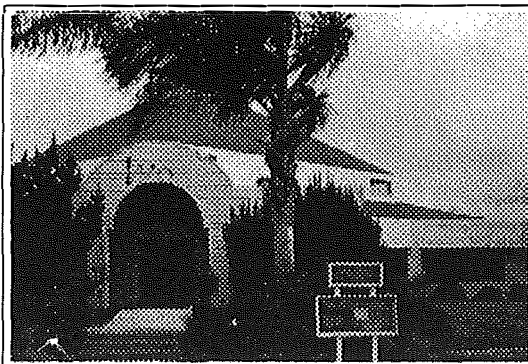
These are serious questions which require serious discussions and dialog. But the answers are not beyond the capability of North American Zarthustis. What we need is the religious will to build an Agiary. What is your will?

A group of interested and committed Zarthustis in Toronto have held informal discussions about the feasibility of such a project and they have proposed to start an Agiary Fund with grass root support from the community. *However a continuity strategy is a community strategy. It is not solely the responsibility of any one communal body. Are we ready to take the next step in the continuity strategy?*

Dolly Dastoor
President, FEZANA

ON THE NORTH AMERICAN SCENE From Beginning to Farshogard

California-based Mazdeyasnie Connection organized its fifth annual Summer Spiritual Retreat, July 22-29, 1995. Conducted by Ervad Kaikhushru N. Dastoor, the retreat offered "seven golden days of spiritual rejuvenation" as participants were taken on a "fascinating trip to explore the soul's journey from the beginning of Creation to the final Frashogard.



The Mazdaznan Church, in the picturesque town of Encinitas, 93 miles south of Los Angeles, with a magnificent 360 degree view of the Pacific ocean,

provided an ideal location for the retreat. For information, contact The Mazdeyasnie Connection, 9528 Walker Street, #5, Cypress, CA 90630.

Prevailing Views of 'Z-Netters'

55 persons (of whom 53 were Zarthustis) out of a 'Znet' population of 300 responded to a survey by Khershed Cooper of Virginia. The purpose of the survey, according to Cooper, was "to determine prevailing views of Z-netters, to summarize opposing views and to find common threads." Only the raw data is presented here. An analysis and summary of the insightful comments from respondents will be presented in a future issue.

Do you believe in Conversion?

64% Yes 27% No

Do you think mixed marriages should be allowed?

75% Yes 16% No

Should children with one Zoroastrian parent be allowed to have his or her Navjote performed?

87% Yes 4% No

Do you think homosexuals should be accepted as part of the community?

62% Yes 18%

No _____

1. "Z-net" refers to the Zoroastrian discussion group on the Internet administered by Mehrdad Khosraviani of California. To subscribe to this group (there is no charge), send e-mail to:

mehrdad.khosraviani@eng.sun.com

Do you believe that God created humanity or humanity evolved?

26% Created 33% Evolved
18% Created and Evolved

Do you believe in the death penalty?

47% Yes 27% No

Do you think Zoroastrianism will survive or die out in the next 100 years?

71% Survive 11% Die out

Of course, no conclusions can be drawn from this survey since it represents the views of only a very small number of Zarthustis.

Freon Smuggling Conviction in Florida

A sixty-one year old Zarthusti has pled guilty in the federal district court in Miami, Florida, for smuggling ozone-depleting refrigerants (CFC-12 or Freon) into the U.S.A. The case gained national attention, on account of his being the first person ever convicted under the Clean Air Act for this offense. Among other charges, he is charged with shipping two cargo containers of Freon to Miami, while falsifying documents to make it appear that they would be sent on to Mexico. He could receive several years in prison and hundreds of thousands of dollars in fines.

[From The Environmental Manager, June 1995]

Houston Zoroastrian Study Group

The Zoroastrian Study Group in Houston discussed the article "Is Zoroastrianism Dualistic or Monotheistic?", written by James W. Boyd and Donald Crosby in the Journal of the American Academy of Religion. The Group meets every fourth Sunday at Boyce Engineering offices in Houston, at 1:00 pm.

ZAGNY Conference on After-Life

The Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York organized a one-day conference on "After-Life in the Zoroastrian and the Indo-European Tradition", on June 11. Speakers were K. Irani, P. Ichaporia, J. Bagli, J. Stern, M. Prasad and U. Naval.

Vision TV at Vancouver Darbe Mehr

To shoot a feature on Bella Tata for their program *Sky-light*, Vision TV came to the Vancouver Darbe Mehr on March 12. Sky-light features people involved in community or religious work, and Zoroastrians were featured for this particular show in view of Noruz and Zarthustra's birthday falling at about the time the program was aired.

The video was shot in the prayer hall of the Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr, during a hum-bandagi led by Faredoon Amrollia, followed by interviews with community members including Bella Tata. The 15-minute video was aired on Vision TV in March and will be repeated in August.

Mehraban Guiv Remembered

On June 17, Zoroastrian Society of Ontario observed the death anniversary of Mehraban Guiv, benefactor of the Mehraban Guiv Darbe Mehr in Ontario. Son of Guiv and Kharman, Mehraban was born in Tehran in 1929. He started a professional nursery and horticultural business and his company distributed flowers all across Tehran. Mehraban made significant donations to numerous charitable organizations. In his name, the family built a medical clinic and dharamshala for pilgrims to Piresaze near Tehran.

Appreciating Diversity in LA

Ervad Zarir Bhandara and a dozen members of the Zoroastrian Association of California presented Zoroastrianism at the Festival on "Appreciating Diversity, Seeking Unity" at the Hyatt Hotel at Los Angeles Airport on June 10-11. They handed out literature from the "Zoroastrian Booth", and projected the Zarthusti ideals of co-existing peacefully in harmony with the society at large, in spite of religious differences. Mobed Bhandara chanted Zarthusti prayers at the inter-faith prayer ceremony. The organizers group, part of the UN Religious Council, related they were honored to have representatives from the "oldest religion in the world" and would ensure Zarthusti representation in future events.

IN COMING ISSUES...

Themes for future issues of the Journal will be:

Winter (December) 1995:

Special Business and Entrepreneurship Issue

This Special Issue will showcase Zarthusti businesses, entrepreneurs and professionals, and provide an opportunity for networking. All Zarthusti businesses, entrepreneurs and professionals are invited to participate. [See details on p.61].

Spring (March) 1996:

A look at Iranian history from Achaemenian times to the recent past.

Letters and articles on these themes are invited. Submission deadline is October 15 for the Winter issue and January 15 for the Spring issue.

COMING EVENTS

Asian Zarathustrian Youth Conference



KARACHI 1995

The first Asian Zarathustrian Youth Conference will be held at the Avari Towers Hotel in Karachi, Pakistan from October 22-24, 1995. The Conference is open to all Zarthushtis, between the ages of 18 and 40 from any part of the world, and including those whose one parent is a Zarthushti. Others may attend as observers.

Post-Conference entertainment and cultural visits include a day trip to Moenjodaro, site of one of the oldest excavations in the world, sailing in 'bunder boats' and a beach picnic. Registration is Pak Rs. 3,250 including most teas, lunches and dinners.

The theme is "We have made history, let us not become history". Says Chairperson Toxy Cowasjee: "Our Conference will be structured to allow maximum participation of all delegates, and it will provide a unique opportunity to cross geographical barriers." For further information, call Dolly Dastoor at (514) 656-2036.

World Youth Congress in 1997 in UK

The next World Youth Congress is planned for 1997 in London, UK. The Young Zoroastrians Committee of London, with the full support of Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe are coordinating the event.

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 Manou Mobedshahi, President of PZO and Peshotan Irani, President of ZANC. Contact Mobedshahi at (415) 563-5902 or fax (415) 563-5685.

[Also see ads and articles on the Congress in this issue]

East of California Conference

The University of Pennsylvania is hosting the "East of California Asian American Studies Conference" on October 27-29, at the University of Pennsylvania.. The theme is "Expanding our horizons, returning to our roots: Asian Americans into the 21st Century". Zarthushti students attending this conference, please contact Mrs. Diana Dadachanji at (215) 898-6671, email: dadachan@Sas.Upenn.edu. This will also be an opportunity to meet Penn Zoroastrian Club members.

*Committee for Conference on the Yashts and
Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York
in co-sponsorship with FEZANA*

announce

A Conference on the Yashts (The Avestan Hymns)

*on Saturday October 7 and Sunday October 8, 1995
at The Ramada Plaza Hotel, New Rochelle, New York
(25 miles North of New York City)*

The conference will discuss the content and theology of the Yashts, their historical, cultural aspects and significance in the religious literature of Zoroastrianism. Contact:

*Professor K. D. Irani, FEZANA Conference Committee
410 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10025
(212) 666-3954*

*Dr. Pallan R. Ichaporia, FEZANA Research Committee
253 Adams Drive, Womelsdorf, PA 19567
(610) 589-5419, fax: (610) 589-5495
email: Pichaporia@aol.com*

Sixth World Zoroastrian Congress

will be hosted by

Anjuman Zartoshtian Tehran

in Tehran, Iran

June 20-23, 1996

Khordad 30, 1375 - Tir 2, 1375

Topics will include:

- ☆ Strengthening cooperation among worldwide Zoroastrian Associations.
- ☆ Education of priests.
- ☆ Religious education
- ☆ Location and use of global Zoroastrian assets.

Participants wishing to speak at the Congress should submit their papers to TZA asap. TZA will make visa arrangements for travel to Iran. Application forms, available from your local Association, should be returned to TZA by January 1996.

This Congress was originally planned to be held in Bombay in January 1996. At the International Conference at the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute in January 1995, the Iranian delegation offered to hold the Congress in Tehran, but due to the severe winters in Iran, decided to delay it until June 1996. A letter confirming this date has just been received from Dr. M. Goodarz Mehr, President, TZA. There is concern that this date may clash with the North American Congress on July 4th in San Francisco. For further details contact your local Association or Dolly Dastoor at (514) 656-2036.

AROUND THE WORLD

Letter from New Zealand

Greetings from New Zealand! Please accept my heartiest congratulations on producing such an informative and interesting Journal and that too in the best professional style. Now for some news from our end.

From a humble total of three Zarthusrian families in 1988, by God's grace we have grown to 33 families, a total of around 130 individuals. More than 60% have arrived within the last 6 to 12 months. Fortunately most of them are gainfully employed, though not necessarily in their chosen professions.

There is a good number of teen-agers, and they have adjusted extremely well. Some have already started excelling in various activities. 12-year-old Nash Vazifdar finished as runner-up at the Table Tennis Tournament — Auckland Champion of Champions. Nash also won the boys singles event at the Eastern Zone Table Tennis Championship.

During the year we had two Navjotes, that of Janetta and Sohail, children of Shahin and Behrooz Kermani, and that of Burzin, son of Persis and Homi Colah. Thanks to the joint efforts of Darius Mistry and Jamsheed Sidhwa, our Sunday prayer classes are well attended and children are making good progress in knowing and learning more about our religion. Once a year, the Auckland Chapter of the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP) organizes an Interfaith Service. Each religious group is invited to present an item. All our youngsters and a few adults take part in the same by reciting a short prayer. This brings awareness of the Zarthusrian religion to the locals.

Our "kiwi-born" Zarthusrian population is slowly increasing. We had two new arrivals (both boys) within the last 12 months, and by God's Grace two more are due shortly. May our tribe increase!

I am happy to inform you that we are in the process of setting up "The Zarthusrian Association of New Zealand". The draft constitution is under discussion amongst the community and with a few changes, we hope to have a meeting of the minds soon.

Yazdi Mistry

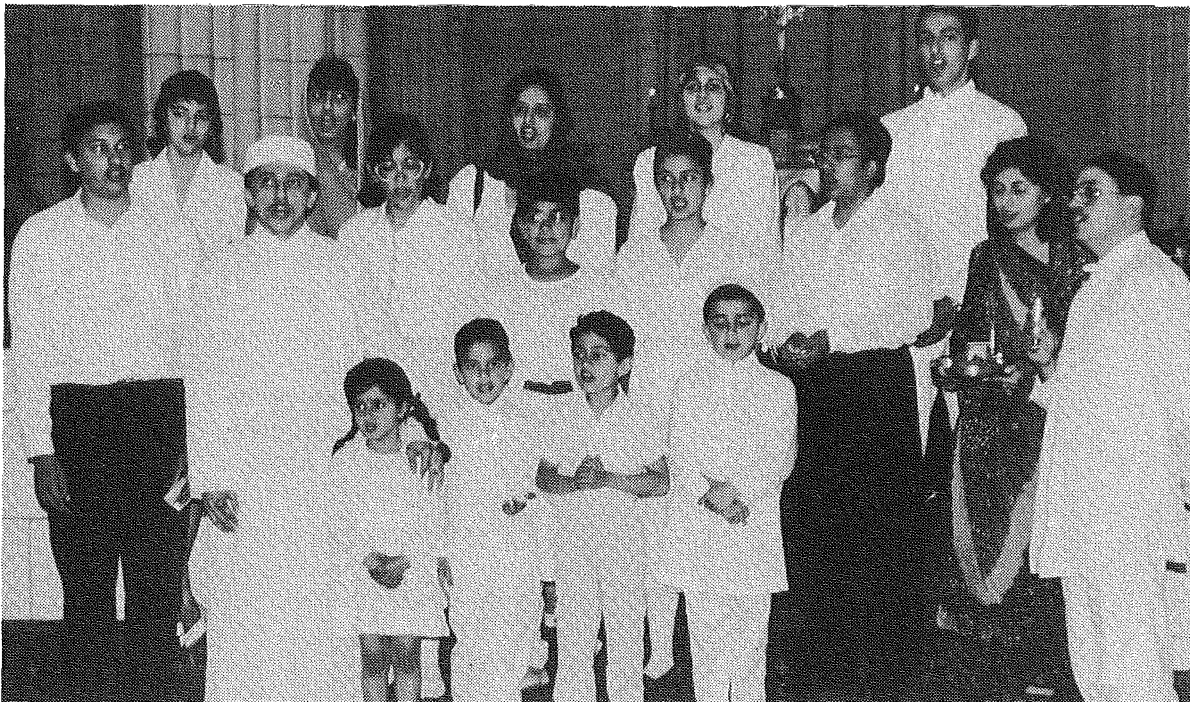
45 Garnet Road, Westmere
Auckland 2, New Zealand

New Junior High School in Tehran

For many years now, Iranian Zarthusis with the assistance of the Parsis from India and the Zarthusis of Iranian origin resident in India, have established several schools in Tehran, Yazd, Kerman and other regions where Zarthusis reside. These schools have been and still are contributing to the progress of science as well as the Iranian culture.

As reported from Tehran, due to the hard work of the Zarthusi community leaders and the Tehran Zoroastrian Anjuman, as well as the guidance and agreement from the Islamic Republic Governmental authorities, Ministers of Education and Interior, and other authorities, a Junior High School for Zarthusi girls (Goshtasb) was established.

The school [photo next page] was officially opened at the beginning of the academic year 1373-1374 (from October 1994 to June 1995). It was established by Mr.



Bringing awareness of the Zarthusi faith to New Zealand: Zarthusis at interfaith ceremony in Auckland church.



Manoochehr Felfeli who has made this charitable donation in memory of his father, the *Late Goshtasb Felfeli*.

Mr. Parviz Ravani, Member of Zoroastrians in the Islamic Parliament, accompanied by Zarthusti community leaders, congratulated teachers and students on the first day of classes. He praised the benevolent people who had dedicated many schools in order to improve science and knowledge.

At the ceremony he said: "Our Holy Prophet Asho Zartosht has always admired charitable deeds; especially for the cause of knowledge and education. Till now there was no Junior High School for Zarthusti girls, among the other Zarthusti schools. But today it has been officially opened and will be used by our children. We wish the best for its founder. We also wish to thank the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Ministers of Education and Interior, who guided and assisted us in many ways to get the job done. We are sure this newly established school will be effective in improving science and knowledge."

Firoozeh Ardeshiri Sharifabad
General Secretary,
Tehran Zoroastrian Anjuman

'Cranes' fly from Karachi to Hiroshima

In response to the "Story of Sadako" [FEZANA Journal, summer 1995], the little Japanese girl who lived in Hiroshima during the atomic bombing fifty years ago, on August 6, 1945, Mrs. Hutoxi Cowasjee of the Karachi Zarthosti Banu Mandal mobilized over a hundred children, parents and sponsors to make paper origami 'Cranes for Peace' for the 50th anniversary commemoration at Sadako's statue in Peace Memorial Park, Hiroshima. [See Mrs. Cowasjee's letter, right].



"... As I wanted our 'cranes' to reach Hiroshima by August 6th for the commemoration, there was no time to waste. On Tuesday Hinopak Motors Ltd. agreed to be a sponsor to do the dispatching. The next step was the paper. We have a paper market where it is cheaper to purchase so I thought Vogue magazine being glossy would make colorful cranes. My husband, being what he is, found me a donor who has an outlet in the Bazaar and saved me going in the rain to find all this paper. By the end of the evening they had been cut into squares ready for the children.

"To save time I jumped into my car and went from one Parsi locality to another requesting my contacts to bring as many willing children as possible on Thursday afternoon to the Banu Mandal. Three volunteers sent their large vans to transport the children.

"On Thursday we had 115 children, a few as young as 5 years old. They patiently folded away till we had made 1300 cranes, and took paper home to make more with the children of the compound. Tomorrow Hinopak Motors is couriering 2130 cranes to Hiroshima ..."

Sir Muncherjee Bhownagree Parliamentary Centenary

One hundred years ago, on July 16, 1895, Sir Muncherjee Bhownagree was elected as a Conservative to the British House of Commons, making him the second Asian/Indian Member of Parliament, following Dr. Dadabhai Naoroji, a Liberal. It is significant to note that the first three Asian/Indian Members of Parliament were Parsi Zoroastrians, the third being Shapurji Saklatwalla (Communist and Labor).

Sir Muncherjee, a barrister and a noted orator of his time, campaigned vigorously for justice for Indians in South Africa, for the amelioration of Zoroastrians in Iran, and for social, educational and industrial training in India. In 1895 he received a Silver Medal from the Royal Society of Arts for his work on Indian female education. He erected the East corridor at London's Imperial Institute, and when this became the Commonwealth Institute, a gallery was named in his honor.

Sir Muncherjee followed Dadabhai in becoming President of the Incorporated Parsee Association of Europe (now known as the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe, ZTFE), serving from 1906 until his death in 1933.

The ZTFE celebrated this historic centenary with an all-day commemoration on July 16 at Zoroastrian House, with prayers and eminent speakers. For information contact: Rusi Dalal, President, ZTFE, tel: 0181-997 2076.

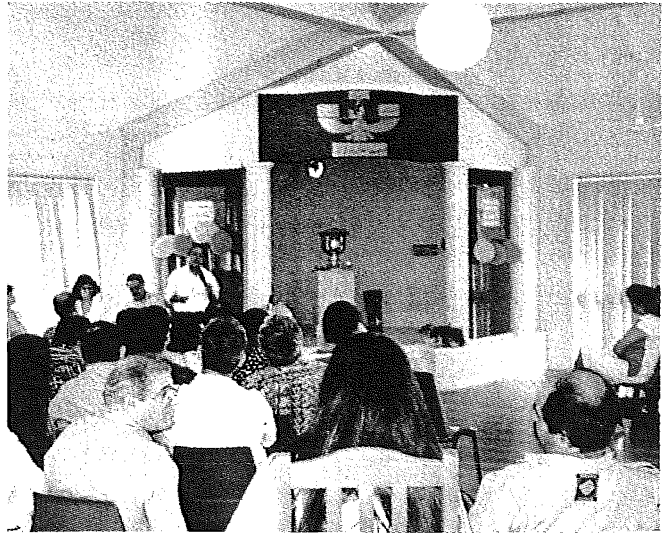
India's Patriot: Britain's MP

The Opening Ceremony of a centennial exhibition on Dr. Dadabhai Naoroji, the first Asian Member of Parliament in Britain, was held on May 4, at the Palace of Westminster in the House of Parliament. Among the eminent speakers was Rusi Dalal, President of ZTFE, who co-sponsored the exhibit, along with the House of Commons and Islington Council. The Exhibit, titled "India's Patriot: Britain's MP", was on display at the House of Commons for a month.

Australian Forum on Zoroastrianism

The Australian Zoroastrian Association (AZA) held the First AZA Forum on Zoroastrianism at their newly inaugurated Arbab Rustam and Morvarid Guiv Darbe Mehr in January. Speakers were scholar, author and erstwhile President of AZA, Dr. Purviz Kolsawalla; Burjor Sethna, who has studied the history of mankind and of world religions in the light of Mazda Yasna; and Dr. Huzan Kharas, noted for her work in religious education and Zarthusti community affairs.

As an expression of the Sydney community's deep gratitude, Kitty Masalawala, President of AZA presented Ervad Jal Pavri with a shawl, for his invaluable services to the Australian Zarthustis. The Forum also



marked the Silver Jubilee of AZA, formed in 1970 when there were fewer than 25 Zoroastrians in Sydney. Today there are upwards of 800.

Zarthusti Choir in Tehran

The Mazdiyasnan Choir, of Zoroastrian university students, accompanied by the Tehran Chamber Orchestra gave an "outstanding performance" according to a *Tehran Times* report. Ancient as well as contemporary works, in Gilaki and Turkish, were performed.

30 young men and women, students in engineering and science, devoted their time and efforts to form the choir, though none of them had prior musical training before embarking on this dream. They have since received several offers to record their performances.

[From Payk-e Mehr, August 1995]

Token of Appreciation from Iran to India

Indian Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore, in the early 1900s, wrote to the Iranian Government to depute Iranian Avestan scholar Professor Poure Davoud to Tagore's Vishva Bharati University to lecture on the history and ancient culture of Iran. The then Government of Iran immediately responded by establishing the Chair of Iranian Culture at Vishva Bharati.

When Tagore wrote to thank the Government of Iran for establishing the Chair, the Iranian Minister for Foreign Affairs, H. H. Foroughi himself sent a reply:

"Dr. Tagore, I assure you, no thanks are due by you to us. I will tell you the reason. Twelve hundred years ago, a part and parcel of our countrymen, Parsis, had to leave the shores of this country under distressing circumstances. We drove them out and India gave them refuge and protection, as if they were her own children. At no time we thanked India for the same. We are founding the Chair in your University as a slight token of appreciation and gratitude for what India had done in protecting and preserving our own children."

[From Parsiana, February-March 1995]

For a millennium and more, the sacred "Iranshah" Fire has been the center of worship and pilgrimage for Zarthustis from around the world. The ritually consecrated flames of the Iranshah (Emperor of Iran — symbolic of the Iranian Empire the Parsis left behind) Fire are venerated with unswerving conviction. Even today Zarthustis maintain the unbroken tradition of a trip to Udvada for the blessings of Iranshah, at every major life-cycle event — a Navjote, a wedding or the start of a new venture. The authors here relate the story of this holy shrine from the mountains of Khorasan in Iran to the landing at Sanjan in India in the 8th century AD, and thence through the vicissitudes of time to its "enthronement" at the Atash Bahram in Udvada, where it resides to this day. But what does the future hold for Udvada? Concerned Zarthustis explore the possibilities.

KISSEH-I SANJAN

The Flight From Iran

The glory of the religion of Zarthustra lasted until the time of Yazdegard [Zarthusti Emperor Yazdegard was overthrown by the Arabs in 651 AD]. Foreigners occupied the throne of Iran, the country was made desolate and the people scattered and enslaved. Some Priests and Behdins who believed in the Avesta went into hiding to preserve their faith; they abandoned their homes, gardens and palaces and concealed themselves in the mountains of Kohistan [the "hill-country" in southern Khorasan, north-east of Kerman], where they remained for one hundred years.

Eventually a pious man advised the Zarthustis to go to Hormuz, as they were being harassed by the unbelievers. They left for Hormuz, where they stayed for 15 years, but even there they had no peace. Finally, a wise Dastur and astrologer read the stars and advised: "The time fate had allotted us in this place is now coming to an end. We must now leave this place at once or our wisdom will be useless and our work come to grief. To escape the infidels, we must leave for India."

Arrival in India

The Zarthustis, men, women and children set sail in several vessels for India. They landed at Diu, and stayed there for nineteen years until a priest-astrologer after reading the stars advised them to "seek another place of refuge". They set sail for Gujerat.

At sea, a mighty storm arose and they feared for their lives. They prayed: "O Victorious Bahram! Guide us

COVER STORY

IRAN

FROM KHORAS

Compiled by Roshan Rivetna



OUR ANCESTRAL HERITAGE

SHAH

AN TO UDVADA



Dastur Neriosang Dhaval: from painting by V. S. Waghulkar in "In Search of My God" by The Zoroastrian Foundation

who are lost in this stormy sea. If we reach India safely, we shall consecrate a great fire in honor of Bahram." Their prayers were heard — the storm abated, a gentle breeze sprang up and brought them to shore. The place where they landed was Sanjan. [The date of this arrival is disputed, and ranges from 716 to 936 AD].

Installing Iranshah in Sanjan

The Dastur [Neriosang Dhaval] approached the Hindu ruler of Sanjan, Jadi Rana for sanctuary. Jadi Rana gave them asylum on four conditions: "I must know something about your religion, your beliefs and customs; second, you must give up your Iranian tongue and use only the Indian; third, your women must assume Indian dress; fourth, you must lay your arms and promise never to use them; and fifth, your marriage ceremonies must be done in the evening." The Dastur explained the religion and accepted the terms.

The Zarthustis found a spacious, fertile plain, where they built a town and named it Sanjan. Remembering their promise during the storm at sea, they set out to install on Indian soil the fire of Bahram. The Rajah gave them land, "three parsangs square", and sent them materials for the building of the temple. The necessary arts and crafts were known to the Zarthustis who had brought with them tools from Khorasan, and with their great energy and zeal for their faith, the building advanced easily. For months they performed the *Yazeshne* Ceremony. In those days, people were deeply versed in spiritual matters, and the sacred fire was consecrated according to the rules of the religion. The Dasturs thus installed Iranshah.

Attack on Sanjan

The Zarthustis prospered and their descendants spread out from Sanjan, to Navsari, Broach, Cambay, Variav and other places throughout India. In this way seven hundred years passed by [to 1393 AD, however the date is disputed]. But then fate turned against them. Sultan Mahmud's army of thirty thousand horsemen advanced on Sanjan like a black cloud. In answer to the Rajah of Sanjan's call to arms, fourteen hundred Zarthustis led by Ardeshir, saddled their horses, donned their armor, and with drums beating, marched out with the Rajah's army as the dawn broke.

Day and night the battle raged. The two leaders were as dragons fighting each other with the fury of tigers. The sky was covered with a dark cloud from which rained swords, arrows and spears. Suddenly the battle turned against the Hindus and they all fled, leaving their Zarthusti comrades unprotected. Still they fought on bravely. Blood streamed from their wounds and flooded the plain. For three days the warriors fought, until at last the Muslim army accepted defeat and drew back. But the victory was short-lived. The following day the Muslims with reinforced infantry and cavalry advanced

to give battle. Ardeshir was in the thick of the battle and fought like a hero, but an arrow pierced his side, he fell from his horse and died. The Rajah too was killed, and his lands lay open to the victor.

Flight to Bahrot and Bansda

With the fall of Sanjan, the Zarthustis fled to the nearby mountain of Bahrot where they preserved their Holy Iranshah for 12 years, till they moved on to Bansda [and the nearby mountain Ajmalgadh]. They prospered, and Zarthustis came from far-away places to worship the Iranshah Fire. And so fourteen happy years passed.

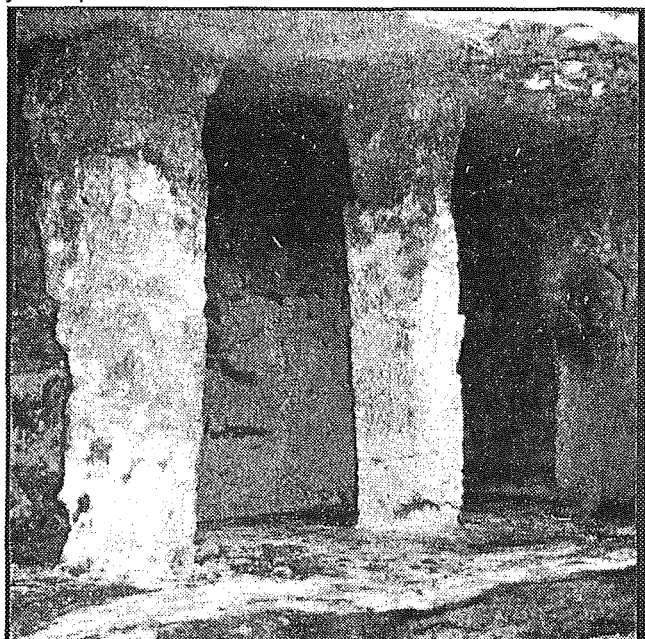


Photo: 1251st Iranshah Anniversary Program Book, 1972

Bahrot Caves: archeologist Dr. (Ms) Roxana Irani of Deccan College Pune, continues to research this area to establish dates and facts about the early history of the Parsis.

Iranshah Installed at Navsari

At that time [around 1419 AD] there was a devout behdin, Changa Asha in Navsari, who persuaded the Navsari Anjuman to move the Iranshah from Bansda to Navsari as "through His blessed presence our prosperity will increase." And so the Iranshah Fire was installed in a Temple in Navsari with pomp and ceremony, tended by three priests who celebrated all the proper rituals.

[Excerpted from "Kisseh-i Sanjan" by H. E. Eduljee, published by the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute, 136 Bombay Samachar Marg, Bombay 400 023, in 1991. Besides an English translation of the Kisseh-i Sanjan, Eduljee's 200 page monograph covers other historical events in Parsi history, and accounts of the Parsis by early European travelers in India. The "Kisseh-i Sanjan" (Story of Sanjan) is the oldest extant account of the coming of the Parsis to India. It was written by Bahman Kaikobad of Navsari in 1600 AC in Persian verse. In the Epilogue, Kaikobad writes: "It was God's

will that I should write this story. I have told it according to what I heard from the Elders, and polished it and showed it to my teacher, who added many a rose from his garden..."]

