



FEZANA JOURNAL

Fall 1999, PAIZ 1368 YZ

Mah Meher, Avan, Adar 1368 YZ (Fasli)
Mah Ardibehest, Khordad, Tir 1369 YZ (Shenshai)
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Prayer in the Zarathushti Religion

Quintessential Prayers

A Zarathushti Prayer
Guide: Suggested Prayers
for all Occasions

Pilgrimage Places in Iran

Perspectives on Prayer

ALSO INSIDE:

FEZANA AGM 99

World Congress 2000 planning

Zarathushti Enterprise

Stories from the Shah Nameh

Publication of the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America

FEZANA

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Associations of North America
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ON THE COVER: Mobed offering Atash
Nyaesh at the Arbab Rustom Guiv
Darbe Mehr in Chicago.

COVER DESIGN: **Zenobia Rivetna**

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Prayers and Zarathushtra's Daena

It seems Asho Zarathushtra was the first one among all mankind to fathom the secrets of the universe in the revelation he was granted by God and to give us religious precepts and prayers based on this revelation. The prayers in which he revels such as in Yasna 28 and 50 of the Gathas [see page 26] are of the same essence (*hazaosha*) as his religion (*daena*). The two are inseparable.

Prayers to Zarathushtra are tied to a divine mission and as long as we pray to God, as does Zarathushtra, for strength and divine blessings for something worthwhile we could accomplish with our body, mind and soul, to bring about Frashokereti (final renovation), he assures us they will not go unheeded. We can hardly do better than review and meditate on the prayers recited by our prophet himself.

He assures us that any prayer that will enhance the *spenta* (beneficent) aspect and forces of God's creation as against the *angra* (malevolent) forces prevailing in nature, will not go unanswered by Ahura Mazda.

To pray is not to beseech God for just our own comforts and needs, but for the good of all and for our own spiritual upliftment as an ally of God in this world. Zarathushtra's own prayers are our best guide in this regard.

My attention was first drawn to this fact when I had just memorized the 72 chapters of Yasna at the age of 11 and did not realize their significance, until I heard Dr. Gilder (Gandhiji's physician and later a Prohibition Minister in the old Bombay province) ending his lecture by citing and explaining Yasna 34.15. I will translate it for you, hoping it will be as helpful to you in your spiritual sojourn as it was to Gandhiji's physician, and albeit to me, for well over half a century:

"O Mazda! therefore, as the proper wish-fulfillment (reward) for my praises (prayers), tell me (reveal unto me) the very best advice and course of actions that would align me with Vohu Mana and Asha (and thus enable me to attain You) (for I know that) through Your Godly Rule (you wish to) render this world fresh (devoid of all suffering, evil and ills that plague mankind) and full of truth (which) accords well with our own goal (because we are Your allies)."

The divine essence within us.

Ahura Mazda is not some distant, unknown and unknowable entity. He resides in all of us, and we can easily find Him if we only stop seeking Him outside of us. My revered teacher, Dasturji Dabu, often compared humans to wild deer who contained the exquisite fragrance of camphor within their own body but being unaware of it, kept running and searching for it elsewhere. He used to say that when "I and my Father are one," through prayers as well as a prayerful, beneficent (*spenta*) life, we will begin to realize and cherish the divinity within us.

Our higher soul, our Fravashi, is nothing but a spark of Him, ever ready to guide us right if we but care to listen to it, which is what Sraosha (later Sarosh Yazad) really means. Instead, we all seek favors from God, myself included at times, and are disappointed when they are denied.

I for one, however, have so often found that what in my ignorance I thought was a favor denied, was actually a great boon and blessing bestowed by Him on me, which

often averted a major disaster. Even when it did not, I felt so ashamed to realize that even a minor nuisance such as a late cancellation by a patient, was almost invariably His way to help me or my other patients out by freeing that time for my or their unanticipated emergencies.

Even as I feel so tuned to Him and so protected by Him all my life, I still do not unfortunately realize the extent to which He looks out for me, more than I could ever look out for myself. But then I try to remind myself that "I and my Father are one" and make up for my ingratitude by working for Him in any way I can, such as by helping others.

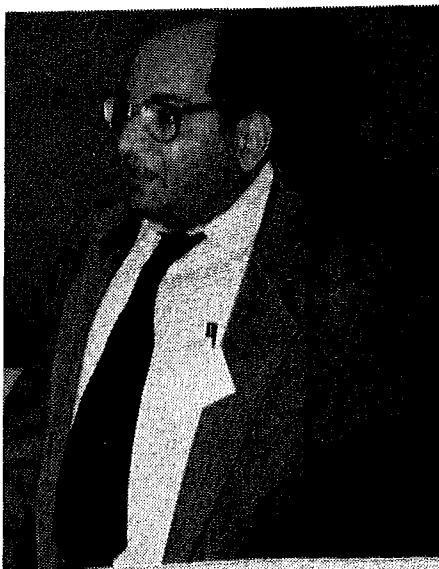
I was also immensely impressed, even as a teenager, by Dastur Dhalla's *Nemaz (Prayers) Unto Ahura Mazda*, and was so overjoyed when my orthodox mother, though too orthodox to subscribe to his liberal views, began reading it aloud to us with great éclat, though she read

few books in English from my father's library. I hope the readers will find it equally inspiring as it contains prayers for various occasions.

Above all, I found praying in Avesta especially the Gathas, after I studied and understood Avesta, most rewarding. It is simply a miracle that we have preserved the very words of our prophet in the form of the Gathas, thanks to the zeal and tenacity of our priests. The best we could do is to study them for the deeper meaning of life, for life to our prophet, is a prayer.

May this issue of FEZANA Journal enlighten us and reinforce the *spenta* aspect in us, through a proper practice and understanding of prayers. ■

Kersey H. Antia,
Guest Editor



More things are wrought by prayer ...



Recitation of prayers purifies the heart and soul and gives one inner strength and confidence. The well known physician Dr. Alexis has said: "Prayer is a force as real as terrestrial gravity. It is the true guide of a soul groping in darkness in the material existence, and helps a fallen soul reinstate himself on the path of virtue. More things are wrought by prayers than this world dreams of."

The primary motive for recitation of prayers is to offer thanksgiving to Ahura Mazda. Man avails himself freely of the gifts bestowed upon him by Ahura Mazda – sunshine, air, water, vegetation – these are the most precious gifts to mankind, and Ahura Mazda is worthy of our highest gratitude. Prayers, to be effective, must be offered with devotion, sincerity of heart and deep yearning for spiritual joy. Prayers provide the best opportunity for introspection. Earnest prayer should be completely devoid of malice and selfishness.

Zarathushtra considered prayer as direct conversations with Ahura Mazda as is very evident in his extant Gathic hymns. The discerning mind has the urge to acquire knowledge and wisdom (Vohu Mana) which is exactly what one needs to follow the path of Asha. On the other hand, it is also suggested that recitation of our sacred Avestan prayers with devotion and sincerity can also uplift the soul.

The prayers one recites individually and privately reaffirm man's communication with Ahura Mazda. Some of the prayers every Zarathushti is expected to know by heart are: *Yatha Ahu Vairya, Ashem Vohu, Yenghe Hatam, Aireyema Ishyo, Kemna Mazda, Hormazd Khodae, Fravarane* and *Din no Kalmo*.

The liturgies performed in fire temples or on special occasions by the priests require ritualistic formalities. The Higher Liturgical Ceremonies like the Yasna (Yazeshne), Visperad and the Nirangdin are performed only in the fire temples by priests who have undergone ablution of Bareshnum. The Outer Liturgical Ceremonies such as the Afringan, Farrokshi and Satum may be performed by any Zarathushti priest.

Individuals and Societies will always look to the medium of prayer as one of the supreme means of attaining spiritual enlightenment. ■

Khorshed Jungalwala
Chair, FEZANA Publications



FEZANA JOURNAL INVITES YOU TO "ADOPT-A-READER"

There are many interested anjumans and individuals, in Iran, India and other countries, who would like to read FEZANA JOURNAL but cannot make the payment. Can you adopt a reader? Please consider sending gift subscriptions to an anjuman or to your family or friends or individual of your choice, or donate to the "Journal Gift Subscription Fund". Please make your check payable to FEZANA and mail to FEZANA treasurer, Rustom Kevala [see back cover for address].

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Some time back I was having a conversation with my good friends, who happen to be Sikhs, Jains and Jews, and who are quite active in serving their communities. While we were assessing the most urgent needs of each community, two themes emerged: *the need for selfless service to the community and the need for unity*.

We all agreed that most of the problems affecting the community can be solved if we are united in purpose. However wrong I may be, our utmost need is unity of purpose, unity of faith and unity of action. We do not spend enough time understanding the other person's point of view: Vohu Mana, Asha and Khshathra Vairya are fine concepts, but as the *Dharma-pada* puts it: "However many holy words you read, however many good words you speak, what good will they do if you do not act upon them?"

Asho Zarathushtra says [Ys.44.11]:

"At ne asha frya dazdyai hakurena"

Let friendly fellowship be granted to us by Truth.

Meher Yasht, 34 provides guidance on "friendly peace" amongst us. Essentially, that guidance could be interpreted to mean:

"Let us unite as one voice, a friendly peaceful voice, let anger be axed and let deceit be begotten."

The future of the Zarathushti community depends upon the selfless service we, as individuals, are able to render to our fellow Zarathushtis.

Albert Einstein used to say: "Only a life lived for other, is a life worthwhile." Many of us believe, as did those who preceded us, that unless you give yourself to some cause, you have not even begun to live. The life of late Gulzarilal Nanda tremendously impressed me. He became the caretaker Prime Minister of India twice even though he never sought the office. He was true 'sevak' (humble servant) and was happy to serve his beloved country in any capacity.

Dinkerd VI provides some insight for those who respond to the call of duty by the community:

"He who seeks fame becomes nameless, but fame belongs to whomever does not require it."

Mother Teresa said: "If you cannot feed a hundred people, then feed just one." Take the responsibility of feeding one hungry Zarathushti child. Take the responsibility of paying one month's cost of one patient at a Zarathushti infirmary. Bear the cost of initiation ceremony of one Zarathushti child in the remote parts of Gujarat. Nothing you do for the community is wasted. They (community members) like children, seem not to notice those who work, hovering, averting eye contact and seldom offer thanks. What we do for the community is never wasted.

Our tiny community is blessed with tremendous intellectual talent. We need to harmonize the talent for the good of the community. Even though we believe in everyone's right to have an opinion (however wrong), do we have to debate every issue before breakfast? Can we not do what is right for the community? Our habit of discussing everything to minute detail prevents us from experiencing greener pastures. "The sole purpose of life is to serve humanity," according to Leo Tolstoy.

It was the disunity among the Sasanian royalty that cost us the



Zarathushti Empire. It was the unity and harmony among us after the first diaspora that made us prosper. Our community has a clear choice: we can follow a true Zarathushti model to guide the destiny of our community for the days to come. That model is: just as Ahura Mazda wisely chose the help of Amesha Spentas to manage the affairs of the world. We can take help from each and every virtuous Zarathushti to stay united and work for the good of the community. Let me quote from *Gems from the Divine Songs of Zoroaster* by D. J. Irani:

"A man or woman who is inspired by the Good Mind, whose actions are guided by the Truth, who works diligently for the welfare of God's Good Creation, and who strives in his humble way to make the world progress towards perfection, will certainly be blessed by Providence with the twin blessings of healthful and happy life here, and immortality ever afterwards in the fair abode of the Greater Father."

We can stay united like the republic of the United States of America or we can ignore the lessons of history from the fractionated Republic of Yugoslavia. The choice is ours. Let us make the right choice, let us work for the unity of the community.

Let your community know that regardless of what happens, you – just one individual – will always be there for the Zarathushti community.

Framroze K. Patel
President, FEZANA

From the Secretary

Final report from outgoing Secretary Mehran Sepehri, who served FEZANA most efficiently as Secretary and Assistant Secretary, with commitment and zeal. We wish him all success in his future projects in the service of the community. - Ed

As I have now completed the full official term as your Secretary, after having previously completed two years as Assistant Secretary of FEZANA, I look forward to using this valuable experience towards other tasks for my community. The secretarial work to me has been more than a position or a task. It has been a commitment and a growth experience, a rewarding and fulfilling experience and a milestone to further help our community and federation.

The office of secretary is primarily responsible for maintaining the records and correspondence of the Federation for producing minutes and notices, and for conducting elections and voting. In this regard, the amount of work is very heavy and requires extreme precision and punctuality. In doing so, I was ultimately involved with the inner-operation of FEZANA and with working with the key players and the associations.

Furthermore, as Secretary, I was involved in a number of tasks and projects at the pleasure of FEZANA President, participated in several committees of FEZANA and the World Congress 2000, and was a faithful member of the Executive. It was fortunate that, as a close and harmonious team, five of us, the Executive Officers of FEZANA, were able to work effectively with unity, to make decisions and policies furthering the objectives of FEZANA.

Having done all my assigned duties and undertakings, I took upon myself to visit a number of associations, to represent FEZANA and to participate in many related religious and cultural events of our member associations.

FEZANA JOURNAL invites readers to send New Year 2000 greetings to your friends and relatives around the world via the "Community Greeting Card" in the Winter 1999 issue of the Journal.

\$30 per insertion

Send your check marked "Greetings", made out to "FEZANA" and your short message (a greeting, message or quotation of less than 50 words) to Jamshed Gandhi, Business Manager [see page 2] by **October 1, 1999.**

I sought to create a personal relationship with all stakeholders of FEZANA. Being a FEZANA officer presented an opportunity to serve my community and to follow the principles I really believe in.

As I am leaving FEZANA temporarily to devote my time to special community projects and my local anjumans, I have no doubt that FEZANA will excel and flourish. The federation, based on democracy and consensus, will appeal to the new generation in the West and shall remain an essential foundation of our community. It is up to us to preserve and follow the letter and spirit of FEZANA constitution, the principles of equality and democracy, and above all, Asha.

I was delighted to find an individual equally qualified and zealous, Arnavaz Sethna, to take the responsibility after me as the next FEZANA secretary. While I will continue to transfer the tasks and be available as much as needed, I believe I am prepared to undertake higher responsibilities and move on the next mission. However, let me assure you that this is not a "Good-bye" but a milestone towards other involvement in projects close to my heart.

For my colleagues and fellow FEZANA Officers, I have nothing but praise and thanks. Without them my work would have been impossible. Special thanks to President Framroze Patel for his full support and mentoring. My gratitude also goes to many others for their advice and help – Farrokh Mistree, Dolly Dastoor, Rohinton Rivetna and Bella Tata in particular, who have always been available and supportive of me. ■

Welfare appeals procedure. At the AGM, FEZANA Appeals Coordinator Dinshaw Joshi proposed that appeals for charitable assistance received by FEZANA and Member Associations need to be coordinated, and donations consolidated, to be effective, especially for donations sent to overseas institutions. The new procedure is being sent to Associations for comment and approval.

FEZANA UPDATE



FEZANA Officers, l. to r, Dr. Rustom Kevala, Treasurer; Mahrukh Motafram, Assistant Secretary; Framroze K. Patel, President; Dr. Mehran Sepehri, outgoing Secretary and Dr. Ardeshir Anoshiravani, outgoing Vice-President.

The 12th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of FEZANA was held on June 19, 1999 at the Keybridge Marriott in Arlington, Virginia, hosted by the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington (ZAMWI). For a no-congress year, attendance was high. As FEZANA gains increasing awareness among its member associations and their individual members, the attendance has increased. This year over 70 individuals attended, representing 15 of 23 member associations.

Much planning was done ahead of time to organize the meeting. As delegates and committee members arrived, they signed in and were given a well organized folder, complete with the agenda and supporting documents. The meeting started with a benediction by **Ervad Behram Panthaky** of Washington DC and **Ervad Jal Birdy** of Los Angeles.

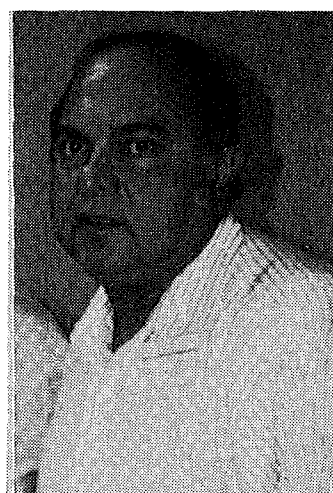
After a welcome speech by **Mehran Khadivi**, president of Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington (ZAMWI), secretary Mehran Sepehri established the quorum and read out the agenda and rules and procedures for the conduct of the meeting. All the preliminaries of the meeting such as adopting the agenda, accepting the minutes of the previous meeting, appointment of Parliamentarian, and such other topics were handled efficiently and expeditiously and the delegates settled to the business of the day.

FEZANA OFFICER REPORTS

In his report, **President Framroze Patel** considered it an honor to open this AGM meeting and commenced by thanking all the Committee Members who supported him during the past year. He then focused on the Seventh World Zoroastrian Congress to be held in December 2000 in Houston, Texas, hosted by the

FEZANA AGM, 1999

At the 12th Annual General Meeting of FEZANA in Washington in June 1999, FEZANA officers, Association representatives, and FEZANA committees deliberate on projects and issues relating to the Zarathushti community in North America and around the world.



ZAMWI President Khadivi, Ervad Panthaky of Washington, incoming secretary Arnavaz Sethna of Houston and incoming vice president Firdosh Mehta of Alberta.

Zoroastrian Association of Houston. Framroze stated that "no problem is insurmountable" and categorically stated that we cannot afford to be divisive. He thanked his fellow Executive officers for their support. His positive message portrayed a community up-building and working together towards the future.

Vice President Ardeshir Anoshiravani, stressed the joyful experience in service of the community despite sacrifices. He pleaded with those who have climbed every mountain, not to get bored but to create a new one. In short, he challenged people to be creative in keeping the community united. Ardeshir also cautioned the dangers of mistrust and the perceived notion of belonging to one 'camp' or the other. Ardeshir praised the Houston community for their degree of tolerance and flexibility. He stated that the Zarathushti reli-

gion is one of wisdom and moderation and we must all display that by having an all-inclusive Congress.

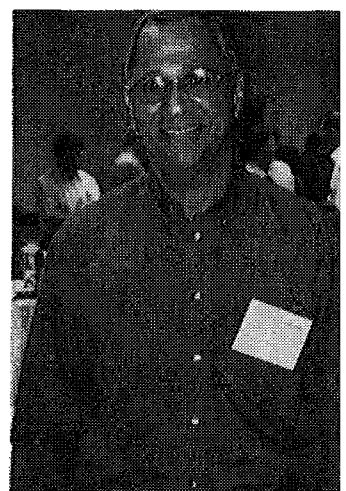
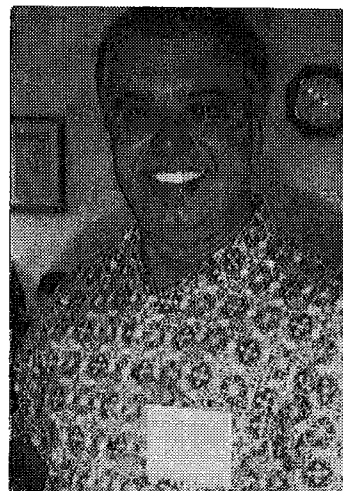
Treasurer Rustom Kevala, explained the balance sheet for the previous year including expenses and revenues and reviewed the proposed budget for the coming year. FEZANA's total assets have increased from \$76,000 in 1997 to \$91,600 in 1998. During the first five months of 1999, they grew by another \$46,000, thanks in part from a large donation from Dr. and Mrs. Kheradi of Rhode Island for the FEZANA Scholarship Fund. Another pledge of a gift of stocks has been received from Mrs. Yasmin Cumming of Santa Rosa, California, in memory of her father, Hormazdyar Damkevala, a long-time resident of Ontario, Canada.

FEZANA's revenue from membership dues is only about \$5,000 per year, while the actual expenses for fiscal year 1998 were over \$44,000. Thanks to subscriptions and donations, FEZANA Journal, which costs over \$20,000 per year, is self-supporting. Other committees with large

revenues and expenditures include Welfare, Zoroastrian Youth of North America and the Zoroastrian Sports Committee. The FEZANA budget for 1999, estimated at \$62,000 against projected revenues of \$63,500, was approved by a voice vote.

Next came reports from the secretary **Mehran Sepehri** and assistant secretary **Mahrukh Motafram**. Outgoing secretary Sepehri was given a standing ovation in recognition of all his work done for FEZANA.

Executive Officer Vacancies. Secretary Mehran Sepehri advised that two positions by rotation were falling vacant this year – vice president and secretary. Mahrukh Motafram, assistant secretary, reported that for the vice president's position there were two nominations – Ardeshir Anoshiravani from California and Firdosh Mehta from Alberta, Canada. Dr. Anoshiravani withdrew in favor of Firdosh. For the position of secretary, Arnavaz Sethna, of Zoroastrian Association of Houston was elected secretary.



ASSOCIATION REPORTS

Delegates of FEZANA member associations reported on activities and programs of their associations and the community. Some highlights are:

Rashid Mehin, CZC, California Zoroastrian Center, said they have now started Farsi Language classes for the children.

Khorshed Jungalwala, ZAGBA, Boston, said they now have a young and progressive committee, taking up new projects that involve every member of the community.

Firdosh Mehta, ZAA, Alberta, talked about the upcoming Avesta Congress being hosted by his association.

Rumi Shroff, ZSBC, British Columbia, announced that his association is now 30 years old. A new project they have started is that of holding Shah Nameh classes.

Hosi Mehta, ZAC, Chicago, bringing levity to the meeting, asked everyone to eat a candy, and stated that just as the candy leaves a sweet taste in the mouth, we should leave something sweet and good for our youth. ZAC is hiring a priest to visit the elderly and give solace to them.

Gev Karkaria, ZAQ, Quebec, Canada, topped Vancouver's claim – his Association is 32 years old, the oldest in North America. They have started a service for their elders' health care and proudly added that Montreal will be the host city for the upcoming Youth Congress, organized by ZYNA.

Dolly Malva, ZAC, California, stated that their emphasis is on the youth and they are encouraging as many youth as possible to participate in the upcoming Youth Congress.

Jal Birdy, TMZA, California, said their Association is 11 years old and they have a membership of about 100 individuals. They hold Jashans and cater to traditional aspects of the religion. Their youth get involved and they co-exist with other Zoroastrian Associations in California.

Mitra Valatabar, ZANT, Dallas, stated that their membership has increased and they celebrated their 10th anniversary on March 21st this year. Their special project is helping the homeless and battered women/children and they get their youth involved in these projects. They regularly hold religious classes.

Hutoxi Contractor, ZAPA, Pittsburgh, stated that theirs is a cohesive group and are focussed on youth as they are the future of our community.

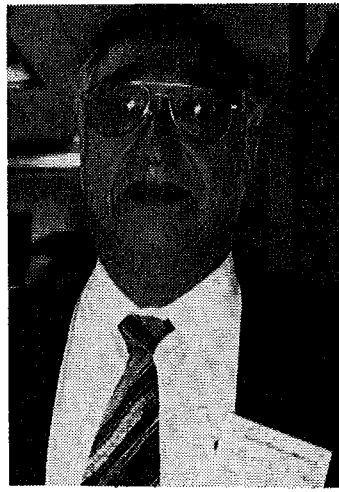
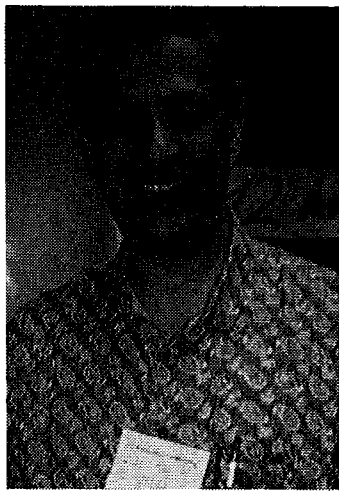
Roshan Sethna, ZAH, Houston, stated that they have regular religious classes for children and youth and apart from participating in association matters, the youth have special projects of helping at homeless shelters. The association has received a substantial sum to complete Phase II and III of the Center and the community is very excited about completing it by the middle of year 2000. She stated that ZAH has extended an invitation to FEZANA to hold its next AGM in Houston.

Freny Ranji, ZAPANJ, said their association is 20 years old. They too hold religious classes for the children. She wished the organizers of the World Zoroastrian Congress every success.

Gev Nentin, ZAGNY, New York, took great pleasure in advising that since the Congress in July 1998, the community has become very vibrant and is continuing the momentum of activities by channeling their energies in various projects – Gujarati classes, cooking classes, establishing support for elders and fund raising for their new building. Referring to the upcoming World Zoroastrian Congress, he made an urgent and impassioned plea for unity and cohesiveness and requested everyone to allow the elected representatives of the Congress committee to make decisions.

Mehran Khadivi, ZAMWI, Washington, DC, advised about plans for their new building.

Kobad Zarolia, ZSO, Toronto, said that the Toronto community is now in the range of 6000 individuals. They have 15 sub committees, two groups of seniors, active youth members, adult education, and other such activities. Their website, www.zso.org is updated every three days and people get the most up to date news from India, Pakistan, Iran and other overseas associations. They have just started a "Seniors Exchange Program" and will advise details later.



Clockwise, from left, Association delegates Rashid Mehiri (CZC, California), Khorshed Jungalwala (ZAGBA, Boston), Hosi Mehta (ZAC, Chicago), Gev Karkaria (ZAQ, Quebec), Dolly Malva (ZAC, California), Jal Birdy and Tahamtan Aresh (TMZA, California), Mitra Valatabar (ZANT, Dallas), Hutoxi Contractor (ZAPA, Pittsburgh) and Roshan Sethna (ZAH, Houston).

COMMITTEES

Khorshed Jungalwala, in her capacity as Chair of **Publication Committee** talked about the FEZANA web-site and FEZANA Journal. She urged people to give gift subscriptions or "adopt-a-reader" especially for readers overseas. The December 2000 issue of the Journal will be a commemorative issue. A one year gift subscription is sent to all Navjote initiates and newly-weds.

Roshan Rivetna, Editor-in-Chief **FEZANA Journal** distributed the Summer 1999 issue with a new cover design in color, and gave highlights of future issues. She too urged everyone to promote the Journal.

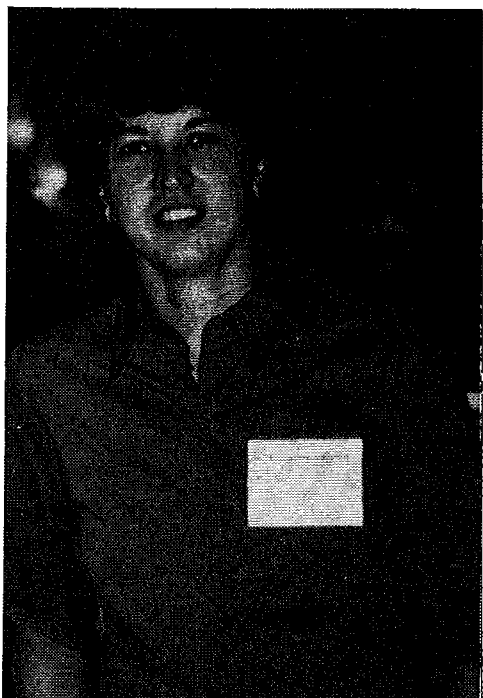
Jehan Bagli, **Research and Historical Preservation Committee**, reported that on the historical front, he has received first hand information on how the Atash Adaran was moved from Aden to Mumbai and is in the process of publishing a book - *Understanding the Practice of Jashan Ceremony*.

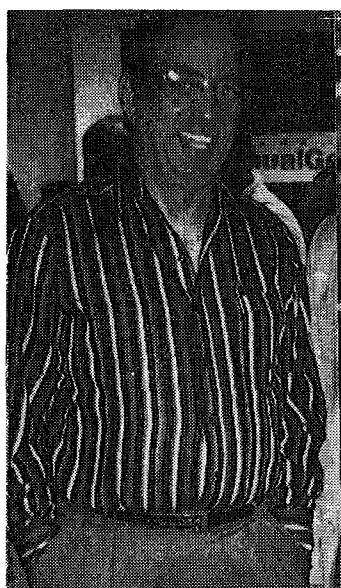
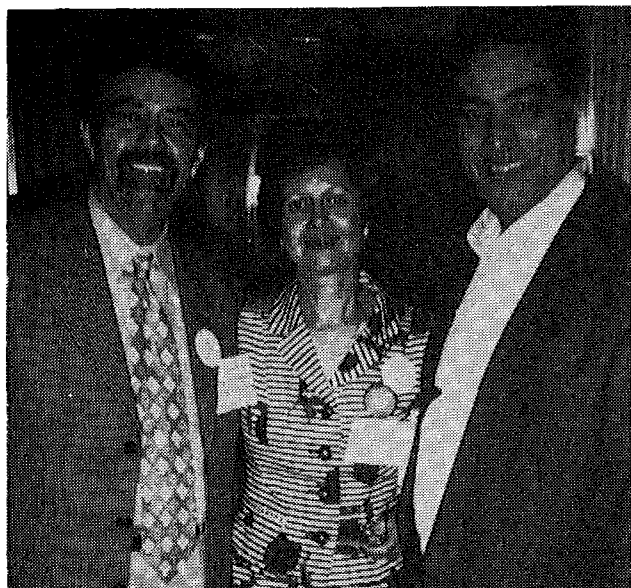
Dolly Dastoor, chair of the **Scholarship Fund**, advised that Terms of Reference have been set up regarding procedures for inviting applications for scholarship, and are awaiting approval from Associations.

Rohinton Rivetna, **External Affairs**, stated that every Zarathushti is an ambassador of the Zarathushti religion and must get involved in their local Interfaith scene. The next Parliament of the World's Religions is scheduled for December 1999 in South Africa, and encouraged Zarathushtis to participate in large numbers. Rohinton will attend the 5-day summit in San Francisco to finalize the charter for *United Religions*; the signing of the Charter is planned for June 2000. He will continue his efforts at UN Religions Meetings with FEZANA's NGO Status.

Sarosh Sukhia, **Public Relations**, talked about an episode in the film *Hercules* where Zarathushtra is portrayed in an offensive manner. He consulted with legal advisers and has sent a letter to the producer, but has not had any response. He said he has tried all avenues that he knows, but has not had any success. He asked the members present to give ideas of how he can make the producers of *Hercules* listen to us.

Mez Birdie, **Small Groups Committee**, reported in absentia, that a majority of the Small Groups continue to prosper and grow but some are experiencing stagnation or slight decline. The decline is due to children leaving





school and venturing out to start their careers. Those groups that are in growth mode, may become ready by the end of 1999 to join FEZANA as an Association. Leaders of various groups have expressed interest in assisting FEZANA with the World Congress in Houston. Farrokh Mistree advised that his group in Atlanta is one of those that is flourishing.

Dinshaw Joshi, Welfare, advised that the present procedure for handling appeals is unsatisfactory. In particular, when appeals are announced in various newsletters, individual donations of \$15 to \$20 to India carry heavy bank charges resulting in less than desirable amount being donated to the individuals. Mr. Joshi presented four options and requested the members to vote on one. It was, however, agreed that all associations publicize appeals in their respective newsletters and channel through the FEZANA Appeals Coordinator.

Negin Demehri, ZYNA, talked about the Youth Retreat in Vancouver and reported that it was quite successful. Presently ZYNA is looking for donations for their web page.

Lovji Cama, Religious Education Committee, lamented the lack of teaching tools for the children and wanted to be involved in bringing out books which are directed to the age group of 8-10 years.

Sports Committee was not represented due to a scheduling conflict with the Zarathushti Games in Los Angeles over the July 4 weekend.

CONGRESSES

Jimmy Mistry, Congress Committee, reported on the Congress activities. He advised that the 11th North American Congress held in Rye Town, New York, was a tremendous success. There were 580 full registrants and 740 for the banquet night. The Youth night was also a big success. Jimmy advised that the proceedings of the entire Congress is on four video tapes and can be purchased for \$10.00 each.

Jimmy gave an outline of the 7th World Zoroastrian Congress. The theme of the Congress is *Zarathushti Odyssey*. Jimmy stated that seed money of \$1,000 was requested from each Member Association to start the work on the Congress and urged those Associations who have not already done so, to give at their earliest.

The next North American Congress will be the 12th Congress in 2002. So far, Zoroastrian Society of Ontario (ZSO) has put in their proposal to hold it in Toronto in the year 2002. Jimmy advised that any association wishing to send their proposal may do so by October 31, 1999.

Farrokh Mistree then gave an overview of the Macro Program for

the 7th World Zoroastrian Congress (WZC2000). He guided the members through the overall theme and mission: "To learn about our Religion, Heritage and Culture, To Celebrate Together as we Launch our Zarathushti Odyssey into the next Millennium". Themes include: Welcoming Zarathushtis from around the world on the first day, going through history and culture, preparing for the next millennium and passing the torch to the next generation. Farrokh emphasized that this Congress should be an inclusionary experience, as the Macro Program sets the stage for convergence of ideas. With the present structure, the role of the Executive Board is that of Arbitrator/Decision Maker. The role of the Program Coordinators is to orchestrate the program.

Rustom Kevala took the podium and read out recommendations of the FEZANA Executive Officers. He started with the background that at the 6th World Zoroastrian Congress in Tehran, FEZANA was given the mandate to organize the 7th World Zoroastrian Congress in North America for the worldwide Zarathushti community. After due consideration of proposals from several associations, it voted that the Congress be held in Houston. Operating Guidelines were prepared to guide the WZC2000 Executive Board. The FEZANA Officers, after careful anal-

From left, Dr. Ardeshir and Shida Anoshiravani of California with Gev Nentin, President, ZAGNY; Kobad Zarolia, President, ZSO; Sarosh Sukhia, Public Relations Committee.

ysis, have concluded that the WZC2000 Executive Board has followed the Guidelines well for all its actions. After this final analysis, the following resolution was moved and put to vote of Member Associations.

(1) FEZANA reaffirm the organizational structure of the WZC2000, including that of its nominated members to the Executive Board and to the Steering Committee;

(2) FEZANA reaffirm the Operating Guidelines for the WZC2000, as developed by Bella Tata in 1997;

(3) FEZANA reaffirm that FEZANA and ZAH will jointly and severally be liable for all aspects of the WZC2000;

(4) FEZANA ratify the Program Development Guide;

(5) To harmonize the FEZANA proposal, which confers greater responsibility to the two Co-Chairs within the existing structure. The two Co-Chairs will work jointly to achieve the objective of a successful Congress and the responsibilities will be worked out independently by the two Co-Chairs.

Considering that this was a very important topic, Framroze Patel allowed extra time for discussion so that all views could be heard. After an exhaustive discussion in which delegates, members of the WZC2000 Committee and observers participated, the Resolution was voted upon and was passed by majority vote. With this resolution passed, the WZC2000 Congress Committee is now forging full speed ahead with the Program. Members present were advised to approach Sarosh Manekshaw with any program ideas that they may wish to develop.

The next item on the agenda was the nomination of Vice Chair, vacated by the resignation of Farrokh Mistree.

The FEZANA Executive nominated Dr. Ardeshir Anoshiravani and members approved. He will be Co-Vice Chair of WZC2000, with Sarosh Manekshaw of ZAH.

WORLD ZARATHUSHTI BODY

At the 1998 FEZANA AGM *Rohinton Rivetna* was mandated to conduct dialog with WZO to come to some understanding. Rohinton has presented two reports on these negotiations – an Interim Report dated October 1998 and a Final Report dated January 31, 1999. The dialog has been productive, with at least three significant areas of agreement.

(1) Acceptance of the concept of a 'Council of Federations' as proposed in the charter prepared for the World Council of Zoroastrian Federations (WCZF).

(2) Acceptance by WZO of the shortcomings of its charter to serve as a representative world body, and its willingness to transform.

(3) Agreement to hold the first meeting of the principal regions that comprise the Council of Federations.

The dialog on this matter is now coming to closure. It is now time for the principal regions of Iran, India, North America and UK to deliberate on the information at hand and decide on their own course of action. For this purpose, Rohinton proposed a meeting of the regions be held; it is tentatively planned for January 10-12, 2000, in Mumbai, or it may be in London per the wishes of WZO.

Rohinton reiterated that as we take our first steps of coming together globally, we must set our sights on harmony, partnering, community, operation by consensus, no pride of authorship, freedom of expression to name but a few. Rohinton requested a mandate from FEZANA to call the meeting of the regions. They could then deliberate among themselves on the options at hand.

Rohinton presented detailed pros and cons of three major courses of action:

● **The first option** is to accept the restructured WZO as is, as proposed by WZO, as one world body with individual members and Federation/Association members. Individual members of WZO to be represented by a 'Council of Individuals' and Federation/Association members of WZO represented by a 'Council of Federations'. The two Councils would then come together (16 members from each) as a 32-member apex body – 'WZO's International Board', based in London. Each of the 32 members will have one vote. This satisfies the concept of one world body, however, it has several disadvantages, primary among them being the 50-50 voting split, giving disproportionately high voting powers to the Council of Individuals.

● **A second option** is a modified variant of the Restructured WZO proposal, with WZO as one organization with two Councils (as above) - a Council of Individuals and a Council of Federations. The two councils would function more or less independently, each with its own membership structure, objectives and spheres of purview. The Councils would come together at a common forum to be called a 'Conference of the Zarathushti Nation' (or any other suitable name) for dialog and discussion and sharing administrative resources. This satisfies the concept of one world body, and (by separating the spheres of purview of the two councils) solves the problem of the disproportionate voting.

This option was proposed because WZO stated that they were not willing to negotiate any further on the 50-50 voting split and would not consider a weightage-based voting structure.

● **A third option**, of two independent bodies, WZCF and WZO, each with their own set of objectives and spheres of purview, working in harmony with each other under a Memorandum of Understanding. This has the disadvantage of being perceived as two world bodies.

Rohinton requested a mandate to take the next steps of arranging a meeting of the representatives of the various regions, who could discuss the available options among themselves and decide on their own course of action. WZO would participate in the meeting. He presented a resolution which was amended to add two members from FEZANA to accompany Rohinton in the process. Names suggested include Firdosh Mehta, Framroze Patel, Mehran Khadivi and Ness Lakdawalla. With the assurance from Rohinton that the Council will not be registered, the following Resolution was proposed by Alberta and seconded by Toronto:

"In execution of the recommendation by Rohinton Rivetna to FEZANA President in his final report of January 31, 1999 on establishment of a Council of Federations of Zoroastrians, this meeting authorizes Rohinton Rivetna and two members of FEZANA as FEZANA representatives to start the process of creation of this Council of Federations in collaboration with other regions. As a first step towards achieving this goal, this meeting also authorizes Rohinton Rivetna to arrange a meeting with other regional representatives. The agenda of the meeting shall include formulation of the structure of the council and its relations with World Zoroastrian Organization (WZO). A report on the discussions at the meeting shall be submitted to the FEZANA President by March 31, 2000. This report will be distributed to all members prior to calling for a motion to form the Council of Federations." This Resolution was passed by a majority vote.

Although it was close to 8:15 pm, Firdosh Mehta was allowed to show the slides of Alberta for the upcoming **Avesta Conference** there. Kobad Zarolia announced that a month later the **Third Annual Zarathushti Business Conference** would be held in Toronto.

In wrapping up the meeting, Framroze Patel advised that due to time

Charting the Odyssey

Report of the meeting of the 7th World Zoroastrian Congress Committee, Washington, DC, June 1999



WZC2000 team members, charting the course for "The Odyssey" 1 to r, Congress co-chairs Dolly Dastoor and Homi Davier, ZAH Representative Yasmin pavri and Secretary Arnavaz Sethna.

Sunday, June 20 dawned a bleak rainy day in Washington DC but that did not dampen the spirit of the World Zoroastrian Congress 2000 (WZC2000) Committee. Armed with the mandate given by the FEZANA members, the previous day, to continue to work towards

constraints all the items on the agenda were not completed and may have to be addressed by mail to the associations. Framroze thanked the host association, the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington, and everyone present for their active participation and thanked Ahura Mazda for an orderly and successful meeting. The meeting concluded with a short prayer by Ervad Behram Panthaky. ■

*Submitted by:
Mehran Sepehri, FEZANA Secretary
Arnavaz Sethna, Secretary-elect
Mahrukh Motafram, Asst. Secretary*

achieving the objective of a successful Congress, the WZC2000 Committee confidently rode in the convoy from Keybridge Marriott to start a productive meeting at the Arbab Rustom Guiv Property and Prayer Room. The atmosphere was pleasant and relaxed, the mood was upbeat, and after the benediction by Ervad Behram Panthaky, the meeting commenced.

Dinshaw Joshi, chair of the **Awards Committee** presented the rules for nominations and eligibility. Nominations for the various categories of awards will be requested shortly. On the **Entertainment** front, co-chairs **Fereshteh Khatibi** and **Gordafriid Aresh** are planning an unforgettable journey – a Zarathushti Odyssey.

Yasmin Ghadiali, **Fund Raising** chair, aims to collect \$600,000. An aggressive fundraising has been started, with letters to Zarathushtis, requesting a pledge of \$200. Within 12 days of launching the project, \$12,000 has been raised. Addition-

ally, Zarathushtis from all over the world are helping in any way they can. Two Lufthansa Airline tickets – donated by Homi and Nergish Davier, netted \$7,000 in a raffle; Ervad Soli Dastoor donated all his *ashodads* amounting to nearly \$1100; Pakistani Zarathushtis sent over \$3000. *Yezdi Sidhwa*, Fund Raising vice chair is trying to obtain a car from Ford or GM which would be raffled. The money thus raised will go towards: awards and scholarships; assist about 30 students in realizing their dream of traveling to the USA; sports; and above all, keep the registration low enough for as many Zarathushtis as possible to participate.

The budget prepared by *Sarosh Collector*, treasurer for the Congress and FEZANA President Framroze Patel, was presented by Sarosh. The analysis of revenues and expenditure will enable the Committee to decide on the much awaited Registration Fees.

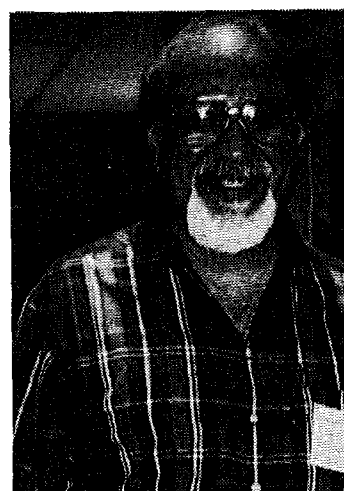
mum coverage to the Congress. The eight-part registration packet, introduced by *Rustom Engineer*, Chairman **Hospitality Committee**, has an attractive front cover design, donated by Mannan, a Graphic Artist from Karachi, Pakistan. Farsi language Registration packages are also being prepared for Iranian Zarathushtis.

