

FEZANA



JOURNAL

FALL 2001, PAIZ 1370 YZ

Mah Meher, Avan, Adar 1370 YZ (Fasli)

Mah Ardibehest, Khordad, Tir 1371 (Shenshai)

Mah Khordad, Tir, Amardad 1371 YZ (Kadmi)

The Zoroastrian Commitment: Individual and Social Attitudes and Resolutions

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Honors for "Apro Zubin"

The Other Mehtas

Fezana AGM 2001

Zarathushti Enterprise

Looking Back

PUBLICATION OF THE FEDERATION OF ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF NORTH AMERICA

Individuality or Cooperation?

Those of you who were at the World Congress at Houston, in December 2000, heard the Zarathushti musicians give an impressive account of themselves. Musicians from different geographic areas of the world came together to play as one orchestra and played quality music. This is a lesson in cooperation which we need to emulate when discussing controversial matters pertaining to the community.

We pride ourselves on following a religion which encourages each person to listen to the Highest Truths, to weigh them with Illumined Minds and make the right choices. That seems to have been interpreted as an instruction to be extremely individual in our thinking. Individuality is laudable up to a point and contributes an interesting variety to society; but when it comes to community matters, we need to stand together on a common platform. Is not cooperation one of the right choices we need to consider?

Some wit said that where there are five Zarathushtis, there are six opinions. For years now, we have been arguing about the same things without coming to any sensible solution: Dokhmenashini, declining numbers, inter-marriage, accepting converts. The orthodox consider their view to be just, because of strict adherence to custom on these matters. The moderns feel that one has to adapt to changing circumstances. They are both partly right. Religious principles stand unaltered while customs need to change with the times.

Rigid views can often lead to disaster. In the 15th century the Spanish Inquisition persecuted people for beliefs that were not strictly orthodox

according to the Roman Catholic church. The result was that many people suffered, but eventually the Inquisition was abolished and tremendous changes did take place in the Church. One of the results of rigidity in the Christian church was the split into various denominations. Our community is too small to break up. Perhaps we can tolerate the views of reform-minded people and



let them exist side-by-side with the orthodox, without an open breach in the ranks. Abraham Lincoln used to say: I will concede nine points to my opponent, if the tenth is the most important. If this is borne in mind, perhaps we could come to a speedier and more desirable conclusion to our interminable arguments.

The Zarathushti community needs to move forward with the times. Life is a constant motion – if we do not move forward we will go backward. We are all pretty well versed with *Gavashni*. It is time to make a commitment to *Kunashni* so that good actions result from our good words. The community can only move forward when there is cooperation; when we listen to all ideas with respect; when we decide to give in to others some of the time so that our ideas may be accepted some of the time; when we accept that there are times to take the lead and times to follow the lead of others so that we can move together to accomplish the task ahead of us – the task of establishing ourselves as a community of progress that will assist in the prosperity of the country we have adopted, just as our ancestors did in India and Iran. ■

Jamshed Udvadia
Editor, FEZANA Journal

Slow Dance

Have you ever watched kids

On a merry-go-round?

Or listened to the rain

Slapping on the ground?

Ever followed a butterfly's

Erratic flight

Or gazed at the sun into the

Fading night?

You better slow down.

Don't dance so fast.

Time is short.

The music won't last.

Do you run through each day

On the fly?

When you ask "How are you?"

Do you hear the reply?

When the day is done

Do you lie in your bed

With the next hundred chores

Running thru' your head?

You'd better slow down.

Don't dance so fast.

Time is short.

The music won't last.

Ever told your child,

We'll do it tomorrow?

And in your haste,

Not see his sorrow?

Ever lost touch,

Let a good friendship die

Cause you never had time

To call and say "Hi"?

You'd better slow down.

Don't dance so fast.

Time is short.

The music won't last.

When you run so fast

To get somewhere

You miss half the fun

Of getting there.

When you worry and hurry

Through your day,

It's like an unopened gift ...

Thrown away.

Life is not a race.

Do take it slower.

Hear the music,

Before the song is over.

- Author unknown

From the President ... *What is happening*

Whenver my daughter Arnavaz calls us, she invariably starts the conversation with "what is happening". So let me pick up on that theme. What is happening in our community these days? The answer is: our vibrant community has not only survived but managed to take giant steps to succeed as one interconnected, unified and cohesive community.

What is happening is this: the Houston community has expended its Center by adding a library, youth room and Sunday school rooms due to magnanimous generosity of one family, Shahnaz and Dr. Yazdi Sidhwa. ZAGNY moved to a new and a larger dar-e-meher. Chicago (ZAC) has added a new wing, which almost doubles the capacity of the hall. Washington (ZAMWI) has received approval from the City of Vienna to proceed with the project, and is in the process of starting an aggressive fund raising campaign. Two communities in California have plans for significant expansion. The California Zoroastrian Center (CZC) has acquired an adjoining property, which will enable them to have a much larger facility. The Zarathushti Anjuman of Northern California (ZANC) also has plans to considerably expand the existing dar-e-mehr. The Zarathushtis in Boston area have earnest plans to acquire a property to be used as a place of worship. The Zarathushtis of Quebec are going to celebrate the 35th anniversary of ZAQ. ZANT (Dallas) is raising funds and searching in earnest for property for a dar-e-mehr.

The first generation of dar-e-mehrs owe their existence to generous contributions of two families: Morvarid and Rustom Guiv and the Zartoshty brothers. The second generation of expansion of dar-e-mehrs is due to generous financial contributions from average Zarathushtis and the "sweat equity" of Zarathushtis who continue to serve the community year after year.

Take the example of Chicago. Rohinton Rivetna was very much involved in the establishment of the first dar-e-mehr that was built in North America, and after twenty-five year's service to the community, he is again, first and foremost responsible for the expansion phase of Chicago's dar-e-mehr. His "sweat equity" contribution this time includes drawing up architectural plans for expansion, and supervising the construction. My understanding is that he was on site every day in construction gear. This is dedication par excellence. Rohinton, Chicago community is indebted to you for your service to the community, and I am sure the second



generation of leaders will learn from your exemplary dedication to the community.

The contribution of Shahnaz and Yazdi Sidhwa gave tremendous impetus to the Houston community to come forward by contributing according to their might. The Zarathushtis of Houston purchased parking lots by paying a high price to reserve a parking space for them, a unique way to raise funds. In addition, they generously contributed to the building fund. The ZAH was fortunate that it had the services of Pervaz Rustomji, Yazdi Sidhwa, Rustom Engineer, Homi Davier and Hoshang Sethna as dynamic members of the Phase II Construction Committee.

The group of twelve Zarathushtis of ZAGNY took a commercial risk by forming a limited liability partnership (LLC). They contributed \$220k as capital to LLC. This provided momentum to raise in excess of \$1.0 million. The LLC donated contributed capital to ZAGNY, for a facility to be used, by both the Iranian Zoroastrian Association (IZA) and ZAGNY. The temple will continue to be known as "Arbab Guiv Dar-e-Mehr Zoroastrian Temple." Except for five donations in excess of \$50K, the bulk of the contribution came

from members of ZAGNY. A sum of \$1.0 Million was raised in the short span of six months.

CZC has purchased a real estate property (cost \$1.2 million) next to their dar-e-mehr in Westminster, CA. The cost of the project is expected to be \$3.0 million. The building when completed is expected to be used as a Zarathushti Community Center. Like ZAGNY, ZAC and ZAH donations are pouring in from average Zarathushtis and they are from \$100 to \$100,000.

General Khodahram Shahryari, a respected Zarathushti from ZAMWI is leading a Herculean effort to significantly expand the current facility. ZAMWI has already collected, including pledges, \$1.2 million. They have reached the 50% mark of the estimated cost of the project. The progress of the project so far, undeniably, is due to the visionary leadership of Khodahram.

The efforts in Boston to acquire a property are coordinated by our Funds and Finance Committee chair, Dr. Jerry Kheradi, whose efforts along with Dr. Rustom Kevala have brought FEZANA finances to a respectable level.

This is what is happening in our blessed community. Thank Ahura Mazda that we don't have to look to any higher authority to finance our houses of worship. As my mother Goolbai, the wisest person I knew, used to say, "You have two broad shoulders, use them to help yourself."

Let the pessimistic critics say whatever they want to say. My hope and prayer is: The message of Zarathushtra will survive for all time, and we, his followers, will have foresight to do what needs to be done and do what is right for our community. Let me conclude:

The best of men are those who are useful to others.

Talmud, Sanhedrin 27b

Without selfless service is no objective fulfilled. In service lies the purest action.

Adi Granth

Framroze K. Patel
President, FEZANA



*Vahishta Kaikobad of
Houston at the Religious
Education workshop*

Religious Education Workshop

Religious Education is one of the most important coordinating functions of FEZANA. A number of ideas were discussed during a workshop at the 2001 FEZANA AGM in Westminster, CA. Availability of teaching material and need to educate teachers in teaching techniques were emphasized. As a result, Lovji Cama, chair of the Education and Scholarship Committee has requested all religious education teachers to send him by e-mail, material they are willing to share with others. This will be made available through the FEZANA website. A report on the workshop is already on the website.

A second half-day workshop for teachers is being planned during the 2002 Congress in Chicago. Please contact Lovji Cama at (Lovji_Cama@Merck.com) or Rustom Kevala at (Rustom@aol.com) if you are interested in participating in the workshop. Also visit the FEZANA website to keep current on developments and plans.

Directory Update

The 3rd Edition of the Directory of Zarathushtis in North America, published in December 2000, is still available from Noshir Langrana (Langrana@caip.rutgers.edu) or through the FEZANA website for only \$10.00 postpaid in USA and Canada. The directory has over 200 pages and contains 3,792 family names, a list of mobeds, and information about North American associations and dar-e-mehrs. The directory is a valuable resource for finding friends and long-lost relatives living in North America. An index of names sorted by state of residence is also given.

As one would expect, the directory does not include all Zarathushtis living in North America today; and many of the addresses, phone numbers, etc. need to be updated already. FEZANA plans to publish an addendum to the 3rd Edition, which will be released at the North American Congress in Chicago in July 2002. This addendum will be available to everyone free of charge.

Naturally, one must have the directory to realize the full value of the addendum. Hence FEZANA urges everyone to purchase the directory now, check their personal information, and send in changes or corrections if needed. Missing information about friends and relatives living in North America will also be welcome [1]. This can be done through the FEZANA website, or by sending the information by e-mail to Noshir Jesung (njesung@socal.rr.com).

NOTE 1: If a name, address, etc. are sent, FEZANA assumes that the individual has no objection to the publication of his/her name, address, etc. in the directory. FEZANA can assume no responsibility or liability for the accuracy of the information. ■

FEZANA

AGM 2001

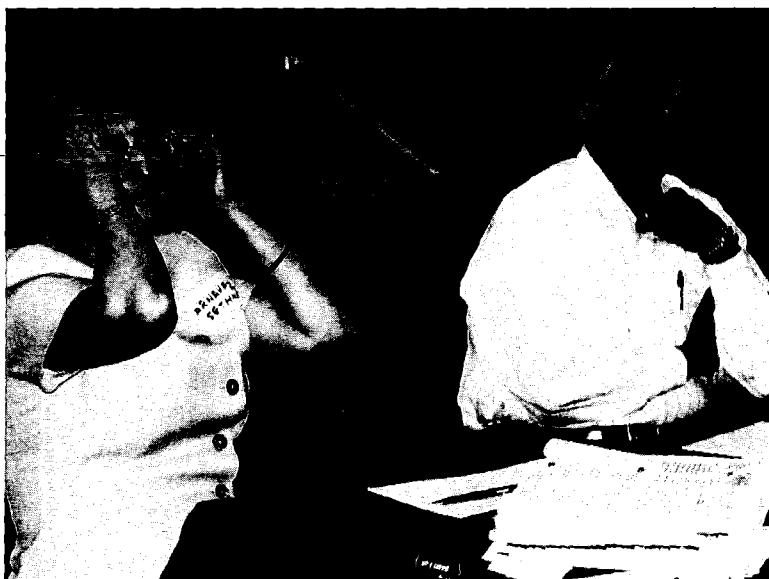
Report of the Fourteenth FEZANA annual general meeting, on May 26 and 27, at the California Zoroastrian Center, in Westminster, California.

The Meeting commenced with a benediction by **Ervad Zarir Bhandara**. After the welcome speech by **Dolly Malva**, President of the Zoroastrian Association of California (ZAC), the meeting was brought to order by FEZANA President Framroze Patel. Over 50 persons were present, including delegates of 15 Member Associations and about 12 committee members and interested local residents of the Los Angeles area.

FEZANA OFFICERS' REPORTS

President Framroze Patel welcomed everyone and thanked the Zoroastrian Association of California for hosting this AGM. He was happy to note that both the past Presidents of FEZANA, Rohinton Rivetna and Dolly Dastoor were also present. He recognized Dr. Farhang Mehr, Khorshed Jungalwala, Dolly Dastoor and Rohinton Rivetna for all their help and guidance during the past year. He thanked the Executive Committee Members for their support.

Vice President Firdosh Mehta thanked everyone on the committee for working together for the common goal of serving the community.



From left, FEZANA secretary Arnavaz Sethna, president Framroze Patel; VP Firdosh Mehta, treasurer Rustom Kevala.

Treasurer Rustom Kevala presented the financial statement. Rustom advised that apart from \$11,926 in donations received for the Gujarat Earthquake Relief Fund, other North American Associations had directly sent their donations to India. Additional donations were sent by all the Canadian Associations also.

The total receipt of \$7642 in the Critical Assistance Fund included an amount of \$2067 from the sale of the video, *In the Footsteps of our Forefathers*.

The sale of the limited partnership share in January 2001, which had been donated to FEZANA by an anonymous donor in 1996 for the FEZANA Journal, netted \$21,381.93.

Since the funds raised for Medical Assistance Fund amounted to only \$2575, the treasurer recommended to wait for six months and if this fund did not receive any substantial donations, it should be merged with the Critical Assistance Fund. Recommendation to transfer funds from General to some specific funds was passed. This included an amount of \$10,000 for future premises for a permanent office of FEZANA. As FEZANA is growing, a time has come to start thinking of an office

where all the documents can be stored permanently.

The accounts as presented on December 31, 2000 and the budget for the year 2001 for \$95,100 were unanimously approved.

Secretary Arnavaz Sethna reviewed the activities of the office of the secretary and reported that she enjoyed working with everyone on the committee as well as communicating with the Members and committee chairs.

Election. Two positions were up for election this year – vice president, and secretary. Firdosh Mehta and Arnavaz Sethna, being eligible, ran for the positions of vice president and secretary. As there were no other contestants for the positions they were declared elected unopposed.

Firdosh Mehta and **Arnavaz Sethna** thanked Members for their support. Firdosh stated that, not receiving any other nomination meant that everyone was satisfied with the work that he was doing. He considered this to be very complimentary and thanked everyone for their support.

ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES

Delegates of fifteen associations made brief reports on their activities

during the past year. Some highlights are given below.

Firdosh Mehta, ZAA, Alberta, reported some increase in their membership. They are greatly involved in Interfaith activities and are always invited at their meetings. Alberta Zarathushtis gave a 15-minute presentation on the Zarathushti religion at the last Interfaith meeting.

Khorshed Jungalwala, ZAGBA, Boston, Massachusetts, said their association has been fortunate in having close ties with several prestigious universities in the area. They have participated in two research projects on socio-economic status of different religious denominations and presented a paper at Harvard University and Tufts University. ZAGBA considered establishing a Darbe Mehr but decided to postpone the project in favor of buying a property near the Boston Metropolitan Area for local and out of town Zarathushtis for temporary stay. The community gathers for social functions at least six times a year – the annual trip to the Tanglewood Music Festival is well attended. This year Zubin Mehta will be performing on August 26, ZAGBA members will attend in large numbers.



Clockwise from left, Meeting parliamentarians Behram Deboo and Jamshed Udvadia, Congress Committee chair Jimmy Mistry; ZYNA co-chairs Morvarid Behziz and Sherazade Mehta; Niaz Khosravi and Bijan Khosraviani (Sports).

Perviz Madon, ZSBC, British Columbia, reported that they have their annual get togethers for Nouruz, Gahambars, Jashn-e-Sadeh, etc. This year they celebrated Arbab Guiv's birthday. The Women's Committee is active in promoting education and counseling. They had a Fashion Show depicting apparel from Iran and India, and raised a substantial amount for the India Earthquake Relief Fund. The Youth are also quite active.

Rashid Mehin, CZC, Los Angeles, California, welcomed everyone to sunny California and thanked Dolly Malva for bringing the AGM to the Center. Southern California has the largest Zarathushti population. The Center now is too small to accommodate everyone and they have found a property next door to the Center which costs \$2.4 million. They are planning for it to be the largest Center in North America. They have been able to raise \$1.3 million and the balance needs to be raised and would welcome any donation.

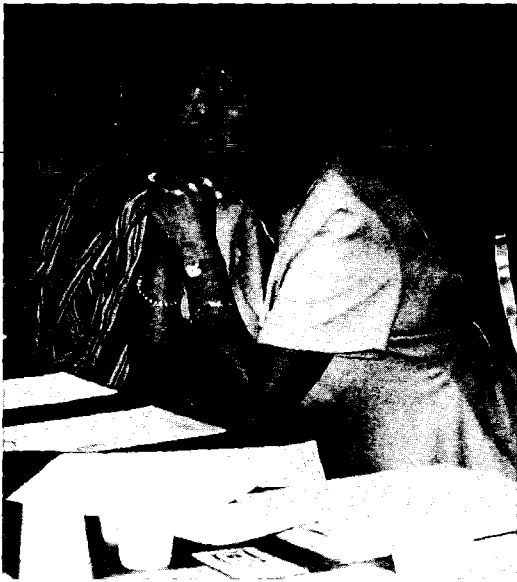
Dolly Malva, ZAC, Los Angeles, California, stated that apart from the usual social activities, ZAC gets involved in other community projects such as feeding the homeless and interfaith activities. They too had the Earthquake Relief fund drive.

Their ladies' meetings are held every two months at the Arjani residence.

Bomi Patel, ZANC, Northern California, reported that for the past two years they enjoyed the influx of Zarathushtis from all over the world. However, with the slump in the 'dot com' industry, many have lost their jobs and ZANC tries to help them in any way they can. They have their social events – gahambars, Nouruz, picnics and other fund raisers. In the past year they sent \$5000 for Doongarwadi fund in Mumbai, \$4000 to Karachi Parsi General Hospital, and \$4000 to the Earthquake Relief Fund. They are trying to make a multi-purpose sports complex at the darbe mehr at a cost of \$75,000 to encourage more youth to visit the darbe mehr.

Hosi Mehta, ZAC, Chicago, Illinois, stated they are also undergoing building expansion and are actively involved in fund raising for it. Their website is kept current and any advertisements would be most welcome. They have Seniors' get-togethers once a month and for the youth a four-day camp is coming up very soon. They have their religious classes for the children and adult Gatha discussion group. ZAC is also very active in interfaith activities to which Rohinton goes regularly. The





From left, Artemis Javanshir (Sports), Mahrukh Motafram (FEZANA Journal); Dolly Dastoor (Scholarship), Jerry Kheradi (Financial), Rashna Ghadialy (Census).

Zarathushti choir goes to various events and sings. ZAC has sponsored priests in the past for immigration and are presently in the midst of processing a young priest from Karachi, Pakistan.

Roshan Sethna, ZAH, Houston, Texas said the major task for ZAH was the World Zoroastrian Congress. ZAH took on the challenge and they delivered. On April 17, the Houston Chapter of the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce was formed and there is an active Zarathushti Investment group. This year 13 youth graduated from high school and they will all be going to various colleges and universities.

Rustom Ferzandi, ZAKA, Kansas, reported that there are 28 families in their association and they are very united. They enjoy each other's company. Dr. Jahanian is very active and they benefit from his knowledge.

Lovji Cama, ZAGNY, New York, reported that their new property is nearing completion – the prayer room has just been completed and some finishing touches are required. They will have their opening ceremony on June 17 to which everyone is invited. They will start with a jashan at the old darbe-meher and transfer the fire to the new darbe mehr. The fire will be started with

Atash Nyaesh and end with *Tandarosti* for the congregation and premises. They are trying to get more youth involved. He reported that the children's religious classes have been held by ZAGNY for the past 22 years, and the adult group discussions for the past 19 years. The youth – late teens and early twenties, are taking keen interest in these discussions.

Sam Vesuna, ZSO, Ontario, stated that they have the largest association with a membership of over 3,000. They have many activities to suit the youth, young adults and seniors. Theirs is the only Zarathushti Scouts Group. Besides social events and celebrating Nouruz, they have lecture sessions, such as those by Dr. Jehan Bagli. ZSO is also very active in Interfaith activities. Zarathushtis are recognized by all government departments.

Ness Lakdawalla, ZAQ, Quebec, reported that their youth is very aggressive and active. They have their usual jashans and other activities including a Carrom tournament. Next year they are planning the 35th anniversary of the Zoroastrian Association of Quebec to which all are welcome.

Gordafriid Aresh, TMZA, Los Angeles, California, said that TMZA is a

small organization. They were active in the World Zoroastrian Congress and four of their youth won medals at the Zarathushti Games.

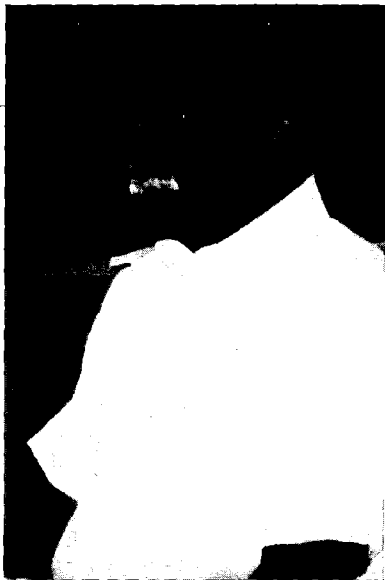
Manijeh Deboo, ZSWS, Washington State advised that theirs is a small association with only 35 families. They have Avesta classes and celebrate Mehrgan, Tirgan, Jashne Sadeh etc. They do not have a hall so they meet at their house and celebrate the functions together.

Jimmy Dholoo, ZAMWI, Washington, DC, advised that they had some difficulties in getting the construction permit for their new darbe mehr. They had a lot of opposition from the neighbors but finally they have received the permit. They too are actively involved in fund raising efforts. They have a new board which is vibrant and enthusiastic.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Census Committee. Chair **Rashna Ghadialy** advised that she had received 34 responses to the questionnaires posted on the website. She now has a committee consisting of Aban and Purvez Rustomji, Soonamai Desai and herself for creating a retirement community.

Land is available in Houston and the Housing and Survey Committee decided not to have it just as a retire-



From left, Rohinton Rivetna (External Affairs); Kaemerz Dotiwalla (Unity and Welfare), Jimmy Dholoo (Washington DC), Manijeh Deboo (Washington State) and Gordafriid Aresh (TMZA).

ment community but a mixed generation community. From the survey the first choice was Houston. She, however, noted that there were no responses from Canada. She would like to publicize this more as the community is aging and this sort of facility should be thought out. This could be single family, town houses or apartments.

Planning and Coordination.

According to the constitution, the vice president is chair of this committee. **Firdosh Mehta** stated that due to previous agreements by past officials, a conflict has arisen between the date planned for the Zarathushti Games and the North American Congress. In future more attention will be paid so that this does not happen again.

Religious Education. Chair **Lovji Cama** advised that the report had already been distributed, and there is a workshop for religious education teachers on Sunday afternoon, after the meeting. All are welcome. [See page 3].

Funds and Finance. Chair **Jerry Kheradi** stated that 500 fund-raising letters mailed out generated \$5,650 and a follow up effort in Fall of 2000 raised \$6,500. With matching donation from Jerry, the total now is \$24,300. The raffle generated a fur-

ther \$7,035. His goal is for each of the Endowment Funds for Scholarship, Welfare and Religious Education to reach a total of \$100,000.

Jerry proposed forming a Financial Advisory Board of three trustees, appointed by the president, who will stay in office for a minimum of five years, extendable to seven years, along with the treasurer and Funds and Finance committee chair. The Financial Advisory Board will have full responsibility of fiscal management and investment decisions for all FEZANA funds and determine the amount of money which will be distributed annually to each of the FEZANA funds.

The president at this time recognized the efforts of Celeste Kheradi in raising the funds and a very grateful thanks to Jerry Kheradi for personally matching these funds to come to a total of \$24,300. The President advised that he is working on the Financial Advisory Board with the treasurer and will make an announcement as soon as it is finalized.

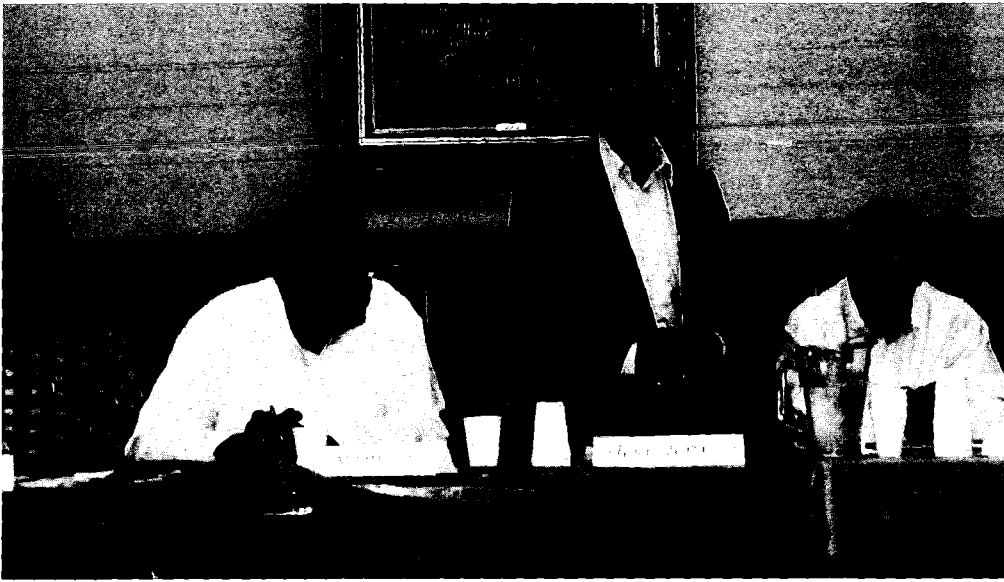
Information Receiving and Disseminating. Chair **Khorshed Jungalwala** advised that their Business Manager has resigned and she has appointed Mahrukh Motafram to be the new Business Manager with the main responsibility of promoting the

Journal. She would like to see an increase in subscriptions. Responding to a question about having a few pages in Farsi, Khorshed advised that initially they used to have one or two pages in Farsi which could be resurrected. To translate the entire Journal into Farsi would be cost prohibitive, but certain key articles could be translated. She requested volunteers for this purpose. Rashid Mehin volunteered to find out if software to translate languages exists in the market.

FEZANA webmaster, **Zubin Medhora** was recognized for an excellent turn around of the website. Subscriptions to the Journal and other donations can now be made online.

Congress Committee. Chair **Jimmy Mistry**, briefly reported on the success of the World Zoroastrian Congress.

As for the North American Congress, Chicago will be hosting it from July 4 to 7, 2002. A call had been sent for the 2004 North American Congress. He had received only one application, from San Francisco, by the deadline date. Toronto's letter to hold either the 2004 North American Congress or the Youth Congress in 2003 was received after the deadline date. Jimmy, therefore, recommended to hold the 2004 North



From left, Ness Lakdawalla (Quebec), Sam Vesuna (Ontario), Lovji Cama (New York), Rustom Ferzandi (Kansas); Roshan Sethna (Houston) and Hosi Mehta (Chicago).

American Congress in San Francisco Bay Area.

Sports. Chair *Artemis Javanshir* introduced her committee, and stated that they were disappointed that once again the date of the Sports Meet was conflicting with the date of the North American Congress in Chicago. Since all the arrangements for the Congress had been made, they agreed to hold both the events simultaneously. Artemis, however, requested that in future, all the even years would be reserved for Sports during the July 4 holidays. Framroze Patel promised that for the year 2004 this conflict will not happen and the Games could be held in any city over the July 4 holidays.

To the question of why the Sports were only held in California and not anywhere else, Artemis advised that they would be willing to have the games in any city where members will work towards getting a good campus.

Scholarship. Committee chair *Dolly Dastoor* advised that scholarships of \$1000 each were given to Behnam Bastani, BS in Computer Science and Dinyar Patel, International Relations major. A call for Scholarships for the year 2001-2002 has been made. Dolly made a plea for a larger pool of

endowment so that more students can avail of this opportunity. She advocated that we must invest in our youth. FEZANA could think of a Rhodes Scholar type of award.

Unity and Welfare. Chair *Kaemerz Dotiwalla* advised that Dinshaw Joshi, Appeals Coordinator, had resigned. He also advised that he now has two more members on his committee, Hosi Mehta of Chicago and Houtoxi Contractor of Pittsburgh. They helped tremendously during the Earthquake Relief Fund raiser. Houtoxi personally visited Ahmedabad. As for the Medical Assistance Fund, Kaemerz reported that whenever a call was made, he had received good response, however, not much was being donated to the Medical Fund without making specific calls.

Zoroastrian Youth of North America. ZYNA co-chair *Sherazade Mehta* stated that not many youth activities had taken place in the previous year. Future activities are:

- Rafting Trip July 28 - 30. This is a fun social event and will cost \$200.
- Z-Cruise in December. They need to know the names and monies must be paid by August as they have to pay at the time of reservation.

● The North American Youth Congress will be held in 2003, July 3 - 5. They have received bids from Florida and Ontario. Any other association wishing to host the youth congress may advise the ZYNA chairs.

Video presentation. A 15-minute video presentation was given by Firdosh Mehta who had attended the Interfaith Prayer Service for Peace in Alberta. More than 800 people attended this Service. The theme was "We All Care".

World Chamber of Commerce. *Rohinton Rivetna* advised that at the World Zoroastrian Congress, during the business sessions, the World Chamber of Commerce was formed. Interim directors were elected from the floor: Rohinton Rivetna (president), Meherwan Boyce (VP Finance), Homi Davier (VP Intl. Affairs), Edul Daver (secretary), Sarosh Collector (treasurer), Ness Lakdawalla, Kobad Zarolia (VP), Fali Shroff (VP Information Tech.), Dorab Mistry and Dadi Mistry. Note: Officer positions were elected subsequently, by the directors. Rohinton also advised that local chapters have been formed in Chicago, New York and Houston.



From left, Bomi Patel (Northern California); Dolly Malva (California), Rashid Mehin (California Zoroastrian Center), Perviz Madon (British Columbia), Khorshed Jungalwala (Boston); Rashna Mehta (Alberta).

External Affairs. Chair **Rohinton Rivetna** stated that we are all ambassadors of our faith by telling others who we are. Zarathushtis have now got a foothold in the White House – we are now on their mailing list for prayer meetings and other such events. He requested the Washington DC association to send a member to these meetings. The Chicago Zarathushti Choir sings at Interfaith meetings and other functions. Rohinton also requested ZAGNY to represent Zarathushtis at the United Nations NGO meetings. He concluded by saying that at every congress there should be an Interfaith event.

Other Committee Reports. President Framroze Patel stated that the committee chairs for **History and Preservation, Restoration of Pahlavi Manuscripts and Small Groups** were not present; however, the reports had been distributed prior to the AGM from History and Preservation and Small Groups.

OTHER AGENDA ITEMS

World Zarathushti Body. Framroze Patel advised that after the dissolution of the two Task Force teams, he has now appointed a Working Group Committee chaired by **Khorshed Jungalwala** to review and summarize the changes recommended by

the Member Associations to the WZO Charter.

Khorshed in giving the background stated that the ad hoc Working Group (WG) was appointed by the FEZANA President and had sent a report. She advised that this report was compiled within four days of their appointment and thanked her committee members for their quick action in review and comments.

ZAH in their proposal stated that in their opinion the voting was disproportionate to the number of membership in the Council of Individuals and Council of Federations in the WZO Charter. They felt that the structure was quite complicated and suggested a much simpler version which was based on the FEZANA structure. ZAH had sent this proposal to the regions. Following are some of the comments:

- Australia was agreeable to this model.
- UK (ZTFE) agreed with most of the points except votes.
- India was willing to take a look at the ZAH proposal
- Chicago. A letter from Chicago was read out by ZAC president Hosi Mehta, wherein they stated that all the stakeholders should meet and

spend a few days, sit across the table and hammer out issue by issue until a consensus is reached. Chicago offered to host such a meeting. FEZANA was formed in this manner and so should the world body be formed.

Roshan Rivetna discussed the restructured WZO organization structure and covered issues and concerns such as inequality of votes at the General Body and International Board level.

Framroze reminded everyone that the WZO Draft Charter now in discussion, is nowhere near the first one that was presented by WZO. It was because of FEZANA's initiatives and efforts of both parties that the charter has been amended to this stage. Chicago's message will be passed on to the WG. He requested all the associations send in their suggestions/proposals within the next 30 days to the FEZANA executives who will pass them on to the WG. WG will do an indepth analysis and present their findings to FEZANA. The issues that surfaced from discussions were:

- (1) Definition of a Zarathushti – whether to include or not in the charter.



Children of the Zoroastrian Association of California in a performance for FEZANA AGM delegates at the Rainbow Fiesta Nite.

(2) The charter should not include discussion of or dissemination of doctrinal issues.

(3) Inequality of voting rights.

Rohinton Rivetna stated that the world body discussion has been going on for many years and there does not seem to be an end in sight, nevertheless the dialogue is progressing. He recommended that Chicago's proposal should be seriously considered. He said "let us be the catalyst that brings the world (Zarathushtis) together" and is confident that Khorshed's team will be the unifying force.

Khorshed advised the following:

(1) Send the feedback from the associations by June 30.

(2) WG will need a month to put these comments together – July 30. After July 30 WG should be in a position to get all the ideas together and informally communicate to WZO our "wish list" and meet with their representatives.

(3) WZO will be requested to respond by August 30, 2001.

Cataloging of Literature on Avesta, Pahlavi, Pazand, Parsis, Zarahushtia and Zarathushtrianism.

thushtia and Zarathushtrianism.

An individual, who wishes to remain anonymous, explained that he wants to catalog works on Avesta, Pahlavi, Pazand, Parsis, Zarahushtia and Zarathushtrianism. His dream is to have a National Union catalog. He is presently researching books, articles, journals on these topics – a monumental task for one person. He has in his personal collection 30,000 books and journal articles. He stated that he is not addressing this meeting for money but wants volunteers who could help him achieve his dream. He would like this to be publicized in FEZANA Journal, so Zarathushtis would come to know about this task. It is his dream to establish a K.R. Cama type of institute in the US and would like FEZANA to start the initiative of this project. California Zoroastrian Center offered their library for his research. Tahamtan and Gordafrid Aresh pledged \$15,000 for this project.

Framroze thanked the individual for undertaking this project and requested Roshan Rivetna to give it coverage in the Journal. Framroze also thanked Tahamtan and

Gordafrid Aresh for their generous contribution.

North American Mobeds' Council.

A report from the Mobed Council was read by Framroze Patel [see page 14].

Canadian Chapter. *Firdosh Mehta*, one of the committee members of the Canadian Chapter committee, advised that a notification had been sent out to all explaining the need for a Canadian Chapter of FEZANA, and a ballot was requested. The ballots were received and of the 54 qualifying votes, there were 39 Yes, 2 No and 10 Abstentions. The vote to establish a Canadian Chapter was carried. The four Canadian Associations – Quebec, Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia will form a committee and by the next AGM, provide Terms of Reference. This will be a satellite arm of FEZANA, mainly for the purpose of providing tax benefits for Canadian donations.

World Zoroastrian Congress. *Dolly Dastoor*, co-chair of the World Zoroastrian Congress, thanked ZAH and FEZANA for their support. The Congress was a tremendous success, it truly involved the world in terms of attendance and participation. FEZANA Journal [Spring 2001] carried full coverage of the Congress. Out of 2340 attendees, 545 represented over 30 countries worldwide. It is obvious that the United States is the new up and coming diaspora. The Congress has made some profit and Dolly requested that some Iranian ZFS students who spent their personal money to obtain visas and who were unsuccessful should be refunded \$500 each. The Congress had many legacy projects:

(a) Formation of the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce.

(b) Formation of network of international women (ZWIN).

(c) Student exchange program where students from USA will spend their vacation time in volunteering at

[Continued on page 83]



Muktaḍ (or Fravardegan) days celebrated during August.

Prayers were offered at Zarathushti centers across North America during the last five days of the Shenshai Zarathushti year (August 16th through 20th) in sacred remembrance of the souls of the dear departed. It is believed that during these days, the *fravashis* of the righteous dead, descend from their spiritual abode and bless those that remember and pray for them. Vases laden with flowers are offered in memory of the departed. Photo shows the Muktaḍ table at the Arbab Rustom Guiv Darbe Mehr in Chicago.



North Texas Zarathushtis plan for Center in Dallas area.

Left, Board Members of Dallas area Zoroastrian Association of North Texas, ZANT: Meherban Roshanravan (president), Manucher Samiya, Farin Iranpour, Nina DiLucci, Viraf Patel; and seated: Zenobia Irani and Farideh Kermani. ZANT, with a membership of about 220, is undertaking various fund-raising projects to move them closer to their dream of a Center. While the search for a suitable property is still on, the community is continuing with its projects, including bazaars, melas, Kroger grocery cards, garage sales, raffles, change jars, and other innovative fundraising ideas. Almost \$100,000 has been raised to date.



Left, below, ZANT members, young and old, participated in large numbers in volleyball, track, basketball and table tennis at the Zarathushti Games in Houston in December 2000.

Claremont Graduate University - California announces chair on Zoroastrianism

New look for ZAPANJ newsletter

The newsletter of the Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania and New Jersey (ZAPANJ) sports a fancy new look. Contact secretary Aban Singh at 610-323-7750.

Afarganyu unveiled at Zarathushti burial grounds in Toronto

On Sunday, June 10th, there was an unveiling ceremony of the *afarganyu* at the Zarathushti burial site at Glenn Oaks, near Toronto, followed by a short prayer. The Zoroastrian Society of Ontario thanked Mrs. Coomi Bhathena for her generosity.



Behram and Manijeh Deboo with Dr. Karen Jo Torgesen [center], dean of the School of Religion at Claremont Graduate University.

I wish I were ...

Big enough

to honestly admit my shortcomings;

Brilliant enough

to accept praise without it making me arrogant;

Tall enough

to tower above deceit;

Strong enough

to hear criticism;

Compassionate enough

to understand human frailties;

Wise enough

to recognize my mistakes;

Humble enough

to appreciate greatness;

Staunch enough

to stand by my friends.

Human enough

to be thoughtful of my neighbors;

Righteous enough

to be devoted to the love of God.

- Fed Newsletter, May 2001

On May 22, Behram and Manijeh Deboo, Arman Ariane and Arthur Perlstein attended the President's Roundtable at Claremont Graduate University's School of Religion, along with representatives of other major religions, to discuss Globalization and Religion.

Topics discussed included: (1) How religious communities interpret the processes of integration and synthesis taking place in the US; (2) Religious traditions becoming transnational; (3) Challenge of globalization and fragmentation; and (4) Resources available to the academic community. The program included luncheon at the residence of the president, Dr. Steadman Upham.

Arman's contact with the faculty has created awareness of the religion of Zarathushtra, with the result that Claremont University has endowed a chair on Zoroastrianism and courses will be offered in the future.

All attendees signed the following resolution:

"It is our profound belief that out of many lamps one light can

shine. As representatives of the rich tapestry that is the American religious and ethical community, we, the undersigned, meeting at the School of Religion, Claremont Graduate University, under the auspices of President Steadham Upham and Dean Karen Jo Torgesen, resolve and commit to work together toward enhancing the ability and opportunity of religious and non-religious traditions to impact our society and engage our world. We resolve to appreciate our diversity and celebrate our commonalities. We resolve to move diligently toward a plural, accepting, and well-informed nation for our children."