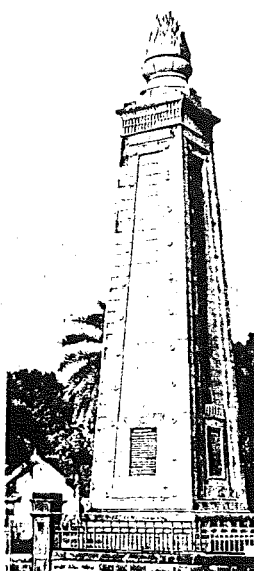
Iranshah Moves to Udvada

In those days there were five main groups of priests, who by mutual agreement had fixed the territorial boundaries of their respective ecclesiastical jurisdiction for performing religious ceremonies: (1) Sanjana priests of Sanjan, (2) Bhagaria priests of Navsari; (3) Godavra priests of Surat, (4) Bharucha priests of Broach, and (5) Cambay priests of Cambay.

With the move of the Holy Iranshah to Navsari, the Sanjana priests who traditionally tended the Holy Fire found themselves within the jurisdiction of the Bhagaria priests of Navsari with resulting disputes. Ultimately Iranshah was moved, in 1740 to Bulsar and thence in 1742 to Udvada, within the territorial jurisdiction of the original Sanjana priests. Since that date, the Holy Iranshah Fire burns at the Atash Bahram in Udvada.

SANJAN MEMORIAL COLUMN

Hundreds of Zarthustis gathered at the site of the Sanjan Landing in November for the annual Sanjan Day jashan and celebrations. A commemorative column, built in 1921 marks the spot where the Zarthustis had landed over 1200 years ago.



"The Sanjan pillar is not just a column of stone" said Khurshed Bhada "It signifies the very existence of the Parsis. It is a living symbol of the abiding gratitude of the Parsi community. At the top of the pillar there is not just a flame — it is a beacon reminding Parsis to always shine in the service of our religion, community and country."

The Sanjan Memorial Column Committee, chaired by Rohintan Daviervala, hopes to build a corpus of Rs. 5 lakhs (\$16,000) to perpetuate the annual observance, and for maintenance of the Column, the Vimadala Pavilion and the Boyce Dharamshala. Contributions will be most gratefully accepted. Contact: Mr. Daviervala, Khan Bahadur Bungalow, Sanjan 396150, India.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Some photos and source materials for this and the following article, from "1251st Anniversary of Installation of Sacred Iranshah Atash Bahram" memorial volume by the Bombay Zoroastrian Jashan Committee, President Maneck Pheroze Mistry, 1972, are gratefully acknowledged.

BAI MOTLIBAI WADIA ATASH BAHRAM IN UDVADA

A HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

By Dinshaw F. D. Joshi
Chevy Chase, Maryland

On October 7, 1994, Roj Meher, Mah Ardibehest, 1364 Yz [1]. the Bai Motlibai Wadia Atash Bahram at Udvada celebrated its first centenary as the home of the Holy Iranshah Fire. This narrative recalls the history of the present Atash Bahram at Udvada.

Early History of Iranshah Fire

Zoroastrians fleeing Iran after the Arab invasion of the country and the fall of the Sassanian dynasty first landed at Diu, a village in present-day Saurashtra on the west coast of India, in about 67 Yz. (697 AD). After 19 years in Diu, in 86 Yz. (716 AD) they moved to Sanjan. On Roj Adar, Mah Adar 90 Yz. (721 AD) the first Atash Bahram on the Indian sub-continent was consecrated in Sanjan by Dastoor-e-Dastooran Neriosang Dhawal and the Holy Fire created with divine help and assistance was enthroned therein [2].

In 667 Yz. (1297 AD), fearing an invasion by the Muslim army of Allaudin Khilji, the Holy Fire was removed to the caves of Bahrot in the surrounding hills where it remained for 12 years. In 679 Yz. (1309 AD), three leading Dasturjis (mobeds) of Sanjan first moved the Holy Fire to a hill top in the Vansda forest (near Bulsar), and in 789 Yz. (1419 AD) to Navsari where it then remained for over 300 years. Between 1107 Yz. (1737 AD) and 1112 Yz. (1742 AD) the Holy Fire was moved repeatedly from one town to another, first to Surat and then back to Navsari, next to Bulsar and finally in 1112 Yz. (1742 AD) to Udvada [3] which has been its home for the last 253 years. The repeated shift of the Holy Fire from one town to another was a result of disputes regarding guardianship of the Holy Fire between the mobeds of Sanjan who claimed to be its sole guardians and the mobeds in different towns who also claimed rights over the Holy Fire.

Early Atash Bahram in Udvada

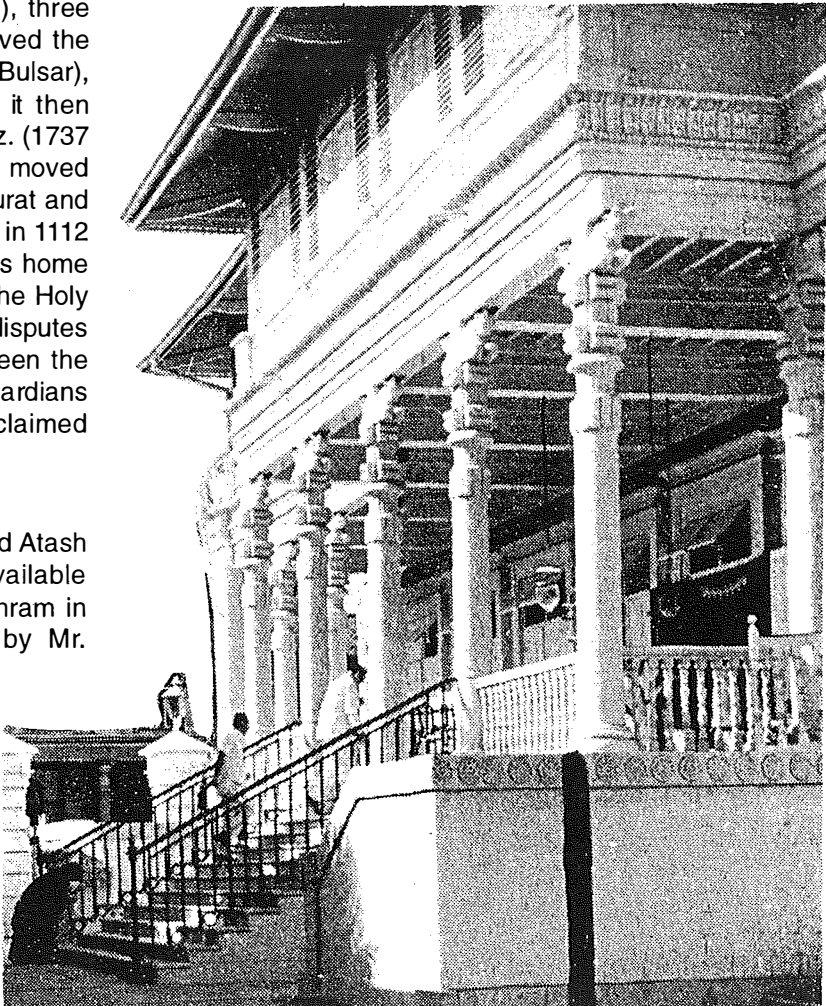
The detailed history of the first, second and third Atash Bahram at Udvada is not known. From available records, we only know that the first Atash Bahram in Udvada was built in 1112 Yz. (1742 AD) by Mr. Muncherjee Bomanjee of Nargol, the second Atash Bahram was built in 1121 Yz. (1751 AD) by Mr. Bhicajee Eduljee of Surat and the third Atash Bahram in 1199 Yz. (1829 AD) by two brothers, Mr. Dadabhoy Pestonjee Wadia and Mr. Muncherjee Pestonjee Wadia of Bombay. By about 1892 AD, the structure of the third Atash Bahram became very dilapidated due to difficulties experienced by the heirs of the two Wadia brothers in its maintenance. With their consent and at the request of the Udvada Parsi

Anjuman, Bai Motlibai Manockjee Wadia of Bombay agreed to replace the third Atash Bahram structure with a new building in memory of her late husband, Seth Manockjee Nowroji Wadia.

Bai Motlibai Wadia Atash Bahram

Bai Motlibai purchased land measuring 6,660 square yards adjacent to the site of the third Atash Bahram for a new Atash Bahram and the *Nahankhana* [4]. The cornerstone of the fourth Atash Bahram was laid on Roj Adar, Mah Adar, 1262 Yz. (May 22, 1893) by Bai Motlibai's sons, Mr. Nowrojee Manockjee Wadia and Mr. Nusserwanji Jehangirjee Wadia. The building was designed by Mr. Dinshaw Dorabjee Mistree, Architect;

Iranshah Atash Bahram in Udvada, built in 1894



the building contractor is unknown. The combined cost of the land and the Atash Bahram and the *Nahankhana* buildings in 1893-94 was Rs. 91,000 (\$2,889) [5]. The current value of the land has not been assessed but it is estimated that to build two similar structures today, if that is at all feasible without the original materials and the artisans, would cost about Rs. 50,000,000 (\$1.58 million). The excellent design of the buildings by the architect, the high quality of the materials used, and the meticulous and sturdy construction by the contractor have all enabled the buildings to withstand over the last hundred years, the ravages of the coastal weather (the Atash Bahram is located only a few hundred yards away from the beach at Udvada), particularly the heavy annual monsoon rains, and the heavy usage of the Atash Bahram by the worshippers.



Bai Motlibai Maneckjee Wadia

After the required consecration ceremonies including several *yezashnes* and *vendidads*, performed over a period of several weeks, the Holy Fire was enthroned in the new Atash Bahram designated "Bai Motlibai Wadia Atash Bahram" on Roj Meher, Mah Ardibehest, 264 Yz. (October 30, 1894), the death anniversary day of Bai Motlibai's husband. On the occasion of the Atash Bahram's centenary, a marble bust of Bai Motlibai was installed on the verandah of the newly renovated Atash Bahram.

Maintenance of the Atash Bahram

On September 22, 1896, Bai Motlibai Wadia executed a Trust, "*Bai Motlibai Wadia Udvada Atash Bahram Trust*" (referred to as the Wadia Trust) with a corpus of Rs. 61,000 (\$1,935). Over the years, the Trust has seen substantial growth; the current corpus is about Rs. 600,000 (\$19,000) with an annual income of about Rs. 80,000 (\$2,535), adequate for routine maintenance of the buildings.

In 1909, under the will of Bai Motlibai's son, Mr. Nowroji Manockji Wadia who died in 1907, another Trust titled "*N. M. Wadia Charities*" (referred to as the Wadia Charities) was established in Bombay with the objectives of general secular charity, relief of poverty, educational and medical aid, performance of religious ceremonies, etc. The current common trustees of the Wadia Trust and the Wadia Charities (and three other trusts) are: Mr. Ratanji Nowroji Bhavnagri, Mr. Sorabji Hormusji Commissariat, Mr. Sam Framroze Joshi, Mr. Jamshed

Khurshed Setna, and Mr. Burjor Hormusji Antia. The maintenance of all Atash Bahram properties is the responsibility of the Wadia Trust.

Custody of the Holy Fire

The custody of the Holy Fire, its maintenance and perpetuation including the provision of *kathi* (a special slow-burning wood) for the Fire, the performance of the daily five *boi* ceremonies, the *machis* offered by devotees, and all rituals and ceremonies are the responsibility of the "*Shree Udvada Nav-Kutumbi Athornan Anjuman*". All dasturjis attending the Holy Fire are from *nav kutumbs* (nine families). The right to perform the *boi* five times a day at the change of each *geh* is rotated between the *nav kutumbs* from month to month.

The Udvada Anjuman has at present two Presidents, Vada Dasturji Hormuzdyar Mirza and Vada Dasturji Kaikobad Dastoor Pherooji; hence the *two* high chairs in the outer prayer hall of the Atash Bahram. Though technically the *Vada Dasturjis* (High Priests) are appointed by the Anjuman, in practice the positions are hereditary. Though this diarchy of dual control — one for the preservation and perpetuation of the Holy Fire and the associated religious ceremonies, and the other for the maintenance of the buildings — has occasionally caused problems, these have been resolved always amicably through mutual understanding.

Re-consecration Ceremonies

The last renovation of the Atash Bahram was done in 1983. With the approaching centenary, the Wadia Trust undertook major repairs including water-proofing of the roofs, retiling of the walls of the prayer halls, new carpeting in the inner prayer hall, retiling of the outer prayer hall floor, and repaving the courtyard, at a cost of about Rs. 2 million (\$63,400). The architects, Dara B. Mistry and Partners, and the contractor, Cyrus Unwalla, both graciously waived their own fees for this assignment. As the Wadia Trust did not have the necessary funds, the trustees of the Wadia Charities (which has a current corpus of Rs. 70 million or \$2.22 million, and an annual income of about Rs. 8 million, or \$254,000), agreed to finance the renovation costs.

Since major repairs were required to be carried out by non-Zoroastrian laborers, before the work could start, the Holy Fire had to be temporarily relocated. The Holy Fire was shifted on October 21, 1993 to the adjacent Petit Dar-e-Mehr building. By June 1994, major repairs were completed, at a cost of Rs. 1.2 million (\$38,000).

Before the Holy Fire could be moved back, each individual room in the Atash Bahram — the inner sanctum and prayer hall, the outer hall where the other rituals and ceremonies are performed, etc. — had to be reconsecrated. The ceremonies comprised one *vendidad* and three *yezashnes* performed by a number of mobeds, separately in the inner and outer halls.

Like most other Atash Bahram and Agiaries in India, the Udvada Atash Bahram also suffers from a severe shortage of professional mobeds, specifically those who can perform the elaborate consecration ceremonies. At present, Udvada has only about ten resident mobeds.

Due to heavy monsoon rains, the consecration ceremonies could not be completed in time for the centenary date, Roj Meher, Mah Ardibehest, 1364 Yz. (October 7, 1994). After completing the necessary rituals, the Holy Fire was shifted to its permanent home in the *Ushahin Geh* (the period between midnight and sunrise) on Roj Aneran, Mah Ardibehest, 1364 Yz. (October 21-22, 1994). For the move, all street lights near the Atash Bahram were turned off to avoid artificial light shining on and polluting the Holy Fire; all lights in the two buildings were also extinguished and the whole area totally darkened. Thereafter, nine mobeds who had taken special *nahns* (purification baths) jointly carried the Holy Fire from the Petit Dar-e-Mehr to the inner sanctum of the Atash Bahram.

The first *boi* and *machi* was offered to the Holy Fire by the son of Vada Dasturji Kaikobad Dastoor Pherooji (who was unable to attend the historic occasion as he was in Bombay recovering from a heart attack) in *Ushahin Geh*. Next day at 6:30 am in the *Havan Geh* (the period between sunrise and mid-day), a *machi* was offered on behalf of the Wadia Trust, followed by a celebration jashan in the outer prayer hall by Vada Dasturji Hormuzdyar Mirza and nine other mobeds.

Devotees visiting Udvada to offer prayers to the Holy Fire in the renovated Atash Bahram have been exuberant about its appearance. The trustees, the architects and contractor all deserve the world Zoroastrian community's commendations and grateful thanks for executing the onerous and difficult tasks of repairing the century-old buildings and thereby providing the Holy Pak Iranshah Fire with an excellent home befitting its status for its eternal preservation and perpetuation.

NOTES:

[1] The Shenshai calendar has been used throughout this narrative as it is the calendar used by both the religious and temporal authorities at the Atash Bahram.

[2] The traditions, rites and legends associated with the creation of the Holy Fire and the rituals and prayers performed on that occasion could be the subject of another narrative. [See "Consecrating the Holy Fire" by Rustom Kevala in this issue, page 18, for highlights of the consecration ritual for an Agiary.]

[3] The original name of the village was "*Uth-wada*" (*uth* means camel in Gujarati), as it served as the location for the camel stables for the local Nawab of Sachin.

[4] "*Nahankhana*" is the place where mobeds stay for ten days after the mandatory "*nahn*" or purificatory bath before they can attend the Holy Fire.

[5] All US Dollar figures are at the mid-1995 currency exchange rate of \$1 = Rs. 31.50.

PRESERVING AND PERPETUATING PRICELESS TREASURES IN UDVADA

By Rohinton M. Rivetna

Hinsdale, Illinois

In an unbroken tradition going back to 1742, when the sacred Iranshah Fire was enthroned in the Atash Bahram there, the town of Udvada has been the foremost pilgrimage center for Zarthustis who come from near and far to pay homage at its altars.

For those of us in the diaspora, as also for any Zarthusti with a Parsi background, Udvada represents the very core of our sacred religious tradition, a place where our children, born and brought up in the West, can feel the spirit of Zarthustra. Irani Zarthustis also recognize the Iranshah (along with the shrines near Yazd, Pir Sabz, Pir-e-Herisht, Pir Narestaneh, Pir Banu, Pir Nareki and others, which they visit in the hundreds during specific four-day periods in the Spring and Summer).

This priceless treasure of our ancestral heritage must be preserved and perpetuated for centuries to come. My vision is to embody in Udvada a repository of everything that is Zarthustrian, from a religious as well as ethnic perspective. Develop the town of Udvada to encompass all the elements of a world religious center — the sacred element, the academic element, and the governance element.

Being the home of the Iranshah, it is already blessed with the sacred element. It's hallowed halls are a haven for worship and for enhancing one's spirituality.

The next step is to develop Udvada as a seat of learning both for priests, scholars of the religion and for the community. Build a 'seminary'-like institution of higher learning to enable our priests to develop the three-fold ritual/spiritual, doctrinal and ministerial aspects of priesthood. While the Navar/Martab ceremonies stress the ritual aspects, they do little to enhance the priest's knowledge of the doctrine and his ability to minister to the community.

For scholars and for the community, build a learning center, a library, a museum, an archive for our priceless treasures, our ancient manuscripts, our timeless traditions, our literature, arts, our culture, and more.

The governance element rests on our ability as a world community to put in place a body that can provide linkage with all the pockets of Zarthustis the world over. Much work has been done in this area. It is hoped that the parent Federation of Zoroastrian Anjumans of India will provide the leadership and bring together the communities spawned by the Federation's constituents across the globe. Thus far, the Federation has not taken the lead in this matter. Permanent, lasting formal ties with the diaspora must be formed while the first

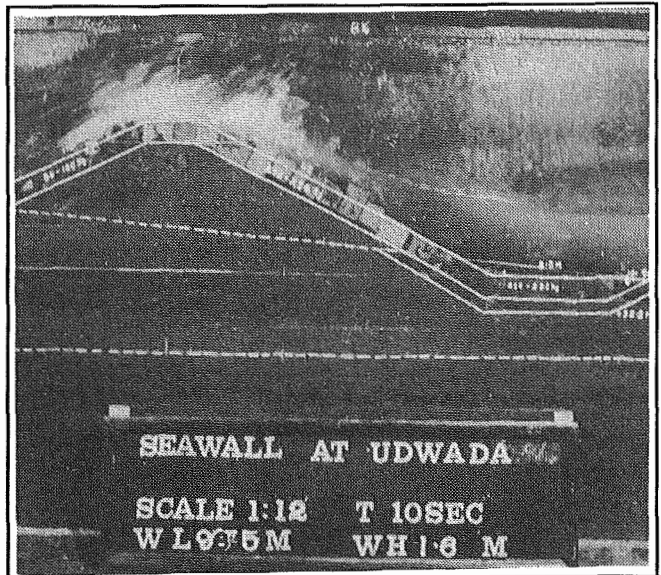
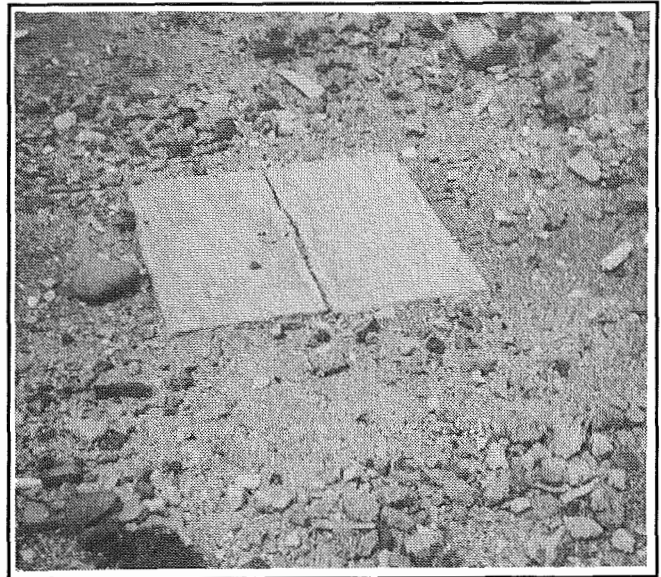
generation is still active; the next generation may not feel as compelled. The need is urgent to have a formal network, and the time is now.

Do we really need a religious world center? In my opinion, more than ever before, Zarthustis today need a world center to support our identity as a world community. In this shrinking world, there is constant dialog with each other. The days when there were two major pockets of Zarthustis, in Iran and India with little contact with each other, are history. We are now indeed a world community, and a world community needs to have a vibrant world center.

Udvada is ideally situated to be a world religious center for Zarthustis. It is within a 3 hour ride from the major metropolis of Bombay, located a few yards from the picturesque sandy beaches of the Indian Ocean. The climate year round is idyllic. The cost of living is reasonable by American, European and Indian standards. There is already considerable investment there by Zarthustis in the hotel business, (as many of us can attest to, that have enjoyed the hospitality of the Parsi Dharamshala or King, Regal, Majestic, Sidhwa and other Hotels, with their bumper breakfasts of kheemo, kaleji, 'tareli boi', 'doodh-na-puff' and more). Further, the political stability of India, coupled with its secularism and freedom of worship, make India an excellent choice for all Zarthustis of the world.

A grand plan for the development of Udvada is needed. Padma Shree Homi Taleyarkhan has sown the seeds with his "Save Udvada" campaign [see next article]. We need to support it and move it further along. Perhaps there is a Zarthusti architect that could on a pro bono basis generate a conceptual plan and attach a cost figure. I am confident that if there is a good cause, the world community will come forth with the funding.

There are many among the diaspora who are looking for an opportunity to give back in some small measure to the country of their origin. What better opportunity is there than to perpetuate and enshrine the traditions of Udvada as a priceless gift to the world wide Zarthusti community for posterity. ♦



(Photo top) The only relic of the Fire Temple of 1742 AD in Udvada: a stone slab over which was placed the Afargan or urn for the sacred Iranshah Fire.

(Middle) Udvada beachfront showing evidence of severe soil erosion. Photo shows stones placed for temporary protection from erosion. The school building is in the rear.

(Bottom) "Wave Flume" experiments for building a sea wall to prevent further erosion at Udvada beach. The project is financed partly by the Government of India, the State Government and the Committee chaired by Padma Shri Homi J. H. Taleyarkhan.

"SAVE UDVADA" PROJECT

Udvada, the age-old sanctum sanctorum of the Parsis, has been suffering from environmental erosion for years. Buildings near the sea shore have already been affected. The high tidal waves are gradually penetrating inside the town, and causing havoc, especially at their height, on full moon days.



A high level committee of eminent citizens and experts was formed a year ago, under the Chairmanship of Padma Shri Homi J. H. Taleyarkhan [photo left], with a view to arresting the damage and taking preventive measures.

A plan has been mobilized for both engineering works and afforestation, with the cooperation of the Water Works Department of the Union and Gujerat Governments. A program of sloping walls and annual beach

sand nourishment, a first in India, is being finalized. The entire project will be financed jointly by the Government of India, the State Government of Gujerat and from the Committee's fund-raising efforts.

Mr. Taleyarkhan has been a dedicated advocate for the development of Udvada. Through his efforts a permanent road was built from Udvada Railway Station to the town, which was inaugurated by the Chief Minister some years ago. This year the road was repaired, relieving hardships to pilgrims and other visitors. He was also instrumental in getting electricity, automatic telephones and STD service started in Udvada.

A number of new hotels have also recently been opened. The J. J. Sanatorium for Parsis is a popular place for Parsi pilgrims. For the facility of visitors to Udvada, Mr. Taleyarkhan has prevailed upon the Railway authorities to make a special stop at Udvada for the daily Gujerat Express train run.

While at one time the Parsi population of Udvada was much larger, now there are only a few hundred left. Parsi pilgrims of course visit the Iranshah regularly in their thousands from Bombay, as well as from all over India and the world. As a result of these plans, it is expected that it will once again revive and regain some of the prosperity it once enjoyed. ♦

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

Photos and articles for the "Save Udvada" article, from Padma Shri Homi J. H. Taleyarkhan, Bombay are gratefully acknowledged.

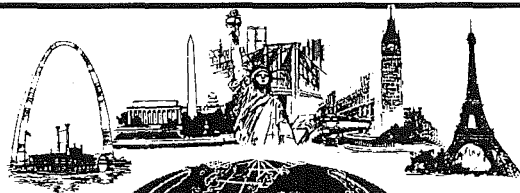
FAR-O-HAR '96

A Journey to Your Roots

Trade Wind Associates Canada, Inc., in association with Gulf-Air and TCI Ltd, India's largest tour operator, is offering a 17-day tour to India in Jan-Feb 1996. This tour is specially designed for those first and second generation Zarthustis whose minds and souls are thirsty to recapture their heritage; learn more about their roots, and discover the quality and colorful diversity of their background.

The tour will include visits to Delhi (Red Fort, Jamma Masjid, India gate, Embassy area ...); Agra (Taj Mahal, Agra Fort); Fateh-pur Sikri (Hindu and Persian architecture); Jaipur (Pink City); Ahmedabad (Gandhi Ashram, Fire Temple, meetings with Parsi families); Baroda (Fire Temple); Surat (hometown of Parsi culture); Udvada (Iranshah); Igatpuri (early Parsi settlements, Fire Temple, Yoga Center); and Bombay (Gateway of India, Jain Temple, Fire Temples, Tower of Silence) and much more. Participants will also be able to extend their stay in Bombay or visit other cities (e.g. Karachi or Goa) after the conducted part of the tour.

Contact Nilufer Mama or Shermin Divecha at Trade Wind Associates Canada, at (416) 966-4853.



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CONSECRATING THE HOLY FIRE

By Rustom Kevala

*Athro Ahurahe Mazdao puthra
tava atarsh puthra Ahurahe Mazdao*

- Atash Nyaishe

Fire is Ahura Mazda's Purifier

The word 'puthra' in Atash Nyaishe is derived from the Sanskrit root 'pu-', meaning "source of purifying, cleaning" [1]. Atash Nyaishe, Bundahishn, Vendidad and the Rivayets refer to several consecrated Fires as venerable, pure beings with soul; Padshahs (Great Rulers) with names, who preside over and purify those who come into their spiritual presence. *Adar Farohaba* presides over mobeds, dasturs and saintly persons; *Adar Goshasb*, enthroned by King Kai-khushru after his conquest of Beheman-diz, presides over soldiers and heroes; *Adar Burzin*, brought to the court of King Vistasp by Asho Zarthusht himself, presides over the agriculturists; and *Adar Neriosang* resides in the hearts of kings and rulers and assists them in the management of the state.

Fire Symbolizes Our Faith

Fire has been a part of religious rituals in many parts of the world, but nowhere is it held in higher esteem than in our temples and places of worship. The Holy Fires in our Atash Bahrams and Agiaries (also called Atash Adarans) are consecrated Fires — the Atash Bahram is considered to be a Fire of the first grade, and the Agiary is considered to be a Fire of the second grade. Ritually pure and perpetually tended, these sacred Fires are located in the consecrated inner sanctums of the temples where only the officiating mobeds are allowed to enter to perform the *machi* ritual at the turn of every *gah*. It is through these and other continuous rituals over the centuries that all our Holy Fires are interconnected and kept pure.

Fire is Our Spiritual Beacon

The consecrated Fire signifies Ahura Mazda's presence in our places of worship. The ritual for the consecration of a fire is specified in the Rivayats [2] and the Vendidad, where it is enjoined that the fires used by different tradesmen may be carried from their place of use

and business and enshrined in a Dadgah, i.e. in a proper place [3]. In the case of all six Atash Bahrams founded and consecrated in Bombay and elsewhere, the process for each has differed in details [4], but has been similar in the general format and procedures. The process of collecting the different fires and of purifying and consecrating them for an Atash Bahram is long and intricate. The process of consecrating an Agiary fire is similar, but does not require as many types of fires and is not as long.

Fire Symbolizes Many Human and Natural Activities

The consecrated Fire is a microcosm of human and natural activities. Hence it must include the purified fires collected from many sources. In the case of Agiaries, four principal kinds of fire are required: from the homes of: (1) the athornans, i.e. the priestly class, (2) the ratheshtaran, i.e. the military or ruling class, (3) the vastroyashan, i.e. the agricultural class, and (4) the hutokhshan, i.e. the artisans, tradesmen and manufacturers. In each case, fires from several individual homes or businesses are collected. Except for the case of the fire from the athornans, these fires need not be from Zarthushti households or businesses alone.

For the Atash Bahram Fire, fires are also collected from natural lightening and from the fire of a burning corpse. In case of the latter, special precautions are required to prevent the spread of pollution from the corpse to those performing the collection and purification rituals [5].

Fire Must be Purified and Consecrated Before Enthronement

The collected fires are placed separately on the open ground and a new fire is started from each by placing a pile of sandalwood powder and frankincense downwind of it. This process is repeated three times. The fire ignited the third time is considered to be sufficiently

pure and is kept burning by being regularly fed. The separate fires are now merged into four fires representing each of the four kinds of fire.

Each fire is now placed in a separate vase and two mobeds take charge of each. On the first day, the Yasna ceremony is performed on each fire in the morning and the Vendidad is performed with the khshnuman of Sarosh after midnight. On the second day, the same ceremonies are performed again, but with the khshnuman of Ahura Mazda. Then on the third day, the four fires are united into one — the vase containing the first, i.e. the fire of the priestly class, receives into itself the fires of the next three classes. All the priests unite themselves with a paivand and then, reciting the Yatha Ahu Vairyo, combine the fires together. Next they recite the Namaskar of Atash three times. The two priests who had consecrated the priestly fire now recite the Yasna ceremony in the morning and the Vendidad with the khshnuman of Sarosh at midnight. Then on the fourth day, a Yasna with the khshnuman of Ahura Mazda is recited over the united fire. The sacred fire is now ready for enthronement.