SPECIAL EVENTS/LEGACY PROJECTS

Special Events outside of the five day Congress are also planned. A **Scholastic Competition**, by *Dr. Jehan Bagli*, inviting the youth to write an essay on “A Blueprint for a Viable Zarathushti Community of the Future”. *Cyrus Mehta* and *Piroozi Cooper* are planning a **World Zarathushti Orchestra**. *Aban and Purvez Rustomji* are spearheading **Zarathushti Field Student (ZFS) Program** in which 30 Zarathushti students who never dreamt of coming to the United States, will be given the opportunity to visit. And, of

are: **Quilt Project - Khursheed Bamboat** in London, England, is putting together some 60 logos of the Zarathushti Associations world wide into a Quilt which will be displayed at the Congress. *Jimmy Kumana* has undertaken to prepare a **Docu-drama of Zarathushti Heroes**. *Firdosh Mehta* is planning a **Time Capsule** which will contain Zarathushti artifacts and present-day memorabilia. The capsule will be buried during the Congress. *Rohinton Rivetna* hopes to finalize the charter for a **Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce** at the Business Meeting in October so that the first meeting of the Chamber can be held during the Congress.

Prof. Kaikhosrov Irani and *Prof. Farang Meher* have been invited to choose a legacy project. Dr. Farang Mehr intends to have a biography written about his contribution to the Zarathushti community and to the



l to r, Cyrus Mehta, orchestrating a Zarathushti orchestra; Dinshaw Joshi, planning for World Community Awards, Kae-marz Dotiwalla, programming; and Yasmin Ghadiali, spearheading the fund-raising.

To assist the overseas attendees, particularly from Iran, India and Pakistan the **International Relations Committee** co-chairs *Ardeshir Anoshiravani* and *Rohinton Rivetna* are in communication with the State Department and the White House. They have urged all North American Associations to approach their Congressmen to assist in obtaining visas. *Roshan Rivetna* and *Aban Rustomji* of the **Public Relations Committee** are forging ahead providing maxi-

course, there will be **Jashans** around the world.

LEGACY PROJECTS

Farrokh Mistree's **Legacy Project** intends to contribute to the next generation who would proudly say: “Yes, the Legacy Projects unveiled at WZC2000 did make a difference to our Zarathushti community”. Proposals for this project are invited from Zarathushtis around the world. Legacy Projects already in process

preservation of the Zarathushtrian culture. Prof. Irani has not formally replied but has verbally indicated his interest in writing about the Philosophy of the religion. A book authored by and *Feroza Punthaky* – an illustrated **Zoroastrian History of 3500 years** will also be launched during the Congress.

Earlier during the meeting, Homi Davier had stressed that this Congress will be an all-inclusive Congress that

would have worldwide participation. The **Program** as explained by **Sarosh Manekshaw** aims to achieve just that. The old Program Committee has been restructured and under the 'Macro Plan of the Congress' an innovative new 'Track System' has been adopted as opposed to the traditional system of programming. Each day will have one plenary session and then break up into various concurrent sessions. The plenary session will set the theme for the day. **Pal-lan Ichaporia**, in charge of the "Religious Track", has gathered a well-balanced team representing different ideologies; and **Kaemerz Dotiwalla**, on the **Social and Historical** front, is planning to have a museum-to-museum exchange.

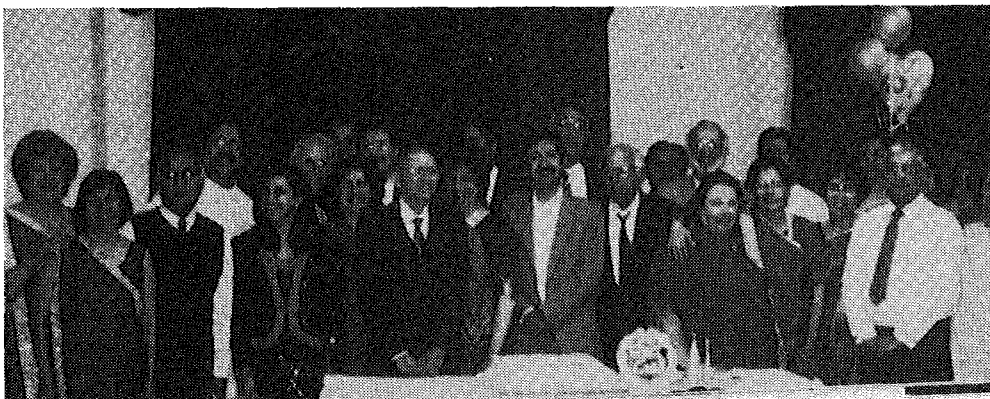
And where is the Congress being held? **Roshan Sethna** and **Pervin Sagar**, co-chairs of the **Operations Committee**, have managed to secure J. W. Marriott, in the ritzy *Galleria* area of Houston, for a room rate of \$79.00 plus tax per night, quadruple occupancy. Their Convention Center is being renovated and can seat approximately 1500 people.

Sounds exciting? Book your airline tickets from now! All roads will lead to Houston in December 2000.

The reporting session ended around 1:30 p.m. and while the main hall was being prepared for a biryani/Iranian lunch prepared by the willing volunteers of ZAMWI, everyone gathered in the Prayer Room where Ervad Panthaky led the congregation in Atash Nyesh. Within minutes the table was laid with the aroma of biryani filling the air - desserts were prepared by Iranian volunteers. During lunch, many friendships were renewed and new acquaintances established and as each group started to leave, it marked an end to yet another successful meeting. WZC2000 is grateful to ZAMWI for their warm welcome and strong support. ■

By **Arnavaz Sethna**
WZC2000 Secretary

■ ON THE NORTH AMERICAN SCENE ■



Zoroastrian Association of California celebrated its 25th anniversary with over 300 Southern California Zarathushtis congregated at the Buena Park Hotel in Los Angeles, on May 8. ZAC was started in 1974 and has flourished and grown to well over 200 families now. The evening was celebrated with good food, festivities and music, including the world famous(!) ZAC "Golden Girls" singing Chaye Hame Zarathushti. President Dolly Malva proudly reflected on the accomplishments of this small but vibrant community.



Miyoko tum Suden (left) of the ASCA Horin Overseas Cultural Exchange program visited the FEZANA AGM in Washington in June 1999 to discuss Zarathushti presence in a proposed inter-religious "Theme Park" in Japan.

"Can Frashokereti - a world filled with universal harmony, goodness and happiness be materialized on this earth?" says their flyer. The project, on a 100 acre site in Japan, hopes to provide the perfect environment for "the renovation of the world." Here it is planned, all major religions, represented by their temples and churches and a university, will co-exist in harmony, where people can "pray for peace of mind, peace for the earth and for harmony in the universe." There is no financial commitment from the religious communities, as the park will be funded by revenues from an accompanying 'International Market'.

Read

FEZANA JOURNAL

Pir-e Sabz festival in Vancouver

On Sunday, June 13 (Ird of Khordad 3737 Yz.) in memory of the traditional Pir-e Sabz pilgrimage celebrated on the same date in Iran, Zarathushtis of North America found their way to the mountains to pray and celebrate.

Over a thousand feet up, on the mountaintop, from a long and narrow, winding road facing the beautiful Shannol Falls, near Vancouver,

ties also join ZSBC in reviving this day of pilgrimage as we used to do (and still do) in the motherland.

- Feraydoon Demehri

Khordadgan celebrated in Los Angeles

On June 20, 1999, Khordad 30, 3737, the Persian Culture and Civilization group under the California Zoroastrian Center presented the national, cultural and religious festival of Khordadgan as a one-day seminar at

Students invited to join Mission to Mars

These are exciting times and I want to include everyone in the frenzy that is spreading like wild fire. I am talking about the Mission to Mars.

Within this decade 1996 - 2005, Mars exploration started with the first lander called *Pathfinder* carrying the rover called *Sojourner*, which left earth in 1996 and landed on Mars on July 4, 1997. That was a great event, watched live by 10,000 people gathered at the Pasadena Convention Center.

The second event, the Polar Lander, left earth in January 1999 to land on Mars on December 3, 1999. On that date, a three-day *Planetfest* has been planned at the Convention Center in Pasadena and again, worldwide attendance is expected. On this mission, names of a million school children world wide have been sent to Mars on a CD.

There has been a recent announcement by NASA asking for names of school children to be sent on the third mission which will take off in April 2001. To participate in this offer, children are invited to submit

their names at the website:

<http://spacekids.hq.nasa.gov/2001>

They will receive a NASA certificate with their name on it. Frame it and hang it up on the wall in the child's room. This excitement will make them curious to know more about this exciting Mission. There is also a contest to give an appropriate name to the microphone that will land on Mars. The closing date is October 1999. For further information, call Aban Daruwalla at (909) 273-4634.

[Aban Daruwalla is a Weapons System Scientist at the Naval Warfare Assessment Station, Corona, California, and volunteers at Jet Propulsion Lab in Pasadena, California.]

the Rustom Guiv Dar-e-Mehr in Westminster (Los Angeles), California on the theme: *"The Good Religion and Persian Culture - a Look into the Future."* with traditional Persian lunch, music and folk dancing. The language of the seminar was Farsi.

- K. Eddie Mehrfar

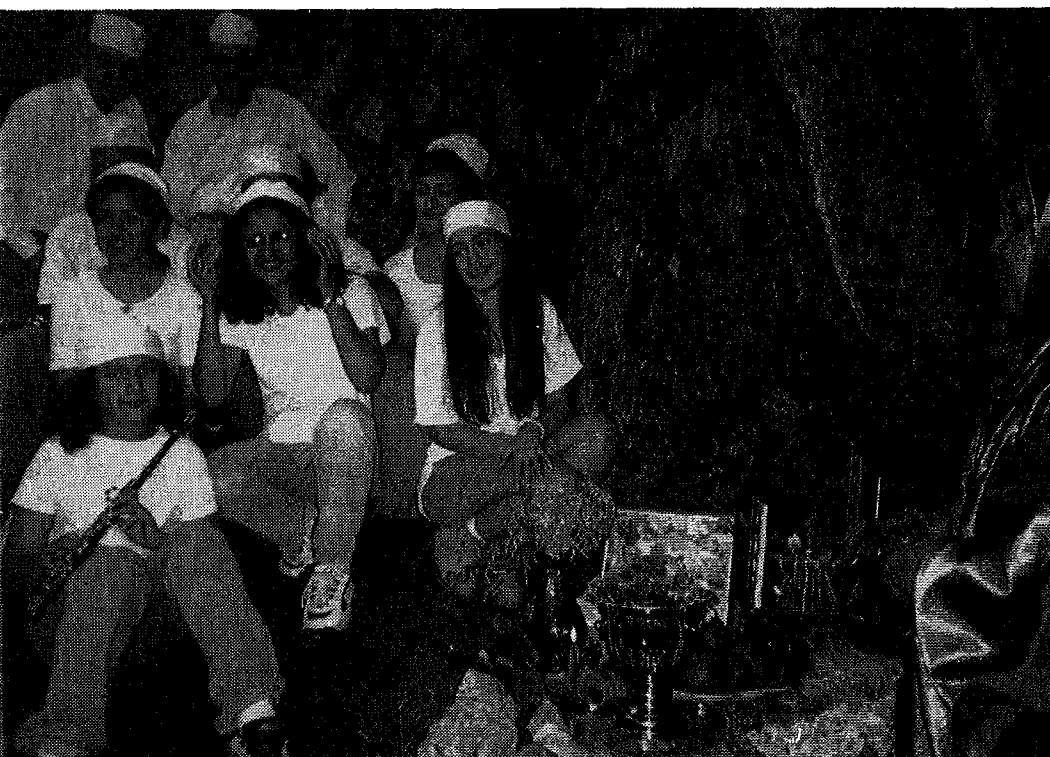
Musician in Chicago

Zarathushtis visiting Chicago area are invited to come to one of the truly inspiring performances by Maestro Farobag Cooper, conductor of the Chicago Philharmonia. Farobag has graciously offered complimentary tickets, to any interested Zarathushtis. Call (773) 493-1915.

BC, a group of over 160 Parsi and Iranian Zarathushtis stood up to pray from the Avesta. Singing aloud from the Gathas, the group of Zarathushti youth ("The Gatha Group") with white caps and raised hands brought pride and tears of joy. They sang spiritual and traditional songs in Avesta and Dari.

Lower down, in the picnic area, a group of the not-so-athletic cooked *Sirug*, a traditional Zarathushti pastry, while the youth played volleyball and the elderly shared stories of old times in Yazd and taught the youth how to make the sirug.

May this newly revived tradition continue and may other communi-



On the eve of Jashan-e Tirgan 3737 Z (Thursday, July 1, 1999), with the arrival of athletes to the campsite located at California State University, Long Beach, LA, the functions of the Sixth Zarathushti Games were underway.

These games first started in 1988 in Los Angeles and have taken place in cities throughout the US. The Seventh Zarathushti Games will be held in December 2000 in conjunction with the Seventh World Zoroastrian Congress in Houston, Texas.

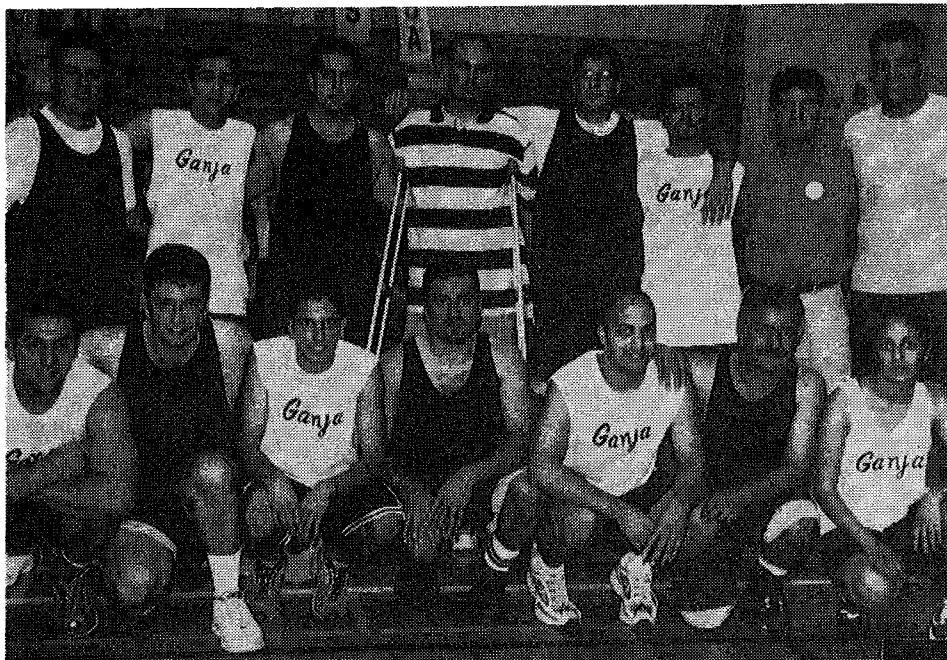
Games played over three days were Basketball, Volleyball, Badminton and Track and Field for adults; and Basketball and Track and Field for youth under 13. The total number of athletes were 165 and 55 children. The majority of the participants were from the US. Among the other countries, Vancouver, Canada had the biggest contingent.

First day. The Opening Ceremony on Friday, July 2, started by carrying the torch from the Zoroastrian Center Dar-e Mehr in Anaheim by Zarathushti runners to the gymnasium. There, Mobed Bahram Shahzadi lit the *afringani* from the torch and recited the prayers along with Zarathushti children, followed by some words of welcome.

Then *The Gatha Group* of Vancouver performed traditional songs, including the Gathic *Yatha Ahu*, *Ay Iran* in Dari and Farsi, and *Z Sport*, composed specially for this occasion and performed for the first time. The games started with the adult Basketball and Volleyball events.

By night, it was party time; some 140 people enjoyed the disco until 2:30 next morning. Many missed their breakfast the next day!

Second day. The games continued and Badminton Singles started (Doubles was canceled due to time and space limitations) and the finalists were determined by the end of the day. In the afternoon, Track and Field competitions as well as youth games were started and finished on the same day.



Sixth Zarathushti

After all that running, people were still excited about the cruise soon to follow. Close to 300 shimmering people took buses to the dinner cruise and dance party. The uplifting music, delicious Persian food, the view, and of course Zarathushti company, made it a memorable night. The lucky last ones reached their beds at 3 am.

Third day. The last day, which came too soon according to all the participants, was mainly for final games except Track and Field. On this day, Koorosh of San Jose beat Ganja of Orange County to become first in adult Basketball; Fravahar of Valley lost to San Diego Mehr in adult Volleyball and accepted second place; Ferdous Irani won the Gold medal in Badminton and Iran of LA beat the Azad in youth Basketball.

Closing ceremonies were watched by about 400 people. It included short speeches from the Zoroastrian Sports Committee, representatives of 2000 Games in Houston, representatives of the Montreal Youth Congress, our distinguished Tennis player Khushchehr Italia and a performance of two songs by *The Gatha Group*. Prizes and medals were awarded to the winners by Tahamtan Aresh and Iraj Movandadi and Dariush Dianat (a

Zarathushti sports pioneer in Yazd). Finally, the torch was passed to representatives of the next Zarathushti Games in Houston, Texas, amidst loud applause from the audience. The events were broadcasted live on the Internet through the good efforts of our Dr. Mehran Sepehri and were publicly announced on 24 Hours Radio in LA.

The ZSC Board Members (Yasaman Farin, Behnaz Dianat, Bijan Khosraviani and Artemis Javanshir) and committees certainly put on an excellent program and we thank them and all those who supported this historic event.

Sponsors and Committees. This year's event was sponsored (donation of over \$500) by Mrs. Parimarz Javanshir, Mr. Tahamtan Aresh and Dr. Darab Bozorg-Chami. We would like to thank them as well as each and every one of all the other donors for their generosity. Over 40 individuals helped make this event a success. Due to space limitations we cannot name them all. Below are those who served as sub-committee coordinators.

Games: Sahel Javanshir, Jahngir Mehr-khodavandi, Keykhosrow Ezati, Farshad Ezati and Rostam Bakhtari. **Registration/Accommoda-**



Far left, First (Kourosh of San Jose) and Second (Ganja of Los Angeles) placed basketball teams.

Left, Men's 100 meter.

3rd: Mahzad Khosraviani

Men 100 meters:

1st: Farhad Ardesheirpour
2nd: Koorosh Dianat
3rd: Behrooz Mehrkhodavandi/
Esi Boustani

Men 400 meters:

1st: Jehangir Mehrkhodavandi
2nd: Behrooz Mehrkhodavandi
3rd: Farhad Mehrkhodavandi

Men 1600 meters:

1st: Nima Mojgani
2nd: Sam Partovi
3rd: Tamouchin McCreless

Men 4/100 meter:

1st: Nima Mojgani, Tamouchin McCreless, Bahman Khadivi, Farhad Ardesheirpour
2nd: Rostam Bakhtyari, Esi Boustani, Jahangir Mehrkhodavandi, Behrooz Mehrkhodavandi.
3rd: Koroosh Dianat Mehraban Foroughi Hormoz Rashidi Ramin Mehrabani.

80 meters Boys (7-8 years)

1st: Payman Mandegari
2nd: Cyrus Mehrfar
3rd: Arman Mazdeyasni

80 meters Boys (9-10 years)

1st: Baback Mehrkhodavandi
2nd: Shahryar Mondegar
3rd: Arsham Dianat

80 meters Boys (11-12 years)

1st: Sorosh Amanat
2nd: Cyrus Desai
3rd: Zavosh Rashidi

80 meters Girls (4-6 years)

1st: Nusheen Goshtasbi
2nd: Aryana Behmardian
3rd: Parisa Sorosh

80 meters Girls (7-8 years)

1st: Yasaman Amanat
2nd: Avishan Khosraviani
3rd: Shirin Ashtari

80 meters Girls (9-12 years)

1st: Anahita Behmardian
2nd: Baharch Mehrkhodavandi
3rd: Yasaman Khadivi

Games in L.A.

tions/Book-keeping: Behnaz Dianat, Shahriar Adorbehi, Ramin Khodadai. **Security/Transportation/First Aid:** Hormoz Jangi, Dr. Ramin Amani. **Advertisement/Publication/Database:** Niaz Kasravi, Iran Adorbehi. **Coordination/Fund-raising:** Yassi Farin, Azita Dianat. **Photos/Video/Reportage:** Feraydun Demehri, Kamiz Soheil, Mehran Sepehri. **Informal Dance:** Saina Kasravi, Babak Homarkar. **Dinner Cruise:** Artimis Javanshir, Bijan Bastani-Nejad. **Opening Ceremony:** Mitra Dinairi. **Closing Ceremony:** Niaz Kasravi. **Awards/Resources:** Babak Namiri, Azadeh Gabrizi. **Children/Statistics:** Fariba Farkhani, Susan Parvareh, Susan Kaboly-Zadeh.

RESULTS

BASKETBALL

Teams: Koorosh of San Jose, Mitra from Orange County, P-shooters (Parsi Shooters) from California, Ganja from Newport Beach, Yaran from Los Angeles, Arash-e Vancouver, TMZA from California and Azad from all over.

1st: Koorosh from San Jose
2nd: Ganja from Orange county
3rd: Andisheh from Valley

VOLLEYBALL

Teams: Iran from LA, San Jose Mehr, San Diego Mehr, San Jose Yekta, Fravar from Valley, Arash-e Vancouver, Azad (all over).

1st: Mehr of San Diego
2nd: Fravahar from Valley
3rd: Iran of Los Angeles

BADMINTON SINGLES

1st: Ferdaus Irani, San Diego
2nd: Feraydoun Demehri, Vancouver
3rd: Roohintan Desai, Texas

YOUTH BASKETBALL

1st: Iran (Sorosh Amanat, Arsham Dianat, Anahita Dianat, Yasaman Amanat, Ramtin Parvareh, Zavesh Rashidi)
2nd: Azad (Dariush Khosravian, Yassaman Khadivi, Cyrus Desai, Roya Waltman, Yasmin Varjavand)
3rd: Asha (Arash Ashtari, Feridoon Dadachanji, Kayvan Maneshi, Shervin Dolatzadeh, Kaveh Bastani, Kayvan Mandegari, Kaivan Dadachanji, Shervin Sepehri)

TRACK AND FIELD

Women 100 meter:

1st: Susan Kabolizadeh
2nd: Bahar Mojgani
3rd: Sima Namiri

Women 400 meters:

1st: Bahar Mojgani
2nd: Susan Kabolizadeh
3rd: Sima Namiri

Women 1600 meters:

1st: Afrouz Demehri
2nd: Negar Demehri

IARF International Interfaith Conference

Soonoo Engineer of Vancouver, BC provided the Zoroastrian presence at an International Interfaith Conference organized by the International Association for Religious Freedom, July 29-Aug 3, at the University of British Columbia. The theme of the Conference was "Creating an Earth Community" and topics covered included: revering nature, nurturing spirit, sharing wealth and preserving freedom.

CPWR visits Chicago Darbe Mehr

"The World in our Backyard" is a reality in Chicago, and prompted the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions to develop the Religious and Spiritual Communities Visitation Project. The program, which is free and open to the public, offers a different religious community as a host site each month. The Zoroastrian Center in Chicago was the host site for the May 1999 visitation event. Visitors participated in the Adar Mah Jashan and partook of a Parsi lunch.

Interfaith in the UK

Zoroastrians are well represented in Interfaith work in the UK. Through the efforts of Jehangir Sarosh, a Zoroastrian Prayer and Resolution joins those from other major religions for the Week of Prayer for World Peace, October 10-17. The following prayer is recommended by Churches Together in England for use at midnight on December 31:

*Let there be respect for the earth,
peace for its people,
love in our lives,
delight in the good,
forgiveness of past wrongs,
and from now on, a new start.*

National Consultation on Religion and Conservation

A historic meeting was held at the WWF Head Office in Delhi, India, on the National Consultation on Religion and Conservation, on April 21, UN Earth Day. For the first time the Zarathushti religion was represented and the Fravashi appeared side by side with the emblems of other religions. Dr. Shernaz Cama read a paper on "The Zoroastrian Statement on Nature", opening with:

"Here, in this place, we praise Ahura Mazda who created the Herds, and Asha, the Truth, who created the Sacred Waters and Plants, the Heavenly Lights, the Earth and all Good Creations." [Ys. 37.1].

Piloo N. Jungalwalla accompanied by General Adi Sethna of Delhi, read:

THE ZOROASTRIAN PLEDGE

We pledge ourselves to protect and honor this Bountiful Earth which gives us sustenance, the Sacred Waters and Plants and all Animals, wild and domestic.

We honor the Sun with love and devotion as also the consecrated Fire, emblem of truth which destroys evil and illuminates our path through life.

May the Fravashis (Guardian Spirits) of the Righteous come to help all humankind through fragrant breezes and sweet-scented flowers.

As followers of Zarathushtra, may we never forget this pledge.

Atha Zamyad, Yatha Afrinami! ■

1999 Avesta Conference, Calgary

The 2nd International Avesta Conference will be held September 24-26, at the Ramada Hotel in Calgary, Alberta. Co-sponsored by the Zoroastrian Education and Research Society, FEZANA and the Zoroastrian Association of Alberta, the aim of this unique conference is to promote knowledge and understanding of all aspects of Zoroastrianism. World-renowned scholars from India, Israel, Japan, Russia, USA, UK, Germany and Italy will be presenting papers. Contact Firdosh Mehta at (780) 438-4371, FMehta@RNG.com

Pluralism Project Symposium

A symposium on Civil Society in Multireligious America, sponsored by The Pluralism Project, will be held at Harvard University in Cambridge, on November 18-20, just preceding the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religions in Boston. Interested persons please contact Rohinton Rivetna at (630) 325-5383, who represents Zarathushtis on the Pluralism Project Advisory Board.

Parliament of World Religions, South Africa

Capetown, South Africa is the venue for the 1999 Parliament of the World's Religions, from December

IN COMING ISSUES OF FEZANA JOURNAL

Winter (Dec) 1999: Social Issues Facing Zarathushtis in North America

Maneck Bhujwala will be Guest Editor. Articles may be submitted to Mr. Bhujwala at 3023 Oldfield Way, San Jose, CA 95135, Tel: (408) 270-9173.

Submission deadline is October 1.

Spring (Mar) 2000: The Dawn of the Next Generation

Shahriar Shahriari and Shervin Shahriari will be Guest Editors of this Nouruz 2000 issue ushering in the new millennium. With ideas contact them at shervin_shahriari@excite.com or shahriari@usa.net. *Deadline is January 1.*

1-8. A tour for Zarathushti participants is being planned prior to the Parliament. Registration for the Parliament, organized by the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions, is \$350 (individual) or \$300 per person (family/group). Contact Rohinton Rivetna at (630) 325-5383.



"Networking 99" Zarathushti Business Conference in Toronto

[See Zarathushti Enterprise in this
issues for details]

The 1999 Zarathushti Business Conference "Networking 99" will be held in Toronto on October 8-10, at the Toronto Airport Ramada hotel. The conference fee of \$100 includes coffee, lunches and Gala banquet. All Zarathushti business persons and entrepreneurs as well as those contemplating business are invited. For information, contact Kobad Zarolia at (416) 745-4622.

K. R. Cama Conference

The K. R. Cama Oriental Institute is convening the Third International Congress, January 6 - 9, 2000, on the theme of "Indo-Persian Cultures: Their Character and Impact on Civilization." Eminent scholars from India as well as abroad are expected to participate and present papers. Contact Mrs. H. N. Modi, K. R. Cama Oriental Institute, 136 Bombay Samachar Marg, Fort, Mumbai 400 023, tel: +91 22 284-3893.

Calendar of Festivals September 1999 to February 2000

Fasli (F), Shenshai (S) and Kadmi (K) dates for festivals from September through February 1999, are listed below:

Fravardian Jashan

Mah Fravardin, Roj Fravardin Tue Aug 10 (K)
Thu Sep 9 (S)

Maidyozarem Gahambar

Mah Ardibehesht, Roj Khorshed - Daepmeher
Wed Sep 1 - Sun Sep 5 (K)
Fri Oct 1 - Tue Oct 5 (S)

Paitishahem Gahambar

Mah Sheherevar, Roj Ashtad - Aneran
Sun Sep 12 - Thu Sep 16 (F)

Jashan-e-Mehergan

Mah Meher, Roj Meher Sat Oct 2 (F)

Ayathrem Gahambar

Mah Meher, Roj Ashtad - Aneran Tue Oct 12 - Sat Oct 16 (F)

Jashan-e-Avangan (Avan Ardivisur Parabh)

Mah Avan, Roj Avan Tue Oct 26 (F)

Maidyoshem Gahambar

Mah Tir, Roj Khorshed - Daepmeher
Sun Oct 31 - Thu Nov 4 (K)
Tue Nov 30 - Sat Dec 4 (S)

Jashan-e-Adargan (Atash nu Parabh)

Mah Adar, Roj Adar Wed Nov 24 (F)

Death Anniversary of Zarathushtra

Mah Dae, Roj Khorshed Sun Dec 26 (F)

Maidhyarem Gahambar

Mah Dae, Roj Meher - Bahram Fri Dec 31 - Jan 4 (F)

Jashan-e-Daegan

Mah Dae, Roj Daepdin Fri Jan 7 (F)

Jashan-e-Bahmangan

Mah Bahman, Roj Bahman Sun Jan 16 (F)

Paitishahem Gahambar

Mah Sheherevar, Roj Ashtad - Aneran
Fri Jan 14 - Tue Jan 18 (K)

Jashan-e-Sadeh

Mah Bahman, Roj Meher Sun Jan 30 (F)

Ayathrem Gahambar

Mah Meher, Roj Ashtad - Aneran Sun Feb 13 - Thu Feb 17 (K)

Paitishahem Gahambar

Mah Sheherevar, Roj Ashtad - Aneran
Sun Feb 13 - Thu Feb 17 (S)



WZC 2000 CONGRESS CALLS

SEVENTH WORLD ZOROASTRIAN CONGRESS
Houston, Texas, December 28, 2000 to January 1, 2001
 Visit the WZC2000 web site at
<http://www.fezana.org/WZC2000>

An exciting program is taking shape for the five days of the Congress:

- Dec 28:* **Welcoming the Zarathushti World** with Opening Ceremonies, Zarathushti fair, exhibits, legacy projects, international exchange; "Getting to Know You" lunch; World Night music extravaganza.
- Dec 29:* **The Zarathushti First and Second Millennia**, celebrating art, archeology, music, culture, history and achievements of women. Sports Awards Lunch. "Go Texan" Night
- Dec 30:* **Anchoring Religion is a Zarathushti's Life**, focusing on contemporary life. Honors and Awards Lunch.
- Dec 31:* **Preparing for the Third Millennium**, forecasting the next 100 years. Professional/Interest Groups Lunch. Millennium Ball.
- Jan 1:* **Passing the Torch**, launching the Odyssey with a Jashan by young priests. Closing ceremony.

A two-day sports event, "**The Seventh Zarathushti Games**" will precede the Congress, on December 26 & 27. For further information on the Games, contact Rustom Khoshnavian at rkhoshnavian@simsci.com.

Sight-seeing and culture tours will be arranged pre- and post-Congress.

Venue. The Congress will be held at J. W. Marriott located in the prestigious Galleria district. Rooms are \$79 + tax for quad occupancy per night. Early registration available. Contact Rustom Engineer for early registration: RustomE@aol.com.



To support the various events of the Congress (sports, honor and awards, field exchange students, cultural/museum events, orchestra, legacy projects, essay prizes, etc) and to subsidize registration especially for the youth and overseas guests, aggressive fund-raising is in progress.

- **Pledge Drive.** Each family in North America is being requested to pledge \$200, which can be paid in 4 installments. The same campaign is also being promoted around the world.
- **Advertisements.** Businesses, organizations and well-wishers are invited to place a message or advertisement in the commemorative brochure:
 Back cover-\$10,000, Inside front cover-\$7,500, Inside back cover- \$5,000,
 Full page color - \$2,000, Full page B&W - \$500, Half page - \$300,
 Quarter page - \$200, Business card - \$75.

Send pledges/ads/messages to Dr. Yasmin Ghadiali, Fundraising co-Chair, 2686 Belcher Street, Baldwin, NY 11510, USA, tel: (516) 378-4516

Musicians invited for World Zarathushti Orchestra

Zarathushti musicians from all over the world are encouraged to be part of an orchestra that will perform at the WZC2000. Professionals as well as amateur musicians of all ages who have attained some level of proficiency are invited to apply. The pieces will be selected based on the response, and will be sent to the selected participants. Rehearsals will take place two days before the event, on December 26 and 27, 2000. For further information and the application form, contact Pirooz Cooper 253 Spring Water Lane, New Canaan, CT 06840, tel: (203) 966-3895 or Cyrus Mehta at (212) 662-0932 or cyrusmehta@aol.com.

Worldwide Trophy Design Competition

The WZC2000 Awards Committee is announcing a worldwide competition to design the award trophies to be presented at the Congress.

Entry criteria. Open to Zarathushtis worldwide. An artist may submit more than one design. Design should have a Zarathushti theme and incorporate the WZC2000 logo. Design should be the same for all award categories. Trophy size should be about 18 inches. Trophy material may be glass, crystal, bronze or other material. Design should include space for plaques bearing (a) "World Zoroastrian Congress-2000" and logo; (b) award category; (c) name of award sponsor if any; and (d) name of winner. Designs shall become the property of WZC Awards Committee and shall not be returned.

Prize. The winner will be recognized at the WZC2000 Awards Lunch and awarded a prize of \$1000.

Submit artwork with details necessary for manufacture, by March 31, 2000, to: Dinshaw Joshi, Awards Committee, 4515 Willard Ave, Apt S-1609, Chevy Chase, MD 20815, fax: (301) 654-0001, email: dfjoshi@erols.com.

Global Scholastic Competition

To stimulate the imagination of Zarathushti youth in the area of Zarathushtrian culture, history and religion, in the spirit of "Unity within Diversity", the Board of the WZC 2000 calls upon the youth of the community to participate in a Global Scholastic Competition. The event will tap the potential of the Zarathushti leadership at the dawn of the new millennium.

The competition entails writing an essay paper on the subject:

"A Blueprint for a Viable Zarathushti Community of the Future."

Entry criteria. Must be a Zarathushti youth of age 17 - 21 by Dec 31, 2000. The paper must be no more than 4000 words, in English, preferably in 12 point font, with 1 inch margins.

Judging. Papers will be judged for their innovative ideas, development of the concept, clarity of expression, linguistic skill, and their spiritual, cultural/historical input. A panel of Zarathushti judges, capable of rendering impartial and objective appraisal, and commanding high stature of communal respect, will judge the papers.

Prizes. Two entries will be selected as a winner and a runner-up. The prizes will strictly constitute an educational scholarship to be utilized for further education. The first prize will be a scholarship of US\$5000 and the second prize of \$3000. The two winning authors will be invited to the Congress and their registration fee, boarding and lodging will be borne by the Congress.

"Intent to Participate". Interested youth may send their signed "Intent to Participate", giving their name, date of birth, address, phone, fax and email address by February 29, 2000, to:

Dr. Jehan Bagli
61 Sayre Drive, Princeton, NJ
08540, email ajehan@aol.com.

Open Letter to Zarathushtis of North America ...

Many of you have asked for an update on the WZC2000 after the FEZANA Annual General Meeting on June 19th and the Open Forum for the Congress on June 20th, 1999. We would like to report that at the FEZANA AGM, the Zoroastrian Association of Houston proposed a resolution that asked the FEZANA Member Associations to reaffirm the organizational structure of the WZC2000 and ratify the restructured program. With this restructured program, we are moving forward. For those of you who are interested in specifics, the details as minuted will be available from the Secretary of FEZANA, Arnavaz Sethna, and from the secretariat of the Congress, Behroz Daruwalla and Arnavaz Sethna.

As co-chairs we want to extend our hand of invitation to *all Zarathushtis* worldwide to join the WZC 2000 Team in producing an all inclusive congress which will cut across various ideologies. We want this congress to bring people from all parts of the world together for five fun-filled days, and immerse them in a total Zarathushti atmosphere spanning millennia. While so doing we also want to spend time planning for our future, and developing strategies which will stand the test of time in the 21st century. The *"future"* belongs to all of us; together we will win or lose the legacy that each of us is striving so hard to preserve for our children and our children's children. *We wish to pass to the next generation a well-lit torch and not a dying ember.*

To create a spirit of globalization, this Congress will have a few firsts: the addition of distinguished Zarathushti liaison officials like Dr. Mahyar Ardeshiri from Iran, Mrs. Homai N. Modi from India and Mrs. Toxy Cowasjee from Pakistan; an international sports festival; a global scholastic competition; international community awards to recognize our own; a Unity Quilt; World Zarathushti Orchestra; International Chamber of Commerce; Time Capsule; a film festival; cultural exhibits; opportunity for 30 youth to visit North America from India, Iran and Pakistan with all expenses paid; and if we really work hard – one united world body for our community. Hope all your special projects and the program which will be sent to you shortly will enthuse you as much as it does us. We seek your support and contributions to ensure a successful congress to help us lead the way to the 21st century.

It is only with the strength of the North American community behind us, with their moral and financial support, can the Seventh World Zoroastrian Congress – the Zarathushti Odyssey 2000, mark the 'Coming of Age of the Second Zarathushti Diaspora' and be an event for all of us to remember and cherish for a long time to come.

Atha Jamyad Yatha Afrinami!

Homi Davier and Dolly Dastoor, Congress Co-chairs

The Zarathushti Millennium Time Capsule

As a Legacy Project of WZC2000, a 'Time Capsule' will be buried on the grounds of the Zarathushti Heritage and Cultural Center, Houston, Texas, the venue of the Congress. The capsule will contain memorabilia, artifacts, literature, video, audio, coins, etc, reflecting our religious heritage. Zarathushtis around the world are invited to participate by donating funds, ideas and items. Contact Firdosh Mehta (780) 438-4371, Fax: (780) 436-0004, email: fmehta@RNG.com.

Seventh World Zoroastrian Congress (WZC2000)

Houston, Texas, USA - December 28, 2000

World Zarathushti Community Awards - 2000

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

For the first time in the history of World Zoroastrian Congresses, **World Zarathushti Community Awards - 2000** will be presented during WZC2000. Awards will be presented in the following five categories to Zarathushtis selected internationally by independent panels of judges for their contribution to the promotion and advancement of the knowledge of Zarathushti history, theology, culture and heritage, those who have given of themselves through humanitarian service or philanthropy, those who have achieved excellence in their chosen profession, performing arts or literature and a youth who has shown outstanding leadership:

Category A. Outstanding World Zarathushti Award

Category B. Outstanding World Zarathushti Award for Humanitarian Services and/or Philanthropy

Category C. World Zarathushti Award for Excellence in Business or Profession

Category D. World Zarathushti Award for Excellence in Performing Arts or Literature

Category E. World Zarathushti Youth Award for Outstanding Leadership

WZC Awards Committee invites nominations of deserving Zarathushtis for consideration for one of the above award categories. Nominations proposed and seconded and signed by the nominee in acceptance of the nomination, must be submitted in the prescribed "Nomination Form". Nomination package with details of the five award categories, evaluation criteria that will be applied in judging the nominees, rules governing the awards and the Nomination Form will be available from mid-September 1999, from:

- Your local Zarathushti Association; or
- WZC Awards Committee, c/o Dinshaw Joshi, 4515 Willard Ave, Apt S-1609, Chevy Chase, MD 20815-3664, Tel: (301) 654-6259; Fax: (301) 654-0001; email: dfjoshi@erols.com.

Closing date for receipt of nominations by the WZC Awards Committee is **January 31, 2000**. Nominations received after that date or not submitted in the prescribed Nomination Form shall not be considered.

Seventh World Zoroastrian Congress (WZC2000)

Zarathushti Field Student Program

As a special project of WZC2000, the **Zarathushti Field Student Program** will sponsor 30 students from India, Pakistan and Iran who might never have dreamt of coming to the US, to come to Houston and attend the Congress as guests of WZC2000.

The Committee is appealing to generous-hearted sponsors interested in making this dream come true for a deserving youth. Further details and selection criteria will be forthcoming from program coordinators Purvez and Aban Rustomji, tel: (281) 493-1275; email: rustomji@tenet.edu.

Message from

FEZANA President

This is an open invitation to all Zarathushtis of all persuasions to participate in the forthcoming Seventh World Zoroastrian Congress. I am particularly addressing those North American Zarathushtis who have never attended a North American (FEZANA's) or a World Congress. Well, you cannot afford to miss this Congress. It is in your back yard. The Congress is ideally priced. The hotel charges are very reasonable. It is expected to be the largest gathering of Zarathushtis on North American soil.

I am not going to discuss the program, because it has already received wide publicity. There are various ways in which you can participate. First, register for the Congress early. Secondly, we need your sweat equity and your financial participation. Fund-raising Chair, Yasmin Ghadiali has appealed for each North American Zarathushti family to pledge \$200 (tax-deductible) to the Congress. Please donate generously. You can donate office equipment. Or you can agree to underwrite registration fees or airfare of a deserving Zarathushti youth from overseas.

There is another compelling reason for you to participate. The Zarathushtis of Houston and members of WZC2000 Committee have been dreaming for the success of this Congress for the last three years. I am amazed at their level of enthusiasm, dedication and selfless service. We just cannot let them down. If you are not convinced, please call any one of us: WZC2000 Committee members, the FEZANA Officers or even your own association president. Finally, do I have any doubt that the Seventh World Zoroastrian Congress will be a success? Here is my answer: *I have learned never to underestimate the potential and power of the Zarathushti spirit.*

- Framroze K. Patel

Preserving the Parsi Cultural Identity

Dr. Homi Dhalla founds the World Zarathushti Cultural Foundation in Mumbai, for the preservation and promotion of Zarathushti culture.

"The process of modernization, commercialization and the rapid pace of technological advance," laments Dr. Homi Dhalla of Mumbai, "are eroding some of the cultural aspects of the Parsi community." Deeply committed to reversing this trend, he founded the *World Zarathushti Cultural Foundation* (WZCF) in 1998, and has, since, undertaken some significant projects:

- **Hormazdiar Dalal** has been commissioned to write the *History of the Parsis of India, 1947 - 2000*.

- **Capt. Hormazdiar Desai** has undertaken the project of recording the *Contribution of the Parsis to the growth of Navsari*, through 2000.

- **Library Project.** WZCF arranged for the entire collection of

1600 books of Ervad Pavri of Nagpur to be housed at the Cowasjee Dinshaw Library in Pune, and made available to the public; the goal being to disseminate our sacred and secular literature to the various cities of India where Parsis reside.

- **Reprint of Books.** The first among a number of important books that WZCF would like to reprint, is a

gem of a prayer book: "Daily Prayers of the Zoroastrians" by Framroz Rustomji. [See page 34].