Located on contiguous campuses, 35 miles east of Los Angeles in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains, Claremont Graduate University is one of the most prestigious universities in the US, offering masters and doctoral degrees in 22 professional and academic disciplines. ■

[Excerpted from submission by Behram Deboo, Seattle, WA].

Sixteen mobeds attended the fourteenth AGM of the North American Mobeds' Council (NAMC) at the Gibson House Community Center, Marlton, New Jersey, April 13-14, 2001.

The meeting opened with a welcome address by Arnavaz Sukhia, president of the host association, ZAPANJ.

President's report. NAMC *president Jal Birdy* [photo right] reported on last year's activities, including:

- NAMC sponsored events at WZC 2000. These included: presentation by Ervads Burzin and Peshotan Unwalla at WZC 2000; NAMC reaffirmed its resolution last year not to encourage Ali Jafarey in participating in Zarathushti congresses; due to a positive cash balance, WZC 2000 had refunded \$1000 seed money to NAMC.

- Fallout from last year's resolutions on controversial topics dealing with definitions of Parsi, Zarathushti and conversion.

- Terrorism on the Internet.

- Ervad Mehbhad Dastur was married last July.

- A check for \$301 was sent by NAMC in response to an appeal from Cama Athornan Institute, Mumbai.

- Mobed Faridoon Zartoshty, brother of NAMC member Mobed Mehraban Zartoshty passed away. A condolence message was sent.

- WZC 2000 proved to be a good venue for enrolling new members.

Birdy concluded with: "... In the years ahead, NAMC members should make a concerted effort at self-education and proving to the laity that they are made of better stuff and are capable of guiding and educating them with confidence."

It was resolved that a letter be sent to FEZANA expressing dismay that no notice was taken of the opinion expressed by NAMC for non-inclusion of Mr. Jafarey in WZC 2000. Members also resolved that FEZANA should be urged to amend its voting system to ensure that the

NAMC Meeting in New Jersey

NAMC focusses on education and training for young mobeds and mobedyars; and discusses followup of some contentious issues from last year.

whole community is brought in when making decisions on important matters. Members further resolved that FEZANA should be requested to intimate NAMC of the results of the voting on the Jafarey issue.

Status of projects were reviewed:

- **Training of Mobedyars.** NAMC continues its efforts to train young mobeds and mobedyars to carry the duties of ordained mobeds, and adopted the following resolution:

"NAMC commits its support for any Parsi Zarathushti from an Athornan or Behdin family wishing to be traditionally ordained through a Navar ceremony as a priest. It is further resolved that such an individual upon ordainment will be accepted as an ordained priest by the NAMC."

- **Guidebooks.** NAMC has now produced two guidebooks for young mobeds to perform jashan ceremonies: *Understanding and Practice of Jashan Ceremony* by Ervad Adi Unwalla and Ervad Jehan Bagli; and *Jashan and Afringan for Beginners* by Ervad Yezdi Antia.

- **The Religion Camp** for Mobeds planned for summer of 2000 was canceled due to poor response.

- Members were urged to give **email addresses** to Mehbhad, to enable sending newsletters by email. Post messages may be sent to namc@yahoo.com.

- **Proxy votes.** After much discussion, the majority present generally agreed that voting could be restricted to those members attending the meeting, but only if the voting

system was tightened such that resolutions could only be passed if a significant consensus was reached and definitely not by a simple majority. The following resolution to add a new paragraph to "Bye Law No. 17 –

Voting" passed unanimously:

"Except for amendments to the Constitution and election of officers, any resolution proposed at an ordinary Annual General Meeting shall be approved by a 90% majority vote of members present who are in good standing."

- **Education plans.** It was agreed that NAMC adopt a multi-pronged approach towards education, to include: workshops at every AGM, publish booklets; formulate answers to frequently asked questions; camps for newly ordained mobeds; educate community members and inform community at large through news media; assist local associations in disseminating religious literature; and invite knowledgeable scholars to NAMC meetings.

NAMC noted two suggestions made by FEZANA president Framroze Patel, that: (a) Mobeds try to get the laity involved at jashan ceremonies; and (b) Mobeds help in publishing out-of-print literature and articles.

It was unanimously agreed that mobedyars be invited to NAMC meetings.

ZAPANJ hosted a dinner reception for the mobeds. President Birdy gave a vote of thanks to ZAPANJ for their hospitality.

[Excerpted by Roshan Rivetna from minutes by Behram Panthaki and Gev Karkaria]



A computer modeling illustration of the Great Hall of World's Religions at the Museum of World's Religions in Taipei City, Taiwan, where religious traditions of the world can be explored, through their history, development, rituals, organization and calendar



Museum of World Religions, Taiwan

The Museum offers an opportunity to appreciate the diverse traditions, history, art and philosophy of different religious faiths and improve relationships and enhance mutual understanding among the world's religions.

***Respect for all faiths
Tolerance for all cultures
Love for all life***

Founded on the vision of the Venerable Dharma Master Hsin-tao, the Museum of World Religions will combine inspiration, instruction and entertainment in a unique way.

A multi-million dollar project, the Museum, which will open in November 2001, reflects the most modern approach to museum design. Located in Taipei, Taiwan, the entrance doors, at the base of a black granite tower, open to *The Golden Lobby* where guests are welcomed with a gentle program of light, sound and smells. Passing through *The Creations Theater* (addressing the origins of life), *The Hall of Life's Journey* (exploring the realities of one's life), *The Avatamsaka Theater* (examining the great truths of all religions) one enters *The Great Hall of World Religions*. Here the history, rituals and culture of the great religious traditions of the world can be explored, through a carefully

acquired collection of artifacts, films, models and exhibits.

The Museum's rapidly growing collections currently hold more than 3200 ritual objects, sacred texts, vest-



ments, sculptures and paintings. The library contains over 6200 volumes, and 2000 CD-ROMs and tapes.

The Zarathushti connection. Master Hsin-tao [shown above with Khorshed Jungalwala at the Parliament of World's Religions in Cape Town, South Africa in December

1999], presented plans for the Museum at the Parliament of World's Religions in Cape Town. Contact was subsequently made by Rohinton Rivetna, with the Museum of World Religions Foundation in Taipei, in March 2000, to ensure that the Zarathushti religion, "which is a seminal religion, with links to all others", is well-presented at the Museum. Earlier this year, film producer Tenaz Dubash of New York was on a documentary team that interviewed Master Hsin-tao, and forty other religious leaders, including Dastoor Kotwal and Ervad Godrej Sidhwa, who were attending the World Millennium Summit at the UN, for a video for the Taiwan museum.

To date, the extent of Zarathushti references at the Museum is not clear. Rohinton is pursuing the matter further with the Museum's "collection department", to coordinate the selection of artifacts, books and other materials that properly present the Zarathushti faith. ■

- By Roshan Rivetna

COMING EVENTS

Zarathushti Soccer

The 2nd Zarathushti Unity Cup soccer tournament will be held at Pacific Palisades, California, on Sunday and Monday, September 2nd and 3rd, 2001. Contact Zoroastrian Sports Committee at ZSC@fezana.org, tel: (310) 219-8811, web: www.fezana.org.

Conference on Religions

The International Conference on Religious Cooperation will be held at the Grand Hotel, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC, September 18-21, 2001. Contact shaiohon@ms.19.hinet.net.

FEZANA AGMs

Firdosh Mehta, FEZANA VP and chair of the FEZANA Coordination and Planning Committee (email: firdosh.mehta@primus.ca) informs us of plans for the next two AGMs:

2002 AGM will be in *Montreal*, Quebec, on the Memorial Day weekend (May 25-27, 2002), hosted by ZAQ.

2003 AGM will be held in *Boston*, Massachusetts, on the Memorial Day weekend (May 2003), hosted by ZAGBA.

Next NA Youth Congress

The next *North American Youth Congress* will be held in Toronto, Ontario in 2003. The date has tentatively been set for the July 4th weekend. Contact FEZANA VP and chair of the Coordination and Planning Committee, Firdosh Mehta at firdosh.mehta@primus.ca.

World Youth Congress

No date or place has yet been set for the next World Youth Congress. There is interest from Iran and UK.

Next World Congress

India and UK have supported the bid from the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe (ZTFE) to host the 8th World Zoroastrian Congress in the UK. Official announcement of the venue or the date has not yet been made. ■

Calendar of Festivals

Fravardian Jashan

Mah Fravardin, Roj Fravardin Thu Aug 9 (K)
Sat Sep 8 (S)

Maidyozarem Gahambar

Mah Ardibehesht, Roj Khorshed - Daepmeher
Fri Aug 31 - Tue Sep 4 (K)
Sun Sep 30 - Thu Oct 4 (S)

Paitishem Gahambar

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

Jashne-Mehergan

Mah Meher, Roj Meher Tue Oct 2 (F)

Ayathrem Gahambar

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

Jashne-Avangan (Avan Ardivisur Parab)

Mah Avan, Roj Avan Fri Oct 26 (F)

Maidyoshem Gahambar

Mah Tir, Roj Khorshed - Daepmeher
Tue Oct 30 - Sat Nov 3 (K)
Thu Nov 29 - Mon Dec 3 (S)

Jashne-Adargan

Mah Adar, Roj Adar Sat Nov 24 (F)

Death Anniversary of Zarathushtra

Mah Daye, Roj Khorshed Wed Dec 26 (F)

Maidhyarem Gahambar

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

Jashan-e-Daegan

Mah Dae, Roz Daepdin Mon Jan 7 (F)

Jashan-e-Bahmangan

Mah Bahman, Roz Bahman Wed Jan 16 (F)

Paitishahem Gahambar

Mah Sheherevar, Roz Ashtad - Aneran
Sun Jan 13 - Thu Jan 17 (K)
Tue Feb 12 - Sat Feb 16 (S)

Jashan-e-Sadeh

Mah Bahman, Roz Meher Wed Jan 30 (F)

Ayathrem Gahambar

Mah Meher, Roz Ashtad - Aneran Tue Feb 12 - Sat Feb 16 (K)
Thu Mar 14-Mon Mar 18(S)

(F)=Fasli, (K)=Kadmi, (S)=Shenshai

Special travel offer for Next North American Congress

American Airlines has offered 10% off the lowest fare, for travel nationwide to the North American Congress in Chicago [see page 18] between July 2 and July 9, 2002, if booked 60 days in advance. Details to follow.

Mehergan - History and Traditions

Among all Iranian festivals, the two most important feasts are Nouruz and Mehergan.

Mehergan is a day of victory, when the angels helped Feraydun and Kaveh become victorious over Zohak. They imprisoned Zohak in Mt. Demavand, where he died from his wounds. Mehergan is the day God gave light to the world, that had previously been dark. On this day Mashya and Mashyani (the first man and woman) were created. On this day, the sun was created.

Some scholars believe that the month of Mehr was the first month of the calendar year during Avestan times. The Mehergan feast then, celebrated the beginning of a new year. Mehr is also the time of harvest.

Mehr in Avestan is 'Miora'; in ancient Farsi and in Sanskrit, it is 'Mitra'; in Pahlavi, it is 'Mitr'; and in modern Farsi, it became Mehr. The word 'Mehr' has been used in various ways – as the word for god, for an angel, as a symbol of the sun, as well as the name of the seventh month of the Iranian calendar.

Beginnings of the celebration. When the Indo-Europeans lived together, Mehr was considered one of the great

gods of that time. During the Achaemenian period, the name of the god Mehr was mentioned many times on the stone carvings. The Achaemenian army always followed a flag depicting Mehr as the shining sun.

Mehergan was celebrated in extravagant style at Persepolis, the seat of the Achaemenians. Not only was it the time for harvest, but it was also the time when taxes were collected. Visitors from different parts of the Persian empire brought gifts for the king – all a part of this lively festival.

Ancient Iranians looked to Mehr as being responsible for love and friendship, contracts and covenants, and also as a representation of light. Later, Mehr was also considered a symbol of the sun. There, Mehr was considered to be a god of heroism and warfare. Iranian soldiers were strong believers and had songs for Mehr. With the expansion of the empire, the worship of Mehr was taken to other countries.

Mithraism. By the first century CE, Mithraism was a popular religion in Rome and had gradually spread throughout western Europe as far as the shores of the Black Sea and the North Sea. Archeological excavations throughout Europe and countries neighboring Iran have uncovered the buried remains of hundreds of temples to Mehr. Many old churches of Europe were also built in the style of these temples.

To this day, there are some rituals, traditions, beliefs and prayers of Mithra, that have survived, even within Christianity. For example the holy day, Sunday, was the day named after the sun, i.e. Mehr. Other vestiges can be seen in the celebration of the Iranian festival of Yalda.

In ancient Iran, after Zarathushtra introduced his new religion, the high standing of Mehr diminished. Although Mehr was reduced in stature from a god to an angel, some of the rituals and traditions remained



King Manouchehr

PHOTO: SHAH NAMA OF FIRDAOSI BY DR. BAHMAN SOHRAB SUFTI

and were incorporated into services for Ahura Mazda.

The celebration. Long ago, Mehergan was celebrated with the same pageantry as Nouruz. People gave their king and each other, gifts. The rich gave gold and silver coins; heroes and warriors gave horses; and others gave gifts according to their means.

Today, Mehergan is celebrated by wearing new clothes and setting up a colorful table. The tablecloth is decorated with dry wild *marjoram*. Items placed on the table include: the *Avesta* prayerbook, a *mirror*, *sormeh dan* (antimony cellar), *rose water*, *sweets*, *flowers*, *vegetables*, fruits, especially *apples* and *pomegranates*, *almonds* and *pistachios*. A few *silver coins* and *senjed seeds* (fruit of the lotus tree) are placed in a dish of pleasant smelling wild *marjoram water*. An *incense burner* is set out, and fed with *kondor* (frankincense) and *espad* (rue seeds).

The family gathers together to pray. Sherbet is drunk, and antimony is rubbed on the face as a good omen. Handfuls of wild marjoram, senjed seeds and noghl (sugar plum) are sprinkled over each other as they embrace. ■

[From ZANT Newsletter, Dallas, 1999]

IN COMING ISSUES OF FEZANA JOURNAL

Winter 2001:

**The Dawn of a New Era:
Reunion in the Western
Diaspora.** Guest editors:
Ardeshir Anoshiravani and
Mehrborzin Soroushian.

Spring 2002

Health and Aging. Guest editors:
Dolly Dastoor and
Soonamai Desai



A special invitation to the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Chicago,

Congress Tel: (630) 789-1983, Email: zac@zac-chicago.org

Website: www.zac-chicago.org

REGISTRATION: Registration is open from September 1, 2001 through May 31, 2002, or until 1,500 participants are registered. No registrations will be accepted after the final deadline of May 31. Children under 10 will be offered a Children's Menu. Seating for all events (except the Opening Ceremony) will be reserved, and will be assigned in the order registrations are received.

	<i>Early Registration</i> (Postmarked by 12/31/01)	<i>Regular Registration</i> (Postmarked by 3/31/02)	<i>Late Registration</i> (Postmarked 5/31/02)
Adults	\$250	\$350	\$400
Children (Under 10)	\$175	\$275	\$325
Full-time Students (with ID)	\$175	\$275	\$325
70 & over	\$175	\$275	\$325

Register by mail: Return the attached Registration Form to: **Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago, Congress 2002 Registration, PO Box 947, Bloomingdale, IL 60108-0947, USA.** (Please use this address for registration only). Payment, in US dollars will be accepted by check or by credit card (Visa, Mastercard or Discover).

Register online: At www.zac-chicago.org. Payment by credit card only (Visa, Mastercard or Discover).

Cancellation: By March 21, 2002 will receive 90% refund; by May 31st will receive 50% refund.

HOTEL: The **Hyatt Regency Hotel**, (151 East Wacker Drive, Chicago, IL 60601) is located adjacent to the "Magnificent Mile" in the heart of Chicago's shopping and business district. The 36-story hotel offers a panoramic view of Lake Michigan and Chicago's dramatic skyline. Its atrium lobby is alive with lush flora and a sparkling pond. Walk to the historic Water Tower and shopping at Water Tower Place. For lovers of nightlife, the hotel is minutes from Rush Street. Art enthusiasts can visit the Art Institute or hop on a bus to see Dinosaur "Sue" at the Field Museum, or the whales at the Shedd Aquarium, the Adler Planetarium, Navy Pier or Sears Tower.

Hotel reservation: A special discounted room rate is available for \$125 per night plus tax for up to 4 persons. For room reservations call the Hyatt directly at (800) 233-1234 or (312) 565-1234; mention "Zoroastrian Congress". Be sure to call before June 1, 2002 to qualify for the special discount rate.

EXHIBIT SPACE: Zarathushti individuals, businesses and associations are invited to reserve an exhibit space (10 feet by 5 feet, with a table and 2 chairs) for \$50 for all three days (July 4, 5 and 6 from 8 am to 6 pm).

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

The Congress theme "*Advancing Communities, Empowering Generations*" is aimed at moving our communities forward in the new millennium by forming an understanding of the day-to-day challenges that confront us as North American Zarathushtis. Through plenary sessions, panel discussions and inter-generational group sessions, Congress 2002 promises to be the most engaging, inspiring and empowering Congress to date.

Wednesday July 3, 2002

12:00 noon **Zoroastrian Symphony Orchestra rehearsal.** Mandatory for all performers.

11:00 am - 2:00 pm **Tour 1: City of Chicago Bus Tour**, Guided tour, lunch included.
Tickets: \$30

6:30 pm **"Breaking-the-Ice" get-together** for the youth.
Meet old friends and make new ones. Meet at the hotel and walk over as a group to the **Grant Park Festival** to enjoy the Taste of Chicago, Grant Park Symphony Orchestra concert and the spectacular Independence Eve Fireworks on the lakefront.
Tickets: No charge

12th North American Zoroastrian Congress

Thursday July 4 - Sunday, July 7, 2002

Congress Office: **Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago, Congress 2002**
8615 Meadowbrook Drive, Hinsdale, IL 60521, USA

6:30 pm Free Evening. Walk over to the **Grant Park Festival** and enjoy the Taste of Chicago, Grant Park Symphony Orchestra concert and the spectacular Independence Eve Fireworks at the lakefront.

Thursday, July 4, 2002

9:00 am **Business Breakfast**, hosted by the World Zoroastrian Chamber of Commerce Chicago Chapter.
Tickets: \$25

10:00 - 11:30 am **Tour 2: Looping "The Loop" on the "L"**. A 1 1/2 hour guided tour on Chicago's famous elevated train. Involves some walking.
Tickets: \$10

1:00 pm **Opening Ceremonies**. Box lunch included.
Tickets: Included in registration

7:30 pm **Gala Dinner Banquet**, featuring a performance by the Zoroastrian Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Farobag Homi Cooper, and "Showtime at Z Apollo".
Tickets: \$25

11:00 pm **Disco**, for the young at heart, after the banquet.
Tickets: \$10

Friday, July 5, 2002

8:00 pm **"Gherno Ghambar" Parsi Natak**, Witness the antics of Dr. Vikaji Vaghmaru, F.R.C.S., I.M.S., and his assorted friends and family, in a hilarious, Parsi, Gujarati Natak (comedy) in two acts, directed by Roshan Patel.
Tickets: \$25, \$15, \$10

Midnight - 2:30 am **Moonlight Cruise** aboard the luxury yacht "Odyssey", with music, dancing and an incredible view of the Chicago skyline. Includes hors d'oeuvres, entertainment and cash bar. Open to adults over 21 only (valid ID required).
Tickets: \$45

Saturday, July 6, 2002

10:00 am **FEZANA Awards Brunch**, honoring outstanding Zarathushtis in North America.
Tickets: Included in registration

7:30 pm **Banquet-Dinner and Closing Ceremonies**. Game Show Night, with loads of laughs and parodies of popular TV game shows. Dance the night away to a DJ.
Tickets: Included in registration

Sunday, July 7, 2002

10:30 am **Jashan** at the Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr, Hinsdale. Chasni and lunch.
Tickets: Included in registration

Buses will leave the hotel at 8:30 am and at 10:00 am for the Darbe Mehr.
Buses will leave the Darbe Mehr for the hotel at 2:00 pm.
Bus Tickets: \$10 for the round trip

CONGRESS INFORMATION. Congress Registration Packages may be picked up at the **Congress Registration Desk** starting Wednesday, July 3rd, afternoon. Information on tours, sight-seeing and transportation will be available at the **Congress Hospitality Desk** starting Wednesday, July 3rd, 10 am.

12th NORTH AMERICAN ZOROASTRIAN CONGRESS, CHICAGO REGISTRATION FORM



Last Name _____	FirstName/M.I. _____
Address _____	
City _____	State _____ Zip _____ Country _____
Daytime Phone _____	Evening Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Congress Registration and Fees					
	Person 1	Person 2	Person 3	Person 4	Person 5
First Name and Middle Initial					
Type of Meal (Circle One)	Veg / Non-Veg / Child	Veg / Non-Veg / Child	Veg / Non-Veg / Child	Veg / Non-Veg / Child	Veg / Non-Veg / Child
Child/Full Time Student-Sr/Adult*					
Seating Preference (Circle One)	Adult / Youth / No Preference	Adult / Youth / No Preference	Adult / Youth / No Preference	Adult / Youth / No Preference	Adult / Youth / No Preference
Congress Registration Fee**					
Optional Events					
Tour of Chicago, July 3 (\$30)					
WZCC-CC Business Breakfast July 4 (\$25)					
Walking/Train Tour of Downtown Chicago, July 4 (\$10)					
Gala Orchestral Banquet, July 4 (\$25)					
Disco Night, July 4 (\$10)					
Parsi Gujarati Natak, July 5 (\$25/\$15/\$10)					
Moonlight Cruise, July 6, (\$45)					
Jashan and Lunch at Darbe Mehr July 7	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
Transportation to/from Darbe Mehr, July 7, Busses leave hotel at 8:30 AM and 10:00 AM (\$10)					
Exhibit Space (\$50 per space)					
Total Amount Due					

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Method of Payment (Circle One) Visa Master Card Discover Check (IN US FUNDS ONLY) *** Name on Credit Card _____ Credit Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____ Signature _____	Congress Use Only Date Received: _____ Date Entered: _____ Payment Processed: _____ Payment Cleared: _____ Confirmation Sent: _____
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* Photo ID will be required ** All charges payable in US Dollars only. Includes Opening Ceremony Box Lunch, FEZANA Brunch July 6, Game Show Night Dinner on July 6 and Jashan Lunch on July 7
 *** Checks should be made payable to ZAC and marked "Congress 2002".



12TH NORTH AMERICAN ZOROASTRIAN CONGRESS, CHICAGO
JULY 4 - 7, 2002

On behalf of the 12th North American Zoroastrian Congress, I invite your support, cooperation and interest in our fundraising initiatives. We depend heavily on individual, corporate and association support in the form of sponsorships, program book advertising, raffle donations and contributions. Our advertising price sheets are below:

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(8 1/2 x 11 high gloss)

1/2 page b&w	\$ 500
1 page b&w	\$1000
1 page b&w	\$1500
2 page spread COLOR	\$2500
Inside front or back, COLOR	\$2500
Inside front AND back cover	\$4500
Back cover COLOR	\$5000 (sold)

Special Event Booklets

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**Gala Orchestral Banquet, Parsi Gujarati Natak
and Closing Ceremony Banquet**

Business card	\$ 75 per event
1/2 page b&w	\$125 per event
1 page b&w	\$200 per event
Inside front cover, b&w	\$450 per event
Back cover, COLOR	\$900 per event

Please call me at (773) 955-9339 or (773) 955-5759 to offer your support. With my heartiest thanks,
Farobag Homi Cooper, *Co-chair, Congress 2002 Finance Committee.*

Zoroastrian Symphony Orchestra

● Attention Musicians ● Performance Opportunities ●

Based on the success of the Zoroastrian Symphony Orchestra at the World Congress in Houston, we invite you to be part of the ZSO that will perform at the North American Congress in Chicago. Professionals as well as amateur musicians of all ages who have attained a sufficient level of proficiency to perform in a symphonic setting are invited to apply. We invite those who performed in the last concert, and other musicians, to participate in the orchestra as well as perform as soloists. Composers who wish to have their works showcased are also invited to apply; ditto for conductors. To request an application, email to cyrusmehta@aol.com or visit www.zac-chicago.org.

Cyrus Mehta, *Administrative Director*
Farobag Homi Cooper, *Artistic Director*

● Attention Patrons of the Arts ●

On behalf of the ZSO, the Finance Committee is seeking donations from individuals and corporate sponsors. The ZSO will enhance upon the successful interplay of Zarathushti musicians and professionals by expanding the professional base so that each Zarathushti can sit side-by-side with a member of the Chicago Philharmonia. Several tiers of gifting, 100% tax-deductible, are available to our individual donors, and high visibility is assured for our corporate sponsors.



As a Special Premium, a Zarathushti donor whose contribution exceeds \$2500 can have a once-in-a-lifetime experience of conducting a short work on the night of the performance. For information or assistance, please contact **Farobag Homi Cooper**, *co-chair, Finance Committee*, at (773) 955-9339, email: F_Homi_Cooper@yahoo.com.

Adventurer makes it to shore



Adventurer, 54-year-old Jim Shekdar, civil engineer from UK becomes the first man to row across the Pacific unaided. His battered boat arrived on March 30, 2001 at North Stradbroke Island, off Brisbane, Australia, in dramatic style, as he was forced to swim the final 200 meters due to his boat capsizing owing to the "mountainous" surf. During his voyage he had survived attacks by the same large shark who persistently battered his boat for two days and endured high winds in the Pacific which almost caused him to capsize. Ironically his 23 foot boat is called *Le Shark*.

This Britisher, great-grandson of entrepreneur Cowasjee Variava of Karachi, started his journey nine months earlier, on June 29, 2000, from Ho, Peru. [From KZBM Newsletter].

AROUND THE WORLD

Antique copy of Shah Nameh found

KATHMANDU, AUG 7: An antique copy of the Shah Nameh stolen 22 years ago from the National Museum of Nepal, has been found. Three people who were trying to sell the rare book for 60 million rupees (800,000 dollars) were arrested by undercover police in Kathmandu.

The 1016-page book describes the achievements of Iranian kings who ruled from 360 BCE to 641CE. Written by Abdul Kashim Mansoor Firdowsi, it has 60,000 lines written in gold Persian script. "Apart from its antique value, the gold used in the book could cost millions of dollars," said the Kathmandu Valley police.

The arrested men had revealed that Kunwar worked in the royal palace two decades ago and stole the book from the museum in 1979 to present it to Prince Dharendra, the youngest brother of the late King Birendra. There are two other copies of the book in Indian libraries – in Patna (Bihar) and New Delhi.

[From Dawn, Karachi, August 8]

Tashkent targets Tajik minority

TASHKENT. The Uzbek education ministry has ordered the destruction of Tajik-language books in several parts of the country, claims the Independent Organization for Human Rights in Uzbekistan, IOHR. The ban is said to affect Samarkand and Bukhara, home to the republics largest Tajik communities.

The move stems from an executive order in May 1998, and a subsequent order issued by the education ministry last year for all "ideologically incorrect" books to be destroyed.

IOHR claims that the principal secondary school in Samarkand has signed over 2,336 scientific textbooks and 1,835 novels for destruction. Almost 90% were in Tajik. World classics are also being targeted: works by Avicenna, Shakespeare, Byron, Pushkin ... About 2 million ethnic Tajiks live in Uzbekistan ... the problems are attributed to tensions between the governments of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

[From The Times of Central Asia, May 3, 2001]

North American Zarathushti Community Awards - 2002

Advance Information

The *North American Zarathushti Community Awards - 2002* will be presented in the following five categories during the Twelfth North American Zoroastrian Congress, Chicago, in July 2002:

- Category A: Rohinton Rivetna Outstanding Zarathushti Award
- Category B: Excellence in Business or Profession Award
- Category C: Jamshed Pavri Humanitarian Service Award
- Category D: World Zarathushti Award for Excellence in Performing Arts, Painting and Literature
- Category E: Outstanding Young Zarathushti Award

The FEZANA Awards Committee will distribute nomination packages with full details of the award categories and their evaluation criteria to FEZANA Member Associations and Small Groups by the end of October 2001. The closing date for receipt of nominations by the Awards Committee will be January 2002. Contact Dinshaw Joshi, Chair, FEZANA Awards Committee, tel: (301) 654-6250, email: dfjoshi@erols.com

Tajik Zoroastrian Anjuman Head Murdered

Zarathushtis worldwide are condemning the murder of 37-year-old Roodaki Behdin, head of the Zoroastrian Mazdayasna Anjuman in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, on July 4.

The Iranian News Agency, IRNA, reported it briefly:

"Mr. Roodaki Samadi, Head of Zoroastrian Anjuman of Tajikistan, was murdered on Wednesday (July 4) while going to work, near Ferdosi Library in Doshanbeh."

Subsequently, Dr. Meher Master Moos, founder-president of Mumbai-based Mazdayasnie Monasterie and Zoroastrian College, who has over the last decade, been in close touch with the Zarathushti revival in Tajikistan, gave further details and put out a call for action to Zarathushtis around the world. She wrote:

"Late Mr. Roodaki [photo right, from the internet] was president of the Mazdayasna Anjuman and was working in Tajik Film Studios. He was doing lots of work helping the youth, especially from the northern mountain village areas where most of the people are of Zarathushti ancestry, to practice the Zarathushti faith. He had arranged for Mobed Jamshedi Kamran [of Sweden] to perform navjotes of about 15 such Iranian Tajiks in September 1999.

"In September 2001, there is the 10th Republic Anniversary Celebrations in Tajikistan with the 3rd Avesta World Conference organized by the Government of Tajikistan through the Academy of Science. I am invited to attend it. Late Mr. Roodaki was a member of the Avesta Conference organizing committee also.

"There is a fundamentalist group targeting pro-Zarathushti intellectuals who are trying to bring about a revival of the religion of Zarathushtra in Tajikistan ... Out of about six million people, about half are of Zarathushti ancestry and many want to return to the faith of their forefathers ..."

Dr. Moos is encouraging FEZANA, the World Zoroastrian Organization,

the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India and other Zarathushti associations to write to the Chairman, ECOSOC, at the UN and to the Secretary General at the UN to place this matter on their peace-keeping agenda, as a top priority. She also suggested creating media/news pressure to uphold human rights and freedom of religion in these countries.



FEZANA, which has NGO status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN is writing a letter to the UN, condemning these happenings.

Dr. Moos is encouraging Zarathushtis to "go *en masse* as a delegation to the celebrations in September and make our presence felt in Tajikistan as a world Zarathushti community capable and willing to support the Tajik President and the Academy of Sciences." For more information, please contact Dr. Moos at mazo-coltajik@rediffmail.com or mazo-col@vsnl.com.

Memorial day for victims of religious assassination. Zarathushtis around the world commemorated August 12, 2001 in memory of the

the Late Roodaki Behdin. The Board of Directors of the California Zoroastrian Center writes:

"We, the Zoroastrian community of Southern California, and as members of the worldwide Zoroastrian community, strongly condemn any acts of violence and intolerance that are perpetrated in the name of religion or race.

"We further abhor any acts of violence that spring from bigotry, hatred and religious dogma, against any individual or people, executed any time in the past, present or the future.

"We, hereby, wish to bring to the attention of the world that one such act of persecution targeted a member of the Tajik Zoroastrian community.

"On July 4, 2001, Roodaki Behdin, a 37 year old leader of the Zoroastrian community in Tajikistan, was shot 4 times, and assassinated in cold blood, for the sole reason that he was a Zoroastrian, practicing his faith, and leading his community.

"On August 12, 2001, at 4:00 pm, we will be holding a special memorial service to honor the life, valor and dignity of Roodaki Behdin, the late leader of the Tajik Zoroastrian community. And every year, thereafter, we declare the anniversary of Roodaki's assassination, as a Memorial Day to honor the lives and souls of all Zoroastrians as well as people of other faiths, who have become victims of religious bigotry and persecution, throughout the world.

"May Ahura Mazda bless his soul, and grant patience, courage and forgiveness to his young wife and 6-year-old son."

California Zoroastrian Center
8952 Hazard Avenue,
Westminster, CA 92683
RoodakiMemorial@hotmail.com
(714) 893-4737

The Roodaki Memorial Committee has set up an account for Roodaki's wife and son. Donations may be sent to: Roodaki Memorial Fund, Wells Fargo Bank, Acct. No. 710 274 9848, Routing No. 121 000 248. ■

ZWIN

Connecting our youth

ZWIN the Zoroastrian Women's International Network, as one of its numerous activities, is arranging for a group of young Zarathushtis from the US and other Western countries to visit India for two weeks: December 27th 2001 – January 11th, with an optional third week. Mr. Dinshaw Tamboly will coordinate the program in Mumbai, with Mrs. Silloo Kavarana, Mr. Bana and the WZO youth group.

Youth (between 18 and 25) will pay their own airfare, but will be warmly hosted by Zarathushti families in Mumbai. The first few days will be in Mumbai, getting a feel of the community, visiting community institutions, mixing with community youth and exchanging ideas. Then a visit to some fascinating heritage places in Gujarat for 3-4 days. Back to Mumbai, unwind, compare notes, shop, sightsee and fly back home, or stay an extra week – with home-stay hospitality and excursions in Mumbai, plus an opportunity to contribute to the lives of some fellow community members. It is also a great chance to meet and bond with young Zarathushtis from various parts of the world. For further details and applications, write to: Dr. Zareen Karani Araoz in the US (zareen@managingcultures.com), Dr. Dolly Dastoor in Canada (dastoor@total.net) and Farhad Billimoria in Australia (billimor@alphalink.com.au).

In June, ZWIN will sponsor and host youth from India and Pakistan in the US. Contact Hovi Shroff (hoves@aol.com).

ZWIN is now five months old with 150 members from four continents. To subscribe send email to subscribe-zwin3@yahoo.com or to zareen@managingcultures.com. ■

PHOTO: KEE PHOTOGRAPHICS, UK



At a dedication ceremony in May, the vast assembly hall at the new Zoroastrian Centre in London, UK, was named the Zartoshty Brothers Hall.

Dedication of Zartoshty Brothers Hall

Over 500 Zarathushtis assembled at the new Zoroastrian Centre at 440 Alexandra Avenue, Rayners Lane, Harrow, to participate in the jashan and program on Sunday, May 20th. Guest of honor was "our munificent benefactor Mobed Mehraban Zartoshty" who had flown in from California for the event. Among local dignitaries present were The Mayor of Harrow and Lady Mayoress, the former Mayor of Harrow and his wife and the MP for Harrow West. The function was also attended by dignitaries of the inter-faith community.

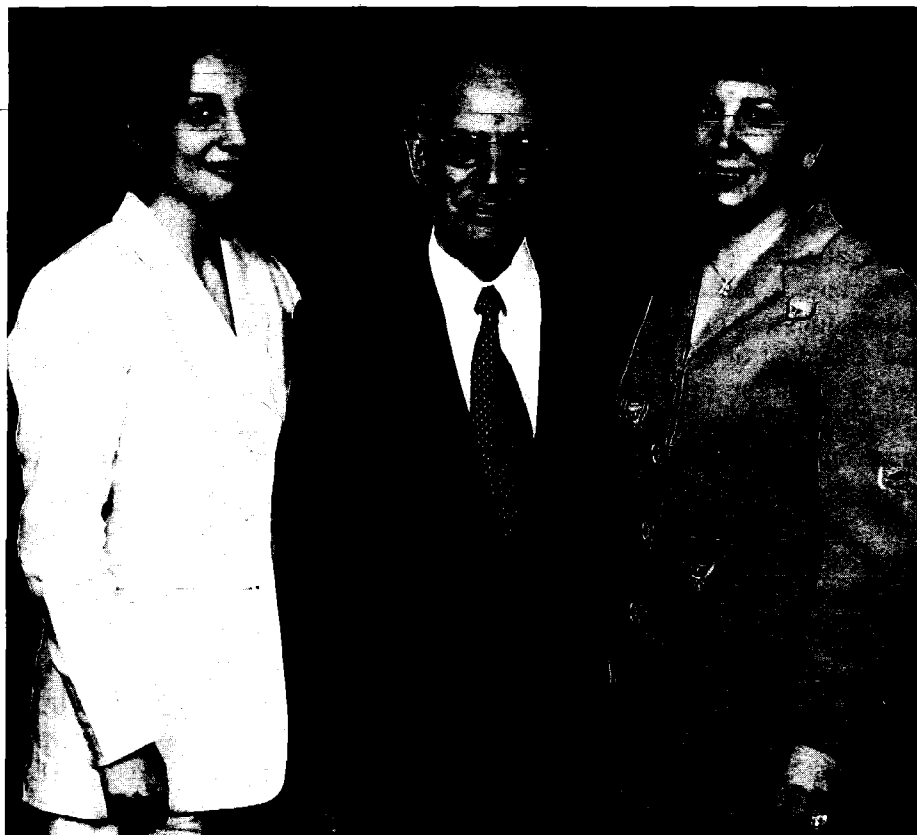
Mehraban Zartoshty unveiled a plaque naming the vast Assembly Hall as the Zartoshty Brothers Hall. Mehraban was escorted to the plaque by the assembled mobeds, past and present trustees and office-bearers of ZTFE, to the tune of *Chhaiye Hame Zartoshti*, as the large audience rose and gave him a standing ovation.

The jashan was performed by Ervad Sahebs Rustom Bhedwar, Zal

Sethna, Homi Desai, Keki Kanga and Farhad Sethna. Ervads Bhedwar and Sethna presented Mobed Zartoshty a 'gooraj' (holy priestly sceptre) on behalf of ZTFE, to thunderous applause from the congregation. It was the highest honor that our Ervad Sahebs could confer on a fellow mobed.

Cllr. Keith Toms said: "Harrow would be richer with its Zoroastrian presence ... it was a very important day for Harrow to be host to one of the oldest religions of the world." The Mayor of Harrow expressed his happiness that Harrow would henceforth be the new home of the Zoroastrian community. The MP for Harrow West expressed confidence that Zoroastrians would restore this beautiful art deco building to its former glory, and pledged his help.

Chair of the New Premises Steering Committee, Shahrokh Shahrokh welcomed the distinguished guests. ZTFE president Dorab Mistry thanked "three generations of the



Three generations of the Zartoshty family graced the dedication of the Zartoshty Brothers Hall. From left, grand-daughter Anahita Jamshidian, Mobed Mehraban Zartoshty and daughter Vida Jamshidian.

Zartoshty family" for honoring the ZTFE with their presence. He described Mobed Mehraban as the "greatest living Zoroastrian philanthropist of our times" and promised to make this "the finest Zoroastrian institution in the Western world."

In a moving response, Mobed Mehraban spoke of the tradition of charity that had been inculcated into him and his brother by their father Jamshid. Referring to the vast sums they have donated, he said, "We are simply doing our duty. To give is very easy, to put that donation to good use is a big job." He praised the work of the ZTFE and expressed his fond hope that the new Centre and the Atash Dadgah would soon be commissioned.

Mobed Mehraban made yet another generous pledge: the Zartoshty Family will match pound for pound all further monies raised by ZTFE for the refurbishment of the new Center and the Atash Dadgah building. ■ [From ZTFE Newsletter, June 2001].

Chair in Zoroastrianism established at SOAS

The School for Oriental and African Studies, London University, in conjunction with ZTFE, organized a Special Lecture in memory of the Late Mobed Faridoon Zartoshty. The lecture, on "*Reward and Recompense in Zarathushtra's Message*" was delivered by Dr. Almut Hintze, the current Zartoshty Brothers Lecturer at SOAS.

The Zartoshty Brothers Chair in Zoroastrianism has been established at SOAS. ZTFE's past president Rusi Dalal gave a background of Zoroastrian studies at SOAS; the many distinguished academics associated with this subject at SOAS; and how the Chair came to be established – thanks to an endowment of £210,000 by the Zartoshty Brothers. A special memento was presented to Mobed Mehraban by Prof. John Hinnells on behalf of SOAS and ZTFE. It was a memorable event hosted by this most prestigious seat of religious studies. ■

Iranica at SOAS: a Brief History

Origins and development of the world's leading center of Zoroastrian and Iranian studies

By Burzine K. Waghmar
London, U.K.