The assembled mobeds and others now form a procession and formally carry the Sacred Fire to the chamber which itself has been cleaned, purified and consecrated by the Yasna and Vendidad ceremonies with the khshnuman of Sarosh for three days. There it is enthroned on a large metallic censor which stands upon a stone platform. The chief mobed then feeds the fire reciting Atash Nyaishe while the others join him in the recitation. Finally, they assemble in the outside hall and perform the Jashan and the Baj ceremonies, which completes the enthronement of the Holy Fire.

O Holy Fire, Thou Art Our Savior

The Vendidad specifies that whenever more than 10 Zarthusti families get together in a new area, an Atash Adaran must be built and consecrated for their use. It is therefore high time for us to think about a consecrated Fire in the West. Let us start making serious plans to have a Holy Fire on North American soil and at the same time, pray for wisdom from the existing Holy Fires to find an amicable solution to our calendar dilemma so that our rituals and celebrations can forever remain in harmony with the natural rhythms and cycles of the seasons. ❖

[5] Vendidad, Fargards VIII and IX refer to the purification requirements in case a Zarthusti comes upon a corpse-burning fire; and the rewards for bringing a purified corpse-burning fire to the Bahram Fire. Dr. Ichaporia points out that these Fargards have probably been mis-translated and misunderstood in the Rivayets and need further study.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author thanks Dr. Jehan Bagli for supplying the reference material and Dr. Pallan Ichaporia for his comments on the Vendidad references to the Bahram Fire.

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]

LIGHT DIVINE

*Ushta ahmai yahmai ushta kahmaichit
Vasé khshayans Mazdao dayat Ahuro;
Utayuiti tevishim gatoi vashemi
Ashem deryai tat moi da Armaiti
Rayo ashish vangheush gaem manangho.*

Who brings to others Light, himself gets Light,
Bestowed by Mazda Ahura, the Lord;
For progress, for upholding Asha's Law,
I pray for Life-renewed and Strength of Soul;
Armaiti, bless us with the Light Divine,
And mold our Life as Vohu Man directs.

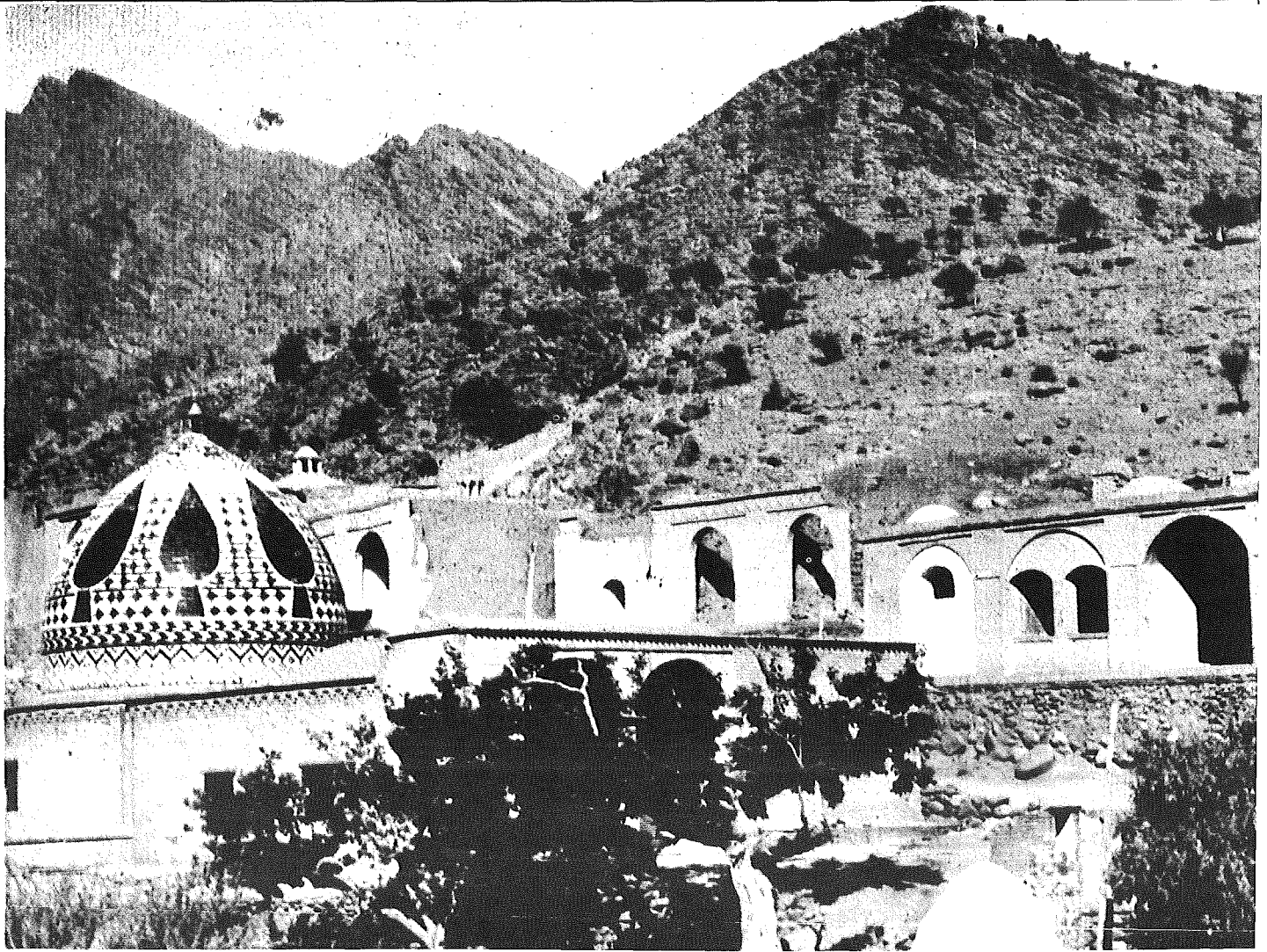
[Gatha Ushtavaiti, Ys. 43.1, from the translation by I. J. S. Taraporewala]

[1] *Khordeh Avesta*, transliterated and translated into English by Prof. Ervad Maneck Furdoonji Kanga from the Gujarati original *Khordeh Avesta By Mayeni* of Ervad Kavasji Edulji Kanga; English Edition 1362 Yz., 1993 AC.

[2] For example, the Ithofer (78) *Rivayets*, published in 1846.

[3] *Vendidad*, Faragard IX, 81-96.

[4] Sir Jivanji Modi, *Religious Ceremonies and Customs of the Parsis*.



WHO WILL KEEP THE FI

Some impressions after Recent Travel

By Ardeshir Damania, Bombay, India

A winding dirt road, north-east of the small town of Ardakan on the plateau in central Iran, cuts through the dusty semi-desert. The hills glow in the blaze of the setting sun on a long summer day in June. Shrubs of wild watermelon with innocent-looking fruits, the size of baseball, but poisonous if eaten, lie on either side of the road. After 15 kms, the road appears to go no further; high, almost vertical, hills lie directly ahead and soon a dead end would come in sight. So one thinks. Just at that moment, very abruptly, the road turns right between two high hillsides, and there, glowing red in the rays of the setting sun, hidden from the cruel world outside, lies the shrine of Pir-e-Herisht! Dedicated to Herisht, the faithful servant of Yazdegird III, the last

Sassanian (and Zoroastrian) king of Persia, the shrine is of great significance to the Zoroastrians of Iran and especially those living in Ardakan, Yazd and other surrounding towns and villages.

Pir-e-Herisht Shrine

On the evening of June 24, 1993, when I visited the shrine of Pir-e-Herisht it was deserted except for 35-year-old Erach Marzbani who looks after the shrine under the supervision of Whabiz Sohrabi, an aged widow. After having convinced the elderly lady, who was too shy to be photographed, that I was a well-meaning Zoroastrian from India, she instructed Erach to open the shrine for me. Climbing up the long flight

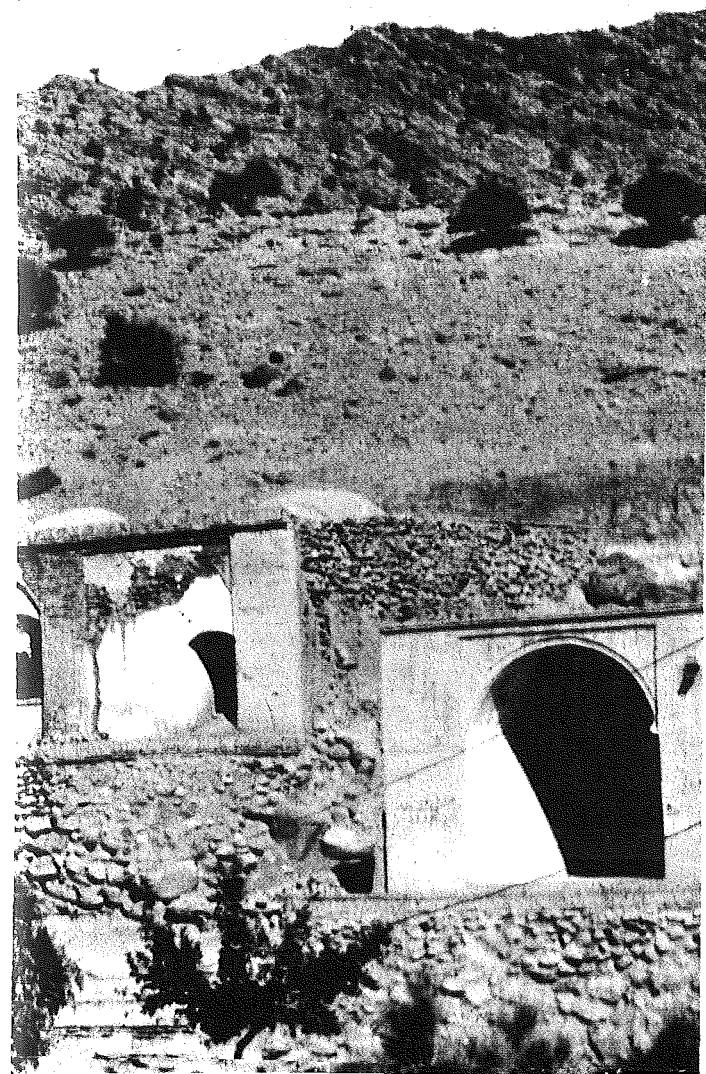


Photo courtesy Dr. K. Harvesf

Pir-e-Banoo or Pars near Yazd

RE ALIGHT? to the Pirs of Iran

of steps, washing my hands and face with cool spring water and performing kushti, I entered the shrine. A plaque outside reads "Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds" in Farsi. Inside there are two rooms. The first room had a raised platform where King Yazdegird's fire was reported to have been kept by Herisht. The fire was not burning that day. Photos of Zarthustra and stalwart Zoroastrians of the past adorn the walls.

The second room contains an altar where several oil lamps burn perpetually. The wall was once again adorned with photos of Zarthustra and Zoroastrian community leaders from the past. Erach was still suspicious because of the presence of my Muslim colleagues, who also entered the shrine (under Iranian

law non-Zoroastrians cannot be refused entrance). I once again performed kushti prayers inside, lit a sandal wood incense stick proffered by Erach and exited after some hurried photography as light was fading fast in the hills. Erach immediately locked the shrine securely behind me.

A system of vents or wind-chimneys (*bad-girs*) which bring cool air from the earth below to the surface serves as a sort of natural air-conditioning system. Nearby is an underground spring whose water is very cool and a plaque, mentioning the Zoroastrians who came here from far corners of the world, is seen atop the entrance. The cool spring water can be reached by descending a long flight of steps. A decent rest-house with about four rooms for overnight visitors is available. Other rooms and a dharamshala are also constructed for pilgrims with lesser means but these are in a neglected condition and graffiti is written all over the walls.

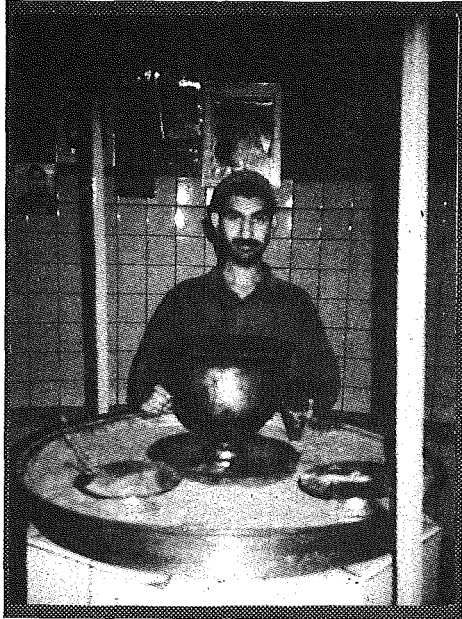
Whabiz Sohrabi informed me (through an interpreter) that she has been looking after the shrine since the last 40 years. But she is now ageing and with failing eyesight most of the physical work is performed by Erach. Also, arthritis prevents her from climbing the many steps to go up to the shrine too often which is at least 100 meters above her humble dwelling place, a single room with a kitchen and toilet. She has a daughter, Keshvar, who lives in Tehran and comes to visit her occasionally.

By now the sun had set and it was rapidly getting dark and Mrs. Sohrabi lit a petromax lantern (her electricity has been cut off) and offered to make tea. She retreated into the kitchen while I took photos of her room and picture frames of her deceased ancestors. In the dim light I could see the outlines of her few meager belongings and evidence of a bleak existence, no doubt due to poverty. Nevertheless, her faith was unwavering, and she vows to fulfill her duties till the end. Finally, totally overcome with sadness I placed a bundle of money in her hand, patted her cheek in encouragement, and made ready to return to Ardakan. As I turned for one last look a faint smile finally appeared on her creased face.

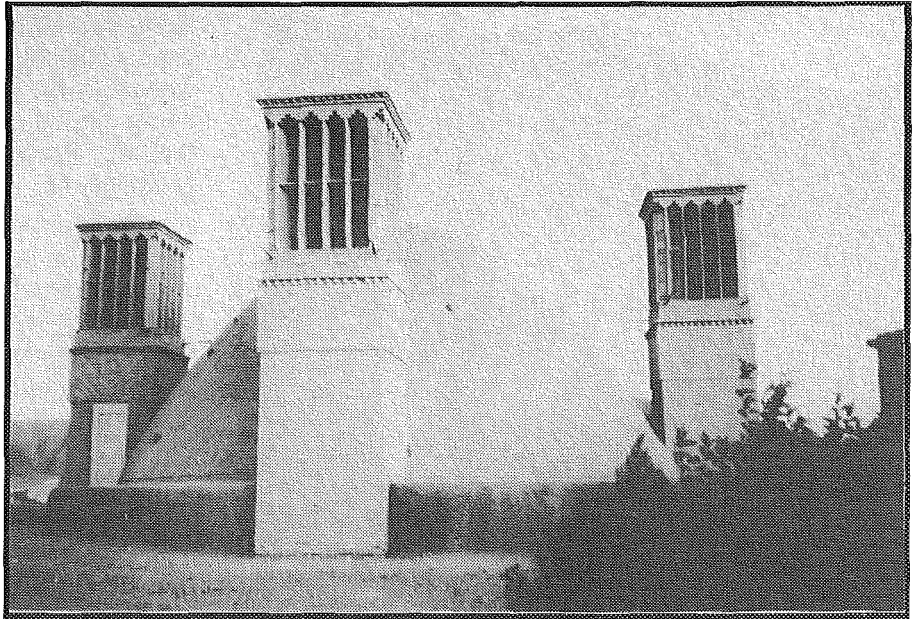
Legend of Khatun (Nikh or Pars) Banoo

At the battle of Nahavand (642 AD), the last Sassanian king Yazdegird III was defeated and fled to the village of Ardakan (near Yazd). His sons and daughters went in different directions in order not to be overtaken by the enemy all at once. But one of Yazdegird's three unmarried daughters, the 22-year old Khatun (Nikh) Banoo, was not so lucky.

With the Arab hordes at her heel, Nikh Banoo fleeing all night, hid in one of the mountain gorges 37 km from Ardakan. Unfortunately, at daybreak she was found out and she climbed higher and higher up the gorge until a



Erach Marzbani, "care-taker", along with the aged Whabiz Sohrabi, at Pir-e Herisht. The building was built in 1870 by Khodamard Namdar in memory of his parents Namdar Marzban and Khurshid Bahram.



Prayer hall at Pir-e Herisht. The hall is cooled in the heat of summer by chimney-like structures 'badgirs' or wind-chimneys, a sort of ancient method of air-conditioning. The construction of the 'bad-girs' and also the 'ganats', the long underground tunnels which bring the cool water of the melted snow from the mountains to the parched lands of central Iran, is a skill known only to a few families of the Yazd region.

sheer wall of rock made further progress impossible. In the midst of her menstruation in the searing heat of summer, completely exhausted and surrounded by sheer walls of solid rock, with the blood thirsty and lustful enemies closing in from below, she realized that there was now no escape.

Nikh Banoo thrust her walking stick in the ground and made a final desperate appeal through prayer to Ahura Mazda to save her honor! Legend has it that Ahura Mazda, in His immense mercy, at once answered her prayers. He opened a crevice in the rock close to where she was standing and she wedged herself into this opening which closed instantly thwarting her enemies.

Soon after, a trickle of water began to flow at the spot from a mysterious source. Some say the mountain weeps at the tragedy which took place there. The stick which Nikh Banoo thrust in the ground, revived by the trickle of water, grew ultimately into a huge tree which is still standing. A tip of her scarf was still visible emerging out of the crack in the rock until about a 100 years ago, Zoroastrian pilgrims having carried off bits of the cloth for veneration.

History of the Pirs near Yazd

Today the spot where Ahura Mazda saved Nikh Banoo's honor has become a shrine. In the past the place was called Dari-din (door of faith). The Zoroastrians of Iran now call it Pir-e Sabz, and some, no doubt deridingly, call it "Chak Chak", after the sound the dripping water makes at the shrine.

Yazdegird III's three other daughters and two sons were either killed by the invaders or died in hiding. One daughter, Hyat Banoo, disappeared from mortal sight at a place called Koh-i-Chakmaku, another shrine in the hills of Agdah, about 50 km from Ardakan. Another daughter, Mehr Banoo, is said to have sought refuge in India and another to have married the grandson of the prophet Mohammed. One son is buried at Noraki 60 km from Ardakan, and another son at Sett-e-Pir. Yazdegird III was a very devout Zoroastrian and hence all these places are considered holy by the Iranian Zoroastrians. The shrines are visited annually on festive occasions.

Visit to Pir-e Sabz (Nikh Banoo)

I traveled the 37 km on dirt road through semi-desert to arrive at Pir-e-Sabz. I washed my hands and face with the cool spring water (considered sacred) and performed kushti while the mobed, Rostam Rashidi unlocked the gates to the shrine. The gates were covered with brass plating and engravings of two Sassanian guards, similar to the stone carvings at Persepolis. Inside I saw a fire place in the center and another stainless steel lamp-holder close to the stone wall where Nikh Banoo had met her fate. Bits of colored cloth were nailed to the stone symbolizing the original scarf which was there until about 100 years ago.

Being a botanist I identified the tree which grew out of the stick which Nikh Banoo thrust into the ground, as *Myrtus communis* (sycamore, or buttonwood, or also sometimes called plane tree). This tree is Mediter-

anean in origin and grows to a height of about 100 feet. It can be propagated by budwood. Hence it is quite possible that the stick which Nikh Banoo was using was, in fact, a live piece of wood from this tree albeit without leaves or roots!

The place had coolness and tranquility which brings great peace to one's soul. We inserted a bunch of sandalwood incense sticks into the ashes at the altar which I thought was inert. But the embers were very much there below a layer of ashes as the incense sticks lit up, filling the room with sandalwood aroma. This was the way, said Mr. Rashidi, of keeping the fire alive 24 hours with minimum attention. He also showed me some prayer books from Bombay printed at the Union Press which were in a cupboard together with other prayer books in Farsi.

By this time a group of Zoroastrian and Muslim youngsters had gathered around the fire and Rostam Rashidi was once again narrating the tragic story of Nikh Banoo, the tree and the miracle which is said to have taken place at the very spot a little more than 1,300 years ago.

Visit to Historic Site at Pasargadae

Pasargadae, the palace and tomb of Cyrus the Great (580-529 BC), the first dynastic capital of the Achaemenian Empire, lies some 100 km north of Shiraz on the main road to Isfahan. They say Cyrus chose this site for his capital because it lay near the battlefield where he was victorious over Astyages, the king of Media (550 BC) and was thus able to establish the Achaemenian dynasty. Cyrus, son of Cambyses, was born in the Fars province of Iran and, after establishing his empire, tragically died fighting a band of nomads somewhere in Afghanistan. This occurred because, unlike other kings, Cyrus himself led his soldiers in to battle and fought the enemy side by side with his men. His mortal remains were brought back to Iran by his soldiers and buried in the tomb at Pasargadae.

Tomb of Cyrus the Great at Pasargadae



Photo from "Persian Mythology" by John R. Hinnells

There is no signboard indicating the fork one has to take, leaving the Shiraz-Isfahan national highway, to reach Pasargadae, and I almost missed it. But it was meant that I should visit the tomb of the founder of the Achaemenian dynasty who reigned over a great empire from 559 BC till his death in 529 BC.

There are only a couple of guards looking after the historic site. The tomb was constructed out of huge white limestone blocks. But no photograph, however well taken, prepares one for the majesty and the simplicity of the monument! The tomb faces west and is so constructed that in the evenings, just before the sun sets over the hills, the rays penetrate the tomb through the entrance (which is only 50 in. in height and 31 in. wide) and light up the otherwise gloomy interior. Even after 2,500 years the sight is awe inspiring to say the least. The fact that the tomb was looted several times; the fact that the plaque with the following words was removed long ago, does not rob the site in any way of its grandeur.

Adam Kurush Khsháyathiya Khsháyathyánám

"I Cyrus, King of Kings, lie here"

Legend has it that Alexander, after his second victory over Darius III in 331 BC, came to Pasargadae in a mood of victory but found Cyrus's tomb had already been broken open and the king's body was lying outside the sarcophagus in disarray. When the Macedonian conqueror read the above inscription on the tomb he ordered his Greek officers to tidy it and look after it while he proceeded on further conquests towards India. The Greek officers, in whose care the tomb was entrusted, had observed a funeral couch made of pure gold and the coffin draped with richly embroidered cloth, as well as silver and gold vessels and jewelry kept within the tomb when it was opened on Alexander's orders.

After Alexander left, and thinking that he would not return, they could not resist the thought of entering the tomb through the narrow door and looting it for personal gain. However, the golden couch was put inside the tomb by its builders before the walls and the narrow entrance were constructed, and hence the Greek looters, led by one Polymachus, could not remove it although they carried off everything else. Finding their plans to carry away the golden couch frustrated, they broke open the coffin and the embalmed body of Cyrus was left once more lying inside the tomb in disarray.

As we know from history, Alexander's soldiers after many conquests refused to fight on further in to Hindustan, as they were thousands of miles from their home country and very tired. They beseeched Alexander not to go beyond the Indus River and he reluctantly agreed. While returning, it is said, Alexander unexpectedly stopped at Pasargadae. And when he

saw that his orders were disobeyed he flew into a rage. He ordered that the body of Cyrus be replaced in the sarcophagus and duplicates of the stolen articles be found and replaced. He ordered the door of the tomb to be cemented and put his personal seal on it. Then he ordered the following inscription be engraved in Greek underneath the original one:

"O man, whosoever thou art, and whencesoever thou comest, for I know thou wilt come; I am Cyrus, who founded the empire of the Persians, grudge me not therefore this little earth which covers my body."

However, in later centuries the tomb was looted once again and today it is quite empty. Unsubstantiated rumors have it, according to the local guide, that the actual body of Cyrus (and later his wife's) was kept buried in the roof of the tomb, and the body inside the tomb was of another person, a decoy devised by Cyrus's successors for they feared grave robbers would loot the tomb one day!

At the extreme southern edge of the site, a rock-cut road indicates the course of the ancient highway between Pasargadae and Persepolis. After Darius I (the Great) came to the throne in 522 BC the capital was shifted to Persepolis. One km north of the tomb are the ruins of the once mighty palace of Cyrus the Great. Only a few pillars with some writings and two or three carvings on black stone remain. A wall, of what is supposed to have been a fire temple (or fire altar), is propped up by means of iron scaffolding. At a distance from the palace, on a low hill, on a raised platform made of stones are the ruins of a large building (it may represent the remains of one of the Achaemenian treasures which Alexander plundered in 330 BC).

Nothing else remains, the surrounding plain and rolling hills are as silent as ever, with small ruminants grazing peacefully.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Ardeshir Damania, until recently at the "Genetic Resources Conservation Program" at the University of California in Davis, visited Iran in the course of his work as a plant ecologist, in 1993, and has written profusely about the Zoroastrian heritage sites he visited.

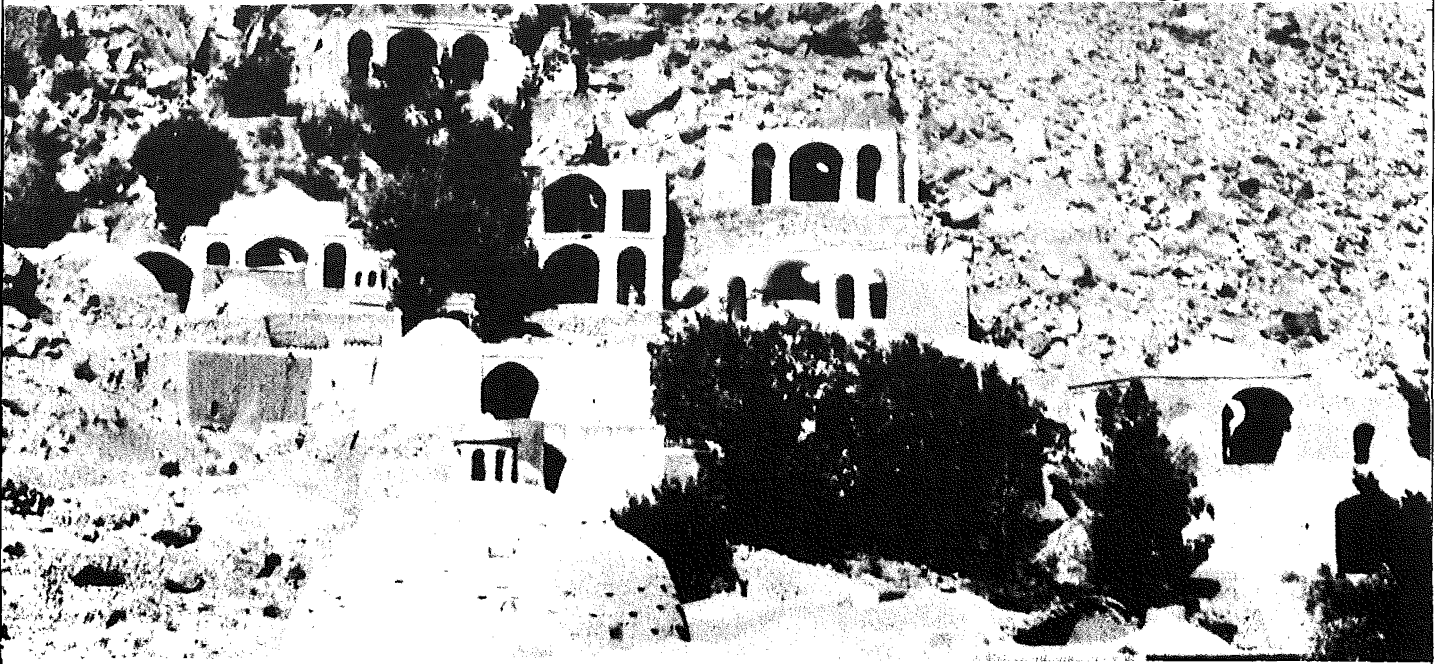
In June 1994, after living abroad for 20 years, Damania and his wife Parvin returned to Bombay permanently "because" he says, "we feel strongly that our family and community there needs us now more than ever". He writes:

I have been doing a lot of reading at the Shields Library at Davis, which has some excellent and rare books on Persian and Zoroastrian history. When I read about the deeds of the Zoroastrian stalwarts of the past, a sense of great pride swells up in my chest! Our forefathers made so many sacrifices and courageously withstood so much hardship, humiliation, and strife to make us what we are today: a miniscule but economically, intellectually and culturally powerful community. With unflinching courage they preserved our religion and our culture.

Did they make these sacrifices to see our youth just throw everything away and mingle with the rest of the world? Our numbers are going down at an alarming pace with no hope of let-up in sight. Those who marry non-Zoroastrians are further stabbing a wounded and dying community.

Although my wife and I have no illusions about success in saving our community in Bombay, we would at least like to think that we did whatever we could to keep the ship afloat as long as possible. ♦

(Below) Pir Nareki, nestled in the rugged hillside.



PRAYER CORNER

ASHEM VOHU THE POWERFUL MANTHRIC PRAYER

By Dr. Pallan Ichaporia

Chair, FEZANA Historic Research and Preservation Committee

Ashem Vohu, one of the most powerful short prayers given to us by Zarathushtra, is divided into three sections as follows:

*ashem vohu vahistem asti
ushta asti ushta ahmai
hyat ashai vahistai ashem*

There exist several poetical translations of Ashem Vohu in English such as: "He is holy for the sake of holiness. To him holiness is bliss untold." These free translations are good for the purpose of religious education and moral edification and they generally serve the purpose by appearing from time to time in newspapers, journals and private publications, but they cannot satisfy those who want to get to the deepest level of the Avestan text.