- **Preserving Avesta-Pahlavi Manuscripts.** The Godrej Foundation has donated a munificent sum

for equipment to transfer some important manuscripts belonging to Dasturji JamaspAsa, onto CD-ROM.

- **Gujarati language classes** have been introduced in schools in Mumbai.

- **Gujarati Poetry.** WZCF is preparing an "Anthology of Parsi Gujarati Poetry", with English translations of about 60 poems.

- **Gathas and Music.** A few Gathic stanzas have been translated by Dr. Dhalla and set to

music by Meher Jansen.

Dr. Dhalla is seeking funds to support these ongoing projects and chart new directions in helping preserve our glorious heritage. Donations may be sent to Rohinton Rivetna, (5750 S. Jackson St., Hinsdale, IL 60521, tel: 630-325-5383) whom Dr. Dhalla has requested to serve as International Advisor to WZCF. ■



In view of the notable work done by WZCF, the Zoroastrian Association has donated one office room, at Tardeo. Photo shows Mr. Aspi Golwalla inaugurating the premises, while Dr. Dhalla (right) looks on.



Navroze Jashan in New Zealand.

First to Greet the Year 2000

Greetings from New Zealand! In another few months we will be welcoming the year 2000. All sorts of preparations are going on around the country for the Big Day. It looks like half the world will be in New Zealand to be the first to see the sunrise on January 1st, 2000. The most excitement is in a town called Gisborne on the East coast, where all the accommodations have been booked up at 10 times the normal rates!

As for our community here ... our population is growing quite rapidly with 8 new families arriving within the last three months. We now have over 95 families and a population of around 270. On March 21st we celebrated with a hilarious natak and set up a *Haft-Seen* table at the Shahlori's home. Both the events were taped by TVNZ and telecast on our TV Channel 1 ...

Yazdi Mistry
Auckland, New Zealand

Children at WCRP - Auckland Program

Last October saw a landmark joint performance by children of the Zoroastrian Association of New Zealand (ZANZ) and the Traditional Mazdayasni Zoroastrian Association of New Zealand (TMZANZ) at an interfaith program of the World Council of Religion and Peace, here

in Auckland. Seeing 25 little ones in white, heads covered, on stage singing songs from Khojeste Mistrree's collections, was a real treat and music for the heart.

*Ervad Jamsheed B. Sidhwa
Auckland, New Zealand*

Hambandagi in Perth, Australia

On May 2nd, at 10 am, Mrs. Katayun Shahzadi lit the diva for the first hambandagi, held at the Bali Gardens, Rhodes Hotel on the banks of the River Swan in South Perth, Western Australia. A heart-warming group of over 50 followers of our great faith (of all denominations) gathered in response to this noble gesture from the Shahzadi family. Her husband Manucher gave an enlightening talk on the meaning of Zarathushti philosophy and history. Their son, Niel led the prayers.

The Shahzadi family has sown the seeds at their own expense and effort to hold the hambandagi every Sunday hereafter. Let us hope the dream of passing on the flame to the next generation gets the support it deserves and finally bears fruit in this our new homeland. We may be a microscopic community in a remote corner of the world, but the annals of our illustrious history can be further lengthened by spiritually staying together under the banner of Manashni, Gavashni, Kunashni.

Towards a New Dawn ...

*Homee Wadia
Perth, Australia*

On India and Indians

Facts on Indians in USA. There are 3.22 million Indians in America ...

- 38% of Doctors in America are Indians.
- 12% of Scientists in America are Indians.
- 36% of NASA employees are Indians.
- 34% of MICROSOFT employees are Indians.
- 28% of IBM employees are Indians.
- 17% of INTEL employees are Indians.
- 13% of Xerox employees are Indians.

Facts about India [from a German Magazine on World History]:

- India invented the number system. Zero was invented by Aryabhatta.
- The world's first university was established in Takshila in 700 BCE.
- Sanskrit is the mother of all European languages. Sanskrit is the most suitable language for computer software [Forbes, July 1987].
- Ayurveda is the earliest school of medicine known to humans. Charaka, the father of medicine consolidated Ayurveda 2500 years ago.
- India was the richest country on earth, until the British in 17th century.
- The art of navigation (Sanskrit 'navgath') was born in the River Sindh 6000 years ago. The word 'navy' is also derived from the Sanskrit 'nou'.
- Bhaskaracharya calculated the time taken by earth to orbit the sun (365.258756484 days) in 5th century, long before the astronomer Smart.
- 'pi' was first calculated by Budhyana in the 6th century, long before European mathematicians. He also explained Pythagorean Theorem.
- Algebra, trigonometry and calculus came from India. Quadratic equations were by Sridharacharya (11th century).
- India was the only source of diamonds until 1896 [Gem. Inst. of America].
- The pioneer of wireless communication was Jagdeesh Bose and not Marconi [IEEE].
- Chess (Shataranja or Ashtapada) was invented in India.
- Sushruta is the father of surgery. 2600 years ago he conducted surgeries like caesarians, cataract, artificial limbs and even brain surgery. Anesthesia was well known in ancient India.
- The decimal system was developed in India in 100 BCE.
- The earliest reservoir and dam for irrigation was built in Saurashtra. ■

[From a posting on the Internet by Eric Gagrath, New York]

A Prayer for the People of Iran

Let's keep all the students and people of Iran in our thoughts and prayers during this trying time. We all feel so helpless because there is not much we can do from here. But we can pray for the safety of the students and we can hope that Iran, the motherland of Zoroastrianism, will once again be able to have freedom of thought. Our religion believes in Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds; it is a sad day when the people of the country in which the Good Religion originated cannot practice these same tenets. How sad for the land of Ahura Mazda, the supreme Lord of Wisdom.

Let's hope that President Khatami can bring about some change and restore those values.

- Jasmine Patel

National Geographic [July 1999, page 33] quotes the Iranian President Khatami advising his people on May 23, 1998:

"The future of religion is that it has to cope with freedom; otherwise it has no future. If religion confronts freedom, the religion will suffer."

What a remarkable continuity in Iranian thinking over nearly 3500 years!

- K. Antia

Zarathushti Prayers

A lay person's guide

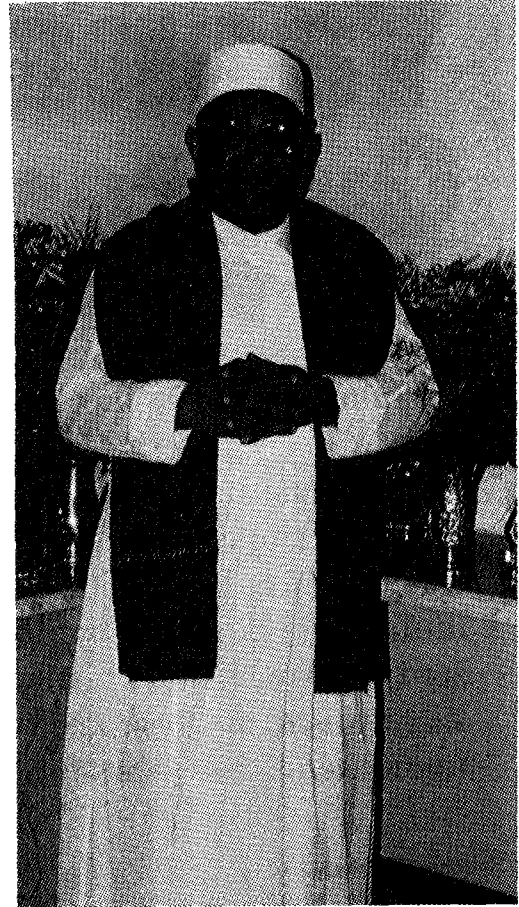
By Kersey H. Antia, Guest Editor

Dear Readers:

It is a real pleasure to present this issue of FEZANA Journal on "Prayers" to you. While every effort has been made to provide as much information as one can on this topic, obviously more information has been left out than included, in the limited space available. Similarly, while an earnest attempt has been made to include differing and even opposing views and interpretations, there is not enough space for them all.

Nevertheless, this issue does make a sincere attempt to cover our basic prayers and lay out a roadmap, suggesting suitable prayers for various occasions. We also present a compilation of views, beliefs and life experiences from a number of Zarathushtis, both lay persons and scholars, on the meaning and power of our prayers and the rituals that accompany them.

This issue of FEZANA Journal is a companion to the Winter 1998 issue on Zoroastrian Religious Scriptures - Gathas, Young Avesta and Pahlavi Literature, guest edited by Dr. Pallan Ichaporia. While that issue gave a historical review of the corpus of Zarathushti scriptures, this issue is written as a guide for their practice and understanding.



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The views expressed in these articles are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of FEZANA, the Journal or the Guest Editor. Per its editorial policy, FEZANA Journal does not endorse or espouse any specific perspective.

Yasna 28 and 50 the Quintessential Prayers

Zarathushtra did away with the superstitions and primitive forms of worship and instituted in their place a lofty form of worship and praise to a supreme deity; a deity who created this universe out of His love for us human beings, granted us free will to choose, or not to choose His divine plan, and offered ultimate salvation for all those who choose to align with Him in His mission to eradicate all evil from this world. It is in this ideal spiritual context that prayers have any significance to him, as can be seen from the translation of Yasna 28 and 50 that I have tried to present as literally and meaningfully, to the lay reader, as I possibly can. To Zarathushtra, these are the quintessential prayers, and we can hardly improve upon them 3700 years later.

Translation by
Kersey H. Antia



YASNA 28 AHUNAVAITI GATHA

[28.1] At the very outset I pray to Mazda with my hands lifted upwards in (a form of humble) salutation, beseeching His assistance through *Spenta Mainyu*, His Ever Beneficent Spirit, through this act (of worship) so that all my actions are governed by *Asha* (the Divine Law of Cosmic Consciousness) and dictated by the wisdom of *Vohu Mana* (Good Mind) so that I may please You and the Soul of the Universe:

[28.2] O Mazda! I will reach you through *Vohu Mana* (in order) to be granted the reward (of attaining fulfillment) of both the worlds, the corporeal and the mental, through *Asha*, so that it may permanently establish Thy supporters in eternal bliss.

[28.3] I, who shall sing Your praise as never before, of *Asha*, *Vohu Mana* and Mazda Ahura and those for whom *Armaiti* (Beneficent/Virtuous Mentality) augments their invincible dominion, (please) come to my call for help.

[28.4] I, who absolutely ready (my) mind to guide my soul according to *Vohu Mana*, know very well that the actions carried out for (strengthening the rule of) Mazda

are spiritually rewarding. As long as I shall have the will and strength, so long shall I strive for *Asha*.

[28.5] O *Asha*! Shall I attain thee, having once realized *Vohu Mana* and the path to Ahura? With a passionate eloquence one would render the greatest obedience to the most powerful Mazda through the following *manthra* [1]:

[28.6] Come Thou through *Vohu Mana* (and) grant long life (for promoting our) *Asha*. True to Thy verbal assurances (to me) O Mazda, bestow on me, Zarathushtra and to us, vigorous support, O Ahura, so that we may overcome the hatred of the hateful.

[28.7] Grant thee, O *Asha*, this spiritual reward – the bliss (of attaining) *Vohu Mana*. And thou, *Armaiti* (please) grant power to *Vishtaspa* and to me (so that we can establish the religion). And grant (us) the power, O Mazda, through which we shall successfully proclaim your manthras.

[1] *manthra*: thought-provoking statement, prayer or mind-empowering words; sacred teaching, literally 'mind-enhancer'.

[28.8] With love I pray to Thee, the Very Best Lord who is of the same essence as the best Asha. Grant the best of Good Mind for their life-time, to the heroic (manly) Frashaoshtra (for helping Zarathushtra establish his religion), to me and to all those worthy of it.

[28.9] May we not displease You, O Ahura, by (making) these entreaties – nor Asha, nor (Vohu Mana) who represents the most heavenly (or best) mentality. We are very devoted in eulogizing You (and entreating You) because You are the strongest and (only) to rulers (like You) belong the might and the mastery (to grant our prayers).

[28.10] Therefore, O Mazda Ahura (all) those whom You do acknowledge to be just and earnest in Asha and Vohu Mana, for them fulfill the attainment of their (noble) aspirations. For (indeed) I am well aware that prayerful words (prayers) stemming from noble purpose and love, never go unheeded by You.

[28.11] O Mazda Ahura! You who sustain Asha and Vohu Mana for ever, (please) teach me (the divine principles) in Your own words worthy of Your spirit and by Your own mouth, whereby the world will be (as good and devoid of all evil) as it was at first (according to Zarathushti lore).

YASNA 50

LAST CHAPTER OF SPENTAMAINYU GATHA

[50.1] Can my *urvan* (soul) seek any help if it wishes? Who has been known to be the protector of my flock? Who (is the protector) of my own self? Who other than You, Mazda Ahura, Asha and Vohu Mana, when earnestly invoked?

[50.2] O Mazda, how shall one seek after joy-bringing world, when he chooses to have (peaceful) havens (instead of choosing to join warring tribes in Zarathushtra's prehistoric times), as he lives honestly in full harmony with Asha in a sun-soaked land. Clearly, I shall (choose to) settle down among the lawful establishments.

[50.3] Indeed, O Mazda, she (*Daena*, Inner Conscience, Zarathushtra's word for religion) [2] which whomever has promised to himself (chosen) with Vohu Mana, Asha and *Khshathra* – Godly Power (that is, the proper exercise of one's power in the image of God) will gravitate to that person who, reinforced by the spiritual reward (of *Frashokereti* promised by *Daena*) will further God's creations nearest to him which the wicked ones have hitherto usurped.

[50.4] Yes, for the sake of praising Mazda Ahura, I shall always eulogize You by (practicing or emulating the qualities of) Asha, Vohu Mana at its very best and

Godly Rule by which one desiring (to follow *Daena*) stands (steadfastly) on the (right) path, and hearkens (listens) to his inner voice (in order to) be truly righteous, existing (for ever) in the 'Abode of Divine Music' (where Mazda Himself resides).

[50.5] O Ahura, let all divine wisdom come on earth indeed as a token of mercy (from You). Yes, if You are happy with the expounder of Your manthras (that is, the Prophet Zarathushtra), please come to him with very tangible assistance by Your powerful hands which shall bestow (eternal) bliss upon us.

[50.6] The one who gives verbal expression to manthra (preaches) for Mazda is a veritable friend of Asha. (Therefore) homage be to Zarathushtra (as the proponent of manthras). May the Creator of intelligence (or intuition) (guide) my direction (in life) so that I could be the charioteer (commander) of my will and my tongue.

[50.7] Yes, I shall verily yoke for You the swiftest steeds (a metaphor for most earnest followers), those full of the splendor of your success, and imbued strongly with (the essence of) both Asha and Vohu Mana. You will race ahead with these (devotees) (to a victorious end). Would You (therefore) be ready (to come to) my help? [3]

[50.8] Mazda, I come to You with (my) hands (reverently) raised upwards (to point to You in the heavens) and with well-known foot-prints (indelible marks) of your exalted worship. In addition (I'll extol) You with Asha and with the humble, reverential bowing of a righteous person: You (Mazda) through the working of Vohu Mana (in me).

[50.9] While praising (You), Mazda, I shall approach You with such worship (as) enterprises of the Good Mind done through righteousness. Ultimately, I will be able to rule at will (after attaining) my spiritual reward (of *frashokereti*). Possessing such powers, I want to be a supplicant of one who is the blissful one (Mazda).

[50.10] Yes, Mazda, whatever things one has realized as well as accomplished by his actions and those things one will verily glorify through the eyes (perspective) of his good mind, like the rays of the sun, the bright (lights) of the moon, are through righteousness, for your adoration.

[50.11] I am, O Mazda, your worshipper and shall be so, as long as I shall have the strength and the will through righteousness. (Such actions) will promote, through Vohu Mana, the (divine) rulers governing this universe, for (such) truthful actions render us freshest (ushers into *frashokereti*) as per God's will (or Divine Plan). ■

[2] *Daena*, a feminine noun, along with Mazda and Spenta Aramaiti, is highly suggestive of the importance of the role of women perceived by Zarathushtra in his noble vision in pre-historic times.

[3] God depends on man for successfully eradicating evil from this world, but man is dependent on God and His loving assistance to guide and goad him in this spiritual undertaking.

A PRAYER GUIDE

Suggested prayers for all occasions

By Kersey H. Antia

Prayer is the best means available to us to reach and touch Ahura Mazda and dialogue directly with Him, even as Zarathushtra does in every paragraph in Ys. 44 by asking rhetorically: "O Ahura! Enlighten me with the truth about what I am asking You." Zarathushtra inquiringly asks Ahura Mazda so many questions in this Yasna but the answers are subtly contained in the questions themselves. We have the divine essence in all of us and we don't have to seek it elsewhere, if we only learn to pray to ignite it and realize it within ourselves.

Through our daily prayers as well as a prayerful, beneficent (spenta) life, we will begin to realize and cherish the divinity with us. And we will learn to confirm in our daily life and actions, what we affirm in our prayers.

There are also special devotional prayers that one can recite, on certain days of the Zarathushti calendar such as the New Year, parabhs, gahambars, jashans, and Gatha days. There are celebratory prayers for life's happy occasions such as birthdays, navjotes, weddings, and anniversaries; and for invoking Ahura Mazda's blessings at the start of any venture, such as a new job, a business, a project, a journey, a difficult examination or any other big or small undertaking. Upon death, the soul (urvan) of the departed is accompanied on its journey with special prayers and is thenceforth remembered with prayers, along with all other urvans and fravashis, year after year.

In times of sickness, trouble and sorrow, the human heart turns to the Almighty for strength and support. What prayers are most beneficial at such times in providing solace to us and helping us understand or accept the misfortune?

In this guide we suggest prayers for these various occasions and situations, focusing especially on those prayers that are recited by the individual layperson, based on past conventions and scriptural dictates. A future issue of FEZANA Journal will cover prayers and ceremonies performed by the priests. The genesis and historical review of the prayers referenced here are covered in the Winter 1998 issue of FEZANA Journal. The prayers mentioned here may be found in most Khordeh Avesta prayer books; a bibliography is provided in this Guide.

General Recommendations.

Prayers may be offered at any time and any place, individually or together as a family or as a communal 'hambandagi'. Most Zarathushtis have a prayer corner in their homes, with a picture of Zarathushtra, photos of dear departed ones and a *diva* (oil lamp).

Prayers are generally recited after taking a bath, or washing the hands and face. During the day, pray facing the sun, and at night facing a lighted object. Do not pray facing North from whence blows the unwelcome, winter wind.

KUSHTI PRAYERS Daily

Minimally, a Zarathushti is expected to perform the kushti prayers daily, first thing in the morning and last thing at night. The prayers include:

Kemna Mazda, entreating Ahura Mazda for the Good Mind and protection from evil.

Hormazd Khodae, promising to actively fight against evil thoughts, evil words and evil deeds, and promote righteous actions.

Jasa Me Avanghahe Mazda, the declaration of faith.

The short kushti prayers end here. This may be followed by:

Sarosh Baj, a prayer to Sarosh (conscience, internal voice), possessor of victorious spiritual weapons, with a commitment to choose the Good Religion.

Close with the four, short Closing Prayers [see below]. [Full text and translation of Kushti prayers is given in FEZANA Journal, Winter 1997.]

CLOSING PRAYERS Offered after Sarosh Baj, Nyaeshes, Yashts and other prayers

Closing Prayers are offered after Sarosh Baj, as well as after Nyaeshes and Yashts:

Ahmai Raescha, invoking blessings for a long and prosperous life.

Hazanghrem, invoking blessings of good health.

Jasa Me Avanghahe Mazda, invoking Ahura Mazda's help

Kerfeh Mazda, offering a life of righteousness for redemption from one's sins.

THREE CARDINAL PRAYERS Offered at the end of most other prayers

Three Cardinal Prayers are offered in closing at the end of most other prayers or can be recited by themselves at any time:

Ashem Vohu, the Principle of Righteousness.

Asha (spiritual truth, the cosmic order governing the universe, righteousness) is good, (it) is best. (or Asha is the best good.) (It) is spiritual bliss. Spiritual bliss (literally, fulfillment of spiritual aspirations) accrues to those who follow Asha (purely) for the sake of attaining best of Asha (so as to merge with the divine, per Hoshbam and other prayers and not for any vicarious, secondary gain).

Ahunavar or Yatha Ahu Vairyo, choosing the Lord in Life.

Just as the Lord is chosen (by us), so is the Prophet on account of his Asha (righteousness). Whosoever does godly acts in this world attains (the bliss of) the Good Mind. Whosoever nurtures the needy attains the Kingdom (Power) of God.

Yenghahe Hatam, veneration of the living Ashavans amongst us.

(Rest assured) Ahura Mazda is well cognizant of whosoever amongst the living are adorable, because of their goodness, and whom, (them) men as well as women, we venerate on account of their Asha (righteousness).

Compilation of materials, design
and layout for this article by
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FARAJYAT
(**FARZIYAT** or **BAYESTE**)
PRAYERS
Daily (in earlier times)

Author's note. This guide fulfills the need of those amongst us who yearn to pray and want to know what to pray and when. Zarathushtis generally do not have standard, written rules or guides for prayer. Moreover the tradition varies considerably from sect to sect, and between Zarathushtis from Iran and India, making the task of preparing this guide all the more difficult. What is presented here are suggestions and recommendations for prayers that seem appropriate for our times, in the humble opinion and experience of the author. Everyone is free, however, to hold on to their own preferences and practices.

Iranian perspective. The author would like to thank *Mobed Bahram Shahzadi* for reviewing and approving this article from the Iranian perspective. While Mobed Shahzadi agrees in general with the suggested prayers, he does feel that recitation of so many prayers "will be impractical." He recommends the following Iranian spellings:

Daebadar, Daebemehr and **Daebedin** instead of Daepadar, Daepmehr and Daepdin.

Arta or **Ard** instead of Ashishvangh.

Bâd instead of Govad.

Mah (which means moon) instead of Mohor.

Goosh instead of Gosh.

Abzoor or **Aban Yasht** instead of **Avan Yasht**.

A Zarathushti is expected to pray five times a day in five *gahs*(periods), each assigned a different prayer. Some prayers were obligatory (*farajyat*) and only then could a lay person recite other prayers such as the *Satum*, *Patet* or *Farrokshi* (*Fravardin Yasht*) or any *Yasht* of their choice; and only then could a priest perform any of the various priestly ceremonies. This was the norm at least until 1 or 2 generations ago, but today, unfortunately, it is rarely followed. The **Farajyat** (or **Farziyat** or **Bayeste**) prayers include:

Kushti prayers including **Sarosh Baj**.

101 Names of Ahura Mazda.

The **Gah**, as appropriate. Each day is divided into five periods (gah):

Ushahin Gah – from midnight to dawn

Havan Gah – from dawn to noon

Rapithwan Gah – from noon to 3 pm (not prayed during the winter).

Uzirehn Gah - from 3 pm to sunset

Aiwisuthrem Gah – from sunset to midnight

These Gahs are sometimes interpreted as the different human evolutionary stages of life or soul progression from lower to higher forms of development, but this progression refers mainly to the personage presiding over each Gah, as made clear by their translation. Starting with the 'head of the household' in the Ushahin Gah, it progresses to Zarathushtratemo, the successor to Zarathushtra, in the Aiwisuthrem Gah. Each Gah mentions and reveres the pertinent personage. The Aiwisuthrem Gah reveres them all together.

Each Gah is a veritable fountain of devotion and a masterpiece in depicting man's dependence upon God as also Nature and his duty to both, as well as to the Asho (righteous) authority designated for each Gah. Righteousness thus encompasses every act of man, and includes his duty to God as well as His creations.

Rapithwan Gah mentions and reveres the five Gathas, which may therefore have been customarily recited during this Gah after completing the Farajyat in the earlier Havan Gah. If so, nothing could better inspire the human soul to spirituality and God.

The **Nyaesh**, as appropriate. (Up to the turn of the century, the Gah was recited after the Nyaesh).

The **Yasht**, as appropriate

Doa Nam Setayashne or **Be Namsetayesh**

An excellent prayer in praise of the Lord, though written in Pahlavi, millennia after Zarathushtra, adoring God in superlative terms and thrice declaring "Lord, Thine will be done!"

Char Disa No Namaskar, Homage in Four Directions (daytime only).

"Homage unto (all) these places, the cities, pastures, dwellings, waters, the lands, the trees, this earth and yonder sky, the holy wind, the stars, the moon, the sun, the boundless natural lights, and all creations of Ahura Mazda, righteous men, righteous women and righteous leaders." [*This prayer is recited facing in turn, the east, south, west and north, affirming respect for preserving the environment and living in harmony with all God's creations, including humans*].

Tandarosti showering blessings of long life, health and happiness.

"Grant longest of long life, happiness and physical well-being. Health be unto them, goodness be unto them, excellence be unto them. Be as adroit in your work even as God and the Ameshaspands are."

FRAVARDEGAN HAMASPATHMAIDYEM GAHAMBAR

ALSO KNOWN AS
PANJEH (IRANIAN)
OR

MUKTAD (PARSI)

THE LAST FIVE DAYS OF THE
YEAR, THE GATHA DAYS:

AHUNAVAD GATHA
USHTAVAD GATHA
SPENTOMAD GATHA
VOHUKHSHATHRA GATHA
VAHISHTOISHT GATHA
LEAP YEAR DAY: AVERDAD
ROZ, MAH GATA BEYU
AMARDAD SAL

The last five days of the year named after the five Gathas, are the **Hamaspathmaidyem Gahambar**, and the sixth day (in a leap year) is called Averdad Roz - Mah Gata Beyu. They are also known to the Iranians as **Panje** and to Parsis as **Muktad** or **Fravardegan**. [See Note 1, below]. In preparation, Zarathushti homes and agiaries are cleaned and made ready for the arrival of the *Fravashis* of dear departed souls, who are believed to visit their loved ones during this time. No activities regarded as polluting (such as cutting hair or nails, or shaving) are done that might mar the sanctity of these holy days. For each departed soul, family members engage the services of a priest to offer 'muktad' prayers and set up a vase (or *karasio*) of flowers, at the local fire-temple. In North America, during the Muktad days, tables of vases laden with flowers are set up and communal muktad prayers are performed by the priest, daily at the Darbe Mehr.

Prayers performed by the priests during the Muktad, include:

Baj (can be done only where the higher category of *Yozdathregar* mobeds are available, mostly in Iran and India).

Afringan, remembering souls of the departed, invoking their blessings.

Satum, adoring and invoking the *Fravashis* of all beings - Ahura Mazda, archangels, angels, and all persons, born and yet-to-be-born. The Satum ceremony is accompanied with an offering of home-cooked food.

Farrokshi, includes portions of the Satum and the **Fravardin Yasht**.

Some communities gather to recite a *hambandagi* (group prayer) daily during the Muktad [p. 40]. An appropriate prayer is:

Muktad-no-Namaskar, prayer in memory of departed souls.

Individuals should pray the corresponding Gatha prayer for each day, as per our tradition:

Ahunavaiti Gatha and **Satum**, on Ahunavad Gatha day.

Ushtavaiti Gatha and **Satum**, on Ushtavad Gatha day.

Spentamainyu Gatha and **Satum**, on Spentomad Gatha day.

Vohukhshathra Gatha and **Satum**, on Vohukhshathra Gatha day.

Vahishtoish Gatha and **Satum**, on Vahishtoish Gatha day.

Note 1. Conventionally, Muktad started on Mah Spandarmad, Roz Ashtad, 10 days before the new year, and lasted 10 days up to Vahishtoish Gatha or, in earlier times lasted for 18 days, up to dawn on Amardad Sal (Mah Fravardin and Roz Amardad) when **Satum** was prayed over an offering of food and *shiav* (sacred clothes) and the *Fravashis* were bid farewell.

PATETI

VAHISHTOISHT GATHA - LAST
DAY OF THE YEAR

NAVROZE
(SHENSHAI - KADMI
NEW YEAR)

MAH FRAVARDIN
ROZ HORMAZD

The last day of the Zarathushti year is celebrated by the parsis as **Pateti**. The following are appropriate, after recitation of the Farajyat prayers:

Siroja Yasht, in veneration of all 30 Yazads.

Patet pashemani, prayer of repentance

"From all my sins I turn back and repent ... I dedicate myself to good thoughts, good words and good deeds ..."

On **Navroze**, New Year's day, Parsis decorate their houses with 'chalk' designs, hang fresh flower garlands (*torans*) on the doorways, dress up in new clothes, and visit the fire temple. Appropriate prayers, after recitation of the Farajyat prayers, are:

Hormazd Yasht, invoking Ahura Mazda's blessings [p. 35].

Tandarosti, showering blessings of health and happiness [p. 30].

NOURUZ
(NEW YEAR)
MAH FRAVARDIN
ROZ HORMAZD

Iranian Zarathushtis have continued to follow their ancient traditions in North America [see details in *FEZANA Journal*, Spring 1993 and 1994]:

Chahar Shanbeh Soori is celebrated on the last Wednesday of the outgoing year with a bonfire, singing and music wishing good health and prosperity in the coming year, though earlier only Muslims celebrated it. It is a remnant of the last night of Panjeh which coincided with the Wednesday night before the downfall of the Sasanian Dynasty.

Haft-Seen table is set up the day before Nouruz and usually taken down after the 13th day of Nouruz. Laid with a white or green cloth, it includes 7 items beginning with the letter "S": Seer (garlic), Seeb (apple), Sanjed (dried fruits), Serkhe (vinegar), Sabzi (sprouted vegetables), Sonbol (Hyacinth) and Sake (Coins). Other items on the table include: a picture of Zarathushtra, an oil lamp or candle, an Avesta prayer book, pomegranate, a spool of thread, rose-water and traditional foods.

Nouruz Day is celebrated with music, dancing and good food. The traditional heralds of Nouruz, **Haji Firuz** and **Amou Nouruz**, dressed in satin costumes with painted faces, make their appearance at Nouruz gatherings, bringing gifts for the children. Families and friends visit each other, bearing gifts. Appropriate prayers for Nouruz are:

Hormazd Yasht, invoking Ahura Mazda's blessings [p.35].

Tandarosti, showering blessings of health and happiness [p. 30].

Sizdeh Bidar. On the 13th day of Nouruz, families leave the cities and picnic in the countryside.

KHORDAD SAL
ZARATHUSHTRA'S
BIRTHDAY
MAH FRAVARDIN
ROZ KHORDAD

The birthday of Zarathushtra, which initially coincided with Nouruz, is now celebrated on the 6th day of Nouruz, **Khordad Sal**.

Prayers performed by the priests for Zarathushtra's birthday, include:

Jashan, including the appropriate **Afringan** and **Afrin**, invoking the blessings of the departed and the prophet.

A good choice for individual prayers is:

Aa Airyema Ishyo, the final goal of Zarathushti fraternity.

"May the fellowship we ardently aspire to, come to the aid of male as well as female [note the emphasis on equality of sexes] followers of Zarathushtra in order to further good thinking on their part so that the act of (intelligently) choosing (Zarathushtra's) Daena (religion) leads one to a spiritual reward, the bliss of attaining Asha (Perfection, which is the way of realizing Godhood per the Hoshbam prayer and therefore be free of any physical, moral or mental ailments), which (indeed) is Ahura Mazda's great divine plan."

ZARATHUSHT-NO-DISO
DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF
ZARATHUSHTRA
MAH DAE
ROZ KHORSHED

Prayers performed by the priests for **Zarathusht-no-Diso**, the death anniversary of Zarathushtra, include:

Afringan and **Afrin**, as appropriate, in honor of Asho Zarathushtra.

A good choice for individual prayer is:

Fravardin Yasht, revering all souls from the first one to the last and celebrating all the creations of Ahura Mazda, including living human beings whose Fravashis have even greater potency than those of the deceased. It celebrates the prophet's birth heralding the unity between man and nature and describes how "the whole universe rejoiced at the birth of Zarathushtra – even the waters and the vegetation world witnessed an increase in their growth and happiness prevailed over the whole spenta (good) creations." [Ch. 24].

**PORSEH
HAMEGANI
MAH SPENDARMAD
ROZ HORMAZD**

In the Iranian tradition, **Porseh Hamegani** commemorates those who lost their lives in the wars against the Arabs. Iranian Zarathushtis visit the anjuman hall and offer condolences. Prayers are offered by the priests and names of the departed are recited in each city, with:

Recitation of prayers from the Avesta.

**FRAVARDIAN
OR FOROODAK
DAY OF REMEMBRANCE
OF THE DEPARTED
MAH FRAVARDIN
ROZ FRAVARDIN**

The 19th day of Nouruz is celebrated as a memorial day, **Foroodak**, for the departed. Zarathushtis visit the *dokhma* (towers of silence), cemetery or final resting place of their loved ones.

Prayers performed by the priests include:

Fravardian Jashan, including the appropriate **Afringan** and **Afrin** in honor of the departed.

A good choice for individual prayers is:

Satum, adoring and invoking the Fravashis of all beings [p. 31].

Fravardin Yasht, revering all souls and celebrating all the creations of Ahura Mazda [p. 32].

**PARABH
NAME OF THE MAH
(MONTH) IS THE SAME
AS THE NAME OF
THE ROZ (DAY)**

● **Mah Ardibehesht - Roz Ardibehesht** Ardibehesht (Av. Asha Vahishta) presides over Asha (righteousness), cosmic consciousness, cosmic energy, fire being one of its manifestations. Appropriate prayers for this day, to be prayed preferably at the fire-temple, are:

Atash Nyaesh, litany in praise of the divine fire energy residing in each of us, reflecting God's inner essence. Four beautiful paragraphs from the Gathas make it even more edifying and inspiring. It reminds us to tend to our inner nature and spiritual needs, so as to shine like heavenly light and qualify for living with the heavenly beings in the brightest of heaven. [To be recited facing the fire or light].

Ardibehesht Yasht [p. 42] is in praise of Ardibehesht Ameshaspand, and refers to various forms of healing and describes healing by *manthra* as the best. The heat of holiness (*Asha or Arda*) heals better with *manthra* than *kereta*, the surgeon's knife, it asserts. Ashavans were often known to have healing powers through their prayers.

● **Mah Khordad - Roz Khordad**. Khordad (Av. Haurvatat) presides over the waters. It also signifies perfect health; hence it behooves us to respect both with the following prayers:

Tandarosti, invoking blessings of long life, health and happiness [p.30].

Ardivisoor Nyaesh/Avan Yasht, in praise of the female yazata Ardivisoor who presides over the waters. It signifies the life-affirming virtues of water, fertility and the feminine species, and God's grace in bestowing them upon us. It enjoins us to respect women and not to pollute the waters.

● **Mah Tir - Roz Tir** is dedicated to the archangel Tir Yazad, who presides over the stars. An appropriate prayer is:

Tir Yasht, in praise of the "glittering light" of Ahura Mazda.

In Iran, **Tirgan** is widely celebrated, primarily as a rain festival, invoking Tir Yazad to enhance the harvest and counter drought. There are many associated customs and legends (e.g. the legend of Arash the Archer) handed down from ancient times, that are followed to this day. [See FEZANA Journal, Summer 1999].

When you do not know or cannot recite the appropriate prayers and don't have access to prayer books, according to our scriptures, it is equally efficacious and acceptable to recite just the *yatha-ashem* prayers, i.e.:

**Yatha Ahu Vairyo
and
Ashem Vohu**

PARABH (CONT'D)

NAME OF THE MAH
(MONTH) IS THE SAME
AS THE NAME OF
THE ROZ (DAY)

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For ordering information, contact *The Zoroastrian Shop*, New Jersey, tel: (609) 768-8351 or *Marzban Giara*, 667 Lady Jehangir Road, Dadar, Mumbai 400 014, India, tel: +91 22 416-6204. ■

● **Mah Amardad - Roz Amardad.** Amardad (Av. Ameretat, or immortality) has significance for the conservation and enhancement of the environment, ecology and the vegetation world. An appropriate prayer might be:

Zamyad Yasht, in praise of Zamyad (Mother Earth) [p. 36].

● **Mah Shehrevat - Roz Shehrevat.** Shehrevat (Av. Khshathra Vairya) represents God's Good Rule and expectation for God's Kingdom to come. Thus, the occasion demands striving for justice, fairness and democracy in the world. Reflection on these values is afforded in:

Vohukhshathra Gatha, the world's first attempt at establishing fair and democratic rule – God's rule on the earth.

● **Mah Meher - Roz Meher.** Meher (Av. Mithra) is an angel of celestial light, love, justice and friendship. Appropriate prayers, to be performed preferably in the fire-temple are:

Meher Yasht, in veneration of Meher, angel of celestial light.

Khorshed Nyaesh, in veneration of the shining sun "eternal, brilliant and emitting light", followed by **Meher Nyaesh**, in veneration of Meher, angel of celestial light. Khorshed-Meher Nyaeshes are prayed together; they can be recited on any day, but only during the daytime.

● **Mah Avan - Roz Avan** known as *Avan Ardvisoor Nu Parabh*. In India, Zarathushtis pray at the river banks or sea shores on this day [see *FEZANA Journal*, Spring 1999], in honor of Avan Yazad who presides over the waters. There is a tradition of offering flowers, coconut, rock candy and a sweet pastry – *dar-ni-pori*. Appropriate prayers are:

Ardvisoor Nyaesh, in praise of the female yazata Ardvisoor who presides over the waters, and is also seen in relationship with various other Yazatas and elements of nature as well as the Gathas.

Avan Yasht, in veneration of "all the good waters created by Ahura Mazda" and all His other creations.

● **Mah Adar - Roz Adar** is dedicated to venerating fire (the divine energy/essence in us). Until recently, Zarathushti families kept a coal hearth fire burning in their kitchen, which was cleaned and repainted as also were fire-temples, for this sacred day. Appropriate prayers are:

Atash Nyaesh, a litany in praise of the divine fire energy [p. 33].

Ardibehesht Yasht, in praise of Ardibehesht (Av. Asha Vahishta) and referring to various forms of healing [p. 33].

● **Mah Dae - Roz Daepadar, Daepmeher and Daepdin.** Dae (divine) represents God. Throughout the month of Dae, and especially on any Dae Roz, a communal jashan is held with a meal for all celebrants:

Dae Mah Nu Jashan

● **Mah Bahman - Roz Bahman.** As Bahman (Av. Vohu Mana) presides over cattle (the animal kingdom), orthodox Zarathushtis do not eat meat during this month, and also avoid meat on Bahman, Mohor, (Mah) Gosh (Goosh) and Ram Roz in any month. A suitable prayer is:

Bahman Yasht, in praise of Bahman (Av. Vohu Mana) [p. 35].

● **Mah Spendarmad - Roz Spendarmad.** Spendarmad (Av. Spenta Armaiti) presides over the beneficent earth. This observance, akin to Mother Earth Day of our times, is celebrated with:

Jashan, with appropriate afringan and afrin, to reconsecrate the earth and to restore it to its purity if polluted by men in any way.

HAMKARS

The first seven days of each month are named after Hormazd and the 6 *Amesha Spentas*. The remaining days, shown in parentheses below, are associated with each Amesha Spenta, as their *Hamkar* (helpers). As a general rule, the *Nyaesh* or *Yasht* bearing the name of the *Roz* should be prayed on that day, but they can be prayed on other days also.

HAMKAR 1

HORMAZD

(AV) AHURA MAZDA
DAEPADAR, DAEPMEHER,
DAEPDIN

Hormazd is the first principle of everything; the be-all and end-all of everything. On these 4 days, which are like the Sunday of the Christians, the Shabbat of the Jews or the Friday of the Muslims, all work is prohibited, and the day is devoted to the worship of Ahura Mazda. Specially appropriate are:

Hormazd Yasht, in praise of Ahura Mazda. It depicts the various attributes and names of God and the willingness of God to assist us all for any *spenta* cause, only for the asking.

Haptan Yasht, an inspiring prayer in praise of the 7 Amesha Spentas, written in post-Gathic language and thus closest in content to the Gathas.

Siroja Yasht, in praise of all 30 Yazatas.

HAMKAR 2

BAHMAN

(AV) VOHU MANA
MOHOR, GOSH, RAM

The Hamkars of *Bahman* protect the good animal kingdom. Meat is therefore, not to be eaten on these days. The appropriate prayers are:

Bahman Yasht, (Vohu Mana) in honor of Bahman (Av. Vohu Mana) who presides over cattle (the animal kingdom).

Gosh Yasht, a prayer for asking various boons and overcoming evil.

Ram Yasht, in praise of the "righteous atmosphere which is the holy mentality", which grants us our wish for eradicating evil from this world.

HAMKAR 3

ARDIBEHESHT

(AV) ASHA VAHISHTA
ADAR, SAROSH, BEHRAM

Ardibehesht or Best Righteousness, can be achieved by purifying our thoughts, words and deeds even as the holy fire, which it represents, purifies everything. Suggested prayers include:

Ardibehesht Yasht, refers to healing by *manthra* [p. 33].

Atash Nyaesh, a litany in praise of the divine fire energy [p. 33].

Sarosh Yasht Hadokht, listening to the inner voice to attain Godhood.

Sarosh Yasht Vadi (to be recited in the night time).

Behram Yasht, for Behram (Verethregna) – "Conqueror of the enemy".

HAMKAR 4

SHEHREVAR

(AV) VOHU KHSHATHRA
KHORSHED, MEHER,
ASMAN, ANERAN

Shehrevan represents the desirable kingdom of God. Proper reflection on these values may be found by reciting:

Vohu Khshathra Gatha

Khorshed Nyaesh, in praise of "light-emitting" sun; **Meher Nyaesh**, in praise of Meher (Mithra) angel of celestial light [p. 34].

HAMKAR 5

SPENDARMAD

(AV) SPENTA ARMAITI
AVAN, DIN, ASHISHVANGH
MARESPAND

Spendarmad represents the beneficent, motherly, female aspects of Ahura Mazda, best represented by Mother Earth, which provides us with food and nourishment. Caring for Ahura Mazda's creations and the environment is tantamount to worshipping Ahura Mazda. Prayers include:

Avan Yasht, for Avan Yazad, who presides over the waters [p. 34].

Din Yasht, in praise of "righteous, true knowledge".

Ashishvangh Yasht, in praise of Ashishvangh, the beneficent Yazata granting boons ('Ashi') to the righteous.

HAMKAR 6
KHORDAD
(AV) HAURVATAT
TIR, FRAVARDIN, GOVAD

Khordad (Av. *Haurvatat*) signifies Perfection, represented by perfect health of the body on a physical plane and perfect spirituality on a spiritual plane. Prayers include:

Khordad Yasht, invoking abundance to the righteous.

Tir Yasht, in praise of the "glittering light" of Ahura Mazda [p.33].

Fravardin Yasht, revering all the creations of Ahura Mazda [p.33].

Ashishvangh Yasht, in praise of Ashishvangh [p. 35].