The School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) was established in 1916 as a distinct college of the University of London for the learning and research of dead as well as living (both major and lesser known) Oriental and African languages and dialects and their cultures.

Zoroastrianism, within the context of Iranian studies, has been taught here since its earliest days. By Iranian studies or Iranistics I mean the study of pre-Islamic Iran, which was geographically a broad cultural continuum stretching from Iraq to Xinjiang, the westernmost province of the People's Republic of China. Persian studies, on the other hand, deals with the study of medieval and modern Iran and Perso-Islamic culture. Despite a tendency to conflate or denote either one loosely, one must distinguish and periodize Iranian studies from prehistory to the Arab conquest. Programs are offered in both Iranian and Persian studies at SOAS.

Inasmuch as *Ervad Dr. Jamshed Unvala* taught as Lecturer in Iranian Languages and Indo-Germanic Philology in 1921-23, the formal beginnings can be traced to a lectureship funded by the school and partly through Parsi benefaction. *Professor Sir Harold Bailey* served as the first Parsee Community Lecturer as this appointment came to be designated from 1929 until his departure in 1936 for the University of Cambridge. *Walter Bruno Henning*, one of the greatest Iranists of the last century and a protégé of F. C. Andreas of

Göttingen, Germany, then succeeded him as the next Parsee Community Lecturer in 1936 and rapidly rose to a Senior Lecturer (1939-47). Henning left Germany as he would not compromise with the Nazis and because his wife Maria Polotsky (sister of the renowned scholar H. J. Polotsky) was a Jew. With the outbreak of war, SOAS was evacuated to Cambridge and the government interned Henning along with other German residents. **S. H. Taqizadeh**, the Iranian savant and later ambassador to Great Britain also taught during this period. When the school reopened after the war in London, Henning spent the academic year 1946-47 as Visiting Professor of Indo-Iranian studies at Columbia University, New York. When he returned he was promoted with a change of title to Reader of Central Asian studies in 1947. He was elevated in the same year to a Professor of Central Asian studies, a chair he held until poor health compelled him to move to the University of California, Berkeley in 1961. One of his pupils and the doyenne of Zoroastrian studies, **Mary Boyce**, succeeded him as Professor of Iranian studies from 1963 to 1982. Earlier, Boyce had been a Lecturer (1947-58) and Reader in Iranian studies (1958-63). Another distinguished pupil of Henning is **David Neil MacKenzie** who studied as well as taught at SOAS as Lecturer in Kurdish (1955-61), Lecturer in Iranian Languages (1961-65) and Reader in Iranian Languages (1965-75). MacKenzie subsequently left to become Professor of Iranian studies at his teacher's *alma mater*, the University of Göttingen in 1975.

A. D. H. Bivar arrived at SOAS as Lecturer in Central Asian Art and Archaeology (1960-86) and later became Professor of Iranian Studies (1987-92). Bivar's courses in historical geography, art and archaeology, numismatics, and glyptics, enriched a curriculum otherwise solely philological in scope. (Textual and inscriptional remains basically determine the study of ancient Iran and the first

demand made on the student is a linguistic understanding of these sources without which further inquiry is inconceivable.) **Shaul Shaked**, an Iranist and Semitist of rare breadth, was briefly an Assistant Lecturer (1964-65) before returning home to teach at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. **Ronald Emmerick**, today's foremost expert on Khotanese and a student of H. W. Bailey, also was a Lecturer in Iranian studies (1964-67). **John Hinnells**, a name more familiar to Zoroastrians, especially Parsis, first came to SOAS for postgraduate work in 1965-67; he returned in 1993 as Professor of Comparative Religion and to chair

“ Thanks to the Zartoshty brothers, SOAS is now the only institution in the world where the first ever post in Zoroastrian studies exists. ”

the newly founded Department for the Study of Religions until his retirement in 1998. **Philip Kreyenbroek**, a former student of Mary Boyce, was appointed as Lecturer in Modern Iranian Languages (1988-93) and then Reader in Iranian Languages and Religions (1993-96). He then left to succeed MacKenzie in Göttingen.

Nicholas Sims-Williams and Almut Hintze teach Iranian studies at present. Since 1994, Sims-Williams, the world's leading authority on Bactrian and Sogdian, and the most outstanding pupil of the late **Ilya Gershevitch**, has been Professor of Iranian and Central Asian studies. He had been a Lecturer in Iranian Languages (1976-89) and Reader in Iranian studies (1989-94) before assuming the mantle in this line of succession. **Dr. Almut Hintze** is the Zartoshty Brothers Lecturer in Zoroastrianism at SOAS since September 2000. A newly endowed position, it was

established thanks to the munificence of two outstanding Zoroastrian philanthropists, Mehraban Zartoshty and his recently departed brother Faridoon. Two anonymous donors have also bequeathed by legacy sums that will eventually upgrade the lectureship to that of a chair in professorial capacity. Prior to her appointment, Hintze, who had studied at Oxford, Erlangen and Berlin, and is an acclaimed Indo-Iranist of the German tradition, had taught as a Visiting Lecturer in Zoroastrian studies (1998-2000). Visiting scholars in the past have also been **Jes Asmussen**, **Jacques Duchesne-Guillemin**, **Desmond Durkin-Meisterernst**, and **Samuel Lieu**.

A range of Old, Middle and New Iranian languages are taught at SOAS: Old Persian, Avestan, Parthian, Pahlavi, Manichean Middle Persian and Parthian, Sogdian, Bactrian, Khotanese, Persian, Kurdish, Pashto, and Baluchi. Courses in Zoroastrianism currently available at the undergraduate and postgraduate level are: “*Zoroastrian Set Texts (Avestan)*”, “*Zoroastrian Set Texts (Pahlavi)*”, “*Zoroastrianism in the Ancient and Modern Worlds*”, “*Text and Context in Zoroastrianism*”, “*Zoroastrianism: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*”, and “*Zoroastrian Literature in Translation*”. Instruction in Sanskrit and Gujarati has been available for well over half a century at SOAS too should the student choose to focus on Parsi literature and history.

The list of those who have studied either full or part time at SOAS certainly reads as a who's who in Iranian scholarship: **Mary Boyce**, **Christopher Brunner**, **Carlo Cereti**, **N. K. Chegini**, **Vesta Curtis**, **Almuth Degener**, **Richard Frye**, the late **Ilya Gershevitch**, **Georgina Herrmann**, **Mahmoud Jaafari-Dehaghi**, **John Hinnells**, **D. N. MacKenzie**, the late **Mahyar Navabi**, **Jenny Rose**, **James Russell**, **D. Sarkarati**, **A. Shapur Shahbazi**, **Shaul Shaked**, **Sarah Stewart**, the late **Ahmad Tafazzoli**, **Alan Williams**, **Y. Yamamoto**, **Ehsan Yarshater**, and **Yutaka Yoshida**.

Three Parsi-Zoroastrians can also be counted among SOAS alumni: *Dastur Hormazdyar Mirza* and the late *Ervad Peshotan Anklesaria* who received doctorates under W. B. Henning in 1942 and 1958 respectively; and *Dastur Firoze Kotwal*, a postdoctoral research fellow under Mary Boyce in 1966-67 and temporary Lecturer in Zoroastrian rituals in 1973.

Links between SOAS and the Americas are also long-standing. While *Frye* and *Russell* of Harvard and *Yarshater* of Columbia were at SOAS, *Martin Schwartz* studied at Berkeley under Henning, and after the latter's untimely demise, by correspondence with Ilya Gershevitch, Henning's oldest SOAS student.

Thanks to the Zartoshty brothers, SOAS is now the only institution in the world where the first ever post in Zoroastrian studies exists. Under the aegis of the *Zartoshty Brothers Fund*, extremely generous bequests have also been made to the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute and the Bombay Parsee Punchayet Trust Funds and Properties. It is now possible for the former to reprint rare works on Zoroastrianism and the latter to offer scholarships and sponsor popular lectures on religious topics across India for the laity.

Another first at SOAS is the inauguration of the *Faridoon Zartoshty Memorial Lecture* series in May 2001. This complements the annual *Dastur Sohrab Kutar Memorial Lecture* instituted at the school in 1998 by Dr. Shirinbanoo Kutar in memory of her husband and High Priest of the British community. Both these endowments now make it possible to invite leading Iranists to deliver public lectures at SOAS on a topic pertaining to Zoroastrianism.

That all this has come to fruit is doubtless due to the solid foundation that had already been laid since the last century. At a time when Iranistics both in terms of funding and numbers languishes around the world—especially the U.S. where the disparity between abundant

To the Zarathushtis of USA and Canada,

Speakers at North American Congresses since the early 1970s, and in various newsletters, have called for the establishment of a post in Zoroastrian Studies at a major university. Such a post has now been established at the School of Oriental and African Studies, a college of the University of London with a high international reputation. Two anonymous benefactors have willed legacies substantial enough for an endowed professorial Chair to be established there in due course. In order to enable teaching and research to begin at once, the Zartoshty brothers made a generous donation, which has been supplemented by SOAS itself. Dr Almut Hintze was appointed the Zartoshty Brothers Lecturer in the summer of 2000, and she has started courses at undergraduate and graduate level. SOAS is an appropriate place for this unique post, because of the range of scholarship among its faculty members, its outstanding library and the proximity of other libraries such as the British Library with its records from the old India Office. London is also the base of the oldest Zoroastrian diaspora association, namely the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe (ZTFE), and SOAS has a long tradition of working together with Zoroastrians from both India and Iran.

What we are now seeking to do is to raise funds to enable Zarathushtis, as well as non-Zarathushtis, to study their noble religion, at whatever level is appropriate. All donations to the Zoroastrian Studies Fund are being recorded in a book of donors held at SOAS. Large donations may have a named Scholarship. Those making donations in North America may wish to know that the US-based CAF America can accept donations on behalf of SOAS, which will then be tax deductible for US citizens. Details can be obtained from Professor Brian Bocking (Study of Religions, SOAS, Thornhaugh St., Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG) or a gift form can be obtained directly from CAF America, King Street Station, 18000 Diagonal Road, Suite 150, Alexandria, VA 22314-2840.

FEZANA policies and newsletters have frequently given priority to the importance of a good education in Zoroastrian Studies for the younger generation if they are to withstand the pressures of the melting pot and of wider society in the New World. How can the young preserve their identity if they do not have a good basic knowledge of the history and traditions of their community? The courses offered at SOAS can make a valuable contribution to the task of handing on the Zarathushti heritage through imparting knowledge and scholarly training both to future teachers and to those simply wishing to learn. The qualifications which can be obtained there range from one-year certificates to doctoral degrees. Details of course options can be had from Dr Almut Hintze at SOAS. We hope that some of the Zarathushti associations in USA and Canada will follow the example of ZTFE in promising support for any of their members accepted for such studies at SOAS.

John Hinnells

On behalf of the Zartoshty Brothers Lectureship Committee

resources and stark reality is lamentable—it is heartening to note that this heritage of learning in Iranistics at SOAS simply never did and still does not exist elsewhere. ■

Burzine K. Waghmar obtained his A.B. and M.A. from the College of

William and Mary and Boston University and is now a research candidate in Iranian and Central Asian studies at SOAS as well as co-editor of the school's Circle of Inner Asian Art newsletter. His dissertation in progress is a comparative examination of Bactrian, Khotanese, Pahlavi, and Sogdian texts.



PHOTO: SHAHROKH MEHTA

Honors for “Apro Zubin”

On April 25, 2001, the president of France, Jacques Chirac [*photos above and right*] presented to music conductor Maestro Zubin Mehta, France’s highest award – the **Legion of Honor**. This prestigious award was created by Napoleon in 1802, to honor civilian and military merit and is bestowed on French nationals as well as foreigners.

On Zubin’s 65th birthday, on April 29th, 2001, the Vienna Philharmonic gave Zubin the **Lifetime Honorary Membership** of the prestigious Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra [*story on next page*].

In March 2001, Mehta received the second highest award, Padma Vib-

hushan from the Government of India. He was the recipient of Padma Bhushan in the 1970s.



PHOTO: D. SARDENNE, FRANCE

On March 11, 2001, *A Gala Evening in Parma, Italy*, brought the greatest stars from opera world together to

celebrate Giuseppe Verdi’s centennial. Stars such as Domingo, Carreras and 17 other top names from the world stage superbly performed some of Verdi’s best known pieces conducted by Zubin Mehta in front of an enthusiastic audience of 3,500 people. A worldwide audience viewed this event, which was televised in 80 countries and recorded for DVD and video release. Mehta, one of the greatest conductors of all time, gifted with the best directorial technique, successfully conducted the demanding program of approximately 3 hours to perfection with masterful command of the orchestra and the chorus.

*By Shahrokh Mehta
Dewitt, New York*

Mehta honoured by Vienna Philharmonic

BERLIN: On his 65th birthday, renowned conductor Zubin Mehta could not have asked for a better gift – lifetime honorary membership of the prestigious Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.

Apart from the rave reviews he has been getting as the director general of the Bavaria State Opera, Mehta's crowning success, to quote the German media, has come in the form of this rare honour recently conferred upon him by the orchestra.

mehta, who turned 65 on April 29, has been the director general of the Munich-based Bavarian State Opera since 1998. His contract was further extended until 2006. Mehta has had a four-decade old affinity with the Austrian capital, the city of his alma mater, the Music Academy of Vienna, where he studied piano, classical music composition and conducting as a young man of 18 ...

Mehta's charismatic personality has won him a bevy of fans in Germany. His two concerts in Munich and Berlin recently in aid of the January 26th earthquake victims of Gujarat were a moving tribute ...

German music lovers say that under Mehta, classical music acquires the trappings of show business, and that he loves creating spectacular settings ... Some of his most impressive performances have taken the form of open-air events in the Israeli capital Tel Aviv.

Mehta has maintained strong ties with Israel ... He has said, "establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Israel had been his lifelong dream that had come true." Mehta was appointed by the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra as a music director for life ... ■

The Other Mehtas

"Apro Zubin's" cousin, Dady Mehta and his son Navroj Mehta perform in San Diego



from Juillard, he served as concertmaster of the New World Symphony. He is Second Violin of the San Diego Symphony, and the Principal Second Violin of the San Diego Chamber Orchestra.

Dady Mehta [far left] was born in Shanghai, to parents Nariman (Mehli Mehta's older brother) and Mina

On April 27, the University of San Diego (USD), division of continuing education, presented "*The Mehtas in Recital*." Father Dady on the piano and son Navroj on the violin entertained the audience with their keyboard mastery and violin virtuosity in a program of Bach, Debussy and Brahms.

Navroj Mehta [above right] is the older son of Dady and Martha Mehta. The San Diego Union Tribune calls him "... charming, informative and dynamic!" As outreach conductor with San Diego Symphony, Music Director of the Alcala Park Symphony and Director of the VOSA Chamber Music Series in San Diego, Navroj Mehta has been acclaimed for his musicianship and audience rapport. Mehta has appeared as guest conductor with many orchestras, both in USA and abroad, and he performs regularly as violin soloist.

Mehta's passion for music carries him into classrooms wherever he goes. He directs In-School Concerts for the San Diego Chamber Orchestra, and lectures at the University of San Diego. Mehta attended Indiana University as a student of Josef Gingold, where he was named a Vice-Presidential scholar. He continued his violin studies with Nathan Milstein, and at the Juillard School. Upon graduation

Mehta. He received his first musical education under the tutelage of Hungarian pianist, Bela Belai. At 17, he went to Paris and earned the Artist's Diploma from the Ecole Normale de Musique in two years. Further piano study followed at the Vienna State Academy of Music, where his graduation recital earned the schools highest honor. In international competitions, he was a prizewinner in Geneva, and received awards in Munich, Warsaw and Vienna. As a teacher, he has been associated with the Vienna State Academy of Music, was "pianist in residence" at the School of Music, St. Andrew's College, North Carolina, and is currently on the piano and chamber music faculty of Eastern Michigan University.

NOTE: Dady's younger cousin, "**Apro Zubin Mehta**", followed Dady to the Vienna State Academy of Music in 1954, where Dady had already made a name for himself as a young pianist virtuoso.

Dady Mehta's younger son **Bejun Mehta**, is one of the handful of leading Countertenors in the world, sought after by major operatic performances around the world. Bejun's bookings now exceed three years in advance on international commitments. ■

By **Shahrokh Mehta**
Dewitt, New York



میخواهیم بدانیم چه عده از ما زرتشتیان ایرانی
ارزشهای سنتی خود را بامریکا آورده و انرا حفظ کرده ایم
وایا این نقل و انتقال به کشورهای دیگر با ارزشهای
سنتی مختلف اثری در زندگی فرزندان جوانان ما
داشته است یا خیر؟

فرزندان ما خود را چگونه معرفی میکنند

پژوهش نشان میدهد وقتی از جوانان سوال میشود که شما زرتشتی ایرانی هستید یا زرتشتی
امریکایی بیشتر آنها جواب میدهند ما نصف زرتشتی ایرانی و نصف دیگر زرتشتی امریکایی هستیم
اما کلا از غذا و موزیک ایرانی لذت میبریم وقتی از یک دختر ۱۴ ساله پرسیدم تو فکر میکنی کجایی
هستی؟ او گفت من سیتیزن دنیا هستم او نمیخواست خودش را به هیچ کشوری وابسته بداند ولیکن
عده ایی دیگر نظرات متفاوتی دارند. بعضی از فرزندان ما به کلاسهای فارسی و دینی رفته اند و آنها
بیشتر سعی میکنند با دیگران به فارسی صحبت کنند حتی در مدارس اگر دوست ایرانی داشته باشند
سعی میکنند با یکدیگر بفارسی صحبت کنند و به ان ببالند.

وضع فرزندان ما در مدارس

گروهی از فرزندان ما فکر میکنند در مدارس معلمین و سایر کارکنان و حتی دانش آموزان و دانشجویان
بین آنها وسایر جوانان امریکایی تفاوت میگذارند. گاهی اوقات این حقیقت است و ما باید انرا بپذیریم
. اگر مادران و پدران سعی کنند در مدارس منشا خدماتی باشند و سنت زیبای ما را به سایر افراد
نشان بدهند در تغییر عقیده این گونه افراد اثر مثبتی خواهد داشت با یستی قبول کرد که جوانان ما
تحت فشار روحی فراوان هستند در منزل سنت ها را یا میگیرند و در محیط بیرون از منزل آزادی بی
حد و طرز زندگی که بکلی متفاوت و متضاد است و نمیدانند چه باید انجام دهند بعضی ها به لباسهای
گشاد بزرگ رو میاورند و از کلمات بسیار عامیانه استفاده میکنند. آنها با فرهنگ و حتی با پدر و مادر
خود غریبه هستند چون زبان آنها را نمی دانند.



چه ارزش سنتی پدران و مادران قبول دارند

بیشتر پدران و مادران برای آزادی و زندگی بهتر فرزندان‌شان به کشورهای دیگر کوچ کرده اند اکثر ما ایرانیان بصورت‌های گوناگون و با سختی و زحمات فراوان آب و خاک و وطن عزیز خود را ترک کرده ایم . ماهمیشه زرتشتی ایرانی میمانیم و سعی میکنیم که آداب و رسوم ایرانی زرتشتی خود را حفظ نماییم . بهترین هدیه ای که هر پدر و مادر زرتشتی ایرانی میتواند به فرزندان خود بدهد همان حفظ سنت‌های خوب ایرانی است .

چه باید کرد

اصول اساسی دین زرتشت - آداب و رسوم - زبان - خصلت خوب زرتشتی بودن - موزیک و پابند به گفتار نیک و کردار نیک و پندار نیک بودن را به فرزندان خود بیاموزید . وقتی پدر و مادری این هدایا را به فرزندان خود اهدا کردند دیگر نباید نگران اثرات سنت‌های سایر کشورها باشند . چون فرزندان ما سنت‌های خوب ایرانی زرتشتی بودن را یاد گرفته و جایی برای سنت‌های پوچ و بی محتوا ندارند حتی اگر آنها سنت های کشورهای دیگر را به سنت‌های خودشان اضافه کنند اطمینان میدهم که فقط تمام ارزشها و سنت‌های خوب آن کشورها خواهد بود لذا جای نگرانی نخواهد بود که گفته شود چون (بطور مثال) فرزندان من در آمریکا بزرگ شده سنت‌های نابجا و نادرست آنها را یاد گرفته . اگر شما پدر و مادرها سنت‌های خوب خود را به آنها یاد داده باشید جایی برای سنت‌های از هم گسیخته نخواهند داشت اما یادتان نرود شما هم که پدر و مادرهای خوبی هستید نه تنها باید سنت‌های غلط و دور از حقیقت خود را دور ریخته و به آنها منتقل نکنید بلکه سنت‌های خوبتر و بهتر را جایگزین آنها نمایید . پدر و مادرها باید سعی کنند حد اقل ماهی یکبار فرزندان خود را در مراسم دینی و سنتی شرکت داده و این مراسم را کوچک و بی ارزش جلوه ندهند . اصول دین زرتشت و سنت‌های خوب ایرانی میتواند مانند چسب محکمی خانواده را محکم و بهم پیوسته و پابرجا نگهدارد چون خانواده یکی از مهم ترین اساس فرهنگ ایران است و این کلام را با یستی به فرزندان خود بگوییم . با عشق و محبت فرزندان را با گذشته پر افتخارشان آشنا نمایید بدون اینکه قضاوت و افکار خودتان را به آنها تزریق نمایید بگذارید خود آنها تصمیم بگیرند . عقیده من اینست که اصلا فرهنگ امریکایی قابل شرحی وجود ندارد . امریکا کشور مهاجرین است و حتی کسانی که قرن‌ها اینجا زندگی کرده اند خود جز مهاجرین بوده اند . فرزندان ما این کشور را دوست دارند با یستی فرهنگ‌های خوب این کشور را به فرهنگ‌های خودتان اضافه کنید و سپس در اختیار آنها قرار دهید . به فرزندان خود بگویید چون در امریکا زندگی میکنیم دلیل ندارد که هویت خود را که زرتشتی ایرانی است از دست بدهیم حتی عده ای از فرزندان که در ایران هستند مسلما از طریق رادیو و تلویزیون و اینترنت از سنت‌ها و آداب و رسوم کشورهای دیگر آگاه میشوند . بگویید ما چون زرتشتی ایرانی هستیم به بعضی از سنت‌های آنها اعتقاد نداریم و آنها را انجام نمیدهیم ولی



هیچوقت این سنتها را تحقیر نکنید چون این عمل باعث طغیان فرزندانمان میشود بگذارید خودشان تشخیص داده و انتخاب کنند. هیچوقت به فرزندان خود نگویید تو زرتشتی ایرانی هستی او ممکن است زرتشتی امریکایی باشد اگر هویت زرتشتی بودن و ایرانی بودن را به او یاد داده باشید اگر نوز و مهرگان و جشن سده و موزیک ایرانی را به او یاد داده باشید او با افتخار اعلام خواهد کرد که من زرتشتی ایرانی هستم. یادتان نرود فرزندان ما در دنیای ما زندگی نمیکنند بلکه ما باید در دنیای آنها زندگی کنیم جوانان ما بسیار قابل احترامند. بعضی از آنها هدفهای خود را پیدا نکرده اند اما لیلیش این نیست که چون ایرانی هستند نتوانسته اند هدفهای خود را پیدا کنند اغلب جوانان ما بسیار مودب و موفق هستند و داشتن پدر و مادرهایی که اعتقاد به ارزشهای فامیلی و خانوادگی و سنتی دارند و آنها را در وجود جوانان پرورش داده اند کمک فراوانی به پیشرفت آنها نموده است.

Have we as Zarathushtis preserved our religion and culture here in America? How has it played a role in the lives of our children?

By: Fereshteh Khatibi

Part 1: Your child's identity

Most children have the problem of identifying themselves with a specific culture. When many children were asked which culture they identified with, Persian-Zarathushti or American-Zarathushti, many responded by stating they had a strong influence from both. A majority considered themselves about equally Persian and American. Moreover, one 14-year-old girl insisted rather emphatically that she is a world citizen and was uncomfortable with being placed in any one category. As a group many children do not consider the local Persian-Zarathushti population as their primary source for new friends and acquaintances but they do very much enjoy some aspects of the culture (Food, Music) in their leisure time outside the home. When it comes down to a child's identity, it would be impossible for him/her to identify with one culture but instead it would be to their benefit to learn the good aspects of them all.

Part 2: Children and the School Environment

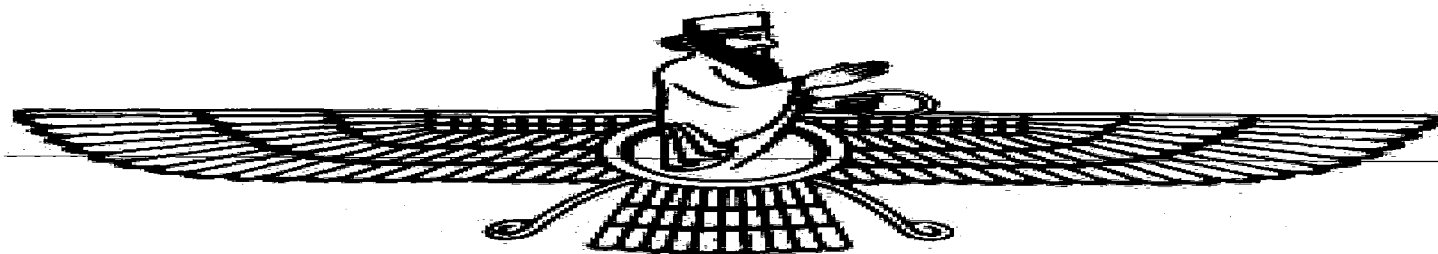
The majority of children that have attended school are split on the perception that the school system is supportive of their Zarathushti culture. Many pointed out that discrimination based on their culture has been present. The best way for parents to solve these discrimination problems is to get involved in the child's education. While a few children have experienced problems with other students because of prejudice against their culture, all of them report no difficulty in sharing their culture with their classmates or speaking up to correct someone who has made a mistake regarding the culture.

Part 3: Cultural Adaptation by the Parents

It's very important for parents to pass on their culture to their children. Parents see aspects of the culture such as language, music, and food as an important gift to their children and a way for them to easily connect to the culture. Parents should not be overly worried that other cultures might be somehow making their children "less Persian-Zarathushti". Instead parents must do their best to teach the Persian-Zarathushti culture while accepting the fact that other cultures will be of some influence in their child's life.

Part 4: What we as parents must do

As parents, we must do our best to present the culture in the best of way without actually pressuring our children to learn it this way. Once the culture has been introduced, the child will carry the qualities of the culture around with them and utilize it in their everyday life. The culture can serve as the glue to maintain family unity and will be very important to the success of the children.



~Youthfully Speaking~

“The mouthpiece for the next generation”

“Welcome to another edition of Youthfully Speaking! Our staff is always on the lookout for ideas and suggestions for future issues. We look to the youth in the community to supply us with their thoughts on the religion and community. Take this opportunity to let others know what is on your mind. Use this journal as a tool for action. Write to us... We're waiting to hear from ya'll!”

Youthfully Speaking ~Z-Editors~

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Feel free to submit photos, articles, or any comments you might have to one of the editors. We love to hear from you!!?



IN EVERY ISSUE OF YOUTHFULLY SPEAKING, A QUESTION WILL BE ASKED TO THE ZARATHUSHTI YOUTH CONCERNING TOPICS AND ISSUES IN OUR RELIGION. THIS TIME THE QUESTION IS...

DO YOU THINK PARENTS SHOULD PERFORM NAVJOTE OF THEIR KIDS AT SUCH A YOUNG AGE, OR SHOULD THEY ALLOW THE KIDS TO MAKE THEIR OWN DECISIONS ONCE THEY HAVE COME OF AGE AND KNOW THE ACTUAL MEANINGS OF THE PRAYERS?

I think the right thing to do would be allowing the child to decide when he/she wants to have the Navjote done. Because when the child gets it done at a young age he/she doesn't even know what's happening. I see that happening every time I go to a Navjote.

Arash Bastani
Newark, NJ

WELL, I FIND IT OKAY FOR PARENTS TO ALLOW THEIR KIDS TO BE NAVJOTE AT YOUNG AGE BECAUSE THEY ARE WORRIED WHEN THE CHILD WILL GET OLDER, THEY WILL FEEL TO EMBARRASSED TO GET IT FINALLY DONE. ALSO, THEY WILL FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE AT SUCH AN OLD AGE. BUT I THINK THAT THE KIDS REALLY DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY ARE SAYING AT THEIR NAVJOTE.

RUSTOM SETHNA
LANSING, MI

I think parents need to make sure their kids know the prayers and the meanings of the prayers prior to the Navjote. As long as the kid knows exactly what he/she is accepting, I find no reason why the navjote should not be done at a young age.

Shireen Irani
Albany, NY



Kankash Camp @ San Jose, California



By: Nikan Khatili

As I continue to travel around North America, I made my first stop in San Jose, California for the annual Kankash summer camp. The camp took place for four days at the local Darehmehr from Thursday July 26th through Sunday July 29th. The camp attendance was especially large this year with over 100 youth present running from the ages of 13 all the way up to 23. I myself was one of the many youth counselors over the age of 18, there ready to help out the younger generations of Zarathushtis in any possible way.

A typical day at camp started off with an early morning prayer that had full youth participation. After prayer, it was off to religious classes where the younger youth would have an opportunity to learn about the religion and have their questions answered by the older youth. This activity really seemed to stimulate the minds of the majority of youth attendees. Many of the youth were comfortable to talk about their problems or share their ideas regarding the religion simply because they were in the presence of their youthful friends. As the day came to an end, it was time to make new friends and strengthen the bonds between the old ones. Social activities were organized that ranged from sport competitions to water fights, to simply group games so that each camp attendee could be guaranteed to make a whole bunch of friends before the camp was over.

The overall experience a youth learns at this camp or any other camp is priceless. From learning that extra piece of knowledge that removed some confusion about the religion for you, to the lifelong friendships that are created at camp, nothing can ever be forgotten!! On the next page, you will see a few photos that I have hand picked from my photo collection of camp. If you are wondering who that hot stud is getting his Navjote (Sedreh Pushi), just for your information, that's me! This camp was especially special to me because I got to share my Navjote with all my friends and family. So the next time you are thinking about attending camp, but are wondering if it's going to be worth it, let me tell you, its worth every day of it. You'll even wonder why you didn't go sooner.



Annual Kankash summer camp at the dar-e-mehr in San Jose, California, July 2001



'Jeeve Talkin'



By: Menashad D. Bandolimalla

In the 1950s, it was considered lewd to swing your hips on television, but that didn't stop Elvis Presley from flooring his audience on the Ed Sullivan show. His fans, especially the young ladies, thought it was the coolest thing they had ever seen, while their parents and others of their parents' generation thought it was the most morally despicable thing they had ever seen, and totally inappropriate for television. Fifty years later, MTV and VH1 show scantily-clad young people discussing the most intimate details of their lives, and this hardly phases us, while our parents, who thought Elvis' hip shaking was so cool, are disgusted when they see Jennifer Lopez wearing clothing that wouldn't fit a healthy eight-year-old girl, much less herself.

This disparity between worldviews is a cultural phenomenon that has played out between adjacent generations since time immemorial. The taboos of one generation often become the acceptable social institutions of another, although this cycles between periods of relative conservatism and liberalism. Why do I bring this up in FEZANA? Because our North American Zoroastrian community is undergoing a slow population transformation, as our youth, the so-called "MTV generation", begin to assume more prominent roles in our community's activities. And we are going to have to learn to negotiate with one another, learn to agree to disagree, and come up with mechanisms that promote overall harmony, even at the expense of our individual egos.

Let's face it: every one of us has a unique viewpoint on most of the issues that are near and dear to our heart. But what we do with that uniqueness can either be exceptionally destructive to our community, or can enrich it. I am saddened to witness far more of the former than the latter. Witness the Zoroastrian Mailing List (zoroastrians@yahoogroups.com). People of all ages, all of whom are exceptional people whom I respect greatly on an individual basis, become rabid maniacs in discussions on any and every topic when others don't agree with them. And what's frightening is that these "discussions" often devolve into far more ignoble activities. Name-calling, threats, and even allusions to lawsuits pervade the most intense of these "discussions", and at the same time, the perpetrators of these actions could claim that they were good Zoroastrians and believed in Humata, Hukhta, and Huvareshtha without being hypocritical.

As our generation begins to come into our own, I challenge every one of us to never let our discussions about our religion get so heated that they make us forget its basic tenets. Every one of us should consider and respect the opinions of others, although we all must think for ourselves. If we are not independent in our thinking, we open the door to succumbing to false prophets and demagogues who have nothing but their own interests at heart. Yet, there is never a reason to let our disagreements devolve into denigration, whether its with our peers, colleagues, or parents.

So take the time to explain to your folks why J-Lo's most recent video does not offend you. And then take the time to listen to why your parents or grandparents don't feel the same way. You don't have to agree with them at all, but it will never hurt you to listen. If we can agree to disagree amicably, while still respecting each other, we can all go a long way to promoting the positive principles of our religion without harming others in the process.

PRAYER ■ CORNER ■

SCIENCE

Searching For the God Within

The way our brains are wired may explain the origin and power of religious beliefs

BY SHARON BEGLEY

The tension between science and religion is about to get tenser, for some scientists have decided that religious experience is just too intriguing not to study. Neurologists jumped in first, finding a connection between temporal lobe epilepsy and a sudden interest in religion. As V. S. Ramachandran of the University of California, San Diego, told a 1997 meeting, these patients during seizures, "say they see God" or feel "a sudden sense of enlightenment." Now researchers are looking at more-common varieties of religious experience. Dr. Andrew Newberg and the late Dr. Eugene d'Aquili, both of the University of Pennsylvania, have a name for this field: neuro-theology ... They conclude that spiritual experiences are the inevitable outcome of brain wiring: "The human brain has been genetically wired to encourage religious beliefs."

Even plain old praying affects the brain in distinctive ways. In SPECT (a brain-imaging machine) scans of Franciscan nuns at prayer, the Penn

This article from Newsweek [January 29, 2001] serves as an addenda to my editorial in the FEZANA Journal on Prayer [Fall 1999]. It is worth reproducing in your Journal, as an independent evidence of the power of prayer. Nowhere else have I found such emphatic scientific affirmation of the subliminal effect of prayer, and is worth reproducing in FEZANA Journal.

Some readers have inquired about a Zarathushti system of meditation. Our chequered history has left no trace of it, but from my intuitive feelings and old folklore I've heard over the years, I have designed my own system of meditation, a method that has been proven to calm the mind and even lower blood pressure by changing brain chemistry. I would like to add some of our hymns (monajats) to a tape I am preparing. If some individual or organization can help in making the tape and distribute it, I'll be glad to hear from them, at 8318 West 138th Place, Orland Park, IL 60462, Tel: (708) 460-6585.

- Dr. Kersey H. Antia

team found a quieting of the orientation area of the brain, which gave the sisters a tangible sense of proximity to and merging with God. "The absorption of the self into something larger [is] not the result of emotional fabrication or wishful thinking," Newberg and d'Aquili write in *"Why God Won't Go Away."* It springs, instead, from neurological events, as when the orientation area goes dark.

Neuro-theology also explores how ritual behavior elicits brain states that bring on feelings ranging from mild community to deep spiritual unity. A 1997 study by Japanese researchers showed that repetitive rhythms can drive the brain's hypothalamus, which can bring on either serenity or arousal. That may explain why incantatory hymns can trigger a sense of quietude that believers interpret as spiritual tranquility and bliss. In contrast, the fast rapturous dancing of Sufi mystics causes hyper-arousal, scientists find, which can make participants feel as if they are channeling the energy of the universe.

Prayer and rituals. Although the inventors of rituals surely didn't know it at the time, these rites manage to tap into the precise brain mechanisms that tend to make believers interpret perceptions and feelings as evidence of God or, at

Feeling as One With All of Creation



least, transcendence. Rituals also tend to focus the mind, blocking out sensory perceptions – including those that the orientation area uses to figure out the boundaries of the self. That's why even nonbelievers are often moved by religious ritual. "As long as our brain is wired as it is," says Newberg, "God will not go away."

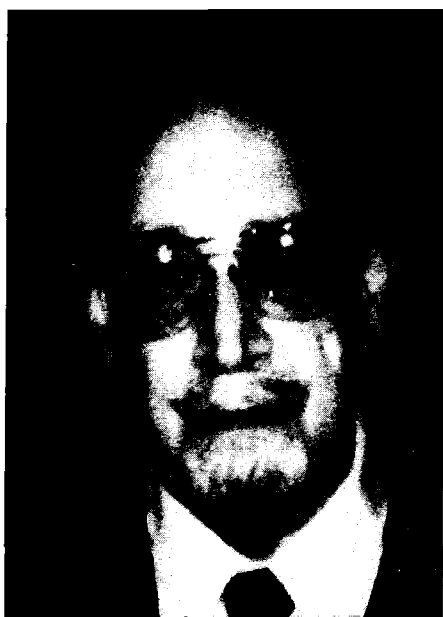
If brain wiring explains the feelings believers get from prayer and ritual, are spiritual experiences mere creations of our neurons? Neuro-theology at least suggests that spiritual experiences are no more meaningful than, say, the fear the brain is hard-wired to feel in response to a strange noise at night.

Believers, of course, have a retort: the brain's wiring may explain religious feelings – but who do you think was the master electrician! ■

[Excerpted from Newsweek, January 29, 2001, page 59]

THE ZOROASTRIAN COMMITMENT

Guest Editor Kaikhosrov D. Irani



Professor Kaikhosrov D. Irani is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at the City College, City University of New York, where he was professor and chairman of the department. In 1996, the North American Congress awarded Prof. Irani with the "Lifetime Achievement Award" for his "sterling and unique achievements in the cause of Zoroastrianism ... on this continent." In 1998, his students and peers bestowed upon Prof. Irani the singular honor of endowing the "K. D. Irani Chair of Philosophy" at City College for yearly appointments of visiting professors.

Some beliefs and practices of the Mazdayasni tradition constitute its core, while others are products of past historical influences. Let the underlying eternal verities of the faith be brought to light, as the 'Core Commitment'. Thus its light will enable us to adjust the beliefs and practices in the present context with the sole purpose of making meaningful and preserving the essential vision of the tradition.

That is the reason for the discourses on the topic "The Zoroastrian Commitment". We can at least identify as much of the common core of the faith as possible. From that we can construct as far as we can the common avowals of the faith and enunciate the rituals in comprehensible form. It is toward this end that the participants in this discussion have offered their thoughts regarding individual commitment as well as the social integrity and flourishing of the community.

In the Zoroastrian community worldwide not only is there agitated discussion on what ought to be demanded of one calling himself a Zoroastrian, but also no agreement on who is a Zoroastrian.

Such disagreements arise in many religious groups from time to time, but if not settled securely can cause the demise or the splitting of the group. The resolution must be, and also be seen as, rational, fair and open, otherwise it appears forced and loses its claim upon the faith of the believers. Hence, directing the thinking of the community toward a rational approach appears a timely and worthy enterprise.

There are two different dimensions where differences appear. The first concerns the focus of the faith: Is the focus on belief or ritual, or both, and if both, which should be considered fundamental? The second concerns the ground of

acceptance of the faith, i.e., how the faith is generated and grounded. Is the faith based on some authority external to oneself, be it an enunciated tradition, a religious priestly authority, or the utterance of God, hence the form of acceptance becomes obedience or submission (as it is called in Islam); or on the other hand, is it based on an internal act of acceptance, consent or dedication arising from reflection and consideration. In such cases, the acceptance is an internal reflective one. It is one for which the acceptance of the faith means something to the person's conscience, and for which the believer has to take responsibility, and which in the believer's mind is not taken to be irrational.

Here we may note that Zarathushtra has given us a doctrine which he asks us to consider reflectively and decide to accept it or not as a faith to live by. This belief – the moral vision of the world – is the fundamental aspect of Mazdayasni religion, and it is to be reflectively accepted.

“ Zarathushtra has given us a doctrine which he asks us to consider reflectively and decide to accept it or not as a faith to live by. ”

Change. The institution of religion is embedded in the life of the social group which is markedly affected by historical change; and beliefs and practices which do not adjust to changed conceptions of life may be carried as pointless burdens of the past for a time, before they die out. Hence those who are committed to preserving the institution are called upon to make appropriate adjustments or perish.