There can be no doubt about the literal meanings of the twelve words that make up the Ashem Vohu:

<i>ashem</i>	'truth' (nominative).
<i>vohu</i>	'good' (adjective or subst.).
<i>vahistem</i>	'best' (adjective) or 'supreme good' (subst.).
<i>asti</i>	'is'.
<i>ushta</i>	'as desired'.
<i>asti</i>	'is'.
<i>ushta</i>	'as desired' (locative sing.) or 'what is desired' or 'desired things' (nom. pl. noun).
<i>ahmai</i>	'to Him/him'.
<i>hyat</i>	'who/which'.
<i>ashai</i>	'truth'.
<i>vahistai</i>	'best' (dative).
<i>ashem</i>	'truth' (nominative).

One literal translation [1] is given below:

*Truth is best (of all that is) good,
As desired, what is being desired,
Is Truth for Him/him who (represents) best Truth.*

The beauty of this powerful prayer is clearly evident from this literal translation. One can easily see the supreme work of the Poet Prophet in beautiful repetitions: 'TRUTH' ... 'TRUTH' ... 'TRUTH', ... 'BEST' ... 'GOOD' ... 'BEST', ... 'DESIRED' ... 'DESIRED'.

Most scholars agree that Ashem Vohu is a prayer, but there is something more to this which is generally not seen by many. Ashem Vohu is also a '*manthra*', the

holy word, the potent truth or meditational formula. [the word *manthra* is very special in the Gathas so for the sake of our understanding we will keep it as it is].

To understand why Ashem Vohu is the mantra as well as the prayer, we will examine the two sentences in the prayer: The verb of both sentences is *asti* 'it is', which means that the sentences do not just express wishes ('may it be') but statements ('it is') implying its status. Like the Gathic stanzas, the Ashem Vohu is a product of a highly developed poetical technique. All but the last two important words (*ahmai hyat*) are repeated once or twice, and these few words are combined with each other so as to produce syntactical variation.

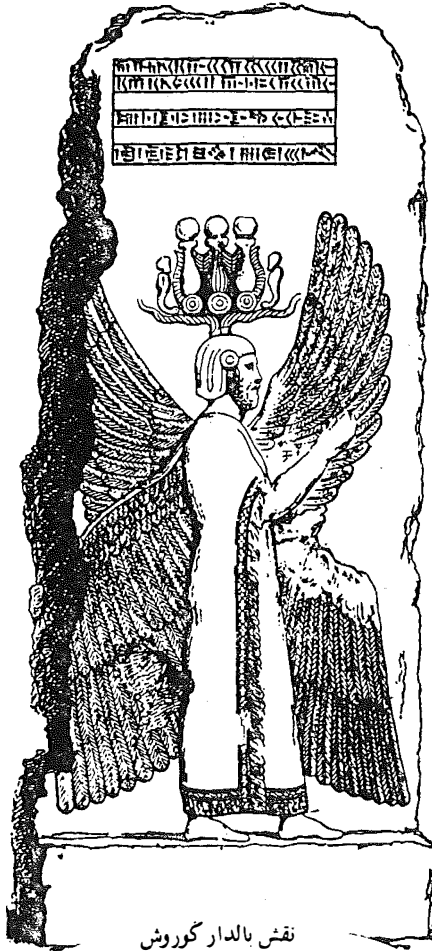
The Ashem Vohu truly owes its mantric efficacy to the elaborate arrangement and artistic repetition of its four auspicious words *asha-vohu (vahistem) asti ushta*. This fact invites adherents not to content themselves with simply reciting the Ashem Vohu, but also to reflect on it. The prophet, far from declaring one single interpretation to be the only correct one (which is why Humbach and Ichaporia gave two [1]), wanted his faithful adherents to ponder on the multitude of interpretations.

Ashem Vohu is recited during the Avestan liturgy by the priests. Lay persons are taught this mantra in their early childhood and repeat it during their lifetime. Thus the written rendition has been throughout supported by an uninterrupted oral tradition. Those who sometimes doubt the correct textual transmission of the Ashem Vohu have no basis for their objections. As a matter of fact, it is seen from Yasna 20, the second chapter of the Bagan Yasht [2] where the Ashem Vohu is interpreted for the first time, that there is no reason to doubt the correctness of the transmitted text and the proper division of the lines in this holy mantra. The first three stanzas of Yasna 20 are:

Ys. 20.1: Ahura Mazda proclaimed *ashem vohu vahistem asti*, "Truth is best of all that is good." By this He refers best good to him/her, in the same way that one refers a family member to his/her family. Ahura Mazda thus says that Truth is best and Truth is best of all that is good, this is made known by the analogy given by Ahura Mazda.

Ys. 20.2: *ushta asti ushta ahmai*, "As desired what is being desired." Ahura Mazda refers to all the truthful in the community who are all in the state of *ushtatat*, i.e. in the state of desired happiness. This is a true statement.

(Continued on p.39)



نقش بالدار گوروش

آنطور که سیاحان خارجی قرن پیش دیده اند.
من گوروش، شاه هخامنشی هستم. (از کتاب رالف نرمان شارب).
تحقیق از داوید استروناخ

THE EDICT OF CYRUS

I am Cyrus, king of the world, great king, mighty king, king of Babylon, king of the land of Sumer and Akkad, king of the four quarters, son of Cambyses, great king, king of Anshan, grandson of Cyrus, great king, king of Anshan, descendent of Teispes, great king, king of Anshan, progeny of an unending royal line, whose rule Bel and Nabu cherish, whose kingship they desire for their hearts' pleasures.

When I, well-disposed, entered Babylon, I established the seat of government in the royal palace amidst jubilation and rejoicing...

I did not allow anyone to terrorize the land of Sumer and Akkad. I kept in view the needs of Babylon and all its sanctuaries to promote their well being. The citizens of Babylon ... I lifted their unbecoming yoke. Their dilapidated dwellings I restored. I put an end to their misfortunes...

All the kings who sat in throne rooms, throughout the four quarters, from the Upper to the Lower Sea, those who dwelt in ... all the kings of the west country who dwelt in tents, brought me their heavy tribute and kissed my feet in Babylon.

From ... to the cities of Ashur and Susa, Agade, Eshnunna, the cities of Zamban, Meurnu, Der, as far as the region of the land of Gutium, the holy cities beyond the Tigris whose sanctuaries had been in ruins over a long period, the gods whose abode is in the midst of them, I returned to their places and housed them in lasting abodes.

I gathered together all their inhabitants and restored (to them) their dwellings. The gods of Sumer and Akkad whom Nabonidus had, to the anger of the lord of the gods, brought into Babylon, I at the bidding of Marduk, the great lord made to dwell in peace in their habitations ... May all the gods whom I have placed within their sanctuaries address a daily prayer in my favor ...

by Cyrus the Great, 557-529 BC.

Translation of cuneiform script written on a stone cylinder, generally recognized as the 'first declaration of human rights'.

OUR GLORIOUS PAST:

KUROUSH (CYRUS) THE GREAT

By Dr. Mehraban Shahrivini
Editor, Payk e Mehr, Vancouver, BC

Speech given by Dr. Shahrivini at the unveiling of the Cyrus Bas Relief at Bicentennial Park, venue of the Olympics in the year 2,000, in Sydney, Australia, during the Persian Cultural Festival in October 1994.

Today is an auspicious day for the world; and important day in the history of mankind. A day of pride for Iran the land of Ahura Mazda for having given the world great men like Kuroush. A day of pride for the ancient culture of Iran for having given men like Kuroush to the world.

Today, for us Persians, wherever we may be, and for our respected Australian friends, it is a day to remember and be proud.

Today is an historic day, a day to be remembered specially for the Persians in Australia and the Persian Cultural Foundation of Australia.

For we are all here today, gathered at the foot of this bas relief of Kuroush the Great, the greatest man in human history. That too, thousands of kilometers away from Pars, the land of his birth. This is because he belongs to all humanity.

Kuroush, the greatest freedom-loving man, an Aryan by race, was born among the Hakamaneshinians who ruled over Pars, in the 6th century BC. According to Herodotus his birth and youth are both shrouded in mystery. But what is certain, is that when he grew up he became a benevolent leader and warrior. When he became ruler of Pars he had in mind a great plan of building a united Iran and then a united world.

By 550 BC he had conquered Ekbatan from the Madhs and later in 546 BC he took Lidi and the city of Sardis. In 539 he made a move towards Babylon and conquered it. Without a fight, the Cadians, Akhandians,



Minister of Multicultural Affairs, NSW, Australia, speaking at the unveiling of the Bas Relief of Cyrus at Centennial Park, in Sydney Australia in October 1994.

Assyrians, Phinioxians and the people to the east of Iran all bowed to his rule.

Guided by his inherited culture, Kuroush gave freedom to all men, freedom of faith and freedom of thought, even to those he conquered.

In Babylon he passed a decree proclaiming this freedom, which was written on a cylinder and is today recognized as the "first proclamation of human rights" [see text on previous page]. On account of this proclamation, 42360 Jews out of the 70,000 captured in Babylon, were able to return to Israel, and he even helped them rebuild their temple in Jerusalem. The Jews were so impressed and surprised that they referred to him as a Savior sent by God.

Kuroush was coronated in 538 BC in Babylon, exactly 2,509 years ago. For three years he ruled over Baby-

lon and then passed it on to his son Kamboia, as he returned to Sush. Cyrus made Sush and Estakhr the center of learning and culture of the ancient world. With benevolence and love, he ruled over his empire, that stretched from the Black Sea to the Sind River, and from Ghafghaz and Aral to the Persian Gulf.

The life of this great man came to an end in 529 BC when he went to punish the upsurgers in the north, called Masajatha. He gave his life while fighting for the honor of his beloved Iran. His body was carried to Pars, where his tomb still exists to this day.

The tomb of Kuroush, made of ancient blocks of stone, is in the plains of Magrab 100 km from Shiraz. His lifeless body lies there, but his spirit is everywhere. At this moment the spirit of Kuroush is present at this spot and thank you all for being present here. ❖

RESTORATIVE DENTISTRY

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متن سخنرانی مهربان شهروینی در پرده برداری پیکره « کورش » در استرالیا (سیدنی)

بنام خداوند بخشنده مهربان

امروز روز باشکوهی در جهان است .

روزی بزرگ برای فرهنگ بشری است .

افتخار بسرزمین اهورایی ایران که در دامن خود بزرگمردی
چون کورش را پروراند .

افتخار و آفرین بفروفرهنگ ایرانزمین که از پرتوهای اهوراداده ی
خود « کورش » را به جهانیان ارزانی داد .

امروز برای ما ایرانیها ، در هر کجای که باشیم و برای
مردم گرامی سرزمین استرالیا روزی افتخار آمیز و غرور
انگیز است .

امروز : برای هم مینهان ما در استرالیا و برای بنیاد فرهنگ
ایران در استرالیا روز سرفرازی و لحظه فراموش نشدنی است

زیراکه همگی شاهد برپایی پیکره کورش و پرده
برداری از نگاره آزاد مرد تاریخ جهان ، در اینجا هستیم .

گواینکه این نماد ایرانی ده ها هزار کیلومتر از سرزمین پارس دور
است ولی از آنجاییکه او متعلق بهمه خلقهای گیتی است ، پس
شکوه آنرا باور داشته و فر آن انکار نا پذیر است .

« کورش »

بزرگمردی آزاده ، از نژاده های آریایی و نیایش به « هخامنش » فرمان
روای پارس و نشان میرسد . کورش در نیمه سده ۶ پیش از میلاد
در پارس متولد شد . برابر روایت های هردود در زایش او افسانه ها
وجود دارد ، آنچه قطعیت اینکه او پس از رشد ، زرم آوری نامی و
سرداری خردمند و شایسته شد و آنگاه که بغرمانروایی پارس رسید ،
برای یکپارچگی « ایران بزرگ » اندیشه ها داشت .

نخست در سال ۵۵۰ پیش از میلاد ، سر زمین ماو و شهر هگمتانا و
در سال ۵۴۶ سرزمین لیدی و شهر سارد را تصرف کرد . سپس
در ۵۳۹ قصد بابل نمود و آنرا بدون جنگ گرفت و مردم کلد
و آکد و آشور و سومر و فنیقی و خاور ایران را تسلیم کرد .

کورش بر سرشت پاکی که از نیایش بارت برده بود بمردم دادو
آزادی و آیینهای خیر و برکت ارزانی داشت . او در بابل برای آزادی
مردمها فرمانی صادر کرد که بنام « اعلامیه حقوق بشر »

یا استوانه کورش نامیده شد و بموجب ان بهمه رده های
خلق آزادی داده و از آنجمله دستور داد تا ۴۲۳۶۰ تن از ۷۰ هزار قوم
یهود که در اسارت بابلیمها بودند ، بسرزمین خود باز گشتند و
معبد مشهور اور شلیم بازسازی گردید . تا آنجا که قوم یهود
کورش را بر گزیده خدا دانستند ، چنانکه در تورات و نیز در
قران بآن اشاره شده است .

کورش در اواخر سال ۵۳۸ پیش از میلاد در بابل تاجگذاری نمود
که تا امروز نزدیک به ۲۵۰۹ سال میگذرد .

او نزدیک به ۳ سال بویرانیهای بابل و آکد پرداخت و بعد بابل را
به پسرش کمبوجیه سپرد و خود رهسپار شوش گردید . شوش و
استخر را مرکز دانش و فرهنگ و اخلاق جهان قرار داد و بر
استانها و مردمهای سرزمین پهناور خود بمهربانی رفتار نمود .
او بر سرزمینی بزرگ از دریای سیاه تا بستر سند و از قفقاز و
اورال تا دریای پارس فرمانروایی نمود و نهایت زندگینامه این آزاد
مرد تاریخ جهان چنین است .

کورش برای سرکوب یاغیان اورال کمر خدمت بست و بسوی شمال
خاوری ایران رهسپار شد ، ولی در جنگ با تیره ای از اقوام سکایی
بنام ماساژتها در سال ۵۲۹ در راه سرفرازی ایران جان باخت و تن
بی جانش به پارس منتقل گردید .

آرامگاه امروزی کورش در دشت مرغاب (استان فارس) ۱۰۰
کیلومتری شمال خاوری شیراز بر بلندای سنگهای مکعبی بزرگ
جایگاهی مکعب قرار دارد .

تن بی جانش آنجاست و فروهرش همه جا است

بریک باور -

در این لحظه باشکوه فروهر گورش در این مکان

باشنده است و ارجگذاری شمارا ارج گزار است .

اینک متن نوشته استوانه ای کورش که در ۲۵۰۰ سال پیش برسفال
نوشته شده را گزارش میدهد

استوانه از کل رس پخته شده

دبیره میخی بابلی

رجهای دبیره رویهمرفته ۴۵ رج

یافته شده در سال ۱۸۷۹ در کند و کاوهای بابل

نگهدارنده کنونی :

موزه بریتا نیا اشکوب سوم گالری یادمانهای

باستانی . ویتترین ۵۱۱

CLUES TO THE 'LOST' INTERCALATIONS

Date of Prophet Zarathushtra's Death Anniversary

By Dr. Jehan Bagli
Princeton, New Jersey

Zadsparam, son of mobed Yudan-Yim, and brother of Manuschihr (author of *Dadistan-i-Dinik*, and the Epistles) was High Priest of Sirkan, south east of Kerman in the late 8th century CE (Christian Era). In a treatise, known after his name, *Selections of Zadsparam* [1] the clergy speaks about the demise of Prophet Zarathushtra in Ch. 23-9:

"In the 47th year died Zarathosht who was aged 77 years 40 days, in the month of Artavahisht (Ardibehesht) on the day Khur (Khorshed). By eight month Vahizakik it has been carried to the month Dadvo (Dae) and the Day Khur, which Vahizakik month is the same month Artavahisht."

[Translated by Professor H. R. Bailey] [2]

Buried within the above statement is the rich history of the early Zarathustrian calendar. Only a careful study over a long period allows the clear revelation of some of the strands of history with time. In a lecture given by Taqizadeh [3], to honor Professor Minorsky in Tehran in 1952, he outlines the history briefly.

Going back almost to the time of the prophet, we had a calendar that came to be known as 'Old Avestan' — a solar year of 6 unequal seasons starting with the vernal equinox. The means by which the seasons were kept in harmony with their astronomic position is not well documented. Around the late 6th or early 5th century BCE another computation was adopted by Iranian Zoroastrians, from the Egyptian system, which later came to be known as the 'Young Avestan Calendar'. A third system of time-reckoning that prevailed only in north western and central Iran was known as the 'Magian Calendar'. This according to Taqizadeh [3], "had been the calendar of people who revered Mithra, Anahita, etc., i.e. old Aryan but not Zoroastrian deities; and who perhaps did not believe in or respect sufficiently Ahura Mazda."

It was around 441 BCE, that many of the Magian beliefs and pre-Zarathustrian deities were incorporated into the Zarathustrian religion. It was at that time that the Young Avestan Calendar was merged with the Magian system to synthesize a new system known as the 'Civil Calendar' or the 'Civil Vague Year' (also known as 'Oshmutik Year'), with its civil feasts for the use of common people and for all day to day affairs. The reason why it was known as a 'Vague Year' was that it was a 365 day system that neglected the approximate one quarter day of the solar year. This calendar

was never intercalated and continued to drift through time. This is exactly the system that is embedded in the Shenshai and Kadmi system today.

Rev. Higgins in his dissertation [4] tells us: "this calendar was unsuitable for dating religious feasts ... originally bound up with the seasons. This relationship was lost by the Vague Year." The Zarathustrian clergies of the time therefore set up a 'Religious Year' parallel with the 'Civil Vague Year'. The Religious Year (later known as the 'Vahizakik Year') was identical in all respects with the Vague Year, except for one important difference. *The Religious Year was fixed and prevented from drifting, by a consistent system of intercalation of 30 days every 120 years.* That fact is also stressed by Professor Hartner in his article [5] on the Avestan Calendar. From the facts of history discussed above it becomes abundantly clear that today's *Shenshai and Kadmi computations are the remnants of the Civil Vague Year, while the Fasli seasonal computation is the remains of the true religious year* as experienced by early Zarathushtrians.

With this backdrop, let us now explore the rationale within the statement of Zadsparam, above. The author says Zarathushtra passed away on Roz Khorshed (11th day) of Mah Ardibehesht (2nd month). Writing in the 9th century CE, he tells us that this day of the Religious Year was the same as Roz Khorshed of Mah Dae (10th month) of the Civil Vague Year. We know from our history that the Religious Year was kept in sync with natural events by *intercalation of one month every 120 years.* Thus in this statement we see a *difference of 8 months* between the date of the Religious and that of the Civil year.

The studies of Taqizadeh [2,3], Rev. Higgins [4], Hartner [5], and Bickerman [6] unanimously agree that *eight intercalations were performed in the Religious Year between the 4th century BCE in the Achaemenian era to the 6th century CE of the Sassanian times.* This was concluded based on the shift of the epagomenal (Gatha) days [4,5,7] involved in the mode of intercalations. *Therefore the date of the death anniversary of Prophet Zarathushtra based on the Religious tradition is on Roz Khorshed of Mah Ardibehesht.*

There is consensus among these great scholars of the Persian calendars that after the eight intercalations, the

[Continued on p.39]

"As geography without history
Seemeth a carcass without motion
So history without geography
Wandereth as a vagrant without habitation"

- John Smith in "General Historie of Virginia"

The Land Mass of Ariana

The domain of our Prophet was the huge land mass which lay between the Avestan Zariaspa (Vedic: Thatta Kush, Modern: Hindu Kush) Mountains in the east and the eastern shores of the Sea of Varkaana (Greek: Sea of Hyrcania, Modern: Caspian Sea) in the west. Appolodorus (2nd century BC), who traveled extensively towards the east, initially triggered Hellenic interest in this area.

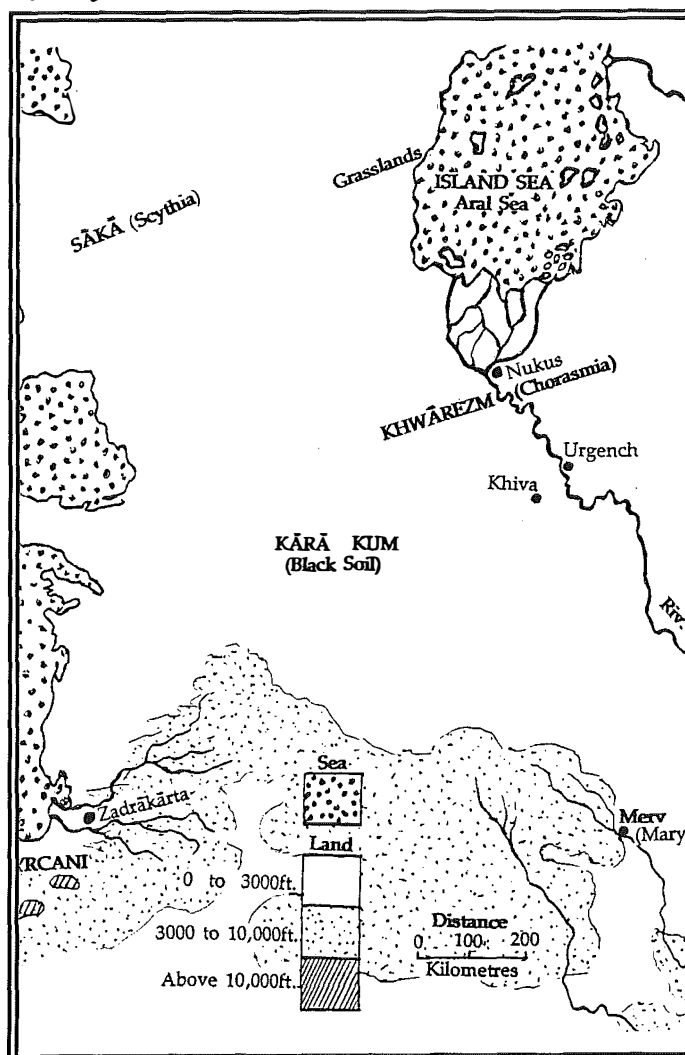
It was Strabo (66 BC) who described in great detail, this vast land of *Ariana* as extending from the tapering ranges of the Himalayan Mountains in the east to the shores of the Sea of Hyrcania in the west; from the Oxus River in the north to the southern outskirts of the Zariaspa Mountains, along a line to the southernmost reaches of Hyrcania, including to the south the region of the Alborz Mountains. South of this lay Haraiva (Greek: Aria) and the great expanse of the Salt Desert. East of the Zariaspa Mountains lay the northwest frontiers of Hindava and Gandhara (Avestan: Vaekereta), the Dahae and the Turanians.

Strabo, in *Geographia*, wrote about Ariana, saying the land-mass encompassed the three lands of Bactriana, Sogdiana and Hyrcania (the Aryan Holy lands celebrated in the Young Avesta). He spoke of Bactriana as being "indeed the ornament of all Ariana." Bactriana is blessed, he wrote with such advantages that would make it very far from remaining uninhabitable. He said that each vine produced a metrete ($\frac{3}{4}$ of a medium-nus) of vine and each fig tree 60 mediumni (one mediumnus was 12 imperial gallons dry weight) of fruit, that the grains of wheat which fell from the husk on the earth, sprang up the following year as plants, and that beehives were found in trees, whose leaves flowed with rich honey.

In the north the River Oxus (Gathic: Vanghui Daitya on whose banks Zarthusra received his revelation) divides Bactriana from Sogdiana, and is so easily navigable that the wares of India were brought up to the Sea of Hyrcania, and thence by various other rivers to the districts near the Euxine Sea (Avestan: Kara Sea, Modern: Black Sea). The land was so fertile that it produced almost everything except olive oil. The country of Sogdiana to the north of the Oxus was not as rich and fertile and was sparsely populated. The cities he describes [Strabo, "The Geography of Strabo" translated by

The Domain

By Sam Kerr,
Sydney, Australia



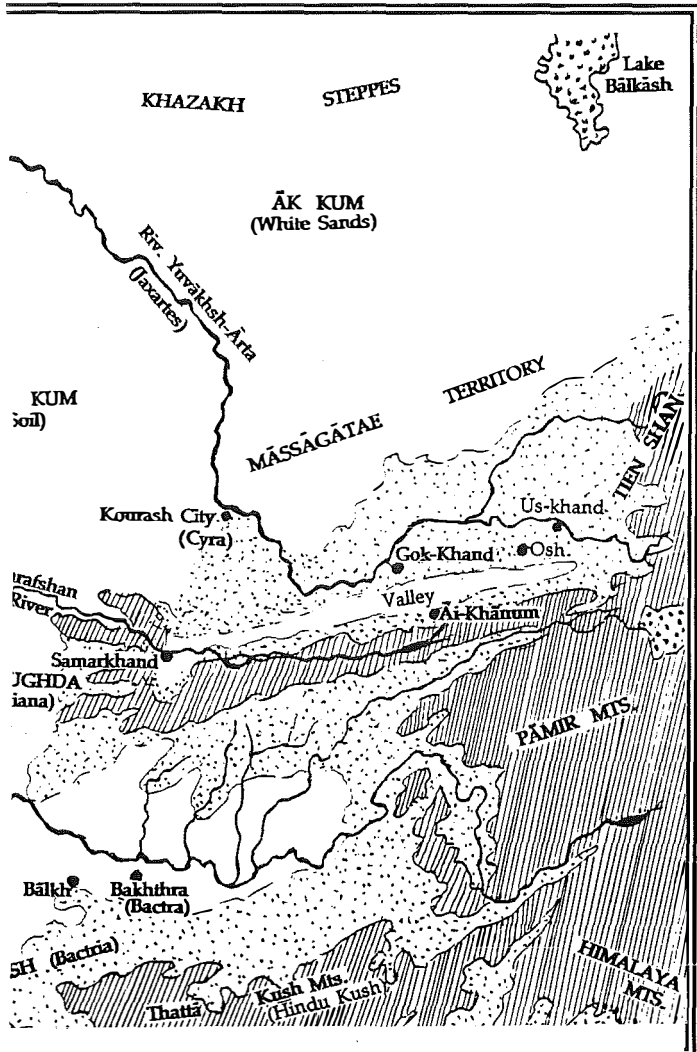
H. C. Hamilton and W. Falconer, 1, 112] were Bactria, Adraspa and "other cities equally beautiful."

Birthplace of the Prophet

The city of Ragha, the birthplace of the Prophet and the major place in his ministry, as far as its geographical location is concerned, has been shrouded in obscurity, its location in Bactria not having been pinpointed in relation to the major geographical features of the land, further compounded by the vagueness that has enveloped the history of Bactria itself. However it has been mentioned thrice in the Avesta:

"What constitutes the four social classes among the citizens? These are the Priests, the Warriors, the Hus-

of Zarthustra



Map by Sam Kerr

bandmen rendering prosperity to the country, and the Artisans." [Ys.19,17].

"The land, generally the domain pertaining to Zarthustra was Ragha of the four Zarthustrian Chiefs. Who are these four Chiefs? First the Lord of the House, second the Lord of the Borough, third the Lord of the Province, and finally the Lord Zarthustrotema" [Ys 19,18].

"The twelfth land and city, I, Ahura Mazda created was Ragha of the three intellects, counteracting the evils of pestilence and of sinful nonbelievers." [Vendidad 1,16].

Greco-Roman Claims

As conquests and migration proceeded further westwards, the original Ragha of the east was conveniently

displaced westwards into Manda (Greek: Media), the (new) Raga (also called Ray). Obviously orchestrated claims were instigated by the local priestly attendants of the region, who adopted early traditions of the faith to enhance the sanctity and renown of their own shrines and temples, succeeding among the local believers in gaining wide credence.

It was then that the Greeks of Babylonian times after the conquest of Cyrus the Great, misplaced Zarthustra (their Zoroaster being for them the first and greatest Magus). Zarthustra was even assigned to Babylon and was therefore called the Chaldean.

The later Macedonians and Parthians after the conquest of Alexander put in claims, generally familiar in Greco-Roman times, of conflicting legends alleged to have been recorded within Iran itself — the scene of Zarthustra's religious activity coming from Azerbaijan, Parthia, Sogdia, Seistan, and the city of Merv in Margiana, plainly at the instigation of the local priests seeking to further the cause of their own sanctuaries and make them centers of pilgrimage.

Islamic Period

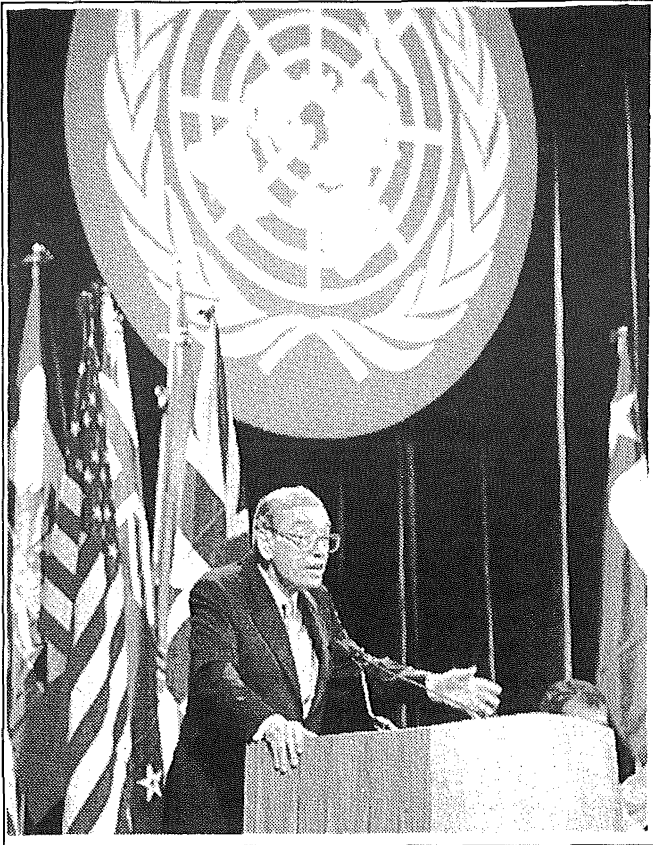
During the early Islamic period, the *Shahrestaniha-i-Eran* claims King Vishtaspa's son Ispendiyar built the new part of the city of Ray, where Zarthustra was born, and founded an Atash Kadeh there. In the later Islamic period in the *Shah Nama*, the source of such bizarre claims was the *Khwaday Namag* (Book of Kings). Bactria, it said was built by King Vishtaspa's father Lohrasp (Avestan: Aurvat-Aspa) where he founded the Great Fire *Adar Burzin Meher*, thus bringing the Bactrian Ragha to the west and placing it in Media ["Zoroastrianism" by Mary Boyce, p.18-19, 1992].