HAMKAR 7
AMARDAD
(AV) AMERETAT
RASHNA, ASHTAD, ZAMYAD

Amardad (Av. *Ameretat*), signifying immortality of the soul has significance for the enhancement of the environment, ecology and the vegetation world. Suggested prayers are:

Zamyad Yasht eulogizes Aam (Mother Earth) and associates divine glory with mountains, apparently as they receive the sun's glory first. It assures us righteousness will triumph over wickedness, describes how divine glory escapes the wicked and how things will be at the end of time.

Ashtad Yasht, in praise of Ashtad (justice) and the glory of Iran, leading to righteousness and moral courage.

Rashna Yasht, in praise of the righteous Rashna (Truth) who helps the righteous in various ways and circumstances.

GAHAMBARS

Maidyozarem Gahambar

Mid Spring: Mah Ardibehesht,
Roz Khorshed to Daepmeher

Maidyoshem Gahambar

Mid-summer: Mah Tir
Roz Khorshed to Daepmeher

Paltishahem Gahambar

Harvest season: Mah Shehrevard
Roz Ashtad to Aneran

Ayathrem Gahambar

Late Fall: Mah Meher
Roz Ashtad to Aneran

Maidhyarem Gahambar

Mid-winter: Mah Dae
Roz Meher to Behram

Hamaspahmaidyem Gahambar

Last five days (Gathas) of the year.

Gahambars, are six seasonal festivals during the year, each lasting for five days. Gahambars are an occasion when Zarathushtris, young and old, rich and poor, come together for a prayer ceremony (Jashan) followed by a feast thanking God for each seasonal event.

Prayers performed by the priests include:

Afringans and **afrins** appropriate for the Gahambar

For the lay persons, there are no special prayers for Gahambars. All that is required for them is to bring some fruits or other food as an offering for the occasion. If they cannot afford it, they are regarded as full participants by partaking of the *Myazda*, the consecrated foods, offered to the congregation following the afringan ceremony.

**FULL MOON OR
NEW MOON**

Mah Bokhtar Nyesh, a litany in praise of *Maha* (the moon) who delivers to us the cosmic rays (*bokhtar*) and who is described as *gao-chithra* (cow-faced, *gao* representing divine vision in the Gathas) or life-origin, referring to the germinating property of the moon's rays (which has been confirmed by modern science). This *nyesh* can also be prayed on any other day.

**JASHAN-E
SADEH**

**MAH BAHMAN
ROZ MEHER**

An ancient mid-winter festival celebrating the discovery of fire in pre-historic times, **Jashan-e Sadeh** is still celebrated in Iran and is being revived in North America. [See *FEZANA Journal*, Winter 1996]. The ceremony includes the lighting of a large bonfire, as the priests recite the names of ancient heroes and lead the gathering in a recitation of:

Atash Nyesh, a litany to divine fire energy, represented on this earth, by fire [p. 33].

THANKSGIVING PRAYER GRACE BEFORE MEALS

The following **Jamvani Baj** [from *Haptan Yasht* 3.1] is an appropriate prayer for reciting as grace before a meal:

**Ba name Yazad, bakhshayandeh bakhshayazgar meherban!
Hormazd Khodae itha at yazamaide. Ahurem Mazdam, ye
gamcha ashemcha dat apascha dat urvaraoscha vanghahuish,
raochaoscha dat bumimcha, vispacha vohu. Ashem Vohu - 1.**

In the name of the Lord Ahura Mazda (who is) the bestower of all good things, the forgiver of sins, and loving. Here we revere Ahura Mazda who created the animals and grains, who created the waters and vegetation, who created beneficent lights (of the sky), and the earth and all (other) good things. Ashem Vohu - 1.

Another excellent prayer for thanksgiving is:

Doa Nam Setayashne (Be Nam Setayesh) for Ahura Mazda [p. 30].

PIRS (SHRINES)

Pir-e Herisht

Mah Prayardin

Roz Amardad to Khorshed

Pir-e Sabz (Chak Chaku)

Mah Khordad

Roz Ashtad to Aneran

Pir-e Narestaneh

Mah Tir

Roz Spendarmad to Adar

Pir-e Banoo

Mah Tir

Roz Meher to Behram

Pir-e Naraki

Mah Amardad

Roz Meher to Behram

Among many longstanding traditions followed by Iranian Zarathushtis even today, is visiting pilgrimage places **pirs** [see page 55] which dot the mountainsides, mostly near the town of Yazd. While Zarathushtis may visit the pirs at any time of year, most popular are the annual pilgrimages on certain days in the summer at each shrine. They are more of a historical than religious significance, and serve as havens for Zarathushtis to gather and celebrate the Zarathushti spirit without outside interference.

There are no special prayers to be offered at the pirs. Any prayer or ceremony appropriate for the day may be offered individually or by the priest (such as a Jashan).

SHAB-E-YALDA (MAH DAE, ROZ DAEPADAR)

Yalda is an ancient Persian festival, believed to have influenced the traditions of Christmas and the Christmas tree [see *FEZANA Journal, Winter 1998*]. It is celebrated on December 23rd, the longest night of the year, with singing, dancing, poetry reading and feasting.

There are no special prayers for the Yalda festival.

BIRTHDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES AND OTHER JOYOUS OCCASIONS

On **joyous occasions** such as birthdays and anniversaries, Parsis decorate their houses with 'chalk' designs, hang flower garlands (*torans*) on the doorways, dress up in new clothes, distribute sweets to friends and relatives, give alms to the needy and visit the fire temple. Appropriate prayers, after recitation of the kushti prayers, are:

Hormazd Yasht, invoking Ahura Mazda's blessings [p. 35].

Doa Nam Setayashne (Be Nam Setayesh) for Ahura Mazda [p. 30].

Tandarosti, showering blessings of health and happiness [p. 30].

NAVJOTE SEDREH PUSHI (INITIATION) CEREMONY

While deeply religious in significance, the **Navjote** or **Sedreh Pushi** [see *FEZANA Journal, Winter 1997*] is a happy and joyous occasion, celebrated with élat in the presence of family and friends, with music and feasting. Prayers recited during the Parsi Navjote ceremony are:

Patet, prayer of repentance (nowadays by the priest on behalf of the child).

Din no Kalmo, Declaration of Faith (priest and child).

Hormuzd Khodae, girding with the Kushti (priest and child)

Jasa me Avanghahe Mazda, Confirmation of Faith (priest and child)

Tandarosti, showering of blessings on the new initiate (priests).

WEDDING CEREMONY



DEATH CEREMONIES

(FOR FIRST 4 DAYS)



ANNIVERSARIES OF DEATH (4TH, 10TH AND 30TH DAY, AND SUBSEQUENTLY MONTHLY AND YEARLY ANNIVERSARIES)



The loved one is remembered at each death anniversary by the priests offering prayers at the fire-temple:

Baj and **Yazeshne** (can be done only where the higher category of *Yozdathregar* mobeds are available, mostly in Iran and India.

Afringan, remembering the souls of the departed.

Satum, adoring and invoking the Fravashis of all beings [p. 31].

Farrokshi, includes portions of the Satum and the **Fravardin Yasht**.

Family members may remember loved ones by reciting:

Satum, adoring and invoking the Fravashis of all beings [p. 31].

Fravardin Yasht, revering and celebrating all creations [p. 32].

Patet Ravan ni, prayer of repentance for the departed.

A Zarathushti fulfills one's most important mission on this earth – procreation and raising of pious children who will bring about Frashokereti, through the bonds of marriage. The Parsi and Iranian **wedding ceremony** are described in *FEZANA Journal* [Spring 1995]. Iranians have a different Ashirwad which is in a language comprehended by them:

Ashirwad, affirmations by the bride and groom, advice and admonitions by the priests, and blessings naming illustrious ancestors.

Tandarosti, showering of blessings on the bride and groom [p. 30].

The last (**Vahishtoisht**) Gatha is also called a Wedding Song.

Different sects pray some or all of the prayers suggested here, depending upon their traditions, preferences or time constraints. Upon the **death** of a loved one, place a divo (oil lamp) or candle near the body and recite **ashem vohu** continuously, by the bedside. Prayers, offered to bring solace and support to the soul of the departed as well as the living, are:

Sarosh Yasht Vadi may be recited every night for 3 nights.

Patet Ravan-ni, prayer of repentance for the departed.

At the **Paydust** ceremony (funeral) the priests pray:

Ahunavad Gatha

Sarosh Nu Patroo (Kardeh-e Sarosh) is performed immediately after sunset for three nights, only after the dead body has been disposed off. It includes: **Sarosh Baj**, **Aiwisuthrem Gah**, **Sarosh Yasht Vadi**, **Patet Ravan-ni** and **Kardeh i Sarosh**. Lay persons can also recite these prayers (except Kardeh i Sarosh).

At the **Uthamna** ceremony (memorial) on the third afternoon, donations are made by family and friends for a worthy charity in memory of the deceased. The priests pray:

Sarosh Baj, **Uzirehn Gah**, **Khorshed-Meher Nyaesh** (twice - first for self and second for the deceased), **Vispa Humata**, **Nam Setayashne**, **Char Disa No Namaskar**, **Patet Ravan-ni** and **Dhoop Nirang**. (**Tandarosti** used to be performed for the eldest son, in case of the father's death and for the second-eldest son, in case of the mother's death; both are responsible for their parents' religious ceremonies after death).

At the **Chahrum** ceremony at dawn on the fourth day, as the soul ascends to the heavens, the priests pray:

Sarosh Baj, **Havan Gah**, **Atash Nyaesh**, **Ravan ni Patet**, **Hoshbam** and **Dhoop Nirang**, followed by an **Afringan** for **Daham Yazad**, **Vispaesha Arda Fravash Beresad**, **Daham Yazad** and **Sarosh**.

This is the first afringan prayed for the deceased who is now an 'anoush-e ravan' and belongs fully to the other world; whereas for the first 3 days the soul is in transition, lingering near the earth.

Note: For the first three days, up to the **Chahrum**, prayers (**Farajyat** with the appropriate **Yashts**) used to be offered continuously, either by family members or a priest, at the place where the body was laid for the last rites.

In the absence of any priests, as a last resort, lay persons can perform the **Paydust**, **Sarosh Nu Patroo**, **Uthamna** and **Chahrum** prayers. For the **Paydust** prayers, the *paywand* (union) must be maintained by two persons holding a white handkerchief between them, while saying the prayers, until the body is laid to rest.

IN TIMES OF DIFFICULTY AND TROUBLE

When faced with inimical forces and wicked ones, we can, like Zarathushtra, reflect on the Gathic prayers, especially:

Gathas: Ys.29.10-11, Ys.30.7-11, Ys.31.15-22, Ys.32, Ys.33.1-4, 12-14, Ys.34, Ys.46, Ys.48.7-12 (the first two Gathic verses of Kemna Mazda are excellent too, for this purpose), Ys.49 (para. 11 in particular), Ys.50, Ys.51.16-22 and Ys.53.6-9.

Also beneficial at such times is recitation of the following prayers:

Hormazd Yasht, invoking Ahura Mazda's blessings [p. 35].

Behram Yasht, Behram (Verethregna) - "conqueror of the enemy".

Vanant Yasht, "victorious courage, smiter of evil".

101 Names of Ahura Mazda, Yatha Ahu Vairyo and Ashem Vohu.

Popular among Parsis these days are various 'nirangs', or efficacious short prayers, one such being:

Nirang of Mushkil Asan Behram Yazad [see *Prayer Books*, p. 34].

PRAYERS FOR GOOD HEALTH AND HEALING

In times of illness, recitation of the following prayers will be helpful:

Aa Airyema Ishyo. The Avesta highly recommends this prayer for reaching perfection and holistic healing [see page 32].

Ardibehesht Yasht, refers to various forms of healing and describes healing by *manthra* as the best. It is often therefore used for healing by auto-suggestion, hypno-therapy and what is nowadays well recognized as "mind-over-matter" form of healing. [See page 42].

Vanant Yasht. "victorious courage, smiter of evil".

Hom Yasht, seeking blessings of good health.

Our Avesta is replete with prayers to invoke blessings of good health and long and happy life; among the more familiar ones are:

Tandarosti, Ahmai Raescha and Hazanghrem.

TO GIVE THANKS, ON ANY FESTIVE OCCASION, OR ASK HELP TO OVERCOME DIFFICULTIES

To give thanks for any reason, such as when a desire has been fulfilled, or on any festive occasion, or to ask Ahura Mazda's help to overcome difficulties or grant a special favor, the **Machi ceremony** is often performed by priests at the individual's request [p. 44].

FOR A NEW HOME, NEW JOB, NEW BUSI- NESS OR ANY NEW VENTURE

To invoke blessings on a new home, business or any major project, or to invoke God's favor for any cause or circumstances, priests are invited to perform a Jashan Ceremony:

Jashan. The appropriate **Afringan** and **Afrin** are recited by the priest with offerings of sandalwood, sweets, fruits and flowers.

Appropriate prayers to be recited by the family, include:

Hormazd Yasht, invoking Ahura Mazda's blessings [p. 35].

Satum, invoking blessings of departed loved ones [p. 31].

Tandarosti, showering blessings of health and happiness [p. 30].

ON ANY OCCASION, ANY TIME, ANY PLACE

When in doubt about what to pray, the following simple prayers are the best. They can be recited at any time and any place (e.g. when starting on a family car trip, or when lost, or in danger or as grace before meals, or simply to keep one's mind and heart on God ...):

Yatha Ahu Vairyo and Ashem Vohu [p. 29]. ■

Hambandagi for Muktaḍ

In Memory of Departed Souls

For the past 6 or 7 years, Zarathushti families in New Orleans have been getting together during the five Gatha days of Muktaḍ at a designated family's house and pray the Hambandagi prayer. Each family brings flowers in a vase and we set up a table in remembrance of our departed loved ones. This is the same Hambandagi I used to pray at the Dadar Agiary in Mumbai years ago, called Muktaḍ-no-Namaskar. It is derived from the the Avesta portion of the Satum. The prayer is from an excellent little booklet published by the Dadar Jashan Committee which gives the prayer and its meanings, in Gujarati. I have transliterated the prayers in English, so everyone here can partake in it, and with the help of a dasturji in Mumbai, obtained an English translation of the prayers.

We urge Zarathushtis everywhere who cannot make it to our Hambandagi in New Orleans, being in other cities, or states or even outside the country, to join us in the prayers, at 7:15 p.m. (Central Daylight Time) on each of the 5 Gatha days. At our gathering, I read the translation first and then everyone joins in the prayer. Both are reproduced below, so we can all pray together during these holy days.

Sincerely,

Rohinton K. Tarapore, New Orleans

Tel: (504) 443-1929, email: ronnie_tarapore@sohold.com



Muktaḍ - no - Namaskar

Az hama gunah patet pashemanum. Ashaou-nam vanguhish surao spentao Fravashayo yazamaide! Ashaone Ashem Vohu - 1.

Recite the above 3 times.

Recite Ahmai Raescha, Hazanghrem, Jasa me Avanghahe Mazda and Kerfeh Mazda.

Kshnaothra Ahurahe Mazdao!

Ashem Vohu - 1.

1. Ashaou-nam vanguhish soora-o spenta-o fravashyo satomi, zabyemi, oofyemi; Yazamaide naman-yao vis-yao zantu-mao dakhyu-mao Zarathustro-te-mao.

2. Vispa-namch aong-ham paorya-nam fravashi-nam eedh yazamaid fravashim-avam yam Ahurahe Mazdao, majish-tamche, vahish-tamche sresh-tamche, khraoj-dish-tamche khrathwish-tamche hukere-pata-mamche, ashat apno-te-mamche.

3. Ashaou-nam vanghu-ish soora-o spenta-o fravashyo yazamaide; Yyao amesha-nam spenta-nam, shaetnam, vere-zidoethra-nam, berez-tam, ayevyam-nam, takhma-nam, ahurye-nam, yo-ee aethya-jang-ho ashavno.

Introduction: When the universe was first created by Ahu, His wish which is *Ahunavar* (*Yatha Ahu Vairyo*) was sent. Then came Fravashi. This Fravashi can be imagined as the mother of the entire Creation. A small part of this Mother Source, with varying levels of Ashoi, does exist in everything in the Universe, from the human being to the smallest of small particles. This provides a spiritual guiding force. This prayer is to remember all Fravashis during the days of Fravardegan, when they come to this *Geti* (Earth).

Translation:

I get attuned, remember, pray and sing in praise of the excellent, heroic and bounteous Fravashis of all Righteous beings who bring happiness and prosperity to us. We praise the Fravashis and High Priests belonging to our homes, cities, states and countries.

Among all these Fravashis of the ancient epoch we worship here, the first and foremost is that of Ahura Mazda, who is the most exalted, the most excellent, and the best, the firmest and the wisest, the most gracious and the highest in righteousness.

We remember the bounteous Holy Fravashis of the Amesha Spentas, who are the rulers, energetic eyed, the exalted and the mighty, who render help and assistance, act in accord with the Law of Ahura Mazda and who are the eternal holy ones.

Here do we extol the life-force, the conscience, the intellect, the souls and the Fravashis of the righteous men

4. Paoerya-nam tekesha-nam, paoerya-nam sasno-gusham eedh asho-nam, ashoni-nam-che ahuum-che, daenam-che, baod-hus-che, oorvanem-che, fravashim-che yazamaide, yoi-e ashai vao-nerray, gay-ush hudhang-ho oorvanem yazamaide.

5. Yoi-e ashai vao-nerray. Gayehe marethno ashono fravashim yazamaide. Zarathustra-he spitam-he eedh ashono ashim-che fravashim-che yazamaide.

Kavo-ish vistasp-he ashono fravashim yazamaide. Istra-vastre-he Zarathustro-ish ashono fravashim yazamaide.

Nabanuz-distanam eedh ashonam ashoni-nam-che ahum-che, daenam-che, baod-hus-che, oorvanen-che, fravashim-che yazamaide, yoi-e ashai vao-nerray; mut vispabio asho-niby, frava-shiby, ya-o eeriri-thusham ashonam, ya-osche zavan-tam ashonam, ya-oscha naram azat-nam frasho-chereth-ram soshyan-tam.

7. Eedh irristenam oorvano yazamaide ya-o asho-nam fravashio. Vispa-nam ahmai nama-ne nabanuz-distanam, per irriste-nam, aethra-paiti-nam, aethraya-nam, neram, naeri-nam eedh asho-nam ashoni-nam fravashio yazamaide.

8. Vispa-nam aethra-paiti-nam ashonam frava-shio yazamaide. Vispa-nam aethraya-nam ashonam fravashio yazamaide. Vispa-nam neram ashonam fravashio yazamaide. Vispanam nairi-nam ashoni-nam fravashio yazamaide.

9. Visp-nam apere-nayuk-nam dahmo-keret-nam ashonam fravashio yazamaide. Aa-dukhyu-namche ashonam fravashio yazamaide. Ooj-dakhu-namche ashonam fravashio yazamaide.

10. Naramche ashonam fravashio yazamaide. Naeri-namche ashoni-nam fravashio yazamaide. Vispao ashao-nam vanghu-ish soora-o spenta-o fravashio yazamaide. Ya-o huch geyat merethenut a sosh-yun-tat vere-thrung-ut.

11. Vispa-o fravashio ashao-nam yazamaide; Ashaou-nam vanghu-ish soora-o spenta-o fravashio yazamaide. Vis-pe ashav-no yazat yazamaide. Ashem Vohu - 1.

and the righteous women of the ancient Mazdayasni faith before Zarathushtra, and of the righteous men and the righteous women who were the first listeners to the religious scriptures of Zarathushtra and who embraced his religion called Mazdayasni Zarathustrish. All these people strove hard for righteousness. We adore the soul of the bounteous Mother Earth.

Amongst those who strove hard for righteousness, we respectfully remember the Fravashi of the righteous Gaya Maretan or Gayomard; we revere here both the Holiness and the Fravashi of Holy Spitama Zarathushtra; we venerate the Fravashi of the Kyanian King Gustasp the Righteous; we venerate the Fravashi of the righteous Istra-vastre, the eldest son of Zarathushtra.

Here do we praise the life-force, the conscience, the intellect, the souls and the Fravashis of the righteous men and the righteous women among the Nabanzdishtans (i.e. people born in the Zarathushti religion, descendants of those who embraced the Zarathushti religion) who strove hard for righteousness.

Along with all these holy Fravashis, do we revere those of the righteous departed souls, those of the righteous who are living, those of the heroes to be born and the heralds-of-renovation, the Saoshyants yet to come – to fight evil and re-establish the Law of Asha (Righteousness) in the world.

Here do we praise the souls of the departed ones who fought for Ashoi and whose Fravashis are holy. Of all the departed souls of Nabanzdishtans, the Ervads, the disciples and men and women who have gone beyond from this fold, we here invoke the Fravashis of the righteous men and of the righteous women.

Of all the Ervads (or Gurus), we revere the Fravashis of the Righteous Ervads. Of all the disciples, we revere the Fravashis of the holy disciples. We revere the Fravashis of all the righteous men. We revere the Fravashis of all the Righteous women.

We praise the Fravashis of all holy, innocent children of tender age; we praise the Fravashis of the holy inhabitants of this country; we praise the Fravashis of the holy inhabitants of other countries.

We praise the Fravashis of the righteous men. We praise the Fravashis of the righteous women. All the excellent, heroic and bounteous Fravashis of the righteous do we revere, those right from Gaya Maretan, the first man up to Saoshyant, our last victorious savior to come.

We remember and praise the Fravashis of all the Righteous souls; We remember and praise the excellent heroic and bounteous Fravashis of the holy ones. All of them bring happiness and prosperity to us. We also remember and praise all the Yazads. ■

Ardibehesht Yasht

“O Asha, unto thee shall I weave hymns and unto Vohu Mana as ne’er before, and unto Mazda Ahura as well ...” [Ys. 23.8]

By Pervin J. Mistry
Mississauga, Ontario

Ardibehesht (Pahlavi) or Asha Vahishta (Avestan) presides over the creation of *Atash* or Fire. Yasna 17.11 mentions *Atash* not only in its visible forms, but also in its invisible forms. The invisible or spiritual fire is cosmic energy and connotes Asha Vahishta. As an *Ame-shaspand*, Asha is ‘hamem’ or one with Ahura Mazda; therefore Asha is truly the divine essence/energy of Ahura Mazda pervading every atom of the universe, transmuting matter to spirit, ultimately realizing the goal of *Frashokereti*.

While *Atash* *Nyaesh* reveals the divine and spiritual status of *Atash*, and contains portions of Yasna 33, 34 (*Ahunavad Gatha*) and 62, *Ardibehesht Yasht* forms a portion of the *Bagan Nask* which is one of the 21 *Nasks* revealed by Ahura Mazda to Asho Zarathushtra. These 21 *Nasks* are based on the 21 ‘*staot*’ (cosmic resonances) of the sacred *Ahunavar* manthra; hence, *Ardibehesht Yasht* is part of one of the resonances created by *Ahunavar*, as revealed in the *Bagan Nask*. *Bagan* contains 16 of the extant *Yashts* (including *Ardibehesht*) which are preserved in the *Avesta*. Although the language of *Gathas* may differ from the language of *Yashts*, it is important to note that both the *Gathas* and *Yashts* form segments of the original 21 *Nasks*; therefore, their source is the same.

Ardibehesht Yasht begins by expressly referring to *Aa Airyema Ishyo* and *Saoka*, both being coworkers of Asha Vahishta. *Airyemana Yazata* bestows spiritual wisdom and

divine harmony through *staot* by driving away deceit and ignorance from the mind. *Saoka* denotes activity of the mind, brilliance of wisdom. Both *Airyemana* and *Saoka* represent spiritual illumination, a quality possessed by *Atash*, as also mentioned in *Atash Nyaesh*. *Atash* is also intimately connected with ‘fluent tongue’ (“*khshv-wrem hizvam urune ushi*”) [*Atash Nyaesh*, 4] indicating *Atash* to be synonymous with wisdom as well as speech. Considering the fact that

“... *Ardibehesht Yasht* wherein healing of body, mind and soul is attributed to piety, spirituality and the utterance of manthra.”

Atash is physical as well as spiritual, thought and speech, on the physical level, are directly correspondent to spirituality and ‘*manthra spenta*’.

This is revealed in detail in the *Ardibehesht Yasht* wherein healing of body, mind and soul is attributed to piety, spirituality and the utterance of manthra. That healing must begin from within, is an old Avestan teaching; that plants also heal “*urvaro baeshazo*” is also mentioned. Further, *Ardibehesht Yasht* reveals that the manthra contained in *Airyemana* prayer is one of the greatest of the holy spells, and whoever worships Asha Vahishta and recites the efficacious manthras, defeats *Angre Mainyu*.

Ardibehesht Yasht adds “the daeva of deceit, *Angre Mainyu*, full of death, ran away from Asha Vahishta and, howled out that the sacred verse of **Ashem Vohu** has the divine power to smite and vanquish me.” *Ashem*

Vohu (dedicated to *Vohu Mana*), and *Asha Vahishta* are like two sides of a coin. *Ashem Vohu* is total purity, and *Asha Vahishta/Atash* is the purifier of all things. *Yasna 20* is a commentary on the *Ashem Vohu* prayer. It specifies that *Ashem Vohu* is called “*bagha Ashahe Vahishtahe*” and the manthra contained in this prayer adds to the power of *Asha Vahishta*.

Light and sound. The question arises as to why *Ardibehesht/Asha Vahishta*, or Fire, is so intimately related to manthra or sound? That light and sound are the functions of waves of energy manifesting at different frequencies is a scientific fact known to our ancestors, thousands of years ago – proof of their wisdom and spirituality! They knew the correspondence between light, manifesting as *Atash*, and sound. Sound is also spiritual/occult. Manthra is composed of sound, not mundane words. It embodies celestial harmony or music of the spheres. Sound is the

key to most potent and effectual power in nature because it transcends the space-time continuum and opens the door of communion between mortals and the divine world. That the two, light and sound are inseparable, is proven by scientists who ‘hear’ stars, that is, they transform the light coming from a particular luminary object into sound. Conversely, ultra-sound x-rays show images through the medium of sound.

The *Avesta* emphasizes the interrelationship of light and sound by stating that sound is at the root of all manifestation. The universe became manifest through the resonance of *Ahunavar* which was conceived in Ahura Mazda’s wisest mind as a result of His first thought (light). This proves that *Asha Vahishta/Atash*, as divine energy/light, is irrefutably connected to manthra or spiritual sound.

Since man is an integral part of the universe, divine consciousness (*Vohu Mana*) and divine essence (*Asha Vahishta*) are innately within us, func-

tioning through the 3 spiritual principles (*Fravashi, baodh and urvan*). These spiritual principles are linked to the physical through the 'mind' which becomes the vehicle of either Angra Mainyu or Spenta Mainyu. Subsequently, the words we utter are the product of our thought, and it is thought or mind, wherein seeds of good or evil come to fruition.

Destructive seeds. Ardibehesht Yasht draws our attention to 3 most destructive 'seeds' which hinder spirituality: 'azi-chithra' (seed of snakes), 'vehrko-chithra' (seed of wolves), and, as food for thought, 'bizangro-chithra' (seeds or tendencies of evil/wicked biped). The fact that man (biped) is placed alongside snakes and wolves indicates that the disposition of man is as destructive. Snakes and wolves are synonymous with being vicious, selfish and cunning, as is man. But man alone is endowed with speech. When a man utters an evil word, the effect created in nature, by the ensuing sound, through the vibes of molecular particles is irreversible. Man alone has the ability to vocalize manthra. Man alone is responsible for his thoughts, words and actions, and when man chooses to be wicked, he is the most dangerous animal.

The Yasht emphasizes that the utterance of efficacious manthra promotes spirituality because during such passage of time while manthra are recited, the door of the soul opens to commune with the Divine. This helps the mind to drive away dormant or active seeds of destruction germinating in the dual principles of human mentality.

It is Atash/Asha Vahishta who alchemize every seed originating from Angra Mainyu to ultimately become purified. Our ancestors knew that sound produced by holy, sacred manthra has the ability to destroy 'druj' (evil). By uttering the manthra of this Yasht, by knowing why and what we are praying, we become aware of existing druj and thereafter

try to consciously drive away evil notions from our mind. The cure for ailments (mental and physical) is also given. The first step to permanently cure ailments is through the recitation of manthra whose spiritual sound enables the soul to dispense holistic cure from within.

“ The seeds of righteousness also come to fruition if we listen to our inner voice of consciousness, the voice of Sarosh Yazad. He dwells in the silent chamber of our heart (soul) ”

The inner voice. Ardibehesht Yasht emphatically states that one who heals by means of reciting manthra is best among all healers because the cure is effected from within, from the soul itself. The seeds of righteousness also come to fruition within us if we listen to our inner voice of consciousness, the voice of Sarosh Yazad. He dwells in the silent chamber of our heart (soul) and is called "takhmahe tanu manthrahe" (manthra incarnate). This indicates that spiritual manthra are inherently present within us, embedded within our soul. We merely have to connect our spiritual soul to the soul of Ahura Mazda (Manthra Spenta) through the prescribed utterances of manthric prayers.

The Path of Asha is an inward path, attained through the inner voice of Sarosh Yazad (soul-consciousness). The most potent weapon against Angra Mainyu is divine manthra. The profound message of this Yasht is that just as a doctor fills out a prescription for his patients, prayers/manthras are our spiritual medication which will heal us from within our inner self so we may become spiritually perfected.

Prayer. Genuine prayer is the calling or invoking into oneself of a portion of divine consciousness because in prayer, through manthra, one opens the inner door (soul) to the reception of the divine guest one communes with. Yasna 30.1 specifies that efficacious manthra is best for spirituality,

which is attained by 'yasna', through 'staotacha Ahurai' (Ahura Mazda's own spiritual language of staot).

On the other hand, if an individual prays five times a day but fails to live by the prescribed tenets, such prayers are not heard or accepted by the Divine. Consequently such weak staot are ineffectual to create productive reciprocal vibes in the spiritual world. The Avesta mentions several instances wherein such prayers have not been answered. The Avesta is our most sacred, priceless legacy. Please let us not desecrate it or

alter it, just because we do not understand it. Let us preserve it with faith and dedication.

"And through these prayers may I hold evermore Asha and Vohu Mana within my heart ..." [Ys. 28.11]

Let us remember:

"Bi bandegi, zindegi
sharmindegi hast"

*Without prayer,
life is insignificant!* ■



Pervin J. Mistry is an ardent follower of Ilm-e-Khshnoom, an occult/mystical belief in Zoroastrianism. After receiving a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy and Literature, Pervin continued her studies through teachings of theosophy and the esoteric teachings of the Zarathushti religion.

Yazatas, Yashts Nyaeshes

On the Yazatas – “the adorable ones worthy of worship”, the Yashts – hymns of praise dedicated to each Yazata and the five litanies – the Nyaeshes.

One view of the Zarathushti Yasht scriptures presented by scholars, based on the literal translations of these ancient texts, is that they are a mixture of history, geography, legend and praise of Iranian gods and goddesses that were worshiped before the time of Prophet Zarathushtra, and that they were written by priests who re-introduced these deities after the death of the Prophet. The orthodox and traditional viewpoint is that these are sacred scriptures that originated from Prophet Zarathushtra's teachings, that were at first orally preserved and later written down by authorized Zarathushti priests.

The following sections (Yazatas, Yashts, Nyaeshes) are excerpted from Khojeste Mistree's book *Zoroastrianism, an Ethnic Perspective*.

The Yazatas. The concept of Yazatas is a unique one in Zoroastrianism, as they are not seen to be individual gods nor are they regarded as angels of the Zoroastrian pantheon. The Avestan term Yazata means 'an adorable being worthy of worship', and therefore included in the pantheon of Yazatas, is Ahura Mazda as well as the Amesha Spentas who aid him in the spiritual and physical worlds. The remaining Yazatas form the second tier of divinities whose origins often appear to stem from a pre-Zoroastrian background. It seems that Zarathushtra's reverence for the Yazatas was probably instinctive and inherited for he acknowledges some of the pre-Zoroastrian divinities in his hymns, thereby maintaining a continuity with all that was good in earlier times.

The Yazatas fulfill a dual role. First they aid the furthering and well-being of the seven good creations, and secondly, they help man to realize the inherent nature of God, a nature which encompasses an all-pervading happiness stemming from Wisdom.

According to Khorshed Yasht [Yt. 6.1] there are hundreds of Yazatas in the universe; however in Ys 16.3-4, it is stated that there are only 30, including the seven Amesha Spentas. Each day (except Fravardin) of the Zoroastrian calendar month is dedicated to a Yazata, with Hormazd being propitiated on four days: Hormazd, Daepadar, Daepmeher and Daepdin. Three Yazatas Apam Napat, Haoma and Daham have no days dedicated in their honor.

The Yazatas are also believed to be the givers of boons when invoked by man. They are deemed to be beneficent, full of glory and the possessors of healing power as well as they comprise the entire task force of Ahura Mazda's good creations. It is believed that they cumulatively enhance the strength and power of mankind in the battle against the forces of evil.

Each Yazata has a short and long blessing (Av. *Khshnuman*) dedicated to it [Sirozah 1&2, SBE 23, pp 3-20] which when invoked, brings to life a rich qualitative diversity woven together in an integrated cosmic whole, both created and continuously maintained by the Yazatas.

Yashts. These are hymns of praise devoted to the worship of the Yazatas. The Yashts are recognized by their introduction and conclusion which are similar in style and syntax to each other. Each Yasht however, differs widely in age and content.

The Nyaeshes are litanies in praise of the sun and light (Khorshed-

Meher Nyaeshes), the moon (Mah Bokhtar Nyaesh), water (Ardvisoor Nyaesh) and fire (Atash Nyaesh). These five Nyaeshes are contained within the collection of prayers known as the Khordeh Avesta.

[Acknowledgement. Khojeste Mistree's "Zoroastrianism, an Ethnic Perspective" is gratefully acknowledged as the source of the above sections]

Ilm-e Kshnoom perspective. The following presents a description by Ervad Kaikhushru Dastur, who follows the *Ilm-e Kshnoom* explanations of our scriptures.

Yazatas are divine emanations from Ahura Mazda. They are conscious beings who can communicate with us. We can attune with a Yazata when we recite the Yasht for that Yazata, focusing solely on the Yazata in a meditative state. We can attune with the Yazatas at different levels, depending on our level of spiritual advancement – with the energy, the light (*ushtan*), or the thoughts/consciousness of the Yazata.

The Yashts describe the following:

- Functions of Yazatas in the divine (*hasti*), non-physical (*nisti*) and physical (*getig*) worlds.

- Virtues of the Yazatas, e.g. Sraosha has the virtue of implicit obedience; Vohu Mana of divine consciousness; Asha Vahishta of Law/Order ...

- *Keherp* (forms) of the works of the Yazatas. All actions create an

[Contd. on page 51]

The Machi Ceremony

The ritual of Machi is the highest form of offering made to the Fire, that has, over the centuries become an embodiment of divine reality – Ahura Mazda.

By Jehan Bagli
Princeton, NJ

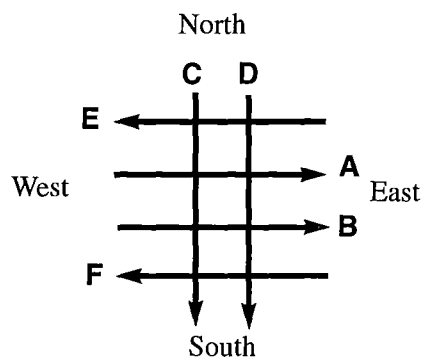
Zarathushtrians make a variety of offerings of earthly creations such as fruits, flowers, milk, water during the performances of different rituals. It is a well established fact that pagan Iranians of the pre-Zarathushtrian era believed in many Gods. They worshiped Gods of Fire, of Water, of Sun and offered sacrifices to them. In the early tribal religions the blood sacrifices of animals and at times humans was a reality.

Zarathushtra advanced the unique notion of a single creating force in the name of Ahura Mazda. He proclaimed the creations of Mazda as sacred and veneration for all the elements of creation. The prayers of Asho Zarathusht in the Gathas are directed, solely for guidance through Amesha Spentas and for reverence to Ahura Mazda. With the passage of time, the changes in prevailing circumstances, the sacrificial offerings were reintroduced to varying degrees, and even included in liturgies of Yashts of the post-Zarathushtrian time. However today, this practice of blood sacrifice has completely dissipated.

Sacred fire. The one Gathic concept that constitutes an unbroken strand through the age of entire tradition is the reverence for consecrated Fire. It is through the agency of Divine Fire that Zarathushtra makes a genuine attempt in the Gathas, to explain the complex notion of Asha or Ashoi which encompasses absolute Truth, Justice, Moral Righteousness and Immutable Order of Nature.

Over the centuries prayers are offered in front of consecrated Fire, that has become the embodiment of divine reality – Ahura Mazda – that pervades the universe. It is incumbent upon Zarathushtis to perpetuate the physical presence of this divine incarnation of Mazda, whether in the Zarathushti household (Atash Dadgah), in an agiary (Atash Aderan) or in an Atash Behram. This obligation is generally fulfilled by offering of fragrant dry wood and incense as nourishment to the sacred Fire.

Atash Padshah. Zarathushtis, since coming to India in 936 CE consecrated the first Atash Behram in Sanjan using the *alat* (consecrated implements) imported from Khorasan. This consecrated Fire, over a period of some 800 years has moved from Sanjan to Bahrot, to Bansda, to



Navsari, to Bulsar, and finally in 1742 to Udvada where it is ablaze today. In Udvada, the Fire being that of the highest status of sanctity, was named *Iranshah*. In time the Fire of Atash Behram generally came to be recognized with the reverential term *Atash Padshah* (or Fire – the King).

Machi. The term Machi is derived from the Sanskrit word '*manchi*',

meaning a raised seat, a set of honor or a throne. The term is also used for a raised stand to display flower arrangements during the Mukta ceremony. This signifies a seat of honor for the flowers to revere the Fravashis, believed to be visiting the earthly precinct during that period.

The Ritual. Traditionally the offering of the fragrant wood to the sacred Fire in the Agiaries and Atash Behrams is performed five times a day at the change of each *Gah*. This act of paying homage to the Divinity is known by the name '*bui*' (or '*boi*'). The word is derived from the Avestan word '*baodha*' or '*baoidhi*' meaning fragrance. The ceremony in Iran and India is recognized as '*bui dedan*' and '*boi devi*' respectively, meaning "to give fragrance."

In Agiaries, the *bui* ceremony is performed for the Atash at the turn of every *Gah* by offering a single piece of sandalwood. In contrast the highest stature of Fire installed in Atash Behrams is nourished at the turn of each *Gah*, with a Machi.

Machi is an elaborate formation of several pieces of sandalwood arranged in the form of a throne, fit for Atash-Padshah (the King). The number of pieces used in this service, varies from six, to seven to nine, depending upon the tradition of the Fire Temple. In the case of an Agiary, therefore, the only difference between *bui* and the Machi ceremony is in the arrangement and the quality of the wood used; while in the case of Atash Behrams, the *bui* and the Machi ceremonies are essentially identical. In either case, when the Machi is requested by Zarathushti laity, the entire expense of the sandalwood and payment to the performing priest, is borne by the family, and a Tandarosti prayer is specifically recited for the family.

The Machi ceremony is performed by a priest who has attained the highest level of spiritual purity through a Bareshnum (a traditional ritual believed to affect spiritual cleansing). At the turn of a *Gah*, during the

day, the priest, after reciting his daily prayers (Padyab-kushti, Sarosh Baj, the appropriate Gah and Khorshed-Meher Nyaesh), enters the consecrated chamber and with gloved hands offers frankincense to the sacred fire. He then faces East and puts two pieces (A and B in the figure) of clean fragrant sandalwood, on the fire. He then moves clockwise to face South to lay two more pieces (C and D) on the first two. A further stride clockwise brings him to face West and two more pieces (E and F) are placed on top. When seven pieces of sandalwood are used, the last one is laid on top, while in case of nine, two more are laid and the last one rests on top.

Then chanting the prayer of *Khsh-naothra Ahurahe Mazdao* followed by the holy words of *Ashem Vohu*, he goes around the stone platform on which the *afarganyu* is located, sprinkling it with pure water. This is followed by the formula for the veneration of Mazda through Holy Fire and through offering Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Actions. The priest goes around the fire during the recital of these prayers, halting at the four directions and the four corners, touching the fire urn with metallic ladle (*chamech*) signifying universal power of Ahura Mazda.

This is followed by praying of the well-known liturgy dedicated to Fire - the Atash Nyaesh. During the Pazand utterances of Dushmata, Duzhukhta and Duzvareshta, bells are chimed. The ringing of the bells is symbolic to drive the evil out of the minds of the worshippers, and out of this world. The number of times this Nyaesh is recited varies with the time of the day and the sacred status of the Fire. Atash Nyaesh is recited only once in an Agiary, while repeated several times in front of an Atash Behram fire.

Zarathushtis generally offer a Machi to Atash Padshah on special festive occasions or upon successful fulfillment of a desire in the family. ■

Nirang

Two Perspectives

Nirang (consecrated bull's urine) – is it a living miracle, as the highly respected, late Dastoor (Dr) Kutar contends in his essay on ‘Nirang, the Water of Life’ or is it an archaic ritual practice that calls for reexamination in light of modern day science, as explained by Dr. Borzoo J. Nadjmi in ‘A Scientific Analysis of Nirang’?

NIRANG WATER OF LIFE

By *Late Dastoor (Dr) Sohrabji H. Kutar*
London, United Kingdom (1969)

Nirang is obtained from the ‘varasiya’ (white bull) and from other bulls maintained on a hygienic diet. The vessels which receive the bull's urine are not only thoroughly scoured, but are themselves purified and consecrated; and the liquid is then sanctified for holy purposes, through the long, intricate and exalted ritual ceremony and prayer service of the Nirangdin. Thereafter, imbued by these prayers, it becomes an agent of purification. These are the tenets of traditional Zarathushti observance and belief; but in this scientific age it seems desirable to reinforce them with scientific proof.

The experiment. In 1963, Dr. Firoze M. Kotwal brought, for the use of the community in London, some nirang by air from India, which had been consecrated in a Nirangdin ceremony at the Vadi Dar-e Mehr of Navsari. Sixteen years later, I submitted a small quantity of this nirang for chemical analysis to the London firm of Henner and Cox, Ltd., analytical

and consulting chemists, together with a control sample taken at that time from an ordinary bull on an English farm in Kent.

As was to be expected, chemical analysis failed to identify the unknown quality in the nirang which would give a physical indication of its sanctifying and healing nature; for this quality necessarily transcends the physical; but the photographs taken in the strictly controlled conditions of a bacteriology laboratory of a London teaching hospital, showed the striking contrast between the two liquids.