The institutional structure of religion incorporates a set of rituals and social practices, maintained by the authority of communal tradition. But most rituals having Avestan recitations are essentially incomprehensible to almost all Zoroastrians. If a way of making them comprehensible is not found in the near future they will be ignored, as in the case of Parsi navjotes, where the invited congregation ignores this most sacred ritual and comes merely to partake in caloric offerings!

Social practices coming from periods long after the advent of the Prophet, need to be respected, that is, they should not be abandoned without reason or consideration. The most responsible way to think about them is to examine the religious or religious-social function they were believed to perform at the time of the institution and, if the function has not become vacuous, adjust them to perform equivalent functions in this day and age.

Thus the changes called forth are efforts at preserving the faith embedded in ancient institutional traditions, which can be made vital in a historically changed social, scientific and technological environment. It is understandable that the making of changes is hard for authoritarian positions, especially if they rely on traditionality, because of their genuine but misconceived concern – the preservation of the faith.

Preservation can only occur, if the beliefs are understood and practices, both ritual and social, are seen to cohere with the central belief commitment. We can thus dismiss the frequently repeated charge: “We should not have change for the sake of change” as missing the point and essentially stupid.

Here then, to summarize our concern, is the rational and responsible way of proceeding in this context.

Some beliefs and practices of the Mazdayasni tradition constitute its core, while others are products of past historical influences. Let the underlying eternal verities of the faith be brought to light, as the “Core Commitment”. Thus its light will enable us to adjust the beliefs and practices in the present context with

“ ... beliefs and practices which do not adjust to changed conceptions of life may be carried as pointless burdens of the past for a time, before they die out. ”

the sole purpose of making meaningful and preserving the essential vision of the tradition.

That is the reason for the discourses on the topic: “The Zoroastrian Commitment”. We can at least identify as much of the common core of the faith as possible. From that we can construct as far as we can the common avowals of the faith and enunciate the rituals in comprehensible form.

Needless to say, each person will perform and participate in recitation and ritual as he or she wishes. That is a matter of individual faith which cannot be impinged upon. But, hopefully, we may be able to generate a framework for socio-religious discussions without abrasion, that may bear fruit for our harmonious unity in the next generation.

It is toward this end that the participants in this discussion have offered their thoughts regarding individual commitment as well as the social integrity and flourishing of the community. ■

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.

the nature of a zarathushti commitment

Until the end of time, each human heart will be born to remain vigorously individualistic and deeply personal, only to yield subconsciously to the rigors of time itself. Ideals and blueprints aimed at a utopia can never bring about a change of heart.

By Sam Kerr
Sydney, Australia

When trying to discuss the nature of a commitment to the faith (an acceptance, which requires no proof, evidence or, some may say, even justification), we are really talking of the very mode of religiosity experienced and lived by the faithful. This being an important influence in life and an intensely personal matter (an individual consciousness) it is certainly not easily amenable, as a subject matter, to argument and, perhaps, even to open discussion. However, since I have committed myself to write on the subject I am obliged to take the liberty of airing briefly my impressions. I would, however, prefer to abstain from quoting chapter and verse.

During my work and in my travels I have not met two Zarathushtis recognizing (or, at least, apparently showing) an identical mode of religious consciousness in their life experiences. There appear to remain some inherent differences, sometimes, even in members of the same households. Why may this be so? Let us try to identify briefly, the reasons for the differences.

In ancient times there was no separation between what we now recognize to be, different disciplines. There existed knowledge, which was disseminated by word of mouth and incorporated the wisdom and tech-

niques of the times. The distinctions emerged when several disciplines were formulated and identified.

Trusting acceptance. The nature of the acceptance of faith by the faithful remains essentially abstract in its very core. It is, often, a fusion of a '*described*' view of life, as it should be seen (imbibed from early life in the household and community) and a '*prescribed*' way of life, as it ought

“ The nature of the acceptance of faith by the faithful remains essentially abstract in its very core. It is, often, a fusion of a '*described*' view of life, as it should be seen ... and a '*prescribed*' way of life, as it ought to be led ... ”

to be led (influenced mainly by experiences in early life in the household and community).

The '*described*' view of life comes as naturally to the trusting infant as the mother tongue through the subtle input of the ten senses. The innocent trust may become somewhat questioning as the child experiences extraneous influences in school and in the company of peers. It may become further abraded as the inquiring mind begins to think for itself and to exert its discriminatory individuality.

The intrinsic core values of a '*prescribed*' way of life (expected of the faithful by the near and dear ones, the peers and the community) are influenced to a major extent by moral principles, too. They may, at times, represent ethical rules of propriety for guidance, requiring or rejecting certain types of thoughts, words or actions as being morally correct or incorrect.

Need for justification. The attempt at the justification of either the fusion of the described view and the prescribed way of life within the faith, or of a careful inquiry and reasoning into the Prophet's teaching is a matter for each individual mind. As we have noted before, where there is faith some may argue that, since no proof or evidence is needed, there should be no reason for justification either. Let us, now, look at the question of careful inquiry and reasoning. In other words let us think individually, each one of us separately, without showing bias to either line of thought.

Evolutionary disuse. A religious belief (and its practice) exists in the individual consciousness of the faithful, who may develop a frame of mind – an attitude about its '*correctness*' or otherwise. There is enough evidence to show that certain deeply emotional (sometimes traumatic and

intense) life experiences do govern the nature of the commitment. The display of a fundamental stubbornness of one's adherence to such 'correct' beliefs (orthodoxy) and to such 'correct' practices (orthopraxy) is often taken as being the quality of a deeply devout person – perhaps, rightly so in most circumstances.

A tradition (with its social interaction), on the other hand, carries a definite legitimacy. One becomes obliged to respect it individually as well as during social interaction, which makes it essentially an integral part of the communal consciousness. There was, obviously, a historical period in time when the tradition, in the course of communal existence, commenced. Its initial purpose, that of evoking a feeling of devotion and of establishing social continuity and solidarity within the community was, at that point in time, very crucial. During another historical period in the vastness of evolutionary time, its initial purpose, somehow, did not appear just as crucial and relevant. It, then, appeared as if it had outgrown its usefulness. Indeed, it gradually faded away, not by refutation but by disuse over the long periods of time, as the generations passed by.

There are many glaring examples: The widespread use of the Zarathushti '*topi*' or '*mathubanu*' or similar appropriate headdresses in daily life, without which one would have been labeled a non-Zarathushti only a generation ago (particularly in the rural towns), is hardly worn in modern daily life. When worn, the headdress is generally discarded as soon as the ceremonial prayers are over. During a 5-6 day period of the last world congress in Houston (among the 2200 Zarathushti ladies and gentlemen, barring the respected Mobeds) I can remember seeing only a few delegates with an appropriate Zarathushti headdress outside the time of the prayer ceremonies.

Another example is the use of copper wires instead of the barsom twigs (Avestan: *baresman*) during prayer rituals. The reason given is an apparent "helplessness" because of the non-availability of the barsom plant, although there has been no particular plant clearly identified in the religious texts as a barsom plant.

“ Human history has shown that those who lack the motivation to adjust and progress through mutual respect have, ultimately, managed to reform through cooperation enforced through fear, interference as well as imposition. ”

There are many more examples of evolutionary disuse: (1) The repeated taking of the *baj*, commencing with every new task or event in daily life; (2) The gradual extinction of the Pahlavi language and script in favor of the Gujarati and Modern Persian languages and scripts; (3) The slow change to and adoption of some customs and way of life of the host populations; (4) The (heated exchanges we are going through regarding the) replacement of the traditional household living flame or fire by incandescent light, etc. I do maintain a *divo* but will my next generation continue the practice?

The discarding of these extremely pious practices have occurred, not because they are not 'correct' practices any more, but because they have gradually ceased to be justifiably acceptable in daily life during the slow and persuasive process of evolutionary time.

The dilemma. Remembering that the fusion of a described view and a prescribed way of life attempts to justify human existence and to bring an iota of significance to the faithful, let us delve further into this topic. The nature of belief does not always lie in a statement of facts (as in other disciplines, say history or science) but in the inner, sometimes,

unquenchable quest of the believer's mind, which may be faced with the obligation of a commitment to accept the belief, perhaps by taking a view of life from a different plane.

When viewed from such a plane, each individual consciousness becomes truly worthy of tranquil thought rather than of mere factual acceptance. Religious texts are replete with a special set of literal facts admixed with commentaries and even literal interpretation. A strict adherence to facts without a clear direction can only lead to persistent discord, leading to confusion in inquiring human minds and an inconsistent communal consciousness.

Somewhere in this maze, the communal purpose of generating devotion or evoking a feeling of social continuity and solidarity in the community is lost. It is not possible to enforce uniformity, idealism and idealistic perfection in a spiritual sense. Until the end of time, each human heart will be born to remain vigorously individualistic and deeply personal, only to yield subconsciously to the rigors of time itself. Those in power, who have tried to impose legislation and to implement it by force, have realized this does not work. Ideals and blueprints aimed at a utopia can never bring about a change of heart.

The new thinking of reformists always appears untrustworthy because the old thinking has taken deep root in the mind and, therefore, appears safe. Still, the inevitable force of a slow and persuasive evolutionary change admixed with the natural human striving to redress and equalize the imbalance will continue. Human history has shown that those who lack the motivation to adjust and progress through mutual respect have, ultimately, managed to reform through cooperation enforced through fear, interference as well as imposition.

In other faiths (which, incidentally have followers in the tumultuous

millions) such occurrences have led to breakup of the followers, who have separated from the mainstream and formed their own new denominations, which, then, have been quickly absorbed within the millions. With only a few thousand left on this good earth, we, the faithful, the guardians of the most ancient of all faiths on earth, would hardly be able to sustain any further breakup. ■

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zarathushtrian commitment

Since the advent of Asho Spitama Zarathushtra, the way of life based on the teachings proclaimed by that great manthran, have demonstrated an unbroken chain of commitment through the millennia.

By Jehan Bagli
Mississauga, Ontario

It was the commitment of Maidy-oimaongha Spitama, the first person to understand the religion of Mazda through his spiritual consciousness, who said, "It is better to live the life through deeds following the laws given by the Wise One" [Ys. 51.19]. This is the foundation of the modern day axiom, "The religion of Zarathushtra is the religion of action."

The Gathic platitude has resonated through the history of our glorious faith. We see this reflected in the actions of the founder of the Achaemenian dynasty, Cyrus the Great. This mighty monarch marched through the gates of Babylon to liberate exiled Jewish people, and challenged them to rebuild their temples. The Book of Ezra records [Ezra 1.1,2] this crowning Zarathushtrian commitment of Cyrus and for which he is entitled the "Anointed One" [Isaiah 45.1].

Moving further down the historical highway, we approach another illustrious monarch of the same suzerainty – Darius. His act of fulfillment of the commitment of his ancestor is also recognized by Ezra [Ezra 6.14, 15] when that Jewish prophet says, "... and they completed this house (of Yahweh) ... in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the King."

The perennial question, "Were Achaemenians Zarathushtrians?" becomes redundant when one reads the copious tributes paid by these monarchs to Ahura Mazda. Despite

the fact that they never mentioned Zarathushtra by name, their commitment to Ahura Mazda, the God of Zarathushtra, demonstrates their pledge to the tenets of that first savior of mankind.

Moving through history, one clearly observes some remarkable changes in the Gathic religion of Zarathushtra. The Mesopotamian magi of western Iran usurp the reins of the Zarathushtrian religion from the athravans of the east. As the Achaemenian empire spreads from the Aegean Sea on the west to the Indus River on the east, the religion of Zarathushtra is immersed in a highly politicized melting pot of Greek, Babylonian, Egyptian and Asian culture. Many beliefs and the mode of expression of religiosity underwent stark changes. But through all that debris of overt changes, the Zarathushtrian pledge,

"Extolling the path of Asha through the thinking of a serene mind (Vohu Manah), free of earthly conflicts, and making the right choice of action"

has filtered through, like crystal clear water through the layers of richly mineralized rock.

Entering the first millennium around the center of the Parthian suzerainty (250 BCE - 226 CE) posed new challenges for the Zarathushti way of life. In the beginning the religion of Zarathushtra and its practitioners in northeastern Iran were challenged by

the spread of Buddhism in transition to Mahayana. This transition may well have a bearing on the strength of the undercurrent of the Zarathushtrian milieu [M. Boyce, *HZ Vol. III, p. 149*] that prevailed in that era.

The latter half of the Arsacids rule was then faced with the emergence of the formidable missionary Christian faith. The Parthians remained committed to the teachings of the prophet Zarathushtra. They were kind to the captives, generous to the fugitives, and of scrupulous morals. The middle of the third century CE saw the decline of the Parthians, with the ascension of the Sasanians. With this, the Zarathushtrian faith, coached by powerful prelates Tansar, Kirdar, Adurbad Marespand and Mehermaresht, was resurrected to withstand the challenges of the time.

Here again, as before, the expression of religiosity was cluttered with institutionalized priesthood, and belabored with rituals. Nevertheless, the Zarathushtrian commitment came through unscathed:

- That taught good thinking reflecting a peaceful mind.
- That propagated to humanity to define their own salvation through good expressions and actions.
- That charged each human to contemplate and choose the path of truth and righteousness.
- That preached a progressive and full life through Spenta Mainyu.
- That was highly self reflective, introspective and universal.

Despite the highly prescriptive nature of the religiosity that evolved in the later era, the reflective and inspirational nature of the commitment to the way of life, as preached by Asho Zarathushtra, is immortalized.

As we enter the new millennium, it is imperative to recognize that in this shrinking world of technology there is significantly increased human interaction between different ethnic groups. This has markedly increased the mutual interdependence among mankind, has dissolved barriers, and

improved our understanding of different religions, that in early eras, evolved in seclusion. The Gathic commitments of Zarathushtra, such as:

"May we be among those who renovate or progress this world"

[Ys. 30.19]

and

"Lord, thou shalt truly refresh the life in this world as you desire"

[Ys. 34.15]

have a profoundly greater responsibility today, than when they were uttered by Zarathushtra.

Asho Zarathushtra in his commitment to the Wise Lord recognizes through repeated chanting:

"I have realized Thee (Mazda) to be holy, when He attended me through Good Mind"

[Ys. 43.7, 9, 11, 13, 15]

It is beyond question, that the mind of that divinely ordained thinker, was always in a state of 'holy serenity' – *Spenta Armaiti* – to align his mentality with the 'holy mentality' – *Spenta Mainyu* – to conceive 'best righteousness' – *Asha Vahishta* – in consonance with the will of the Wise Lord.

The first step for an average human to influence the renovation of this flawed world, is to revitalize the human mind – *Vohu Mana* – that is constantly beleaguered with good and evil carnal instincts in this imperfect environment. Love, compassion and care for creation in general and for less fortunate humanity in particular, is an integral part of the Zarathushtrian commitment. These are the very foundations upon which to build the infrastructure of renovation, the edifice of that divine rule – *Khshathra Vairya*.

These lofty ideals have a way of getting washed away in the torrents of the day to day stress of life. The human mind needs frequent rejuvenation to that benevolent mode of thinking. While such **Good Thinking** requires special efforts, to put these thoughts into **Good Words** and

Actions demands a degree of self-sacrifice. A consistent effort to commune with the divine, in the state of holy serenity, in the state of true devotion, can unlock the doors to attunement with the divine spirit – *Mazda* – within, to pave the way to refresh the life in this physical world.

Zarathushtrian kushti prayers aid us, with the holy manthras which, when intellectually understood and recited with spiritual compassion, harmonize the human mentality with the holy mentality.

Only through such a revelation does one recognize the venerable spirit of giving, of serving creation and mankind. Only the persistent effort to attune with the divine, can result in concordance between the physical and the spiritual within. That is the awareness, that elevates mankind beyond one's physical self, to manifest the wholeness and perfection (*haurvatat*) of a human being to reflect the immortality (*amertat*) of the Zarathushtrian commitment.

**Ushta ahmai ya ahmai
ushta kahmaichit.**

[Ys. 43.1]

**Radiant happiness to him,
who radiates happiness to others. ■**

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commitment zoroastrian and non-zoroastrian

Commitment is deeper than mere dedication, and has more totality, finality and even a sense of irrevocability about it. How does the commitment of a Zoroastrian differ from that of others?

By Jimmy Nadershaw Sidhva
Mumbai, India

Commitment has been defined in the Oxford dictionary as "Devotion to a cause", and has been considered synonymous with "dedication" and 'pledge'. To my way of thinking, commitment is deeper than mere dedication, and has more totality, finality and even a sense of irrevocability about it.

Every human being is committed to one or more causes. (Even the uncommitted and rudderless individual is committed to laziness of thought and self indulgence). All right-thinking people have moral and social commitments, which guide them through their life with varying degrees of decency of behavior and self respect. How then does the commitment of a Zoroastrian differ from that of others? What sets apart the Zoroastrian commitment from any other commitment?

At the risk of appearing pedantic and old fashioned, I submit that the special commitment of a Zoroastrian is closely tied to his faith and his commitment to the Zoroastrian din. This involves not only commitment to the Zoroastrian ideals of philosophy, but especially to the sentiments and pledges expressed in our religious literature, both in the Gathas of Zarathushtra as well as in our other prayers, culled from the Yasna.

To comment fleetingly on the commitments which a Zoroastrian shares

with any other individual, he is committed to the ideals of "Humata, Hukhta, Huvareshtha" – Good thoughts, Good words, Good deeds. In addition to these, the Zoroastrian, like his non-Zoroastrian brother, is committed to truth, purity, love for his fellow humans and living creatures, the sanctity of a promise or covenant, and common laws of morality and decent behavior.

Apart from these general commitments, the Zoroastrian is specially committed by his religion to certain other ideals of thought, word and deed. These can best be enumerated and elaborated upon by probing our religious scriptures.

The first and foremost commitment or dedication that a devout Zoroastrian makes is embodied in the *Fravarane* or Declaration of Faith. This is recited every day, and several times a day as the *Jasa me avanghahe Mazda* part of the *kushti* prayers, which is the last stanza of the twelfth *ha* of the *Yasna* (the Avestan *Din-no-kalmo*, or the Zoroastrian Creed).

In this prayer, just after the phrase "*Jasa me avanghahe Mazda*" ("Come to my help, O Mazda!") the Zoroastrian devotee declares his commitment to the Mazdayasni Zarathushti faith, namely:

"I profess to be a Mazda worshipper, a Mazda worshipping follower

of Zarathushtra, and an ardent believer in this faith."

This then, is the prime commitment of every Zoroastrian, to Ahura Mazda and his faith as revealed to the world by Prophet Zarathushtra. In the second-last line of this prayer, the devotee acknowledges Ahura Mazda as the supreme source of goodness, when he says:

"All that is good stems from Ahura Mazda."

This thought is also expressed beautifully in the Gathas, as described later.

The other *Fravarane* is the one at the start of each *Gah*, where the devotee says:

"I profess to be a Mazda-worshipping follower of Zarathushtra, opposed to the evil ones, and a follower of the doctrine of Ahura."

The devout Zoroastrian makes these commitments or declaration a number of times a day when he performs the *kushti* ritual or recites the *Gah*.

In addition to these commitments, a Zoroastrian cannot do better than to follow the declaration and pledges Zarathushtra makes in his Gathas, where he also proclaims his devotion to, and reverence for, Ahura Mazda:

"Zarathushtra doth offer as sacrifice (or dedication), the very breath of his own life, and the first fruits of his loving mind, to Mazda. He dedicates the willing obedience of his best words, and the power of his best deeds, to Asha (Truth)."

[Ys. 33.14]

Thus, in this one stanza, Zarathushtra not only commits his life but also his best thoughts, words and deeds to Ahura Mazda and his Amesha Spenta, Asha. What more does a Zoroastrian require in the matter of commitment, but to follow these glorious words of his prophet? Some more pledges of Zarathushtra are equally illuminating and inspiring:

"As long as, with strength and with power I thrive, So long shall I teach men, towards Asha to strive!"

[Ys. 28.4]

He reiterates this in:

*"Thus, O Mazda, with
my prayers shall I,
To turn away evil and
faithlessness try."*

[Ys 33.4]

and in:

*"Now indeed on your behalf, O
Mazda, shall I teach,
To the wise and clear-minded Your
doctrine shall I preach."*

[Ys. 51.8]

And again, with devout humility, he pledges:

*"Although my misgivings
I cannot disguise,
In spreading Thy word to others,
this prize I shall try to deliver,
as best in me lies."*

[Ys. 43.11]

In accordance with these pledges, the devout Zoroastrian should be committed not only to the service of Ahura Mazda, but also to teach and spread His gospel among his fellow Zoroastrians.

Zoroastrian commitment to, and love for his Creator, Ahura Mazda, is also beautifully laid out in the Gathas:

*"And I shall be known as Thy
admirer, O Mazda."*

[Ys. 50.1]

As the source of all truth and goodness (as in the *Jasa me Avanghahe Mazda*):

*"Thou art the source of truth - the
unrivaled judge of the acts of all
men in this world."*

[Ys. 31.8]

"He is the primal thinker."

[Ys. 31.7]

In a beautiful stanza, Zarathushtra expresses his love and reverence for, and his worship of, Ahura Mazda, and his Amesha Spentas:

*"Singing hymns of praise, I shall
worship Ye Mazda,*

*And Asha, most-loving
Vohu Mano and Khshathra,*

*So that standing on the pathway
to heaven, I might*

*Listen to the revelation from the
abode of light."*

[Ys. 50.4]

our zoroastrian commitment the quest for truth

Truth is of the essence of Ahura Mazda. We stand before the sanctified fire in our fire-temples with truthful minds, true utterances and truthful actions – they are our sincere offerings to Ahura Mazda and our commitment to His revelation conveyed to Zarathushtra.

By Farrokh Vajifdar
London, UK

It was no less an authority than Dastur Bahman Kaikobad who, in 1600, in his devoutly composed *Kisseh-i Sanjan*, deplored the fact that "In our own age, the Lord only knows what true religion is, for men do not." He did acknowledge, however, that the earliest generations of Parsi immigrants had possessed a truer knowledge of the faith which they had exiled themselves to preserve and perpetuate, and himself entreated the Lord for enlightenment. Around 1770 the French pioneer Anquetil was to write, "Ignorance was the dominating vice of the Parsis of India."

Some ninety years later Spiegel would repeat this in his groundbreaking work on the traditional literature of the Parsis. Others soon noticed that the Parsi religion was one of rituals and ceremonial and that it was not noticeably Zoroastrian doctrinally. These verdicts were long to remain unchanged and unchallenged.

Four hundred years after the *Kisseh*, in more tranquil and settled times, we still seek enlightenment. While there appear prelates and preachers aplenty to expound on Zoroastrianism, they have signally succeeded in projecting only an inconsistent and largely incredible picture of Parsiism. The authentic Iranian teachings, from the *Gathas* to the *Rivayet* responses, are arbitrarily ignored in favor of some quite fantastical expositions ensuring continued pecuniary advantage and transient blaze of public attention for their presenters.

Zarathushtra has been marginalized and in his place are paraded unworthy pretenders and posturers. Detectable throughout is an absence of true learning and a liberal sprinkling of pseudo-mystical and occultic twaddle, the misbegotten product of an insidious theosophy which has found no secure foothold in the religious system of Zarathushtra. Hav-

The beauty of these thoughts of Zarathushtra cannot be more vividly underlined and it should be the firm commitment of every Zoroastrian not only to reiterate these thoughts and pledges, but also to try and spread the gospel of Asho Zarathushtra as best he can, thus embodying "The Zoroastrian Commitment."

Dr. Jimmy Nadershaw Sidhva is a medical doctor, one of the

eminent radiologists of Mumbai. He has been engaged in the study of the



faith for many years. He has composed an acclaimed translation of the *Gathas* in English verse, published four years ago.

ing rejected the teacher and derided the theologians, these followers of a system nursed in fraud and matured in immorality still vainly attempt to stem the tide of authentic knowledge which now attracts a devout following amongst new generations questing after truth.

In our *kushti nirangs* we commence with declarations made to Mazda. Zarathushtra's only Ahura, that it is solely his truth-strengthened *fire* and his *mind*, both abstractions, which determine our deceit-expelling activity. It is the essence of the Good Religion, despite which we look to "lesser divinities" and even ceremonial objects with their ritualistic invocations for our spiritual sustenance: the one has become six, or is it seven? Then on to thirty-three and even myriads! Such is the habit of mind which thus allows itself to be gulled by mavericks and opportunists! Shouldn't they be reminded that to consecrate the unintelligible is blasphemy, and that such alien systems with their dubious rituals were execrated by our preceptor?

The *nirang* continues, again with the abjuration of deceit, to exalt the 'healer of existence' who, we note here and elsewhere, is *anyone* imbibing and practicing these teachings, and who through good thinking lets Mazda's precepts be hearkened by whomsoever Ahura wills.

Clearly not the exclusive deity of a chosen people, Ahura Mazda's teachings revealed to Zarathushtra have a universalist intent. Similar teachings are discerned on the *Saoshyant* which later Zoroastrianism made the last of the three millennial saviors: in the Gathas everyone who has obtained insight through cultivation of good thinking is regarded as *Saoshyant* whose actions are consonant with good thinking, the pathway to Ahura Mazda's truth. Does not Zarathushtra emphasize that those, both men and women, who strive for the 'best existence' here through the sovereignty of Ahura Mazda's aspects of truth and good thinking, with all these will he cross the bridge, their individual Chinvat ... He leaves no room for our racial or tribal predilections ...

tence' here through the sovereignty of Ahura Mazda's aspects of truth and good thinking, with all these will he cross the bridge, their individual Chinvat? He leaves no room for our racial or tribal predilections; instead he insists on the duty of *everyone* to ponder the truth of the revelation with its life-affirming message of hope, and act according to his/her good inner vision for the betterment of

“ ... those, both men and women, who strive for the 'best existence' here through the sovereignty of Ahura Mazda's aspects of truth and good thinking, with all these will he cross the bridge, their individual Chinvat ... He leaves no room for our racial or tribal predilections ... ”

society at large, and the family of man as a whole, towards the regeneration of this world.

The Avestic "Profession of the Faith" which closes the *kushti-bastan* consists of pledges declared to Ahura Mazda: that we are for the doctrine of Ahura and against the cult of false gods; that we are upholders and praisers of good-minded thought, rightly formulated speech, and well-performed deed; of the Mazda-venerating Good Religion of Zarathushtra which dispels hostilities and causes the laying down of weapons. (It is inappropriate to discuss *khvaetva-datha* here, save to indicate that in its original concept it was an interpolation which from the eighteenth century onwards was made to signify something nonsensical like "giving of self", presumably in service to the Good Religion!). Particularly relevant in this affirmation prayer is the unambiguous attribution of everything good to Ahura Mazda.

Similarly directed is the *Kalma-i-din* Pazand prayer dutifully repeated after the officiating priest by the initiate during the *navjote*. It too is an affirmation that the newcomer to the Zoro-

astrian fold undertakes to abide by and uphold the religion which Ahura Mazda gave to Zarathushtra *for propagation throughout the world*. This declaration before the truth-symbolizing fire and the witnesses present is sealed with an *Ashem Vohu*, the Laudation of Truth: it represents the novice's Zoroastrian commitment. Is it understood? Will it be honored? It should be both, surely!

Truth, then, is of the essence of Ahura Mazda. Indeed, truth is Mazda's 'son' every bit as much as the sacred fire in our veneration of it; it is strengthened through truth. We stand before the sanctified fire in our fire-temples with truthful minds, true utterances, and truthful actions – they are our sincere offerings to Ahura Mazda, and our commitment to his revelation conveyed to Zarathushtra. To do otherwise is to profane a sacred precinct with evil on our minds, falsehood on our lips, and a lie in our right hand.

Unprincipled dualists in our midst invidiously proclaim that Ahura Mazda is not all-powerful, that he is at present subordinate to an opponent, yet somehow he will regain the vanquishing hand at some unspecified time! Amidst such childish perverse pronouncements we do not detect the clear Gathic teaching on the awareness of evil and its expulsion through the efforts of the individual. We see instead the reintroduction of some hybrid Zurvanite speculation with heretical Manichean overtones. Zarathushtra has no part in this infantile prattling; his teaching places the onus squarely on man – no intermediary can lift away a moral burden from another.

In the *Vendidad*, our anti-demonic code, the qualities of good and bad priests are detailed. Among the latter we meet those who do not study and enquire into the religion, who wrongly teach alien precepts, and who lack integrity. In 19th century India the punchayet had to intervene and re-

direct those Parsi priests who served in alien places of worship, who encouraged uneducated and superstitious women-folk from poor Parsi families to gratify material desires by frequenting such places, who themselves took to drinking and gambling during hours of appointed religious service, and turned up uninvited at family gatherings demanding both hospitality and *ashodad*.

Such was the arrogance and religious ignorance of some hereditary priests that they lost the natural respect of the educated laity whose revulsion resulted in dwindling attendance numbers at fire-temples even on festive occasions. The decline caused alarm among the intelligentsia who reacted high-mindedly by ensuring proper courses of religious study for the priesthood and restored for Zoroastrianism its long overdue pre-eminence among world religions which it had, since ancient times, influenced for the better.

Regrettably the pendulum has begun its return swing; prelates and preachers have forced their unwholesome views on our trusting and unsuspecting communities worldwide leading to confrontational divisions and acute dissension in our minuscule ranks. They have, in fact, lost all commitment to Zoroastrian truth, and blindly set out to destroy what they could not come to terms with, still less understood.

Let the last word rest with the conservative priest Sir Jivanji Jamshedji Modi. Through his own profound studies and contacts with scholars of other religions, he realized that the laity had to be emancipated from their age-old dependency on a largely ignorant rank-and-file clergy. It was he who, in response to a well-intended protestation, famously wrote: "I do say and believe that the worship of a pious Zoroastrian does not need priestly aid!" The truth about one's salvation or damnation depending not on the intercession of an intermediary but on one's own piously directed good activity, reflects Zarathushtra's own vision of the perfecting of all

mankind towards the perfection of this Ahura-created world.

May we, as true Zoroastrians, abide by this truth and honor our commitment! ■

Farrokh Vajifdar, right, is a linguist residing in London. He has been more specifically interested in ancient Indo-Iranian studies, and the Avestan and Pahlavi languages. He has been a student of the history of the Mazdayasni community, as many of his papers illustrate.



Zarathushtra

© Roya Kaviani

He was known as Zarathushtra
Born in the ancient land of Persia
The first to believe in the one and the only,
the divine Mazda Ahura
He brought an end to the old myths,
he put to rest Zeus and Athena

Zoroaster, Zarathushtra, or Zartosht,
No matter what the name
His message universal; love, peace and progress,
Reaching haurvatat was his aim.

He taught us to do right for the sake of right
He told us: with the darkness, we must fight
Think Good Thoughts, Say Good Words, and Do Good Deeds
Humata, Hukhta and Huvareshtha, they're the seeds
Plant them in your heart and in your mind
Watch them grow, see them bloom, and you'll find:
Being wise and choosing right is the key
In crossing the Chinwad bridge to eternity.

Say not just the words in Ashem Vohu
Repeat not blindly the Yatha Ahu
But let their meanings be your guide,
all the way through
Have love and compassion for mankind
Think good, Say good and then Do.

His name was Zarathushtra
Born in the ancient land of Persia ...

Roya Kaviani's "Zarathushtra", which she wrote in October 2000, was read at the Farewell Ceremonies of the New Rochelle Darbe Mehr [see page 12]

Much has been written about the message of Asho Zarathushtra as given to us in the Gathas

and the concept of Freedom of Choice, which involves choosing between right and wrong. For a student of Zarathushtra's religion, the Gathas are both sublime as well as pragmatic.

In my opinion, the Gathas are not just plain philosophy or lofty scriptures but very practical and livable message from our prophet and its significance is as valid today as when it was first propounded, 3,500 years ago.

Rather than getting into the semantics of obscure Avestan words and trying to fathom its meaning using philology or esoteric schools of thought like Ilm-e-Khshnoom's explanations, we, the non-scholarly laity can and should try and understand the core of Asho Zarathushtra's message and apply it to today's world.

Was the message composed in the pastoral age of 3,500 years ago when our ancestors who had led a nomadic

“... unique in Zarathushtra's religion is that all the good work that we do on this earth is not meant just for us, but for all living beings. Later Pahlavi sources mention a “storehouse of good thoughts, words and deeds” which are stored for bringing about the renovation of the whole world (fraskhokereti), rather than personal salvation.”

life and had just settled down to agricultural life, still valid in the fast changing 21st century?

The answer, in my opinion, is a resounding “yes”. So let us examine

a commitment to zarathushtra's message

Examining how we, the non-scholarly laity, can and should try and understand the core of Asho Zarathushtra's message and apply it to today's world.

By Purvez D. Kolsawalla
Sydney, Australia

how we ordinary human beings give our commitment to Zarathushtra's message. First, I believe that Zarathushtra was very much a worldly figure. He did not espouse renunciation of day-to-day life for his followers. In his message he expects us to live a full life experiencing both the good and evil, and using our mind (*Vohu Mana*) to make the right choice between good and evil. A lofty message, but how practical is it in today's world?

Another issue that is unique in Zarathushtra's religion is that all the good work that we do on this earth is not meant for just us, but for all living beings. Later Pahlavi sources mention a “storehouse of good thoughts, words and deeds” which are stored for bringing about the renovation of the whole world (*frashokereti*) rather than personal salvation.

So, let's get down to brass tacks. What can we, ordinary Zarathushtis do to achieve this goal? The first step is to achieve *global unity* among ourselves. The current vociferous and often bitter dispute that exists between the orthodox and liberals has to stop. We must learn to respect opposing viewpoints and even if we do not agree with the opposing viewpoint, we must take it into account. The other side has as much a right to exist, express their viewpoints as we do ourselves. Only when this happens and when we learn to co-exist *separately* but *peacefully*, will our community survive.

The next step is to *educate our community* and specifically the youth about the essence of Zarathushtra's message. A vast majority of born Zarathushtis are lethargic and not aware of Zarathushtra's sublime message. There have been some suggestions of preparing a standard translation of the Gathas. I do not believe that this concept is possible. In the theocratic time of the Sasanian dynasty, such an idea was possible under the head priest, Kirdar.

Our community is too diverse. In the absence of an all-powerful head priest, such a translation, even if takes place, would be hotly disputed and challenged. What we need instead is a simple explanation of Zarathushtra's message whereby the underlying gist of each *haiiti* of the Gathas is explained in simple language shorn of scholarly verbiage. This project can and should be undertaken by a group of like-minded Zarathushtis.

In the past, our ancestors helped the community by making huge charities to help the poor. These charities were not restricted to Zarathushtis but helped all mankind. In today's world, especially in the west, most of the Zarathushtis are well off. So monetary charity is not needed as much. What we need today is to satisfy the mental, spiritual and psychological needs of our community, especially those who are isolated and cannot receive help from their own family and Zarathushti neighbors. A

voluntary counseling, self-help developing service is needed, wherever Zarathushtis have settled on all continents of this world.

The list of our commitment could stretch on and on, but we can make a start by considering the above-mentioned issues.

May the shining light of the Gathas guide us and our progeny.

Atha jamyad, yatha afrinami! ■



Dr. Purvez Kolsawalla is a lecturer in Marketing and Management by profession. He is also a widely-read scholar of the Zarathushti religion and has prepared a computerized Avesta-English dictionary. He submitted his first Ph.D. thesis on Haoma Yazata in 1992. In 1996 he received his second doctorate (D.Sc) in compilation of all Avestan scriptures with various translations, commentary and esoteric explanation. He was president of the Australian Zoroastrian Association of NSW for six terms, a Sunday School teacher and conducted adult discussion classes for over 15 years. He is currently involved in setting up the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations in Australasia (FEZAA).



**Opportunity
often comes
disguised as
Misfortune**

what is the zoroastrian commitment?

Individual and social attitudes and resolutions, taken rationally, constitute the 'Zoroastrian Commitment'.

By Kaikhosrov D. Irani
New York, New York

The doctrine we can obtain clearly from the Gathic verses is what one might call a 'Religious Vision'. By that we mean that the religious conception offers not stories about gods, nor prescriptions imposed by God, nor again God's will manifested in history. The religious vision, here, is a 'View of the World', i.e. a perspective from which one may view the world such that it leads one to a 'Way of Life'. The fusion of the two constitutes a religious vision.

The gathic vision portrays the world in radically moral terms, that is, it sees a good world contaminated with evil. The 'good' here is taken to be the perfect design of the world, called *Asha*, the Truth. This, the ideal truth, is the divinely given good, acting in accordance with which is 'Right Action'. One who chooses to live thus is called an *ashavan*. Any individual can live such a life, since we are all equipped with the 'Good Mind' (*Vohu Mana*) which is the intrinsic power to reveal to us how *Asha* applies to any situation. Thus acting to implement *Asha*, as disclosed by *Vohu Mana* is the resulting ideal way of life.

This is what Zarathushtra asked humanity to live by. It is the Mazdayasni faith he preached. Of course, religious institutions usually embrace more than religious vision; they develop rituals and social practices, often based on legendary histo-

ries and myths, cosmogonic and historical.

Rituals developed naturally, some having a clear ritualization of the religious vision, and some not. For example, the initiation (*navjote*) ritual is one where the initiate declares his/her choice of the worthy way of life – a life of good thought, word and deed. Similarly, the marriage ceremony over and above being a declaration of mutual commitment to each other, is also a joint commitment to *Asha*.

When you look at one of the high rituals of the Zoroastrian church – the *Yazeshne* ceremony – the recitation of the 72 *ha's* of the *Yasna* are recited when the *haoma* juice is extracted, the relation of the ritual to the original vision is quite obscure. This ceremony of high sanctity has been maintained by an inviolable tradition, because of the historical association with the pre-Zarathushtra concept of religiosity involving *haoma*, even though the ritual is unrelated to the vision of Zarathushtra. It will thus be performed less and less, and may in time disappear, which would be a loss. Hence one should attempt to preserve at least that part of the *Yasna* that is related to the original vision.

The principle for evaluating tradition, obvious to all rational human beings is this: the primary focus of the faith must be clearly recognized

and explicitly preserved, as well as the ideals that emerge from it. Rituals and social practices must be seen to be related to the articulation, veneration, or reinforcement of the primary articles of faith.

Notice what is, and what is not being suggested. Not the abandonment of ritual or social practice, nor replacement of the same, but their adaptation so that they may become significant to the contemporary mind and conscience, and in that form, live in the minds and hearts of believers. Rituals and social practices must live as meaningful and pleasant aspects of one's life, and not become the repetitive residues of an uncomprehended past.

“ ... Not the abandonment of ritual or social practice, nor replacement of the same, but their adaptation so that they may become significant to the contemporary mind and conscience, and in that form, live in the minds and hearts of believers. ”

The application of the principle of adaptation to social practices of the religious group often evokes divisive discourse. This is because the Zarathushtrian community, after the loss of its empire had to live in a tribal society framework, both in Iran and in India. The tribal feature of the religious outlook implies that a person acquires a religion by birth. This may well have been the case with Iranians of the pre-Zarathushtra period, as it was with the Vedic Indians.

By contrast, Zarathushtra offers his message to humanity. According to him the religious vision is accepted

by the believer, a human being, upon reflection and an explicit act of choice. This, of course, is no secret. It is declared by each initiate at that ceremony in the recitation of the *Jasa me avanghahe Mazda*. Nowhere in the scriptures is the universality of the faith denied or compromised the least bit.

Now, if a person accepts the vision of Zarathushtra and considers himself/herself a believer in that faith, such a relation is one between the believer and God. The crucial social issue is this: How should such a person be received by the Zarathushtrian community, i.e., have him/her be welcomed, allowed, or excluded from participating in its ritual life?

As far as I can see, to disallow such a person is contrary to the position of the theology, and violating the intent and spirit of Zarathushtra. I know, however, that there are some members of the community who would disagree. That could be only on grounds of traditionality, even though it runs counter to the theology! Here we see the pernicious manifestations of traditionalism; the maintaining of the tradition even when it has run amok.