Allusions in Avesta-Pahlavi

There is no clear indication in the Avesta or Pahlavi texts about the exact location of King Vishtaspa's capital. The geographical allusion, assisted by other references do point towards the east, more specifically the land of Zariaspa/Baakhdhi as Zarthustra's place of origin for the dissemination of his Gospel.

Zamyad Yasht [5, 66-69] appears to suggest the place described is the region adjoining the Zariaspa Mountain range and the rivulets forming the Zariaspa River. Avan Yasht [5, 112-113] talks of King Vishtaspa's brother, Zairi-vairi offering sacrifice for victory in battle over Arejat-aspa by the banks of the River Daitya and asks for a boon from "the beneficent Divinity of Waters, Aredvi Sur Anahita."

There is one clear reference in the Bundahishn too which locates the scene of the battle against Arejat-aspa being in eastern Khorasan [*Zoroaster, The Prophet of Ancient Iran*, by A. V. W. Jackson, p.208-211, 1965.]



UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali at the UN Charter re-dedication ceremony.. AP/PAUL SAKUMA

A Golden Gate Anniversary

The world came to San Francisco this Spring to renew a dream born in that city 50 years ago. For three months the city hosted a glittering array of events — from serious debate and seminars, to interfaith services and cultural galas—to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter.

Lofty calls for global peace were heard from every quarter. Eleven Nobel Peace Prize Laureates from eight countries issued an unprecedented joint declaration in support of human rights, the eradication of poverty, protection of the global environment, sustainable development and an end to the arms trade and child labor. In messages from figures as diverse as President Clinton, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Poet Maya Angelou, the gathered ambassadors to the UN were told that the “people of a world made smaller every day by the unstoppable tide of technology have no choice but to work together.”

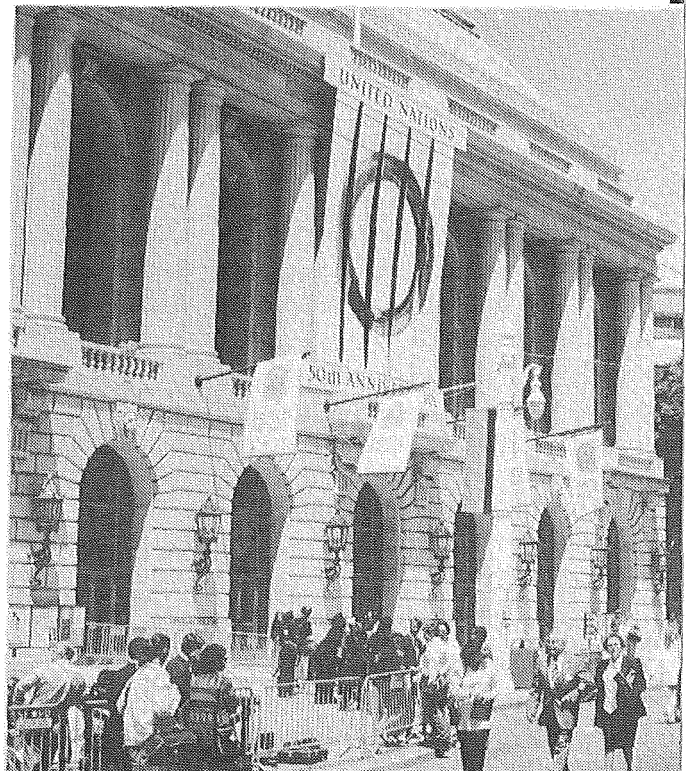
A respectable number of Zarthusti voices were also heard at the various commemorative events, including that of FEZANA President Dolly Dastoor, and a message from Dasturji Kaikhusroo M.Jamasp Asa, High Priest of Bombay, largely through the efforts of Rohinton Rivetna and San Francisco residents Maneck Bhujwala, Bijan Khosraviani and Natalie Vania.

UN50 Interfaith Service

On Sunday, June 25th, Grace Cathedral, on Nob Hill, was filled with over 150 religious leaders representing the world's spiritual traditions, hundreds of youth representatives from various religions, UN ambassadors and special guests including Polish President Lech Walesa and Princess Margaret of Britain, to celebrate an Interfaith Service, hosted by Bishop Swing of California.

Mobed Jimmy Makujina, in a white jama and pichodi, representing the Zarthusti tradition, shared the stage with spiritual leaders from the Native American, Christian, Jewish, Bahai, Mormon, Sikh and other traditions, all sporting the colorful regalia of their faiths. The message from Dasturji Jamasp Asa, which was printed in the program reads (in part):

“... Zoroastrianism offers the philosophy of hamazor (harmony, brotherhood). Man is exhorted to live in harmony with himself, the Creator, his fellow men, and with the environment. May this spirit of hamazor which inspires Zoroastrians to cooperate with all members of the human family, help support and strengthen the United Nations in its global activities ... As religion is one of the deepest motivating forces for human action, we should certainly draw inspiration from the vast resources of our spiritual heritage to face the challenges to our troubled planet ... The Zoroastrian prays for the good of all living creatures which Ahura Mazda, the Lord of Wisdom, has created. We pray that the generous may be prosperous, the truthful may be blessed, the trees be ever growing, the corn be ever ripening. May the thoughts, words and actions of us all be truthful and righteous, so that in the end, the whole of mankind may benefit.”



We the Peoples of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

And for Those Ends to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbors and to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security and to ensure by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples,

Have Resolved to Combine Our Efforts to Accomplish these aims. Accordingly, our respective governments, through representatives assembled in the city of San Francisco, who have exhibited their full powers found to be in good and due form, have agreed to the present Charter of the United Nations and do hereby establish an international organization to be known as the United Nations

Preamble to the UN Charter, January 26, 1945



OUR DYNAMIC PRESENT:

A RE-DEDICATION IN SAN FRANCISCO

Zarthustis join world political and spiritual leaders to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the United Nations

By Roshan Rivetna

At 9 a.m. on June 26, 1945, one hundred and fifty-three delegates representing the fifty participating countries began their procession past the round table, with President Truman looking on, in the magnificent War Memorial Building (*photo above*) in San Francisco. On the table, awaiting their signatures, was the Charter of the United Nations which heralded the birth of a universal international organization created to maintain world peace, human welfare and social progress.

Fifty years later, on June 26, 1995, on the very same stage, President Clinton, UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali and over 150 ambassadors, Nobel Peace Prize Laureates and a host of political, social and religious leaders, reaffirmed the principles of the Charter to meet the global challenges of the twenty-first century. (*Photo left*) Rohinton Rivetna, FEZANA External Affairs, Dolly Dastoor, FEZANA President and Natalie Vania were among those gathered to witness the historic commemoration.



Towards a Global Ethic

Several Zarthustis were among the 150 or so Buddhists, Jains, Protestants, Catholics, Hindus, Native Americans, Jews, Muslims, Sufis, Bahai's and others at another UN50 event — the two-day conference, "*Celebrating the Spirit: Towards a Global Ethic*", at the Berkeley Campus, aimed at focusing attention on the evolution of the document *Towards a Global Ethic*, first presented at the 1993 Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago, inching it perhaps toward adoption some day by the United Nations.

In her talk "*Commitment to a Culture of Equality and a Life of Partnership between Men and Women at Celebrating the Spirit*", Dolly Dastoor quoted the Gathas [Ys.30.2], where the presence and equality of women in the society are explicitly acknowledged and said: "Women as well as men were considered to be made in the image of God and given co-responsibility for the rest of creation. ... With the ascendancy of Zoroastrian warriors



Dastoor, Vania and Rivetna: celebrating the spirit.

and the ascendancy of male domination, the role and position of women began to change. This shift in emphasis was like an erosion of the original Zoroastrian tradition ... If we can organize and strategize, we can change the direction of history and retrieve the balance in Zoroastrian life and religious structures."

Rohinton Rivetna presented "*Resources for Avoiding Fractious Conflicts*" first examining Zoroastrian strategies where "Zarthusra's religion of Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds enjoins humankind to work in consort with Ahura Mazda to eradicate all evil from this world and move His creation towards Frashokereti". He then enumerated other efforts in recent history to advocate a culture of non-violence, notably UN and UNESCO efforts, and declarations and calls for peace by religious organizations, including the 1993 Global Ethic document.

Dr. Natalie Vania's workshop on "*North American Zoroastrian Youth Sexuality*" presented a summary of

Zoroastrian world view and virtues; worksheets for a set of sexual ethics case studies; and an invitation to compare and contrast with other faith traditions.

At the closing ceremony, Maneck Bhujwala recited passages from the Gathas in Avesta and English, and affirmed the Zarthusti community's respect for the basic beliefs common to all religions as well as for the secondary differences arising from differing language, customs and ethnic backgrounds. Bhujwala has represented Zarthustis at numerous interfaith events in the San Francisco area, most recently at a June 10th Interfaith Service organized by the UN50 Interfaith Council at First Methodist Church, and on June 17th, by Stanford Associated Ministries at the Baccalaureate Graduation Ceremonies, held in the main quadrangle at Stanford University, where Bhujwala participated, along with Christians, Jews, Muslims, Bahai's and others, in the ceremonial walks and sat on the dais in front of the assembled graduating class and their families.



Bhujwala

Dr. Kersey Antia submitted a paper in absentia on "*How Zoroastrian Beliefs and Traditions Provide Resources for Creating a Culture of Tolerance and a Life of Truthfulness*." Quoting from non-Zoroastrian scholars from the

At UN50 Grace Cathedral Interfaith Ceremony:

Rivetna, Zen Priest Rev. Dalenberg, Mobedjina, Vania, Shinto Pries



Greek Herodotus to the present-day Paul du Breuil, Dr. Antia presented a number of judgements eulogizing the tolerant attitude of the Zoroastrian kings. Emphasizing that truthfulness formed the very basis of the Persian religion as well as Persian rule, he says: "One of the reasons for their (Zoroastrian) professional excellence is the strict adherence to truthfulness so vehemently preached by Zoroaster.

Youth — Rediscovering Justice

Based on their demonstrated leadership qualities, five Zarthusti youth, Shahnaz Bhujwala, Aban Captain, Ferzeen Irani, Susan Kaboly-Zadeh and Thrity Pourbahrami, were chosen, to represent their faith at the 3-day UN50 Interfaith Youth Conference, "*Rediscovering Justice*", at the University of San Francisco to discuss how the UN model can enable the world's religions to address issues of war, peace and equity [see next article for the youth's perspective on this event].

In parallel round-table sessions, the organizers of the Conference, notably Rev. William Swing, Bishop of California met with a core group of committed religious leaders to draft plans for a "*United Religions*" where representatives of the great religions could sit together as a permanent body, much like the UN, to cooperate in resolving global challenges, and scoping out a 10-acre site in The Presidio where this assembly might become a reality by the year 2000. Rohinton Rivetna, who has been a strong proponent of this concept, participated in this forum, and lent his support to move the vision forward. ❖

REDISCOVERING JUSTICE: 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UN

*By Susan Kaboly Zadeh
Vancouver, British Columbia*

It was a privilege to be selected as a representative of the world Zoroastrian community, to participate in the UN Interfaith Conference for Youth, in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the UN, from June 21-25, 1995.

The UN Charter was ratified on October 24, 1945, after World War II, when "282 delegates convened to begin laying the foundations for enduring peace, economic stability and the rights and expectations of the world's peoples." Fifty years later, with the theme "*Rediscovering Justice*", 200 delegates from over 40 religious traditions gathered to once again discuss, debate, and listen to the pearls of wisdom presented by dignitaries such as Nobel Peace Prize Laureates Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Betty Williams, Imam W. Deen Mohammed (Senator, Pakistan Parliament) and Dr. Javid Iqbal (Muslim American Spokesperson for Human Salvation).

The first day began with visions for the conference and for the future, and a review of the program by conference organizers: The Reverend William Swing, Rabbi David Davis, Dr. Alan Ziajka and Father Joseph Angilella. Other early speakers were Father Schlegal, President of the University of San Francisco, who stated: "My wishes are that you truly become peacemakers", and Father Alan Jones, Dean of Grace Cathedral, who

At UN50 Youth Conference — Rediscovering Justice

Aban Captain, Thrity Pourbahrami, Ferzeen Irani, Shahnaz Bhujwala and Susan Kaboly-Zadeh

Japan, and Dastoor.



remarked: "History runs through everything twice. First through tragedy, and then through farce." Personal and global questions raised during the small group sessions were: "How can we affect justice most immediately?"; and "What do the world's religious traditions say about justice and injustice?" Each day began and ended with selected readings from the Sacred Traditions of different religions; as an example, an excerpt, *Hamazurbim*, was read from "Avestaye Koshti".

The presentation by Dr. Diana Eck, Professor of Comparative Religion and India Studies, stressed that interdependency is not healthy because it brings about isolation, and that relatedness is an important factor, such as of nations, economies, and peoples with inter-religious dialog. A positive note is that there is a rise in religious chauvinism since movement toward pluralism and interfaith encounters are of the deliberate kind.

Most presentations were in a horseshoe format, where groups of 10-20 delegates, seated in a horseshoe facing the rest of the delegates, served as a discussion panel with the guest speakers. In a later presentation, Rabbi Alfred Gottschalk referring to his childhood during World War II and his experiences with oppression, racism and prejudice, remarked: "Humans were created to have the free will to look up to the light of the heavens and also to look down to the ground at nature." Rabbi David Saperstein expressed four main points: humans are of infinite value; everyone is equal before God; everyone should be a pursuer of peace and a partner of God; and that there should be a focus on responsibilities and not on rights.

Two other intriguing speakers were Nobel Peace Prize winners Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Betty Williams. Archbishop Tutu, who has led a continuing fight against racial and political injustice in South Africa, focused on people in situations of injustice and oppression. He noted that it was racism that gave humans slavery, the holocaust and apartheid. Betty Williams is committed to the welfare of the children of the world. She made challenging and thought-provoking comments: "Sexism doesn't work — no one sex can do it without the other", "Freedom of speech is not democracy — three million children are starving in the United States."

The Conference closed with the grand service at Grace Cathedral, where one of the youth delegates, Farid Senzai of Afghanistan, made an impassioned plea to look back at history and learn from past mistakes.

On a personal note, I made a number of very loving, caring and faithful friends at the Conference, who not only shared their thoughts on the Conference, but also their personal challenges with me. We all hope to have learned to better our communities, religious and otherwise, in light of the discussions during those five days. Thank you to all my friends who shared this experience with me.

REDISCOVERING JUSTICE IN WORLD RELIGIONS

By Shahnaz Bhujwala

San Jose, California

In my private meditations after prayer, I have often reflected upon the numerous injustices in our world — the monstrous injustices executed in the name of God, the neglect of our earthly environment by uncaring humans, the abuse and torture of God's creatures in the name of research and technology. I know what injustice is, but it is always much more difficult for me to define what the concept of justice means to me.

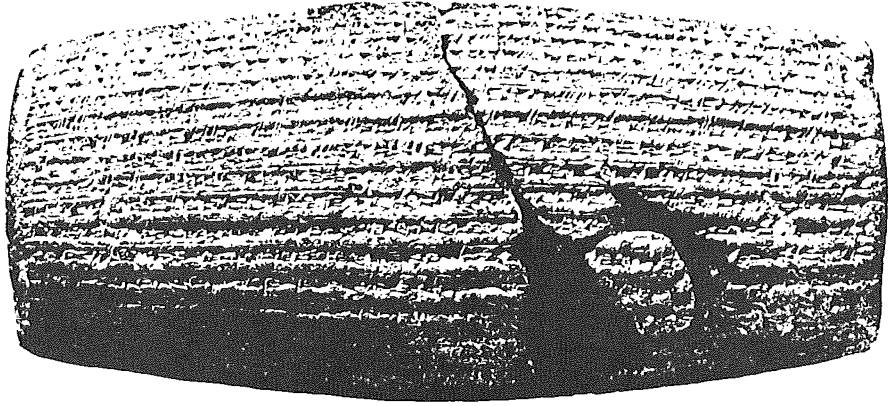
When I attended the UN50 Interfaith Youth Conference, "*Rediscovering Justice*", I came closer to understanding what justice means in our world. Amongst the 200 participants, the importance of understanding each others' religions and cultural backgrounds was quickly realized. Late into the night, many of us would gather to describe our religions. In my entire life, I have never been in such a safe and secure environment within which to discuss religion.

I found that in describing my religion, I came to a better understanding of it myself. The concept of justice towards all in Ahura Mazda's worldly creation is addressed through the *Law of Asha*, wherein righteous deeds, which include doing justice, creating harmony, promoting goodness and love, lead us all towards a more perfect world.

Perhaps the most poignant moment was when a young Bosnian girl, a participant representing Islam, stood up and told us of the war that rages on in the homeland she fled from. In the heartfelt silence that followed her story, she wondered aloud how the U.S. could ignore the atrocities occurring there day after day and instead focus on the "heroic" young American soldier stuck over there who survived for five days without food and water. With tears of frustration and wisdom beyond her years, she asked us how Americans could value one life over another, when our very doctrine embodies equality amongst all humans. And there was no physical answer to her cry, but strong emotions of empathy mixed with outrage stirred within us all.

And so, within those four days of dialog and interaction, I have truly rediscovered what justice is. In the words of Archbishop Tutu, "Justice is when you exist for the sake of the other. It is the ultimate paradox, when the world tells you to always look out for yourself, but in these actions is a fulfillment which is so incredible ..." I have not attained that sense of fulfillment, but I will strive for it, to feed that hungry child, to create harmony amongst our community and the global community, to bring our world towards the perfection which is yet to come. This is what doing justice is, and it is my lifelong goal.

Mounted in a display case on a wooden base, designed by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, a replica of the tablet inscribed with the "Edict of Cyrus" is displayed, along with its English and French translations, at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The display is 5' 6" high and 3' wide.



A Piece of Zarthusti History at the UN

By Roshan Rivetna

The Edict of Cyrus, an ancient "declaration of human rights" made by Cyrus the Great (circa 557 - 529 BC) after he conquered Babylon, was presented to the United Nations by Princess Ashraf Pahlavi, on behalf of Government of Iran, in a ceremony at the UN headquarters in New York, on October 14, 1971.

The presentation coincided with the week-long celebrations marking the 2500th anniversary of the founding of the Persian Empire by Cyrus. The celebrations in Iran, attended by dignitaries from around the world, culminated in a grand ceremonial parade in Persepolis. Accepting the historic gift, Secretary General U Thant said:

"Another replica of man's early attempts to establish peace in the world now graces this corridor [on the second floor, outside the Economic and Social Council Chamber], the scene of our present-day

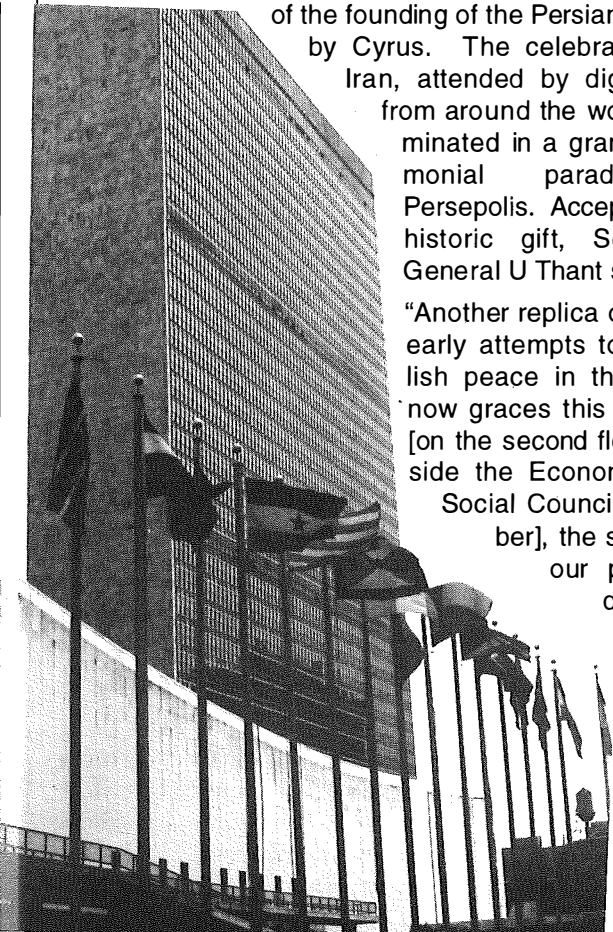
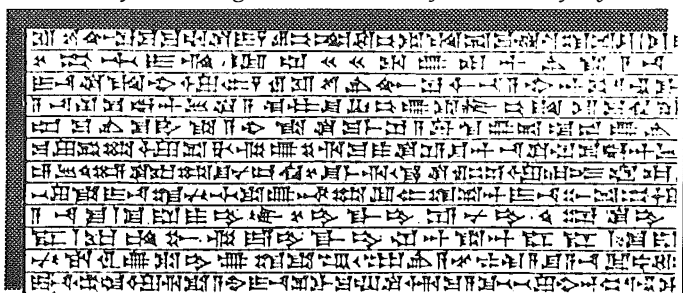
efforts towards the same end. In creating the ancient Persian Empire, twenty-five hundred years ago, Cyrus displayed the wisdom of respecting the peoples and civilizations that he 'unified' under his sway. He conquered discreetly, sparing capitals, leaders and officials. His clemency in victory and his understanding of the wishes of the people under his rule were unprecedented in the annals of the ancient Near East.

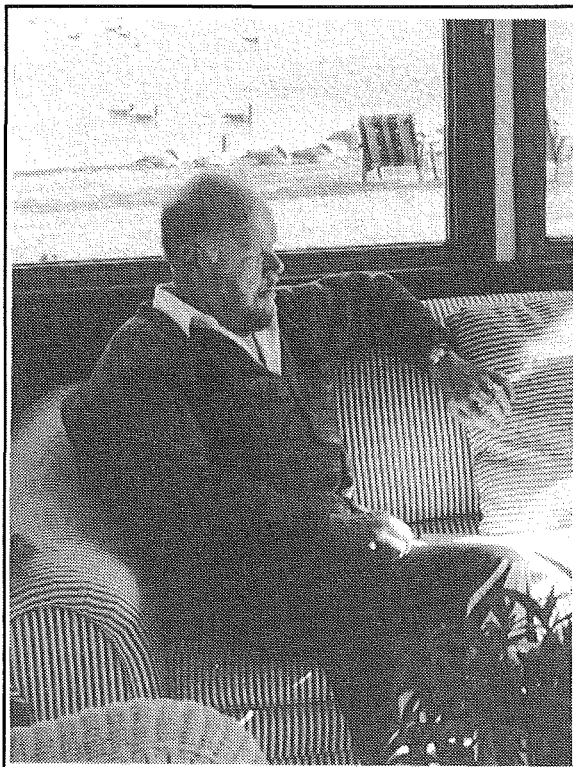
"As can be deduced from the formal text inscribed on this clay cylinder, Cyrus presented himself to the Babylonians as a liberator. He assumed their throne peacefully, restored their temples and freed their subject populations, thus engendering goodwill and justice all around.

"This proclamation reflects Cyrus' desire to establish peace in his vast empire which he wisely understood could best be accomplished by allowing its varied peoples to keep their own customs and beliefs.

"Since the General Assembly is currently [in 1971] seized with the question of Respect for Human Rights in Armed Conflict, this ancient document could not be more timely."

The replica, in white clay inscribed with cuneiform letters of the text in ancient Persian, was made by the British Museum in London from the original which is in the Museum's permanent collection. [see "Kuroush", this issue for the English translation of the Edict of Cyrus].





A Westerner's Impressions Of the Zarthusti Community

A prolific author, scholar and most of all a valued friend and admirer of the Zarthusti community, Professor John R. Hinnells has probably done more to promote awareness of the Zarthusti religion and communities amongst non-Zoroastrians, especially in Britain, than any other non-Zoroastrian in recent history.

Attracted by their "ideals of honesty, philanthropy, their sense of humor, and their food (!)" Professor John R. Hinnells, Head of the Department of Study of Religion at London University's School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), and Professor of Comparative Religions at the University of Manchester for 23 years prior to that, has spent a lifetime studying, teaching and writing about the Zoroastrian religion and communities.

A student of Mary Boyce at London University, he was first inspired by "the courage of the Zoroastrians in the face of a millennium of persecution" (in Iran), and later by his contacts with the London community — watching Dasturji Kutar and Cyrus Mehta, Secretary of the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe, and others pouring their life into perpetuating their faith and traditions.

On a visit to Bombay in 1975, he met Dastur Jamasp Asa, and was deeply impressed by his immense knowledge. It was then that he resolved to learn more about the Parsis. In another year, Hinnells hopes to publish his *"History of the Parsis in British India"*, which he is writing in collaboration with Dastur Jamasp Asa.

In his book *"Zoroastrians in Britain"* which went to the publishers last year, Hinnells traces the history of the Zoroastrians in Britain, from the first known Parsi visitor, Naoroji Rustomji who came to London in 1724 to protest, successfully, against the way in which his family had been treated by officials of the East India Company in Bombay", to a perceptive look at the British Zarthusti community in the 1980s, exploring on the way the dilemmas the Parsis have faced, and the

processes of change and adaptation they have passed through. "No one disagrees that change is needed to enable them to meet the challenge of their new environments", he says, "But how, when, where and by whom this is to be done remains a matter of intense debate."

In the 1980s, Hinnells conducted a historical and social survey and in-depth interviews of the contemporary Zoroastrian diaspora in the USA, Canada and elsewhere. He researched the records and archives of all major North American Associations. His findings were presented at the prestigious 7-week "Ratanbai Katrak Lecture Series" given once every ten years at Oxford. Much of that material, and more, will be covered in another book *"Zoroastrians Around the World in Modern Times:"* to be published shortly by Oxford University Press.

He is currently consumed with his new degree program at SOAS, and finishing his books. Penguin Books has offered him a contract as Editorial Advisor for all religious books. He is also collaborating with Raymond Williams of Wabash College in Illinois and Harold Coward of University of Victoria, British Columbia, on the impact of migration on the preservation of ancient religions.

Of Zoroastrians in the new world, he says: "You have not lost your tradition of hospitality — now that I'm able to travel again (after some years of severe medical problems), I hope to renew my many close friendships with Zoroastrians in North America."

The recent availability of numerous new fragments of the Dead Sea Scrolls merits research, according to Hinnells. No one has yet discussed whether there was Zoroastrian influence. He believes there was Zoroastrian influence, transmitted by the Parthians, but whether it penetrated the enclosed Qumran community is something that merits investigation.

About the future of the community, he says "Have more children! And marry early! More Zoroastrians need to be born, and then strive to keep them in the community." From his study of the community over the years, he offers some lessons from history for the North American Zarthushtis.

(1) The community has to enjoy coming together, whether for small things like parties or for big occasions like congresses.

(2) It has to develop an educational infrastructure so that the Zoroastrians know enough of their history and religion to value their identity and transmit that evaluation to the younger generation.

(3) It must project that knowledge and understanding to the outside world, so that the place of Zoroastrians in both ancient and modern times can be secured.

Most of all, he stresses, it is essential that at the personal level, Zoroastrians live up to the ideals of their religion.

He feels North Americans are a particularly dynamic collection of communities, with a prolific building program, and FEZANA quite an epoch-making development, probably producing more in the way of Congresses, initiatives, books and materials, than any other community.

"It is a pity you fight so much", he lamented, hitting home the truth with a laugh, "Zoroastrians around the world tend to fight, about this or that. I hope North Americans will rise above that."

Will we? ❖

- By Roshan Rivetna

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.

Lost Intercalations (Contd. from p.29) ...

next one due around 640 CE [3] and subsequent intercalations were never undertaken. Thus what we observe today under the label of Shenshai and Kadmi are in fact the Civil computations of the earlier era. In contrast, the Fasli computation truly represents the Religious Year of our early tradition. This explains the discrepancy, why the commemorative days observed for the prophet are shifted from those of the early religious tradition. ❖

- [1] Sacred Books of the East, 1969, Vol XLVII, p.165.
- [2] Taqizadeh, S.H., Bulletin of School of Oriental Studies, 1937-39, 9, 132.
- [3] Taqizadeh, S.H., Bulletin of School of African Studies, 1952, 14, (part 3) 603.
- [4] Rev. Higgins, M.J., Ph.D. Dissertation Part I: Brief History of the Persian Calendar, Catholic University of America, Washington DC, 1939.
- [5] Hartner, W., Journal of History & Astronomy, 1979, 10, 1
- [6] Bickerman, E., Archiv Orientalni, 1967, 35, 197.
- [7] Hartner, W., Cambridge History of Iran, Vol.2, Old Iranian Calendar, 714.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author wishes to sincerely thank Sarosh Maneckshaw of Houston for providing some very valuable references that have made this clarification possible.

Ashem Vohu ... (Contd. from p.25)

ment, which is also the universal truth, reflected in the word *asti*, 'is, being'.

Ys. 20.3: *yat ashai vahistai ashem*, "Truth is for him/her who represents truth." Ahura Mazda here refers to the power of truth in the same way that he refers to truth which is for him/her who is truthful (i.e. represents truth). In the same way Ahura Mazda refers to all Saoshyants (benefactors) who are beneficent because they are truthful.

The Bagan Yasht thus supports the analysis suggested by the author.

- [1] Professor Helmut Humbach and Dr. Pallan Ichaporia, "The Heritage of Zarathushtra, A New Translation of the Gathas", Universitätsverlag, Carl Winter, Heidelberg, Germany, 1994.
- [2] The interpretation of the Ashem Vohu found in the Bagan Yasht has been neglected by almost all Iranologists except Humbach.

OUR DYNAMIC FUTURE ...