The control sample appeared distinctly contaminated with impurities, whereas the nirang was flawless. This degree of purity is what I myself, as a priest, had faith in and looked for in the nirang; but the evidence produced by this objective scientific inquiry may be of interest to the more skeptical.

Consecration of nirang. Much has already been written by so many scholars of our religion, so much

It is known that ordinary urine left to itself soon decomposes and emits an offensive odor. That is due to quick growth of millions of germs in it – of both pathogenic (disease-causing) and non-pathogenic (relatively harmless) organisms. By modern bacteriological methods, the presence of these germs could be detected under a microscope and they can also be grown over suitable nutrient media maintained sterile in special containers called Petri dishes. These sterile media contain no organisms, but if a material containing organisms is spread in minute quantities over its surface, they multiply and grow and collect on the surface as visible

“ “ When he examined the Petri dishes of the cultured specimens, Dr. Saunders was profoundly surprised that both specimens did not grow a single colony or germ of any kind ... “I have never seen anything like this in all my long professional life!” ” ”

One specimen was six years old, which had been with me in normal use (during the *nahan* ceremony at Navjotes and weddings), and the other one was six months old sent to me from Bombay by Ervad Dr. Peshotan Anklesaria, Principal of the Cama Athornan Institute. Dr. Saunders is the Consultant Bacteriologist to St. Nicholas Hospital in London. I explained to him what I wanted done and why. He agreed to oblige me by culturing both the specimens. Not being a Zarathushti, he firmly believed that the specimens of nirang, would both contain large numbers of bacteria, would show

This revelation I hold to my co-religionists as power of our manthra-vani and the efficacy of the Nirangdin ceremony, and leave the non-believers to refute with empty words what scientific inquiry confirms. ■

Dastoor (Dr) Sohrabji H. Kutar was a practicing physician and the highly respected head priest of the U.K. Zarathushti community until his passing in the 1980s.

History shows that Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds are truly energized –

*When we spread so much peace around us, there is no room for war
When we spread so much love around us, there is no room for hate
When we spread so much good around us, there is no room for evil
When we spread so much health around us, there is no room for sickness
When we spread so much light around us, there is no room for darkness.*

- Meher Dadabhoy Amalsad

A SCIENTIFIC ANALYSIS OF NIRANG

By Borzoo J. Nadjmi, M.D.
Lincoln, Rhode Island

In recent months some articles have been written about the efficacy of nirang (consecrated bull's or cow's urine). For clarification, I was born into the Zarathushti faith and have remained in that religion not by inheritance but after extensively studying all other faiths and finding that the Zarathushti faith fits me the best.

The source of my guidance is essentially the Gathas of Zarathushtra. The Gathas are the only element in the entire Zarathushti scriptures that both directly and authoritatively can be attributed to be the impassioned outpourings of the prophet himself. I do not dismiss other writings, but do not consider them scriptural. One of the articles persistently stated that the Vendidad is part of the Zarathushti scripture, which it is not. I believe some valuable information can be found in these writings but they are not a part of the holy book at all. I am neither a reformist nor an orthodox, but a realist. This paper is not meant to denigrate anyone's belief or writings; it is meant to improve our understanding and respect towards each other.

Medicinal properties. Nirang is the consecrated urine of bulls, cows, sheep and goats and the purificatory ritual for nirang is called the Nirangdin ceremony. Nirang is also called 'ab-e zar' or 'zar ab'; the Persian word is 'zahr ab' (poisonous water or excreta). The Nirangdin ceremony is very ancient; its origin, most likely is Aryan, belonging to an era dating pre-Zarathushtra. Among the ancient Iranians water, urine and particular kinds of clay were consid-

ered to be the best means of purification or cleansing.

Urine has been used by several peoples in ancient times as a means of cleansing. Its original use as a

“ Zarathushtra unequivocally recommends water for purifying and cleansing – nothing more, nothing less. For Zarathushtis to drink nirang or to wash their bodies with it in the 21st century is unconscionable and does not comport with the scriptures as defined in the Gathas. ”

cleansing agent has led to the notion of it being considered a charm against evil spirits. Dr. Eugene Wilhelm, a professor who discussed the use of urine according to the precepts of the later Avesta, provides references from Hindu and Roman books showing that urine was medicinally used in ancient times in Egypt, Greece, Rome and Scandinavia.

Urine is slightly acidic and this gives it antiseptic properties. The Aryans knew about this mildly antiseptic nature of aseptic urine and thus they used it as a cleansing agent (only for the surface). Additionally, urine contains a substance which is called glycosaminoglycan which forms a protective layer over the wound to prevent infection. In this day and age, however, there are far better means for cleaning and treatment of infection; any antibiotic or even some soaps will do a better job.

To understand and invalidate the use of nirang, it is necessary to explore it in three parts: the anthropological, religious and medicinal/pathological aspects.

Anthropological aspect. An anthropological study of religious practices would be very helpful. In a search through the literature, I have found only a very few primitive tribes who

still drink urine and devour feces as a ritual practice. However, since I am not an anthropologist, I will leave it to others to explore this aspect.

Religious aspect. In the Gathas, water always is a purifying substance. *Nirang is not even once mentioned in the Gathas.* The more ancient portions of the Avesta, namely the pre-Achaemenid Yasna, reveal few traces of purity laws and rites. Subsequent books in the Avesta and Pahlavi display an ever increasing concern with problems of purity and pollution. Indeed, many Pahlavi texts from the late Sasanian (including the Vendidad) and early Islamic period writings deal with

maintenance of ritual purity. Yasna 48.5 states:

“O Armaiti, do not allow the tyrants and bad rulers to rule over us ...”

At the end of that verse is:

“Dedication to purity is best for man since his birth.”

Purity in this verse means righteousness, according to the late Dr. Tarporewalla and eight other competent translators.

Yasna 65 - 69 considers water as a purifying substance and is highly praised. Hormazd Yasht [verse 21], Haptanhaiti, Aban Yasht, Khorshed Yasht, Tir Yasht and a few other Yashts praise the purifying effects of water. In Goshtasb Yasht which is newer, we read: “Do not wash yourself with Gaomez (urine) but wash and cleanse yourself with water.”

If one considers the Gathas as the only authentic writing of Zarathushtra and the Yashts as writings of different people at different times (pre- and post-Zarathushtra's era), readers would understand that nirang is the invention of the Aryan magi and its use has been incorrectly forced by the semi-barbaric Parthians and dictated to Zarathushtis by the Vendidad, which does not have any religious basis. Within the past three years, a

prominent Zarathushti studies scholar in Iran has published four volumes on the Vendidad, supporting other scholars' views that the Vendidad is not scripture.

Zarathushtra unequivocally recommended water for purifying and cleansing – nothing more, nothing less. For Zarathushtis to drink nirang or to wash their bodies with it in the 21st century is unconscionable and does not comport with the scriptures as defined by the Gathas.

Medicinal/pathological aspects.

Urinalysis is both the most important and productive of all the laboratory screening tests, yet it is also the most poorly done test in medicine; hence the results of analytical testing on 6-year-old nirang that was transported by air from India to England, are at best, unreliable. The reasons for the unreliability of many urinalysis tests are: (1) the improper collection of specimens; (2) the delay in performance of urinalysis; and (3) a lack of interest or expertise on the examiner's part.

This fundamental laboratory study must be performed by the physician. The specimen must be observed promptly because urine becomes alkaline on standing, and alkaline urine dissolves the cellular elements present, leaving only an amorphous debris, to which no pathologic significance may be attached. Only aseptically collected, fresh urine specimens merit serious study.

If one considers the rate of bacterial multiplication, (doubling every 20 minutes), *the laboratory must avoid examining urine which has been treated or left standing at room temperature longer than 4 hours.* If the examination of urinary sediment cannot be undertaken within 1 or 2 hours after collection, precautions must be taken to avoid deterioration of chemical, noncellular and cellular constituents of the urine sample.

It is advisable that the bacteriologic cultures are done as soon as possible after collection. Cultures may be performed within 12 hours after collection if the urine sample is refrigerated. If the urine sample cannot be refrigerated, then chemical preservatives or fixatives are extremely useful in minimizing degenerative cellular changes.

In performing urinalysis, each element should be identified and measured. Specific gravity, osmolality and pH are extremely important. For example, mycobacterium bovis (i.e. tuberculosis) will grow only in acidic urine and many other infections usually develop in alkaline urine. pH is

“ Zarathushtra was the first to teach that purity of the body leads to purity of the mind and that in turn leads to purity of spirit ... His manthras and reciting of the Gathas leads to purity of mind and spirit and should be used only for that purpose. ”

extremely important in the foundation of different types of stones.

A urine culture for the detection of mycobacterium bovis is a complex task. Due to specimen collection error and the unavailability of modern techniques, only 15% of urine cultures prior to 1987 have read positively for this infection. Moreover, in Great Britain and other countries, the incidents of mycobacterium bovis are grossly underestimated as a result of many laboratories failing to identify or report such infections.

Source of infection. Scientific data reveals that many diseases can be transferred from cattle to human beings. Three of these are (a) Brucellosis, also known as Malta's fever is generally transferred from animal hosts to human beings. Transmission from person to person has never been recorded. The organism is shed in the urine and infection occurs via mucous membranes. (b) Schistosomiasis, a chronic worm infection.

Human beings may be infected by 'schistosomes' whose normal habitat is in humans and other mammals (cows, bulls, water buffalo). A single worm pair will spawn several million eggs, which may be excreted via the urine or feces. Diagnosis of this infection may be made through microscopic examination, however, in lighter infections routine urinalysis will not always reveal the presence of eggs. (c) Mycobacterium bovis, where an infected cow or bull is the only source of the infection. Infection can be established by inhaling mycobacterium organisms on dust or water droplets. After involvement of the kidneys, bacteria are excreted from the urine, stools, milk and nasal secretions.

The point I am making here is that scientific data shows that urine is a source and breeding ground for many infections.

In conclusion, looking at it from all aspects – anthro-

pologic, religious and medicinal, *I can only conclude that urine, consecrated or not, is nothing but an impious excreta with no religious significance.*

Zarathushtra's original teachings as recorded in the Gathas differ widely from the later Avesta and Pahlavi. We cannot help but feel that the original teaching of the Gathas has been radically altered. In the Gathas [Ys. 33.1], the prophet indicates and expects his followers to conform, that his message is universal and applied to all mankind. Also, Zarathushtra was the first to teach that purity of the body leads to purity of the mind and that in turn leads to purity of spirit. These three types of purity are essential elements for fighting physical, social and other evils. Zarathushtra's manthras and reciting of the Gathas leads to purity of mind and spirit and should be used only for that purpose.

The core of the religion should be maintained; however, the associated practices can change from time to time, in accordance with the Zarathushti obligation to reflect, reason and choose. To be responsive to the message of Zarathushtra, we must formulate and articulate the religious vision to be preached and then apply ethical principles to the complex and varying conditions of modern existence. If moral resolution is replaced by ritualistic fervor, then the Zarathushtrian vision of a perfecting world may be on a path to oblivion.

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*A candle loses none of its
light by lighting another.*

What is the purpose of the various sounds in a language? According to modern linguists, sounds or phonemes of a language help in differentiation and beyond that they do not have any other function. The main function of any language is to communicate meaning. What sound combinations should be used in a word to communicate a certain meaning? Is there any connection between sounds of a word and its denotative meaning? Why should we call a table "table" and a chair "chair"? Could we just as well call a table "chair" and a chair "table"? From the point of view of modern linguistics, it is alright if the new convention is accepted by the people speaking that language. According to modern linguistics, the meanings associated with words of natural languages are conventional and there is no connection between sounds

and/or the number of sounds in a word, and its meaning. Interestingly, Sanskrit grammarians from India around the time of Panini (400 BC) were thinking semantics (the science of meaning) in the same way that modern linguists think about it today.

Artificial Intelligence and Sanskrit. The ancient languages of Iran and India were highly structured languages. They carried word declensions. Because each word had an ending, the meaning of a sentence was conserved, irrespective of the order of words in a sentence. This is not true for English. The meaning of a sentence "John drinks water" is changed with the change of position of the words "John" and "water". Rick Briggs, an engineer from NASA's Ames Laboratory wrote an article in *Artificial Intelligence* magazine in 1985, on the application of Sanskrit in modern machines called computers. It was found that the ancient Sanskrit grammarians were analyzing Sanskrit sentences very similar to the semantics now used in research on artificial intelligence.

The computer is a machine. It does not understand what it does. Machines follow rules because they are programmed to do so and they can perform rule-based operations. Mathematics is perfectly rule-based. Hence computers are comfortable with mathematical operations. Languages like English, although they follow certain grammatical rules, are flexible, with a lot of redundancy. Computers do not like redundancy. While mathematics (rigid without redundancy) occupies one end of the spectrum, English (flexible with little inflections) sits at the other end of the linguistic spectrum.

Ancient inflected languages of Iran and India. Where do the highly inflected ancient languages of Iran and India sit in this linguistic spectrum? They are closer to the 'mathematics end' of the spectrum. In the area of artificial intelligence, the ancient languages of Avesta and

Vedas, therefore, will do better than English. Are there other features of Sanskrit that we do not know? We know that it is a language governed by rules and regulations and still it could be a spoken natural language.

A human language is, after all, a tool of human communication using sounds produced by the human vocal tract. True, but could there be a language that uses all possible sounds produced by the human vocal tract and deploys the minimum number of sounds in order to convey the maximum amount of meaning? This would then be an efficient linguistic code!

One way to realize the maximum efficiency in linguistic communication is to have each sound carry an atomic meaning. The meaning of a word could then be obtained by adding atomic meanings of sounds present in the word. In other words, no sound is redundant in a word. A word then becomes a 'manthra', a linguistic formula similar to the mathematical formula, in which no letter or number is redundant. The word 'manthra' takes us back to Avesta and the Vedas, of ancient Iran and India.

Sound symbolism. The subject of manthra is closely related to the sounds of a language, above and beyond its syntax. Are the meanings of Sanskrit words conventional as in English, or is there something intrinsic about them? A majority of ancient Indian scholars and modern Sanskrit scholars believe that the denotative meanings of Sanskrit words are conventional, but a small minority of Indian scholars believe otherwise. This minority believe in atomic meanings for the sounds of letters. This is called 'sound symbolism' or 'phonetic symbolism' in modern linguistics.

Modern linguists have tried to discover the language specific phonetic symbolism in languages like English and Arabic. It did not work beyond a few words.

Will it work for all words and sounds of the Avesta and the Vedas? If it does, then cracking this linguistic code will help us discover the common cultural heritage of Manthra Science of ancient Iran and India. ■

Narayan R. Joshi has studied the joint history of Iran and India as a hobby, and believes that in the noise of Indo-Europeans the history of Indo-Asians has been side-tracked. He has an MS in Electronics from Poona University, India and a Ph.D. in Materials Science from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD. with many years of teaching and research experience in ultrasonics. He may be reached at (409) 866-3959.

Yazatas ...

[Contd from page 44]

effect in nature. Our deeds create a keherp which is seen by our soul after we die. For example, the keherp of Khorshed Yazata is the sun, that of Mah Bokhtar is the moon, that of Adar is the fire, that of Meher are the rays of the sun, and that of Avan Ardvisoor, is water.

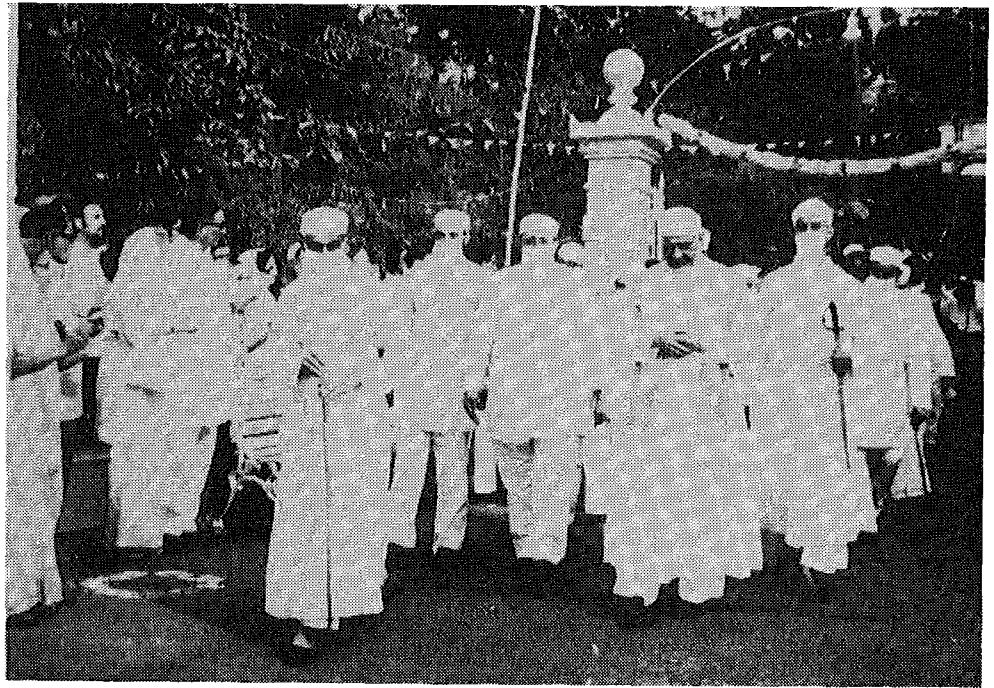
- ◆ The works of the Yazatas at different levels of reality.
- ◆ Kings of ancient Iran who invoked the Yazata.
- ◆ Mystical descriptions of Yazatas and their different forms. As in the Gathas, the mention of different animals and birds in the Yashts is not to be taken literally. The Ilm-e Kshnoom texts have arrived at the real meanings that are alluded to by the use of these names of animals and birds.

When these real meanings are understood, we can appreciate the beauty and treasure of knowledge contained in the Yashts. ■

[Acknowledgment: Ervad K. N. Das-toor is gratefully acknowledged as the source of the above section based on Ilm-e Kshnoom beliefs.]

The Holy Spirit

From
Aden to Lonavla



Vada Dasturji Kaikobad of Udvada and other Dasturjis entering the Aden-walla Agiary on the occasion of the installation of the Sacred Fire of Aden at the Agiary in Lonavla.

For the first time in recent history, the sacred Fire of an agiary was ceremoniously transported by air, to be installed at an agiary an ocean away.

By Jehan Bagli
Princeton, New Jersey

Dateline 1883 - The Historic Foundation. The genesis of the Holy Fire of the Aden Agiary goes back to the late nineteenth century when the late Seth Cowasjee Dinshaw arrived in Aden (at the North end of the Red Sea) and laid the foundation of a flourishing business. The Aden Agiary was opened by this great philanthropist businessman on Roz Behram, Mah Fravardin, 1253 Yz (October 8, 1883) in the presence of an Aden Parsi congregation, following the holy ritual of Jashan, for the use of Zarathushtis.

The foundation stone of the Agiary was laid by the Seth Cowasjee Din-

shaw on Roz Behram, Mah Amar-dad, 1252 Yz (February 5, 1883). Enclosed within, was a glass jar bearing a scroll that described the family history of Cowasjee Dinshaw who came to Aden some 40 years ago, and that this foundation was laid by his descendant. It also said that this benevolent act was carried out in memory of his departed family members, son Dinshawji, father Dinshawji, mother Dinbai and wife Baijai, to promote the perpetuation of the Zarathushti *daena* and for the use of the Zarathushti anjuman of Aden. It ended with the hope: "May Yazatas look over, keep and protect this structure forever. Amen!"

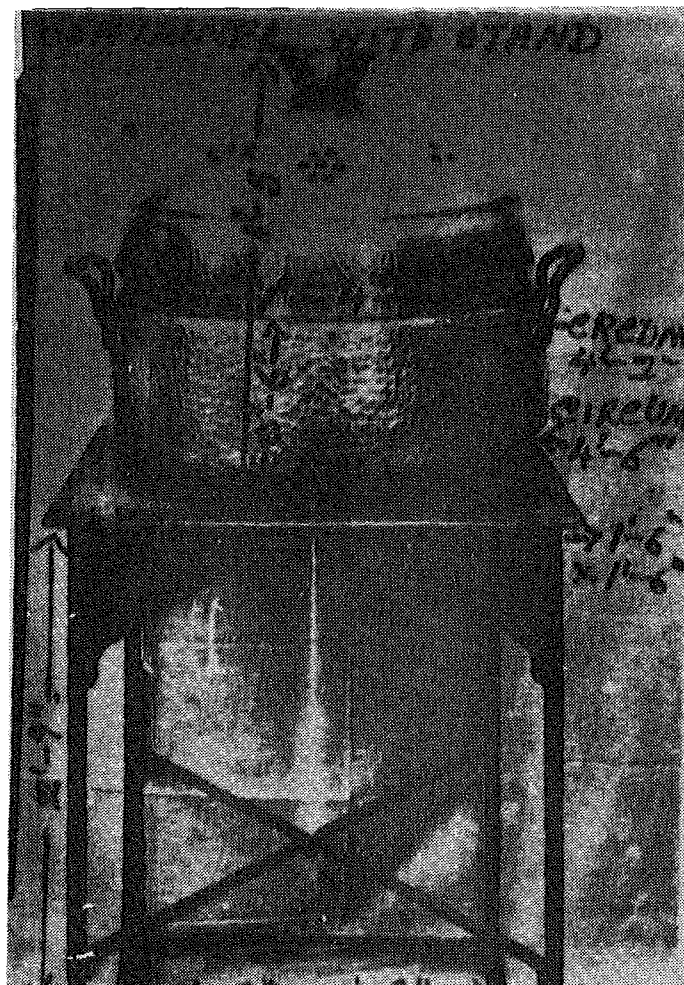
The benevolent flare of the Dinshaw family also spread to the local Islamic population. Cowasjee built a mosque for the local Muslim community of Aden, that came to be recognized as the "Cowasjee Masjid".

Dateline 1940 - The Danger Looms. The time was World War II and the British in an effort to protect their territories had destroyed the major cities of Somaliland across from Aden. It was at that time, the question of the protection and perpet-

uation of the Sacred Fire of Aden Aderan first emerged. Seth Cowasjee Dinshaw, on September 23, 1940, wrote a letter to several Dasturs and religious scholars asking for advice and thoughts on what should be done in the event of impending danger in that area. However, the cloud of danger breezed by, raising no major peril to the sacred Atash Padshah of Aden at that time.

Dateline 1967 - Aden Lost to Yemen. Politics moves in mysterious ways. With the passage of time, in 1967, Aden was handed over to the Peoples Democratic Republic of Southern Yemen and so went all the properties in the town. The one time 1300-strong Zarathushtrian population quickly dwindled as people began leaving the country.

The responsibility of the survival of the Holy Atash of the Aden Aderan fell upon the shoulders of the great grandson Cowasjee Dinshaw II. The Atash enthroned in that Agiary had nurtured the spirituality of the Zarathushti community of Aden for over eight decades. The community had faith in that Sacred Fire. It was the focus of their unity and they



Left, the container in which the Holy Fire of Aden Agiary was taken from Aden to Bombay via a chartered Air India plane. Above, At the Lonavla Agiary, ex-President of India, Shri Ali Ahmed inspecting the container which carried the Holy Fire. Also in the picture are Seth Cowasjee Dinshaw, Mrs. Cowasjee Dinshaw, Dasturji and other distinguished guests.

attributed their success to the blessings received from it. Cowasjee was therefore determined not to let the Fire, that was the better part of life of that vibrant Zarathushti community, to be snuffed out.

The Odyssey Begins. Cowasjee thus embarked on the perilous journey to preserve the Holy Fire and move it to a home that it could adorn. Various places such as Iran, London and India were considered. The decision was taken in 1976, to move the Holy Fire next to the existing agiary in Lonavla, which had been consecrated by Cowasjee Dinshaw in 1899 in memory of his dear wife Jerbai. Negotiations were initiated, on the one hand with the Government of South Yemen for permission to move it out of the country, and on the other hand, with the administration of the countries where it was to find shelter. The entire operation must be conducted at both ends following the Zarathushti spiritual regimen, so as to protect the sanctity

of the Holy Spirit of Mazda that the Fire represents.

The arduous diplomatic discussions continued for nine excruciating years. Support was drawn from the Foreign Ministry of India, led by Mr. Y. B. Chavan and personal intervention of the late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi of India. It took this high level strategy from the Foreign Ministry of India to convince the Presidential Council of South Yemen to agree to the release of the Holy Atash.

Through all these years of hard work, despite his failing health, Ervad Minocher Dastur helped preserve the ritual purity of the Sacred Atash and kept it ablaze. Also, Mr. Minoo Patel, the then secretary of the Aden Anjuman left no stone unturned, and continued residence in Aden to see the successful move of the Atash Padshah from Aden to India.

Search for the Course. Having crossed the first hurdle, Cowasjee and

his associates now turned their attention to the next obstacle – selection of the route of transport. Transport over water was ruled out on theological grounds. It is a fact that commercial waterways undoubtedly are contaminated with a variety of pollutants and waste matter that could violate the sanctity of the Holy Fire.

Cowasjee therefore approached Field Marshall Sam Maneckshaw to chart out a possible land route for the transportation. Upon deliberation of the route mapped out, it became obvious that the land route was entirely incompatible. Firstly, the route was via Mecca and Medina, which posed a problem to preserve the spirituality of the Holy Spirit. Secondly, the crossing of the Iranian frontier into Afghanistan involved mountainous and wild countryside with the danger of highway robbers. Thirdly, the logistics of finding suitable Zarathushti vehicle operator, mechanics, mobeds and the perpetu-

ation of the flames by intermittent *bui* ceremony (nourishing the Holy Fire with fragrant sandalwood). This left the only viable alternative to be transport by air.

Air India readily consented to provide a Boeing 707 for the purpose. But we were far from ready. The search was on for an all-Zarathushti crew. By this time most Zarathushti pilots of the company were flying the newly acquired Jumbo Jet 747. The DGCA (equivalent of FAA) regulations prevented them from flying the 707, if they were not current for one year on that aircraft.

There was just one Zarathushti pilot, Capt. Maneck Daroowala (presently a resident of New York) who was on the verge of retiring and he was in New York at that time. He received a telex asking him "to return immediately for operational reasons" with no other details. Maneck told this writer "had he known the purpose, he would have gladly done the Aden Ferry flight." The telex was however flashed back and Air India was left with no Zarathushti pilot to fly the plane. A Parsi pilot, Capt. Sam Pedder was identified who was by now flying the 747. He had to be retrained in a hurry on simulator trainers and on 707 by Air India, the only Indian carrier who had Boeing 707. Well, at the end of the line, a Parsi crew was assembled, made up of Capt. Sam Pedder, co-pilot Hosi Balsara, navigator Soli Colabawala, flight engineer R. Ichaporia and cabin staff.

To Aden and Back. On Saturday November 13, 1976, the Boeing 707 *Lhotse* left Indian soil as it became airborne for Aden. It carried with it, Seth Cowasjee Dinshaw II, Vada Dastur of Udvada Kaikobad Dasturji Firozji, and five other mobeds. The plane landed in Aden around midnight. The engines of the plane were kept running, while one of the mobeds, Ervad Sahiyar left the plane.

In Aden Agiary, in the meantime, Ervad Minocher Dastur was performing the last *bui* ceremony for the Atash Padshah. The Holy Fire was then removed by the two mobeds in a

specially prepared container. This receptacle was specially designed by Mr. N. S. Mistry, deputy director of engineering at Air India. It was a fire-proof box of aluminum, with a special holder for the Atash, suitable vents to allow circulation of air and provided with four emergency extinguishers within. This container is presently on display at Lonavla Agiary.

With the Atash securely in the container, the two mobeds drawing a *pavi* (consecrated area to preserve the sanctity) brought the container to the aircraft with a handful of Aden Zarathushtis witnessing the unfolding drama with tearful sentiments. The container was enthroned in the specially modified first class cabin, within a *pavi*. As the deafening boom of the 21-gun salute given by the Yemenis crashed through the calm of the night, the tiring engines roared the craft airborne.

In the air, there was the all-Zarathushti crew making every effort to preserve the spirituality of the environment. All with their heads covered, mobeds performing *Padyab Kushti*, reciting the Holy Avesta and offering the necessary nourishment with sandalwood, to keep the Atash going for three hours and forty-five minutes of the flight.

The aircraft landed at Santa Cruz airport a day later on Roz Behram, Mah Khordad 1346 Yz at 7 am marking for the first time in Zarathushti religious history of the modern era, an unprecedented aerial jaunt of 63,000 Km by a consecrated *alat* of the religion.

The airport was packed with Zarathushtis and the buzzing of holy mantras filled the air, as a ladder specially purified with *Gaomez* and water rolled over to the entrance of the plane. Dastur Kaikobad together with other Ervads emerged with the Atash Padshah and carried it through a *pavi*. Messages of salutations from the Government of India and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi were received with grace. Under special orders from Prime Minister Rt. Hon. Y. B. Chavan of Maharashtra, the path was lined completely with Zarathushti police

units through which the Holy consignment was conveyed to a luxury bus bound for Mahim Soonawala Agiary. Here the Holy Fire was rested and as per the advice of Dastur Kaikobad, nurtured with *machi* and *bui* of Havan and Rapithwan Gah.

The Second Lap. It is now 1:30 pm and the Atash Padshah was remounted within a *pavi* specially prepared in a luxury vehicle for transport through the hills of the Western Ghats to Lonavla. A procession of six to seven busloads, 60 to 70 private automobiles and scooters all under the command of an all-Parsi police escort started off on the second leg of the journey.

At the direct orders of the Maharashtra Government, the route along the Ghat was closed to the general public. It was indeed a source of great pride and happiness for the Zarathushti community, to see the extent of cooperation the entire operation received from the Indian Government. It was at the stroke of 4:00 pm that the luxury vehicle carrying the consecrated flames entered the compound of Lonavla Adenwala Agiary. The anjumans of Lonavla and nearby Khandala had left no stone unturned to follow proper spiritual regimen in preparing a consecrated area to preserve the ritualistic purity of the Atash.

The afargan containing the consecrated flames was carried through and the Atash was enthroned in a specially prepared room which it adorns to this day. The ritual *machi* and *bui* for the Uzirehn Gah were performed by the *panthaki* (administering mobed) of Lonavla Agiary. This was followed by a Jashan bringing to a successful close, the saga of the move of that embodiment of Ahura Mazda, with spiritual grace.

During the entire operation, proper spiritual regimen was as closely adhered to as possible, following the counsel of the Vada Dasturji. Non-Zarathushtis were not allowed to gaze at the Holy Atash, which could defile its sanctity. There is however, an anecdote associated with this

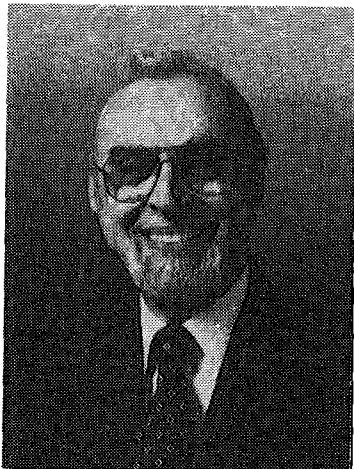
story, about a Muslim officer in Aden who insisted on inspecting the Fire before its departure, to the utter dismay of the Zarathushti community. The story goes that this officer died quite unexpectedly the day before the Atash Padshah was to leave Aden. Mr. Dinshaw, in his conversation with this author did not either confirm nor deny the validity of that incident.

**Dayao mae Atash Puthra Ahurahe
Mazdao, Ya mae angahata afra-
s-aonghao nuremcha yavaechataite.**

O purifying essence of Ahura
Mazda, Grant me enlighten-
ment now and forever.

- Atash Nyaesh

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: The author thanks Mr. Cowasjee Dinshaw II for sparing the time from his busy schedule for a meeting, for the Gujarati booklet by Mr. Khurshedji M. Patel that provided the basis for the above article and the photographs related to this account. The information provided by Capt. Maneck Daroovala is also gratefully acknowledged. ■



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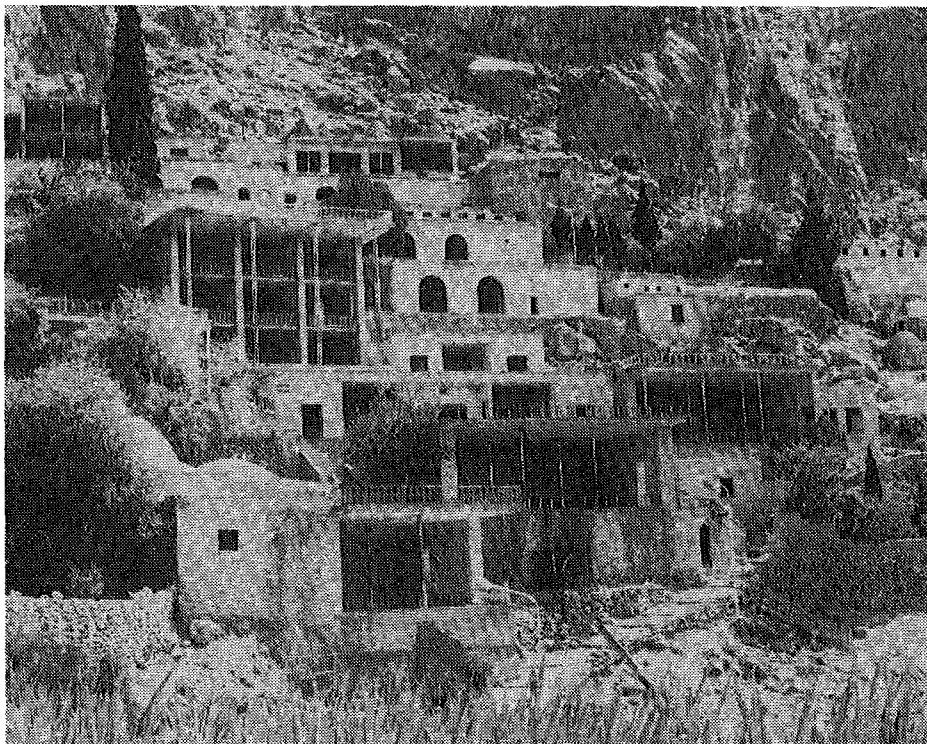


PHOTO: COURTESY DARYOUSH MEHRSHAHI

The popular pilgrimage place of Pir-e Sabz, 65 km from Yazd.

Pilgrimage Places in Iran

Their origin and cultural-historical significance

By Daryoush Mehrshahi
Sheffield, United Kingdom

Probably the most important holy places in Iran for Zarathushtis /Fravashi are pilgrimage places near Ardakan, Aghda, Mehriz and Yazd, located in Yazd province, in Central Iran. This article discusses the significance and characteristics of these historical and religious places, focussing on the shrines at Pir-e Sabz, Pir-e Herisht, Pir-e Narestaneh, Pir-e Banoo and Pir-e Naraki.

The pilgrimage tradition. While these holy places are visited every year by hundreds of Zarathushtis from all over the world, they cannot be considered solely as places of worship. As Pishdadi has written [2]: "We should not consider them a part of Zarathushti teachings. These pilgrimages are the fruit of our ancestor's beliefs. They used to serve as a remedy for pain and a source of protection for the defeated nation, the

homeless and the oppressed whose lives were filled with horror, shortage and other stress."

During the pilgrimage period, mobeds may perform the initiation (*Sedreh Pushi*) ceremonies and sometimes a wedding (*gaveh giri*). At times the sick and infirm, visit the pir and ask a mobed to recite a *Tandarosti* for them. Since 1990, at Pir-e Sabz, verses from the Avesta, notably *Ashem Vohu* and *Yatha Ahu Vairyo*, with piano accompaniment, recorded by the choral group of the Zoroastrian Students Society of Tehran, are played on the audio system at dawn and sunset. Hearing this sublime music echoing across the mountains and vibrating in the hearts of the visitors is one of the most soul-stirring feeling I have ever experienced.

Geographical locations. Except Pir-e Herisht, all other pilgrimage places are located on or near the slopes of

mountains. **Pir-e Sabz** (or Chak Chaku) is located on the slopes of Chak Chak ('drop by drop') Mountain in an abandoned area 65 km NW of Yazd. **Pir-e Herisht**, 90 km from Yazd, was built on a small hill about 5 km from a secondary road to Khor (sun) in the heart of the Dasht-e Kavir (The Great Kavir, a salt-encrusted desert). A small farm and spring called Howz-e Gowr (Zoroastrian pool) is the nearest place to Herisht.

Narestaneh is situated in a remote place in a valley of the Narestaneh Mountain, 30 km north of Yazd. The nearest village is Dorbid 7 km to the north. The last time I visited this village (in 1990) two shepherd families were living there. One of the shepherds pointed to the remnants of an old fire temple, which had been demolished and levelled to the ground by the local people (mainly from the city) who wanted to build a mosque in its place.

Pir-e Banoo is the furthest place of pilgrimage from Yazd (110 km West) and is located in one of the several valleys inhabited by local farmers, shepherds and hunters. It is near Aghda, an area full of ancient Persian names, as well as new Arabic names. Persian names such as Ormudeh, Ashtigah (Place of Peace), Desgin, Parpar, Haftador (Seven Fires) seem to be of some historical significance.

While all the above piroon are situated in the western part of Yazd Province, **Pir-e Naraki** is located further to the east, at the foot of Bohruk Mountain near Mehriz, an ancient city 40 km to the southeast of Yazd. Some of the valleys and slopes of the nearby mountains are sparsely inhabited due to shortage of water.

Geological characteristics. All of these places, except Pir-e Banoo, have been built on the carbonate rocks (limestone) of the Cretaceous age. Pir-e Banoo was built on the conglomerate rocks of the pre-Cambrian age, which consists of pebbles and gravel of mostly carbonate origin. All these places are adjacent to the local faults and some of them,

such as Pir-e Sabz and Naraki are located on the immediate vicinity of the fault wall. These two characteristics, carbonate rocks and fault lines led to the occurrence of two distinguishing features of these places – springs and rockfalls.

Archeological Characteristics. To date, no archeological evidence has been found in these holy places to suggest antiquity or very ancient age of the sites. Probably the oldest building is Pir-e Banoo, which could not be older than 200 years. Possibly the older structures have perished naturally or during the rebuilding process.

One can assume that these places were important for many years, and perhaps centuries, much earlier than the present buildings. Although archeological evidence is absent in these places, nevertheless, there is some evidence from nearby areas. In the Aghda Mountain (near Pir-e Banoo) a historical cave has been found, with evidence of compacted and cemented remnants of debris from a fireplace. Nobody has yet tried to investigate the age of the inhabitants of this cave or the age of the fireplace.

In the case of Naraki, several archaeological tools and sculptures have been found near Mehriz, which have been interpreted as Achaemenid remnants. However, there are no clues to establish any relationship between the archaeological evidence found in nearby areas and the building of the holy places. There are rumors among the local people about historical treasures (coins, broken jewelry, dagger and human skeletons) which have been found by local shepherds and foreign travelers. Unfortunately, in several cases, the archaeological evidence of human activities have been removed or destroyed by persons looking for the treasures.

Theories of Origin. One of the earliest and most conventional theories pertains to the time of the *Arab invasion*, related to the Arabs chasing of the daughters of Yazdegard III, the last Sasanian king of Iran. To escape them, the family of the king, and par-

ticularly his daughters, moved towards Khorasan to the northeast, with their treasures.

The legend goes that as they were about to be captured, the innocent girls prayed to God for protection. Consequently, God helped them and they disappeared into the opening fissures or were buried by falling rocks. The elders narrate that many years ago a colorful petrified piece of cloth was visible near Pir-e Banoo, believed to be part of the fleeing women's dress. However, it could well be that what they saw was the colorful, conglomerate rocks of the area. The second theory is similar to the first one, but in this version, the Arab invaders are replaced by internal rebels.

According to the third legend, these holy places were hiding places for the treasures of Yazdegard and the royal family. To make their escape from the Arab invaders (or the internal rebels) easier, they buried the treasures they were carrying. The places were later declared 'holy' by the local people, or the survivors of the flight, if any, in order to safeguard the treasures.

The fourth theory is related to Anahita (Av. Ardivisoor Anahita), goddess or Yazad representing water, rain, rivers, love, motherhood and birth [1]. Although Pir-e Sabz and Naraki are the only ones which have waterfalls now, such features and also rivers and springs, may have been more active during the wetter conditions of historical times [*Mobed Rostam Shahzadi, personal communication, 1989*]. Waterfalls and springs within such places had functioned at the holy place of Anahita, probably earlier than the Zarathushti period, under Mithraism. One can assume that water in such arid environments was so precious and praiseworthy that the occurrence of springs, waterfalls and rivers were connected to Anahita.

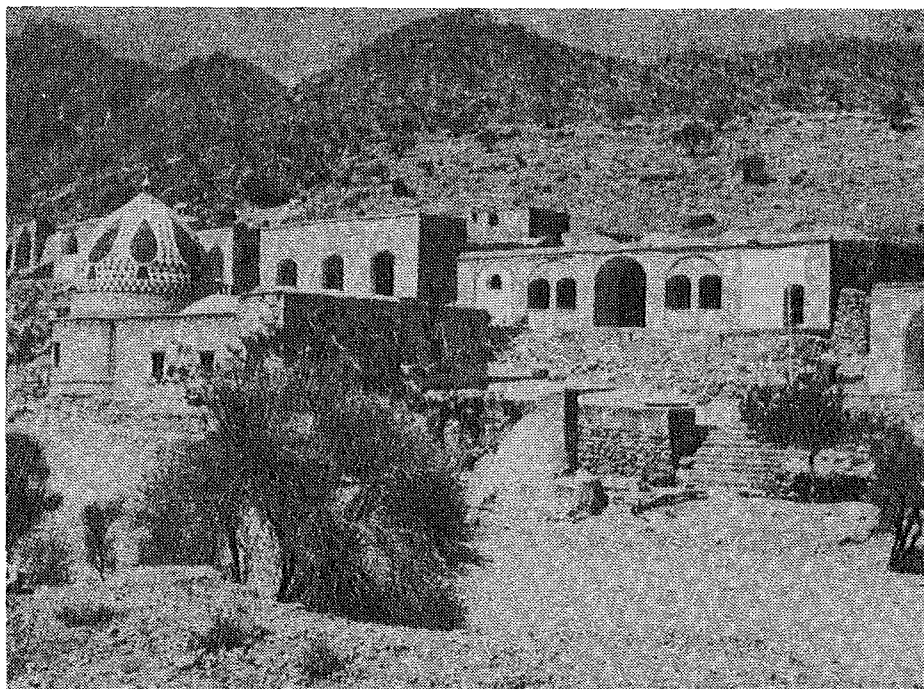
A clue for this idea is that most of these places are connected to women: Banoo means 'lady'; Pir-e Sabz is related to Hayat Banoo, a holy woman, although

with an inverted Arabic name. Pir-e Naraki is also attributed to a holy lady. All these stories, according to this theory could have originated from Yazad Anahita, which then changed to the more acceptable story of Yazdegard's daughters and later became the stories of these holy ladies with Arabic names.