In this atmosphere of cross winds of opinions, what is, or what should be the commitment of a Zoroastrian? This is how I construe the teachings of the prophet, who calls upon us in social situations to be “healers of existence.” Instead of repeating one's position, one should try to justify it, not by involving just tradition, but by formulating the core of the prophet's teaching, and examine which policy alternative is consistent with it. The discussion is to be governed by understanding and reason (*Vohu Mana*) and with exchange of reasons and insights (*Spenta Armaiti*). This, I take it, is *Hukhta*, exchange in good words.

These individual and social attitudes and resolutions may be taken rationally to be what this writer considers the ‘Zoroastrian Commitment’. ■

MARCH ON

Saga of the Parsi Mango Tree

By Dinaz Kutar Rogers

The state of Gujarat in India, has the distinct honor of claiming two botanical marvels, one of which is a giant Banyan tree, *Kabirvad*, planted by the sage Kabir on the banks of the river Narbada. A mile away from Sanjan, in Bhilwadi, on the banks of the river Varli stands another centuries-old tree. This tree has no special name, but the fact that it was put in the Indian soil by our ancestors fleeing religious persecution in Iran, makes it an integral part of Parsi history in particular and Indian history at large. Another emotional part of this scenery is the far-away pale-red ruins of the fort of Jadiv Rana, the Hindu king who gave our forefathers safety and security on the shores of the Arabian Sea.

This tree, not only has survived, borne small bright red fruits over all these intervening centuries, but has spread over a distance of more than 4 miles. A botanist would explain that as the tree grows, its branches instead of growing upward toward the heavens, would arch and bow earthward and in due time touch the soil and take root. Such trees are called trees with creeping stems, rhizomes or root stock. These partially or completely buried parts of the rhizomes put out roots and the exposed parts, to leaves and buds.



Lest We Forget

By Dinaz Kutar Rogers

Do you remember any stories or sayings?

"Lest We Forget" is hosted by Dinaz Kutar Rogers, a high-school biology teacher and published writer. 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, to Dinaz at 1240 Takena SW, Albany, Oregon 97321, tel: (541) 967-1911, email: drogers@proaxis.com.

Ode to the Parsi Mango Tree

By Dinaz Kutar Rogers (See story on previous page)

Once upon a time, now that's a long time ago
Along with our ancestors came a tree of mango.

It's fruits were few, small and red
A reminder of the land they had fled.

They planted this young tree on the banks of the Varli
A mere mile from Sanjan, at the village of Bhilwadi.

It must have been a mere sapling centuries ago
But now has spread over four miles as we know.

For it's branches bow toward earth into graceful arches
On hitting the ground, this tree on and on, marches.

The rhizomes thicken, sending roots in the ground
Whereas buds, leaves and fruits on the other side abound.

Beloved Gujarat gave us shelter, tolerance, a haven-in-Sanjan
And even let a mere mango tree flourish from our native Iran.

Time has passed on the shores of this beautiful sea
Where our ancestors made to Jadiv their milk-and-sugar plea.

This kind king's pale-red fort, is now falling apart
Not far from where, survives this tree, reminding us of our start.

Centuries old is this spreading mango tree
A symbolic spirit of those Iranians who wanted to be free.

It has prevailed, persisted, stood the test of time
This tree, like the Parsi-Zarathushti has fared just fine.

Now the survival of the Parsis and this tree is at stake
To preserve both, every effort let us all make.

As noted by historian Rustom Barjorji Paymaster in a book on Parsi culture, in 1916, this tree measured at a diameter of about 70 feet and had ten branches. Living in the vicinity of this marvel tree, 80-year-old Gangli Lapsi Mahali says she has seen this "Parsi tree" walk around quite a few times for a distance of perhaps 60 yards.

Rohinton Davierwalla, of the Sanjan Parsi Punchayet, acknowledges the community's awareness over all these centuries, about this mango tree. Even though the Parsis, inasmuch as cherishing the historical and emotional significance of this tree, don't attach any religious significance to this marvel of nature, the locals, however, consider it wondrous and use its bark for curative purposes for skin and stomach ailments. There have been several attempts made to propagate this tree by grafting, but so far none have been successful.

Now, flourishing into the 21st century, this tree spreads to about 50 feet and sits on the property of a Muslim farmer, Ahmedbhai, and is slowly encroaching into the small paddy farm of Vallibhai. Not pleased at the possibility of losing his precious farmland to this tree, Vallibhai has been quietly lopping off some of the branches.

So now, having weathered both man and nature over the centuries, this mango tree, just like the Parsi community, is facing a threat to its very existence. This concern has lead the Parsis to petition the Government of Gujarat to declare this as a historical monument, a true national heritage, and buy off the surrounding land. The government, unfortunately, sees no such measure necessary, to offer protection to a mere tree.

Knowing its unique history and features, however, this mango tree, just like the Parsis of India, needs special emergency actions to safeguard, secure and guarantee its very survival. ■

My mother used to say ...

“The old forget. The young don’t know.” – Japanese proverb

“Tee-pay, tee-pay, sarovar bharai”

Drop by drop, a lake gets filled. Every bit counts. One must not be impatient. Every little drop helps to make up a lake.

“Topee pehrai toh pehrow”

If the hat fits, wear it. This saying is used when one tries to do something beyond one’s capacity.

“Kaa-ra kagda, bathey hoi”

Black crows are everywhere. Black is the color of evil. There are unscrupulous persons everywhere. There are black sheep in all places and communities.

“Baap jeva beta, aney vad jeva teta(n)”

Like father like son, the tree is as good as its roots. This saying is uttered when a child does something good (or bad) following in the footsteps of his/her parents. If the foundation is good (or bad), the whole building is good (or bad).

“Pug joi-ne pathernu karvoo(n)”

See your legs and then spread your bedroll. Check your size before making your bed. Cut your cloth according to your size. Plan before you take on things. Do not take on things beyond your means or capacity.

“kamla-ni ankhen pirooj dekhai”

One can see only yellow, when suffering from jaundice. Jaundice is the disease where bile, the yellow liquid made by the pancreas, is secreted into the bloodstream, and the sufferer’s skin and eyes turn yellow and one begins to see everything yellow, as if wearing yellow sunglasses. Hence the saying “seeing things with a jaundiced eye”. If you are prejudiced to begin with, you are bound to find fault.

“Kaari gai khattar khay, dhani nay joi-nay nasee jai”

The black cow eats the fodder and runs away on seeing the owner. The black cow (or bad one) eats all the fodder given it by the owner, but when the time comes to be milked, she runs away (when she sees the owner coming with a bucket). Used when someone takes advantage of a situation and then shirks one’s duty when its time to pay back.

“Mor-ni soojay tither chale”

The little mocking bird tries to walk in the footsteps of the peacock. When someone tries to be what one is not and makes a fool of oneself. This saying was commonly uttered in the Parsi dominated towns of Gujarat.

“Kacho papad, pakko papad”

Uncooked papadam, cooked papadam. This was a tongue-twister my mother used to say. If you try to say this repeatedly and rapidly you will be tongue-tied! We used to end up accepting defeat.

“Kaka-ye kaki ne kayu ke kach ni kabat mathi kando, kakdi, kothmir kari nay kachooobar kar”

Uncle told the aunt to take out from the glass cupboard, an onion, a cucumber and some coriander leaves and make kachooobar. This sentence, with the same first letter was used by my mother, to tease us. Kachooobar is an onion salad made with the above ingredients, that is invariably consumed with the Parsis’ most favorite and traditional dish, dhansak. A cupboard with see-through glass or mesh, was used as a pantry in most Parsi homes before the advent of ice-boxes and electricity. Inside, sugar jars were placed in saucers of water to prevent attack by ants, and similarly butter pots were placed in a pan of water to keep the butter cool and prevent it from melting.

“Bhajiya(n) vay-rai gaya(n)”

The bhajias have fallen out on the ground. The nearest English equivalent is “The cat is out of the bag.” This was one of my father-in-laws favorite sayings, when something we were trying to hide was exposed quite dramatically, suddenly or unintentionally. Bhajias are a popular snack from western India, made by deepfrying potatoes or onion slices or other vegetables dipped in a chickpea flour batter. They are invariably eaten with two chutneys: one a sweet and sour brown one made from tamarind and sugarcane molasses (gor), and the other a hot one made from coriander leaves and green chillies.

“Kaal no dookaal aajay parsay”

Tomorrow’s famine will occur today. This saying is used when one does an act that brings on something unpleasant earlier than expected. For example, when there was uncertainty of water supply in Bombay due to dwindling water pressure in the taps, if I should happen to tip over a bucket of water and waste the water, my mother would scold me with this saying.

“Dookaal ma adhik maas”

In famine an extra month. When there is famine in the land, food should be rationed and made to last longer, i.e. for an extra month. This saying is used when additional problems arise or an additional burden is put on one’s meager resources in already difficult times.

“Gher ne gheli bahaarni daai”

Crazy at home, an angel outside. Used to describe someone, usually a child that is naughty at home but behaves like an angel outside. ■

[Submitted by **Parvin Damania**, administrative assistant in the Institute of Toxicology at University of California, Davis. She has a BA in English literature and French from the University of Bombay and a diploma in Secretarial Practice from Davar’s College, Bombay. Contact Parvin at padamania@hotmail.com]

READER'S

This column is a forum to present information and opinions. Letters (under 250 words) may be submitted to the Editor. The Journal reserves the right to edit all materials for clarity and space.

Kudos ...

Thank you for the years of service you have given us in every which way, especially for the fabulous FEZANA Journal, a truly world class Zarathushti publication which gets better and better every year. It is truly a class act and a must for every Zarathushti home ...

You will be pleased to know that my niece has found a wonderful husband through FEZANA Journal ...

And finally, at the FEZANA AGM I had suggested that we have a Farsi version of FEZANA Journal. I have located a group of people interested in helping with this ...

*Jimmy F. Dholoo
Gaithersburg, Maryland*

[We are pleased to inform readers that with this issue of FEZANA Journal, we have reinstated a 2-page Farsi Section, to be edited by Mrs. Fereshteh Khatibi - Ed.]

... I wanted to take a moment to thank you and the staff at FEZANA for publishing my article [*"Brightness in the Shade, FEZANA Journal, Summer 2001*] in the Summer issue, guest edited by Dina McIntyre. I consider it an honor and privilege to be in your magazine.

*Timothy R. Smith
Lompoc, California*

Thanks to your article [*"Historic Document on Calendars", FEZANA Journal, Spring 2001*], I had several people emailing me for information and to offer help with my project about Shenshai and Kadmi calendars at the British Museum, the oral history of people who lived in the last years of the Empire...**THANK YOU!**

*Afsaneh Khalat-Bari
London, UK
tonekabon@awogan.fsnet.co.uk*

I am one of the few persons who has received the Spring issue of the Journal here in Australia. I spent my lunch hour in the comfort of my Consulting Rooms to scan it and then posted it off to one family. It will circulate for a while before returning to me.

It is very well set out and tastefully done. Whatever will happen if you choose to stop doing it?

*Dr. Sam Kerr
Sydney, Australia*

I trust that the venerable FEZANA Journal is going from strength to strength under your careful and dedicated stewardship ... I admire the work that you've put into the Journal from its inception; it is now a truly world class publication of international repute with subscribers literally all over the world.

Marvellous work. A labor of love!

*Ronnie K. Marker
Bordentown, New Jersey*

World Congress

It is my sincere hope that people do not view congresses, such as the recent World Congress in Houston, as the sole remedy, or "quick fix" to preserve our beautiful religion. While congresses are a great way to share and discuss ideas with fellow Zarathushtris, they cannot show or teach our youth the good thoughts, good words and good deeds our religion stresses.

If we truly want to preserve our sacred religion, it must begin in the home. Setting a good example for your children by praying, wearing your sudreh and kushti, and teaching your children right from wrong, will do more for this religion than any congress ever can.

*Yazad Lala
Farmington Hills, MI
yaz521@aol.com*

Kudos for your issue on the World Congress [*FEZANA Journal, Spring 2001*]. However, while you have covered almost everything well, and given unprecedented coverage to Khojeste Mistree's call for an "amicable divorce" between the orthodox and the liberals (though in my 31-year practice as a psychologist, I have yet to come across an amicable divorce, and I strongly feel that in view of our dwindling numbers, it is wiser to "agree to disagree" and emphasize our commonality rather than our differences), you have not found it fit to mention what followed.

Following Khojeste's session, Kaemerz Dotiwalla chaired a session with panelists Pervin Mistry, BPP trustee Rustom Tirandaz and myself, inviting liberals and orthodox to present their views. Mistry emphasized the mystical, Ilm-e-Khshnoomist aspect of the religion. Tirandaz espoused the orthodox cause with illustrations and anecdotes from his experiences with the Mumbai Parsis. In my presentation, I observed that today's orthodox are tomorrow's liberals and that we do not need to put a wedge between the two; instead we should look towards devising ways to survive in the critical future facing us.

*Dr. Kersey H. Antia
Orland Park, Illinois*

Meeting with the Clintons

On June 16th, at Stanford University in California, they had a baccalaureate ceremony organized by the Stanford Associated Religions Board, which consists of representatives from various religious groups. As a member of this interfaith group, I was invited to join the procession of clergy and to sit with them on the stage.

As a bonus, I had the opportunity to meet and shake hands with former US president Bill Clinton, his wife, US Senator Hillary Clinton, and their daughter Chelsea who was one of the graduating students at Stanford. The Clintons had come to attend the event in a private capacity and kept a low profile, in the middle of the audi-

ence. However, I recognized Mr. Clinton as I passed next to him during the procession, and shook his hand in recognition.

After the ceremony was over, I introduced myself as a member of the Zoroastrian community to Mrs. Clinton. She was aware of the Parsi Zoroastrian community, as she once shared a dormitory room with a Zarathushti lady.

After completing his two terms as president, Bill Clinton continues to be active in various community and social events, including helping raise funds for the earthquake in Gujarat, and also visiting the devastated areas during his recent trip to Bhuj, Ahmedabad and surrounding villages. It was, therefore, a privilege to meet this distinguished family.

*Maneck Bhujwala
San Jose, California*

Another distortion, Another fable

According to an article "*The Adventures of Marco Polo, Part I*" by Mike Edwards (also an assistant editor) in *National Geographic* [May 2001]:

"The three Magi, the wise men who went to Bethlehem to worship the infant Jesus... The Magi were probably Zoroastrians, who revered fire. That was the principal religion before Islam came from Arabia in the 600s"

"In Marco Polo's account, the wise men journey to Bethlehem with gifts – gold, incense, myrrh – and the baby Jesus gives them a stone. It signifies that their faith should be strong, but they misunderstood and toss it into a well. Then a burning fire comes down from the heaven and straight into the well... The Magi realize the fire is holy and take it home, to be kept eternally.

"And that, Marco Polo concludes, is how fire came to be venerated in Persia."

This is what hundreds of thousands of National Geographic readers, who have never heard of Zarathushtis, will learn about Zarathushtis—the world's

first and oldest religion. A religion which venerated fire and was founded almost two thousand years before the birth of Christ. A religion which was the principal religion of the known world at the time. A world which then stretched from the Hindu-Kush in the east to beyond the Mediterranean Sea.

Did Marco Polo write this to please the Pope? A whiff of suspicion has lingered about him ever since he wrote his book in 1298, writes the author; but he also adds that, "Most scholars who have dissected Marco Polo's work, regard him as truthful."

Now it is left for us to prove him incorrect, at least about his conclusions regarding the Magis and fire.

Not being a scholar, I am at a disadvantage voicing my lone concern to the editor, National Geographic. I would, however, urge leaders of the community to take this matter up.

*Rusi Sorabji
Campbell, California*

On organ and body donation

As an ordained priest and a critical member of the American Red Cross life saving team, I fully support and endorse Dr. Mehroo Patel's article [*"To Remember Me"*, *FEZANA Journal, Summer 2001*] about organ and body donation. Giving one's organs does not interfere at all with Zarathushti last rites. In fact, to save someone's life is considered to be the most meritorious act that one can perform when parting the physical tenement of this body.

Further, I also recommend everybody, whilst you are alive and can, to donate blood, blood platelets, plasma and bone marrow. In fact, you can donate platelets every 2 weeks. According to Red Cross statistics, every time you donate blood, platelets and plasma you can save three lives.

You are endowed with the power to save three lives every time you donate! This kind of deed is living the religion of Zarathushtra at its zenith. It is the best way one can apply the

principles of our religion and prayers and put them into practice.

Give Life, Live Life! For more information, call 1-800-GIVE LIFE.

*Mobed Zarir F. Bhandara
Irvine, California*

Thoughts on dokhmenashini

During the last few months, a major controversy has been raging in Mumbai, on the issue of *dokhmenashini*, lack of birds of prey, use of Doongerwadi facilities by families of those using methods other than *dokhmas* for disposal of the dead, etc. The individuals involved are the Vada Dasturjis, a group of Zarathushti doctors and lawyers with the acronym "DDD-AG" (Disposal of the Dead with Dignity – Action Group), trustees of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet and several other Zarathushti scholars of our religion. Because of its intensity, the controversy has drawn attention of both the Indian and the foreign press (e.g. TIME magazine).

However, whatever the merits of the arguments and the final outcome of these heated discussions on which these individuals have expended valuable time and energy, and millions of words, it would apply finally only to the diminishing Zarathushti populations of the few cities and towns in India and Pakistan where *dokhmenashini* facilities currently exist.

In the above discussions, the dasturjis and scholars have objected to both burial and cremation, the other two alternatives, which indeed are the only procedures available to increasing Zarathushti populations in the rest of the world. Their objections are based primarily on religion, but one scholar also objected to these on environmental considerations (polluting the ground and the air).

What is the alternative? Should not the "Council of Iranian Mobeds of North America" and the "North American Mobeds Council", in consultation with similar councils of mobeds in Australia, Europe, Iran, etc. provide guidance to Zarathushtis living outside India and Pakistan, as

to the best method for disposal of departed Zarathushtis?

Dinshaw Joshi

Chevy Chase, Maryland

We are all aware of the controversy raging regarding the *dokhmenashini* system, between the DDD-AG and the traditional group.

I am a true believer in tradition. We have every right to question and tailor the religious practices according to our needs and not follow blindly the dictates as though it was The Word. As Asho Zarathushtra said: "Hear with your ears and ponder with a good mind." I would put it another way: "Sift the grain from the chaff."

I would like to put forth a question to the high priests and scholars. My question is: "What was the funerary procedure used when our beloved prophet passed away? Was it cremation (that would be defiling the fire)? Was it burial (that would be desecrating the earth)? Or was it *dokhmenashini* (where the body was left on the top of the mountain to be devoured by vultures)?"

To date, we don't even know the year of Zarathushtra's birth, so how can one be sure that *dokhmenashini* was the system used when Asho Zarathushtra died? Has anyone, anywhere recorded the event?

Farida Bamji

Ottawa, Canada

... On the subject of *dokhmenashini*, currently under much discussion ... if ours was a faith of strict dogmas, as is the case of many Revealed (or Prophetic) Faiths or even of strict traditions such as in the case of the Ancient Traditional Beliefs (e.g. Hinduism, which has no single teacher or prophet, but is the accumulated knowledge and philosophy of several sages over centuries), perhaps one would have less of a difficulty understanding, and continuing the practice, the tradition, that has come down to us in respect of disposal of the dead.

Two vital factors need to be kept in mind. First, the quickest way of dis-

posal, and second, to give back to nature what came from nature. *Dokhmenashini* perhaps meets the second factor profoundly; but then again, the question that needs to be raised is: "Does it fit today's chosen way of life?" Or are we to totally disregard realities; would that be a good Zarathushti tradition? Can human actions totally divorce realities?

In days gone by, granted *dokhmenashini* was perhaps the perfect system, with least contamination of the environment, and thus the God-given assets. For sure, burial and open energy-inefficient cremations contribute greatly to contamination, particularly when the finite earth and numbers of humans today are taken into account. Man must therefore find new solutions.

Of all the systems known to man today, perhaps modern cremation is the most logical and practical, with least pollution. I would further add that one may indeed have the choice of donating the body for organs and medical research. One may then have the satisfaction that having been unable to give back to nature as we do through *dokhmenashini*, we have contributed to humanity, even in our closing hour. Would not that demonstrate our ultimate belief in charity, something we so pride ourselves in?

Rather than the above, there are proposals that go to extremes of spending time, expense, energy and other vital and finite resources of the community, such as breeding birds that do not exist. How then can we explain the logic of our final charity? Charity to something or someone that does not exist? Creating the demand, just so we may feed them the diminishing population? Is that rational? Does that, perhaps, have a parallel in enhanced breeding of cattle and pork, through science, just to feed the existing and ever-increasing number of humans?

May I urge the readers to go back to your earliest teachings from our parents? Zarathushtra, the first of the revealers, was sent down to earth by

Ahura Mazda when ignorance and superstition prevailed. Zarathushtra came down to reveal to mankind the reality and purpose of His creation, to distinguish right from wrong, and get away from the wrong, through the use of the greatest gift of Ahura Mazda to man, *Vohu Mana*.

I sincerely hope and pray that some scholars, in their scholarly search, are not slipping back to the pre-Zarathushtra days. ■

Ester Bamji

Chevy Chase, Maryland



● The Journal regrets the omission of any reference to *Shehernaz Joshi Verahrami*'s contributions as one of the leaders of the Zoroastrian Womens International Network (ZWIN) [*FEZANA Journal*, Summer 2001, p. 10]. Shehernaz was the coordinator of the forum on the subject at the World Congress and subsequently worked with Aban Rustomji on the ZWIN newsletter.

● *Zarir Bhandara*'s introduction [*FEZANA Journal*, Summer 2001 p. 48] should read "He received the best student award from the vice chancellor of Bombay University" as the 4-year post graduate priestly studies were conducted by the Athra-van Education Trust and not by Bombay University. The Journal regrets the error. ■

ON THE INTERNET

zoroastrianplanet.com is a new portal for Zarathushtis, which allows access to unlimited information about the religion, culture and traditions; opportunity to network with Zarathushtis around the world; prayers and rituals; a "Find a Zoroastrian" section to locate old friends; a Chat Room; and "Shopping Cart" to purchase prayer books, CDs, books, saris, borders, sudrehes, caps; matrimonials and more. All Zoroastrians are invited, membership is free. ■

[Reprinted from "Parsis: the Jews of India", *New Society*, UK, Jan 1, 1988]

Parsis: The Jews of India

Parsis are the oldest established Asians in Britain, but traditionally they have never drawn attention to themselves. Estranged from their communal roots, can they survive?

Take three men: a Liberal (Dadabhai Naoroji - MP for Finsbury 1892-95), a Tory (Mancherjee Bhownagree - MP for Bethnal Green 1895-1905) and a Socialist (Shapurji Saklatvala - MP for Battersea 1922-29). These men, Britain's first Asian MPs, all belonged to the small and highly influential Indian community known as the Parsis.

The Parsis are a community with a long tradition in public life in India itself. Wherever its members have settled, they have endeavoured to carry on that tradition. In recent years, for example, the Parsis in South Africa have emerged as the most eloquent critics of apartheid.

Parsis in Britain. Parsis have been coming to Britain for over 200 years – longer than any other Asians. Yet how many people could say with any certainty what a Parsi was? Parsis in Britain have never drawn attention to themselves, or had much attention drawn to them. Among Parsis well-known here today are Freddie Mercury of Queen, Farrukh Dhondy (the Channel 4 editor and scriptwriter) and Zerbano Gifford (Liberal candidate for Harrow East at last election). None of them, however, is known as a Parsi, although Gifford at least is

proud to be one. The oldest established Asian people in Britain remain a hidden minority.

Migration to India. The Parsis are a remnant of the great Persian Empire. Followers of the Persian prophet Zoroaster (aka Zarathustra, of 2001 fame), their ancestors were driven out of Persia by invading Muslims 1400 years ago. Some, known as the Iranis, took refuge in the desert. Others, later joined by the Iranis, fled to Gujarat in north India. It is these Indian Zoroastrians who are termed Parsi.

On Indian soil, they erected Zoroastrian fire temples – the temples in which a flame is kept burning as a symbol of the life cycle and of eternal recurrence. This symbol has been richly significant to the nomadic Parsis: in a literal sense, the Zoroastrian faith has been kept burning. In India, Parsis also erected 'Towers of Silence' the buildings in which they leave their dead to be devoured by vultures – a practice which, strange though it may seem to modern Western thinking, has the ancient religious purpose of affirming the equality of all men in death.

Suffering no further persecution in India, for centuries the Parsis made modest livings out of their farming and small trade. Gujarati became their mother tongue, though the Gujarati spoken by Parsis is an idiosyncratic variant of the language. This is highly typical of the Parsi tendency to adapt but without any surrender of their distinctiveness.

'Jews of India'. With the arrival of the British, however, Parsi fortunes underwent a quantum leap. Manifesting a business acumen which got them dubbed the 'Jews of India', the Parsis came to dominate the commercial life of Victorian Bombay, the city in which they are still mostly concentrated.

Monotheists, unconstrained by any caste system, and lighter skinned than the majority of Indians, the Parsis

were eminently acceptable to the British imperium; and with some exceptions – notably Dadabhai Naoroji, an early proponent of the independence movement – their loyalty to the crown was unswerving. Indeed, there was no shortage of those who – like Mancherjee Bhownagree (nicknamed "Bow and agree" by his detractors) – regarded British rule as little less than providential. They are however renowned for their honesty and their philanthropy – there is a saying "Parsi thy name is Charity" – and they have always enjoyed a high moral standing in India. Parsi charity begins at home, and – like Quakerism – the Zoroastrian religion has always encouraged mutual assistance.

Although Parsis never surrendered their religious identity, or – in contrast to the ill fated Anglo-Indians – ever became reviled as sycophants of the British, they were eager to absorb British culture and education. The Parsis remain an extraordinarily highly qualified, and in a superficial sense, westernized people.

Indeed Parsis are the 'Jews of India' in terms of intellectual as well as commercial achievements. And since Zoroastrianism enjoined equality between the sexes – an imperative which sharply distinguishes it from other eastern religions – Parsi women tended to be at least as well educated as Parsi men. They can also be combative, and it is said that Parsi plays typically depict women as the dominant sex.

Zerbano Gifford, a forthright representative of this tradition of female independence, thinks of Parsis as "very Victorian" in their energy and enterprise. The firm of Tata, a giant commercial and industrial undertaking with its own city, Jamshedpur, outside Calcutta, and bases all over the world is an awesome monument to Parsi entrepreneurship.

Diminishing numbers. But the Victorian comparison is revealing, for the Parsis are nothing resembling the

force they were. In India, their religion is struggling to survive. Furthermore, Parsi numbers, always small, are now diminishing at an alarming rate. In 1971 there were 91,000 Parsis in India, by 1981 the figure had fallen to 71,000, and one in five Indian Parsis is now over 65. Non-marriage, marriage outside the community and late marriage have all contributed to the decline, the major reason for which is perhaps the career-mindedness of highly educated Parsi women.

The Parsis have also steadily been losing their prosperity and prestige, and even their sense of purpose. Nowadays, 40% of Parsis in Bombay – a city where they could once boast they had no beggars – are on the verge of poverty, and among the young there is a growing problem of drug addiction. There is some evidence, too, that they have particularly high incidences of mental illness and haemophilia, both perhaps exacerbated by their defensiveness as a community and some degree of inbreeding.

Arguably, the crisis afflicting the Parsi community in India dates back to 1947. For although they have not dropped from notice – Rajiv Gandhi's father was a Parsi and the defense services have had Parsi commanders – they have not benefited as a people from the new Indian society which has emerged since Independence.

Rebuilding the community. The Parsi journalist Delshad Karanjia believes that, using their still-ample resources, Parsis must act now to rebuild the community. But the action taken by young Parsis has been to emigrate. In Britain there are about 5,000 Parsis, mainly based in London. The residue of the once-dynamic Indian bourgeoisie, many of them are affluent professionals – although it is important to appreciate that British Parsis have been subsumed into a slightly larger community which includes Zoroastrian immigrants from East Africa and Zoroastrian refugees from Khomeini's Iran.

Ideological disputes. So far as the community has a hub, it is Zoroastrian

House, a big Victorian house in West Hampstead where prayer meetings and social functions are held. Here, however, as elsewhere, Zoroastrians are driven by ideological disputes. Some, worried about shrinking numbers, want to waive the traditional Zoroastrian taboo against accepting converts; for others – the highly orthodox east African Zoroastrians in particular – such proposals are anathema.

Their debates, apparently, are lively. Rustom Irani, who came here from India in the fifties, tells the joke that wherever three Zoroastrians meet the result is four arguments. A Bayswater hotelier and the founding president of the World Zoroastrian Organisation, Irani is proud of his religion and heritage. But the bickering which goes on at Zoroastrian House gets him down and he takes no heart from a younger generation who seem to be indifferent to the old traditions and to have lost the old zest for business. The British Empire, he likes to recall, was built on a gamble, but watching young Parsis opting for safe jobs and amusing themselves at discos, he sees no sign of a gambling spirit and he is despondent about the community's prospects.

Yet there are younger British Parsis who are just as anxious to preserve their traditions. Thrity Shroff, a young professional Parsi woman from a Bombay family, has been bringing together Zoroastrians in Harrow. Having noticed faces in the street which she thought might belong to fellow-Parsis, she scoured the electoral register for Parsi-sounding names. Through her efforts, Harrow Zoroastrians are meeting to read the gathas, their religions ancient scriptures – no easy task, since what has survived of them is open to wide interpretation and they have no priest to guide them. Training a Zoroastrian priest is a long and complex business and in Britain, a tradition of Zoroastrian priesthood has scarcely emerged.

Harrow's Zoroastrians are talking, too, about their practical difficulties as a religious minority which has barely been identified. Some Zoroastrians

want to get planning permission for a fire temple. The trouble is, says Thrity Shroff, that Parsis used to be loath to be seen as a burden on society, and she thinks they may have missed their opportunity to get their special needs acknowledged. It is a question of how these devotees will sustain their faith in the absence of authoritative guidance, though there is no doubt that they are determined to do so.

Western scholars. Overcoming a sense of estrangement from their own communal past is a problem for British Parsis. Ironically, it is to western scholars that they have principally turned to learn in detail about their history. Prof. John Hinnells of Manchester University has made a major study of the Parsis, and Dr. Mary Boyce is perhaps the leading authority on Zoroastrianism. Both names are well-known in Parsi circles and their lectures and writing have contributed greatly to the community's self awareness. Zervanoo Gifford, for instance, says that she never gave a thought to her preoccupation with cleanliness until she read about the ancient emphasis on ritual purity in Hinnell's work.

It is a mystery why a people with so interesting a past, and so old and close a connection with the British, should have gone largely unnoticed. Partly, perhaps, they have been victims of their own assimilationist tendencies. They may have been overlooked because of the smallness of the numbers. In the Indian population as a whole, Rustom Irani remarks that the Parsis were never more than a "speck of dust".

Today, however, the question is whether the Parsis and Zoroastrians in general can survive at all. Maneck Dalal, MD of Tata Ltd in London, is not inclined to take talk of the impending disappearance of the Parsis too seriously. It has always gone on, he says. In view of the sharp decline in the Parsi population, this may seem complacent, but the Parsis have an impressive record of resilience and their adaptability is almost proverbial. It is not yet time to write their obituary. ■

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Dr. Meherwan P. Boyce, VP-Finance and Homi Davier, VP-International Affairs at the recently-formed World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce (WZCC) present the energy picture in the US, and opportunities and challenges that lie ahead of us, in the USA.

THE US BUSINESS SCENE

What is the energy picture in the US?

There are supposedly 295,000 megawatts of new power plants being designed to be built in the next several years in the US. Is this going to be a glut or a boom to the market place? 94% of all outages in the electrical grid has nothing to do with generating power but is related to distributing it. How is this going to help the reliability of the system that powers today's information hubs in corporate America? If the industry were to build these plants, how are they going to find the natural gas to fuel them? Does the infrastructure exist that can distribute the natural

gas if we are to find it. How should we be solving this problem?

Distributed systems may be the answer. Many server farms in the US are placing systems "inside the fence" to guarantee the power. These systems are micro turbines, fuel cells, and combined cycle plants.

The Zarathushti community in India once rose to the challenge of power in the sub continent. The first totally private hydro-electric plant was built by the TATA Corporation. It was built in Khapoli with water coming from the Valvan dam in Lonavala

some 80 miles from Mumbai, up in the western Ghats.

Another major project was designed and engineered by many Zarathushtis was the *Sukkur Barrage*. Its chief engineer was Khan Bahadur Jehangir R. Colabawala, and with him was a very strong team of engineers many of them Parsis. The Sukkur Barrage harnessed the Indus and made the Indus valley one of the major sources of energy and the breadbasket of Pakistan.

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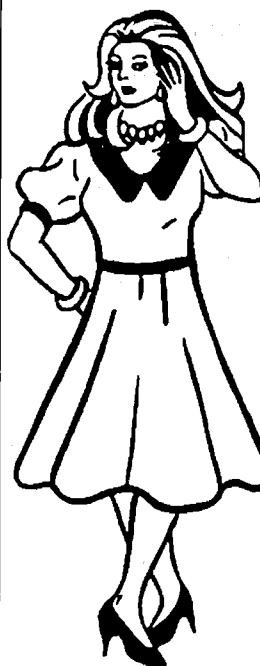
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World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce

WWW.WZCC.ORG

Website is under development. Watch for more to come!
Contact WebMaster Fali D. Shroff at fali_shroff@hotmail.com

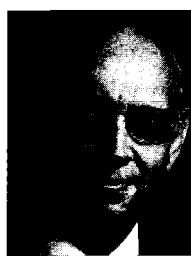
All Zarathushti businesspersons, entrepreneurs, would-be business persons and professionals are invited to join this global network.

Membership: Student (\$20); Individual (\$50); Organizations (\$100)

Please make checks to WZCC and mail to Sarosh Collector, Treasurer, 217 Lazy Hollow Drive, League City, Texas 77573, tel: (281) 332-8661, saroshjc@aol.com
Information: Contact Corp. Secretary Edul Daver, tel: (732) 469-1866, daver@acupowder.com

many challenges ahead of us and many opportunities and examples to draw upon.

The World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce (WZCC) is dedicated to making the dreams of our youth a reality. We suggest that interested persons visit our website www.wzcc.org [see above] and start a dialog on this subject. In the next issue we will discuss another interesting subject on the business scene. Your ideas for these different business topics are also encouraged. ■



Dr. Meherwan P. Boyce, P.E.
vice-president
(Finance) for
WZCC, is Managing Partner of *The Boyce Consultancy*,
and has over 35

years of experience in the Energy field.



Homi Davier
vice-president
(International
Affairs) of the
WZCC is founder
and CEO of *The Capricorn Group Inc.* which initiated

the startup of *Baltic International Airlines*, *Capricorn Travel N' Tours, Inc.* and other ventures.

Returning Entrepreneurs Bring India a Bit of California

[Excerpted from article in Wall Street Journal Interactive Edition, October 30, 2000, by Dan Biers in Los Angeles and Sadanand Dhume in Bangalore]

Indians who have made it in Silicon Valley in the past few years suddenly are bringing valuable expertise, cash and contacts back to the motherland. Their rags-to-riches tales also are inspiring an entrepreneurial spirit long stifled by India's oppressive bureaucracy.

"There is a sense of giving back," says Berkeley professor AnnaLea Saxenian, "I think there's a certain amount of guilt associated with leaving India and then succeeding beyond anyone's imagination."

The contributions of Overseas Indians to their motherland was a comparative pittance until recently ... It was not until the late 1990s that Silicon Valley and other high-tech centers started churning out multimillionaire Indian entrepreneurs who could invest in their native land. By 1998, there were an estimated 774 high-tech firms in Silicon Valley led by an Indian chief executive officer...

Kanwal Rekhi was one of the first Indians to strike it big in Silicon Val-

ley, when he sold his company to US-based Internet software giant Novell in 1989 for \$210 million.

Mr. Bhalerao is a classic example of how Overseas Indians are contributing more than just dollars and cents. He is co-founder of three IT startups whose Indian subsidiaries are in Broadband Hub, a gleaming five-story building that's the latest addition to Bangalore's skyline. His total investment in the companies – optical networking company Amber Networks, broadband firm Alopa Networks, and semiconductor designer Ishoni Networks – probably won't go much higher than \$8 million. More important is the roughly \$200 million the companies have attracted from foreign investors willing to bet on his vision. About one tenth of that money is going to the Indian operations, which employ about 150 people.

Raju Reddy is another Indian who has taken his California company back home. He is founder and CEO of Sierra Atlantic, which designs and

develops e-business application networks. He set up an offshore development center in Hyderabad in 1993; today, two-thirds of his workforce – about 250 people – is in India.

These success stories, says **Arun Maheshwari**, CEO of TriVium India Software, “have helped the spirit of entrepreneurship in India.” He says Indians can connect with stories about **Sabeer Bhatia**, founder of e-mail service provider Hotmail, and **K. B. Chandrasekhar**, who founded California-based Internet-hosting firm Exodus Communications.

In addition to the spirit of entrepreneurship, the Silicon Valley Indians are promoting the spirit of capitalism. They are also making their mark on India’s perennially underfunded education system. Many of the success stories in the US are products of the elite Indian Institutes of Technology. Now, graduates are beginning to give back to their alma maters in a big way. **Garuraj Deshpande**, chairman and founder of Massachusetts-based Sycamore Networks is donating \$100 million to IIT Madras.

Ultimately, it may be those contributions that go the farthest, by developing a new generation of brainpower that will secure India’s place as a global leader in technology. ■

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Ordering daglis, pagrees, fetas, sapats, topis and such from Mumbai

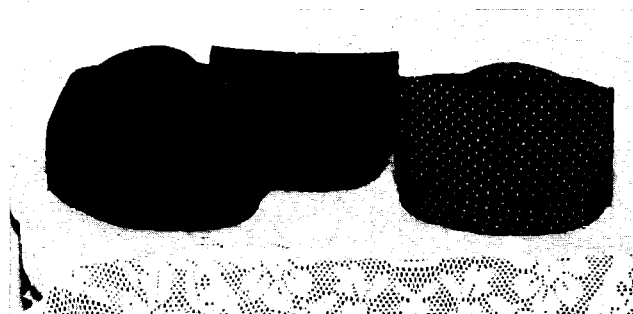


Pagrees and Fetas. When **Gulshan Kolah** [photo above] was about to be married, back in 1980, she could not find anyone who would make a ‘pagree’ [photo above] for her husband. A pagree, of course, is the distinguished looking, pointed, shiny black hat, worn nowadays mostly for ceremonial occasions, such as weddings and navjotes, by Parsi men. Some men, however, prefer to wear the ‘feta’ which looks rather like a heavy felt hat, without a rim.

So Gulshan decided to make one herself. She sought out Mr. Nariman Pagdiwalla, the last of the pagree-makers, and learnt the art of making it. In olden days, they were made of silk polished with a coat of shiny lacquer. Today, the preference is for a natural silk look. The pagree is made on a mold, with a cardboard base, draped with black silk material, with a choice of either maroon or white dots. It is custom-made, to fit snugly on the forehead.

Since then, Gulshan got into taking orders and has now made hundreds. To order one, contact Gulshan at K-2 Cusrow Baug, S. B. Road, Colaba, Mumbai 400 001. For a while she was in Australia and could be reached at 64-9-489-7649, tehmus@ai.co.nz.

The venerable *feta* and *pagree* shop, **B. J. Mistry and Co.** at 491 Kalbadevi Road, Mumbai, established in 1876, was shut down in 1986. But Burjor Mistry may be persuaded to take a special order at his home at Queen’s Chambers, above Kala Niketan, Queen’s Road, Mumbai. But he does not make it during



the monsoon season, since it goes limp. And they do not, nowadays, come in the classic “B. J. Mistry” hat box, with the special instructions:

1. Always use a soft brush.
2. Brush the hat in a counter-clock wise direction.
3. Keep naphthalene balls inside when the hat is idle.
4. Do not put any article or weight on top of the hat.
5. Look after your hat during the monsoons.