THOUGHTS ON THE NEXT NORTH AMERICAN CONGRESS

The Tenth Congress — Reaching the Thinkers and Doers of the World

An interview with Manou Mobedshahi, President of the Northern California Persian Zoroastrian Organization, and Chairperson of the Tenth North American Zoroastrian Congress to be held in the San Francisco area in July 1996.

What is the theme of the tenth Congress?

The theme (or themes) have not yet been defined. It is one of the most important tasks we have to deal with. We intend to decide on themes which can have major impacts in our community and hopefully start an awakening movement.

Please explain how the Congress can have such an impact.

For centuries, our ancestors have lived a defensive life. In bad times they have been persecuted and denied their most basic rights. They have been forced to minimize their religious, social and economic activities. In better times they have been able to flourish and produce world-class talents and leaders in all fields, specially in business. After one thousand years, at this unique juncture in history, destiny has brought the Parsis and Iranians together. With 20 thousand and increasing numbers of well educated and capable Zarthushtis in the West we have an opportunity to create the most powerful, enterprising and ethical community that the world has ever known. We can do this if the majority decides and the Zarthushti communities in India, Iran and other parts of the world support such ideas.

I do not understand how this is achievable.

I will give you an example. Look at what the Tatas and Godrejs have been able to create in India. The business practices of such individuals are based on the true

teachings of Zarthusstra. Such beliefs and practices have enabled them to establish successful and ethical enterprises. They, and other such businesses have used their profits not for personal gratification, but to enhance our religion and our fellow Zarthushtis. They have also supported the cultural and social lives of their communities. There are many Zarthushtis who have achieved incredible success in all fields of activities. I can give you several examples in Iran and elsewhere. I believe that we can achieve the highest levels of success in the democratic west. I suggest, instead of waiting for a person or persons to repeat the past, we can do it together by creating a World Leadership Group. This leadership entity can combine and use Zarthushti talents and resources from all over the world, and through its success enrich the community

What do you mean by 'leadership entity'?

I mean a democratically elected body of talented, energetic and visionary Zarthushtis in all different fields, who will together, create an international business and social conglomerate

which can, in the longer run, generate huge profits and be able to make things happen.

Assuming that such a thing is possible, how would Zarthushtis benefit from it?



Mobedshahi: in front of the Sherman House hotel that he owns, in San Francisco.

The benefits are numerous. First of all such an enterprise can have political power by which it can protect and enhance our religion and our people. It can show the world what the true teachings of Zarthustra are, and how men and women can excel to their fullest potentials. It can also ensure that every Zarthusti youth, anywhere in the world, will have access to higher education as much as he or she is capable of.

If you look around, you will realize that our young Zarthustis are becoming more and more technocrats and experts in different fields and are less in the leadership and entrepreneurial positions. The Leadership Group has to change this course and give a chance to any Zarthusti who has entrepreneurial talents to excel. One of the initial and major tasks of the leadership group will be to find all Zarthustis around the globe, stay in touch with them, and afford them access to all the other Zarthustis through a network which needs to be created.

The leadership group can tackle many other tasks that have been ignored for so long. For example supporting the Zarthustis, anywhere in the world, who are facing hostile local authorities. Help them to immigrate and settle in different parts of the world. It will have the status to negotiate with different governments.

Maybe eventually our community needs to have a land or country for itself. This will require vision, a lot of political muscle as well as financial resources. The Leadership Group can support scholars around the world to study and publish the true teachings of Zarthustra and educate our children and the world of the highest values that our religion represents. I can go on with the list of major impacts that a powerful, democratic and ethical leadership can do for our community.

Why do you think that the existing organizations can not achieve the same?

I believe that the existing Zarthusti organizations are not set for this task. They have been formed to achieve other goals. Most of the existing organizations are only doing cultural or charity activities. Their financial and human resources are very limited and therefore they are not in a position to make improvements.

What I am talking about is a Zarthusti enterprise which operates internationally and is not subject to restrictions of one political or social system. It can enhance our communities and the teachings of Zarthustra in a meaningful and effective way. I am talking about a conglomerate which is managed in the most sophisticated and intelligent way and employs thousands of Zarthustis. Its objective is to improve our religion and its members anywhere in the world.

How do you intend to achieve this within the Tenth Congress?

We have about ten months left before the Congress. If we see that the idea has an appeal in our community, we can prepare the ground work to be presented and discussed at the Congress. We can reach the Zarthusti thinkers and doers all over the world and ensure that they attend the Congress and come up with constructive ideas.

I hereby invite all individuals and organizations who believe this is doable and are not scared of such an enormous task to contact me via phone at (415) 563-5902 or fax (415) 563-5685 and let me know what they think. I would be willing to travel to any part of the world to meet people who are capable and willing to support this cause.

Do you believe the Zarthustis, who are very individualistic, can work together, especially where money is involved?

We can not achieve this with our old ways. That is why I talk about change. Change in our approaches and change to our world leadership structure which, at the present time, is non-existent. I hope the Congress can succeed in agreeing to come up with new ideas on how to restructure our society and propose a central management system. We have first to agree to separate our religion from the political and social aspects of our community. We have to agree that our old system (of Mobeds being in control of our community) did not work and will not work.

We must begin this task soon. And I believe that the 10th North American Congress will give us the best opportunity to do so.

WITH AN EYE TO THE FUTURE!

By Bella Tata

Chairperson, FEZANA Congress Committee

Late last year I took over as Congress Chair from Dhunmai Dalal of California, who had chaired the FEZANA Congress Committee since the formation of FEZANA. Whilst attempting to carry on the good work of Ms. Dalal, I will express my views on what I believe we should endeavor to do.

Congresses provide the opportunity for people to get together, hear learned people's views on Zoroastrianism, and among other things, present awards. There is, however, a real need to start focusing on how we can turn these large gatherings into useful forums for dealing with important issues which face our community's future in North America. 'Change' is a word commonly bandied about, and everything we do undergoes change. This might be the time to change the objectives of our congresses, so that we not only have fun

and enjoyment, education and enlightenment, but also use these opportunities to accomplish some business. We have chosen to live on this continent, and we should be prepared to deal with the 'real' issues we face — not only as individuals but as a community.

Any single congress should not have to focus on all the immediate concerns; however, at least one issue should be discussed and some sort of consensus reached. How should we accomplish this? Let us, for instance, take the question of inter-marriage, since it is a reality, not only in North America, but in other parts of the world as well. A Zarthusti has married out of the religion because he/she could not find a suitable Zarthusti partner. Could the community have prevented this? Perhaps we could have; perhaps not, depending on where the person was located, and whether the community felt it was an issue of concern.

This is a continent of distances, and there are no guarantees that there will be Zarthustis around where one is. Have a panel discussion on what each association or community can do to provide a conducive atmosphere for single people to meet, and without deciding who is right or wrong, or what is right or wrong, concentrate on bringing all sides of the problem into focus, so that people are well informed. The need for single people to know one another, irrespective of where they reside, is an issue which has been addressed by FEZANA with the formation of *Club-Zed* [See *FEZANA Journal, Spring 1995*] and the Matrimonial Column in the *FEZANA Journal*.

There are other issues such as the definition of a Zarthusti, acceptance, and hereditary priesthood, that concern us as a community, and could be discussed at congresses in workshops or as debates. Congresses should bring people up to the stage of consensus-building and decision-making. FEZANA should then inform all the associations of what transpired, and leave the question of implementation to the associations.

I believe that it is a delusion that one meets many new individuals at congresses. No. We always seem to gravitate towards those we know, as there is no time to do anything else. Sessions keep us glued to our seats; coffee and lunch breaks are just a hurried exercise; and the banquet again keeps us tied down to the people at our table. So how do we meet new people, if this is the purpose of congresses, apart from the learning curve? I leave this thought with the congress organizers, and would be glad to discuss with them methods to achieve fruitful results.

The Tenth North American Zoroastrian Congress, to be held in the San Francisco area in July 1996, will be unique, inasmuch as it will be the first Congress to be hosted by two organizations: the Persian Zoroastrian Organization PZO, and the Zarthoshti Anjuman of

Northern California, ZANC, with PZO President Manou Mobedshahi as the Chair and ZANC President Peshotan Irani as co-chair; thus bringing about a rich mix of ideas and talents to the organizing table. Dolly Dastoor, FEZANA's dynamic President, has already visited California twice to discuss congress-related issues with members of both these associations, and give guidance. There will not be a separate youth congress, and the efforts of the youth will be channeled to make the Tenth Congress a compelling success.

Associations which have hosted congresses in the past have to be congratulated for the excellent results they have produced with limited time, resources and manpower. It is my hope that future congresses will continue to tie the community together and, at the same time, provide an opportunity for a healthy discussion and suggestions for solutions to problems which we, as a community comprised of great and intelligent individuals, face in North America.

WHY A CONGRESS

By Mehran Sepehri

Assistant Secretary, FEZANA

Zarthustis of Northern California just delivered a successful youth congress, and are now aiming for a major North American congress in July 1996.

Organizing a congress has been a rewarding experience. Working late hours and weekends with limited resources, one appreciates the value of teamwork, communication, and working together for a common purpose.

A congress is not just a three-day event once every two years. It is not just sending a Mother's Day card once a year and then forgetting about it till the next year. A congress should be the start of an on-going friendship and education. People come together to share ideas and build friendships. But they should keep the momentum to continue with the spirit and objectives they set.

In the past twenty years, congresses have been a source of communication, unity, education and sharing, for our spread-out North American community. It is a worthwhile experience bridging across time and space.

One could say that the first congress was held by Shah Goshtasb with Zarthustra himself. Ferdowsi in *Shahnama* tells the story of Zarthustra coming with his discoveries, and the King asking the people from many regions to gather and debate.

Seven youth congresses, one world youth congress, and nine adult congresses in North America is a major accomplishment for a small community such as ours.

The program books alone testify to the progressive thoughts generated at these events.

Are we ready for the future? The future is here, and we are it! The future is bright and promising and our wait is over. We have passed the question of survival, a theme of earlier congresses, and are now building lasting bridges.

The bridges will connect our islands and unite our directions. We will build bridges not on sand but on the solid foundation of our heritage. They will connect our glorious past to our shining future. Of course, we will need a map — and that is our Gathas.

In Northern California, probably for the first time, working for the youth congress, Parsis and Iranians worked together without any sense of differences. It is the sweet feeling of working together in total equality, that made this possible.

For the youth congress, we had to make difficult choices. We had to limit our size to 300 youth to be able to offer a high quality congress and stay within Stanford University's requirements. We wanted to set a broad agenda and diverse programs, to provide something for everyone. The decisions were all made by a simple majority of 30-plus organizers. We agreed to disagree, but then commit to group decisions. We had many sub-committees working together without having one or several people in charge. For each meeting we had a rotating chairperson and a comprehensive agenda.

The youth congress was probably not perfect, but fortunately without a major incident or problem. We wanted variety, participation, and above all, a congress organized by the youth and for the youth. We are now proud of our youth in Northern California.

The congress committee for 1996 has also set up a very aggressive agenda — a three-day event for 1000-plus youth and adults. It will be in the metropolitan San Francisco area with a full range of educational and social activities. It will no doubt be a memorable event for our North American Zarthusti community.

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FEZANA AWARDS COMMITTEE ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

to be presented at the
TENTH NORTH AMERICAN ZOROASTRIAN CONGRESS

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Achievement Awards in the following five categories will be presented to selected deserving Zoroastrians from North America during the Tenth North American Zoroastrian Congress in July 1996.

ROHINTON RIVETNA OUTSTANDING ZOROASTRIAN AWARD

To recognize a Zoroastrian who has achieved excellence in his/her profession and has also made substantial contribution to further the cause of the Zoroastrian community in the social, cultural or religious fields.

EXCELLENCE IN PROFESSION/BUSINESS AWARD

To recognize a Zoroastrian who is at the peak of his/her profession or business whose achievements have been internationally recognized.

JAMSHED PAVRI HUMANITARIAN SERVICE AWARD

To recognize a Zoroastrian who has made significant contributions towards advancing humanitarian causes in general and for the Zoroastrian community in particular.

OUTSTANDING YOUNG ZOROASTRIAN AWARD

To recognize a Zoroastrian under the age of 35 years on December 31, 1995 whose performance has been outstanding in his/her profession.

OUTSTANDING STUDENT AWARD

To recognize a full time student who has achieved outstanding performance both in scholastic studies and in extracurricular activities.

An individual can be nominated for only one award category. Individuals who were presented Achievement Awards at the July 1994 Ninth North American Zoroastrian Congress are not eligible for nomination. The nominee must be (a) a Zoroastrian and (b) either a USA or Canadian citizen or a legal resident of USA or Canada for at least 12 months on June 30, 1995.

The Awards Committee invites nominations of deserving Zoroastrians for consideration of an Achievement Award in the above categories. Nominations must include: (a) the name, address, and telephone and fax numbers of the sponsor (an association or an individual); (b) the nominee's curriculum vitae or resume (not exceeding 3 pages); (c) the specific award category for which the nominee is sponsored; and (d) a certification that the nominee meets the eligibility criteria.

Nominations should be mailed to the Awards Committee at the following address latest by **November 30, 1995**. Nominations postmarked after that date will not be considered.

Dinshaw F. D. Joshi
4515 Willard Avenue, Apt. S-1609,
Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815-3619, USA

BOOKS AND SUCH

UNDERSTANDING THE GATHAS,
THE HYMNS OF ZARATHUSHTRA

Introductory Lectures on Gathic Themes

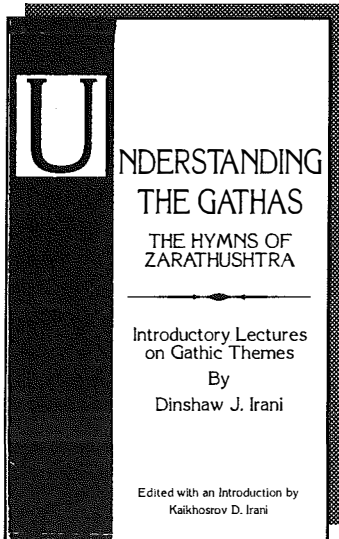
By Dinshaw J. Irani

Edited with Introduction by Kaikhosrov D. Irani

Available from Ahura Publishers, Inc.,
253 S 4th Street, Womelsdorf, PA 19567, USA;
or call Armaity Patel at (908) 855-7847.

ISBN 0-9638045-0-2, 87 pp, 1994, \$15.

Dinshaw Irani was a lawyer of great stature, but his real talent appears to have been in the translation and interpretation of the Gathas. The chapters of this book were originally delivered as lectures by the author between 1935 and 1937 in Bombay and London. After his death in 1938, his lecture notes laid in an attic for over 50 years, when they finally came to the attention of his sons Kaikhosrov and Farrokh. This little gem of a book is the result.



Kaikhosrov, whom we all know very well, shares many of the Gathic interpretations with his father, Dinshaw. He is eminently qualified to write the short introduction to the Gathas that is included in the book.

The book is divided into ten chapters. The first eight of these present selected verses from the Gathas more or less in the



Dinshaw Irani

order of Prophet Zarathushtra's ministry. The ninth chapter is devoted to the wedding song and sermon of Zarathushtra on the occasion of the wedding of his daughter Pouruchista to Jamaspa Hvogva. The final chapter gives citations from various Ha's on the subject of death and after-life.

Irani's translations vibrate with the feeling and excitement of Zarathushtra's revelation. His free translations are able to accurately convey the Prophet's sense of wonder and reverence. His selections and commentary inspire the reader to deep thought and reflection.

The translations are closest to Moulton's; but Irani is able to convey the true meaning behind each verse as only a Zarthusti can. Often, he discards the scholarly translation in favor of what he considers to be the true meaning as intended by our Prophet in the idiom of his times. And yet, his impeccable choice of words leaves no ambiguity or conflict with the scholarly translations [as has been the case with Taraporewala's free translation]. The Zarthusti reader will immediately identify with his interpretations. His commentaries amplify the meaning of the highly condensed verses and connect the different passages into a coherent religious doctrine.

For example, in his commentary on Ha 46.7, our revered Kemna Mazda prayer [see cover], Dinshaw Irani says:

"If you reflect on the full meaning of this prayer, you come to see that like the prophet himself, we all become objects of assault some time in our lives. And we already have the means of protection — His Sacred Fire and His Thought. The Sacred Fire is a spiritual concept, it is the spiritual energy which sustains the good creation; its physical manifestation is the ritual fire, in the temple or in the home, before which one may focus one's thinking to grasp the Divine Thought, that is the religion of Ahura Mazda. Living in this way we progressively bring about the rule of Truth and Righteousness."

Regarding the well-known Ha 44.5:

*This I ask Thee, tell me truly, O Ahura;
What great artificer created light and darkness
What artificer produced the phenomenon
Of sleep and wakeful activity?
Who made the dawn, noon and night
Which call the enlightened to their duties?*

Dinshaw Irani comments:

These are not casual juxtapositions. Zarathushtra is making his audience aware of the divine design in which there is an intimate relation between the natural order of day and night and the human order of our lives, activity and rest.

The rhythms and cycles of Zarthusti life are quite evident in this wonderful book. It is the best exposition on the Gathas that I have had the fortune to read. The selected Ha's are entirely appropriate and help the reader to focus on the real message of the Gathas. I highly recommend this book for self-study or as a discussion guide in religious study groups. A complete translation of the Gathas is currently under preparation. I eagerly await its publication.

The book does have faults. There are a few typographical errors and some of the rhymes are not perfect. After all, it was written, edited and published by human beings.

[Book review by Rustom Kevala]

LIVING IN AMERICA
POETRY AND FICTION BY SOUTH ASIAN AMERICAN WRITERS

Edited by Roshni Rustomji-Kerns

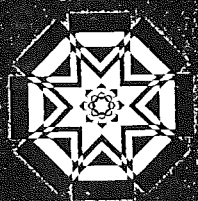
Westview Press, 5500 Central Avenue,

Boulder, CO 80301-2847, Tel: (303) 444-3541

ISBN 0-8133-2378-9, paperback, 277 pp. 1995, \$18.

LIVING
in America

Poetry and Fiction by
South Asian American
Writers



edited by
Roshni Rustomji-Kerns

"Living in America" is an anthology of short poems (in Part 1) and short fictional stories (in Part 2) all by South Asian American writers. The term South Asian American identifies a talented group of writers who straddle two cultures — that of the Indian subcontinent and North America (USA and Canada). In the last two decades, these writers have enriched American literature, with poignant stories of their struggles to accommodate Old World customs to New World expectations.

As they travel across continents and cultures, writers of the South Asian diaspora are weaving their native literary and cultural traditions into modern American literature. They also bring into this literature the literary, political, historical and socio-economic issues they carry with them. From all stories emerge the evocative themes of love, loss, exile, nostalgia, loneliness and renewal. These stories are sure to strike a resonant chord with those who read them. The stories will particularly appeal to newcomers to North America from the Old World who experience culture-shock.

The editor in her Introduction reveals that most of the writings in this anthology relate to two distinct categories. In the first category, the writers use a process of remembering to explore themselves, their lives, and the lives of others around them in North America. In the second, the writers living in America use their prerogative as writers to select any landscape, character, experience and event they wish to, without any reference to South Asia or to South Asian America for their works.

Rustomji-Kerns also has provided detailed headnotes that place each writer's work in context and discuss its nuances. At the end of the book, a summary of each writer's credentials is presented for the reader. This summary reveals some Parsi names such as Darius Cooper in San Diego, Boman Desai in Chicago and Bapsy Sidhwa of Karachi.



Roshni Rustomji-Kerns at book celebration-reading at the Modern Times Bookstore in San Francisco in May 1995.

Congratulations to Roshni Rustomji-Kerns for bringing the diversity and strength of talented writers to the attention of the wider American audience.

Rustomji-Kerns is Professor Emerita from Sonoma State University, California. A Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from U.C. Berkeley, she was born in Bombay, and has lived, studied and worked in India, Pakistan, Lebanon, the USA and Mexico. She has presented papers and published articles on comparative mythology, South Asian women's writings and South Asian American literature. Her short stories have also been widely published. Her recent work "Blood into Ink" [see Book Review, FEZANA Journal, Summer 1995] is an anthology of South Asian women's writings.


[Book review by Adel Engineer]

Karaka's History of Parsis

A catalog of rare books published by "Asian Rare Books", 175 West 93rd Street, Suite 16-D, New York, NY 10025, Tel: (212) 316-5334, lists one Zarthushti book. The catalog entry reads:

"Dosabhoy Framji Karaka: History of the Parsis, L. 1884, 2 vols. Plates. III. Three quarters-leather and marbled boards. Some wear. Good set. Bookplates of former owner. \$400."

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Obedience: name of an angel:

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fostering ideas and stimulating innovative thought among Zarthusti youth

Posers, Deadheads, and the Sad Reality of Youth Congresses

by Jim A. Engineer
Youth Editor

What do Grateful Dead concerts and Zoroastrian youth congresses have in common?

After the most recent youth congress in San Francisco I'd say the two events share much in common. If you're confused at my strange analogy just sit back and read further.

Peace, love, happiness and joy are just a sample of emotions you could have expected at both a G.D. concert and a youth congress. But many Grateful Dead fans, before Jerry Garcia's sad passing, saw a change in the quality of fans. The audiences were sparsely populated with a growing number of "posers." Although I hate to stereotype, posers are a younger segment of youth who abuse their freedom and try desperately to be ten years older than they really are.

To put things into proper perspective just imagine the class of Beverly Hills 90210 jammin' to the Dead. It just doesn't seem right!?!

Unfortunately, the Seventh North American Zoroastrian youth congress was just as pitiful an experience, and we can only blame a select group of our younger youth generation.

Stupidity, irresponsibility, and heavy underage drinking contributed to a brutal four days. Fact: a fire alarm was pulled at 3 a.m. (whether or not this person was a younger youth was not made available). Fact: police made raids on underage (18 and younger) dormitories. Fact: there were a number of kids literally passed out who had to be physically moved from party sites. My opinion: these "posers" abused their freedom.

We were never told who our 3 a.m. prankmaster was. Nor do we know if our young Zarthusti party

animals even realize they had decimated over a year's worth of planning by the Zarthusti youth of Northern California, both in time and money.

The bottom line is that the actions of a few irresponsible Zarthusti youth reflected terribly upon our the religion, our community, the congress organizers, and our credibility with Stanford University. More importantly, it ruined the congress programming and mood of over three hundred young Zarthustis.

Everyone became a critic as the days passed. Congress organizers were blamed for much of the negative ramifications at the congress. These organizers ran themselves ragged in trying to put on the best show possible and didn't get a fair shake, in retrospect. The organizers should be commended for organizing a congress at Stanford, an incredible, picturesque bastion of higher learning. They faced a challenge that attendees should have supported. They did not receive the credit they deserve.

There were many justifiable complaints — the food, programming sites separated by great distances, and an overall lack of enthusiasm as the days passed (except for Ari Jahanian, one of two MC's, whose jokes kept a smile on many faces).

The sad reality is that 90 percent of the participants didn't even know how close the congress was to being canceled by Stanford University because of 1.) the fire alarm, and 2.) the heavy underage drinking.

For the past seven years youth congress organizers had progressed in ensuring a trust and certain level of freedom from adult chaperoning. That trust was

see "Sad Reality"...

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"SAD REALITY"

CONTINUED . . .

abused at this youth congress.

Based on this disturbing reality I believe youth congresses should be divided by the following two age categories: 1.) college-age and above, and 2.) high school and below (give or take a grade due to changes in Canadian/U.S. school systems). It is blatantly obvious this division must take place, because the social and spiritual needs of college-age and older participants versus high school and below are quite different.

Very few aspects of modern-day youth congress programming appeal to both younger and older audiences without being hideously redundant. We all share in a thirst for philosophical, historical, and social development. This thirst is not being satis-

Youthfully Speaking is the official youth section of the FEZANA Journal. The opinions expressed in articles and editorials of Youthfully Speaking are those of each respective author. Letters are welcome to the address below. FEZANA Journal reserves the right to edit letters for minor grammatical formatting. Letters should be no longer than 200 words. Please send any comments, feedback, ideas or suggestions to:

Jim Engineer
Youth Editor
FEZANA Journal
10925-2 E. Keswick Road
Philadelphia, PA 19154

ZYNA -- "Building a Social Fabric"

by Mazda K. Antia
and Jim A. Engineer
ZYNA Co-Chairs

The Zarthusti Youth of North America (ZYNA) recently presented a workshop at the Seventh North American Youth Congress held at Stanford University, Palo Alto, Ca. Titled "ZYNA — Building a Social Fabric," the presentation was aimed at pooling congress attendees into their respective areas of expertise, and bringing the community together in terms of resources.

Among its many FEZANA-born goals and objectives, the committee focused on the following at the congress:

A professional network/directory of college-age/young professional Zarthusti youth: To collectively pool the strengths of our diversity in our respected professions or fields of interest into a "network." The intention of this network is to generate relationships, increase the flow of support, and establish Zarthusti mentoring and leadership to sustain the competitive nature of the working world.

Building our student education loan/scholarship fund: To be competitive in North America we must not only be backed by a strong network of professionals, but be of sound mind through a quality education. Our many layers of talent are diverse, and through education we can plant the seeds for future generations.

see "Social Fabric" . . .

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"SOCIAL FABRIC"

CONTINUED . . .

Continued involvement in the structure and design of Zarthusti youth congresses in North America: We have reached a point in time where the value of youth congresses for some age groups and individuals has diminished significantly, and have started a push for the revamping of the structure and format of the congresses. Our primary challenge satisfying two segments of our Zarthusti youth population, those in the 10-18 age group that have never experienced a youth congress, and rightfully wish to discuss issues congresses have always addressed (conversion, intermarriage, wearing the sudreh/kusti). The next segment of 18-30-year-olds who have attended a number of congresses seem to be rightfully searching for discussion on other aspects of the religion: spirituality, philosophy, history and more innovative discussion on social issues.

Each goal is in its infancy. Accomplishing and working in a steadfast manner to achieve the aforementioned goals requires community-based involvement and support from dedicated

Zarthustis. Many congress participants heralded the presentation as innovative and different, a presentation of a new kind that had an important message to share.

Each objective is based on the premise of collaboratively uniting the Zarthusti youth of North America through a spirit of cooperation and cohesiveness. These objectives all follow a parallel theme of helping one another, which in essence, is the basis of our religion and our existence on this planet.

Grassroots efforts have to be taken, nothing can be done alone or with the involvement of just a few individuals and groups. The latter only defeats the purpose.

We have arrived at a crossroads in our community, for the past several years we have thought on a problem-driven approach, always talking about the problems we face and leaving it at that. The time has now come to initiate a change, and begin thinking with a solution-based frame of mind. This is the only way we can move ahead. **INITIATE ACTION!** Call us . . .

Mazda 708/460-6585

Jim 215/824-1504

SPEAK UP AND GET INVOLVED!

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Contact: Jim Engineer 215-824-1504 or Mazda Antia 708-460-6585

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Rediscovering Justice

An Interfaith Youth Conference in Celebration of the United Nation's 50th Anniversary

by Trity Pourbahrami

From June 21 to 25 I was among two-hundred youth chosen from more than thirty-five of the world's faiths to gather and share views and experiences on the role of religion in our world. The conference was titled "Rediscovering Justice - Awakening World Faiths to Address World Issues" and was held at the University of San Francisco.

Our four day experience on the campus consisted of numerous large and small group discussions, some of which followed memorable and thought-provoking presentations by religious and intellectual leaders. Those with greatest impact were Nobel Peace Prize winners Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Betty Williams, and Professor Diana Eck of Harvard University.

We would gather several times each day to share prayers and worship practices such as meditation, readings from holy books (Hamazorbim from the Avesta) and ceremonies such as the Jewish Shabat.

The youth delegation began by focusing its discussion on the role of religion in the injustice experienced in our world. We shared personal experiences and knowledge of the current global conflicts that are usually fueled by race, ethnicity and religious belief. We discussed and concluded that injustice is not limited to conflicts such as wars, but rather, experienced by the people of many nations whose governments abuse religion to maintain power. We found that at the heart of this injustice is the lack of true understanding of the situation or the other side's views, objectives and beliefs.

The first challenge in this process is finding a structure which encourages two conflicting sides to unite. Dr. Diana Eck proposed the "pluralistic" structure which involves forming a relationship based on the knowledge and realization that many differences exist. She further described that each person on either side must be passionate about their own beliefs, while open minded and willing to sincerely listen and understand the views of others. Professor Eck specifically emphasized that in such a "pluralistic" structure there is no pressure on any member to leave their religious commitments in favor of relativism.

As a step toward our goal of greater understanding, we began discussing the creation of a new organization — United Religions. It would use the United Nations' model of open dialogue but follow "a spirituality-directed approach" such as that used by Bishop Desmond Tutu and Mahatma Gandhi.

During the conference we expressed and considered many concerns and options regarding a United Religions (UR). For instance, we were concerned that the UR might become dominated by a few powerful members and might not be truly representative of all faiths. Regardless, the proposal was placed before the faiths at Grace Cathedral, asking the world to come together to plan such an organization. Presently, many of the youth I participated remain involved via the Internet in planning and creating a United Religions. Please contact me for more information or with your ideas and concerns.

see 'Rediscovering Justice' . . .

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Letter to the Editor . . .

Editor's note: your organization may receive this letter, along with a petition in which youth are being asked to support the "greening" of future congresses. Also, the topic of environmentalism in Zoroastrianism was addressed in a fine presentation by Shahnaz Bhujwala and Bahar Mojgani at the past youth congress in San Francisco.

'Rediscovering Justice' continued . . .

My greatest concern is: How will Zoroastrians be represented in this international and interfaith organization.

Who can best represent us? A religious leader, a scholar, or otherwise active member of our community?

Our representative must be passionate and knowledgeable about our religion and culture, while open-minded, knowledgeable and understanding of others.

It is my responsibility, it is your responsibility, thus it is our collective responsibility to actively search out and nourish such leaders. Justice begins with each one of us.