The fifth theory is that of 'immigration stations'. Some people believe that these places were a chain of stations and the last farewell places on the way to India. After 1100 AD the migration of Zarathushtis towards the east was accelerated due to increasing hardships and limitations on their activities. Zarathushtis all over Persia, from Azerbaijan and Aran (Eran), to Susiana (Khuzistan); and from the Alborz to the Zagros Mountains, were the subject of continuous discrimination and persecution. As a result, waves of migration continued. The Yazd and Ardakan deserts had two remarkable characteristics: one was their isolation from the other parts of Iran (due to the existence of vast deserts and kavirs) and another was due to their central location within Persia. One can assume that during those dark and hard days the Zarathushti caravans were trying not to attract attention, and it was logical, therefore, to avoid crossing major roads and cities. The vital needs of the caravans were water and food, both of which were available in the abandoned mountainous areas of Aghda, Ardakan and Yazd. The wild goat, sheep and partridge were abundant then and the water supply was probably better than now, due to a wetter climate.

We are not sure whether these piroon were places of pilgrimage in those days. However, they were mainly used by Zarathushtis as stations during their long journeys east. Various Zarathushti dialects in Yazd, Ardakan and Taft areas could be testimony to the effect of such immigration pattern which eventually led to the settlement of a mixed population in the area.

These places may also have been used as temporary shelters during



Pir-e Banoo, 110 km from Yazd

PHOTO BY DARYOUSH MEHRSHAHI OF KANON-E DANESHJOOYAN-E ZARTOSHTI

local or regional disturbances when the Zarathushtis were seriously under pressure. For example, the period of Sultan Hosain Safavi, the last king of the Safavi Dynasty, was one of the darkest sequences of Zarathushti history. Zarathushtis were seriously attacked and persecuted. There are some oral memories about those days with Zarathushtis escaping to the mountain areas of Isfahan, Nain, Aghda, Ardakan and Yazd. In those days of suffering, the local mountains with adequate source of water were more likely to be of interest to them. Although those dark days no longer exist, the piroons still draw Zarathushtis in large numbers, not only for prayers, but more for pleasure and the enjoyment of reunion. They provide platforms for Zarathushti gathering (unity), praying and remembering their ancestors and of course the happiness which is the consequence of those three.

It is great to see the new generation of Zarathushtis taking over from their forefathers with an improved and living culture, and not a weakened and dispossessed one.

These sites deserve to be holy places, whether or not their holiness belongs to Anahita or to King Yazdegard's

daughters. They deserve to be places of pilgrimage because they carry a long history of faith, resistance, love and hope for survival. ■

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

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Daryoush Mehrshahi was born in Abadan. He has a BA and an MS in Geography from National University of Iran, Tehran; and a Ph.D. for his study of "Paleoenvironmental Reconstruction of the Ardakan Kavir near Yazd in Central Iran" from University of Sheffield, UK in 1999.



Humanity and Prayer

It is in prayer that the human, in a pious mental state, harmonizes with the Holy Mentality. It is in prayer that the human will synchronizes with the Divine Will to attain the spiritual manifestation. Recognition of this extra dimension of the Divine within, permits one to explore fully the freedom and creativity not only for oneself but also for humanity at large.

HUMANITY AND PRAYER

By Jehan Bagli
Princeton, New Jersey

In simple terms, prayer is understood as a vehicle of communication with the divinity. To a savage of ancient times, prayer could be a fervent desire, perhaps, for the death of an enemy. For a nomadic peasant it could be the desire for rain or fertility of his crop! The prayer of an average human of these early civilizations lacked the notion of purification from sin, or craving for guidance to find the path of righteousness. This is primarily a consequence of their limited thought process, that will still be embedded in fetishism and magic.

Manthra. Prayer is a universal phenomenon in the religions of the world, and must necessarily exhibit a range of variation in its form and spiritual caliber. A religion lending dignity to the prayers through the formula of holy words (*manthra*) and sonorous cadences of an ancient language, ultimately finds that the formula and the cadences are retained long after the actual implication and the significance of the words are dead. A prayer by definition is directed to a higher Divinity, in case of Zarathushtrians, to Ahura Mazda. Regardless of the immense desire for physical benefits, or for avoidance of temptations, or guidance to the right path, without a clear vision of the goodness and wisdom of God the

prayer passes into a one-sided exercise leading to nowhere. Michael Novak in his book *Belief and Disbelief*, says: "It is in prayer that one comes to know God best."

The routine question is: **Why should one fulfill the obligation of praying to God?** This question can only find an answer if one believes in God. The belief in God can only evolve through persuasive efforts of daily prayers. One pervades this paradigm by formulating a clear vision of Ahura Mazda.

Vision of the Creator. A clear vision of the Creator is a prerequisite for a true dialog through the vehicle of prayers. Ancient civilizations visualized their God in their own human image. Even in the Gathas, Zarathushtra, despite his personal ingenuity, projects an anthropocentric notion of this Supreme Divinity to the primitive society of his time. He speaks of His penetrative eyes [*Ys. 31.13*], the rewards from his hands [*Ys. 43.4*], words from his mouth [*31.3*] and Mazda residing in the House of Song – Garo Demane [*Ys. 45.8*].

It is only 2400 years later, that the ninth century text *Shayast ne-Shayast* (The Proper and the Improper) [*Ch. 15.1, 2*] transcends this rudimentary image, to portray a realistic concept of the Lord of Wisdom. Here Asho Zarathusht is portrayed as praying to Ahura Mazda: "Thy head, hands, feet, face and tongue are in my eyes

... give me a hand so that I may grasp Thy hand." and the Divine voice responds: "I am an intangible *spirit*, it is not possible to grasp my hand." [*Sacred Book of the East, Vol. V, p. 372*]. The voice goes on: "In the world that which is mine, Ahura Mazda is the Righteous Man. ..." [*Ch. 15.5*]. These words unambiguously state both the keenly personal as well as the universally a-personal nature of Ahura Mazda. Furthermore, they clearly imply the presence of the Divine Spirit within the physical framework of the human.

Spenta Mainyu. In Zarathushtrian theology the creative Spiritual Will, an active principal of the thought process of Ahura Mazda is recognized in the term Spenta Mainyu. The great modern thinker Dastur Dhalla states: "Spenta Mainyu symbolizes the ideal or perfect existence as conceived in thought by Ahura Mazda." Spenta Mainyu thus represents the supreme mental mechanism through which Wise Lord operated the Universe.

Despite the interpretations of philology, viz. Progressive Mentality or Good Mental aspect, the profundity and immensity of God has prompted most theologians to interpret it as the Holy Spirit of Mazda. Zarathushtra initiates his prayers in the profound hymn of Gatha Ahunavaiti [*Ys. 28.1*] asking for support of the Holy Spirit, and continues his prayers to affirm that he may perform all his actions through Good Mind and Righteousness.

It is a basic assertion that all the prime religions practiced today have two major components – the physical and the spiritual. The former involves a careful, analytical study and understanding of prayers through sustained scholastic thinking. The latter however, must be believed through faith, and prayers, offered by a peaceful and devotional mind. The fact is that both the physical and the spiritual component involve thinking. The first case demands active analytical thinking, while the other

Perspectives on Prayer

A cross-section of Zarathushtis share their stories, experiences, thoughts and feelings on the topic of "Prayer".

MY GOD AND ME

By Kersey H. Antia
Orland Park, Illinois

Prayer is personal. Personal and individual prayers, rather than congregational prayers and worship services, are the norm in the Zarathushtrian mode of praying, which facilitates intimate contact with God.

By prayer, we are encouraged to seek and emulate God in this world and emphasize His presence. Unless we talk to God, it is meaningless to talk about God. Studies show that people begin to pray seriously after the age of 30 or 40 when life becomes increasingly complex and God remains the only true, absolute and the only one to turn to for unconditional love. We all pray in our own way, whether we know it or not. But few pray because it is a must for a *spenta* existence, for a spiritually blessed life.

Even those faiths that emphasize congregational worship now maintain that, how often you pray on your own is a better indication of religious commitment, because it is truly your choice and not influenced by social or other pressures. Thus a Rabbi is quoted as saying: "When people come to my temple, they expect a spiritual experience. But I say that if they have not prayed on their own before they step into a sacred place, that place is going to be no more sacred than a library or a movie theater."

Psychology and prayer. The power of prayer is being studied in psychology and medicine. A decade ago, for instance, outsiders were urged to pray for cardiac patients in San Francisco General Hospital, as reported in the Southern Medical Journal. Even

though the patients were not aware of it, they recovered faster than those that were not prayed for. Psychologists no longer look down on religion, but see God as a close companion (*hamkar*). One psychiatrist, Arthur Kornhaber, even added prayer to his therapeutic repertoire for troubled teenagers and maintained: "To

“The secret lies not in trying to control God but heeding Him, as Sraosha does, and letting Him be our friend and guide so we never feel lonely and lost, without a compass.”

exclude God from psychiatric consultation is a form of malpractice."

Prayer is no shortcut. Some people tend to pray only at moments of crisis and finding it hard to pray, they try to strike a bargain with God: "I'll follow God if He makes me well," instead of saying, even as Zarathushtra says in Yasna 29: "Only that which God wills, will prevail." Prayer is no shortcut against misfortunes. It cannot bring back a deceased loved one, but it can provide some soothing relief and inner peace.

We discover God as we become vulnerable and helpless and try to reach beyond ourselves for some invisible, divine help, which is more often than not, available to us, just for the asking. It even elevates us as we ask, for it brings us in His presence and influence.

Love of prayer. I for one, found it rather hard to be brought up as a full-fledged priest 50 years ago, whose main hobby even to this day, is the

study of religion in all its variegated aspects and enjoying praying for self and others; and yet practice as a psychologist in private practice, rather than as a priest (on account of economic reasons). But I liked to pray, and even as a 13-year old *navaria*, I was so surprised when other mobeds vehemently urged my priestly uncle to advise me not to strain my young self by waking up in the Ushahin Gah to pray, but take it easy instead. I did so only because of my enormous respect for my saintly uncle.

About that time, I also studied Hormazd Yasht and its meaning, and began to practice its injunction to recite its various names of God when undertaking any activity, including entering any town. Can you imagine one doing it religiously while traveling from Bombay to Surat, from dawn to dusk, by local train which stops at each and every railway station! But I did, and in the process forgot all about the hardship we experienced, because somehow my brother and I had ended up on the train with not a penny in our pockets.

I now continue to pray to God with every breath when I can, but I consider myself blessed insofar as I am also able to rehabilitate others by helping them use their own Vohu Mana, Good Mind. I may not now recite the names of God by rote, but I enjoy helping others and that is also prayer to me; I forget my own troubles by trying to help solve others' troubles, which imparts an unfailing sense of Asha and Armaiti.

What ever insight psychology will offer us on the power of prayer in coming years, should only strengthen

Healing the body with prayer.

Research indicates that one can lower his blood pressure, metabolic rate, stress level, heart rate, pain thresholds, etc. by praying and meditating. However, those who are already attuned to God are more likely to feel his presence and get close to Him, thereby achieving a proper body-mind balance that can heal the body. The secret lies not in trying to control God but heeding Him as Sraosha does, and letting Him be our friend and guide so we never feel lonely and lost, without a compass in life.

Prayer and breath. Asho Zarathushtra prayerfully dedicates his own breath to Mazda [Ys. 33.14]. Breath had a great religious significance among Indo-Iranians, which led me to inquire more about it. I found that following every breath prayerfully and peacefully a few times a day, can lead to a very blissful union of body-mind-spirit.

Even greater benefits can be had by saying *Vohu* as one breathes in and *Mana* as one breathes out – breathing out and banishing all bad thoughts from one’s psyche. I often find myself doing it even in my sleep. Much to my surprise my Hindu cardiologist noticed it. When my heart rate would not accelerate even when running on a stress mill, he angrily shouted: “Stop it.”. Another cardiologist told me and my wife after exhausting all cardiac tests that my heart was as good as a 16-year old’s and he wished he had one like that, though my cholesterol level is always above 300, and I do not take any medications for it.

I attribute it all to a life of prayer in its very broad sense and pray it will inspire others to a prayerful life of their own in their own way.

Atha Jamyat Yatha Afrinami!

A horizontal line of 18 small, solid black diamonds arranged in a single row, used as a section separator.

*To handle yourself use your head
To handle others, use your heart.*

*By Dinaz Rogers
Albany, Oregon*

As a young child I often wondered about and questioned our “Parsi Prayers” that we were taught to recite for all occasions, some of the most important of which were our Kushti prayers, especially Ashem Vohu and Yatha Ahu Vairyo. All these totally foreign prayer-words from my ancient, ancestral past, my heritage of long ago; meant something to me. I could feel it intuitively – but intellectually ***I wanted to know*** what each and every word meant. Yes, even at that young age I wanted to know and understand. I wanted to be all-knowing!

A little intimidated and in total awe of my elders, I never verbalized my doubts, my longing to know, out aloud, but I was glad others did. Many asked my father and my uncles who were ordained priests and the answer by one of my uncles, Dastoor Kaikhashrow Mahiyar Kutar captivated and enlightened my young intellectual curiosity.

When approached by skeptics, the curious and those genuinely yearning to know the meanings of our prayers in Gujarati or English, as also why we did not recite the translations instead of the ancient original Avesta, my Kaikhashrow *foowajee* (uncle) would give this analogy:

When you are not feeling well you go to the doctor for medicine. The doctor tells you what is wrong with you and as per his diagnosis, writes out a prescription for your ailment. You look at the prescription, which is in a way a blueprint for your recovery and good health and if you are lucky enough to figure out the doctor's handwriting, you read what he has prescribed for you. Do you ***understand*** the long, almost unpronounceable chemical formula or name of the medication that he has scribbled on the prescription pad? It's all Greek and Latin to you, right? Whether or not you could read his handwriting or

understand this medical and pharmacologic recipe, do you not, then have your prescription filled, take the medicine home, not knowing anything about it; and then do you not, *on blind faith*, knowing it will make you feel better, put that medicine in your body?

So it is with out Zarathushti prayers, that have their roots in antiquity. We recite them day and night – at birth and death, at navjotes, weddings, gahambars and all our other ceremonies – without challenge, without questions, without doubts.

Yes, we recite out ancient and beneficial prayers in Avesta, with absolute trust and unwavering conviction, as it had been in the beginning, at this present time and forever more times to come ... with absolute certainty that it will bring us nothing but good and make us feel better!

More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Where fore,
let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and
day.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson
Morte d'Arthur, line 415.

(I would like to thank my cousin Phiroze Darab Kutar (P.D.) for reminding me about this wonderful story from our childhood.) ■

When Your Heart Aches ...

When your heart aches, go within
When your tears flow, dry them within,
When your dreams fall apart,
 Seek solace within,
When you have lost your way,
 Look for direction within.
For within is the answer
 To all that we seek,

*From within is the healing,
For all that disturbs our peace,
From within is the way
To our heart's desire.
From within
Do we find our way home.*

- John McIntosh and Ananda,
from a posting on the Internet by K. Samiya.

PRAYERS WITH UNDERSTANDING

Piloo N. Jungalwalla
New Delhi, India

By the age of two, my sister, Pareen, and I knew the *Ashem Vohu* and *Yatha Ahu Vairyo* by heart and would make up our own little tunes and sing them. At sunset, we would help Mother light our family afargan with sandalwood and incense and take the lighted afargan round every nook and corner of the house. Our heads were always covered with a mathubanu (white scarf) or else a beaded cap. This custom prevailed in all Parsi households until sandalwood and incense almost disappeared from the market.

When I went to Girton College, Cambridge in 1933, I took with me my Mamaiji's gift of a small afargan, with a flat spoon and tongs, plus a packet of sandalwood chips and a box of incense gum which had to be hammered into small pieces and then crushed. Every Sunday, when my Christian friends went to Chapel, I would wash my hair, light my afargan with a coal, sandalwood and incense and then recite my prayers from the Khordeh Avesta, Kavasji Eduljee Kanga's Gujarati edition. Every word of the text would be numbered, and the same numbers transposed on the Gujarati translation, the Avesta text being transliterated in Gujarati lettering. So we knew, roughly, the meaning of the daily prayers.

These consisted of the Sarosh Baj, Khorshed, Meher and Atash Nyaeshes, Hormazd Yasht, Ardibehesht Yasht, Sarosh Yasht Hadokht and Sarosh Yasht Vadi, Yasna 58. The prayers would end with the Tandarosti (Pazend version) and the Din-no-Kalmo, our brief Declaration of Faith. All this took an hour or more to recite.

At the age of 15 years, I was very rebellious. "Why must I recite these long prayers every single day except

during my monthly periods? Worse still. Certain passages are marked 'Repeat thrice' or four times! *Dukh per dahm!* - the last straw on the camel's back!" Mother never argued. She insisted the routine be carried out. We should not be lazy, but take the trouble to learn the meaning of what we were praying. It was good discipline.

Today, I feel it is essential for all Zarathushtis to *learn the meaning* of our prayers. Why do we not adopt the Israeli custom? Hebrew is a difficult language, yet every Jew reads, writes, speaks and recites his prayers in the original language. From the age of 2 or 3, every Jewish child is given bright, colored, wooden blocks, each painted with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet. By the age of six, the child is familiar with the sounds and shape of the letters.

Zarathushtis scattered abroad might begin by getting wooden blocks painted with the letters of the Avesta alphabet ... as they grow older they will have mastered the script and learned the meaning of the prayers recited. This would create a unifying bond cutting across geographical boundaries and bring all Zarathushtis together in friendship and understanding. It would help to preserve our spiritual heritage. ■

THE MIRACLE WORKER IN MY LIFE

Parviz Malbari
Concord, California

I have been living with cancer for 13 years. My battle began in July of 1986, I had a great oncologist who advised me to set happy goals for myself, so on my way home from treatments, I would think of encouraging visions to see me through the tough moments. At that time, my daughter Zenia was almost 19 and what better goal than to see your daughter come walking down the aisle on the arm of her father.

The treatments were undoubtedly extremely rough, not just on me, but on my family. Very slowly, I began to see the light beginning to shine through the end of that dark, long tunnel. Things started to look good again! I went back to work where my job was kept open for me. My morale was high. The family was happy once again. On Christmas day of 1988, Zenia got married. *One goal achieved!*

In 1989, I was not feeling well again and my checkup results were bad. I had another surgery and took chemo treatments. With so many surgeries, adhesions started forming in my gut and I had two more surgeries in one month. My surgeon, who was not just a great doctor, but also a friend and coach for me and my family, reconstructed my gut, and I could maintain some quality in my life. My husband Bejan and I traveled all over the world, we went on a wonderful cruise and we enjoyed ourselves.

Now here is the misconception. I had read books that said if you are cancer-free for five years, you are home free. Research has proved that wrong, as happened in my case!

Guardian angel. To deviate a bit and take you back to my young days. All my young life, my dad would tell me to help people in little ways, but being so young, would it sink in? I was selfish, as he had spoiled me with so much love and attention. At 19, this immature, selfish young girl lost her father. The mentor she had adored and worshiped was gone after just five days and nights of nursing him and praying for a miracle.

It was then that I turned to prayers. I just had an inkling that my father, although not on this earth, was behind me, shielding me and guiding me. Countless incidents happened, but I will just relate a couple.

A week before my wedding, I came down with jaundice. All my life, I'd been so healthy - never even had to take an aspirin! All my dreams of having a good time at our wedding

were gone. I cried throughout my wedding day, wondering if I could make it. Somehow, as I was dressing up, my nervousness disappeared. I did not feel sick and I did not look sick – rather attractive, if I may say so. As I walked down the aisle on my brother's arm, I felt a light touch on my other arm – a voice whispering: "You can do it! Just stay calm." And I just knew that it was my dad again! Later, during my heavy chemo treatments, I would pray and try to relax and he'd come to me. I'd feel his hand in mine, with a voice whispering: "You have to go through with this. There are good things in store for you yet."

So all I'm saying is that I feel that my father was a miracle worker in my life. Everyone has a guardian angel, and he was mine.

More surgeries and more miracles. Getting back to recent times, I had two more surgeries and another round of chemotherapy. Then my second daughter Anita got married. *Another goal realized!*

Seven or eight years passed, and again I was cancer-free. Zenia's little baby, Zara was born. Yet another miracle! But only two months later, the cancer came back. At that same time, Bejan had arranged a cruise to Alaska for nine people – family and good friends. How come all of these good things kept happening?

Soon after, there were more fun times for the family. Anita's little baby boy, Jay Farhad was born. *Another dream come true for Bejan and me!*

But by this time, the doctors told me that the cancer was too big. They gave me three days, three weeks ... or three months. Well, I'm still here.

Good miracles keep happening in my life. I am a very happy person, with a strong, positive, capable and compassionate family behind me. I've lived a very good life. The cancer was just a detour on the road to happiness. And there are still more goals. Our grandchildren have given us so much joy that there is still a rea-

son to live; and my miracle-worker, my father will help me along.

To sum up my message, I want to say that each of our lives brings with it difficult moments that may seem unfair and unbearable at times. Our goals, our visions and our belief in God see us through to brighter times. The people that we hold dear to our hearts, even those who may not be with us any longer, help to guide us through. ■

Parviz Malbari passed away on July 4, 1999. [See Obituary, in this issue]. Donations in her memory may be sent for two causes very dear to her heart – the Minocher Homji General Hospital in Karachi and the Parsi General Hospital in Mumbai. Please send checks, made out to "Zoroastrian Association of Northern California", and mail to Mr. Bejan Malbari, 1705, Helix Court, Concord, CA 94518.

THOUGHTS ON PRAYER

By Jamshed R. Udvadia
Lansing, Michigan

Prayer in its simplest form is a conversation with God. Which immediately brings up the question: What is God? Should we think of God as a powerful being with a human-like form and a kindly face, or as an omnipotent, omnipresent spirit, or as the First Principle that created the Universe of which we, earthlings, are a part. It does not matter what the concept of God is at the moment; it will change, most likely, as we mature from childhood to adulthood to our senior years. Nevertheless the need to communicate with a power more wise, more effective, more benevolent than humans, is felt by most of us.

Do prayers help? A child prays because he has been taught to do so by his parents. The performance of the prayer ritual brings him the approval of his parents and society. Adults often pray that they and their

families be kept in good health and free from harm. It helps them to think that the power on high is on their side. Prayers help people who have suffered a disappointment, feel that they have at least one friend who will not let them down.

As teenagers and young adults, we often pray for material things. I know that I used to pray that some time in the future, I would own a house in the mountains, which would have seven rooms and a large verandah. One of the rooms was going to be a library which would have all the classic literature that I could refer to at will, and where I could sit and meditate for hours without being disturbed. This prayer was granted only in small part, but that may be because my idea of what I wanted out of life changed considerably between the ages of 15 and 55.

By the time I was 20, I used to pray that God grant me the wisdom, to know the answer to four questions: Who am I? Where did I come from? Why am I here? Where am I going? In pursuit of these, I looked into various religions and meditated and got part answers to these questions. I still hope to obtain better understanding before I pass from this world.

The time that prayers help most is when misfortune strikes, as it does some time or another in our lives, and we feel unable to help ourselves, so we seek help from a higher power. In some cases help may arrive from unexpected sources. I remember the time when, in my twenties, I was unhappy with my job in Bombay, because my immediate supervisor made life difficult for me. As an escape, I took a transfer to Delhi as an outdoor salesman. Unfortunately, the 120° F heat in May caused heat exhaustion and to make matters worse, the Bombay supervisor was transferred to Delhi as a branch manager. I was quite sick and confused.

My prayer for help from Above was answered in the form of a Parsi businessman, whom I had never met before, who happened to visit the

dharamshala where I was staying. He kindly stopped by my bed and hearing of my dilemma said in a very quiet, fatherly manner: "If you have your health, you can always find another job. If you remain here your health may deteriorate, you will not be able to perform, and you risk being fired." The advice tendered so simply and concisely sounded reasonable but I still had some doubts. After a half hour of prayer and meditation at the adjacent agiary my doubts disappeared. I felt confident in resigning and returning to Bombay. This eventually led to my immigration to the US, where I have lived happier than in Bombay.

Not all prayers are granted. One can see why prayer for selfish interests, which might cause problems to others may not be granted. Also, prayers which are not backed up by action to help oneself, may not have a good chance of success. People who flock to certain agiaries on certain days, to pray and then wait for a miracle, without making an effort towards the desired result, are setting themselves up for disappointment. Then again, there are times when we may pray for a result that is not beneficial to us, but we can only see that much later. At such times we could echo the thought of a well-known philosopher (I believe it was Emerson) who said: "I have lived to thank God that all my prayers have **not** been granted."

Prayers are answered. Some people do not recognize the help they get in answer to their prayers. God does not reach out a mighty hand from Heaven to lift us out of our troubles. His help may come through other people or other members of His creation. In this connection, I am reminded of an amusing story.

A very religious man, caught in a flood, climbed up on his roof and prayed to God to save him as the waters continued to rise. A passing motorist offered him a ride which he refused saying: "I have faith in God, He will save me." The waters rose to

where the street became a river. Along came a man in a boat and offered to help, but he continued to maintain that God would save him in answer to his prayers. Finally as the waters rose to the roof, a helicopter pilot threw down a rope and asked him to grab on. He again refused saying his faith in God was unshaken. He finally drowned and went to Heaven. Face to face with God, he asked: "Lord, I had such faith in you. Why did you not answer my prayers for help?" God said: "What are you saying my man, I sent you three angels of mercy and you refused them all."

Finally, besides the traditional prayers spoken or read from a book, let us not forget other forms of prayer like service to society, and love for your fellow-men that great religious teachers have advocated. Samuel Coleridge, the 19th century English poet, expressed it this way:

"He prayeth best who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all." ■■■

PRAYER IN THE GATHAS

*By Alexander Bard
Stockholm, Sweden*

"I know, Wise One, that I am powerless. I have a few cattle and also a few men. I appeal to You. Please Lord, see to it. Lend me the help a friend gives a friend. Grant through righteousness the riches of a good mind."

[Gathas 11/2, Jafarey translation]

Does Zarathushtra pray for more cattle? Does Zarathushtra pray for more power? Or does he not try to clear his mind to become more productive, more progressive, more sincere, as a good Mazdayasni should be?

He certainly does not ask for God to throw a bunch of cattle or a bunch of followers his way. Zarathushtra asks Ahura Mazda for inspiration to become more of his true self. To think ever clearer with a mind that is already clear and progressive.

Compared to the Judeo-Christian-Islamic tradition, where asking God for material blessings is vital, this is closer to what we could refer to as meditation rather than prayer. The prayer for material favors is alien to Zarathushtra's thinking. Which explains why he was vehemently opposed to sacrifices.

"When, Wise One, shall those days dawn which will, for the maintenance of the righteous life, motivate the wisdom of the benefactors with advanced teachings? To whom shall this wisdom come with good mind to help? For myself, Lord, I choose your teachings."

[Gathas 11/3, Jafarey translation]

Here, Zarathushtra does not ask for guidance from a supernatural power. Instead, the increased understanding he requests is to come from within himself, as a fruit of his own mind. Not as something which, in a supernatural manner, is dropped on him from high above. This is an important distinction.

Prayer in the Gathas is never about asking for material blessings. Neither is it about bending to one's knees before God. Jews, Christians and Muslims fear their Gods. But as Mazdayasni, we do not fear our God. The fact that Ahura Mazda knows more than we do, is wiser, is not something we constantly have to tell Ahura Mazda. It is for us an obvious fact. We do not need to make any sacrifices to please our God.

Rather, our prayers are all about concentrating on becoming an even better and more progressive Mazdayasni. Being humble is not a quality Ahura Mazda asks of us. Ahura Mazda wants us to be His co-creators. Co-creators of the Creator himself. That is what being a Mazdayasni, and praying as a Mazdayasni, is all about. ■■■

Alexander Bard, a convert to Zoroastrianism, owns a music management company, Bullgod Entertainment. He writes and lectures, and is a regular guest on Swedish and International TV. He can be contacted by email at bard@bullgod.se.

ZARATHUSHTRA'S PRAYER

By Ardalan Keykavoussi
Los Angeles, California

I would like to give my thoughts on how prayer is used in the Gathas, using Songs 11/2 and 11/3 as translated by Dr. Jafarey [see previous article]. I regard prayer as one of the fundamental methods of expressing my allegiance to my religion as well as an affirmation of my faith. In these examples, in particular, I see prayer as a way to ask for guidance to continue performing righteous acts through a good mind.

Praying 'for' something is not un-Zoroastrian. Praying for a car, a parking space, getting to work on time, etc ... that's something else; but praying for righteous acts, righteous thoughts which may result in the proper functioning of political and social institutions, which not only benefit those involved but also contribute to this world as a whole, is a very Zarathushti form of prayer.

In Song 11/2, Zarathushtra shows that we as mere humans come to realize sooner or later that we are humble in this vast universe. There come a time when we have no answers and we are left with few choices. 'Cattle' also means riches in the sense of influence or power, and 'few men' means few hearers and few allies who would listen and help. Thus Zarathushtra turns to Ahura Mazda and asks Him for guidance in the form of a proper solution which will stimulate his mind and cause him to resolve his dilemma. He asks humbly, as a man in need with no options before him, for the help of a friend, a mighty one.

In Song 11/3, Asho Zarathushtra praises those whose more advanced intellect and ways act as examples to follow for those who wish to follow a better path. Again he shows that it is not wrong to pray and ask for guidance in times of doubt and uncertainty.

The purpose of prayer then becomes clear. It is in a way an act of humility, through which the individual and community acknowledge a greater wisdom with the power to deliver answers, provided the person in question listens when the answer comes to his mind. Furthermore, prayer also reflects that time when we need to grow more and understand that we never have all the answers, but seek to have them by learning higher teachings. ■

LIFE — A PRAYER

By Soonoo Engineer
Vancouver, British Columbia

My prayers are short and sweet, personal and spontaneous. I believe:

My words fly up,
My thoughts remain below;
Words without thoughts,
Cannot to Heaven go. — Anon

I would like to share the following poem, giving my thoughts on Prayer:

Not for her the mindless ritual
the tired prayers,
The soulless chants,
the stifling dogma,
Rather the sharp severance,
the cutting denial
The bold assertion of the independence and might of Man,
Than the cajoling of angels,
the begging and bargaining
And cringing subservience
to a capricious God.

However expansive is the soul,
and hers soared to grasp
That Source inimitable —
The Lord of Life
The God of Love,
Of Truth and Peace
In beauty she sought
His Presence,
In silence she sought
His Grace,
To her,
life was a prayer,
An aspiring search through
His labyrinthine ways. ■



PRAYER OF THANKS

By Nahid Irani
Chicago, Illinois

In the last few years I have found myself praying only when I needed something. God, help me get a good grade. God, help me get this promotion. God, I will donate money to the poor if you help me get into this graduate school ... To top it all, if I did not get what I asked for, I would get mad at God. Why? Does He not love me?

Then, the day of realization came. One day I came home from a business trip and saw my mother sleeping on the couch with braces around her neck and spots of blood on her shirt. Then it just hit me! "God, I never thanked You for all my blessings; for having a family; a mom and dad who are healthy and adore me." My mother had been in a car accident, but was alive and well.

I came to the realization that the error is not in the prayer, but in the way we view our circumstances. We may pray asking God for peace, not realizing that he has already given us peace. We choose not to enjoy it. We ask God for wisdom, but we choose to act unwisely. We pray for God to show us joy in the day, while ignoring God's abundant joy all around us. We pray and ask God for things He has already given us. The truth is we will

not acknowledge that He has given it to us, because it may not be exactly as we wanted it.

Maybe we are asking for strength when we should be acknowledging and thanking God for making us strong. Maybe instead of leaving it up to God to show us the joy of the day, we should look around and praise God for the joy we find on our own. I would like to suggest fellow Zarathushtis to try and refrain from praying through your wish list, and just thank and praise God for all that He has already given us. **Tonight, pray and be thankful ...**

Be thankful

That you don't already have
everything you desire,
If you did, what would there be
to look forward to?

Be thankful

When you don't know something
For it gives you the
opportunity to learn.

Be thankful

For the difficult times.
During those times
you grow.

Be thankful

For your limitations,
Because they give you
opportunities for improvement.

Be thankful

For each new challenge,
Because it will build
your strength and character.

Be thankful

For your mistakes.
They will teach you
valuable lessons.

Be thankful

When you're tired and weary
Because it means you've
made a difference. - Anon

It's easy to be thankful for the good things. A life of rich fulfillment comes to those who are also thankful for the setbacks. Gratitude can turn a negative into a positive. *Find a way to be thankful for your troubles, and they can become your blessings.* ■

Nahid Irani moved to the US from Iran at age 13. She studied Business and Computer Science, and has been working with Anderson Consulting for 3 years.

SPIRITUALITY AND HEALTH

Spirituality, defined as a belief in a higher power that gives life meaning, improves overall health and may prolong life, according to two recently published studies. Some research suggests that people who attend religious services are healthier than those who do not, and are less likely to smoke and/or drink excessive amounts of alcohol. Strong social bonds such as those formed among congregation members may help boost immune system function, thus improving overall health.

One study [*Journal of Demography, May 1999*] showed that people who never attend church live to about 75, while those who attend services one or more times a week, live to an average of 83. The researchers showed that health can play a role in the ability to attend services, but suggest that religious attendance also works through increased social ties and behavioral factors to decrease the risks of death.

In a second study in Georgia [*Family Medicine*], those who said that they were highly or moderately spiritual reported better overall health and less physical pain than their counterparts who reported low levels of spirituality. ■

[Acknowledgments: Submitted by K. Samiya, from *Reuters Health, Demography, 36, 1999; Family Medicine, 30, 1998*].

PRAYER THROUGH THE AGES

By Kaykhosrow Samiya
Dallas, Texas

Prayer in my humble opinion is a concerted effort of our physical consciousness to become attuned to the consciousness of the Creator or Ahura Mazda.

Concept of God. Since the dawn of humanity, we have always prayed to something bigger and better than

ourselves. In the beginning this was in the form of two-dimensional drawings on the caves for hunting. Early man believed if he prayed in this manner, they would get a good hunt. It was through this communion and belief that they actually did experience a good hunt the following day. Later on, as man's brain developed, this two-dimensional drawing also evolved into a three-dimensional object. We call them idols now, but they were gods to early man. They worshiped such idols and even made sacrifices to them.

Once again, as man's brain evolved further, so did his image of god. Man now believed in a living god. He started to worship animals, such as elephants, the white bull ... His prayer was in the form of offerings. And finally, as man's perception of the world around him changed, so did his concept of god. Man's belief now only accepted god to be in a different dimension than he existed. Since man was no longer able to see and worship these gods, he had to communicate with them mentally.

Prayer today. Today's prayer to God is very much an individualized preference, but tinted to a great degree by the religion the person belongs to. For example, Zarathushtis believe that the head has to be covered, our body must be clean and we must face a source of light when we pray.

Regardless of religious beliefs, there are other factors, such as man's belief, that greatly influence the outcome of his prayer. In some parts of Iran for example, people who have a great need for a miracle, may offer certain foods. There are others who go to certain shrines for prayer.

It is my belief that regardless of how you pray, it is our *faith* that ultimately causes the manifestation of that prayer. Man's faith, which is comprised of the three elements of 'desire', 'belief' and 'expectancy' are the dominating factors. Napoleon Hill in his book "Think and Grow Rich" said that desire is the starting point of all achievement. Desire is

the spark that started creation. This spark is the seed that is planted in the spiritual dimension which is also where man's mind resides. Spiritual dimension is also where God resides and is also the root of all physical creation. How this seed shows up in its physical equivalence is through the 'belief' and 'expectancy' faculties of the mind. These two faculties are likened to the fertilizer and water that give way to fruition. Doubt and fear are what destroy a creation.

Man has always had a 'desire' for something, whether it be a successful hunt, a fruitful year or rain during drought. He needed the extra elements of 'belief' and 'expectancy' which he brought about through prayer. Prayer provided the missing links. As long as man is in the physical form on this physical plane of existence, he will always have a need for prayer. It is a belief in a higher power or Ahura Mazda that will save him every time. ■

Kaykhosrow Samiya is a software engineer in the network field and a Vice President at Bank of America in Dallas, Texas. A Master Hypnotist, Holistic Faith



Healer and Psychorientologist, Kaykhosrow teaches Meditation and Spiritual Healing in US and Canada.

THE PRAYING HANDS

Back in the fifteenth century, in a tiny village near Nuremberg, lived a family with eighteen children. Eighteen! The father, a goldsmith, worked long hours merely to keep food on the table. Despite their seemingly hopeless condition, two of Albrecht Durer the Elder's children had a dream. They both wanted to pursue their tal-

ent for art, but they knew full well that their father would never be financially able to afford to send them to Nuremberg, to study at the academy.

After long discussions at night in their crowded bed, the two boys finally worked out a pact. They would toss a coin. The loser would go down into the nearby mines and, with his earnings, support his brother at the academy. Then, when the brother completed his studies in four years, he would support the other.

They tossed on Sunday morning after church. Albrecht Durer (the son) won the toss and went off to Nuremberg.

Albert went down into the dangerous mines, and for the next four years, financed his brother, whose work at the academy was almost an immediate sensation. Albrecht's etchings, his woodcuts and his oils were far better than those of most of his professors, and by the time he graduated, he was beginning to earn considerable fees for his works.

When the young artist returned to his village, the Durer family held a festive dinner on their lawn to celebrate Albrecht's triumphant homecoming. After a long and memorable meal, Albrecht rose to drink a toast to his beloved brother for the years of sacrifice that had enabled Albrecht to fulfill his ambition. His closing words were: "And now, Albert, blessed brother of mine, now it is your turn. Now you go to Nuremberg to pursue your dream, and I will take care of you."

All heads turned to the far end of the table where Albert sat, tears streaming down his pale face, shaking his lowered head from side to side while he sobbed, over and over, "No! No! No!" Finally, Albert rose, he wiped the tears from his cheeks and then, holding his hands close to his right cheek, he said softly: "No, brother, I cannot go. It is too late for me. Look. Look what four years in the mines have done to my hands! The bones in every finger have been smashed, and

lately I have been suffering from arthritis so badly that I cannot even hold a glass to return your toast, much less make delicate lines on canvas with a brush. For me, brother, it is too late."

More than 450 years have passed. By now, Albrecht Durer's hun-

dreds of masterful portraits, pen and silver-point sketches, watercolors, charcoals and woodcuts hang in every great museum in the world, but the odds are great that you, like most people, are familiar with only one of Albrecht Durer's works. More than merely being familiar with it, you very well may have a reproduction hanging in your home or office.

One day, to pay homage to Albert, Albrecht Durer painstakingly drew his brother's abused hands with palms together and thin fingers stretched skyward. He called his powerful drawing simply "Hands", but the entire world almost immediately opened their hearts to his great masterpiece and renamed his tribute of love - "The Praying Hands."



The next time you see a copy of that touching creation, take a second look. Let it be your reminder, if you still need one, that no one – no one – ever makes it alone!

[Submitted by Deenaz Damania, daughter of the late, respected Dastur Nowroze Minocher-Homji. Deenaz is currently working in the field of Behavioral Sciences and Research in Kuala Lumpur, where her husband Rustom is setting up an Aircraft Design Center]

ON HAPPINESS

Two men, both seriously ill, occupied the same hospital room. One man was allowed to sit up in his bed for an hour each afternoon to help drain the fluid from his lungs. His bed was next to the room's only window. The other man had to spend all his time flat on his back.

The two men talked for hours on end. They spoke of their wives and families, their homes, their jobs ... And every afternoon when the man in the bed by the window would pass the time by describing to his roommate all the things he could see outside the window.

The man in the other bed began to live for those 1-hour periods where his world would be broadened and enlivened by all the activity and color of the world outside. The window overlooked a park with a lovely lake. Ducks and swans played on the water while children sailed their model boats. Young lovers walked amidst flowers of every color. Grand old trees graced the landscape, with a fine view of the city skyline in the distance. As the man by the window described all this in exquisite detail, the man in the other bed would close his eyes and imagine the scene. Days and weeks passed by in this fashion.

One morning the nurse arrived, only to find the lifeless body of the man by the window, who had died peacefully in his sleep. As the body was taken away, the other man asked if he could be moved to the other bed. The nurse was happy to make the switch.

BOOKS AND SUCH

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May both these CDs be of inspiration to our community! And if they do, as I am sure they will, we owe Ervad Makujina our deep appreciation. ■

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Slowly, painfully, he propped himself up on one elbow to take his first look at the world outside. Finally, he would have the joy of seeing it for himself. He strained to slowly turn to look out the window beside the bed. It faced a blank wall! The man asked the nurse what could have compelled his deceased roommate to describe such wonderful things outside his 'window'.

"The man was blind," she said, and could not even see the wall." Perhaps he just wanted to feel good himself and share it with you."

Epilogue. There is tremendous happiness in making others happy, despite our own situations. *Shared grief is half the sorrow, but happiness when shared, is doubled.* ■

[Author unknown. Submitted by Rusi Sorabji of Campbell, California]

Faszination Zarathushtra

Zoroaster und die Europäische Religionsgeschichte der Frühen Neuzeit

von

Michael Stausberg

Walter de Gruyter
Berlin • New York

1998

Review by Gernot Windfuhr
University of Michigan

The fascination with the figure of Zarathushtra and his circle in Greece and the Hellenistic Near East, and the extensive pseudo-epigraphic writings attributed to him, have been studied by Joseph Bidez and Franz Cumont, 1938, and more recently by Roger Beck, 1991, and by Peter Kingsley, 1995 [1]. The renewal of this fascination with Zarathushtra in Western Europe in the 15th century and its subsequent course leading to the linguistic, philological and comparative study of Zoroastrian texts, have been brilliantly outlined in the trail-blazing [2] work by Jacques Duchesne-Guillemin, 1958 [3].

The work by Michael Stausberg is a masterful, monumental 1124-page elucidation of the European Zarathushtra discourse, that documents in sheer overwhelming detail, the extent of the role of the figure of Zarathushtra during the first phase of that study, that is, the Renaissance, Baroque and Enlightenment of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, with focus in Italy, Central Europe and France, respectively.

Faszination Zarathushtra

Zoroaster und die Europäische Religionsgeschichte der Frühen Neuzeit

By Michael Stausberg

2 vols. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1998, 1124 pp, \$311.