Parsi topis (velvet or satin caps) and **sapats** (leather or velvet slippers) as also **sudrehs** and **kushtis** may be ordered from the oldtime “**Kerawalla & Co.**” at 218 Chandra Mahal, Dr. Cowasji Hormasji Street, Dhobi Talao, Mumbai 400 002, tel: 206-1343. Mr. Keki Kerawalla is interested in hearing from a wholesaler to market these items to Parsis abroad.

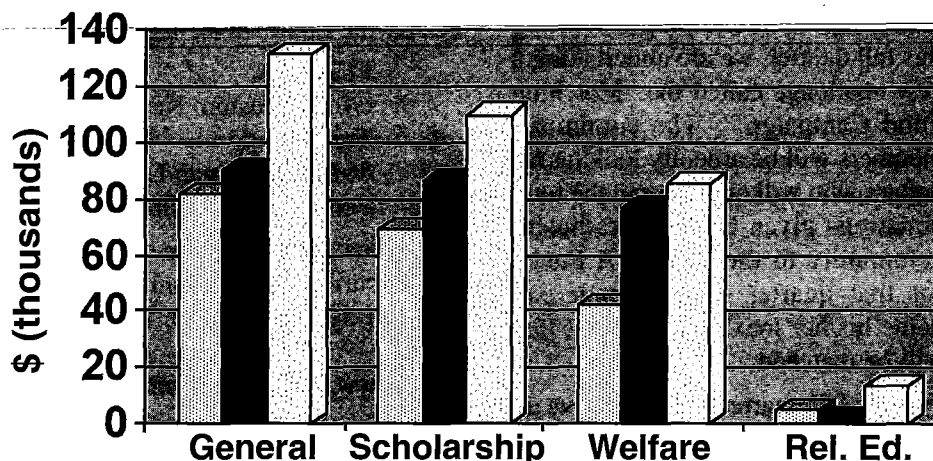
The **Parsi dagli**, the traditional coat of light-weight white material with the bow ties in front, or the **daglo** – made of heavier white duck material with a closed collar and buttons down the front, can be custom-made at: **D. Shamji & Co.**, 143/B Perin Nariman Street, Bazar Gate, Fort, Mumbai 400 001, Tel: 266 3131. He even has a one-page form on which measurements can be sent to him from overseas.

Nowadays, of course, one can get all this information at the click of the mouse. On a whim, I went to *yahoo* and searched for ‘Parsi’ ‘pagree’ ‘topi’ and ‘feta’. Try it out - you will be amazed. - *Rohinton Rivetna*



Dr. Jerry M. Kheradi *chair of the FEZANA Funds and Finance Committee.*

FINANCIAL



FEZANA fund balances, in dollars, as of December 1999, December 2000 and June 2001.

FEZANA Financial Progress Report

FEZANA funds continued their growth during the first half of 2001. Even though 2000 was not a very good year for investments, FEZANA's total assets are now nearing the \$350,000 mark. In the chart above, FEZANA's General fund (operating fund), which finances most of FEZANA's committee activities such as the Journal, youth activities, sports, etc., have grown from \$81,000 in 1999 to over 131,000 in the first half of this year. We have already exceeded our goal of \$100,000 for the year 2001 for the

Scholarship Fund, and the Welfare Fund is not far behind. We are also beginning to receive good support towards the Religious Education Fund.

A look at FEZANA's revenues and expenditures. Last year, FEZANA spent over \$65,000 to conduct its business. The table [below] summarizes some of the major revenue sources and expenditures.

The budget for 2001, approved at the Annual General Meeting in Westminster, California, is for \$95,000 in

expenses against an expected revenue of about \$200,000. Revenues (including donations) during the first half of 2001 have been just over \$110,000. Hence we hope to meet our targets if this pace continues.

Our goal still remains the same. With the help of Ahura Mazda the Scholarship Fund has reached its goal of \$100,000 and hopefully the Welfare Fund will follow suit. We will appreciate your help in boosting the funds in the Religious Education Fund to try and reach its goal of \$100,000.

Calendar Year 2000	Admin *	Journal **	Welfare ***	Academic Scholarship ***	Religious Education	Total
Revenues, US\$	54,894	30,273	33,051	17,591	1,860	127,669
Expenditures, US\$	8,050	30,750	4,256	2,000	4,435	65,317

- Notes:
- * "Admin" revenues include Membership dues, unrestricted endowments and donations, sales (directory, religion text, etc.), and investment income. Admin. expenses include supplies, copy ing and postage, communications (including website), meetings and Congress expenses, etc.
 - ** Journal is shown as a separate line item because it is one of FEZANA's major activities which generates its own revenue from subscriptions, advertisements and donations.
 - *** Includes donations and endowment funds. Only the income from an endowment fund can be utilized for its specified purpose.

FINANCIAL

Matching Fund campaign. Starting this fall quarter, we are undertaking a new challenge called the "Matching Fund Campaign." The committee members will be ardently looking for donors who will either equal the total donations given by the Zarathushti community to the FEZANA Funds for that quarter or the donor can name his/her maximum amount that will be matched.

For this fall quarter 2001, we have an anonymous donor from New York State, who has offered to match up to \$2,000. We would love to have more volunteers come forward for this worthy cause and you can name the fund toward which your matching donations will go. In order to better publicize this campaign, FEZANA will publish the names of the donors, unless the donor expressly wishes to remain anonymous. Kindly make your checks payable to FEZANA,

specify the Fund name, and mail to:

FEZANA
c/o Dr. Rustom Kevala,
Treasurer
8812 Tuckerman Lane
Potomac, MD 20854-3164

Donations may also be made by credit card (we recommend this method) by going to the FEZANA website:

<http://www.fezana.org/funds.htm>

and click on "DONATE ONLINE". All transactions are completely secure.

Jerry M. Kheradi, MD, Chairperson, Funds and Finance Committee

Rustom Kevala, PhD, FEZANA Treasurer

Committee: **Mr. Alayar Dabestani, Mr. Manucher Mobedshahi, Dr. Borzoo Nadjmi, Dr. Meherwan Boyce**

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Who Wants to be a Millionaire?

It all starts with a vision!

Andrew Carnegie believed that all personal wealth beyond what was required to supply the needs of one's family should be regarded as a trust to be administered for the benefit of the community. One of his lifelong interests was education, especially for the working class. There were only a few public libraries in the world when, in 1881, Carnegie began promoting the idea. He and his corporation subsequently spent more than \$56 million to build 2,509 libraries throughout the English-speaking world. In total, Carnegie gave away more than \$350 million to charitable causes during his lifetime. [Source: Carnegie Corporation website].

A million dollar goal for our Zarathushti youths!!

If your concept of the future doesn't extend past the next month's junior prom, some big numbers may help focus your attention.

For example, put \$2 a day into your piggy bank. After a year, open an IRA with the \$730 you've saved, and keep adding to it at the rate of \$2 a day through your adult life. Assuming you're age 16 when you open the IRA, and your investment averages a 10% annual return, you'll have more than \$1.3 million by the time you're 70. If you live to age 85, you'd be able to take out more than \$90,000 a year and still have money to leave to your heirs.

In other words, *wealth's biggest ally is time!* If you haven't started a savings plan, do it now. Boys and girls, isn't that a great idea and a solid, stable financial basis for the future? I am sure all our intelligent Z-youths will seriously consider this plan to help themselves and to make their parents happy and proud.

You want to be a millionaire!!!

First, you must realize that the definition of a millionaire is a person who has \$1 million in assets – not a person with an income of \$1 million a year. Then, you must figure out how you can reach your goal of having \$1 million by retirement (at age 65). *The main idea is to start early.* At age 35, you must put away \$5,000 a year, just more than \$400 a month, assuming an 11% annual return, to reach your goal. If you wait 10 years, until age 45, then that figure more than triples to \$15,600 a year. So, as we can see, wealth's biggest ally is time.

FEZANA wants to be a millionaire!!!!

With the examples given above, it shows that time is our biggest ally in investing and saving for the future. FEZANA is now a teenager. We need to start investing for the future of FEZANA and the future of our youth. We need 1,000 people from our community to contribute \$100 to get started. This will yield \$100,000

towards our goal of reaching \$1,000,000. \$100 is a lot of money, but when you compare the current prices for sneakers, a nice dress or a dinner for two in a nice restaurant, \$100 is very affordable to give to our Zarathushti community.

Following Andrew Carnegie's example, consider the needs of your own family first, but then consider the needs of your Zarathushti family. Please be one of the volunteers for this venture in the new millennium for the future of our religion, culture and youth.

"A thousand points of light"

Our plan is to form a separate section in this financial corner where we shall be publishing the list of all donors (or anonymous if you wish) of \$100 or more and they will be automatically enrolled in a select group called "A Thousand Points of Light." For each \$100 donated by you, you will be entitled to one "Point of Light." We established the "Thousand Points of Light" to recognize those special friends whose leadership gifts and commitments are making a real difference in our goal to create a world of true Zoroastrianism. In the future, we also plan to send out individual certificates that will identify you as a member of the "Thousand Points of Light." We look forward to welcoming you to this very special group of elite leaders. ■

Read

FEZANA JOURNAL

Be informed. Be inspired. Be educated.
Send a gift subscription to family and friends.

Please inform us of address changes promptly

If the Journal is not forwardable by the Post Office, it is returned to us at a cost of \$5 to \$7. If it is forwarded to your new address it still costs FEZANA 60 cents. Send changes to Subscriptions Manager Rustom Kevala [see front cover].

Year End Tax Planning Strategy

Yes folks, it is that time of year, to begin your tax planning to optimize your tax position and give less to Uncle Sam. One strategy is to donate to FEZANA. FEZANA being a not-for-profit charitable organization qualifies you to get the maximum tax benefits for any contribution made to it. FEZANA will soon be registered in Canada to enable Canadians to also obtain tax benefits.

Donating an amount to charities each month or year, either as a percentage of your net income or as a dollar amount, is one of the most common ways to set aside your charitable resources. Because charitable contributions can be partially "paid for" through reduced taxes (see chart below), you might find that you could give much more on an annual basis than you imagined.

The higher your tax bracket, the lower the after-tax cost of a contribution

Federal Tax Rate	Contribution (Cash or Equivalent)	Simple Tax Savings	After-tax Cost of Donation
39.6%	\$10,000	\$3,960	\$6,040
35.0%	\$10,000	\$3,600	\$6,400
31.0%	\$10,000	\$3,100	\$6,900

(This table is to be used as an example and utilizes the tax brackets for the year 2000 and does not take into account any new tax laws.)

Charitable giving is an excellent way for individuals to reduce their income tax liability. Appreciated assets are usually subject to capital gains tax if they are sold. By contributing appreciated securities, a donor can turn over the full value of the appreciated assets to a worthy cause and neither the donor nor the charity will be liable for capital gains taxes. In addition to cash and securities, almost any asset can be used for charitable giving; i.e. real estate, artwork, jewelry, automobiles and even life insurance.

Healthy and Wealthy

We wish to keep you physically fit and want to give you the latest guidelines for a healthy heart from the American Heart Association.

2001 Cholesterol Guidelines

Total Cholesterol Level	Total Cholesterol Category
Less than 200 mg/dL	Desirable
200 - 239 mg/dL	Borderline high
240 mg/dL and above	High
LDL Cholesterol Level	LDL Cholesterol
Less than 100 mg/dL	Optimal
100 - 129 mg/dL	Near optimal/above optimal
130-189 mg/dL	Borderline high to High
190 mg/dL and above	Very high
Triglyceride Level	Triglyceride Category
Less than 150 mg/dL	Normal
150 - 499 mg/dL	Borderline high to High
500 or greater	Very high
HDL Cholesterol Level	HDL Cholesterol Category
Less than 40 mg/dL	Low (representing increased risk)
60 mg/dL and above	High (heart protective)

Acknowledgments

FEZANA gratefully acknowledges donations received between May 1 and August 8.

General fund. Kersi Bhesania, Toronto, ONT (\$51); Rustom Damania, Covis, CA (\$35); Er. Soli Das-toor, University Park, FL (\$116 from Jashans in FL); Jasmin Deboo, Coral springs, FL (\$21); Farrokh & Dr. Shirin Engineer, Columbia, MD (\$20); Dr Nilufer P. Medora, Cypress, CA (\$31); Kaizad Rajkotwala, Houston, TX (\$20); Anoo Randelia, San Francisco, CA (50); Hoshang Subawalla, Pensacola, FL (\$51); Perry D. Unwalla, St. Augustine, FL (\$40); Iranian Zor. Assoc. NY (\$20); Zor. Assoc. of Kansas (\$45); Zor. Society of British Columbia (\$40).

Critical Assistance Fund. Byram Daruwalla, W. Windsor, NJ (\$25); Farrokh & Dr. Shirin Engineer, Columbia, MD (\$20); Dault Engineer, Glen Ellyn, IL (\$51); Farieda Irani, Plano, TX (\$160); Khurshid Jamadar, Coppell, TX (\$60); Shernaz Mohanty, Plano, TX (\$12); Parvez S. Mukadam, Shoreview, MN (\$51).

FEZANA Journal. Burjor J. Patel, Schaumburg, IL (\$20); Pesi Sanjana, Farmington Hills, MI (\$22).

Religious Education Fund. Dr. Kamal Campbell, Columbus, GA (\$25); Maneck & Meher Dustoor, Grand Rapids, MI (\$30); Farrokh & Dr. Shirin Engineer, Columbia, MD (\$20); Freyaz K Shroff, N. Myrtle Beach, SC (\$30); Zor. Assoc. of Metr. Washington (\$90 for Z-factor).

Scholarship Fund. Dr. Babak Abadi, Pittsburgh, PA (\$100); Firdaus Bamji, New York, NY (\$61); Adi Dutia, Huntsville, AL (\$200); Farrokh & Dr. Shirin Engineer, Columbia, MD (\$20); Eruch & Lily Karanjawala, Santa Maria, CA (\$25).

Welfare Fund. Cyrus Austin, Chandler, AZ (\$300); Shahrokh Mehta, DeWitt, NY (\$21); Farrokh & Dr. Shirin Engineer, Columbia, MD (\$20); Noshir & Rhoda Lakdawalla, Valencia, CA (\$30); Farrokh Nam-daran, N. Vancouver, BC (\$48); Behram Shroff, McLean, VA (\$90); Jer Vijan, Mesa, AZ (\$120); Dr. Aspi & Ketty Wadia, Austin, TX (\$70); Zor. Assoc. of California (\$215) for Gujarat earthquake.

PLEASE GIVE FROM YOUR HEART

Please make checks payable to "FEZANA", and send to the address in the appeal, or to FEZANA Treasurer Rustom Kevala, 8812 Tuckerman Lane, Potomac, MD 20854. Please indicate the intended purpose clearly. For tax exemption eligibility see FEZANA Journal [Summer 2000, page 71 and Fall 2000, page 88]

Kidney transplant for Shahzad Doneshwar (Irani)

Shahzad Doneshwar (Irani) 41, of Mumbai, father of 7-year-old twins, is suffering from complete renal failure. He has been on dialysis for the last 3 years, and the doctors have now advised him to go for a kidney transplant. Estimated cost of surgery and medication for 1 year is Rs. 400,000. Please send contributions to FEZANA [see above] marked "Shahzad".

Full Time Mobed Welfare Scheme

WZO Trust Funds and Athornan Mandal jointly address the goal of encouraging young athornans to embrace mobedi as a full time profession

... It was recognized that looking to the present and future spiritual needs of the community, what was necessary, was the development of an educated, intelligent, knowledgeable and articulate class of mobeds. It was very essential not only to encourage our young athornans to embrace mobedi as a full time profession by making it economically viable, but also to inculcate in them the essential requisites for the class of mobeds needed by the community, not only all over India, but worldwide.

The WZO Trust Funds and Athornan Mandal who were both striving towards the same objectives, forged a working relationship to jointly address the issue and launched a project to transform thought into reality. WZO Trust Funds were able to raise donations amounting to Rs. 9 million.

Presently, 31 young athornanzadas are benefitting from the scheme; 18 practice in Mumbai, 6 in Surat, 2 in Navsari and 1 each in Bangalore, Bilimora, Dahanu, Gandevi and Neemuch. The monthly support extended to each of them ranges between Rs. 1250 to Rs. 4000.

The revival of mobedi as a profession where the income is in tune with the times is well under way. This is a win-win situation for the community as well as for the athornans.

Donations for this very worthwhile project are very welcome. Please send your checks to FEZANA [see above] marked "Full time Mobedi".

[Excerpted from "WZO Trust Funds - Athornan Mandal Full Time Mobed Welfare Scheme" by Dinshaw Tamboly and Nadir Modi, August, 2001]

Keyannejad-Kapadia Zoroastrian Scholarship Fund

The Triangle Fraternity Education Foundation is pleased to announce the creation of the Keyannejad-Kapadia Zoroastrian Scholarship Fund (endowed by Mr. Homi Kapadia and his sister Mrs. Mahrokh Keyannejad). The scholarships generated by this fund may be used for undergraduate or graduate study in an accredited university in the USA.

To qualify for an award, the applicant must be a member of Triangle Fraternity, have at least a 3.0 cumulative grade point average (out of 4.0) and be enrolled in an engineering curriculum. Additionally, priority will be given to candidates who are:

- Enrolled at Michigan State University
- Not citizens or Permanent Residents (Green Card) of the USA
- Of the Zoroastrian religion

Triangle Fraternity was founded at the University of Illinois in 1907 and is recognized as the social fraternity for students majoring in engineering, architecture or the sciences. Triangle Fraternity is:

Serious About Scholarship ● Sets and Demonstrates High Standards ● Celebrates Achievement

For information about the scholarships and the application process, please contact:

Triangle Fraternity National Headquarters, 120 S. Center Street, Plainfield, IN 46168

Tel: (317) 837-9641 ● fax: (317) 837-9642 ● www.Triangle.org

Scholarships for Religious Studies

The need for young Zarathushtis to take a more active part in scholarly activities and meetings has been keenly felt for a long time. The FEZANA Religious Education committee has therefore recommended that FEZANA should set up a major scholarship to be awarded to a Zarathushti student to pursue studies and/or research in religion, leading to an undergraduate or post-graduate degree at an accredited university anywhere in the world. This scholarship, starting at \$5,000 per year, will supplement other stipends or funds that are becoming available at many universities [see S.O.A.S announcement in the Summer 2001 Journal and on page 25 of this issue. Also see page 13]. Contact Lovji Cama at Lovji_Cama@Merck.com, for further information. Donations for the scholarship should be marked "Religious Studies".

Letter from Ahmedabad

"The amount received by us from FEZANA, totals the magnanimous amount of US \$8,500 ... we at the Ahmedabad Panchayat, on our behalf and on behalf of each and every recipient of your timely help, as well as on behalf of the entire small Parsi community here, wish to express our most sincere gratitude to you and all your silent donors who came forward to help in our hour of need.

"May Pak Purvurdegah bless you ... and continue to inspire you all to do charity, which is, and is rightly given so much importance to, in our noble religion."

Firoze Davar

Er. Navroz Kanga

Jt. Hon. Secretaries

Ahmedabad Parsi Panchayat

Donation of eye glasses to Mombasa

Through the committed efforts of **Behram Pastakia** of Bethesda, MD, used eye glasses were collected (mostly at the World Congress in Houston last year) and shipped to the



This man is blind in one eye because of a complication of cataract surgery, and in the other because of inadequate spectacles. [SOURCE: "BLINDNESS CONTROL IN INDIA: BEYOND ANACHRONISM", L. DANDONA, SUPPLEMENT TO LANCET 2000 (PERSPECTIVES), VOLUME 356, PAGE. S25].

Lions Charitable Trust in Mombasa, Kenya. The Lions Trust writes:

"... We have received your donation of 500 pairs of eye glasses you had shipped. They are all in good condition. Thank you, they will go a long way in preventing reversible blindness. We will make sure that the eye glasses are given out to the needy and the less privileged members of our community..."

To help in future such drives, contact Behram at BPastakia@aol.com.

Delhi Darbe Meher and Dharamshala

To commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Darbe Meher in Delhi, on December 21, 2001, the Delhi Parsi Anjuman is organizing a two-day Regional Conference, and extends an invitation to fellow Zarathushtis to attend this auspicious occasion.

The **Darb-e-Meher** needs considerable renovation including the kebla and its surrounding areas. The estimated cost for the total renovation is Rs. 15 lakhs.

The Delhi Parsi Anjuman also runs the **Dharamshala**, which is a great facility to Zarathushtis from all over the world when they visit the capital

city. Apart from offering very decent boarding and lodging at a low cost, they also offer concessional rates of Rs. 15 per day, for students, entrepreneurs and individuals who are starting life. It has 90% occupancy throughout the year. They are planning to build four more rooms at an estimated cost of Rs. 2.5 lakhs each.

Donations for this very noble cause may be sent to FEZANA [see above] marked "Delhi Anjuman".

Saronda Fire Temple

The Saronda Parsi Anjuman maintains a fire temple in Gujarat near Sanjan, where our ancestors landed when they came from Iran. The Anjuman maintains this fire from the income from a trust corpus and donations. They are now faced with some necessary repairs and renovations. The cost of shifting the sacred fire to a temporary place is Rs. 1,20,000. Large donors will be suitably recognized with a plaque. Please send donations to FEZANA [see above], marked "Saronda Fire Temple".

Accident at Ahmedabad Agiary

Rashna, 45, wife of a practicing boy-wala priest of Kankaria Agiary in Ahmedabad was trying to light the wood 'sagri' in the kitchen to make *daraan* when her nylon nightdress caught fire and she has received 40% burns. Her whole front is burnt and she needs extensive skin grafting. Expected expense of the treatment is estimated at Rs. 1,50,000. The family is in no condition to bear this massive expense and hence this appeal to Zarathushtis around the world for help. Please send donations to FEZANA [see above] marked "Rashna - Kankaria Agiary".

LATE NEWS. As of going to press, FEZANA Journal has learned that Rashna of Kankaria Agiary in Ahmedabad [see above] succumbed to her injuries, and passed away, on August 24th.

FEZANA will coordinate initial contacts between interested parties; we do not assume any responsibility for verifying credentials. Contact Roshan Rivetna.

Smart, attractive Parsi girl, 33, 5' 6", well-educated, widely travelled, enjoys sports, music, outdoor and indoor sporting activities; seeks well-educated, self-sufficient gentleman. Call (909) 606-0017. [F01-15]

Young man, 20, seeks marriage. Would like to relocate anywhere in America. Call Freny at (541) 552-9177. [M01-16]

Pleasant looking, **caring and loving Parsi girl, 26,** working in Mumbai, would like to correspond with a suitable Zarathushti gentleman. Please contact family friend at (301) 977-7817. [F01-17]

Matrimonial correspondence invited from gentlemen for good looking, respectable, **family-oriented Parsi lady, 30,** working as a software engineer in California. Call (510) 818-0755 or email crv22@hotmail.com. [F01-18]

Parsi lady, 46, pleasant looking, caring, CPA accountant, settled in USA with family, invites matrimonial correspondence from eligible, educated gentlemen willing to settle in USA. Call (510) 886-4191 or email: pgmarawala@hotmail.com. [F01-19]

Male, 41, accountant in Australia, divorced, jovial, extremely caring and affectionate. Enjoys classical music, reading and light outdoor sports. Willing to relocate. Seeks well-educated girl from good family, with friendly disposition and good temperament. Call Melbourne 61-03-94365163, email kpatel@vweb.net.au. [M01-20]

Male, 42, environmental engineer in USA, divorced. Seeks educated lady from India or abroad, from good family, willing to settle in USA. Email vdalal@yahoo.com. [M01-21]

Finding that special someone. 'Matrimonial' – not a very attractive word many people think ... but still, an indispensable part of our leading dailies and weeklies. It is not a word favored by the youth of today because of misconceptions about the reasons one would opt for a matrimonial column. In fact, it might even suggest a last ditch or last resort scenario. But friends, you could not be further from the truth.

What many might not be aware of is that matrimonials are a common feature in most countries of the world including the first world nation countries like the USA, UK and Australia. The only difference here is that instead of being termed matrimonial agencies, columns, etc. more fancy versions of the noun are used, like dating services, chat rooms or introduction agencies. In fact, our modern-day Internet is turning out to be the biggest matrimonial site for the whole world! In most developed countries local newspapers, weeklies, magazines even, are full of guy seeking girl, and girl seeking guy advertisements.

It's nothing sordid or unfashionable. People put forth these matrimonial ads for a variety of reasons. The main cause for the popularity of this

sort of an introduction is because people are sometimes tired of being in failed relationships based around their common circle and they desperately want to find that special someone ...

Also, owing to the fast pace of western lifestyles, people don't have the time to go out and look for that special person or, most importantly, to wait for that special person to storm into their life one fine day. Like everything else worth anything in life, we need to go out and find it. And when it comes to something as invaluable as a life partner, why not! Hence the good old matrimonial ad.

What makes a good matrimonial? Having finished singing the praises of this humble tool of introduction, let's take a look at what goes into making a really good matrimonial ad. Some principles to follow...

- *Honesty is not always the best policy...* the matrimonial needs to be smart, more than just plain honest!

- *Be concise.* You don't want your ad to read like a novel. Use fewer, but the right words.

- *Be specific without sounding fussy.* "Wanted a tall, handsome, well-settled, successful professional, living in the US, drawing a seven-

Looking for a soulmate? Have you visited these websites?

www.ozemail.com.au/~zarathus/soulmate.html

(traditional Zarathushti marriage site)

and

www.matchmeup.com

(as exhibited at the World Congress in Houston)

and

www.marriagetoday.com

(A comprehensive site, based in India, with matrimonials, a wedding bazar, planning tips, wedding products and services)



figure salary ..." may turn off a guy. Instead, say "Seeking a good looking, professional man, well-settled (preferably abroad)..."

● *Reveal your best and forget the rest ...* You need not stress your weak points, but rather stress other attributes such as long tresses or a PhD or a good swimmer. Such unique traits may prove to be attractive beyond physical beauty, provided the two can get to meet each other in the first place ...

● *Have a broad search criteria.* Don't narrow down your options by being too specific ...

● *Studio and passport photos are a definite no-no.* The best photos to send are where you are relaxed and look like you're having fun.

... All you young'uns out there, get it out of your head that matrimonials are a thing of the past. If anything, they are a thing of the future because more and more people around the world are getting hitched through matrimonials in dating agencies, from columns in magazines and papers and now over the Internet ...

Maybe one day you will proudly be able to tell your kids that yours was a match made in a matrimonial column! ■

Excerpted from "A Smart Matrimonial" by Pashmina Contractor, Jame Jamshed, Mumbai 2001. For the full article, contact pashmah@hotmail.com.

Another good result from the Houston World Congress

Fariz Dinshaw is from Karachi, and has been living in San Francisco for over 13 years. She came to the World Congress in Houston last December and met **Gustav Sethna** from the UK. They met, they clicked, they spent some time together and now they are married. The couple will be residing in the UK. ■

■ ■ ■ ■ MILESTONES ■ ■ ■ ■

Births

Maya Freny Argenta, a girl to Oufreez (Udvadia) and Peter Argenta, in New York on May 25. Maya is the first grandchild of Jamshed R. Udvadia of Lansing, MI.

Cyrus Buhariwalla, a boy, to Keshvar and Kali Buhariwalla, of Dallas area, on May 10.

Rushad Daboo, a boy, to Behram and Roxana Daboo of Aurora, IL, brother to Zal, and grandson to Aspy and Aban Daboo, in Aurora, IL, on June 22.

Anaita Dadinatha, a girl, to Zarrin (Bharucha) and Zarir Dadinatha, of Coquitlam, BC, on April 29.

Xerxis Dastur, a boy, to Mehbhad and Zenobia Dastur, in Toronto, on June 23. Grandson to Dinshaw and Aban Dastur and Sarosh and Nergish Marker; nephew to Firoozi Dastur and great-grandson to Minocher Marker.

Avan Homiar, a girl, to Maneck and Jamshed Homiar, sister to Shireen, in Brampton, Ontario, on July 5.

Kian Izedian, a boy, to Jila and Ramesh Izedian, in Boston, on July 25.

Harshika and Hritshik Jha, to Navaz and Prakash Jha, on June 24 [ZANT].

Deryus Jijina, a boy, to Vispi and Selena Jijina of Waukesha, WI, brother to Farhad and Delnavaz, in Waukesha, WI, on May 27.

Jasmine Machhi, a girl, to Kaizad and Jinobya Machhi of Germantown, WI, sister to Rushad and Rehan, on January 25.

Zubin Master, a boy, to Percy and Sharmeen Master of Houston, TX, brother to Katie, grandson to Minoo and Sanobar Baria, in Houston, on June 16.

Ayesha Medhora, a girl, to Zarir and Claudine Medhora, in Toronto, on May 21.

Sophia Michelle Olson, a girl, to Maynaz and Matthew Olson, sister to Madison, and granddaughter to Katie Irani, in Dallas, TX, on March 26.

Shanaya Zara Patel, a girl, to Ron and Michelle Patel of Mississauga, Ontario, granddaughter to Cawas and Gul Patel of Mississauga, Ontario and Yezdi and Roshan Engineer of Little Rock, Arkansas, in Mississauga, Ontario, on June 13.

Aban Pithawala, a girl, to Jamshed and Hutoxi Pithawala of Toronto, Ontario, granddaughter to Mehroo and (late) Dara Pithawala and Dinshaw and Kety Batliwala, great granddaughter to Khorshed Batliwala, niece to Nancy, Jerry, Rashna, and Sharon, in Toronto, Ontario, on May 22.

Zen Sharifabad, a boy, to Neena and Behram Sharifabad, brother to Afreen, on March 26 [ZSO].

Simone Sabnis, a girl, to Shenaz and Amol Sabnis, a brother for Adit, on April 27 [ZANT].

Liam Sorabji, a boy, to Rustom and Binaifer Mirza, of Ottawa, brother to Riaan, grandson to Hoshang Surti and Noshir and Putli Mirza of Toronto area, on March 30.

Cyrus Vachha, a boy, to Bakhtavar and Rustom Vachha, a brother to Sarosh, 5, in Fremont, California, on March 22.

Kyra Vatcha, a girl, to Rinavaz and Nariman Vatcha of Toronto, Ontario, granddaughter to Meher and Murzban Shroff and Cawas and Shireen Vatcha, in Toronto, on May 25.

Navjote, Sedreh Pushi

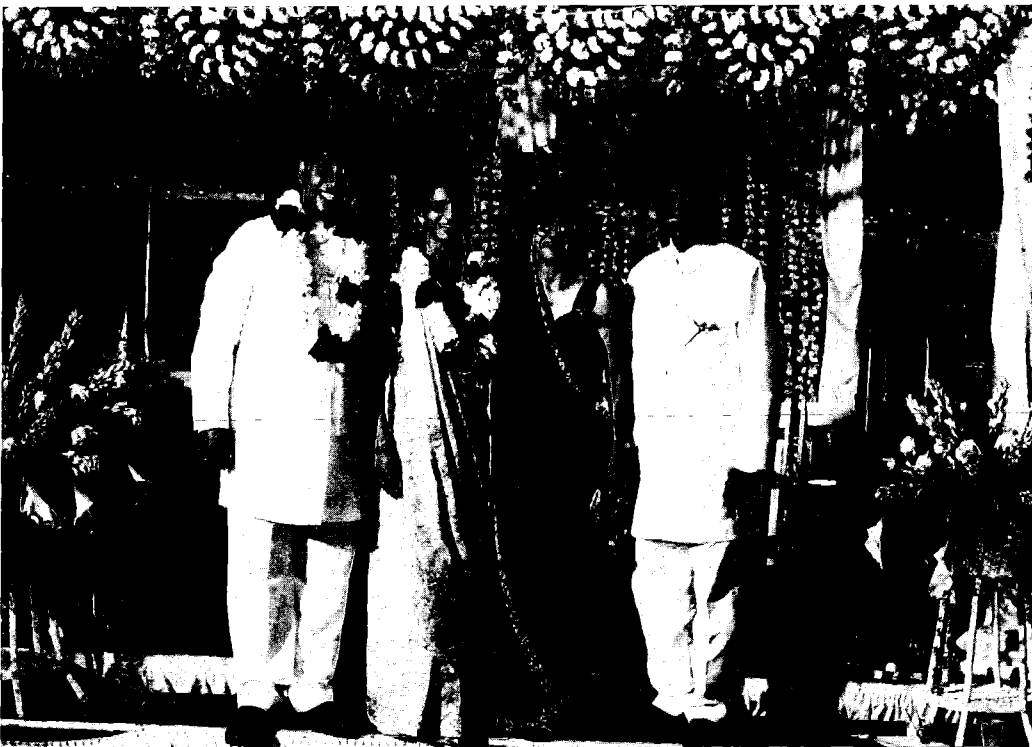
Behram Antia, son of Maharukh and Adil Antia, on July 21 [ZSO].

Cyrus Buhariwala, son of Kerman and Goshasp Buhariwala, in Mississauga, ONT, on June 9.

Cyrus Byramjee, son of Kermin and Marzi Byramjee, on July 1 [ZSO].



Tanaz and Darius Jamsetjee, children of Rumi and Kashmira Jamsetjee of Bolingbrook, IL, at their navjote ceremony at Arbab Rustom Guiv Darbe Mehr in Hinsdale, IL, on August 4. The ceremony was performed by recently initiated young navars, **Ervads Adil and Farhad Minocherjhomjee** [standing]. Other priests in attendance are [from left] **Ervads Jamshed Ravji**, recently-initiated navar **Hoshi Vazifdar**, and **Arda-e-Viraf Minocherhomjee**.



Zenobia Rivetna, daughter of Rohinton and Roshan Rivetna [at right] of Hinsdale, IL, was married to **Darius Damania**, son of Minoo and (late) Viloo Damania, of Mumbai, at the Arbab Rustom Guiv Darbe Mehr in Hinsdale, IL, on July 21. The ceremony was performed by Dasturs **Dr. Kersey Antia** and **Jamshed Ravji** in a tent set up on the grounds of the darbe mehr; a reception followed in the newly-expanded darbe mehr hall. The couple will reside in Wheaton, Illinois.

Naomi and Natasha Farooqh, children of Anaita and Behram Farooqh, on June 30 [ZSO].

Tanya and Danny Irani, children of Arnawaz and Hoshi Irani, on July 15 [ZSO].

Sabrina Jagosh, daughter of Phiroza

and Yazdi Jagosh, on July 22 [ZSO].

Tanaz and Darius Jamsetjee [see photo above].

Asha Jamzadeh, son of Dr. Fereydoon and Nahid Jamzadeh, in Indianapolis, IN, on June 16. Mobed Keikhosrow Mobed officiated.

Katie Marolia, daughter of Rohinton and Debbie Marolia, of Hartland, WI, on July 22.

Tina Siganporia, daughter of Munira and Farrokh Siganporia, at the Arbab Rustom Guiv Darbe Mehr, in Hinsdale, IL, on September 1.

Weddings

Zia Sagar to Rustom Anklesaria, in Mumbai, India, on May 24 [ZAH].

Firoza Irani, daughter of Hilla and Peshu Irani, of Hollister, CA, to **Joshua Calderon**, son of Grizelle and Len Canter and Iris and Ismael Calderon. The wedding was solemnized by Dasturjis Jimmy Makujina and Kobad Jamshed.

Rustom Irani, son of Hilla and Peshu Irani of Hollister, CA, to **Ann Law**, daughter of Faye and Gilbert Law of Cullman, AL. The wedding was solemnized by Dasturjis Jimmy Makujina and Kobad Jamshed.

Tanaz Dutia, daughter of Minu and Beroz Dutia, to **Michel Reid**, in New York [ZAGNY].

Gita Farhadieh, daughter of Dr. Bahram and Mahnaz Farhadieh of Libertyville, IL, to **Monte Goss**, son of Richard and Carol Goss, in Rosemont, IL, on August 25. Mobed Keikhosrow Mobed and Father Ronald Gollatz officiated.

Mehrnaz Khosravi, daughter of Farangis and Khodayar Khosravi, to **Olafer Gudmundsson**, in Lansing, MI. Mobed Keikhosrow Mobed officiated.

Zenobia Rivetna to Darius Damania [see photo previous page].

Farrokh Vesuna and Binaifer, in New Jersey [ZAGNY].

Anniversaries

Soli and JoAnn Dastur of Sarasota, FL, parents of Shirin and Marvin Simmons-Dastur and Anahita and James Hodge, grandparents of Cristina, Allison and Taj, celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary in Cincinnati, OH, on July 14.

Houtoxi and Farhad Contractor of Pittsburgh, PA, celebrated their 25th anniversary with family and friends at a dinner dance given in their honor at the Sheraton hotel, by their daughters Laila and Cyra, on June 16.

Recovering

United Nations Under-Secretary **Jamsheed Marker** and his wife **Arnaz**, of Florida, and daughter **Firoza** (of New York) were involved in a head on collision in New York, on August 25th. They were going from Manhattan to Poughkeepsie, NY in a taxi for a family wedding, when a van with 4 young women, who appeared to be drunk crashed into the taxi head on. Firoza is in critical condition in coma with multiple head injuries and broken bones. Jamsheed has leg and pelvic fractures, Arnaz has minor hand and head injuries. They were taken to St. Francis hospital in Poughkeepsie. Family and friends around the world are holding prayer vigils for their speedy recovery.

Deaths

Gushtad Behziz, father of Shirin Teherani, Hormazdiar Behziz and Feridoon Behziz, grandfather of Arianne, Arman, Morvarid and Keikhosrow [ZAC-California].

Cowcee M. Colabewalla, 75, brother of Perween H. Cooper of New Canaan, CT and uncle to Farobag Homi Cooper of Chicago, in Karachi, on March 28.

Thrity Dordi, 82, wife of late Naval Bapuji Dordi, mother of Zarin (Minoo) Press of Schaumburg, IL, Yezdi (Roxane) Dordi of Palo Alto, CA, sister of Silloo (Framroze) Dubash of Ottawa, grandmother of Carl and Cyrus Press, and Zal, Ava and Eyra Dordi, in Schaumburg, IL, on July 30.

Neville Godiwalla, of a heart attack, in Mumbai on May 18. Mr. Godiwalla was the "King of Parsi Caterers", popular at weddings and navjotes in Mumbai for many years.

Khurshed K. Irani, brother of Gooloo Sam Polad, of Houston, TX, in Miami, FL, on June 24.

Roda Sohrab Irani, 73, wife of Sohrab Irani, mother of Diniyar Irani, Farida Khambatta and Cyrus Irani, in Karachi, on May 26 [ZANT].

Bapai Rustomjee Karani, mother of Hoshang (Bonnie) Karani, of Chicago, and Rohinton Karani of North Carolina; grandmother of Susan, Sabrina, Nathan, Ali, and Kip, in Mumbai, on June 13.

Khorshed Sam Karanjia, sister-in-law of Noshir and Nergish Karanjia, aunt of Banoo, Homiyar and Lisa, in Marlton, NJ.

Jimmy Lord, 73, owner of Lord's Hotel in Matheran, husband of Zenobia, father of Shiavux, Yazad, Zal and Yasmin, from hemorrhaging in the brain, following a car accident on Bombay-Pune Road, at Jaslok Hospital in Mumbai, on September 4.

Roshan Mama, mother of Kelly Mama of Houston, TX, in Mumbai, on June 28.

Jehangir Cawasjee Patell, brother of Soonie and Homie, brother-in-law of Bahadur, uncle of Syavux, Mahrukh, Lilly, Nargis and Darius, in Toronto, on April 30.

Nergis Pavri, sister of Roshan Patel, of Chicago, in Mumbai, on May 5.

Minoo Polson, 92, in Mumbai, on March 27. A versatile man, Mr. Polson was ex-chair of Polson Limited, India's hallmark of butter and coffee manufacturers; an eminent philatelist and president of the Empire of India Philatelic Society; an amateur magician and the first Indian to be president of the International Amateur Magicians Association [Fed Newsletter, May 2001].