Editor's Note: Trity Pourbahrami is a 15-year-old student from Toronto. She can be reached via the Internet at: trityp@unixg.ubc.ca or trityp@physics.ubc.ca

Dear Editor:

As excellent as this past congress in California was, we must always seek to improve some aspects of these important meetings. Perhaps you noticed the multitude of styrofoam used at meals, from cups to plates and bowls. Although it may not seem excessive to the individual, consider that if each of some 300 youth used just one cup and one plate for each meal, that would add up to 11 meals and 3300 plates and cups. Also we have to consider the fact that styrofoam takes thousands of years to decompose in landfills -- this is not a pretty figure!

There's a reason why I have addressed this letter to you, and your community. I feel that there are several small things we as youth can do to preserve "frashokariti." Here are a couple of simple suggestions I came up with to help make the "Bridges to the Future" a little "greener." Maybe you can think of a few more:

Participants could bring their own cup to the congress and reuse it at every meal. (It may sound silly or inconvenient, but it makes sense when you consider how much styrofoam will be saved and how much fun you can have with it!)

Food can be served on thinner, less bulky paper plates instead of styrofoam.

Enclosed is a petition that is being sent to several cities. The petitions will eventually be compiled and sent to the Congress Planning Committee. I'm hoping that you or a friend can take it to the youth center, Darbe Mehr, or anywhere else you meet other youth. Please feel free to make as many copies as needed

Each of Ahura Mazda's creations are very sacred, so we must work together to ensure that we do everything in our power to preserve them. Thank you for your support.

Farrah Bhesania

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Congress



Highlights . . .

Organizing Committee - For handling unforeseen problems responsibly and dedicating just over a year and a half to organizing the event. Special recognition to Darius Kassad for patience and diplomacy before and during the congress.

Ztar Trek - effective play modeled after Star Trek television program that introduced many topics and themes for future discussion.

70's Party - Groovy man . . . While it lasted.

Location - Stanford represented a logistics challenge, but a nostalgic, prestigious, and scenic campus.

Talent Show - Entertaining, well-done, humorous and colorful.

Congress



Lowlights . . .

Under-Age Drinking / Late Night Fire Alarm - The 3 a.m. fire alarm really kicked off the evening well. Passing out at 3 a.m. from drinking because *it's like so cool* simply tells us that a few members of the younger generation of Zoroastrians can't respect the freedom they are entrusted with in each congress. These two events eliminated the positive tone and trust between the hosting organization and congress-goers.

The Food.

Logistics: As beautiful as the weather and campus turned out to be, many people either got lost or had to walk for quite a while simply to get to the lectures or meetings. This was especially a problem during the evening of the formal, where most people were dressed up (most men in suits and many women in heels).

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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.

Exploring the Land Where Zarthustra Preached

Twenty years ago in 1975, when our Rusby family resided in Kabul, Afghanistan, our good friends, the Woodberrys told us about a Zoroastrian temple, in ruins, up on a hill on the western end of the city. One afternoon, we all hiked up the hill to see the ruins. In spite of its total collapse, enough of the temple outline remains to confirm that the ancient structure was once a functioning Zoroastrian temple.

The most unique feature of this temple is its location. The city of Kabul is located at the western end of an ancient lake bed which, when it was a lake, had a length of approximately 14 miles. More recently (geologically speaking and perhaps several thousand years ago) geologic disturbances cracked open the eastern end of the lake, the water escaped and what remains is the Kabul Gorge, a geologic fault through which the River Kabul runs and tumbles down more than a thousand feet to the valley below.

On any day, naturally, the rays of each day's sunrise appear first through this rock opening and fall on the foothills at the western end of the ancient lake bed just outside of Kabul. However, on the first day of Spring, on March 21st — Navroze to the Afghans and Iranians — the first rays of the sun fall on the mound of grass-covered brick and stone which was once the Zoroastrian temple. It is this phenomenon of the very first rays of the sunrise (on the vernal equinox) falling on the temple that makes its location so special.

It was to watch this phenomenon that the Rusbys and the Woodberrys had packed a big picnic basket with flasks of hot coffee and tea to sit on the mound as early as four o'clock in the morning to watch the first rays appear through the crack and fall on the ruins. Unfortunately, it was not to be, for before the alarms could go off at three o'clock, it had started to snow rather heavily and the picnic we dreamed of had to be canceled.

We traveled all over Afghanistan and while in Bost, south of Kandahar, people talked of "Zarathust". It amazed us that people who had not gone through the 'standard schooling' had this particular historical knowledge. As we in India have known, it is the word-of-mouth that passes on historical knowledge among the people who did not have formal education. On our trip up north to Kundus, Mazar-i-Sharif, and especially Balkh, the knowledge that Zarthustra preached in those areas is very common. Unfortunately, we did not have

enough time to explore if there were any more ruins of Zoroastrian temples.

One day when peace returns to Afghanistan, it would be one of the most fantastic adventures for Zarthustis to explore this land where Zarthustra preached.

*Sheroo and Paul Rusby
Arlington, Virginia*

Warning About Shipments to India

In the Fall 1993 issue of FEZANA Journal, Mrs. Silloo Kavarana made an appeal to send used clothing to India for the poor Parsis of Bombay and Gujerat. I immediately got busy and collected almost half a container of clothing from the community in British Columbia. I was informed by the shipping companies that Indian ships do not come to Vancouver any more, but go to the east coast and Toronto, so I shipped it via Hong Kong and paid the freight and insurance myself which came to \$907. A retired teacher in Edmonton, Mani Dastur, shared the cost with me.

Though the intentions were good on both sides, the unstable policies of the Indian Government forced the cancellation of the license before December 4, 1993, which was the date the shipment landed safely in the docks in Bombay.

Mrs. Kavarana and her friends tried their level best, but up to the present time, have not been successful in clearing the shipment from the Bombay docks.

It is very frustrating for people who donated the clothing and the group of seniors who helped to pack the clothing in plastic bags and boxes. I sincerely apologize to all these people and hope they will understand.

I have no idea what has happened to the shipment. The time, money and effort were a complete waste. From this experience, it is a warning to Zoroastrians of North America, that it is better just to send donations of money, rather than anything in kind.

*Roda J. Pavri
Vancouver, British Columbia*

On the Pope's Apology and Covey's Seven Habits

The article "Galileo and other Faithful Scientists" [Time, December 28, 1992, reprinted in FEZANA Journal, Summer 1995], brought out two points: (1) Even the pope accepts that the Vatican made a mistake (in placing the astronomer under house arrest in 1633, for writing that the earth revolves around the sun), and apologized; and (2) When the scriptures are in clear conflict with science, then the scriptures need to be reevaluated.

What a concept! So it is acceptable to learn from science and give up un-supported beliefs! Progress is acceptable! Wonder which other interpretation mistakes have still not been corrected!

On another note, I highly recommend Stephen Covey's *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* to one and all. It is amazing how many Zarthustrian values are present in the principles he talks about. Covey teaches developing a character ethic (sound familiar?) and principle-based leadership at corporations and Universities. Too much of the literature according to him deals with developing the personality ethic, the superficial habits which try to find the weak points in others and then manipulate them to get what we need, in business as well as in relationships. Some quotes from his book that have a familiar Zoroastrian ring are:

"We are free to choose our actions, based on our knowledge of correct principles, but we are not free to choose the consequences of those actions."

"Principles have natural consequences attached to them. There are positive consequences when we live in harmony with the principles. There are negative consequences when we ignore them. But because these principles apply to everyone, whether or not they are aware, this limitation is universal. And the more we know the correct principles, the greater is our personal freedom to act wisely."

"Principles don't die. They aren't here one day and gone the next. They can't be destroyed by fire, earthquake or theft."

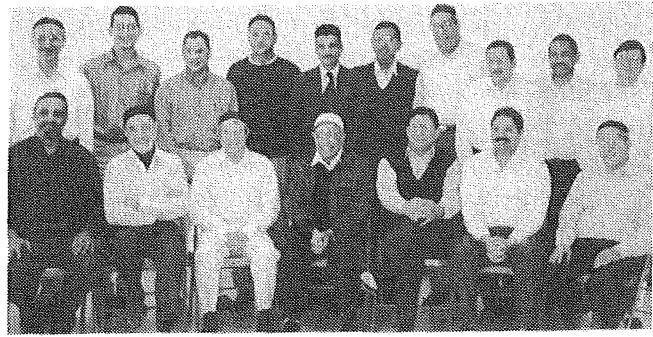
One can find these same answers by studying the Gathas, but at age 16 to 18 or even later, Covey's examples will be easier to comprehend.

Jamsheed Wania

waniaj@dialogic.com, New Jersey

Sharing Some Thoughts With Our Mobeds

In the Summer 1995 issue of FEZANA Journal, there is a commemorative picture and an article on the *Annual General Meeting of North American Mobeds' Council*. If this photograph had appeared in any other publication, the reader at first glance would have thought it portrayed seventeen Jewish males sitting or standing around, wearing their yarmulkes (kepahs) because it is more customary for the men of the Jewish faith to wear kepahs. Since this picture is published in FEZANA Journal, it stands to reason that this must be a group of Zoroastrians wearing topees. Without reading the caption, no one probably would have guessed that they are Zoroastrian mobeds, because they are not in their beautiful and dignified mobeds' costumes.



North American Mobeds' Council: where are the Jamas?

Given the fact that this is a formal photograph, one wishes that these fine mobeds had taken the occasion more seriously and appeared in their beautiful outfits, the *Jamo* and *Pagree*. This would have made a more appropriate picture and would have been more representative of them and the Zarthusti community.

We all know that our prophet Zarthustra teaches us to be pure and clean inside as well as outside. Wearing white while praying signifies, and is a reminder of that fact. In order to present a fine, and more distinguished appearance to the community, it is our hope that in the future our mobeds will be aware of this fact and practice it, especially when praying, performing religious ceremonies, and for the taking of official pictures.

K. Harvesf, M.D.

Jacksonville, Florida

Some Interesting Facts About the Bundahishn

Here are some interesting facts about the Bundahishn [FEZANA Journal, Summer 1995]. The Bundahishn ('Primal Creation') is a Pahlavi Zoroastrian text, also known as Zand-Agahih ('Knowledge of the Commentary'). Its contents include: (1) Pahlavi translations of several Avestan texts. (2) Pre-Zoroastrian and early Zoroastrian myths and legends with pre-historic mythical and geographical names. (3) Several commentaries showing foreign influences [see Boyce, *Middle Persian Literature, Handbuch der Orientalistik, Leiden 1968*].

Bundahishn is the work of several authors who contributed from time to time at different periods. It has several redactions from the early period after the Arab conquest of Zoroastrian Iran dating from 651 AD to 1158 AD [see T. D. Anklesaria, *GBd.*, Chapter 33 and E. Yarsheter, "The Cambridge History of Iran", 3(2)]. The last redaction may have been done in 1078 AD, but the final chapters are definitely written during the Abbasid era [see T. D. Anklesaria, *GBd.*, where the Pahlavi word 'Bagdad' (modern: Baghdad) is found in Ch. 31]. Several passages have pre-historic views derived from pre-Achaemenian sources while other chapters have clear

influences from Babylonian, Greek and Indian sciences with some details of astrology and astronomy [see Henning, "An Astronomical Chapter in the Bundahishn", *JRAS, London 1942*].

The Bundahishn has 36 chapters. We have three extant codices of the Greater or Iranian Bundahishn: TD1 (written in 1531 AD), TD2 (written in 1606 AD), and DH (written in 1577 AD). All these codices are in Bombay, India.

The smaller or Indian Bundahishn has several extant manuscripts including K20 and K20b in the University of Copenhagen Library. Manuscript M6 is in the State Library at Munich, Germany. Manuscript 121 is in the Bodleian Library at Oxford University [for details see West, "Pahlavi Texts" in *Sacred Books of the East 1901*].

B. T. Anklesaria has published the text and English translations of the TD manuscripts in 1956. Y. M. Nawabi published a Concordance of the TD1, TD2 and DH manuscripts in 1974, while Sir. H. Bailey has transliterated and translated the Iranian or Greater Bundahishn as a D. Phil thesis, at Oxford University in 1933. F. Justi edited and translated "Der Bundehesh" in Leipzig, 1868. K. Barr has also transliterated and translated the Bundahishn which is not yet published. M. Bahar's "Glossary of Pahlavi Bundahishn" was published in Tehran in 1966.

Dr. Pallan Ichaporia
Womelsdorf, Pennsylvania

What's In a Name?

Mr. Udvadia is right in saying [FEZANA Journal, Spring 1995] that we should preserve our identity by keeping our ancestral names. The origin and meaning of a person's name plays an important part in his or her life. I even believe that a person grows to look like his name. Our religion is an ancient one and obviously did not have to compete with other faiths at the early stages. Naturally identification was not an issue in its early span of life. Some even erroneously believe that the Achaemenids were not Zoroastrians or Zarthushtis because the name of the Prophet does not appear on their rich stone inscriptions. Beyond doubt, the state religion of the Sassanians was Zoroastrianism but again, we do not find our Prophet's name on Sassanian stone inscriptions either.

Beside the emotional aspect we have to face realities. I am at a loss to find the origin of some of the truncated first names such as Najoo, Siloo, Pesi, Sheru, Aloo and Jini. For some names, we can guess at their origins, such as Mehru being short for Mah-roo and Minoo for Manoocher. Why not be more confident and use the full, meaningful, original name?

Some names point to an Arabic origin such as Adil, Nadir and Reyaze, a comparatively later acquisition. Forgetting the variation in spelling, Khorshid is used by the Parsis for girls and boys. In Iran it is a girl's name and Khashayar (Greek: Xerxis) for boys. The Iranian version is of Gathic Avestan origin and appears in our daily prayer.

One should not be too harsh on the Greeks. They went even further than our own people to give our Prophet a philosophical dimension. We have every right to be anti-Alexander, the one who destroyed Persepolis, but we can compromise by saying that he was a bold (*gostakh* or *maloon*) Macedonian, and not a pure Greek. In India, Egypt and Turkey there are places named after him, but not in Iran. The irony is that in Iran boys are named Eskander (Alexander) as if his sins have been forgiven, and after all a number of his generals and soldiers married Persian girls and naturally mixing of names the same as races became inevitable.

One can go on on this subject for ever. Would it not be better if we call ourselves Mazdayasnan Zarthushti? A Mazdayasnan is the worshipper of Ahura Mazda or by doing this would we camouflage even further our present insignificant identity?

On the light side — would it not be amusing to try to explain to our children how Pithawalla, Daruwalla and Todiwalla families came from the present 'dry' land of Gujerat!

Shahrokh R. Vafadari
Surrey, UK

Community Survival

The closing years of this century have revived much interest in our religion and community. Some innovative, landmark activity (or is it omen?) is under way by the daring initiator of the Zarathustrian Assembly, Mr. Ali Jafarey, by bringing non-Zoroastrian Iranis and others into the Zoroastrian faith in a most systematic, careful and judicious manner, without fear or favor. One hopes this movement will strengthen, spread and be embraced by Zoroastrians all over the world. That may be our ultimate solution. The other welcome landmark is the acceptance of Mr. Neville Wadia into the Zoroastrian faith with due Navjote and the blessings of a majority of High Priests. The river of conservatism has thus started changing its course for the better.

But time is of the essence and it is up to us therefore, to proclaim through our social institutions and ecclesiastical structure that under appropriate conditions, we will welcome in our midst and in our institutions, all non-Zoroastrian spouses married to Zoroastrians, and their children, subject of course to their desire to do so, after proper education, study and practice of the Good Reli-

gion and undergoing the Navjote ceremony. If the Bombay Parsi Panchayet and the Federation of Zoroastrian Anjumans of India are unable or unwilling to face this situation squarely by themselves, let them convene a 'Hama Anjuman' meeting, place before them the true facts of our demographic situation with all possible pros and cons and let them decide by ballot whether to change our course and survive or be adamantly conservative and die out.

Quoting from my paper "A Window on the Twenty-first Century Zoroastrianism in North America and the World" [December 1991, paragraph 25]: "The only solution is:

(a) Admit into the religion/community, with immediate effect (going back retroactively for two or three generations), all non-Zoroastrian spouses and their children and adopted children and widows, widowers, divorcees and their children, irrespective of their faith at birth or caste, color or creed, as long as they are ready, able and willing to accept full and exclusive belief and practice of the Zoroastrian religion, after due education and initiation. That will create closer knit families and better mutual respect and understanding.

(b) Similarly 'accept' those individuals and families who historically professed Zoroastrianism beyond the past three generations, but were obliged or forced to quit such profession for whatever reason; and thereafter

(c) Admit those not historically born of Zoroastrian parentage, but who now sincerely believe in the Good Religion, are prepared to disown their religion by birth, and voluntarily want to become Zoroastrians as a matter of faith and belief, are prepared to undergo a process of religious education and put it into practice, are assessed to be true in their faith and are then initiated by Navjote.

We must now forego our 'holier-than-thou' attitude and also the fib about purity of blood. Historically our kings and noblemen (and also not so noblemen) have married and begotten children through non-Zoroastrian princesses and concubines as well, who are now practicing Zoroastrians. With an eye to our own disintegrating state, let us realize and acknowledge that Zarthustra's religion was of an ethical universalism, of a world brotherhood. The world is not waiting for us — it is passing us by and soon we may become history!

Homi B. Minocher Homji
Weston, Ontario

Absolute purity or righteousness is the best boon to be desired. Whoever loves purity for its own sake, would be blessed and happy.

["Ashem Vohu" translation by Dastur Khurshed Dabu, from "Pocket Avesta" by Homi B. Minocher Homji].

Zarthustra Superstar

I encountered Zoroastrianism strictly from the perspective of modern science. Studying astro-physics, quantum mechanics and such, and trying to fit the new developments in science into a new paradigm, a new world view, I was absolutely astonished to run into Zarthustra.

I believe Zarthustra was really the smartest human ever born, possibly 3,000 years or even more, ahead of his time. Of course Zarthustra was not a scientist and did not claim to be one. Consequently Zoroastrianism cannot explain astro-physics or quantum physics, which are all modern sciences. However, modern science has given us a new picture of life, a new idea of how the universe works, such as the 'big bang', the expansion of the universe, and the principles of entropy and evolution. Now if we apply these achievements on the traditional religions we discover they do not fit. What we know now proves that what we have believed (Christianity, Islam, Judaism alike) no longer makes sense. With one exception, and that is Zoroastrianism.

I look around and see a world in desperate search for God. The belief in God's existence is stronger than ever, but the dominating world religions have lost their credibility because, among many other things, modern science has proved their theologies to be wrong.

Zarthustra's real genius was that he did indeed construct a timeless set of principles based on the only human trait which never changes, the human mind! Like, Zarthustra, I believe in God and I even believe that I believe in the very same God as him, call him Ahura Mazda or the Wise Lord or whatever. Nobody before Zarthustra and hardly anybody after him, including the Sassanian priests who wrote the Vendidad (which is an interesting historical document and heaven for anthropologists, but hardly credible with the modern mind, I'm sorry to say) and even Buddha, Christ nor Mohammed were even close.

Zarthustra was and remains unique. In our search for a founder of the new world view we need to go no further. Somebody intuitively or lead by God already had the picture clear a long long time ago. And that person was indeed Zarthustra!

I am not a Parsi and have no intention of becoming one. I have Parsi and Irani friends and I love Parsi culture and history. However, I am a great admirer and fellow traveler of Zarthustra. Looking at the state of the world today and where modern science and our knowledge of our place in the universe is heading, I would not be the slightest bit surprised if Zarthustra is "the next big thing waiting to happen", with or without the traditional Zoroastrians.

Alexander Bard
Stockholm, Sweden

Conversion: Much ado About Nothing

I do not understand the constant clamoring for 'conversions' to Zoroastrianism. As I see it, it is much ado about nothing. If a person wishes to practice Zoroastrianism, who am I, or the Parsi Panchayet, or the World Zoroastrian Association (if one exists) to stop one from practicing it? As if getting the official sanction for conversion makes a world of difference. It isn't going to change a thing. Zoroastrians will accept you or reject you based on the *ide'e fixe* of what defines a Zoroastrian. The Parsis of India have survived a millennium without conversion, and from what I remember just a few thousand made it to India. Today they number close to a hundred thousand.

Mixed marriages are a bigger issue and need to be addressed. But the true issue facing Parsis (I can only speak about them since I am on more familiar grounds there) today is the gradual erosion of all the values, traditions and culture that defines us. For example, 'nobility' (the virtue par excellence) that used to be the hallmark of the Aryans in general, and the Parsis of India in particular, is a scarce commodity these days; and Western influence hasn't helped much in cultivating this one particular virtue. One cannot expect that to happen in a society where 'nobility' is almost synonymous with the word 'loser', can one? Where people are judged based solely on success and material wealth. Where noblesse oblige is such a rarity that most people cannot comprehend a selfless act. There are a host of other values I can whip around, but one suffices here.

Again there seems to be a lot of confusion regarding Zoroastrians and Parsis. Being a Parsi is more than being just a Zoroastrian from India. Over the centuries, we have developed our own unique culture, reflected in our cuisine, drama, and other social paraphernalia. We adopted some of the local customs; but we have a mutual respect for our religions and traditions, which are unique and lend color to any given society. Being of the same Indo-Aryan extraction has definitely helped to maintain harmony and mutual understanding between the two peoples. There is still a good reason to refrain from 'active' conversion. That it breeds distrust and suspicion between the dominant religion and a minority religion is beyond doubt as the Hindu-Muslim relations have highlighted time and again. For the most, we have practiced our religion in the privacy of our homes or within the boundaries of our community and refrained from public exhibitionism.

That we should abandon the traditional ways that have stood the test of time is an absolute joke! Call the Parsis of India Khshnoomist (at first I thought that to be an ill wind sweeping the sands of the Sahara) or what you will, but we have had a *continuous* tradition in practicing

Zoroastrianism (along with about 17,000 Iranian Zoroastrians), and hopefully will continue to do so. That is the sole reason that Zoroastrianism in its truest form has survived in India.

The rebellious attitude of some of the Parsis towards conversionists is the same kind of xenophobia that the Red Indians felt about the white man. There is, however, a major difference. Parsis have always prided themselves in their ability to adapt to changing times. Till the recent past, these adaptations had been but superficial. But, never in the history of our religion (except perhaps under Arab rule) have our traditions been threatened in a more insidious way than they are today — because of the gradual loss of identity in an increasingly tumultuous world. The saddest part is that these forces of strife lie within the community itself. The forces without only exacerbate the situation.

The world the conversionists talk about is the 'Brave New World' of Aldous Huxley, a bland expanse of assembly-line humans — one an exact replica of the other. The world today recognizes the importance of all species, however few their membership, that lend flavor to our existence. The same rule applies to the Parsis of India. Therein lies your problem of acceptance. Anyone can and should accept you as a Zoroastrian, but to accept you as a Parsi would amount to doing an 'Oliver Twist' on me.

As for the warping of our genes, I would merely draw the people's attention to the contribution of Parsis in India. We have produced pioneers in the fields of aviation, industry (Tatas, Godrej, Wadias) and in hi-tech (Homi Bhabha). These are but a few of the public exhibits I can offer. And this, in the very near past. Our contributions have been way out of proportion to our small numbers. Had our genes been defective, one would not run into accomplished Parsis in all walks of life! I rest my case.

Neville Gai
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

[First appeared on 'Z-net' in response to a debate on 'conversion'. Reprinted with permission of the author.]

Environmental Issues and Ideas to Contemplate

Dr. Ursula Franklin, Professor Emeritus at the University of Toronto notes in her book, *The Real World of Technology*: "The automobile ... has been part of many societies for the last hundred years or so. The support structures for the car population are in place — the production of gasoline and its delivery by service stations, roads and bridges, car ferries, and parking garages. We know about smog and toxic emissions, resource limitations, and transportation problems. Yet in spite of

all this, birth control for cars and trucks is not an urgent agenda item in any public discussion ..."

Reading this book I knew that I was always a worrier for the environment and the consequences of modern technology. While some people worry and others instead do something proactive, I personally have been doing both. In addition to car-pooling, using natural products, earnestly recycling and coaching others to do so too, and eating healthy foods most of the time, the question I raised to myself was: "Are people against nature or are people with nature?"

In this day and age, most people are so busy with their own immediate lives, that they forget to stop and "smell the roses" once in a while, much less worry about the depleting environment! There also seems to be a lack of close-knit communities and the feeling of being 'family'. Now-a-days, everything is a product of modern technology which supposedly aids us to communicate easier and clearer so that we can even "hear a pin drop" while on the telephone. Yet, ironically, instead of helping, technology is a roadblock to normal interactions among people. Instead of going to the grocery store, it is possible to pick up the phone and shop by catalog. Registering for courses at most colleges is by phone through an automated computer system, serving every need of the student (provided they don't mind the elevator music and beeping noises)!

Obviously, it would be silly to dig a hole in our back yards and bury all products of modern technology, and return to the olden days. Instead, by "reducing, reusing and recycling" items that we use everyday, it would drastically improve the planet's future, and most importantly, our own. Just think, would you consider living in a milieu like that of the movie "Total Recall" or "The Terminator", in which Arnold Schwarzenegger acted? I wouldn't think so. Respect the environment!

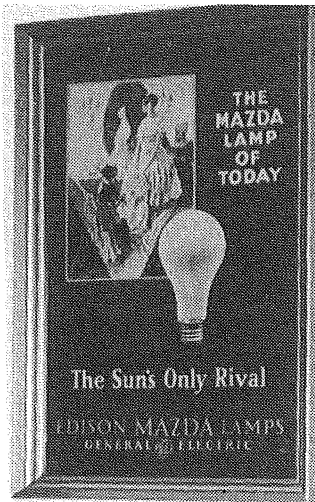
Some suggestions I would like to offer are:

- ☐ Use reusable "Rubbermaid"-like products instead of throwaway plastic and paper bags.
- ☐ Use vinegar as an all purpose cleaner, or natural health food store items, instead of chemical cleaners.
- ☐ Car-pooling is one way to get to know people, while reducing emissions; cycling and walking is even better!
- ☐ Try to eat more unprocessed, organic foods like fruits, vegetables, nuts and legumes, instead of meat.
- ☐ Exercise regularly to reduce stress and keep fit.
- ☐ Visit your Health Food store for more ideas.
- ☐ Good books to read on healthy eating and living are: *Fit for Life* by Harvey Diamond; *The Science and the Fine Art of Food and Nutrition* by Herbert Shelton; and *Fats and Oils* by Udo Erasmus.

As Thomas Edison said: "The doctor of the future will give no medicine, but will interest his patients in the care of the human frame, in diet, and in the cause and prevention of disease." The doctor is within us!

Susan Kaboly-Zadeh
Vancouver, British Columbia

Thomas Edison and Us?



Last month my family and I were very fortunate in getting the opportunity to visit Thomas Edison's home in Fort Myers, on the west coast of Florida.

While touring Edison's home, museum and exotic gardens, I came across a piece of information that I thought would be both amazing and interesting to readers of FEZANA Journal. Incredibly, on reading in detail about the great inventor's life, I found that in 1931, he named his electric light bulb company "The Edison Mazda Lamp Company", derived from Ahura Mazda, the God of Light.

Edison Mazda Lamp Advertising Display c. 1910-20

The word *Mazda* comes from the god of light, Ahura Mazda, in Persian mythology. The General Electric Company used the name to signify a high quality of light bulb. *Mazda* was applied to light bulbs long after Edison's death in 1897.

I could scarcely contain my excitement. I quickly took some photographs of what I had inadvertently come upon. So a trip that had started out being an educational science lesson for my seven-year-old son, turned into a history lesson for me.

It left me with a feeling of pride that Thomas Alva Edison, indeed a genius and the most prolific inventor of our times, had chosen to name his lamp, that today shines brightly in every home, after our Wise Lord, Ahura Mazda.

Havovi Shroff
Boca Raton, Florida

ZARTHUSTI ENTERPRISE

As a service to readers, Zarthusti businesses are showcased in this section. Please support our Zarthusti entrepreneurs and businesses.

Special Business and Entrepreneurship Issue of FEZANA Journal in Winter 95

[Also see advertisement next page]

The next (Winter 1995) issue of the FEZANA Journal will be a "Special Business and Entrepreneurship" issue devoted to promoting Zarthusti businesses and entrepreneurship in North America. It will include:

(a) Inspirational stories of our predecessors, such as the Tata's, Wadia's, Arbab Guiv, and others who, from humble beginnings rose to fame and fortune, and also provided invaluable service to the community.

(b) A presentation, in 'yellow pages' format, of North American Zarthusti businesses, including their start-up stories, ups and downs, and tips for success.

(c) Articles looking ahead to the future, references for starting a new business, plans for a 'Business Expo' ...

All North American Zarthusti businesses, big and small are invited to submit their stories, with a photo, and place advertisements at the special discounted rates. Please call Rustom Kevala at (201) 450-3154 or Rohinton Rivetna at (708) 325-5383.

JOBS

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

Key to Gainful Employment

The international Labor Organization (ILO) estimates that 30% of the world's labor force of about 2.5 billion people is either unemployed or underemployed. Many management theorists insist that the whole concept of a job — steady work at steady pay for the same employer — must be discarded, because the old ways of defining work are no longer meaningful in an era when the success of companies often depends on their 'intellectual capital', the collective brainpower of its employees. The key to uninterrupted gainful employment in the future will be higher education, and the willingness of the individual to apply his or her knowledge to solve the problems of mankind.

Jobs Available

Gas Station Manager in Michigan

A position is available for a gas station manager in Flint, Michigan. Living accommodations may be available. Contact Adil Bharucha (713) 721-8450.

Telecom Network Installation Specialists

15 positions open immediately for people with experience in installing, wiring, cabling telecom equipment; PC and workstation network software; LANs. B.S. in related field is a plus. Travel required. Excellent benefits. Rush resumes to Behram Panthaki, International Business Corporation, 4155 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax, VA 22030, Tel: (703) 691-0400, Fax: 691-0401.

Jobs Wanted

Chartered Accountant

A chartered accountant (awaiting results of CPA examination), with accounting and costing experience in manufacturing companies in India and Indonesia, trading and foreign exchange, consolidation of 23 companies and properties in Singapore, is looking for a suitable position. Now settled in Lincoln, Nebraska. Married, willing to relocate. Contact Ronny Karkaria at (402) 489-5309 or (402) 467-4646.