During these periods, three types of new sources became available: the ancient and Hellenistic writings in Greek due to the activity of Byzantine scholars since the 15th century; Arabic and other Near Eastern texts; and reports on Zoroastrianism by European travelers since the 16th century. The three decisive texts were the Middle Platonic *Chaldean Oracles*, which the Byzantine scholar Plethod (d. 1454) wrongly ascribed to Zarathushtra; the first comprehensive history of the Persian religion by Hyde, 1700, who extensively utilized Near Eastern sources and included the first Latin translation of a Zoroastrian text, the 15th century *Sad Dar*

“...a masterful, monumental 1124-page elucidation of the European Zarathushtra discourse that documents in sheer overwhelming detail the extent of the role of the figure of Zoroaster... in the Renaissance, Baroque and Enlightenment of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, with focus in Italy, Central Europe and France ...

in Persian; and the monumental work with translations of the original sources of Anquetil Duperron, 1771, the fruit of his study with Parsis in India [4] which was the true turning point in the scholarly study of Zoroastrianism. Each work formed the basis of a new phase and focus of the debate.

In essence, the history of the European Zarathushtra discourse is the history of the role of Zarathushtra in the continuing attempts at the emancipation, via enlightened Neopla-

tonic esotericism parallel to similar movements in the Islamic Near East, as one of the “ancient theologians”, to representative of “natural religion” independent of the Mosaic law, from the dominance of the world view of Aristotelianized Judeo-Christianity, which either assimilated him as a descendent of Noah and similar, or vilified him as a dualist magus.

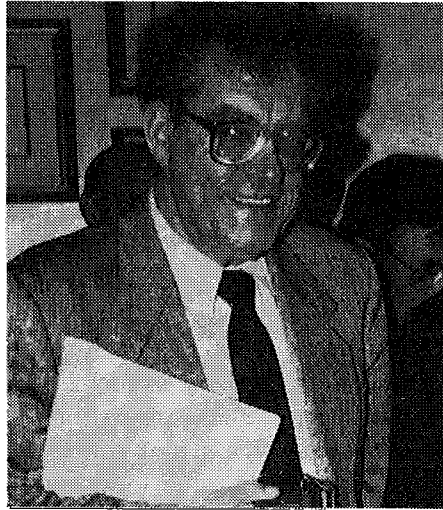
The basic constellation during this period, Christian apologetic vs. humanist ideals, is the subject matter of the author’s fundamental approach [5]. It is that of reception theory, which traces not the possible “influences” of figures like Zarathushtra (implying the adoption of Zoroastrian or Iranian ideas), but the motifs and interests of the participants in the inter-textual discourse who manipulated that figure for their own ends. These included virtually every major and minor figure in theology, philosophy and history, from Ficino (d. 1499) to Voltaire (d. 1778) and in literature, the arts and opera as well.

The two volumes are in origin a doctoral dissertation at the University of Bonn. The target reader is the specialist of the intellectual and religious history in and of Europe. The language is the German of their scholarly discourse, together with the specialist terminology of several disciplines. The ‘monographic’ historical time line of the main text is freely interspersed with superb short to very extensive ‘discourses’ on specific thematic and chronological connections. Most prominently, following the discussion of the 16th cen-

tury, the chronological flow is interrupted by topical discourses which range from the early Christian to the present centuries, and conclude Volume I (pp. 397 - 579).

These few notes cannot do justice to the topical wealth collated and interpreted in the two volumes, which is very much biographical and ideological, but also includes cosmological issues ranging from love, to the soul and resurrection. It is here where the problem of reception vs. influence, which, one should remark, is or should be relativistic as well, is acute. Although the author admits the possibility of an "archeology" of originally Zoroastrian or Iranian elements in Europe (p. 971), he dismisses attempts to seek its direct influence in Europe probably too summarily.

Dr. Michael Stausberg is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Theology, Section History of Religions, at Uppsala University, Sweden. □



Gernot Windfuhr, Ph.D. (University of Hamburg, 1965) is Professor of Iranian Studies, University of Michigan, since 1966. He has done extensive research and teaching in: Persian and Iranian linguistics, Persian literature and Zoroastrianism, and is presently editing a volume on *The Iranian Languages*

[1] Joseph Bidez and Franz Cumont, *Les mages hellénisés. Zoroastre Ostanès et Hystaspès d'après la tradition grecque*, 2 vols., Paris 1938 (=1973). Roger Beck, "Thus spake not Zarathustra: Zoroastrian Pseudoepigrapha in the Greco-Roman World," in Mary Boyce and Franz Grenet, *A History of Zoroastrianism* III, Leiden and Köln 1991, pp. 491-565. Peter Kingsley, "Meetings with Magi: Iranian Themes among the Greeks, from Zanthos of Lydia to Plato's Academy," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 3, 1995, 173-209.

[2] Thus, justly, Stausberg, p. 31, n. 144.

[3] Jacques Duchesne-Guillemin, *The Western Response to Zoroaster*, Oxford 1958.

[4] Thomas Hyde, *Historia religionis veterum Persorum, eorumque Magorum*, Oxford, 2nd ed. 1760 (= Tehran 1976). Abraham Anquetil Duperron, *Zend-Avesta, Ouvrage de Zoroastre* I-III, Paris 1771 (=New York and London 1984 [*Myth & Romanticism* 1]).

[5] The main points of the work are summarized on pp. 969-978. For follow-up articles, see Michael Stausberg, "Zoroaster im 18. Jahrhundert: zwischen Aufklärung und Esoterik," in *Aufklärung und Esoterik*, edited by Monika Neugebauer-Wölk unter Mitarbeit von Holger Zaunstöck, 1999, pp. 117-139; and "The Invention of a Canon: The Case of Zoroastrianism", in *Canonization and Decanonization. Papers Presented to the International Conference of the Leiden Institute for the Study of Religions (LISOR), held at Leiden 9-10 January 1997*, edited by A. van der Kooij and K. van der Toorn, Leiden, Boston and Köln 1998, pp. 257-277.

[6] Thus, this reviewer suggested that Mozart's opera *Die Zauberflöte* may have an Iranian-Zoroastrian background. Specifically, the librettist may have had access to Anquetil's work, in particular the translation of the fifth or "Wedding" Gatha, which hails wife and womanhood; cf. Gernot Windfuhr, "Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* and Zoroaster," in *Proceedings, Second International Congress, January 5-8, 1995*, Bombay, 1996, pp. 283-300.

Home on the Hill, a Bombay Girlhood

By W. D. Merchant

ISBN 0-89410-712-7 (hardcover) \$20, ISBN 0-89410-713-5 (paperback) \$12, 133 pp. Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder, CO, Tel: (303) 444-6684;

www.rienner.com.

Review by Ardeshir B. Damania
University of California, Davis

Whabiz Dinshaw Merchant, the eldest daughter of a successful Parsi industrialist, grew up in a typical upper middle-class post-war Parsi household. She later attended the University of Chicago and at present teaches sociology and anthropology at South Suburban College in South Holland, Illinois. This book is her autobiographical account of the virtues (and drawbacks) of living in a Parsi home, with Parsi relatives, and going through Parsi schools and matrimonial courts.

Whabiz talks about her father, a stern disciplinarian who had much in common with this reviewer's father. Perhaps all self-made Parsi men of those times were made from the same cloth. As an infant, she would stand at the door of the house for hours after he left for work each morning. Whabiz still hates to see a man leave her house for any reason. At about the same time, in the same city only 3 miles away, this reviewer used to cry his heart out when his father left for work each morning, even though he would return home a few hours later for lunch. Perhaps it was the loss of security that Parsi dads of that time provided as virtual pillars of strength, or was it the loss, however temporary, of parental bond?

A "Once in a Millennium Opportunity". Commemorate your family or loved one's name by sponsoring the Special Issue of FEZANA Journal [Winter 1999] to be distributed at the World Congress 2000. [Contact Rustom Kevala].

The author writes about her father as being "sentimental but hated displays of emotion unless they were negative. One could yell ... at taxi drivers who cut into his lane of traffic. But one could not show the slightest affection in public or private. He was mortified when I hugged him at the airport on a visit home from America." This perhaps demonstrates how very British (stiff) the Parsis had become due to the close association with them for almost a century.

Those were the days. I found the book, although dominated by the father's imperious personality, extremely interesting because it describes in some detail the Parsi mannerisms and household customs in those post-independence days. Those were the days when the British civil servants were packing up and leaving for destinations as Britain (where they had relatives) and Australia (the new frontier with plenty of jobs). Canada and the US were not as attractive as they were to become a couple of decades later.

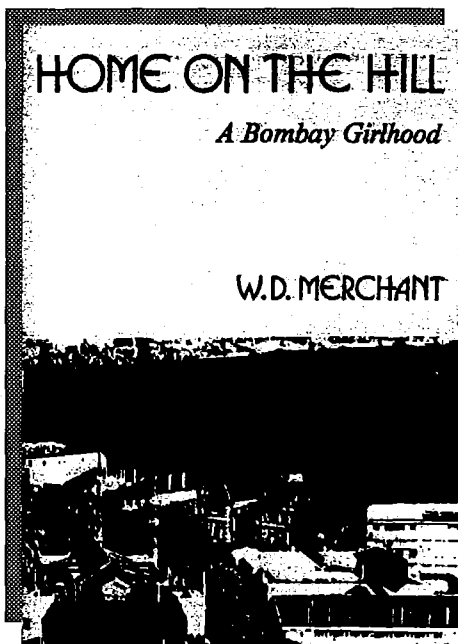
The Home on the Hill was a sprawling cavernously large bungalow at Pali Hill, Bandra, overlooking the murky waters of the Arabian Sea. In those days there were only bungalows on Pali Hill, and that too, far in-between; not the mess of high-rise shoe-box like habitations which Bombayites call 'flats'.

On the north side of Pali Hill lay the fishing village of Danda, where Bombay ducks (a slimy, soft, white fish unique to the area) were hung up on a bamboo scaffold to dry in the sun. Rolled in batter of flour and bread crumbs and deep fried, fresh Bombay ducks are devoured with great gusto and glee in many a Parsi household even today.

"To feed and be fed are synonymous in Parsi vocabulary with both pleasure and the right way. One can never visit a Parsi home without being overwhelmed with food ... During the great famine of 1877, it was a Parsi family that fed the city of

Bombay for an entire period of eighteen months. As children we were taught to leave the last mouthful of food on the plate untouched. It was called 'the mongrel's share' (*kutra no bhag*) and was fed to stray animals" (dogs) writes the author.

Parsi mannerisms. Whabiz's observation on the Parsi Gujarati language was not without humor. She says "Parsi Gujarati is replete with obscure terms original and borrowed.



Both men and women swear, but the vocabulary of abuse is different. Women tend to use the names of the lowest castes as oaths, whereas the men's terms have to do with bodily parts and functions."

Whabiz's mother, who had been married previously, was from a priestly family and wanted to adhere to the strict code of conduct for menstruating women in a Parsi household. But being the only adult female she had to compromise some of her principles. "So she drew arbitrary lines around objects and isolated them instead. The clothes to be worn to the fire temple could not be touched, nor the flower vases. She avoided handling pickles or new money. She purified us all with ritual baths when she emerged from her confinement."

A brief account of the author's short-lived stint in a boarding school, run

by Christian missionaries at one of the 'hill stations', is also included. However Dinshawji, according to the author, was not impressed by other faiths and reserved his most scathing comments for Parsis, mostly women, who went to church or visited the tombs of Muslim saints and 'babas'. She recalls one morning when her father, spying a Parsi lady about to enter the church at Mahim, stopped his beloved 1948 Morris car and shouted "Why don't you go to a fire-temple, you fool?" a sentiment this reviewer can appreciate and endorse!

Almost an entire chapter has been devoted to Whabiz's navjote in Bombay and another on her schooling at the Wadia-Vatcha school in Dadar Parsi Colony. These accounts bring back a flood (though fading) of memories of this reviewer's own navjote at Albless Baug and schooling at Don Bosco. Whabiz also talks of half-hearted separate attempts by her mother and father to find a suitable match for her from among the Parsi community. But all to no avail.

Discord at home. Notwithstanding the love-hate relationship which her parents had, it was obvious from the book, that the children were being torn apart mentally, because of the frequent and loud quarrels between the parents, followed by a most acrimonious divorce case. In between Whabiz had a nervous breakdown and even attempted suicide, as each child was dragged into court to testify for or against a parent. The case was ultimately decided in her father's favor and her mother appealed to a higher court. Unfortunately, she passed away just one day from being heard in the highest court in the land.

In order to forget the discord at home, she threw herself completely into her studies. And so, after graduation, from Bombay University's prestigious Elphinstone College, she left her troubled family for the distant shores of America and a new life. The book ends on a sad but pragmatic note. Whabiz has not married to this day.

It is good to read and digest an accurate real-life account of a young girl reaching adulthood in a Parsi household in Bombay. I would recommend this book without the slightest hesitation to all Parsis, scholars and laymen alike, as well as others who are interested in this tiny community, whose numbers are rapidly falling. It is an authentic record of the Parsi diaspora in the words of a soul who has evidently yet to find inner peace. ■

Dr. Ardeshir B. Damania is a geneticist at the University of California, Davis. He has worked on projects sponsored by the UN and the World Bank on crop improvement. Dr. Damania has authored over 90 scientific papers, and is the senior editor of a book "The Origins of Agriculture and Crop Domestication". He is also technical consultant to "Diversity" journal, Bethesda, MD. His recent interests include biodiversity conservation throughout the world.

Calendar conversion program available

Have you ever wanted to find out the roz-mah of any given date? You can, now, with a program I have researched, tested and written to convert between the Parsi (Shenshai, Kadmi and Fasli), Western (Gregorian) and Mohammedan calendars.

The Western calendar was changed in 1582, when Pope Gregory XIII declared that the year would no longer begin on March 25th and further, that years divisible by 400 would no longer be considered leap years.

The Parsi (Shenshai) calendar dates from Yazdegard III's coronation on June 16, 632 AC. It has failed to add the 'leap month' every 120 years, as required, except once in 499 Yz.

The program, written in QBASIC, for any IBM-compatible computer is available on a microdisk for a postage and handling charge of \$2. Contact Dan Rogers, 1240 Takena St. SW, Albany, OR 97321, Tel: (503) 967-1911, drogers@proaxis.com. ■

READERS' FORUM

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

On recent issues ...

I enjoyed immensely reading the Spring 99 issue, absorbing each article carefully over a period of time.

It warms the cockles of our hearts to see the nice photo on p. 83 of a Parsi couple settled in Canada married in full traditional dress! Not only have they managed to find each other during times when Parsi youngsters are marrying outside in large numbers, but have chosen to have a traditional ceremony in Mumbai. Please convey my congratulations to Pervez Mistry and Zenobia Panthaky. Couples such as these truly help to keep the Zarathushti religion and culture alive!

*Dr. Ardeshir B. Damania
University of California, Davis*

It was with great interest that I read the latest Spring 99 issue and was very impressed by the wide coverage of Zarathushti news. In connection with the short write up about prominent Parsis who have contributed to Singapore in the past, I felt that it may be of interest to your readers to know about another humble Singapore Parsi whose name is somehow never mentioned.

He was **Mr. Pesi B. Davar**, whom I knew personally until his death in 1978 and who I feel deserves recognition. He bequeathed Sing.\$50,000 to the Singapore Parsi Association and the rest of his entire estate to charitable and educational causes. Almost US\$140,000 are disbursed from his estate every year to charitable and educational institutions in Singapore.

I am enclosing a short writeup of this relatively unknown Parsi who gave every cent of his estate to charity. I feel his story will be of interest to Parsis worldwide and will accord due recognition to his philanthropy.

*Pesi B. Chacha
Singapore*

[FEZANA Journal plans to do a more in-depth article on the Zarathushtis of Singapore in a future issue. At that time, we shall certainly ensure that Mr. Davar's contributions are given the recognition he deserves - Ed]

My best wishes and congratulations – I enjoy reading FEZANA Journal and appreciate your efforts in maintaining the high standard.

*Prakash Mody
North York, Ontario*

Thank you for the good work. I look forward to each issue and enjoy reading it thoroughly. The wealth of information provided is both varied and stimulating. I can understand the time and effort spent in producing each issue and I hope I am not alone in thanking you for your services to the community.

*Nadir Camay
Santa Monica California*

FEZANA Journal is a treasure trove of solid information. I have read every word and will study the philosophical and historical pieces soon. I must say that you are doing a heroic, beautiful and substantive piece of work. The more I read, the more I sense the need for a handy Zarathushti glossary. Maybe you have one in mind someday.

I recently visited Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia, an exploration that revived my interest in learning about contemporary Zoroastrianism. In the Armenian Church's cathedral at Etchmiadzin, I was shown an area under the cathedral containing what was described as a place of Zoroastrian ritual.

I am a writer and retired journalist, and have read extensively about

ancient Zoroastrianism, but am short on information about Zoroastrian life today. I would be interested in getting in touch with a Zoroastrian Society near Michigan.

I am valiantly attempting to get Zoroaster and Zoroastrian out of my head so that I will have room for Zarathushtra and Zarathushti.

*Budd Gauger
Lambertville, Michigan
(734) 856-1352*

Compliments to you for such an outstanding job with FEZANA Journal. It is simply wonderful with so many interesting articles. Each issue surpasses the previous one. May you continue this work for many many years to come.

*Roshan and Jijoo Motivala
Los Angeles, California*

My heartfelt thanks to you for the phenomenal job of producing FEZANA Journal. Keep up the magnificent work. You have been an inspiration and a fantastic role model. God bless you in your worthy and dedicated mission.

*Mehernaz Irani
Chandler, Arizona*

I draw your kind attention that in your Journal you dwell too much upon giving news of unending congresses, marriages, navjotes, etc. etc. All these do not produce any redeeming feature for a layman Zarathoshti who desires to know something about our *Din-e Bérégist* (the Excellent Religion). As you know, three-fourths of our Avestan texts consist of hidden meanings (*ramz*).

The fault is not wholly of our Zarathoshtis who happen to live, like us, in a Christian land, where from morning till night, everything is disciplined and regulated by unwarranted, artificial and futile wants of day-to-day existence.

Yours in Service,
*Shiavux D. Cooper
Paris, France*

On Zarathushti Music and Musicians Issue

Thank you for the wonderful article on Mehli Mehta [*Summer 1999*]. What a great man and what a career. All Zarathushtis should be very proud to have such a role model and mentor in the community. Mr. Mehta has really brought class to our small community, especially here in North America. The article was well written and researched. My congratulations to you, to Mr. Mehta and to Ms Dubash for her style and for making the article so very informative as well as interesting.

Keep up the good work. Our community is indebted to you.

*Dhun Sethna (89 years old)
New York*

You do an outstanding job with the Journal. I not only read them cover to cover, but have kept every single one since they first started. My father in India also loves getting his copy ...

*Thritee Baxter
Manlius, New York*

My heartiest congratulations on another spectacular issue [*Summer 1999*]. You deserve the Zarathushti community's gratitude for all the hard work that must have gone into its publication. The Journal has gone from strength to strength both in its contents and its get up and appearance. The cover in color definitely enhances the Journal. If the inside pages can be made thinner (like Time or Newsweek) and suitable for color, the value of the Journal will be enhanced further ...

*Dinshaw Joshi
Chevy Chase, Maryland*

I would like to commend you for the wonderful Summer issue. I carried it with me on the plane back from the AGM, and read the whole magazine, since I had nearly five hours on the flight. A very slick production. Good to know you will have a front cover in color from now on ...

*Dolly Malva
Downey, California*

Congratulations on the new look cover for FEZANA Journal. We look forward to reading it ...

*Jehangir Patel
Editor, Parsiana*

I want to congratulate you on the excellent Summer issue. Very worthy and deserving cover page (of Mehli Mehta) and well-written articles, especially those by the very talented Soozan Baxter, Parastu Dubash and Khurshid Khurody. They deserve our entire community's congratulations for researching and educating us about our illustrious heroes.

I salute FEZANA for a well-done job once again.

Homi Patel

Thank you for the Summer issue of FEZANA Journal. I am very grateful to you.

Maestro Zubin Mehta is eminently famous in Japan. I heard he has established a scholarship fund for musicians at Bombay and Peking, with his performance fee in Japan.

I hope the thoughts of Prophet Zarathushtra become known in Japan.

*Noriko Katsuki
Tokyo, Japan*

Congratulations on the superbly brought out issue on Music and Musicians. The entire issue is very informative and will be immensely useful to anyone interested in this aspect of Zarathushti culture.

I would also like to mention that we at Zoroastrian Studies, have produced a twin cassette of Persian songs by Daraiush Yazeshni (mentioned on p. 28).

*Shehnaz Munshi
Mumbai, India*

Musicians Missed

I noticed the omission of two gifted musicians known to me personally.

Phiroz Erach Tarapore is a highly gifted pianist who was awarded the "Outstanding Young Zarathushti Award" at the NY Congress last

year. His performances at the banquets at both the NY Congress in 1998 and the preceding Congress in San Francisco, were highly applauded. His accomplishments as an outstanding student and an accomplished pianist were presented in FEZANA Journal [Fall 1998].

Neville Buji Chinoy of Mumbai, who died at the very young age of 19, was considered a musical prodigy. He was a highly gifted pianist. When Neville was just 12, Lionel Dakers, examiner of the London Royal School of Music (LRSM) heard him play and arranged for his schooling in music in England, so that he could benefit from one of the great music teachers of that time, Kendall Taylor. In November 1970, Neville took the LRSM exams, was awarded a scholarship and secured a first class in his final year. Neville was invited by Rudolf Serkin, who was to be his mentor, to attend the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia.

On September 8, 1974, Neville was on a TWA flight from Mumbai to Philadelphia, when the plane crashed in the Ionian Sea, killing all aboard. Through his untimely death, the Zarathushti community lost one of our most gifted young pianists.

Dinshaw Joshi
Chevy Chase, Maryland

Congratulations on an excellent issue on the contributions of Zarathushtis to music. A glaring omission is no mention at all of a very young Parsi pianist, **Neville Chinoy**, who died in an air crash some years ago. Had he been alive today, he surely would have ranked among the finest pianists of the world today. I hope there is some piano scholarships to commemorate his short-lived legacy. It is important to document such facts for posterity, especially as our contribution is mainly linked to industry and business in the public eye. I was astounded once, when an American scholar, well conversant with our history and religion, men-

tioned that our community had contributed little to music and arts.

Kersey A. Antia
Orland Park, Illinois

I must commend you for such a bang-up job of the articles on musicians. I read them with a sense of pleasure and pride. However, I must bring to your notice a glaring omission of a famous music personality.

Perveez Meherji Dastur is a highly accomplished *geet* and *ghazal* singer, settled in Karachi for the past 40 years. In addition to being a stage and radio singer, she has performed on Karachi TV, and acted, with her husband, in several Gujarati natak. Besides releasing several cassettes of her songs, she has also recorded popular cassettes of wedding and navjote songs.

I hope you will not disappoint her hundreds of fans in Karachi, and make amends in your next issue.

Kairasp Rusi Lashkari
Houston, Texas

Three Calendars

Zarathushtis are a small community further sub-divided into smaller factions by what? Their calendars!!!

Other religions have factions. The Christians have Baptists, Methodists, Roman Catholics, etc. The Muslims have Shiya, Sunni, Khoja, etc. They have differences in beliefs and practices and I can see why they are separate. But the main difference among the Zarathushti factions – Fasli, Shenshai and Kadmi – is the calendar, and perhaps a matter of pronunciation of some of the basic prayers (e.g. Ashem Vohu as against Ashem Vahi) though no difference in meaning.

Is this not ridiculous? A very small community divided into three because of a difference in calendars? The Shenshai and Kadmi calendars came about as an error. Since the extra month at the end of 120 years was not observed at all by the Kadmis after the Arab conquest, their New Year reckoning has slipped

from the original Navroze (NoRuz) which falls on March 21st, the Vernal equinox (very astronomically correct and suitable, as it is the first day of Spring) to some time in July.

The Zarathushtis of India observed the intercalary month only once after they landed in India and so they also got out of sync with Jamshedi Navroze, but differed from the Kadmi by one month so their New Year falls in August (but will continue to slip backward against the seasons, just like the Kadmi calendar).

It is time we gave up our allegiances to our erroneous calendars. It is time we stopped the argument that it would adversely affect the observances of our religious ceremonies, jashans, gahambars, etc., if we corrected the calendars. They have already been affected, since our festivals were based on the seasons and are now being observed by the Shenshais and the Kadmis during the wrong seasons. Our religion is based on Truth as a prime virtue. It behooves us to admit the error as early as possible and correct the calendars to start on the Vernal Equinox, and include leap years, in order to bring them back into sync with the seasons.

There already exists such a calendar – the Fasli calendar – and all we have to do is to agree to adopt it as The Calendar for all Zarathushtis. It is ridiculous to have the same ceremonies and festivals observed at three different times of the year, based on one correct and two erroneous calendars.

When the Gregorian calendar was adopted in England and the US in 1752, they had to undergo some adjustments to their festivals of Christmas, Easter, etc. But they went ahead and did it because, not to do so would have meant to continue in error.

Are we going to take the Truthful Path (Asha) or are we going to continue in divisiveness and bury our heads in the sand?

I would like to request the World Congress 2000 committee to set up a

Task Force to look into the possibility of uniting the calendars at the start of the new millennium so that we turn over a new leaf as we turn into the 21st century.

*Jamshed R. Udovadia
Lansing, Michigan*

Conquering the Pacific

Congratulations. Your FEZANA Journal is the *very best* and *most* interesting, enlightening publication of any Zoroastrian publication anywhere the world over.

Now a request. A young-at-heart Zarathushti is determined to conquer the Pacific, California to Sydney, in a single engine aircraft, an amphibian Cessna 206H 8-seater turbo-stationer. The great circle navigation route will be followed and the crossing will take a day and a half (a Jumbo Jet takes 13 hours).

I am looking for some noble-hearted Zarathushti to come forth and sponsor this enterprise. Would it not be nice to call this Cessna "The Spirit of Zarathushtra" or "The Spirit of Persia". If we start now, by NoRuz 2000, our Zarathushti crew will be qualified and ready. To quote Goethe:

Whatever you can do or dream you can do, *Begin it!*
Boldness has genius, power and magic.

*Rustomjee Behman Naoroze
Ex-captain, PIA, 4/383 A, Canterbury
Road, Campsie, NSW 2194,
Sydney, Australia*

Time Capsule

As one of the Legacy Projects for the World Congress 2000, the executive committee has decided to encapsulate articles and records of contemporary Zarathushti culture in a "Millennium Time Capsule" to be

buried for posterity in the grounds of the Zarathushti Center in Houston.

While the project is highly laudable, my question is "Why Houston?" What is Houston's significance to Zarathushti history or heritage except that it had the good fortune to be selected as the site of the Congress?

I suggest that instead of taking a unilateral decision, the organizers should conduct a survey of world opinion on the burial site for the Time Capsule through a referendum. After pruning the list and reducing it to a reasonable number, the organizers should submit it for a final decision by a "Council of Elders" of 3 to 5 community stalwarts such as Prof. K. D. Irani and Dr. Farhang Mehr who are well versed in the history and heritage of the religion. ■

*Dinshaw Joshi
Chevy Chase, Maryland*

Dance Like No One's Watching

We convince ourselves that life will be better after we get married, have a baby, then another. Then we are frustrated that the kids are too young, or that we have a teenager to deal with, we will certainly be happy when they are out of that stage. We tell ourselves that our life will be complete when our spouse gets his or her act together, when we get a nicer car, are able to go on a nice vacation, when we retire. The truth is *there's no better time to be happy than right now*. If not now, when?

Your life will always be filled with challenges. It's best to admit this to yourself and decide to be happy anyway. One of my favorite quotes comes from Alfred Souza: "For a long time it had seemed to me that life was about to begin – real life. But there was always some obstacle in the way, something to be gotten through first, some unfinished business, time still to be served, a debt to be paid. Then life would begin. At last it dawned on me that these obstacles *were* my life."

This perspective has helped me to see that there is no way to happiness. Happiness is the way; treasure every moment that you have. So, stop waiting until you finish school, until you go back to school, until you lose ten pounds, until you gain ten pounds, until you have kids, until your kids leave the house, until you start work, until you retire, until you get married, until you get divorced, until Friday night, until Sunday morning, until you get a new car or home, until your car or home is paid off, until spring, until summer, until fall, until winter, until you are off welfare, until the first or the fifteenth, until your song comes on, until you've had a drink, until you've sobered up, until you die, until you are born again ... to decide that there is no better time than right now to be happy. *Happiness is a journey, not a destination*.

Thought for the day: "Work like you don't need the money; love like you've never been hurt; and dance like no one's watching ..."

- From a posting on the Internet by Kaykhosrow Samiya



ITS UP TO YOU

One song can spark a moment
One flower can wake a dream
One tree can start a forest
One bird can herald spring.

One smile begins a friendship
One handclasp lifts a soul
One star can guide a ship at sea
One word can frame the goal.

One vote can change the nation
One sunbeam lights a room.
One candle wipes out darkness
One laugh will conquer gloom.

One step must start each journey
One word must start each prayer
One hope will raise our spirits
One touch can show you care.

One voice can speak with wisdom
One heart can know what's true
One life can make the difference
You see! It's up to you!

*- Posted on the Internet
by Dinshaw J. Panthaky.*





Lest We Forget

By Dinaz Kutar Rogers
Albany, Oregon



Regale me with tales of faraway and near
That to my heart they may add much cheer.

Those legends of old
Over time have been told
With joy and veneration.

Legends and lore gaining strength over time
Never losing their luster – always sublime.
O tell me the tales, those stories of old:
Of Rustom, Sohrab, knights noble and bold.
Tales from Shah Nameh's, maddar vattan Iran
Kisseh-e Sanjan, and generous Mother Hindustan.
Histories, allegories and hyperbole
Fables, epics, everyone has a story.

Over time and distance our people did strive
Now we must keep these legendary flames alive.

Of legend and lore
I yearn to know more.

So shout out to the world, before memories fade
Give us your all – of which legends are made.

- Dinaz Kutar Rogers

SPIDER VS 'SARDO'

"Difference between story and history – history demands higher objectives than mere stories"

- author unknown

"Kill! Kill that spider!" Grandmama, my mother's mother, '*mamaijee*' (in Gujarati *mamai* for maternal grandmother, add a 'jee' to it, as to any name, for respect) would scream. That interjection, that command, was not born out of fear for those arachnids, but out of their acts of betrayal.

A spider betraying a human. O pray tell me that one! My *mamaijee* told us that tale, which took place in, where else but Iran, in a well.

"The enemy Arabs were hiding in a well. The brave army of Yazdegard Shahryar was looking for them."

"But what does a spider have to do with the Battle of Nihavand and Qadisiya?

"The reason why our soldiers were unable to find the bad guys was because the spider had woven a thick, opaque web over the top of the well," Grandma stated with authority in her voice.

"Oh." A gasp of understanding was heard amongst her grandchildren.

"So our Iranian soldiers, the brave Zarathushtis, looked everywhere. The village well, now covered with a tangle of cobwebs, must have added to the desolation and destruction of the village, brought on by the long war." My *mamaijee* with a white muslin scarf (a '*mathubanu*') tied around her head and nape – Orthodox Parsis of both sexes always keep their heads covered – continued her story.

But what my grandmother was not up on, were all the scholarly details and accuracies; she was just narrating simple tales passed on from generation to generation. But I, in my growing curiosity and a strange passion to intellectualize all the stories, would look up those never-failing friends of my childhood – books. But after lis-

Do you remember any stories or sayings?

FEZANA Journal is proud to introduce "Lest We Forget", a new regular feature hosted by Dinaz Kutar Rogers. Readers are invited to contribute their stories, lores, legends and memories related to our faith, community, Iran, India, that we grew up with as young children. Jot down those sayings your mother used to say, and send them in, with your version of the meanings. Please send to Dinaz at 1240 Takena SW, Albany, Oregon 97321, Tel: (541) 967-1911; drogers@proaxis.com.

tening to the “marvelous miracles”, those wonderful stories attached to all religions, this saying by Marie Jean Guyare comes to mind:

“A religion without myth, without dogma, without cult, without rites, is no more than a bastard thing ... Religion is a sociology conceived as a physical, metaphysical or moral explanation of all things.”

What would any religion be without such outlandish tales? Now we come to that part of the story which will explain the title. Spider sure, but what is a *sardo*?

Grandmother continued. “The war-weary but noble defenders of the faith looked everywhere for the Arabs, but did not think of looking in the old village well. However a *sardo* (chameleon, lizard) with that peculiar motion of its head pointed to the well. The soldiers, not quite understanding the significance, ignored the lizard as it bobbed its head up, down and sideways and continued the motion with its upper body. Suddenly one wise warrior understood. He started to remove the cobwebs; soon others joined him in his efforts.”

I started applauding, carried away by the narrative. My *mamajee*, with a disapproving glance in my direction, ceased my untimely clapping.

“Soon the well yielded its secret! Our soldiers killed the invaders and liberated the village. The well, which had been dry for a long time, was suddenly filled with sweet, cool water. The villagers felt twice blessed. From then on, remembering the treachery, they swatted at spiders, and remembering loyalty, spared the *sardo*.”

The intonation in her voice was a signal for us all to relax. We all clapped, and clapped hard, as we would at the end of a Tarzan tale or any other Saturday matinee adventure. ■

**“Take away Man’s legends
and the man dies.”**

**“We are responsible for the stories
we tell, and the stories we don’t
tell.”**
- Rabbi Sandy Sasso

My mother used to say ...

“The old forget. The young don’t know.” - Japanese proverb

“*Boo-roo thai tay sa-ra nay ka-jay*”

Bad things happen, so that eventually good will come out of it. I grew up with this expression, uttered often by one and all, especially when misfortune, disaster and other assorted minor and major tragedies befell anyone. This philosophical expression has served me well over the years, as at times we do not realize that at the end of the long dark tunnel, something good is awaiting us. Our forefathers knew the wisdom in having patience and waiting out adversarial times, as nothing lasts forever. Persevere, for this too shall pass, giving rise to wonderful things.

“*Khar-o kho-day tay pa-ray*”

The one who digs a hole for others, to harm them or destroy them, will be the one to fall in it. Beware that you might destroy yourself or get hurt in the process of hurting others, especially innocent people.

“*Boo-dhi ghoree, lal lagam*”

An old mare with a red bridle. When an older woman does not dress appropriate to her age, but like a teenager. There is a proper time and place for everything.

“*Saw choo-hay kha kay bill-ee haj ko chali*”

After devouring a 100 mice, the cat goes on a pilgrimage. This is a sarcastic remark, implying: after having his fill of wrong-doings – living it up, having fun, committing indiscretions – he is now being overly pious.

“*Koo-tra nee poo-chree vak-ee tay vak-eej*”

A dog’s crooked tail always stays crooked. You cannot expect to change someone’s inborn nature. Blood will tell.

“*Ta-ray mo-nay saker*”

Sugar in your mouth. When someone wishes something nice for you, or predicts wonderful things to come, you say “Ta-ray mo-nay saker” meaning “May your sweet words come true.”

“*Raja nay gum-ee Rani, te chhanna vinti aa-nee.*”

The king liked the queen, even though she made cowdung cakes. If a man takes a fancy to a woman, however lowly she may be, he could make her his queen.

“*Hak-nam saheb*”

“Lord of the Hour or Time”. If you are saying or wishing something and the clock chimes, one says this expression, meaning: even the Lord of Time agrees with you; watch out, what you are saying may come true.

“*Bay hath vager tali na-hee par-ay*”

One cannot clap without two hands. When there is a dispute between two parties, just one person cannot be blamed. Both sides are usually at fault. Listen to both sides of the story. It takes two to tango.

- Compiled by Dinaz Rogers

Dinaz Kutar Rogers is a high-school biology teacher and lives in Albany, Oregon, with her husband Dan and children Diane, Armaity and Zenobia. She is also a writer, has published some of her works and is currently working on a book about Zarathushti heritage.

The leader of the nomads in the deserts of Arabia was a nobleman named Merdas whose son Zohak, under the guidance of Ahri-man, plotted to kill his own devout father and crowned himself king. (Zohak attacked Iran and defeated the armies of Jamsheed and took his two daughters Shahrnavaz and Arnavaz as prisoners and eventually made them his consorts). When Zohak ascended the throne, Ahri-man took on a disguise and again approached the king with a tempting proposition about his culinary expertise.

Zohak entrusted him with the preparation of food and was so taken in by his skills that he turned to the young cook (Ahri-man in disguise) and asked him what he desired. The young cook indicated that he wished to kiss Zohak on both his shoulders. The request was happily granted, and Ahri-man disappeared from the face of the earth.

Snakes. Soon two snakes emerged from Zohak's shoulders. Each time the distraught ruler tried cutting them off at the base, two new snakes emerged. Ahri-man advised the ruler to feed the brains of two young men to the snakes. Every day two young men would be brought in of whom one would be quietly released into the mountains by Shahrnavaz and Arnavaz.

One night, Zohak had a confounding dream, which was explained by a priest Zirak, warning him of a certain Feraydun who will take possession of the royal throne. Feraydun was a scion of a nobleman Atebin (descended from the Kayanian dynasty) and his wife Faranak. Atebin was taken away and served as food for Zohak's snakes. Faranak became fearful of Zohak's desire to

young man seethed with fury when he learned about the fate of his father Atebin at the hands of Zohak, and swore to take revenge.

Zohak maneuvered his court to sign a document proclaiming him a just and generous king who has done only righteous and benevolent acts. *Kaveh, a blacksmith*, rushed into the court fearlessly demanding justice, imploring: "I have had eighteen sons of

whom seventeen have already been sacrificed to your snakes. Release my last remaining child." Zohak ordered the son's release and proposed to Kaveh to sign the document.

Blazing with righteous anger, Kaveh ripped up the document and stormed out of the court with his son. He stirred the emotions of the waiting crowds outside crying out for justice. He made a banner from his leather apron by fastening it on his spear. (This banner became Iran's national flag throughout Iran's five dynasties and came to be known as 'Drafshe Kavyani' or 'Kavyani Zundo'). He took the insurgent multitude to

Feraydun, who went to his mother and proclaimed: "Mother, the day of vengeance is at hand. I leave for war and with God's help I shall destroy the tyrant Zohak's palace."

Feraydun had the divine approval of the archangel Sraosh Yazad. He marched towards Zohak's capital Gang-Dez-Hukht (Pahlavi) or

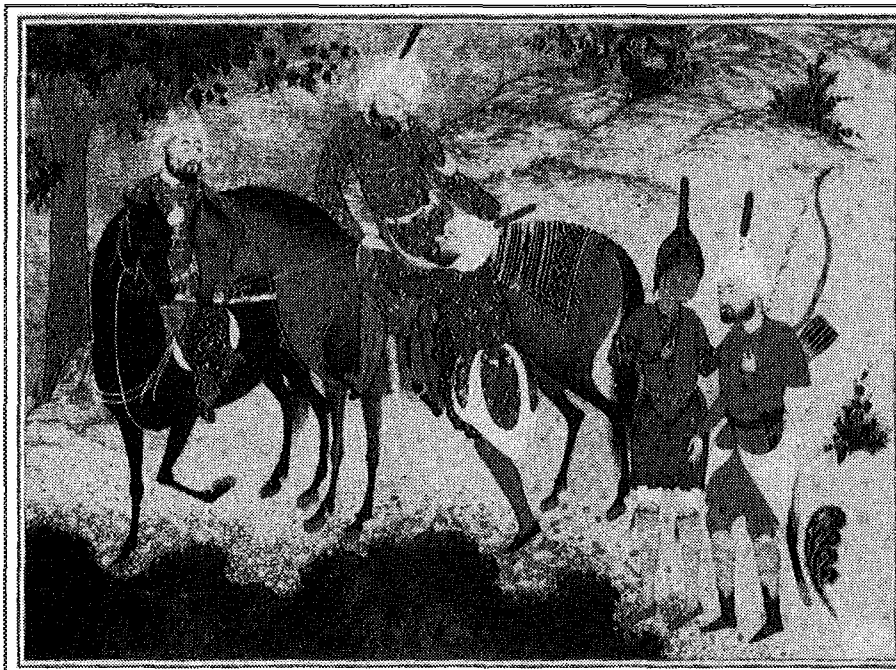
STORIES

FROM THE

SHAH NAMEH

Part 2 Zohak and Feraydun

By Khorshed Jungalwala



Feraydun Crossing the River Arvand.
Painted by Soltan Mohammad c. 1520-30. Private Collection.

destroy her son Feraydun and managed to take him away to the grassy uplands to be raised by oxherd and later by a wise and noble man in the Alburz Mountains.

Feraydun's revenge. Years passed and Feraydun descended from the mountains and went to his mother to question her about his lineage. The

Upon hearing of the audacious actions of the young Feraydun from his palace custodian Kundarav, Zohak rushed with his army to his palace. A fierce battle ensued between the forces of Feraydun and Zohak. Feraydun was on the verge of annihilating Zohak with his mace when the archangel Sraosh Yazad appeared and instructed Feraydun to secure Zohak in chains and take him up to the highest peak of the Alburz Mountains – Mt. Demavand. Legend has it that the iniquitous Zohak is still in the deepest caves of the Mountain suffering the same agonizing pains he so mercilessly inflicted on others.

Reign of Feraydun. Feraydun secured himself on the throne on Hormazd Roz and Meher Mah and fifteen days later celebrated with a coronation and Jashan, placing the Kayanian crown on his head, on Meher Roz and Meher Mah. This jashan, known as *Jashan-e Mehrgan*, is celebrated even today to commemorate the end of Zohak's rule and Feraydun's ascension to the throne.

Feraydun shifted the capital from Jerusalem (Gang-Dez-Hukht) to Varena. When he felt his sovereignty to be secure, he traversed the world to spread the arts of civilization and destroy evil. He married both Shahrnavaz and Arnavaz and had three sons whom he did not name for several years.

*Stately as cypresses,
Fair as the Spring
The image of their father
and their king.*

Feraydun dispatched his prudent advisor, Jandal to lands near and distant, to search three sisters for his three sons, specifying that they should belong to the same father and

mother, be identical in appearance and not be named. After diligent inquiries Jandal arrived at the palace of King Sarv of Yemen. The King was saddened at the thought of sending away his three daughters whom he loved dearly. He informed Jandal that he should tell King Feraydun to send his three sons to Yemen so he could meet them and test them for their suitability for his daughters. He tested them by inebriating them and creating freezing temperatures which all three sons survived unharmed. Finally he relented and gave away his beloved daughters in marriage.

When the princes were on their way back to Iran with their brides Feraydun decided to test their valor by assuming the form of a dragon and charged at his three sons. The eldest son retreated and fled. The second son pulled out his bow and arrow, but had second thoughts, lost his nerve and fled. The youngest son charged toward the beast, ordering him to move out of the way, with a warning that all three brothers were armed with maces that could kill him. King Feraydun transformed back to his human form and praised all three sons naming them according to their respective reactions. The eldest son – Salm, the second son – Tur, and the youngest son – Irach. He also named their brides.