Roshan Rustomji, mother of Kaizad Rustomji, Rukshandeh Dhalla and

[Continued on page 75]

LATE NEWS: As of going to press, FEZANA Journal has learned that **Firoza Marker** [see Recovering above] succumbed to her injuries and passed away on September 4. Firoza, in her 40s, of New York, is daughter of Jamsheed Marker of Florida, and sister of Niloofer, of Poughkeepsie, NY.

Homi Kapadia (1928 - 2001)

SUCCESSFUL INTERNATIONAL BUSINESSMAN AND HUMANITARIAN



Homi Kapadia with his sister Mahrokh Keyannejad, who preceded him in death by just a few weeks.

There are few individuals in the world who have the capability of influencing the lives of those they touch in a positive way. They convey a sense of commitment to their fellow human beings that sets them apart as examples of those we could rightly emulate.

Early days. Born in Kerman, Iran, on August 13, 1928, and raised abroad, Homi was the youngest of six children (3 brothers and 2 sisters) born to an Irani Zarathushti couple settled in India. Although he had the misfortune of losing his father 3 months before his birth, he was guided by his mother and his own innate sense of responsibility to his family, friends and those whose lives he touched.

He received his bachelor's degrees in chemistry from Bombay and Poona University. During his college days in India and England he was very involved in sports. In 1946 he set the Olympic record by making a grueling 62-mile bicycle marathon in three hours and one minute and was a standout in swimming, polo, cricket and hockey.

Homi graduated with a BS and MS in Mechanical Engineering from Michi-

gan State University, where he founded the Michigan chapter of the Triangle Fraternity of Engineers in 1955. After college he worked in the US for Kawneer International Ltd., Reynolds Metal Co., and Mount Hope Machinery Co., in various positions, becoming the Director of International Operations with Mount Hope Machinery. His operations took him all over the world and his expertise in hydraulic, pneumatic and mechanical machinery was sought by companies, both here and abroad. He maintained residences in England, Switzerland and Greece. He officially became citizen of the US in Boston in 1961.

Homi started his own business *Arcomat International* in 1967, with operations in Switzerland and Greece, and gained tremendous success in developing and marketing his products and expertise to businesses and governments.

His travel schedule left him little time and opportunity to explore the richness of family life. He was completely devoted to his older sister *Mahrokh Keyannejad*, who stayed with him for the last fifteen years of their lives and who passed away in March 2001 in Toronto.

Philanthropist. Although he was a citizen of US, his business commitments kept him in Europe. He established a home base in Athens, Greece. Homi and his sister Mahrokh, who was a teacher, considered education a priority in efforts to help others. In 1999 the Keyannejad-Kapadia Zoroastrian Scholarship Fund was created through a substantially large endowment to The Triangle Fraternity Education Foundation, through an affiliation with the Michigan State University.

The scholarships generated by this fund are used for undergraduate / graduate study in the engineering discipline at an accredited university in the USA. (Information on the Scholarship Fund is also included elsewhere in each issue of FEZANA Journal).

This August he was to be honored by being inducted in the Wall of Fame of the Triangle Fraternity. A building (Chapter House) at the Michigan State University is named "Keyannejad-Kapadia House" in honor of the family's contributions, financial and otherwise.

Homi was an accomplished linguist, speaking fluent Persian, Hindi, French, Spanish, German and English and had a great appreciation for classical music and renaissance art.

Declining health. In recent years Homi's health started to fail. He came to Boston regularly for treatment of a heart condition. In March 2001 sister Mahrokh who was not keeping good health suddenly passed away while they were with close friends Farrokh and Tenaz Bhandari in Toronto. Homi decided to go through with his plan to undergo cancer surgery in Boston on April 13. During his recovery he was at a Rehabilitation Center in Sudbury, Massachusetts. The Kheradis of Rhode Island and Massachusetts families like the Araozs, the Colabewallas, the Guzders, the Jungalwalas and the Panthakis were very helpful in making Homi feel comfortable.

Homi was looking forward to leaving the Rehab Center to stay with the Jungalwalas for recovery. He was very fond of reading the FEZANA Journal. He discussed plans on several occasions to make major contributions to a few organizations, including our FEZANA organization, and was eager to start the process as soon as he left the Center.

On May 4, he spent the evening at the Rehab Center in a happy frame of mind and enjoying a delicious Greek dinner with friends – Dr. and Mrs. Jerry and Celeste Kheradi, Dr. and Mrs. Firoze and Khorshed Jungalwala and Jannan Akrawi. Around 9:00 pm with his friends around him, he had a massive heart attack and passed into unconsciousness. Although tremendous efforts were made to bring him back, keeping him on the respirator for 4 days, he finally passed away on May 8.

Last respects. As news spread of Homi's condition in the last few days, friends came from different parts of the world to Boston to bid farewell and pay their last respects. They came from Michigan, Canada, California, Germany, Sweden, Greece, England, among others. Bella Tata, a very dear friend and relative came from Vancouver and close friends Farrokh and Tanaz Bhandari from Toronto.

Many business associates and friends like Jivan and Zarine Colabewala, Marion Parkinson, Dr. Gay Freeman, Louis McBride, Scot Bova, Ingrid Heyland, Fanis Mamalis, (some of whom had known him for more than 45 years), spoke glowingly of Homi's humanitarian spirit.

Homi was as much at ease with ambassadors, diplomats, and CEOs as he was with those of humbler means. Anyone who had the privilege of knowing him was his friend for life. He was a true Zarathushti in the sense that, he lived his life according to the lofty principles of our Zarathushti faith. ■

- By Khorshed Jungalwala
Sudbury, Massachusetts

Princess Leila Pahlavi (1970 - 2001)

DAUGHTER OF HIS MAJESTY MOHAMMAD REZA SHAH PAHLAVI AND EMPRESS FARAH, PRINCESS LEILA SPENT MUCH OF HER LIFE IN EXILE

Leila Pahlavi, 31, passed away in London, during her sleep, on the night of June 10, 2001. At the funeral, in Paris, friends from all over the world came to pay their last respects.

In an open letter to her daughter, the Empress Farah writes:

"... You were born on March 27, 1970, a week after the Persian new year, a beautiful present to your brothers Reza, 10, and Ali, 5, and your sister Farahnaz, 8. We lived in the Niavaran Palace in the foothills of the Alborz mountains ...

"Iran was on the road to progress and development. You witnessed the affection and respect people had for your father and myself. You observed the deference the world had for your country and you were invited to visit foreign countries and to meet kings and presidents.

"Gradually dark clouds began to gather over Iran. Uncertainty prevailed as the palace became a fortress surrounded by tanks and armored cars.

"Then began our dreadful exile. You were only eight years old when I had to pack you onto a military plane to Texas. We left Iran a day or two after you and we contacted you again from Egypt. By now you were with your aunt in New York. After about a week we left for Morocco, where you all came to visit us and stayed for a while. Your father decided you should return to New York and continue your education.



"This was an ugly time in Iran, with daily executions. For political reasons we then had to leave again for Mexico. You visited us throughout this ordeal...

"Then, a year after we fled Iran, your father was diagnosed with leukemia. I flew to New York with your father for surgery ... Because of the hostages, the American authorities wanted us out of New York as soon as possible. We were rushed to Texas ... From Texas we found a temporary safe refuge in Panama ... The expert medical attention was not available there, so we went to Cairo, where Presi-

dent and Mrs. Sadat received your father affectionately and with the reverence due to a head of state.

"How could you understand all these changes and these moves from one country to another? See your father die. We stayed in Cairo for another year until our family was hit by another devastating blow. President Sadat, who had been like a father to you all, was assassinated. You were still only 11.

"Then in 1981, I received a message from President Reagan that we were welcome in America. You and your siblings went to Massachusetts. You liked your new school and found new friends. In 1984 we moved again to Greenwich.

"You showed signs of fatigue throughout your studies at Brown University.

[Continued on page 76]

Milestones

[Continued from page 72]

Mahnaz Sohrab, in Arlington, TX, on June 8.

Naval Jehangir Sanjana, 92, husband of Perin, father of Sanobar, grandfather of Jimmy and Laila, and uncle of Lily Homi Billimoria, in Toronto, on June 23.

Kaikhusr Bicajee Sarkari, 94, father of Pouruchisti, Behram, Dinyar and Zarir, in Toronto, on June 18.

Dina Sarkari, mother of Silloo Patel, grandmother of Shernaz and Kashmira, in Mumbai [ZAC-California].

Nozar B. Satarawala, 79, husband of Parvin, and father of Soonu, Pearl, Zarin and Zerxis, in North Carolina, on August 1. He was chief electrical advisor to the Northern Indian Railways before the family immigrated to Iran in the late 1960s. After escaping from the revolution in Iran, he lived in the USA since 1980. He had battled Parkinson's disease for the last 20 years.

Keki Sohrabji Tamboly, father of Dinshaw Tamboly, in Mumbai, on June 9.

Nariman Jalejar Taraporewala, father of Armaity Framroze Patel, of New Jersey, grandfather of Arnavaz and Pashang, in Mumbai.

Zenobia Naval Wadia, mother of Khurshed Wadia of Houston, TX, in Mumbai, India, on June 18. ■

Four deaths in South Africa

"The small Zarathushti community (of about 150 persons) in South Africa suffered four deaths earlier this year: **Phiroze Randeria** and **'Biggy' Nariman** in Durban; and **Elma Camay** and **Paul Nogama** in Johannesburg," reports long-time resident of Johannesburg, anaesthetist, Dr. Solly Shapurjee. ■



On Anthony Quinn: a personal eulogy to the man and the movie

By **Ronnie K. Marker**
Bordentown, New Jersey

The author writes: "I would like to offer another of my amateur musings on the recent passing of the legendary actor Anthony Quinn ("Zorba") for publication in FEZANA Journal.

"As for the relevance to things Zarathushti and/or Parsi, what may I say? How about the fact that the movie's gorgeous theme music is in scores of Parsi households (our family alone has dozens of versions); or, perhaps that so many hundreds of Parsis must have gone to see Zorba the Greek when it was released in the mid-1960s – at Liberty cinema, or was it Metro, or Regal? Or, how about the fact that the author (me) is a Parsi? I know it is a bit of a stretch, but I offer it to you, the choice is yours ..." The Editors chose to include it – for its nostalgic and inspirational value.

A man needs a little madness to cut the rope and be free

– Alexis Zorba ("the Greek")

Farewell Anthony Quinn!

With those sage words came the end to my all-time favorite movie and now the life of its larger-than-life actor Anthony Quinn, known to millions simply as "Zorba".

What a movie! What a man! It was a movie that truly captured the human psyche and spirit with all its frailties and foibles. It combined copious amounts of humor, pathos, philosophy, exhilaration, deceit, hope – you name it, it had it – the entire spectrum of human emotions that all of us can identify with at certain times in our lives.

If anything, the movie's themes and messages are more relevant today than ever before, in our present-day world of strife, stress, uncertainty and chaos. It's portrayal of the triumph of the human spirit is stupendous and serves to show us vividly, candidly,

even harshly that it is the smaller, intangible and non-material things about life that are more profound, important and self-perpetuating.

As we get caught up in the drudges of our daily lives, striving, struggling to make ends meet, we are reminded again and again that huge bank balances and the wielding of enormous power do not always serve to guarantee happiness, especially that of the soul and of the mind. Perhaps, material happiness may be achieved but that is of the most fleeting and unfulfilling kind.

Some of the earthy dialogues uttered by Zorba are resounding in my ears: "Clever people and grocers, they weigh everything." Translation: must everything be thought of only with the head? What about thinking with the heart sometimes? Giving in to hunches. Not seeing everything with a dollars and cents bottom line. How true this is and yet, how often in today's ultra-competitive and cut-throat world are we never given the chance to make decisions only "for the heck of it" as Zorba says.

What moves me most is the spirit of Zorba. He is almost certainly an illiterate in the formal sense of the word, penniless most of the time and an all-round lothario and louse, and yet he is endowed with a roguish, incorrigible and irrepressible spirit honed by his own brush with life, of just living it, that render him eminently poised to make the profound statements that he does.

Little wonder then, that his university-educated employer in the movie (played wonderfully by Alan Bates) is at a loss for words when his mighty Cretan manservant lectures him about the realities of life: "Boss, why did God give us hands? To grab what is ours, what we want ...". This is so appropriate and applicable to our lives today as well. We must "grab" and be rapacious or else be crushed and trodden over by the multitude that surround every aspect of our unreasonably competitive and stress-filled lives.

Two years ago, I went to the beautiful island of Crete. It's patriotic people with their proud history impressed me. I even met a macho mini-Zorba (a grocer from whom I bought apricots and heavenly delicious honey) at the local market there. It was easy to see why the director of the movie chose Crete as the location of his celluloid masterpiece.

For me, it was a personal pilgrimage. A dual mission of sorts: to pay homage to "the land of Zorba" and that of my favorite singer, Nana Mouskouri, who also hails from that captivating island. You see, I try to live my own life with that simple but immensely valuable credo that Zorba embodied: "a man needs a little madness to cut the rope and be free" – free from the harsh, inescapable realities of life; free for our imaginations to soar and to allow us even the briefest of reprieves from the ubiquitous burden that comes with that most precious of all gifts that we are fortunate to possess: life.

Farewell Zorba. Yasou!

Princess Leila ...

[Continued from page 74]

For the past 10 years you suffered severe headaches, muscle and joint aches and chronic fatigue. You never knew which country to make your home – America, France or Britain. But we were constantly complimented for your beauty, charm, intelligence, sensitivity and generosity.

"You were both strong and fragile. But our long saga in exile left an enormous scar on your spirit. I do not dare look to the heavens and ask why. My life has been far from ordinary. I had all that one could desire and also a lot I would not wish upon anybody. But for a mother's heart, absolutely nothing in the world is more precious than her children.

"Life is a struggle but come what may you must never lose hope."

[Excerpted from www.farah-pahlavi.org]

EVENTS & HONORS

Godrej 'Billy' Billimoria

Rotary member and philanthropist



PHOTO: JULIE FABISZAK

He joined Rotary in 1982 and has completed more than a dozen international aid projects. This year the Wilmette Rotary Club named him *Rotarian of the Year* and he received an award from the district. "I wanted to do something for the world. I have an opportunity to do it in India especially, because I'm getting a lot of seed money from Indians." He has done much of his work in his hometown of Bilimora, a town of 400,000 near Bombay. His projects have ranged from providing health care equipment and medicine to feeding malnourished children. He has received \$100,000 from the Blind Foundation of India to provide inexpensive cataract surgery in India and hopes to receive a matching grant from Rotary International. He travels

to India every year. "I go see if things are working out properly."

Background. He came to the U.S. from India in 1965 with a B. S. in law and earned his MBA. He became a certified public accountant and founded his own firm. He has lived in Wilmette and Kenilworth and currently resides in Winnetka.

After "retirement". He plans to retire in the near future and devote more time to his Rotary aid projects. "I would like to do lots of stuff through Rotary when I retire. It's a good organization."

[The above is reprinted from Pioneer Press, September 2000, by Dan Cisek.]

In April 2001, Godrej received the Rotary International Award from the Rotary International Foundation. He has now been appointed chair of the International Committee for the entire district where he will coordinate the projects of 70 Rotary Clubs. His major recent projects include: Braille Writing Machines for the blind in Mumbai (\$48,000); optical testing equipment for KEM hospital, (\$49,000); water filtration plant for Bilimora (\$750,000); cataract surgeries in Mumbai (\$50,000); blindness prevention for underprivileged children in Mumbai (\$49,000); talking computers for the blind at Juhu, India (\$48,000); surgical equipment for Bhavnagar (\$48,000); pathology lab in Bilimora; vehicles in Gujarat; 8 low-cost housing units in India; equipment for physically handicapped in Delhi; Anganwadi project for malnourished children and x-ray machines in Kharel, Gujarat; computer training in Chandigarh; TB education in Surendranagar; dialysis machine in Udaipur; and numerous projects in India, Philippines, South Africa, and elsewhere.

For Godrej, this has been a labor of love. While he works his heart out, he feels very fulfilled in knowing that in his own way, he has been able to fulfill the Zarathushti vision of charity and philanthropy.

- By Roshan Rivetna

Mantreh Atasband and **Cyrus Tampal** of Toronto were presented a scroll of recognition as a token of appreciation on behalf of Mayor Mel Lastman and the Toronto City Council for their outstanding contributions as volunteers. It read: "As we celebrate the International Year of Volunteers in 2001, the City thanks you for caring and giving. You are one of the reasons why Toronto is the greatest City in the world."



Nazneen Bahrassa, daughter of Feraydoon Bahrassa, MD and Persis Shroff, MD, graduated with

honors from the Arkansas School for Mathematics and Sciences, an accelerated residential high school for the gifted and talented in Arkansas. She plans to attend Washington University in St. Louis, MI for undergraduate studies in science.

In high school, Nazneen received numerous awards for her science fair project, including first place in Microbiology in the Arkansas State Science Fair and US Army Certificate of Achievement in the Life Sciences category. Nazneen was also a community leader, student government association senator, captain of her varsity soccer team, and member of the National Honor Society.

Saira Ghadially, a secondary school student in Toronto has been awarded a provincial scholarship from the Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation. This \$4,000 tuition scholarship (renewable for up to four years for a total of \$16,000) is given to graduating students who achieve academic excellence, participate in extra-curricular activities, volunteer in their communities and demonstrate leadership potential. After her 2 years of undergraduate studies, she will attain an Honors Business and Administration degree.

Outstanding Educator Award for Mistree

Mechanical engineering professor Farrokh Mistree gets Georgia Tech's "Outstanding Educator Award" for 2001

Dr. Farrokh Mistree, professor at Georgia Tech's George W. Woodruff School of Mechanical Engineering has received the *Jack M. Ziegler Outstanding Educator Award*, which includes a plaque, \$5000 and the opportunity to give a lecture to the faculty and students. The title of his lecture will be "Fairy Tales and Engineering Education."

Farrokh's nomination for the prestigious award was supported heartily by his students and peers. Student Scott Cowan wrote:

"For Farrokh's students, a day in class is an adventure in learning."

Another student wrote: "Farrokh's first priority as an advisor and mentor is to help me achieve my goals and dreams ..."

Gary Koopmann, Distinguished Professor at Penn State wrote:

"Few people are gifted with the ability to project their innovative visions beyond the constraints of conventional thinking. Farrokh is such a person."

Other professors wrote:

"Farrokh is recognized as a pioneer in design education," (Janet Kolodner);

"In the end, Mistree himself became an educational institution. He created knowledge by making learning occur all around him" (John Lienhard); and

"His visionary leadership has been central to the evolution of the field of engineering design for well over a decade ..." (Achille Messac).



The George W. Woodruff School of Mechanical Engineering is the oldest and second largest of nine divisions in the College of Engineering at Georgia Tech. Enrollment includes more than 1300 undergraduates and 535 graduate students; with a faculty of 68 full-time

professors. The Woodruff School is the only educational institution to be designated an Historic Mechanical Engineering Heritage Site by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers.

Farrokh has demonstrated his organizational and motivational skills time and again in FEZANA and has supported many a project, often times "behind-the-scenes",

for FEZANA, for Zarathushti associations, for North American congresses and most recently, for the World Congress in Houston. He has also been a pioneer of innovative children's religious education techniques.

Mistree, who has a PhD in Engineering from the University of Berkeley has been professor at Georgia Tech since 1992. From 1981-92, he was professor at the University of Houston. Prior to that he was lecturer at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia.

And what does Farrokh wish to do in the future? He wants to have fun – "fun in defining the emerging science-based discipline of design, fun in providing an opportunity for highly motivated and talented students to learn how to achieve *their* dreams."

- By Roshan Rivetna

Keki Cooper, Tata Scholar, director of Technical Services at Exeter, in Devon, Great Britain, is the recipient of the *Redland Award for Civic Trust* for his design of the Cathedral Quay Car Park. The car park, with a capacity for 500 cars, situated beside an ancient Roman tower and wall which dates back 2,000 years, was given this award for the most sensitivity designed building in Great Britain.

Keki's Cathedral Quay Park has multiple levels, is covered with baskets of ferns and flowers and blends beautifully with the surroundings. In this car park, Cooper has built an outstanding, sensitive masterpiece of urban living. Besides this award-winning car park, Cooper-designed roads and bridges all over Exeter, attest to his skill and talent.

Keki is married to Freny, a school teacher, and has two children: a lawyer in Kent and a pediatrician in Boston. After retirement, Cooper continues his civic duties as a magistrate, Rotarian and avid golfer. He also continues to serve the Zoroastrian Center in London, even though it is 200 miles from his beloved town of Exeter.

Aviation scientist, the late Rustom Damania [see *FEZANA Journal*, Summer 2001] was honored by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research which runs the National Aerospace Labs in India. In a ceremony on August 20, the Flight Research Hangar that Damania was instrumental in building and where his beloved airplanes are housed, was dedicated to his memory, and named after him.

CSIR officials recognized Damania's contributions to aircraft design and development in India. Damania's wife, Deenaz writes: "... my husband will finally get the recognition he so richly deserves and it will be a sad and highly poignant day in my life to see my beloved become a permanent part of the aviation history of India."

Aysha Ghadiali, daughter of Jamshed and Yasmin Ghadiali of New York area, graduated from Boston University Magna Cum Laude, with a BA in Political Science and History, interned for the Democratic National Committee Headquarters in Washington and worked on various campaigns in local DC and Massachusetts politics. She is leaving for Jordan as a Peace Corps volunteer for two years.

Xerxes Sidhwa from Houston is another Zarathushti youth currently serving as a Peace Corps volunteer, in Morocco.

Rusi Gandhi of RE/MAX Properties Unlimited in Montville, NJ, was awarded membership in RE/MAX of New Jersey's prestigious 10% club, at the Awards Ceremony at the Tropicana Casino Hotel in Atlantic City.

Cyrus Mehrabaun Harvesf, son of the late Dr. Keikhosrow



Harvesf, is a member of the 2001 graduating class of Stanton College Preparatory High School in Jacksonville, Florida. Cyrus was awarded the Stanton Excellence Award, an honor given to one senior chosen by the faculty of the school, which was recently declared the "best high school in the nation" by *Newsweek* magazine.

Cyrus is a member of the National Honor Society, a National Merit Scholar, a candidate for the Interna-

tional Baccalaureate Diploma and a leader in Student Government, Math Honor Society and Peer Tutoring. He will study Computer Science at the Georgia Institute of Technology on a full four-year scholarship.

Jehanbux Aderji Kapadia ("Uncle Kap"), 95, is now a double world champion. He won the gold medals in both the 100m and 200m sprint at the 14th World Veteran's Athletic Championships in the 95 and over men's category. The nonagenarian athlete traveled to Brisbane, Australia for the event, from his home in Chandni Chowk, Calcutta.

"We were taken to the starting line in wheel chairs," said Kapadia. Since he is a "little hard of hearing" he missed the starting gun, but "when I saw the man in the next lane running," he says, "I took off like a deer." His timing of 32.25 secs was enough to secure him top honors in the 100m sprint.

Neville Medhora, son of Yasmin and Noshir Medhora of Houston, was bestowed the rank of Eagle Scout on May 12. The Eagle is the highest rank that a scout can attain. To qualify, Neville had to earn over 21 merit badges that taught him various survival skills, including a 10-day wilderness camping trip to Philmont, in New Mexico, where they hiked for over 75 miles.

Roxanne Mody, 13, daughter of Rustom and Dina Mody of Texas, won the Texas State Junior (Girls 14 division) Major Tennis Championship in Corpus Christi in August. She was also awarded the "Nancy Jeffett" Sportsmanship Award for all age groups.

Maneck Sattha of Toronto, has been awarded the Toronto Canada Day Achievement Award. It is presented to those who have contributed significantly to the community, clocking in numerous hours of volunteer work and dedication, for a minimum period of five years to needy individuals, non-profit organizations and community agencies.



From an era gone by ...

Photo, submitted by Ardeshir Damania, of a Tatas "glider" taken at Mahalaxmi Race Course, Bombay, on May 10, 1941. The important-looking gentleman in the black suit is either Sir John Colville or Sir Roger Lumley, then Governor of Bombay. Before leaving, the governor had gifted his Rolls Royce to the Indian Gliding Association. Ardeshir's father [right] is the only one wearing his white, pure khadi suit in support of Mahatma Gandhi's call to support India's khadi industry.

Arthur Conan Doyle solves the George Edalji mystery

The creator of Sherlock Holmes, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, solves the case of George Edalji, who was wrongly accused – account of an incident in UK in the early 1900s.

[Excerpted from a hand-typed article by Bruce Heydt, submitted to FEZANA Journal by Sohrab Gandhi of Escondido, CA, (gandhi@ecse.rpi.edu). The original source of the article is unknown].

Savvy Londoners know that there is no such address as 221B Baker Street to be found anywhere in that city. It requires less intimate knowledge of London to know that the famous lodger at this non-existent address, Detective Sherlock Holmes, is equally fictitious. Yet even today, the Royal Post Office receives letters addressed to the literary detective at the imaginary address, asking Holmes' help in solving their case.

In the early years of the 20th century, one such desperate man penned a letter, addressing it not to Sherlock Holmes, but to his creator, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

The petitioner was George Edalji, the 27-year-old son of the vicar of Great Wyrley. Edalji's story began even before he was born, when his father, a man of Parsee ancestry, married an Englishwoman, converted to Christianity, and ultimately became the spiritual leader of his small Staffordshire community. His parishioners, perhaps thinking that the elder Edalji's Parsee heritage made him an unsuitable Christian preacher, had little liking for him, and some made his and his wife's lives miserable.

Harassment and accusations. In 1892, when George Edalji was 16 years old, the Edaljis began receiving threatening letters in the post; other clergymen received abusive letters over Edalji's forged signature; and mocking advertisements appeared in local newspapers, also purported to be submitted by the disliked vicar. George shared in the family's troubles, but went on to become a successful solicitor with a fine professional reputation.

The harassment directed against the Edalji family came to a head following several incidents of animal mutilation throughout Great Wyrley. In the wake of these incidents, the police received anonymous letters accusing George Edalji of the crimes.

Edalji found guilty. Acting on the accusations, the local chief constable assigned no less than six policemen to keep the Edalji house under surveillance. Despite this, a laborer heading to work in the early hours of a summer's day, stumbled upon another mutilated animal, a pony this time, whose stomach had been sliced open.

The police, already preconditioned to believe that George Edalji was the culprit, proceeded to George's Birmingham office, where they arrested their suspect ... George was tried on 20th October, 1903, found guilty, and sentenced to seven years in jail. In addition, the verdict effectively destroyed his law career.

The injustice of the sentence was obvious to many outside Great Wyrley. Ten thousand people signed a petition demanding that the case be retried. Newspapers carried stories upholding Edalji's innocence as well, but to no avail until the third year of his sentence, when he was released without pardon, apology or explanation.

Arthur Conan Doyle clears Edalji's name. In an effort to clear his name, Edalji wrote to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. "As I read," Sir Arthur remembered, "the unmistakable accent of truth forced itself upon my attention, and I realized that I was in the presence of an appalling tragedy, and that I was called upon to do what I could to set it right." He launched himself into a personal investigation of the case with the same enthusiasm with which Holmes might shout, "Come, Watson, the game is afoot!"

Painstakingly, the amateur detective turned up some very startling defects in the case against Edalji. The razor that the police claimed the defendant used to mutilate the pony had not a trace of blood. The mud found on Edalji's clothes was of a different type of soil than that found at the crime scene ... He also shot holes in the handwriting analysis that identified Edalji as the culprit.

Conan Doyle submitted the complete results of his investigations to *The*

[Continued on page 84]



the sock story

By Cyrus Rivetna
Hinsdale, Illinois

A glimpse of daily life in a Parsi household in Ahmedabad

To fully comprehend "The Sock Story" I must first describe to you the household that I am living in. I am staying in the house of a typical, middle class Parsi family. They occupy the ground floor and I have a sunny room on the upper floor. The house is located on a quiet street in the new part of Ahmedabad, and from my terrace, if I look over the slums, I can see the river which now contains water, since the monsoons have begun.

The house is owned by Auntie and Uncle. Auntie is the manager of one of the largest banks in Ahmedabad. On weekends you can sometimes find her peacefully passing her time peeling vegetables, not because she has to, but because she wants to. Uncle is retired from his post at the Gujarat State Transport Department and now has a small business, which he operates, from an office that is next to my room. Most of Uncle's time, however, is spent vigilantly maintaining the perfectly maintained household.

Auntie and Uncle (I should mention that they aren't my real aunt and uncle, but in India you call anybody significantly older than you Auntie for females and Uncle for males) have two children: Mehrzad and Ruby. Mehrzad has just received his MBA from the NIRMA Institute of Management and for the past two months has been searching for a job. Ruby is the manager of a bank (smaller than Auntie's) and is married

to her first cousin Cyrus (not me, but another Cyrus who used to live in the same room that I now occupy).

Ruby and Cyrus have two cute kids named Kaizad and Kety. Kaizad is seven years old and he is currently home from school recovering from malaria. Kety is four and is just beginning to learn English in school. She frequently wakes me up on Saturday mornings by calling up to my window, "Cyrus Uncle! Cyrus Uncle! What you are doing?"

Also part of the household is Raju, who I refer to as "the little boy who spends his day cleaning my room while he should be in school learning". He's about 10 years old and lives in the near-by slums. He comes to the house every day (half day on Sundays) to do small chores such as fill the water tanks, wash the car, clean the windows, dust the sofas, water the plants, get this from that top shelf, put this in that cupboard, etc.

Mani Masi is the servant who's been with the family for about 20 of her 36 years. Her day is spent cooking, doing laundry and helping Uncle maintain the perfectly maintained household. In eight months I've only seen her leave the house once and that was last week when it was the other Cyrus's birthday.

We celebrated at a restaurant that recently opened called "Ranch" that is decorated like an old barn from America's wild west – with lassos, leather saddles, gun holsters and

hand painted signs on the wall that say things like "Gentle man, no horses aloud in the dineing room".

Mani Masi lives in the house, but does not have her own room. She has one 3' x 3' closet where she keeps her belongings; she sleeps outside when the weather permits and inside on the kitchen floor when the weather does not permit.

Now I will begin The Sock Story. It was a typical peaceful morning in the peaceful house on the peaceful street. Nothing was out of place as I walked downstairs with my armful of laundry. Aunty was on the porch swing reciting her daily prayers, while Uncle was in the living room sipping his tea and reading the morning newspaper. I placed my dirty clothes on the little wooden bench in the dining room as I usually do on Tuesdays.

Breakfast was typical: an egg, one glass of hot milk, three pieces of toast, one piece of fruit and a bowl of dried monkey brains. My trip to the office was typical. My morning in the office was typical. My afternoon in the office was typical.

It was just after afternoon teatime that my typical day became a-typical. I had a strange phone call from Uncle. Now this was strange because he's never called me in the office before. What was even more strange were the strange questions he asked: what time I'd be home, if I was going to be eating in the house and the strangest question, had I remembered to bring all of my dirty clothes downstairs. After I hung up the telephone I wasn't quite sure why he had called, but I had a definite feeling that he was hiding something from me; something that couldn't be told over the phone.

I reached home at around 9:00 and was surprised to find the family still eating dinner. I said my hellos and sat down at my usual spot next to

Aunty who sits next to Uncle, who sits at the head of the table.

Uncle turned to me and said, "You know, you have brought down your dirty clothes this morning."

"Yes."

"It is likely that you have forgotten one sock upstairs."

"Oh, maybe. I haven't been upstairs yet. Why?"

He was fidgeting with his long pointy moustache as he replied, "You see," – pause – "one white sock has not been found." He stared at me as if to judge my response.

"Oh, OK." I said casually.

He looked a bit relieved. "We are very sorry. You know we have been searching, but nobody has been able

“ It was a typical peaceful morning in the peaceful house on the peaceful street. Nothing was out of place as I walked downstairs with my armful of laundry. Aunty was on the porch swing reciting her prayers, while Uncle was in the living room sipping his tea and reading the morning newspaper.”

to locate your sock. I am certain that it must be in your cupboard. You were in a hurry this morning, and must have forgotten it."

"Maybe. I'll have to check."

"If the sock is not upstairs then you know we must purchase you a new sock. I have seen this same sock in a store near to here."

"Oh, no, no, Uncle, that's OK; it's only a sock."

Then Ruby commented on my casualness and slowly began to explain the chaos of that afternoon. How Aunty was folding the clothes and realized that she was one sock short. How the entire household was ransacked in an attempt to find my missing sock. Raju, Mani Masi, Kaizad,

Kety, Aunty, Uncle and when she returned home from work, even Ruby was sent in search of my missing sock. How dinner was late all because of my missing sock. The breaking point for me was when Aunty mentioned something about even looking for my sock in the toilet.

I knew I shouldn't, but I couldn't help it; I let out the teeniest of tiny giggles. And as I did all 14 eyes at the table turned and gave me a strange look. A look of "who is this weirdo that's sitting at our dinner table and what strange land did he come from?"

Unfortunately there was no missing sock in my cupboard. The next day the first words I heard from Uncle were, "Has your sock been found?" Then I saw Aunty; "Did you find your sock?" That evening I met Ruby, "Was your sock upstairs?" Seven different times I had to tell seven different people that no I hadn't found my sock because I forgot to look. I didn't have the courage to tell them that it was lost. I considered telling them that I had found the sock in my cupboard upstairs, but then what would I say if they later found the sock downstairs.

Two days after The Sock Story I left for a short trip to Baroda, and fortunately when I returned the missing sock had been forgotten. Or, to be more accurate I should say it was no longer mentioned.

It's been over one month now and still there is no sign of the missing sock, but I haven't given up hope; I still have faith in India. ■

Cyrus Rivetna is an architect and photographer in Chicago. The Sock Story was written during his one and a half year stay in Ahmedabad, where he worked with noted architect B.V. Doshi at "Sangath".

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FEZANA AGM 2001 ...

[Continued from page 10]

the hospital or other institutions in India and/or Pakistan

(d) World Zarathushti Orchestra will now play at the Chicago Congress.

Dolly also thanked Marzi Byramjee of Toronto who donated the amount of his printing invoice.

Framroze Patel thanked Dolly Dastoor and Homi Davier for delivering a successful congress. He also thanked the entire team of dedicated volunteers from Houston for their efforts. All the volunteers were recognized, in particular, Rohinton Rivetna and Darioush Vafadari for their efforts in streamlining the issuance of visas to Iranians, Indians and Pakistanis. The fact that 95 Iranians were granted visas was very commendable to their efforts. Rohinton Rivetna stated that without the help of the Consulates they would not have achieved so much success and suggested that the Congress co-chairs write a letter of appreciation to these consulates. Rohinton was requested to provide a list of the consulates.

Sarosh Collector presented the Congress financial report. The profits from the Congress are \$181,206.62 of which \$20,900.00 are held over for the printing of the proceedings. It was noted that this amount is only for printing and no postage was included. Some discussion took place whether to sell the proceedings or give them out free. In the end it was agreed that the Congress organizers should make the decision and deduct all expenses before distributing the profits equally to ZAH and FEZANA.

Amendments to the FEZANA Constitution. *Firdosh Mehta* read out a letter from the Constitution Committee chair, Dinshaw Joshi. Since at the last AGM it was agreed to separate the By Laws from the Constitution, a rough draft had been prepared. This is not ready for distribution yet.

A need for a paid administrator is increasing as FEZANA is growing. To a question raised by Members as to where the administrator would be located, Rustom Kevala advised that an office space would be required. The Members decided that first a decision should be taken on the premises and then the paid Administrator would be considered. In the meantime, the Terms of Reference could be drafted for the position of the paid Administrator.

2002 North American Congress. *Rashna Ghadialy*, chair of the 2002 North American Congress in Chicago, July 4-7, stated that in future at least 18 months of preparation should be allowed. They were really scrambling to get things moving in just about a year's time.

Chicago has made reservations with the downtown Hyatt Regency hotel. They are not encouraging home hospitality as the rate of \$125 + 14% tax has been obtained on a guarantee of certain number of rooms. At the low end they are estimating 500 attendees, but are planning for many more. The hotel banquet hall can accommodate 5000. To a question from some members if there were other less expensive hotels in the area, Rashna responded in the negative. Congress organizers are encouraging delegates to stay at the hotel, and enjoy all the Chicago lakefront activities such as Independence Eve fireworks, Taste of Chicago, Magnificent Mile shopping, museums and more.

By end of June they will have their website (www.zac-chicago.org) which will give all the information. Rashna advised that the theme is "Passing the Torch to the New Generation" (it has since been changed to "Enhancing Communities - Empowering Generations"). Besides the sessions, they will have the Zarathushti World Orchestra perform at the banquet and will request participation from other associations for the Cultural Night entertainment. There will also be a full-length Gujarati natak (comedy).

Primary Affiliation. Some members wished to clarify the statement "Members who have declared their Primary Affiliation". Firdosh stated that according to Article III, Section 1, subsection E, paragraph four of the FEZANA constitution, "If an individual belongs to more than one Member Association, he shall for purposes of all Federation business be counted only once, as an individual member of that Member Association with which he has declared his primary affiliation. Failure to declare primary affiliation will disqualify an individual from being considered as an individual member of any Member Association for the current year."

It was clear from the article that for the purposes of all Federation business an individual can only be counted once. An individual may participate in discussion but can only vote on FEZANA-related matters in the association of their primary affiliation. However, a legal opinion may also be sought by the association.

Letter from TMZA: A letter from TMZA was read in which TMZA requested that:

(1) FEZANA constitution be amended to ensure that matters of importance receive the involvement of their members at the grass roots level and their votes are properly reflected in the decision making process. Matters which are considered important should not be decided by a simple majority.

(2) Make available to TMZA the results of the individual voting on the two Motions passed last year involving Mr. Jafarey's inclusion at the FEZANA Special Event at the WZC 2000. This information would help TMZA in using its influence directly at the association level in the future until FEZANA voting rules on important issues are suitably amended.

For Item (1) FEZANA VP responded:

(a) FEZANA cannot interfere in the affairs of the Member Associations and cannot mandate how they can conduct their affairs.

For Item (2) some members felt that whereas a Member has a right to see all the records, the intent of “using its influence” posed some sort of threat. ZSO’s question as to why an association would want to know how other associations voted remained unanswered. Many Associations were initially not agreeable to disclosing the individual voting under this condition. However, after some discussion, it was decided that results of the motions can be made available to all Members, if requested.

Next AGM. ZAQ offered to host the next AGM in Quebec to coincide with the 35th Anniversary of formation of the ZAQ. Members felt that traveling to Montreal for the AGM and then to Chicago for the Congress would place undue financial burden and requested whether the 2002 AGM could be held in Chicago. The agenda would be kept for one day only. Chicago will advise the date and place so as not to jeopardize the Congress planning.

The meeting adjourned with thanks to the Chair, the host Association – the Zoroastrian Association of California, the California Zoroastrian Center for providing its facilities, and everyone present for their active participation. ■

Holmes and Edalji ...

Daily Telegraph on 9th January, 1907. He advised “Only an appeal to the public can put an end to a course of injustice and persecution which amount, as I hope that I shall show, to a national scandal.” The newspaper printed the entire 18,000-word summary.

The case is solved. In the meantime, Conan Doyle had turned his attention to looking for the real slasher ... Following various clues, he identified the local butcher as the guilty party beyond any possible doubt.

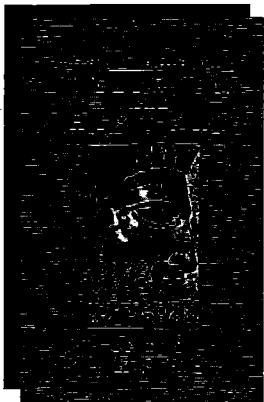
But Sir Arthur's great investigative success ended on a bitter note. The government bureaucracy, he concluded in disgust, is motivated by "a determination to admit nothing which inculcates another official, and as to the idea of punishing another official for offenses which have caused misery to helpless victims, it never comes within their horizon." Certainly, it was not the kind of ending a Sherlock Holmes fan would have expected. ■



- Benjamin Franklin

a life of charity and service

Mrs. Marker's (known affectionately as Mehra Aunty) remarkable life was celebrated by friends, family and dignitaries at a reception on July 21 at the home of her son, former ambassador Jamsheed Marker, at Bath Island, Karachi. Byram Avari, chair



RELIGION AND HISTORY OF THE PARSEES, published in 1995, by Meherbano Kekobad Marker, is a handsome, hardcover volume, covering the life of Prophet Zarathushtra, the religion, rituals, history, Parsis, the Avesta, places of worship, the priesthood, Zarathushti literature, ceremonies and other topics. For information about the book, contact Aban Rustomji at aban@coatingengineers.com.

of the Karachi Parsi Anjuman felicitated Mrs. Marker and gave a brief account of her illustrious life. Messages of felicitation were also received from Zarathushti associations in Pakistan and the All Pakistan Women's Association.