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.

Appeal for Medical Treatment of Sanam Rabadi

On April 17, a Zarthusti couple and their two daughters were involved in a tragic automobile accident on the Bombay-Pune road in India. The accident proved fatal to both parents, Rusi and Zarine Rabadi. Their younger daughter Ayesha escaped with minor injuries but the elder daughter, Sanam, suffered multiple fractures on her arms, legs and hips and severe spinal injuries resulting in her being paralyzed from below the chest. After orthopaedic and neurological surgery, Sanam is currently undergoing rehabilitation, expected to continue for a year. Sanam has no living relatives from her father's side. To pay for the substantial present and future medical bills for surgery and rehabilitation, Sanam's widowed maternal grandmother has appealed for funds.

FEZANA supports this appeal. Checks payable to FEZANA Welfare Fund, marked "For Sanam Rabadi" may be sent to Dinshaw Joshi at the above address.

Appeals from India

FEZANA has received the following appeals from India:

Farzad Engineer, 22, met with a serious hit-and-run accident in Bombay which has left him with serious injuries to the face requiring several facial reconstruction surgeries. His parents, both bank employees, can ill afford the estimated cost of Rs. 600,000 for the surgeries to be performed at Bombay Hospital.

Aban Sidhwa, whose husband Ervad Homiyar Sidhwa has been a full time dasturji at the Vakil Agiary in

Ahmedabad for 50 years, is undergoing chemo-therapy and radiation treatment for cancer. Ervad Sidhwa is unable to personally finance the heavy cost of treatment from his modest income and has been funded partially by the Ahmedabad Parsi Panchayet, which has requested donations to meet remaining expenses.

Tehmul Kasad, in his forties, is suffering from cancer of the jaw. He underwent surgery on one side of the face last year. He is now to undergo surgery on the other side at a cost of Rs. 65,000. Tehmul of Navsari, India,

CALLING ALL ZARTHUSTI ENTREPRENEURS AND BUSINESSES...

☐ DO YOU OWN A SMALL BUSINESS?

- * Grocery store, Gift shop, Print shop, Restaurant ...
- * Travel agency, Insurance, Photography, Catering ...
- * Make sudrehs, or vasanoo, or cakes or kavabs ...

☐ DID YOU START UP YOUR OWN FACTORY?

- * Manufacturing? Automobile Garage? Workshop?

☐ ARE YOU YOUR OWN BOSS?

- * A consultant? Engineer? Install computers?
- * Accountant? Doctor? Astrologer? Lawyer?

☐ ARE YOU IN BUSINESS?

- * Import/Export? Retail? Theater? Movies?

HERE IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO NETWORK!

FEZANA Journal plans to publish a "SPECIAL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP ISSUE" in Winter 1995, including a compilation of Zarthusti businesses in the USA and Canada.

- * We would like to hear your stories. How did you start? Ups and downs?
- * Also send us a photo of your business or of yourself.
- * We invite your ads. Discounted rates for this Special Business Issue are:

FULL Page:	\$200 marked down to \$150
HALF Page:	\$100 marked down to \$75
QUARTER Page:	\$50 marked down to \$40
Business Card:	\$25 marked down to \$20

- * Most important, send us your ideas and suggestions for networking among Zarthusti businesses and for fostering entrepreneurship.

WHAT SHOULD THE COMMUNITY DO TO BRING BACK THE SPIRIT OF ENTERPRISE? HOW CAN WE ZARTHUSTIS MAKE A SHINING CONTRIBUTION TO THE NORTH AMERICAN ECONOMY AND THE GLOBAL ECONOMY, TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH?

Submit your ideas, stories (less than 1000 words), photos, and ads by October 15, to Rustom Kevala, Chairperson, FEZANA Journal Committee, 753 Mill Street, Apt. 1, Belleville, NJ 07109, Tel: (201) 450-3154; or to Rohinton Rivetna, Guest Editor, FEZANA Journal Business Issue, 5750 South Jackson Street, Hinsdale, Illinois 60521, Tel: (708) 325-5383. AND IF YOU ARE TOO BUSY TO WRITE, JUST CALL!!!

works in a bank and is the sole breadwinner for his wife, two children, and aged parents.

FEZANA supports these appeals and requests donations from philanthropic Zarthustis. Checks payable to FEZANA Welfare Fund, may be sent to Dinshaw Joshi at the address noted above.

Parsee General Hospital Fundraising

We once again request generous-hearted Zoroastrians of the US and Canada for funds for B. D. Petit Parsee General Hospital, Bombay. The funds will be used specifically for distributing free medicines for poor and needy Zarthustis at the hospital.

The small beginning in 1986 has now brought us to our ninth annual appeal. The following amounts have been collected, and every dime is sent to the hospital:

1986	\$6,839	1990	\$9,855
1987	\$5,482	1991	\$8,201
1988	\$6,966	1992	\$12,955
1989	\$7,711	1993	\$11,900

We are very hopeful that this year again, you will come forward to help our sick and needy brethren. Please send checks payable to "Zagny Critical Assistance Fund" to the address below.

Yasmin and Jamshed Ghadiali,
2686 Belcher Street, Baldwin, NY 11510,
Tel: (516) 378-4516.

The Havrashta Foundation



The Bombay-based Havrashta Foundation, set up in 1978 focuses on social research, survey and data-collection projects on the Parsi community. Lately, they have also taken up the publication of booklets on general spiritual subjects and holistic living.

Among its early projects was a systematic computerized documentation of several hundred Parsi charitable trusts and a free Trust Advisory Service.

Recognizing that some important older books on Zarthusti religion and culture may be lost (sometimes even sold as scrap paper!) in private collections, the Foundation undertook to track down and micro-film over 200 titles to preserve them for posterity.

In 1989, the Foundation published "*Zarthushtian*", a handsome, hard-cover book containing the life-sketch-

es of over 400 Parsi men and women in various walks of life, who by their integrity and conscientiousness, have earned the respect of their fellow men. The Foundation is currently in the process of publishing the *Encyclopaedia Zoroastriana*, with write-ups covering 800 terms, concepts, places, institutions, events and personalities of Zarthusti history and culture.

The Foundation invites Zarthustis, in India and abroad, to contribute their time and talents, their services and facilities, their office-equipment and supplies, to help with their publications and survey work. They are also looking for people in USA/Canada who can help with distribution of materials. Financial help will be most welcome. Checks, payable to "Havrashta Foundation" may be sent c/o Modi Electronics and Engineering, 72 Chikhholi M.I.D.C., Ambernath, MAH, 421505, India.

Acknowledgements

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For Welfare:

Anonymous, TX (\$101); Cyrus Austin, AZ (\$125 + \$201); Humata, Hukhta, Huvaresha, FL (\$101); Bahram & Farieda Irani, TX (\$101); Bahram Shroff, VA (\$51); Burjis & Havovi Shroff, FL (\$21); Sam & Lyla Todywala, FL (\$51); P. A. Vazifdar, IL (\$51).

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(\$10); Rustom Kanga, GA (\$11); Eric Karanjawala, NJ (\$10); Russ Kevala, NJ (\$40); Cyrus Khavarian, CA (\$11); Fredoon Khory, ONT (\$15); Bijan Khosraviani, CA (\$10); K. R. Kotwal, TX (\$10); Shirinbanoo Sohrabji Kutar, UK (£15); Amy Laly, WA (\$10); Parvez Madon, QE (\$15); Shavak Madon, ONT (\$15); Noel Mancherje, NY (\$10); Firdausi Mazda, IL (\$10); Riasp Medora, OH (\$50); Hosi Mehta, IL (\$20); Mehar Mehta, FL (\$10); Parvez Mehta, NY (\$10); Virasp Mehta, Pakistan (\$8); Kerman Minbatiwalla, NY (\$10); Noshir Mirza, ONT (\$30); Thrity Mistry, AB (\$65); Behramsha Mizan, BC (\$12); Sohrab Modi, DC (\$10); Areez Mody, MA (\$10); Parvez Mukadam, MN (\$10); F. Namdaran, BC (ZSBC) (\$50); Paterasp Nirumvala, BC (\$50); Behroz Padamsee, NC (\$10); Neville Parakh, BC (\$20); Kairas Parvez, FL (\$10); Noshir Panthaky for Hormazd Dalal (\$15); Pervez Patel, NY (\$20); Mehran Pooladi-Darvish, DE (\$15); Roshni Rustomji-Kerns, CA (\$10); Ronny Sadri, KY (\$10); Pesi Sagar, FL (\$10); Burjor Santoke, CA (\$10); Bahram Shahzadi, CA (\$20); Rohinton Shroff, BC (\$30); Freyaz Shroff, SC (\$10); Burjis Shroff, FL (\$30); Jal Shroff, Hong Kong (\$20); Fali Sidhva, FL (\$20); Bakhti Sinor, PA (\$10); Nergesh Surti, NC (\$10); Rohinton Surti, CA (\$10); Hoshang Surti, ONT (\$15); E. Sutcliffe, MA (\$10); Rohinton Tarapore, LA (\$10); D. Tamboli, Bombay (by N. Contractor), \$65; Tata Limited, NY (\$40); S. Tavariva, PA (\$10); Kavas Thunthy, LA (\$21); Sam Todywala (\$21); Z. Turnbull, BC (\$15); United Security & Communications, FL (\$10); P. A. Vazifdar, IL (\$20); Parviz Varjavand, CA (\$10); D. Vazir, FL (\$10); Jer Vijan, OR (\$10); Jamsheed Wania, NJ (\$10); Parviz Yeganegi, BC (\$100).

Donation of Limited Partnership

FEZANA is deeply grateful to a generous donor who wishes to remain anonymous, for transferring a Limited Partnership unit to FEZANA, for the FEZANA Journal. This yields a generous income every quarter. As our community matures and as we prepare our estate plans, consult your financial planner for advice on creative ways to include FEZANA or your local Association in your estate plan.

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).

Professional, 30, brown hair, blue eyes, good sense of humor. From Bombay with a global upbringing. Likes music, movies, theater, arts, travel, camping and outdoors. Seeks attractive, educated Zarthusi female 22-30. Call (303) 744-3052. [M95-12].

Gentleman, 55, highly educated; seeks energetic partner willing to live in New York area and have fun in the whole wide world. Must love to talk, cook and entertain. [M95-14]

Female executive in Dubai, 48, 5' 6", intelligent, well-groomed and good-natured. Looking for "someone I

can respect, with a ready sense of humor and be compatible and comfortable to live with". [F95-15].

Professional gentleman, 31, with excellent tastes, in New York area. [M95-16].

Gentleman, 35, Ph.D., well-settled, in pharmaceuticals, from California. [M95-17].

Professional gentleman, 41, in sales and marketing in Canada. [M95-18].

Highly educated male, 6', 34, well-settled in California, would like to meet tall, cultured lady with pleasant personality. Contact (408) 737-8755. [M95-19].

Attractive lady, 36, 5' 6", working in airlines in Canada, sociable, enjoys music. Interested in educated, professional, handsome gentleman. Call (604) 272-1946. [F95-19].

Home-loving, religious lady, 47, 5' 2", teacher's diploma from Bombay, very fair, good natured, sociable, loves reading, crafts. Call (604) 272-1946. [F95-20].

Attractive, easy-going aviation professional, 47 (looks 37), 5' 9", likes most activities, emotionally and financially secure, honest, high moral values, dependable, seeking attractive lady. Call (817) 468-8380. [M95-21].

MILESTONES

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

Births

Rustom, a boy, to Beverly and Rohinton Engineer of Chicago area, and brother to Kashmira, on July 12.

Nicholas, a boy to Anahita and Paul Guarino, grandson of Roshni and Darayes Bharda, of New York area.

Gordiya Parsi, a girl, to Anne and Zarir Khademian, of Chicago area, on April 22.

Natasha, a girl, to Babak and Anna Marie Marzbani, in North Vancouver, on January 11.

Alycia Farida, a girl to Chris and Piroza Sherback, of Alberta, on May 31.

Navjote (Sudreh-Pushi) Ceremonies

Zenobia Ravji, daughter of Ervad Jamshed and Dinaz Ravji of Chicago area, at the Arbab Rustom Guiv Darbe Mehr in Hinsdale, on September 2.

Engagements

Jim Engineer, Editor of the "Youthfully Speaking" section of FEZANA Journal, son of Adel & Feroza Engineer of Chicago area, to **Rashna Ichaporia**, daughter of Dr. Pallan and Hutoxi Ichaporia of Womelsdorf, PA, on September 23, in Chicago.

Khushnum Avari of California to Raiomand Taila of Miami. The wedding is planned for December in Los Angeles.

Weddings

Tazneen Behramfram, daughter of Khursheed and Sam Behramfram of Vancouver, BC, to Kersasp Bharucha of Calgary, son of Banoo and Rusi Bharucha of Edmonton, on June 3, in Richmond, BC.

Roxanne Bhatena, daughter of Pervin and Darius Bhatena, granddaughter of Coomi Bhatena of Toronto, to Gary Corbett, on April 8, in Toronto.

Natasha Bilimoria, daughter of Farrokh and Armaity Bilimoria of Chicago area, to David Casey, at Montefiori, in Lemont, Illinois on June 24.

Shermin Sorabji, daughter of Villy and Rusi Sorabji, to Joseph De Biase Jr., in Campbell, CA, on June 18.

Cyrus Dotiwalla of New York area to Arnaz Tarapore of Ahmedabad.

Navaz Daruvalla, daughter of Nergish and late Noshir Daruvalla, to Dan Hurd, in Los Angeles.

Khodi Kaviani of Tacoma, Washington and Mahvash Kaboly-Zadeh of Vancouver, BC, in Elko, Nevada, on April 24.

Zarina Mullan, daughter of Sohrab and Linda Mullan of Chicago area, to James Plath, in Bloomington, IL, on August 11.

Tenaz Turner of Dallas, Texas and Farhad Sahiar of Dayton Ohio, were married on May 13.

Deaths

Father of Pervez Baria and Juzan Jivaasha of Texas, in India, on June 10.

Yazdanyar Bonshashi, brother of Khodarahm (Shireen) Bonshahi, in Bombay on May 3.

Khorshed Daroga, 90, in Toronto, sister of Firoze Sethna of Vancouver, BC, on May 2.

Shirinbai Nariman Desai, 86, wife of late Nariman Desai, mother of Kersi and Mehroo Desai of Montreal and Nergish of Toronto, in Navsari, on May 31.

Spitman Desai, father of Freny Desai of Texas, on May 23, in Bombay.

Parvis Iranpour, 51, husband of Farin, father of Neda and Pooya, of a severe heart attack, in Dallas, TX, on July 20.

Khorshedbanoo Jamshedji Kanga, mother of Viraf (Shirin) Kanga of Chicago area, in Bombay on May 9.

Noshir Kerghamwala, 71, an investment broker in New York for 40 years, in New York City on March 29.

Noshir Dorabjee Jijina, brother of Aloo and Minoo Jijina of California, and Nariman Jijina, in Poona, India, on June 16.

Vijalaxmi Kothari, mother of Kanti (Yasmin) Kothari of Chicago area, in Ahmedabad, on May 11.

Mirza Soroush Lohrasb, 90, husband of Perin, father of Shahnaz of North Vancouver, BC, Farkondeh and Shahbehrum of Victoria, BC, on May 16, in Iran, after a long and successful career as teacher and superintendent of Zarthusti schools in Yezd. For his indefatigable and meritorious service to the cause of education, the Pahlavi regime honored him with the title of "Nishan-e-Elmi."

Homai Hormusji Modi, mother of Bachi Maherji Bilimoria of Chicago area, in Bombay, on July 16.

Golestan Shahzadi, 67, mother of Fariborz (Manijeh) Shahzadi of the Council of Iranian Mobeds of North America, grandmother of Farhang and Arash, in California, on May 17.

Feroze Tata, husband of Sheroo, father of Nozer and Cyrus, and brother of Jer Tata of Toronto, in Bangalore, on July 8.

Freny Udvadia, in Durham, NC, on June 24. Condolences to the Udvadia family, Jamshed, Ava, Oufreez and Peter, of Lansing, MI.

EVENTS AND HONORS

DR. KERSEY H. ANTIA, psychologist by profession, and high priest of the Chicago area Zarthustis, was recognized for his professional excellence and service to the community, by inclusion in Strathmore's 1995 edition of "Who's Who Registry of Business Leaders", in Marquis's "Who's Who in the World", and in American Biographical Institute's "Who's Who of the Year". Only a selected number of "leaders of influence" are chosen for inclusion in these volumes.

JAMSHED B. GANDI was admitted as a partner in the San Francisco CPA firm of Bertorelli & Co. on July 1, 1995. Jamshed has been with the firm for the past nine years as a tax manager. He received his Bachelor of Commerce degree from Karachi University in 1971. After moving to San Francisco, he qualified as a CPA in 1982 and was awarded a Master's degree in Tax from Golden Gate University in 1985.



MEHEROO JUSSAWALLA, leading scholar on global telecommunications policies and trade, has been named Emeritus Senior Fellow at the East-West Center in Honolulu, Hawaii, where she has been a researcher since 1978. Her research has focused on issues such as telecommunications trade between Japan and US, satellite orbital competition over the Pacific Ocean, privatization of telecommunications monopolies, markets for cellular mobile networks, and infrastructure growth in China.

Earlier this year, Jussawalla was presented the Award of Honor by the Pacific Telecommunications Council for her 17 years of service to the organization and to the advancement of communications in the region. Her contributions to the telecommunications field and its political, social and cultural impacts has gained international recognition for the East West Center. Jussawalla is the mother of Feroza Dasenbrook of New Jersey.

JEHANBUX KAPADIA, 89 years young, a senior participant, ran in the 100, 200 and 400 meters dash at the 11th World Veterans Championship in Buffalo, NY, July

13-24. Previously, he ran in Melbourne, Australia and Portland, Oregon. Mr. Kapadia is the father of Kamal Driver of Zoroastrian Society of Ontario.

PHILIP PATEL, son of Dr. and Mrs. Jijibhoy Patel of San Ramon, California, M.D. from Boston University, was appointed to the prestigious Mayo Clinic for residency in Internal medicine, and then will enter into an Interventional Cardiology Fellowship.

NUMAZER (NUMI) PAVRI, son of Dinyar and Dinar Pavri of Pleasant Hill, California, was awarded the Eagle Scout medal on July 16.

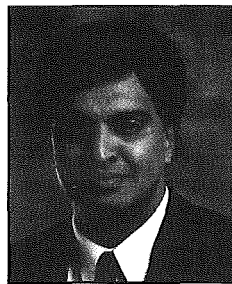
Cellular immunologist YASMIN THANAVALA, of Roswell Park Cancer Institute in Buffalo, NY, is developing a plant-based oral vaccine for hepatitis B virus. "If the vaccine could be produced in edible plant parts, acquiring immunization against the disease could be as simple as taking a bite", she says, "We want a vaccine that does not need refrigeration for transportation, delivery and maintenance." Such plant-based production is viewed as a possible way to make vaccines cheaper and more available in developing nations.

niques to *Atash*. The group, which now has 40 students largely from the youth of the community, whom she trains, has performed at numerous events and dance festivals, and produced shows many of which celebrate ancient Zoroastrian and Iranian traditions — Noruz, Asha va Hista and Mehrgan, all choreographed by herself or by members of the group.

For her work with *Atash*, Shahriari won the "Educator of the Year Award" of North Vancouver City in July 1995.

With a Master's degree in Theatre and Film from University of British Columbia, Shahriari has been a prolific producer of short videos and films, that have been shown and acclaimed, at numerous international festivals and on multicultural channels and Vision TV. Her most recent film, *Salt Please*, a comedy about gender roles, won the first prize in the 1995 Montana Film and Video Festival.

In the Big League



"I never gave up my dream, till finally I landed in the Big League, not as a competitor, but a marketer", says MERZI DUBASH marketing manager for the NBA professional basketball team, the New Jersey Nets.

Nets management added Dubash to their marketing staff to attract

Indian clientele that is growing both in numbers and in prominence in the New Jersey area. They hope to increase ticket sales by getting ethnic groups interested in professional basketball and building good long term relations with them.

National Basketball Association



Since joining the Nets in April 1993, Dubash has produced promising results. He has set up 'ticket packages' with a number of Indian clients. He targets specific sectors of the community — professionals like doctors, lawyers and Indian-owned businesses, which he hopes will lead to corporate sponsorships.

Consumed by the sport, Dubash feels the athletes, such as Nets all stars Kenny Anderson and Derek Coleman, and others with their phenomenal agility and grace, provide excellent role models for our children.

Dubash lives with his wife Parvin and 9 year-old daughter Sheherezade, in Sayreville, New Jersey. With a degree in Track and Field from Bombay, Dubash has a Masters in Sports Marketing and Management from Springfield College in Massachusetts, the very college where the sport of basketball was invented by Dr. James Naismith in 1891.



A Rising Star

A rising star, talented dancer and film producer, MOJDEH SHAHRIARI of Vancouver, BC, has gained recognition in both dance and film.

Dancing since the age of six, Shahriari started the *Atash* Dance Group, an Iranian dance company in her hometown of Vancouver, BC, in 1990. Trained in Classical ballet in Iran, and later Modern and Jazz dance in the US, France and Canada, Shahriari brings a unique combination of western and eastern styles and tech-

A14 THE TORONTO STAR Sunday, July 24, 1994

STORY FOR A SUMMER'S DAY

For the Want of a Cart

BY ZUBIN AUSTIN

It's not only my fault, you know. Timothy J.'s to blame too. And Mr. Pemberton. And everyone else. That means you too. It started in the summer after Grade 7. That was 1989. Timothy J. and I needed some cash. Timothy J.'s dad worked for Mr. Pemberton, so we got a job at Mr. Pemberton's grocery store — The HyperMarket.

The HyperMarket sold everything. Food, clothes, toys, books, wine, drugs, all kinds of good junk. People came from all over just to shop at the HyperMarket. Some people came from as far away as Toronto and Hamilton, no small deal considering both cities were at least two hours away. There used to be lots of little stores in town. I don't remember them, but that's what my mom tells me. But over the years, Mr. Pemberton's grocery store grew to be a supermarket, then a megamarket, then an Ultramarket and now into a HyperMarket. Timothy J.'s dad used to own the drugstore in town; now he works in the pharmacy at the HyperMarket. So does just about everyone else.

Mr. Pemberton's gonna pay us five dollars an hour to help him at the store in the summer. Dad didn't much like the idea — he said "Kids should be kids and not worry about money." But mom said it would be better for me to be outside earning some money instead of inside watching TV all summer. So I made a deal. I could buy a Nintendo and a new GameBoy after the summer was over. The rest of the money I'd put away in the bank for when I go to university.

We started work at 9:30 a.m. sharp. Dad told me to make sure I got to work on time and was neat. He didn't want me making the whole family look crummy. Dad worked for this company that sold plastic shopping bags, and Mr. Pemberton was dad's best and biggest customer. Timothy J. and I rode our bikes to work. He was going to buy a new bike at the end of summer with all his money. Plus save some for university. He wanted a new BMX 2000 series with whitewall tires. He was going to ask Mr. Pemberton if he could get a discount since the HyperMarket sold bicycles too.

On our first day, Mr. Pemberton didn't come to see us. Instead there was a guy from university named Ranjit Singh. He was working here for the summer to buy books and food and stuff for university. He told us what our job was.

"Okay, guys," he said, "I want you to make sure there are no shopping carts in the parking lot. Make sure the ramp leading up to the store is always clear."

That was it, that was our job. All we had to do to make \$5 each hour was to make sure there were no buggies clogging up the lot. When there were, cars kept running into them and getting scratched and customers complained. Or if all the carts were out and not in the store, customers complained again

because their backs hurt from too much lifting.

"This'll be a snap," said Timothy J. He pointed to the little rows of huts set up throughout the parking lot. "All the people gotta do is put the buggies into the little buggy huts. Then all we gotta do is bring 'em in every once in a while. What could be easier?"

"It was a mega-drag, in the heat and in the rain, me and Timothy J. outside ropin' in those stray buggies."

Lots. Though it really didn't require any effort, people didn't put their carts back into the huts. They left carts all over the place — on the sidewalk, on the grass, behind other cars. Once Timothy J. politely asked someone why she hadn't put the cart into the hut like she was supposed to. She said, "Don't they have people to do that?" I even saw my mom leave her cart in the middle of the parking lot!

"Sometimes I think these jerks work harder to leave these buggies where we find them instead of where they belong," said Timothy J. "People are such inconsiderate slob." He was right — everyone was a slob. Tall people, short people, fat people, thin people, white, brown, black, blue-haired people. All of them, the exact same.

It was a mega-drag, in the heat and in the rain, me and Timothy J. outside ropin' in those stray buggies. Bruised knees, sore arms and sunburned backs. Metal cages on four wheels all over the place, standing up, fallen over, left behind by some stupid moron to rust and die. And us chasin' 'em down, sliding each buggy into the one in front, then weaving 'em back to the store like a giant metal, segmented worm. Only to know that in a couple of hours, those buggies would be all over the place again.

I remember how it all started. It was in the third week of that summer, a brutally hot and busy Wednesday in July. And Timothy J. lost it — big time! It was about two in the afternoon — we still had three hours to go. And about a million buggies all over the lot to bring in. We just looked at each other, waiting for one to say "Let's quit." No GameBoy was worth this, and I'm sure Timothy J. would have been just as happy riding his old bike.

Suddenly, he started to run down the ramp away from the store. I thought "That's it, he's bailing," and was about to join him. Instead, he ran straight for one lone buggy at the edge of the parking lot. He grabbed it firmly by its handle and turned right around. He dodged the occasional parked car or concrete pillar and swerved around the other buggies cluttering up the lot, the

way race car drivers do it on TV. And then he went over the edge.

Well, more precisely, he pushed his cart over the edge of the ramp. It fell maybe 10 or 15 feet. He just stood there, looking over the edge, not moving or cheering or doing any little victory dance. I ran up to see what he'd done.

As I looked over the edge, I saw the shopping cart on its side. All in one piece. In a weird sort of way, I felt sorry for that buggy. It wasn't the buggy's fault that no one used the huts, or that Timothy J. was out of control. And there was nothing different about that particular buggy — it was exactly the same as every other cart, yet it was our first victim.

I say "first" because that's when I got the idea. "Look," I said, "these slob never put their carts back. They don't deserve to be able to use them. They need to learn a lesson."

So we started hiding away carts. Under the ramp. In the vacant lot on the north side of the HyperMarket. In the nearby ravine. Anywhere but where they belonged. Sometimes we just left them at the edge of the parking lot. We didn't mean to hurt anyone, honest. Just hide enough of these carts to make people think a little bit.

During the summer, we must have hidden a couple of dozen, mostly on weekends and evenings. It was good to see people finally get concerned. No one seemed to figure out that there were fewer buggies, they just knew something wasn't right. And me and Timothy J., we got a good laugh watching the slob get by without shopping buggies. They'd complain long and loud to Ranjit about how the service at the HyperMarket was getting lousy.

"By August, something funny happened. People just stopped coming shopping."

By August, something funny happened. People just stopped coming shopping. Mr. Pemberton was always walking around scratching his head and muttering about "leading economic indicators." Ranjit turned pretty sour and was always stressed out. Then one day I saw him come flying out of Mr. Pemberton's office. He looked mad. He just grabbed his gym bag and headed out the door. At 1:30 in the afternoon. I ran to catch up with him.

"What's up?" I asked. He stopped and turned to look at me. He looked like he was about to start bawling or something. "Mr. Pemberton had to lay me off. He said business was getting too slow, not enough customers. He's letting some of the cashiers and stockboys go too."

"Oh," I replied, suddenly feeling guilty.

Judges' choice



Zubin Austin of Toronto is a teacher on the faculty of pharmacy at the University of Toronto. He says he has dabbled in fiction writing for years, and also enjoys music, bicycling and squash.

"Maybe if we got all the shopping carts back!"

"Yeah?"

"If we got them all back, maybe people would come back to the HyperMarket! And then my dad — and Ranjit — would both get their jobs back!"

We spent a week trying to undo what we'd done. We spent every evening at the weekend hunting down those buggies and hauling them back. We must have got 20 or 30 of them back by the evening my dad came home — early.

He'd lost his job, too. Mr. Pemberton had stopped buying so many plastic bags, since there were fewer customers. Mom started to cry — I think dad did too. I promised him all my summer money, which suddenly didn't seem like a whole heck of a lot. I told Timothy J. about it and asked him what we should do.

"I don't understand it," he said. "We found almost all the buggies, but the store's still empty. Maybe we could steal some more from another mall or something..."

"The nearest mall was 10 miles away, way too far to walk with a bunch of stolen buggies."

We thought about that idea for while but knew it wouldn't work. For one thing, the nearest mall was 10 miles away, way too far to walk with a bunch of stolen buggies. The HyperMarket had been, for so long, the one store in town. And even when we brought our own buggies back, it didn't seem to do any good. The people just never came back.

September came pretty quick. I didn't have my GameBoy and Timothy J. was still riding his old bike. We didn't mind — about half the kids my class knew someone who had lost a job at the HyperMarket. I never knew before how many people actually worked there. A whole pile of houses had "For Sale" signs on them.

A few months later, Mr. Pemberton announced he was going to close the HyperMarket down. People said they had to move to find other jobs, but my dad's already tried that. He says the aren't any jobs left anywhere. So no he sits and watches the news. Sometimes, I watch the news with him.

I'm really sorry me and Timothy started this whole recession thing! I'm hiding all the shopping carts. But I still don't think it's entirely our fault. If everyone had just taken a few extra seconds to put their buggies back where they belonged, everything might have turned out differently.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! for all your subscriptions and donations to FEZANA Journal. It is deeply appreciated. Check your address label to see if yours is due.

Budding Author: the above short story by Zubin Austin appeared in the Toronto Star, Sunday, July 24, 1994. Austin, a MBA student and a teacher on the faculty in pharmacy at the University of Toronto, always had a flare for writing.

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