Three kingdoms. King Feraydun decided to distribute his far-flung kingdom among his three sons. The land west of Iran which included Byzantium and Rome was given to the eldest son Salm; the land east of Iran which covered China and Turkestan, he handed over to Tur; and Iran and Arabia he bestowed upon Irach. Salm and Tur departed for their dominions, one to the west, the other to the east of Iran.

As years went by both the brothers began to feel disgruntled and challenged their father's decision which they viewed as favoring Irach. They met at a convenient place in the mountains, Salm from the west and Tur from the east, and drafted an impudent message threatening King

Feraydun with military action if he did not divest Irach of the crown. The King summoned Irach revealing to him the malice and hatred of his two brothers which he advised should be dealt with swiftly in combat. Irach responded thus to his father: "I shall renounce the throne; I shall win my brothers over by such kindness that all vindictiveness and anger will be expelled from their hearts."

Instead of confronting their evil brothers in combat, Irach proceeded to meet them and reason with them, but to no avail. As he was being attacked he cried out:

You have a soul yourself
how can you say
That you will take
another's soul away?

Pity the ants that
 toil beneath your feet;
 They have their souls –
 to them their souls are sweet.

Tur rushed towards Irach screaming vituperative invectives and after plunging the poisoned dagger into Irach's body, severed his brother's head and gave orders that it be wrapped in camphor and musk and sent to their father Feraydun. The King clasped the head of his beloved departed son Irach and moaned: "Alas, Alas! For you my luckless prince, slaughtered by the dagger of vengeance. O Great God, grant my desire and allow me live enough to see Irach's descendants rise up to avenge their father." ■



In Quietness ...

Go deeper into silence,
Put aside the worldly din,
Go past the ticking of the clock,
And hear the voice within!

Go deeper into silence,
Still your body, mind and soul,
And listen to the voice of God,
The voice that makes you whole.

*[By Marion Elliot, courtesy of
Informal Religious Activities].*

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- Software engineers, quality assurance, technical writers, accountants and more, covering US & UK. Contact Kekoo Irani, Jim Engineer *Current Source, Inc.* at (630) 357-4122.
- The System Firmware and System Diagnostics engineers. Contact Mehrdad Mojgani, (408) 328-8864.

Support our
Zarathushti
businesses

Zoroastrian Business Network Directory

The Zoroastrian Business Network Directory, also known as ZBNet.com, serving the community since 1997 has now moved to a new address, at: www.zarathusht.com, under the administration of Rita Kapadia and Altavisions, a Web Hosting, Development and Design Company. In addition to free listings of businesses and professionals worldwide, it now offers Internet related services for Zarathushti companies who wish to create or enhance their web presence. [See ad below].

Free Service

Network with Zarathushti
professionals and businesses at
www.zarathusht.com

NEW BUSINESSES

FEZANA Journal will be happy to announce new businesses/enterprises in this column. Please send your announcement to the Editor.

millenium

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*Nilufer Mama, Vice President
Millenium Travel*

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The idea is to help Zarathushtis to use the web to its full potential. This is a cost-effective solution for Zarathushti businesses and individuals no matter how big or small they are, to get a website.

Altavisions specializes in Internet Software, Website Design and Construction, using the latest tools and technology to your business use. Established in Massachusetts since 1996, we specialize in putting small businesses on the internet.

AltaVisions is offering websites and web pages for all Zarathushti-related material on a special domain and server, setup for this purpose at:

<http://www.zarathusht.com>

For more information contact:

Rita J. Kapadia, President, ALTAVISIONS

Tel: (978) 369-5810

Email: webmaster@zarathusht.com or
kapadia@altavisions.com

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Little Zehan Daruwalla's Heart Surgery

My son Zehan, 5, had undergone open heart surgery when he was 9 months old. Complications have once again developed, his heart muscles are very weak, and doctor's in India have advised me to get Zehan operated in USA, at Boston Children's Hospital. Doctors in Boston have given me good hopes of success.

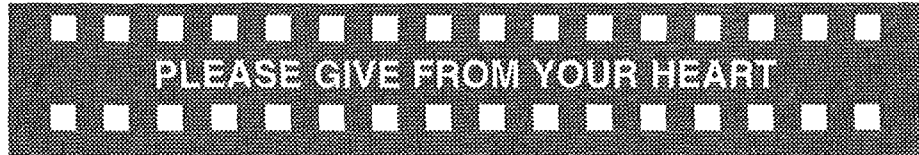
The only problem is lack of funds. The estimate for surgery is \$48,000 plus expenses. I request your good selves to donate whatever is affordable to help us out of this trauma, and give little Zehan a second chance for life. We will always remain indebted to you.

Mehernosh Daruwalla
Surat, India

Please send checks made out to "FEZANA" to the Appeals Coordinator [see address above]



*Ideas are a dime a dozen.
People who put them into
action are priceless.*



Donation checks, payable to "FEZANA", may be sent to the address in the appeal, or to Dinshaw Joshi, FEZANA Appeals Coordinator, 4515 Willard Avenue, #1609-S Chevy Chase, MD 20815, Tel: (301) 654-6250. For tax exemption eligibility please refer to FEZANA Journal [Winter 1994, p.60-61].

Banaji Limji Agiari

Mr. D. K. Banaji, trustee of the Banaji Limji Agiary near Flora Fountain, the oldest agiary in Mumbai, have sent an appeal to Zarathushtis world wide for funds to repair the building, which has been declared a "national monument by the Government of India". Please send checks made out to "FEZANA" to the Appeals Coordinator [see above].

Dastur Schools, Pune

Mrs. Tehmi Grant, Fundraising Chair is appealing to wellwishers around the world for donations for a new school building for the Sardar Dastur Schools in Pune, founded in 1893. The Dastur family has dedicated itself to continuous expansion of the schools to meet ever-increasing demands. Please send checks made out to "FEZANA" to the Appeals Coordinator [see above].

Rising Tennis Star

[See story on page 87]. Since childhood, Khushchehr Italia of California has excelled in tennis, and at 18, is developing into a nationally ranked player and prospective tennis pro. The family is looking for help to support the high costs of training and competing, for this rising, young Zarathushti star. Contact Mr. Italia at (818) 348-0101. Please send checks payable to "TMZA" marked "Italia Fund", to TMZA, 11 Crestwood Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660.

Acknowledgments

FEZANA gratefully acknowledges donations received this quarter through July 1999.

For General Fund: Homi Davier, TX (\$101); Jerry Kheradi, (\$500).

For Welfare Fund: Anonymous, IL (\$500); Cyrus Austin, AZ (\$301); Homi B. Minocher Homji, ONT



Networking '99

1999 Zarathushti Business Conference

Ramada Hotel – Toronto Airport, Toronto, Canada
October 8-10, 1999

The 1999 Zarathushti business conference will focus on "Networking". All Zarathushti business persons and entrepreneurs as well as those contemplating business are invited.

Hotel: Ramada Hotel special "ZBC" rate: \$100 (old tower), \$120 (new tower), Call (416) 621-2121.

Registration: \$100/person (includes coffees, lunches, Saturday Gala banquet). \$30 (banquet only).

Advertising: \$50 - 1/2 page, \$100 - full page, \$150 - back full page.

Biographies: All participants are invited to send a short biography (1/2 page or less), contact information and a passport-size photo, to be included in the Program Brochure.

To register: See www.zso.org or call Kobad Zarolia, (416) 745-4622, fax (416) 745-6499, kzarolia@interlog.com.

Sponsored by the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario

(\$50); Rohinton Ogra, IL (\$45+\$45+\$9+\$36+\$30+\$33); Behram Shroff, VA (\$101+\$101); Raymond Unwalla, PA (\$50); Dick Vazir, FL (\$51).

For Scholarship Fund: Thritee Baxter, NY (\$50);

For FEZANA Journal: Anonymous, IL (\$293.75); Anonymous, IL (\$698.02); Anonymous, IL (\$832.97); Thritee Baxter, NY (\$40); Roshan Bhappu, AZ (\$10); Darayus S. Bharucha, MN (\$21); Porus Buharivala, TX (\$21); Zarine R. C. Cooper, Singapore (\$25); Marzban Daroowalla, MD (\$51); Dara S. Deboo, WA (\$10); Dr. Navaz Dolasa, NY (\$70); Jamshed Elavia, TX (\$10); Noshir Lakdawalla, CA (\$10); Dr. Adi N. Irani, MI (\$10); Gustad Irani, FL (\$55); Jehangir Irani, TX (\$21); Rumi Jamsetjee, IL (\$21); Merwan B. Mehta, MO (\$10); Sohrab Mirza, CA (\$20); Jamshed Mistry, ONT (\$85); Parvez & Shirin Mody, CA (\$191); Vafadar Najmi, MD (\$20); Dr. Aspi Patel, DE (\$21); Yazdi Pithavala, CA (\$90); Borzoo Yazdani, MA (\$10). ■

■ ■ ■ ■ MATRIMONIALS ■ ■ ■ ■

FEZANA will coordinate initial contacts between interested parties. FEZANA does not assume any responsibility for verifying credentials. Contact Roshan Rivetna.

Male, 27, US citizen, good natured, very caring, loves traveling, strong family values, seeks lady with good upbringing. Call (602) 786-3960 or email: a.irani@law.cwsl.edu. [M99-11]

28 year old woman, sincere, loving, moderately religious, software consultant, working in SF Bay area. Seeking matrimonial alliance, must be non-smoker. Parties from India welcome. (510) 818-0069. [F99-16]

Parsi gentleman, 39, divorced, accountant, in Australia, good-natured, loves reading, classical music, +03-943 65163. [M99-27]

Well-settled woman, 38, professional, divorced, looking for open-

minded, professional gentleman. (718) 631-1159. [F99-28]

Attractive woman, 29, 5'3", travel professional in California. (818) 986-8069. [F99-29]

Gentleman, 30, 6 feet, in family business In USA. [M99-30]

Lady, recently widowed, 65, in excellent health, looking for companionship with well-placed gentleman in good health. Call Mrs. Bhatena (416) 863-6615. [F99-31]

Attractive woman, 25, medium built, 5' 4", working in family business in USA. [F99-32]

Support Navar brothers. Rashida Shahparast of Udvada has taken young Farzin and Romin of Iran under her care, as they train to become mobeds at Dadar Madressa. Help towards their expenses will be appreciated [see p. 90].

Overcome all your tailoring problems



Contact:

Mrs. Coomi Bhatena
Tel: (416) 863-6615
220 Oak Street, #2517
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- 35 years experience in ladies dress-making. Alterations expert (jacket lining, let-in, let-out, zippers, hems). Curtains, pillowcases. Wedding/navjote outfits (daglis, sadras, blouses) and more...
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Fax: +41 (61) 206-9355
email: jafkham@mcwellness.com.

PERSONALS

Rose Koch of Breman, Germany, wishes to get in touch with any descendants or relatives of her grandfather, **Dhunjshaw Ardeshir Painter**. Originally from Bombay and a British citizen, Mr. Painter went to China in 1900, married a Chinese lady, Lili Shih, renamed Mary Anne Painter and died in

China at the age of 62, in 1941. His son lives in Breman, Germany with his wife and daughter, Rose, who is now interested in tracing her roots. Contact Dilnawaz Mahanti, New Delhi, tel: 694 1935.

Long-time resident of Chicago area, Dr. Rustom Dalal, 89-years old, would like to contact his nephew, **Dr. N. Dalal**, Ph.D. (University of Utah) last known to be residing in the Connecticut or New York area and working for Xerox Corporation. With any information, please contact Zoroastrian Association of Chicago President Hosi Mehta (630) 833-6923. ■

MILESTONES

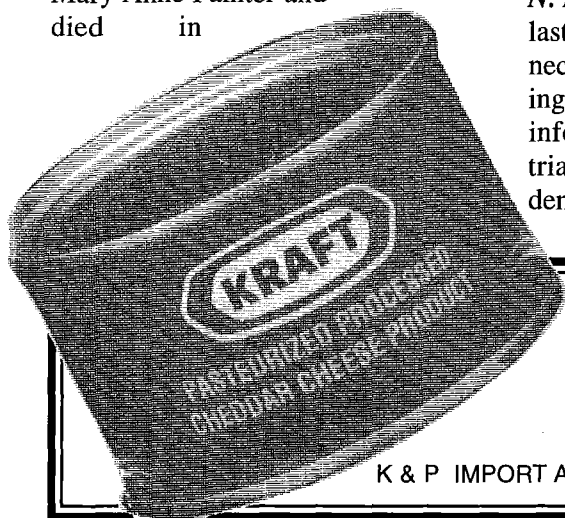
Births

Alisha Farah Banker, a girl, to Persis and Cyrus Banker, of Oakville, Ontario, on May 4.

Shanaya Bedford, a girl, to Binaifer (Binu) and Bruce Bedford of Naperville, IL, granddaughter to Sarosh and Farida Khambatta, niece to Sunita and Zubin, on April 28.

Shawhin Dehmoubed, a boy, to Ramin and Farahnaz Dehmoubed, of Ontario, on March 19.

Katie Master, a girl, to Sharmeen and Percy, on July 7. of Houston. Minoo and Sanobar Baria and Gool Master are the proud grandparents.



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FEZANA SCHOLARSHIPS

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

FEZANA is pleased to announce the establishment of a Scholarship Fund to provide financial assistance to deserving Zarathushti women and men who have obtained admission at institutions of higher learning in USA or Canada.

Scholarships. For the academic year 1999-2000 two scholarships of \$1000 each will be awarded. Announcement for the following academic year (2000-2001) will be made in the March 2000 issue of FEZANA Journal, on the FEZANA web page (www.fezana.org) and through the newsletters of local Zarathushti Associations.

Eligibility. To be eligible, the applicant must complete the application form and provide: (1) Proof of status in USA and Canada (one year residency status in USA or Canada compulsory); (2) annual financial need including assistance already pledged, by other trust funds, charitable institutions or the institution of choice; (3) other financial assistance available from family and friends; (4) past academic record; (5) other extra-curricular activities in the community.

Award criteria. The applicant will be rated on Merit of Scholastic Achievement (40%), Financial Needs (40%) and Extra-curricular Activities (20%).

Application. Application forms are available from: Arnavaz Sethna, Secretary, FEZANA at ahsethna@yahoo.com; Dolly Dastoor, Chair, Ad Hoc Committee, dastoor@total.net; or FEZANA web site www.fezana.org. Completed application forms should be returned by **November 1, 1999** to:

**Dolly Dastoor, Ph.D., Chair, Ad Hoc Scholarship Committee,
3765 Malo, Brossard, Quebec, J4Y 1B4, Canada • email: dastoor@total.net**

Navjote, Sedreh Pushi

Shireen Desai, daughter of Bakhtavar and Fred, of Fairfield, OH, in Cincinnati, OH, on July 25.

Mitra and Noshir Khumbatta, children of Kershaw and Nazneen Khumbatta of Houston area, on July 3.

Jimmy and Sean Sethna, children of Jal and Shermeen of Houston area, on July 10.

Armaitish and Aizad Sethna, children of Anita and Burjore Sethna of Ontario, on July 1.

Zenia Tarapore, daughter of Gulshan and Khushro Tarapore of Ontario, on July 3.

Kevan and Jaime Karanjia, sons of Coombi and Darius Karanjia, of Ontario, on July 17.

Farokh and Rustom Patel, sons of Hozhi and Benifer Patel, of Ontario, on July 18.

Weddings

Homi and Diane Limbuwala were married in February. [From ZANT].

Nareeman Patel, son of Khurshed and Katy Patel of Ontario, to Tina, on June 26.

Rinawaz Shroff, daughter of Mehr and Murzban Shroff of Ontario, to **Nariman Vatcha**, son of Shireen and Cawas Vatcha of Ontario, on July 2.

Zhaleh Commissariat, daughter of Anita and Homi Commissariat, to **Rooshad Golwalla**, son of Feroze and Sarfaraz Golwalla, of Ontario, on July 23.

Birthday

Coomi Framroze Bhathena of Toronto, celebrated her 90th birthday in August. "She is like the Energizer battery," says the ZSO Newsletter,

"the only difference being the battery after much use, fails to perform, whereas Coomi Aunty is perennially charged and ready to go." Mrs. Bhatena's services have been well-recognized, both within the Zarathushti community, and in the community at large [see ad p. 82].

Retirement

Maestro Mehli Mehta retired at 90 from the American Youth Symphony after 33 seasons. His farewell concert was held at Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in a rare joint performance with son Zubin Mehta. The Zarathushti community of North America congratulates the Maestro for giving us over 3 decades of glorious music and opening the world of music to hundreds of young musicians.

Deaths

Khodadad Bamasi, husband of Parinaz Namiranian, father of Semira and Kevin, in California, on August 11.

Jehangir Gazdar, brother of Dr. Adi Gazdar of Dallas area, of lung disease, in Mumbai, on June 10.

Gool Phiroze Khan, 72, in Mumbai, on June 26.

Morvarid Ardeshtir Harvesf, mother of Kaikhosrow Harvesf and Hooshang Harvesf (both of Jacksonville, FL) and a daughter in Canada, on July 23, in Jacksonville, FL.

Mitra Sohrab Khosraviani, in California on July 2. Funeral service was held in Los Gatos Memorial Park. Condolences to her husband and three children.

Perviz Malbari, wife of Bejan, mother of Zenia (Aderbad) of California, Anita (Jamshed) Karanjia of California, grandmother of Zara and Jay Farhad, in Concord, CA on July 4 [see Obituary].

Jamshed Master, father of Jasmine (Percy) Katrak, of Houston, in Mumbai, on May 9.

Jimmy Mehta, father of Delna Minwalla of Houston, in Karachi, April 13.

Dinamai Parabia, mother of Sam, Perin, Minoo and Ratan Parabia, after a short illness, in Scranton, PA, on March 24.

Dara Nadershah Pithawalla, husband of Mehru, father of Minoo, Jamshed and Nancy, in Toronto, on June 8.

Sam Nusserwanji Sutaria, father of Pheroza (Ravi) Arcot.

Katy Behramgore Vakil, mother of Ratan (Nitash) Vakil of Dallas, TX and Khorshed (Jamshed) Unwalla of Detroit, in Singapore, on July 11.

Naval Wadia, 83, father of Khurshed Wadia, in Mumbai, on April 26.

Rustom Zarolia, 66, of heart attack, son of Shirin and late Shahriarji of Mumbai, brother of Kobad (Nergish) Zarolia, Sarosh (Noshir) Dastoor and Cyrus (Homai) Zarolia, all of Toronto, and Mitha Motavara of Mumbai, in Mumbai, on June 21.

OBITUARY

With the passing of **Perviz Bejan Malbari**, the world has lost a rare and wonderful lady, a lady of unsurpassed courage and eternal dignity, a lady who showed me with lighthearted seriousness that the world is a beautiful and miraculous place.

Many would say that she finally lost a long, 13-year war with cancer. I say that she won the war. She wore through almost ten major surgeries, four rounds of chemotherapy and severely limited dietary tolerance. She fought for every second of the remission that allowed her to see her daughters graduate from high school, graduate from college, get married and each have a child. She put aside her pain to play with her grand-kids. Not once did she demonstrate self-pity, or show a condemnation of her fate. She carried it all astride her shoulders. To lose the war is to cast

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aside the burden, to wallow in pity, is to condemn fate. To win the war is to fall over carrying the burden. Perviz won the war ...

July 4th. What a perfect day for such a person to leave. The day that symbolizes independence, freedom from oppression. She went right before the first firework did above the roof of the house. And assuredly, no rocket came even close to the beauty of the soul that rose above everything that night ...

The heart-wrench that grips me as I write this is inexpressible and indescribable, so I will relate some images that convey the feeling.

Imagine, three days before her death, Perviz talking to her daughters. Unable to lift her head, she worries about who will look after the grandkids during her funeral: "Remember to arrange for a baby-sitter."

Imagine, she wrote on the calendar of her bedroom, on the day of her husband's birthday: "Happy birthday darling, I wish I was there."

Imagine, she compiled a list of everyone she wanted to inform of her death, and gave it to her son-in-law because she thought her daughters would be too grief-stricken to call.

Imagine, two days before she died, as she lay so fragile on her bed, she said to me: "I have done everything now, Phiroz, I am ready."

This is the lady who threw a large party just a few months ago, invited all of her friends, and raised 10,000 dollars for cancer research in India.

Once, when asked how she remained so constantly smiling and constantly cheerful through all her various trials, she said: "There are so many beautiful and good things around me. I have my Bejan, my daughters ... and look, the sun is shining through that window, and those flowers are so beautiful ..."

She receives my ultimate respect, my ultimate gratitude and my ultimate love. She leaves a gaping void that can only be assuaged by her memory.

- By Phiroz Erach Tarapore

EVENTS AND HONORS

SHERNAZ BAMJI, daughter of Thrity and Xerxis Bamji of Montreal, obtained her Ph.D. in neuro-biology from McGill University in March, making the Dean's list. She has been awarded a fellowship from Human Frontiers, and will pursue her post-doctorate at the University of San Francisco.



NILUFER DALAL, daughter of Behram and Tehmi Dalal of Raleigh, NC, graduated from the University of North Carolina with a Juris Doctor degree.

Nilufer appeared for the NY bar exam and will commence work with a law firm in New York.

ERIC ELAVIA, son of Darayus and Arnavaz Elavia of Chicago area, was a medalist in the Sectional and Conference level at the Illinois State High School Gymnastic Conference. He was a finalist in the State Meet and was placed in the top ten in the State competition on parallel bars.

KEKOO GATTA, son of Minocher and Mani of Ontario, volunteered ten days in Albania assisting in relief efforts that entailed the distribution of clothes, food and hygiene products to Kosovar refugees, often working in dangerous and difficult conditions.

ANAHITA DUA (right) daughter of Arnavaz and Kulwinder Dua of Brookfield, Wisconsin, won the Discover Card Tribute silver scholarship for the State of Wisconsin, in recognition of "leadership among your peers, your commitment to community service and your pursuit of educational excellence." She received an award of \$2000 along with special recognition by the media in Wisconsin.

JUSTIN MODY of Houston qualified to participate in the 1999 Youth Athletics Track & Field Championships at Southern Illinois University. He qualified in three field events: Shot Put, Discus and Javelin.

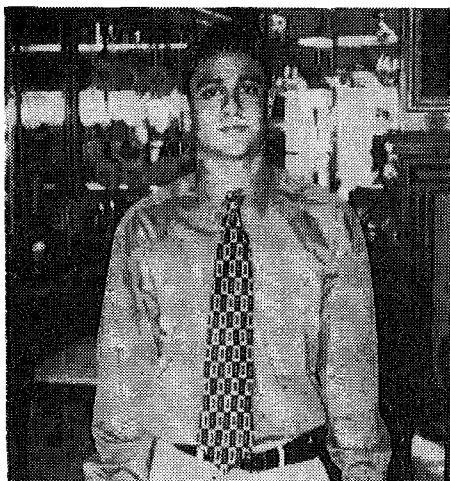
CYRUS PRESS, son of Minoo and Zarin Press of Chicago area, was a medalist in the Sectional and Conference level at the Illinois State High School Gymnastic Conference.

NEVILLE RABADI of Ontario, son of Roshan and Pervaze, and husband of Veera, left for Israel on July 1, to take the position of Maintenance Platoon Commander, on a one-year assignment administered from the UN in New York. Neville was the first Zarathushti to complete his Military Officer's training.



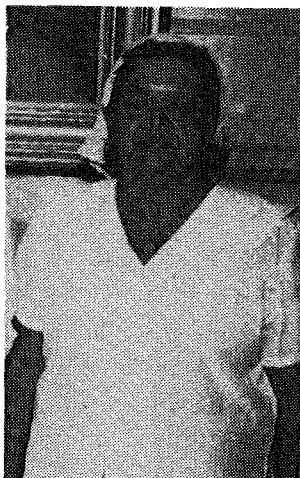
DOLLY DASTOOR received her Ph.D. degree in Psychology from Concordia University, in Montreal.





CYRUS IRANI, (left) son of Behram and Farieda Irani of Plano, Texas, attended a one-week training camp at the US Olympic Training Center in Colorado. Cyrus, a member of the City of Plano swimmers, was one of ten swimmers from his team to qualify for this honor. He maintains a rigorous training schedule of over 25 hours a week and swims competitively for his team at the state and regional level. At the Texas Age Group State Championship meet in July, Cyrus won the gold in the 100m breast stroke and the silver medal in the 200m breast stroke for the 15 to 18 age group. He achieved Junior Olympic times in both events making him one of the premier breast stroke swimmers at the national level.

Cyrus is a member of the National Honor Society and is currently ranked 6th out of 600 students in his sophomore grade. Cyrus plays the cello in his High School Symphonic Orchestra.



Far left, **ROMIN**, 14, and **FARZIN**, 16, sons of Darius Yazeshne, "Singer of Yazd" [see *FEZANA Journal Summer 1999*, page 28] at their Navar ceremony on May 9. The boys are studying at the Dadar Athornan Madressa in Mumbai, under the guardianship of Rashida Shahparast (left) of Udvada, who had met Darius while on a tour of Iran.

"I thank Ahura Mazda for bringing these boys into my life," says Rashida, whom the boys look to as their fairy godmother, "It has been a valiant battle for them; they arrived in Bombay in 1995 with Khojeste Mistree, knowing only Dari. Thereafter they have picked up English, Hindi, Marathi and Gujarati." Farzin wants to become an electrical engineer and dreams of coming to America. Romin wants to be a mobed. The high cost of the navar ceremony (about Rs. 20,000 per boy) plus their supplies of clothes, shoes etc. has been a financial burden on the retired couple, but with the help of some well-wishers, Rashida and her husband, Kersi have managed, for she writes: "Let me give Dadar Hormazd two additional priests, so that Heaven's gates would open up for me."

Persons wishing to donate towards Romin and Farzin's navar ceremony, please contact FEZANA Appeals coordinator [see page 81].

FIRDAUS BAMJI (right) son of Ester and Roshan Bamji of Washington, DC area, starred with noted film actress Jean Stapleton in the American premiere of *Indian Ink*, a new work by Tom Stoppard (one of the 20th century's great masters and co-writer of *Shakespeare in Love*) at The American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco. *Indian Ink* is a journey across cultures, continents and time, alternating between the lush and lyrical India of the past and the modern London and India of the present. Bamji has appeared off Broadway, at Lincoln Center Theater, the Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, DC and others. His film credits include *The Sixth Sense*, with Bruce Willis.

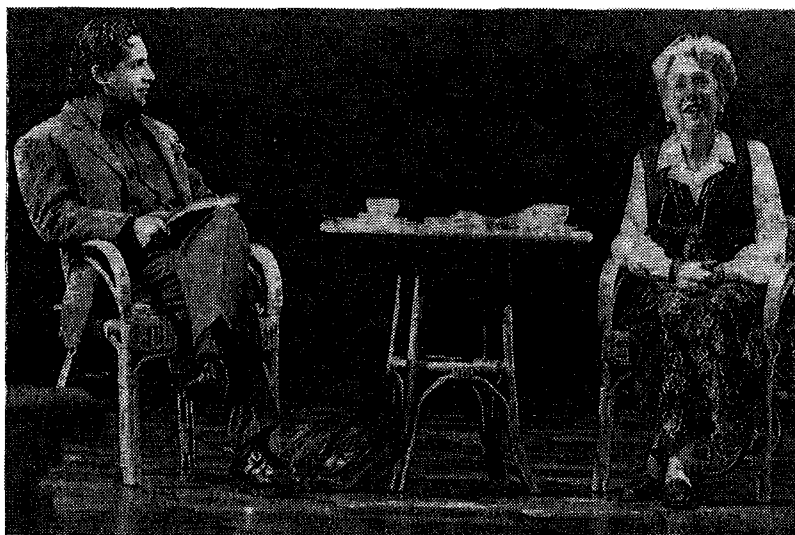


PHOTO: SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS, MARCH 19, 1999

Khushchehr Italia – a Rising Zarathushti Tennis Star

"Tennis has always been, and will remain one of the most expensive sports. The annual expense to develop a nationally ranked player like Khushchehr is \$12000 to \$14000, minimum. Being a middle-class family, we cannot spend even half of this on her development. Frankly, it has been a struggle these last eight years." So say Cyrus and Bakhtavar Italia of Southern California, whose daughter, Khushchehr, has excelled in tennis since she the age of eight, and who are looking for all the help they can get to support their gifted and determined child.

A freshman at Brigham Young University, 18-year old Khushchehr has shown brilliance, character and true grit as a prospective tennis pro. Besides being a straight-A student throughout her school career, she has devoted her entire youth to the love of the sport, spending countless hours in the gym and on the courts building the strength and stamina required for its severe physical demands.

Her parents have con-

stantly lent their support and accompanied Khushchehr to national and international tournaments.

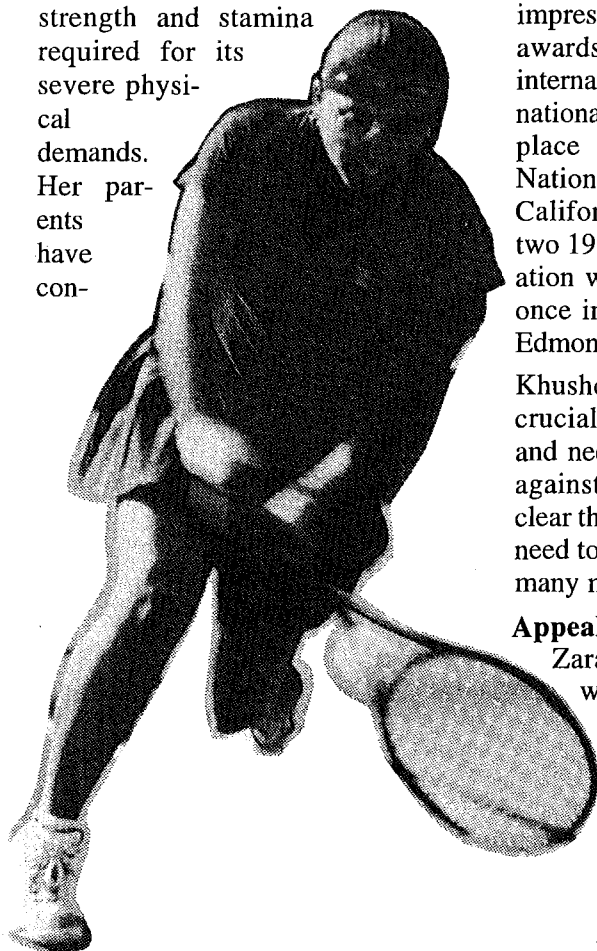
Khushchehr is known for her serve-and-volley strategy, a rarity in junior tennis. Her principal weapons are her powerful serve, an explosive forehand and an overpowering net game. Her ranking in the tough Southern California Tennis Association (which has been the playing ground for world pros like Pete Sampras, Michael Chang, Billie Jean King and Andre Aggasi, to name just a few) has always been among the top 10's and 20's.

"Khushchehr is one of the very few players invited to the Junior National Tennis tournaments, the premier tournaments in the nation. But due to financial constraints, she was able to attend only seven national and three international world ranking tournaments over the past two years," says Cyrus.

This young lady has collected an impressive list of achievements and awards at the state, national and international levels. So far, her best national achievement has been a 2nd place in the 1998 Interscholastic National Championships in Fresno, California and a quarter-finalist in two 1998 International Tennis Federation world-ranking championships, once in Vancouver and the other in Edmonton, Canada.

Khushchehr is now entering a very crucial period in her tennis career and needs financial help to compete against the best in the world. It is clear that if she is to succeed, she will need to be coached and participate in many more prominent events.

Appeal. Please support this rising Zarathushti star. Your donation will be used exclusively to support Khushchehr's tennis career. Contact Cyrus Italia at (818) 348-0101. Send your check payable to "TMZA" marked "Italia Fund", to TMZA, 11 Crestwood Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660. ■



Rohinton Mistry bags more awards

For *Such a Long Journey*, Rohinton Mistry bagged two more awards in June 1999: a Doctor of Letters at a special convocation held by the University of Toronto, and the prestigious President's Award for 1999 from the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce. Rohinton wrote his first full-length novel, *Such a Long Journey*, which was short-listed for the Booker prize and won the Commonwealth Writers' prize for the best book of the year. His work was also recognized by being awarded the Governor General's award and the W. H. Smith Books in Canada - First Novel Award. Rohinton has established his claim as a world renowned writer who is known for his ability to write brutally simple and delicately complex stories. ■

Don't miss

Earth

The film *Earth*, [see *FEZANA Journal Winter 1998*] produced by Deepa Mehta, based on Bapsi Sidhwa's novel *Cracking India*, will be released world wide – in India, Australia, UK and USA starting September 12. Canadian release will follow shortly. It will be shown in theaters that mostly show foreign films.

In USA it will be released by Zeitgeist Films, in New York City (Quad and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas), Boston, Los Angeles (at Laemle's Music Hall), Houston, Denver, Seattle and later (after January) in Chicago and other US and Canadian cities.

Earth is about the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 as seen by the innocent eyes of a Parsi child. Read more about *Earth* at:

www.zeitgeistfilm.com

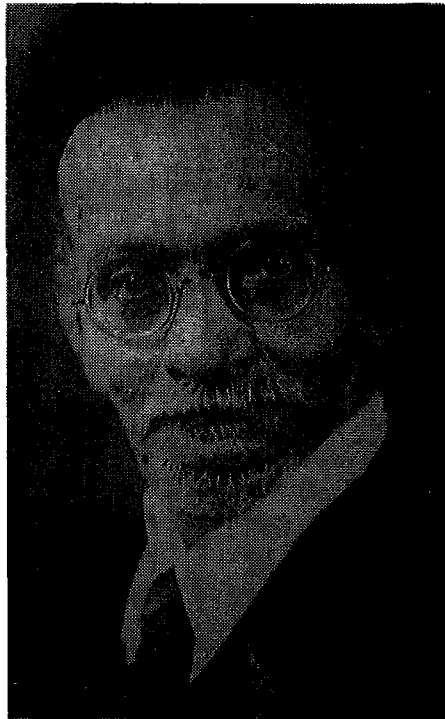
By Rustom Kevala
Potomac, Maryland

Dinshah Ghadiali

The curious history of a brilliant eccentric,
an inventor, a pioneer in North America

It was the acquisition of a "Dinshah Lamp" some years ago, that led Dr. Steven Maron, a pediatrician and medical historian in southern New Jersey, to begin investigating the curious history of Col. Dinshah P. Ghadiali, MD. (As it turned out, the lamp was not the real thing [see photo next page], but a "diathermy bulb", which was a popular electrical treatment of the 1920s). Later, while surfing the Internet to learn more about Dinshah Ghadiali's religion, he came across the FEZANA web site and the article about him by Kersi B. Shroff [FEZANA Journal, Spring 1997]. After some email exchanges with this author, Dr. Maron was invited to speak and show slides about his research to the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington, last October. Since then, he has also presented his findings to ZAPANJ.

Dr. Maron presented an interesting account of Dinshah Ghadiali, a child prodigy born in Mumbai, a rebellious man, who was difficult to control. He became a lecturer in college at the age of 11 and went on to medical college in Bombay for some years, but it is not clear if he actually completed his studies. Feeling misunderstood, and having run out of money, he left India and went to Europe.



Col. Dinshah P. Ghadiali, MD

In 1911, Dinshah Ghadiali emigrated to the US and became a naturalized US citizen in 1917. Years later, his citizenship was challenged and he defended himself by proving that he was "white" (even though he had a swarthy complexion). Ghadiali had

first visited the US in 1896 when he met Thomas Edison and other noted scientists.

During world war I, he was commissioned a colonel in the New York City Police Reserve Air Service and carried air mail between New York and Philadelphia.

Spectro-Chrome and other inventions. Later, Dr. Dinshah, as he liked to be called, developed the highly controversial therapeutic method using colored light, he called "Spectro-Chrome" for curing illnesses. He had studied many religions and used the "mystical" six-pointed Mogan David Star as an analogy to the Amsha Spentas and the primary colors of his Spectro-Chrome system [see diagram].

Prior to his invention of the Spectro-Chrome, Colonel Ghadiali already possessed patents for innovations such as an 'anti-forgery pen' (described in *Scientific American* of January 22, 1910), a 'Dinshah Automobile Engine Fault-Finder' (for which he was offered \$100,000, but he donated his patent to the US government for aircraft engines), a

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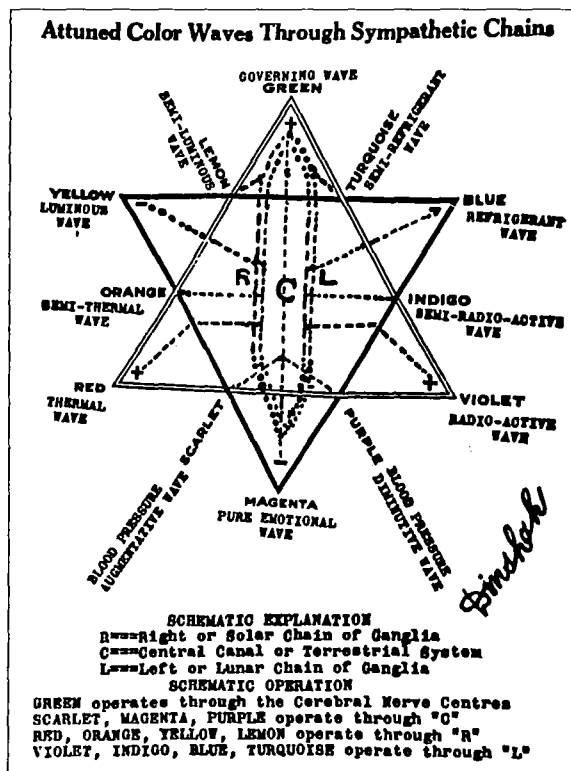
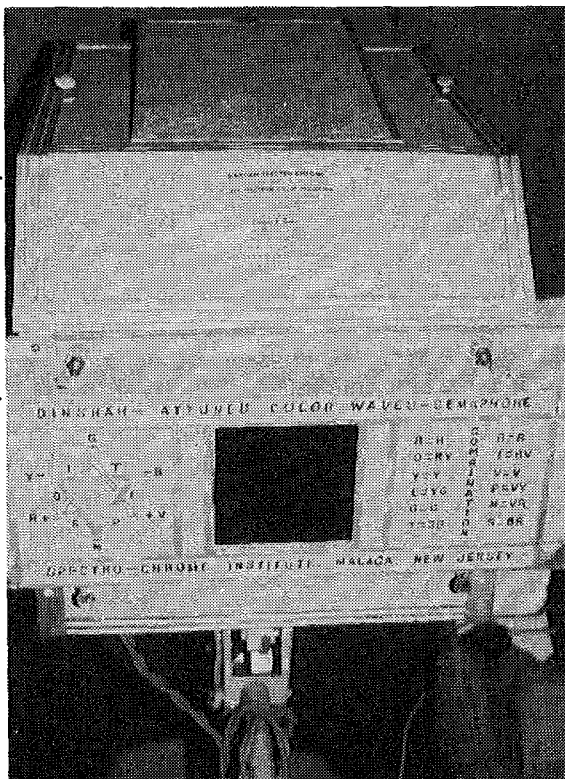
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FEZANA JOURNAL encourages its readers to submit relevant information, news and views for publication. Articles in the Journal are intended for the general reader, and should not be highly technical in content. All unsolicited submissions should be limited to 600 words. Articles or letters that attempt to conduct ongoing public dialogue with other letter-writers, revile any religious doctrines or practices, or attack or slander individuals will be rejected. All submissions must have the author's name and address. Anonymous letters will not be published. The editors reserve the right to accept or reject articles, letters, announcements and advertisements, hold them for future use, and edit them for clarity or to meet space constraints. The editors further reserve the right to publish any materials sent to them, materials published elsewhere, or materials posted on the Internet, with due acknowledgment, unless specifically requested otherwise. The official language of FEZANA, and that of the Journal is English.

Right, the "Dinshah Spectro-Chrome" projector of the type produced at the Dinshah Institute in Malaga. Far right, a Star of David diagram illustrating the color healing system.

ALL PHOTOS
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'Peace Gun' (a prototypical non-lethal stun-gun) and a 'Shutterless Flickerless Film Projector.' None of his inventions other than the Spectro-Chrome, seem to have been commercially successful.

Lawsuits. Dinshaw traveled around the country teaching courses on his

Spectro-Chrome and leasing equipment to his graduates.

Soon thereafter, he ran afoul of the medical establishment and found himself the defendant in numerous lawsuits, sometimes representing himself, rarely successfully. Ghadiali continued the activities of the Spectro-Chrome Institute (which he had

founded in New York in 1920 and later moved to Malaga, New Jersey) under various guises, staying narrowly within the letter of court rulings, until 1958 when he was ordered to cease and desist and destroy most of his equipment. Deeply committed to his color healing system, Dinshaw continued to give lectures and

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Family. Dinshah was a strict vegetarian and claims to have never been inoculated or having taken any medicine other than his Spectro-Chrome treatment. A deeply religious Zarathushti, he appears to have converted several persons, including his German-born American wife, Irene. He had two children with his first wife, Maneck, and eight with Irene, named Cyrus, Darius, Roshan, Jal, Sarosh, Homi, Jay, Noshervan and Shireen. His sons Darius, Roshan and Jal have carried on some of his work, and still live on or around the same farm he had bought in Malaga, in rural New Jersey in the 1920s.

● This article is based on the findings of medical historian Dr. Steven Maron of Vineland, New Jersey. Dr. Maron is available to speak to any group or Association about Dr. Dinshah. Contact him by email at SMaron5202@aol.com.

● According to information provided by Mr. Maneck Daroowalla, a book published by the Mazdayasnie

Monasterie, 1978, on Spectrochrometry, mentions: "Col. Dinshaw's work on the wonderful colors of Light can be ordered in a 3-volume encyclopedia from Mr. Jay or Daraius Dinshah of Dinshah Health Society, 100 Dinshah Drive, Malaga, NJ 08328."

Dr. Maron is seeking support for a documentary on Dinshah Ghadiali. If you would like to contribute financially for this project, please contact Dr. Kevala at rustom@aol.com. ■



Is not a matter of chance,

It is a matter of choice.

*It is not a thing to be waited for,
It is a thing to be achieved.*

- William Jennings Bryan

Due to a formatting error, part of the last paragraph on p. 45 [*FEZANA Journal, Summer 1999*] was missing. The paragraph is reproduced below.

ADI JAMSHEDJI MIRZA
Writer of poems & ghazals

From early childhood **Adi Jamshedji Mirza** was interested in poetry. His first poem was published in *Kaiser-i-Hind* when he was ten years old. As a writer of ghazals, he has taken part in countless *mushairas* (poetry meets) and continues to receive invitations to recite his poetry, from prestigious institutions like the Indian National Theater, TV, radio as well as at private functions.

Adi is also a talented musician and plays the harmonium with superb ease. Adi is currently working on a book of his poems and ghazals. ■

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[see review on page 68]



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