Toxy Cowasjee, president of the Karachi Zarathushti Banu Mandal presented Mrs. Marker with a unique chronological record of her life against world events, wrapped in a navy leather case, bearing Mehramai's embossed initials. Ten blooms of pink carnations were specially ordered for the ten decades of her life, along with a card highlighting the events in each decade.

Mehramai, who lives in Quetta, Pakistan, is an exemplary role model as a devoted daughter, wife and mother, and as a pioneer of many movements that served the nascent nation of Pakistan. She came to Quetta as a young bride in 1922. Her husband, the late Kaikobad Marker, was enchanted at first sight where he saw her; he soon came to realize that she was not only a beautiful woman, but also a very beautiful person. Exuding great moral and value judgments, she developed a true love for serving causes that were of importance to women and children.

Mehramai devoted herself to starting the Girl Guide movement in Pakistan,

pioneering a women's cottage industry *Adara-e-Taraque-Niswan*, developing adult literary centers, maternity health centers, and establishing the Lady Dufferin Hospital with her careful attention and monitoring of all her projects, her social work has established a high standard, which is emulated today throughout Pakistan.

Also a devoted community member, she took great pride in encouraging community affairs. She wrote a book, *The Religion and History of the Parsees*, which provided glimpses of the history and practices of the Parsis. All proceeds from the sale of the book were donated to the World Zoroastrian Organization to help indigent Parsis in Mumbai.

She also advocated a scheme to have large families for Zarathushtis so that the population would increase. She proposed that parents with more than three children receive monetary help. She tirelessly campaigned for all her causes and articulated her needs well.

Mehramai truly lives her life according to the tenets of the Zarathushti religion:

**Ushta Ahmai Yahmai
Ushta Khamaichit.**

*Happiness is to those
who give happiness to others.* ■

[Compiled by Roshan Rivetna from articles by Sunnu Golwalla and Aban Rustomji]



First Dastur Meherjirana Library

Some time ago I accompanied a visiting Japanese scholar to the **First Dastur Meherjirana Library** in Navsari. I was surprised to find a wealth of information which perhaps may not be found in many other libraries. There are classics by Annie Besant, Blavatsky, Balzac, Charles Darwin, Disraeli, Emerson, Sigmund Freud, Milton, Max Muller, Ruskin, Mark Twain and other respected authors, in English and other European languages. There are also excellent references in Gujarati and ancient Iranian texts. The books are properly catalogued and well preserved.

The library is managed by dedicated trustees, a librarian and an assistant. Since their funds are frugal, the librarian, Mrs. Bharati Gandhi, indicated that she would welcome donations of books on any subjects – even old educational magazines such as *National Geographic*.

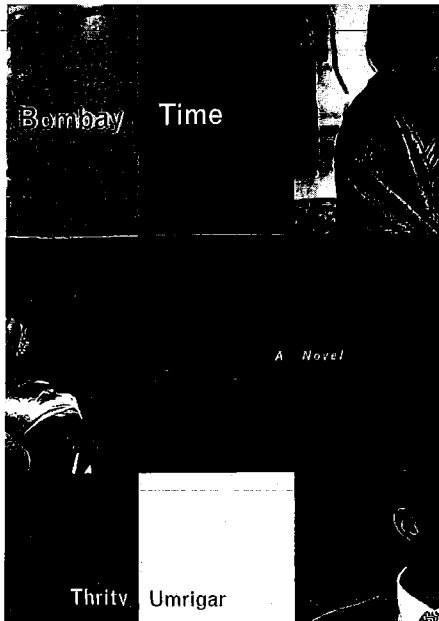
This is certainly a Zarathushti institution that deserves support of all Zarathushtis in whatever way they can.

Contact information: The trustees are Eruch Dastoor, Dasturji Meherji Meherjirana and others. Life membership fees are only Rs. 1001. The address is: First Dastur Meherjirana Library, Tarota Bazar, Navsari 396 445, Gujarat, India; tel: 91 2637 45847. The Mumbai contact office is at M/52 Cusrow Baug, Colaba Causeway, Mumbai 400 039, tel: 91 22 284 1987.

*Minocher Damania
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Bombay Time

By Thrity Umrigar

Picador, New York, USA, 2001
ISBN 0-312-27716-4,
256 pp., \$24

Review by Dolly Dastoor
Brossard, Quebec

BOMBAY TIME, the first novel written by Mumbai-born author *Thrity Umrigar*, set in Bombay, portrays the lives of longtime Parsi residents of a block of flats called "Wadia Baug" and examines the bonds which bind the families to each other. Bonds which are at once unique and recognizable to all, specially if one grew up in a 'baug' in Mumbai.

Thrity has a very easy writing style, making reading a pleasurable experience. The book is sprinkled generously with colloquial Gujarati words, which makes one nostalgic for the language of one's birth. She craftily invokes images of the youthful days of the lives of the middle-class aging men and women who live in Wadia Baug as they all gather to celebrate the marriage of Mehernosh, son of Jimmy and Zarin Kanga, the success story of the baug. The wedding is an excuse to dredge from the past,

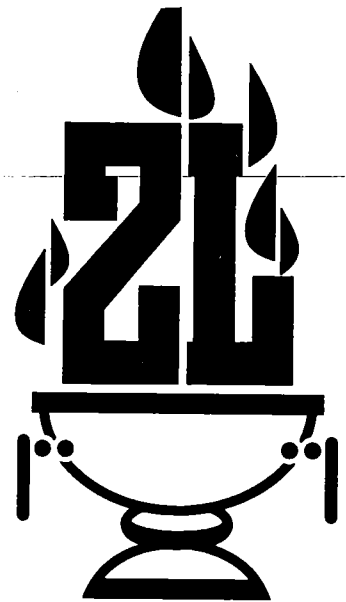
memories of a wide gamut of human conditions of the families who lived in that building: failed relationships, dissolution of marriage, sexual depravity, bitterness, regret, joy, happiness, alcoholism, the idealism of youth, the struggle, and the unfulfilled dreams of a middle-aged business man Rusi Bilimoria.

Even though the novel is supposed to have been set in contemporary India, where references are made to Clinton, Atul Bihari Vajpai and Sanjay Dutt, one is not quite sure to what time periods the flash backs carry the reader. This makes a guessing game of the age of the characters of the baug, specially when Dosa Popat wants to be the first woman Parsi doctor!

Although the names of all the residents of the baug, leave no doubt in the mind of an Indian reader that the residents all belong to the Parsi community, there is only passing mention in the book of the community and its religious practices.

In her attempt to portray Mumbai as a city of extremes, great wealth surrounded by abject poverty, Umrigar, sours the wedding with a stone-throwing incident and the unnecessary tragic beating of an innocent bystander by the 'chowkidar'! This introduces another dimension to the story, a dimension which really does not hang together with the rather poignant stories Umrigar has weaved throughout the book.

Thrity Umrigar lived in India for the first 21 years of her life, then moved to US to work on her master's in Journalism. She was the recipient of the prestigious Nieman Fellowship at Harvard, writes for the Akron Beacon Journal, Ohio and is a contributor to the Boston Globe and Washington Post. She now lives in Kent, Ohio. *Bombay Time* is her first novel, and we certainly hope not her last. Recommended reading for all who wish to relive the nostalgia of their youth in their mother country if it happens to be India. ■



I was aware of the power of consciousness but always wondered about the power of cyber consciousness. So about two years ago I decided to check it out by sending e-mail messages to fellow Zarathushtis across the globe.

This journey to enlightenment started with my first inspirational e-message being sent to about 40 Zarathushtis. Fellow Zarathushtis worldwide who appreciated these messages sent me names with email addresses of their families and friends to be added to my list. This e-list grew from 40 to 400+ people in the first year and from 400 to 4000+ people in the second year.

The power of cyber consciousness did not stop there. Many Zarathushtis across the globe ranging from 7 to 81 years started corresponding with me and sharing their accomplishments as well as their contributions to our community. It was also encouraging to know that some of them had developed a special folder in their email slot for saving these inspirational messages.

First contact. One of the most interesting cyber interactions came from a Zarathushti who responded to my Nouruz 2001 e-message of love and light. This response was unique because the person said: "I am responding to your message because of your name *Meher*", and wanted to know more about your work.

So, I mailed him a copy of my book "*Bread For The Head*."

Z-Legacy

through cyber consciousness

©2001, by Meher D. Amalsad, author of Bread For the Head™

Now, his statement aroused my curiosity so I asked him if it had anything to do with my name starting with an 'M' and ending with an 'R'.

He said, "No. It has something to do with a Z-Legacy project which I started about 30-years ago on Meher Roj and Meher Mah."

My life has been blessed with miracles but this unique and miraculous blessing of Meher Yazad was yet to be tapped.

Over the next few days, while we were having a dialog about his work, guess what happened?

He received my book on Meher Roz.

This got my attention. So, I decided to add *Khorshed*, the twin deity of Meher along with *Roshan*, the light of Meher and *Rustom*, the power of Meher to our enlightening discussions. Thus Khorshed Jungalwala, Roshan Rivetna and Rustom Kevala joined our cyber-group to discuss this man's work of Z-Legacy.

As we were doing that we realized that we needed to ground this project in the worldly reality, and bring it to the 'geti' world (*Jehan*) within our community, so we enlisted the help of Jehan Bagli.

After about a week of interactive discussions via email it was unanimously concluded that this being a monumental piece of work, would require the support of an established organization like FEZANA.

So, we asked FEZANA to invite this man for a very special presentation at the 2001 FEZANA AGM in Westminster, California, USA in May.

His presentation was so powerful that he got the unanimous support of the FEZANA executives and the heads of the FEZANA Member

Associations, and all who were present during his presentation.

However, after this presentation, he shared with me his apprehensiveness about the various ways of disseminating his work on a global basis. That afternoon we had lunch with Khorshed Jungalwala and my spir-



ited friend Shahriar Shahriari during which we collectively focused on creative avenues for disseminating his work to our community.

The monumental work. So ladies and gentlemen, brothers and sisters, here is an encapsulated version of his monumental work.

From his early childhood he was interested in Zarathushtrian and comparative religious studies, and was deeply influenced by the works of Firdowsi, Mulla Firuz bin Kaus, the father and son publications of the Sanjanas and the Anklesarias, and Mr. Bamanji Byramji Patel (the compiler of *Parsi Prakash*, an unpar-

alleled source of historical reference for the Zarathushtrian community).

Being acutely aware of the deficiency of a "National Union Catalogue" for Zarathushtrianism, he decided to single handedly set in motion, a process for cataloging the materials on the subjects of Avesta, Pahlavi, Pazand, Parsis, Zarathushtra and Zarathushtrianism, patterned on the most exacting standards set by the US Library of Congress, and in many instances, even exceeding those standards, to set up a mechanism for the proper cataloging and indexing of all future materials on Zarathushtrianism.

He has scanned visually the major data bases of the world's materials on Zarathushtrianism, ranging from books, monographic sets and serials, to *festschrifts*, commemorative volumes, conference proceedings of all types, museum and exhibition catalogs, master's and doctoral dissertations, audio and audio-visual materials and maps.

To-date, he has found citations pertaining to Zarathushtrianism in close to 5000 journals in about 120 languages. This compilation is an author-based bibliography patterned somewhat along the lines of the US Pre-1956 National Union Catalog. It also contains research material for further serious investigation of historical and religious facts.

A worthy project. It is a historical fact that we have suffered serious losses of our religious scriptures, manuscripts and information thereby leaving us today with roughly 1% of the original glory and splendor of our scriptures. Thus, this project will serve as a bridge to bring together data that will be of great importance to historians around the world. Its worth may or may not be measured in present value but it will surely be recognized by future generations.

In confirmation with the above sentiment, our Z-friend has now requested that a mechanism be created to give a helping hand to this single-handed monumental task. Once established, this 'process' will serve as a

Zarathushtrian heritage map for generations to come, in the lives of our present and future community members.

Going back to the topic of cyber consciousness – as I was finalizing this article, I received an email from him with a concern if the recent storms affected any valuable books at the Zarathushti Center in Houston and offered his expertise on restoration and subsequent preservation. So I made an appeal to the conscience and guidance of *Sarosh Yazad* - I called my good friend Sarosh Maneckshaw in Houston and found out that the library books were OK, but he mentioned that he has a personal collection of books that may require some restoration expertise. One more example of how cyber consciousness is at work. Sarosh also expressed great interest in working on this Z-Legacy project.

So the Radiance of Khorshed, the Light of Roshan, the Power of Rustom, the Support of Jehan, the Spirit of Shahriar, the Guidance of Sarosh and the Love of Meher, now surround our Z-friend.

Probably by now you are wondering who our Z-friend is. Well, in the interest of the continuity of his work, he has requested to remain anonymous. However, he has requested that an independent “Z-Legacy Committee” be formed to initiate this monumental project. Thus, under the guidance of our Z-friend, a committee has been formed, comprising of Mobed Zarir Bhandara, Khorshed Jungalwala, Dr. Daryoush Jahanian, Dr. Meherborzin Soroushian and Sarosh Maneckshaw. We will apprise the community with the pertinent progress in upcoming issues of FEZANA Journal under an article entitled: *The Z-Legacy Continues...*

Until then, blessings with love and light to you all. ■

Meher Dadabhoy Amalsad is a professional speaker; author of *Bread for the Head™* and audiocassettes *Bread for the Parent's Head™*. Visit www.Bread4theHead.com.

Acknowledgments to **Phil Avari** of California for creating the two logos.

Making a documentary

A sneak-peek behind the making of “In the Footsteps of our Forefathers”

By Tenaz Dubash

Since completing the documentary, *In the Footsteps of our Forefathers*, I have received several phone calls/e-mails from folks who are interested in finding out more about the filmmaking process. I am, therefore, writing a brief article on what is involved educationally, technically and emotionally in making a film.

Footsteps was my first independent film. Before making this I had spent several years, in the television industry, at ABC, CNBC and PBS and had been on many shoots involving a sound person, cameraman and on-air talent. These were very professional experiences but in no way prepared me for the project in Iran, where the film followed 34 Zarathushtis in search of the roots of their religion.

I had never attempted to film a documentary in a foreign country where Americans had no political rights and where I did not speak the native language. Most importantly, the subject matter was religion and, as we all know, human beings can become fiercely dogmatic in their interpretation of religion. This affected the film, at all stages, in both positive and negative ways.

The three major steps in producing a film are pre-production, production and post-production/distribution. As I shall point out below, filming *Footsteps* was unique in many ways.

Pre-production. This stage of making a film involves the planning – researching the content and formulating the structure of the film. It also involves coming up with a detailed budget (for equipment, camera-peo-



PHOTO: CYRUS RIVETNA

Dubash [left] at filming of “Footsteps” at tomb of Cyrus the Great in Pasargadae.

ple and editing costs), identifying and hiring camera people/editors, and most importantly, fund-raising.

As far as *Footsteps* went, fundraising was relatively easy. Zarathushtis openly and generously supported the film. Identifying camera people was a little more complicated because finding a qualified Zarathushti who worked in Iran, was next to impossible – because most Zarathushtis do not have the opportunity to become professionals in Iran. We ended up with two camera people – a Muslim (primary) and a Zarathushti (secondary). The editor was a colleague willing to work on the project for half his normal fee as a favor.

Researching Iran, reading books and articles and preparing my fellow pilgrims for the somewhat intrusive nature of filming, were tasks that I was involved in during this stage. I was also communicating closely with the folks who had the monumental job of organizing our travel within Iran. This was to ensure that my agenda of making a documentary did not clash with their agenda of organizing a religious tour within Iran.

Production. This step involves actually shooting material. Since a documentary, by definition, is supposed to "document reality" it is better to shoot material as it develops without scripting it or giving folks too much direction. Having said this, there does need to be some loose structure in the producer's mind while going into this phase.

Most of the pilgrims were willing to be interviewed and were very accommodating about sharing their thoughts and feelings as we traveled through Iran. Things also went very smoothly thanks to the professionalism and hard work of both the camerapersons. Interestingly and coincidentally, both the Zoroastrian and Muslim camera persons had the same first name – Shahriar.

Yes, there were some challenges during this stage of production. When we

reached Yazd and Kerman, the holiest sites for some Zarathushtis, some of the group members did not want the Muslim-cameraperson to be in these cities or towns. As a result, I separated myself and the 2 camera people from the group for 2 days, hired a taxi with a Zarathushti taxi driver, and explored Yazd, Kerman and the *dokhmas* myself. It was very challenging to be in front of the camera but was also extremely liberating to be away from the large group of 34 people for two days. This was one of the few, and very rare, times in Iran that I had a true sense of ownership over the material I was working on.

Post-production and distribution.

This part is the most time-consuming and technically challenging. It involves looking at all the footage and deciding what it is that stays and what ends up on the proverbial cutting-floor. First, the producer uses time code that is burnt electronically into tapes to select in and out points. Then he/she takes this footage and assembles a rough-paper-cut. Finally the producer approaches the editor to turn the paper edit into something that viewers want to look at with the help of a script, narration, music, graphics and effects.

In the case of *Footsteps* we had over 18 hours of footage. First, the Beta tapes, shot in Iran on PAL, had to be converted to NTSC tapes (the American system). These tapes, in turn, had to be converted to VHS tapes with time code burnt into them. Believe me, this is a backbreaking process when you are single-handedly lugging around 18 hours of tapes to dub houses.

I also had a full time job at FOX while I was trying to work on the

“ ... making a film is very hard work – technically, physically and emotionally. ”

post-production aspect. Most documentary units have at least 6-12 people helping out during this stage. I had my amazing associate producer in New York, but even with her help I was beginning to feel that I would not be able to complete the project by December in time for the Houston Congress. We only began the actual editing at the end of September because my editor was completing another documentary for PBS. Since



Tenaz Dubash [center] discussing her upcoming documentary with Zubin Mehta. The Maestro enjoyed bhel-puri and Parsi pora with the Boston area Zarathushtis after his concert with the Israel Philharmonic at Tanglewood in August, to standing ovations from an audience of 10,000. Dubash's next documentary is a contemporary look at who Zoroastrians are and what they stand for. It is personality-driven and will involve interviews with several prominent Zarathushtis, including Zubin Mehta.

he was doing me a huge favor and charging a very nominal fee, I was in no position to rush him.

It was around this time that I did something very foolish. I gave up my full-time job as a staff writer at FOX to complete the documentary. I, of course, had not budgeted a salary for myself in the original budget but was so vested in the project by this time that I willingly, and rather foolishly, gave up my job.

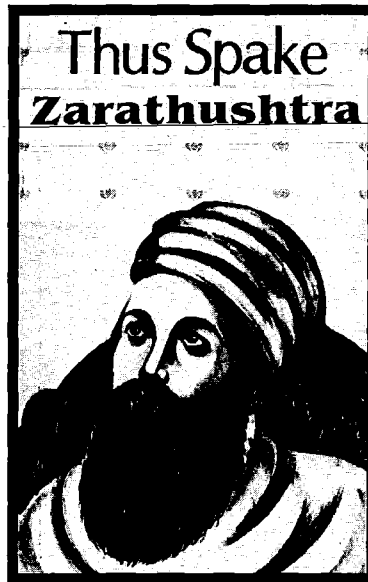
Air in Houston it did! Not twice as it was originally planned, but four times. Most people loved it and were very generous with their praise and compliments. Some were not, but that is to be expected.

Distribution. Once you have completed your masterpiece you want to make sure that you market it correctly. You need to submit your film to festivals and independent television stations. There were, once again, costs here for tape duplication, festival application fees and postage that I had overlooked.

In conclusion, making a film is very hard work – technically, physically and emotionally. However, if you are passionate about your project it is very worth it in the end.

Top 10 things to do when making your first independent film:

- (1) Stay away from topics like religion and politics for your first film. It will save you the headache of passionate opinions/interpretations.
- (2) If you are brave enough to tackle a controversial topic, be aware that there will be ruffled feathers and bruised egos. Make sure you are emotionally equipped to deal with this.
- (3) Come up with a realistic budget. Pay yourself a salary. Don't ask friends for too many favors. Pay them for their services.
- (4) Remember to thank participants, friends, family and benefactors for all their financial and emotional support. Be accommodating of people who ask for additional recognition.



THUS SPAKE ZARATHUSHTRA

Compiled by B. S. Surti

96 pp., ISBN 81-7120-203-9

Published by Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Chennai 600 004, India

It's only 2" x 4" and 1/4" thick, but the 96 pages, along with a brief history of the Zarathushti religion, gives us a quick yet profound insight into the brilliance of the prophet Zarathushtra.

This little pocket book is one of the "Thus SPAKE" series (others in the series cover Buddha, Christ, Sri Rama, Mohammad, and

others) and deals with 26 topics ranging from "Ahura Mazda" (example: "One need not scale the heights of the heavens nor travel along highways of the world to find Ahura Mazda. With purity of mind and holiness of heart one can find Him in one's own heart.") to "Think for Yourself" (example: "Doubt with enquiring spirit what you cannot honestly believe. Believe wholeheartedly what you cannot sincerely doubt.")

The author states that he has drawn upon his almost five decades of studies of our holy scriptures along with related works of distinguished scholars, great works of celebrated Iranian poets of the past (Firdowsi) and more recent times (Pour-e Davoud), to help him with his interpretations of the quotations. My only regret after going through this quaint but handy booklet was that there were no citations after each quotation, identifying from which section of the Zend Avesta – the Vendidad, Yashts, Sirozahs, Gathas, Yasna – these sayings were selected.

Nevertheless, I am grateful for this little book, as I am for all the books written about or on the religion of Zarathushtra, Parsis, Iran, ancient Iran, and any subject even remotely connected to us. After years of having embarked on a personal journey of discovering my ancient faith and heritage, I will say, for the umpteenth time, (and especially to those who see nothing in our noble faith, and oft times belittle and abandon their Zarathushti din and heritage for others), "There is gold in them thar Hills!" ■

- By Dinaz Rogers (drogers@proaxis.com)

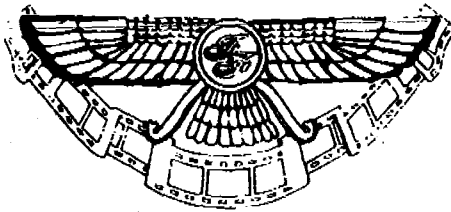
- (5) Delegate, especially during the post-production phase.
- (6) Be aware that in spite of delegating and asking for help, you will be doing 90% of the work single-handedly. Be very prepared for this.
- (7) Hang on very tightly to your common sense, sense of humor and sense of self-reliance.
- (8) Have a clear idea of who the audience for the film is beyond the obvious small, niche audience.

- 9) Have a clear-cut distribution plan to reach this wider audience.

- (10) Give yourself a big pat on the back for undertaking a very challenging project. ■

Tenaz Dubash is a writer/producer. She is currently free lance writing in New York and is working on the pre-production stage of two other documentaries. For information on the process or the film, contact Tenaz at Tdubash@aol.com.

Frohar Films



Tele-serial on Doodarshan TV, Mumbai

Silloo P. Mahava, in charge of production and public relations at Mumbai-based **Frohar Films**, writes:

Frohar Films have pioneered and initiated a tele-serial celebrating Zoroastrian history, culture and heritage. From August through December 1999, *Doodarshan II* Metro channel has been telecasting a serial entitled: "Humata Hukhta Hvarshtha – Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds" every Sunday afternoon at 12:30. Since April 16, 2000, it has also been telecast by the *Gurjari* channel of RTV Network every Sunday afternoon at 12:30 as well as in the evening at 7:00 pm.

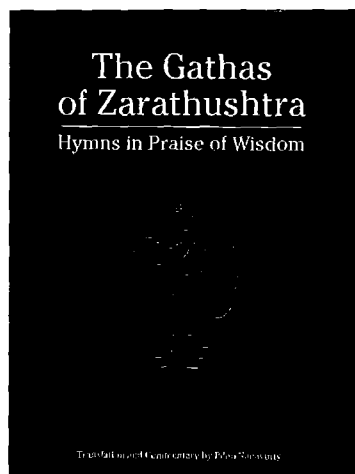
Through interviews, presentations and cultural programs, by Parsi high priests, scholars, professionals and even children, the community's rich and varied culture, traditions, life style and ethics have been showcased to a wide viewership among members of all communities in India.

Funding. The full tele-series will have 52 episodes. The Channels do not pay any of the production costs. Thus far production has been possible only due to the personal contributions by promoters of the serial and donations from philanthropic individuals and institutions. The cost per episode is approx. Rs. 40,000 (\$850).

Financial assistance from well-wishers, trusts and organizations will be most welcome, in our endeavor for a wide appreciation of our great religion and culture. You may consider a one-time grant or sponsor a specific episode. Contact Frohar Films at P.O. Box 4112, Mumbai 400 007, email: froharfilms@yahoo.com. ■



Mrs. Piloo (Nanavutty) Jungalwalla presenting a copy of her book *The Gathas of Zarathushtra*, to the President of India, K. R. Narayanan, at a reception at Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi, in September 1999. A copy of the book will be placed in the library of the Government House. At left is Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Adi M. Sethna, head of the Delhi Parsi Anjuman.



THE GATHAS OF ZARATHUSHTRA Hymns in Praise of Wisdom

*Translation and Commentary
by Piloo Nanavutty*

192 pp., illustrated, ISBN 1-890206-11-3,
1999. Hardcover \$22, softcover \$14.95
Call Antique Collectors Club 1-800-252-5231
or write to the Delhi Parsi Anjuman, F-17,
Haus Khas Enclave, New Delhi, 110 016,
India, Tel: 462-9994.

Piloo Nanavutty, 85, a graduate of Girton College, Cambridge, has both the scholarly training and the felt experiences of a lifetime with which to correctly interpret the Gathas, the words of Zarathushtra. In this handsome edition with rare and carefully chosen illustrations, she has interpreted and translated the ancient text verse by verse, in straightforward idiomatic English, keeping as close as possible to the original text, and provided commentaries to elucidate the doctrinal allusions. Vedic parallels are drawn to aid comparative studies of these two ancient Aryan traditions.

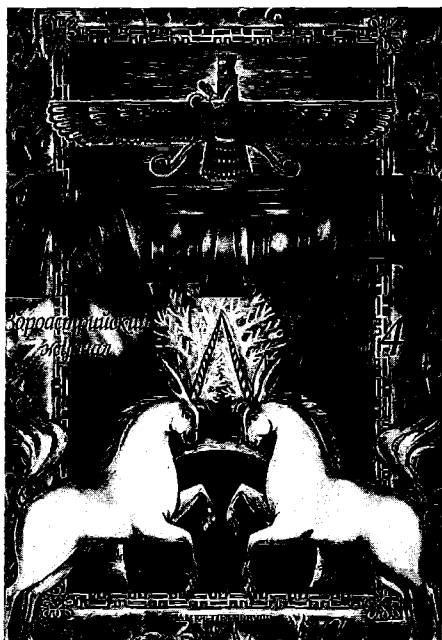
An ideal book which bridges the dividing line between lay persons and scholars, *The Gathas of Zarathushtra* is a must for every Zarathushti home, library and researcher working on the Zarathushti tradition. ■

MITRA

Editor: Galina Sokolova

Magazine published by the St. Petersburg Zoroastrian Community, in Russian language.

Contact MitraSPb@hotmail.com, tel: (812) 345-0277 or Mikhail Chistiakov at chisti@mail.admiral.ru or Behram Atashband at burzin@caravan.ru.



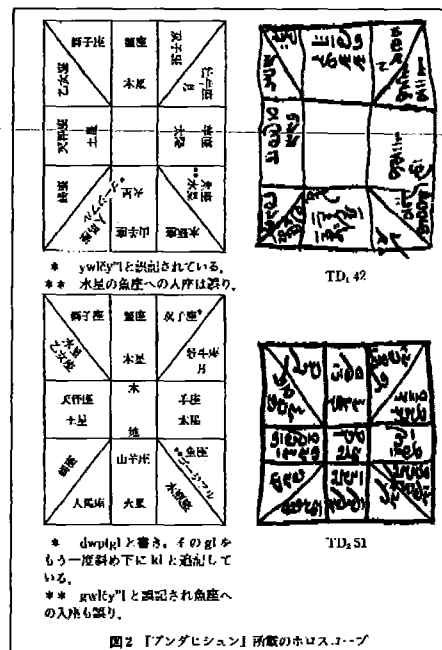
The magazine *Mitra* is published by the recently emerging group of Zarathushtis in the St. Petersburg area in Russia.

With an attractive full-color cover, and copious photos and illustrations, recent issues have carried articles on *Staot Yasht*, *Studkar Nask*, on *asho ravans*, Zarathushti astrology, stars and planets, special days and holidays, Nouruz, caps of Persia, fire temples and more.

Photos at right show *Galina Sokolova*, editor of *Mitra*; *Burzin Atashband*, founder-member of the Zoroastrian Association of Russia (TZAR), and *Globo Pavel*, leader of the Zarathushti group in the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) countries.

伊藤義教 渡来考 ヘルシア文化

シルクロードから飛鳥へ



The Influence of Zoroastrian Culture on Ancient Japan

By Dr. Gikyou Ito

Paperback, 250 pp. ©Emiko Ito 2001

Printed in Japan. In Japanese language.

ISBN 4-480-08636-6 C0121. For information, contact Noriko Katsuki,

5-21-6 Tamagawagakuen, Machida-shi, Tokyo, Japan, 194-0041.

Tel/fax +81-42-725-4533, email: x8110027@crow.grad.tamacc.chou-u.ac.jp

This paperback is a reprint of *The Influence of Zoroastrian Culture on Ancient Japan*. The author, late Dr. Gikyou Ito was a famous Iranologist eminent professor in Kyoto University and professor of my professor, Dr. Maiken A. Okada. The book, which is in Japanese language, mentions that in the 7th century, a few Zoroastrians came to Japan. This fact is noted on Japanese official documents of those days. They presented a folding screen to the Japanese government. The late Dr. Ito interpreted those pictures through the Bundahishn. He also interpreted a Japanese New Year's ceremony through a connection with Zoroastrian rituals. There are ceremonies of fire and water in the Japanese New Year ceremony. This was from the influence of Zoroastrianism. There is also a horoscope of the Bundahishn on page 216 [above right]. My professor, Dr. Okada wrote a commentary on this paperback.

- By Noriko Katsuki, Tokyo, Japan





Left, David de Warren, artistic director of the Sarasota Ballet of Florida's production of "Zal & Rudابه"

Zal & Rudابه – ballet in Florida

[Excerpted from "David de Warren, Artistic Director of the World Premier of Zal and Rudابه" by Shahin Monshipour, *Persian Heritage, Summer 2001*].

David de Warren's original ballet production of the legend of "Zal & Rudابه", from the Shah Nameh, debuted April 5th in Sarasota, Florida. For Iranian-Americans living in self-exile, in a country that gives scant recognition to our culture and heritage, it was indeed an auspicious moment. April 5th was the gala opening with former empress Farah in attendance, along with many in the audience from around the country, and around the world ...

An American, well-known ballet director, Robert de Warren, directed this, and many Americans for the first time had a chance to view a glimpse of beauty inherent in Persian literature and culture presented

through a totally western genre of art known as Ballet.

The Sarasota Ballet of Florida bills it as "Eleven years of living in Iran distilled into Robert de Warren's newest masterpiece ... An exotic ballet woven around the epic love story highlighting the passion and sensuality of Persian dance."

The costumes and sets were gorgeous with numerous true Iranian touches. The music was impressive. Composer David Goldstein, who created the score, had succeeded in incorporating Persian traditional tunes and sounds; in the Zoorkhaneh (traditional athletic dance) scene. Through the mixing of classic American and traditional Zoorkhaneh sounds, he produced rhythms that were western in tune, but would make any 'pahalvan' (hero) have an urge to spin!

The whole production is indeed a labor of love on the part of Mr. de

Warren, who is a native of Sarasota, and has lived in Iran.

There are 26 dancers and students. Accompanying them is a fifty-piece orchestra, and a production team of stage and costume designers, theater staff, rehearsal masters, jewelers, accessory makers, tailors, makeup artists and transcribers.

The production has been a great success. "Many non-Iranians came to me with tears in their eyes and full of appreciation at the beauty of the traditions I showed," says de Warren. "The Shahbanou was most appreciative and is actively helping to get us on tour."

The ballet has been invited to Vancouver in May 2002, to perform with the Vancouver symphony. Plans are also under way to perform in San Francisco and Los Angeles. For information, visit www.sarasotaballet.org or call (941) 351-8000. ■

The Iranians, written by Sandra Mackey, an expert on Middle Eastern culture, in a popular style, reviews the ideological pillars sustaining Iranian culture from the times of Cyrus to the present day. She maintains that the Iranians possess two complex and interlocking traditions: one comes from their Persian and Zoroastrian archetype of the good and just ruler, and the other out of Islam.

After briefly delineating the fundamental principles of the religion of Zarathushtra, the author contends that "Zoroastrianism carries a powerful social content. Religion is not only spiritual, it is political. In terms of contemporary Iran, the profound and lasting legacy of Zoroaster is that he imposed God's moral will on society and implanted in Iran from its earliest beginnings, a strong religious character that has shaped the Iranian and his culture ever since."

"... (Zoroaster), one of the most significant religious figures of all time and (Cyrus), one of the greatest political-military geniuses ever to stride across the human landscape, both occupied the cradle of the Iranian nation in the same era (which is questionable as Zarathushtra preceded Cyrus by many centuries). Their creations – one religious, the other political – blended. Zoroaster gave Cyrus' earthly realm a soul and Cyrus gave Zoroastrianism a body."

She asserts that Cyrus established the basic elements in Iranian culture – the basis of leadership, appreciation and collection of art and mores, and the unique and very special nature of the Aryans (Iran actually means Aryan). These "reappear in varying degrees and in various forms in the rulers and dynasties that followed him and on into the centuries in which Iran is described in terms of Islam."

"Beyond his personal motives of conquest and glory, Cyrus believed that the supreme God defined by

The Iranians

Persia, Islam and the Soul of a Nation

By Sandra Mackey

Published by Plume, 1998, 442 pages, \$15.95

Zoroastrianism had entrusted him with the task of uniting the people of the earth in one kingdom of justice and peace. As the king of that empire, Cyrus exercised the Zoroastrian concept of the just ruler.

"Cyrus was raised as a symbol of Iranian nationalism and political tradition. The Pahlavi Shahs creatively invoked Cyrus's name and defined his legacy to remind Iranians of their pre-Islamic past.

Monarch, priest and God. Zoroastrians regarded their kings as the instruments of God on earth, his right to govern stemming from his righteous conduct, his '*farr*' (*khoreh*) being its external evidence.

"The great king was to be the perfect man, the column of light connecting the upper world of ideals with the lower world of concrete facts. His task was not just to improve the human condition but to rise to a supernatural level on which he renewed the world according to the celestial pattern". This theme looks like a reading from the *Shah Nameh* which she quotes too, but without realizing that this theme veritably reaches its pinnacle there.

Since the religion of Zarathushtra is based on free will, a ruler can choose to be evil, but he thereby loses his *farr*, "the sign of divine favor, which confirmed his inherent right to rule. It was this sacred principle of kingship which linked monarchy and religion as the dual forces of power, the symbolic manifestations of God's will.

"Zoroastrian priests ripened into the authenticators of truth and justice. Thus the king and the priests, the secular and religious, formed another dualism in Persian culture."

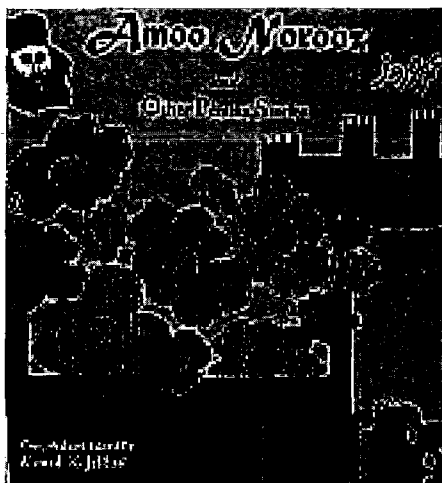
Persians and Arabs. When Iran fell to the Arabs in the seventh century, Persian culture stayed intact to fertilize Islam and define it for him ... Iranians rejected Arab culture, choosing instead to hold to the values, mores and aesthetics of pre-Islamic Persia."

Centuries later, Saddam Hussein "played on the deep prejudices between Arabs and Iranians ... His speeches characterized the Iranians as fire-worshipping Persians and (boasted) that once more the Arabs would crush the tyranny of 'the Magi'. In Iran, the Iraqi invasion tripped all the switches of Iranian nationalism," a Persian heritage.

The author seems to have put in tremendous effort to study the subject. I for one, do not remember reading a book on Iran, except perhaps *The Cambridge History of Iran*, that gave me so much insight into how the past is still governing the present Islamic Iran. As a psychoanalyst I benefitted from it greatly.

This book, more than any other, also enabled me to fully understand why my Iranian friends are so weary of British and American intervention in Iranian politics. The book also afforded me complete coherence about what I had read piecemeal as a teenager, about the struggle between the Shah and his prime minister, Mossadique.

The author's plea to the US not to brand and treat Iran as a pariah nation, but allow it the respect and standing among all nations it deserves, is timely. After all, when the US established diplomatic ties with Persia in 1882, it did so mainly because it was "the oldest government in the world". Today, without Iran's cooperation, few can ensure the safety of the Persian Gulf for us.



Amoo Norooz and Other Persian Stories

Compiled and edited by
Ahmad K. Jabbari

Hardcover, 108 pages, in full color,
ISBN: 1-56859-065-2, \$24.95.

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These four stories, first published as separate volumes in 1983, were well received among the growing number of Persian immigrants and their American friends, and quickly sold out. It was then decided to combine them into one convenient volume.

"Amou Norooz" is the story of the coming of the Persian new year. It is celebrated in Iran, Afghanistan, countries around the Persian Gulf, Turkey, parts of China, among the Parsis of India, and former Soviet Republics – Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan.

Like Santa Claus, an inherent part of the Christmas tradition, Amou Norooz is the symbol of the new year for the Persians and among those countries that have been influenced by Persian civilization throughout history.

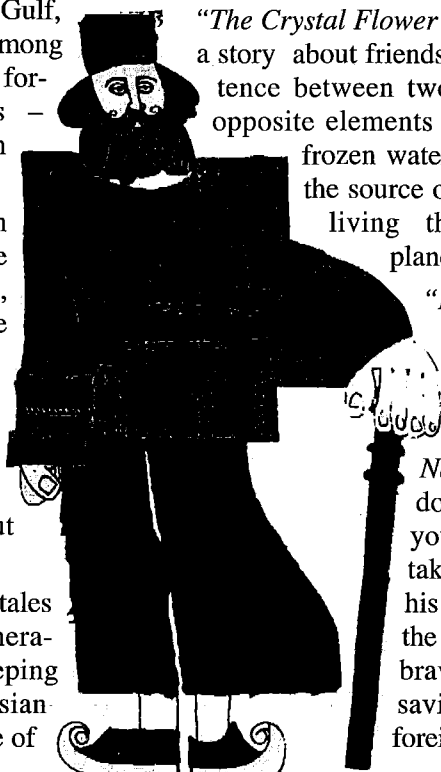
This is one of the oldest tales passed down from generation to generation, keeping the tradition of the Persian new year alive. Because of

the importance of this story, the publisher decided to print it in a bilingual (English and Persian) format.

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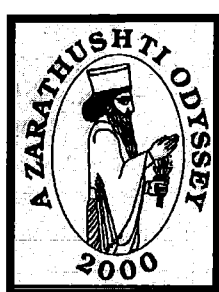
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