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Dawn of a New Era: Reunion in the Western Diaspora

Also inside:

God Bless America

**Zarathushtis and the
September 11th Tragedy**

Second Unity Cup Soccer

**Afghanistan –
The Zarathushti Connection**

PUBLICATION OF THE FEDERATION OF ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF NORTH AMERICA

FEZANA

**Federation of Zoroastrian
Associations of North America**

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ON THE COVER:

The Stars and Stripes and "God Bless
America" in chalk welcome Zarathushtis
to the Mehrgan function at the darbe
mehr in Chicago [page 5].

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Khorsheed Jungalwala
Chair, FEZANA Publications

A Prayer

A dedication to September 11

By Farida Bamji

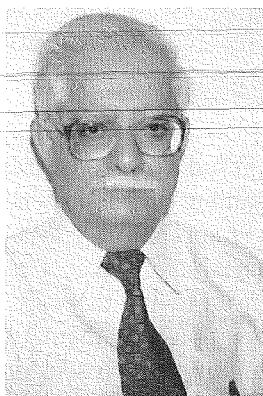
Ottawa, Ontario

Precious Lord linger near
Help me to be brave and never fear
Bear troubles with courage
and good faith
With Thee by my side I really feel safe.

My Life in Thy hands safely I place
Whether sunshine or rainy days.
Life's an ocean in which one's lost
It's also a battle to be faced and fought.

Life's path an upward run
Brave sustain, cowards run.
Life's also a game of dice
Full of goodness and of vice.

Lord! I am in this desert a lost sheep
Take me in Thy Fold and safely keep
Lead me not astray, keep me in sight,
Guide me on Thy Path with
Thy Powerful Light.



From the President ...

What have we learnt from the September 11th tragedy?

By Framroze Patel

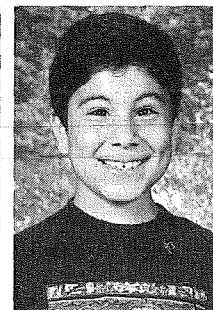
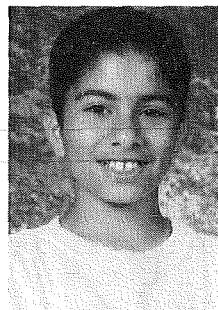
There are lessons to be learnt by the Zarathushti community from these unprecedented events of September 11, 2001. The only way we, the Zarathushtis, can survive is by unity, harmony and solidarity. Zarathushtra preached only one gospel. His message was universal. His message espoused that all men and women have the freedom to choose between good and evil, and the responsibility to make the selection is that of the individual. Zarathushtra's wish for the ideal world is seen in the *Zamyad Yasht*, paragraph 96 [*The Heritage of Zarathushtra and Zamyad Yasht* by Humbach and Ichaporial]:

“The ideal world will come into existence when evil thought will be overcome by good thought. False utterance will be overcome by the voice of straight utterance, and Evil become powerless and Truth will triumph.”

As it has been done before, I want to share this space with the young Zarathushtis to express their thoughts on the events of September 11th. They were asked the question, “What lessons could our community learn from the September 11th incident”. All the young Zarathushtis whose views you are about to read are pre-teenagers and teens. They are sharing their views with the community.

Cyrus, [above left] 10, and Zubin R. Bhandari [right] 8, sons of Zarina and Rohinton Bhandari of Los Altos, CA, are students at Westvalley Elementary School in Sunnyvale, CA.

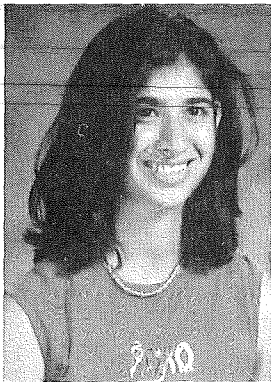
On September 11, 2001, our nation saw a terrible act of terrorism. We



were all affected by it. We were all talking about it in school and we all felt the same way – very sad. I think nothing or no one should be hijacked or killed by some people who are trying to harm lots of Americans. In school and in our community everyone got together to raise money for all those who were affected by this tragedy. All our loose change went to the cause. Everyone should be helping. When we all get together and help, it makes a big difference to all of us. I don't know if anybody in our Zarathushti community died in this attack. I hope not. If anybody did, we should all be helping their families. They might not build the twin towers again, but this day will always be remembered. We hope they build a memorial for those who died. We think the people in the planes did not get a chance to do anything, but next time it will be different. Let us all get together and do something and hopefully this will never happen again.

Freya Motafram, daughter of Fer-
oze and Mahrukh Motafram of
Brookfield, WI, is a freshman at
Brookfield Central High School.

I was in total disbelief when I heard about the disturbing news of the World Trade Center being hit by two

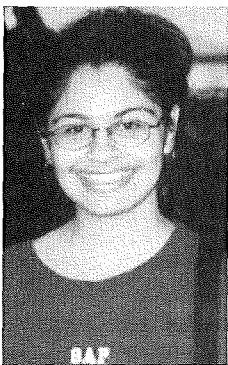


airplanes. I was shocked that people would come into our flourishing nation and want to destroy things that make it so successful.

As an American youth, I know that the guilty parties will get what's coming to them, but the idea of terrorism won't disappear, unfortunately. As the future leaders of America, it will be our responsibility to make people realize that no religion can demand such gruesome acts as killing thousands of innocent citizens.

As a Zarathushti youth, I have more faith in my religion. The statement of "good thoughts, good words, and good deeds" means a lot more to me now, after this has happened. I have faith that Ahura Mazda wants all of these good actions coming from us, not actions filled with hate. I hope that in the future everyone on earth will be united and we can have peace. If Democrats and Republicans in the country are standing behind President Bush, we can stand behind all of them and support them to stop these awful tragedies from occurring again.

Persis Commissariat, 13, daughter of Maharukh and Viraf Commissariat, is an eighth grader at Shelton Intermediate School in Shelton, CT.



When this tragic event first unfolded, a countless number of people listened and watched in disbelief. It was an amazing sight. The two buildings were among the tallest in the

world, majestically defining the New York skyline. It seemed like an action movie until reality sank in; there were people inside.

As Zarathushtis, we learned more about what kind of people we really are, based on the way we reacted. We have always been a tightly knit people, because our religion is so rare, but we have recently become closer than ever. Closer not just to our families and friends, but also to everyone, whether or not they were affected. We learned that we are a caring community, which immediately started prayer vigils, joined in candlelight vigils, and began collecting donations for the victims. And that we are a patriotic community that raised US flags on our homes and community centers. This is evidence that although we are proud to be Zarathushtis, we are prouder to be citizens of a country as great as the USA.

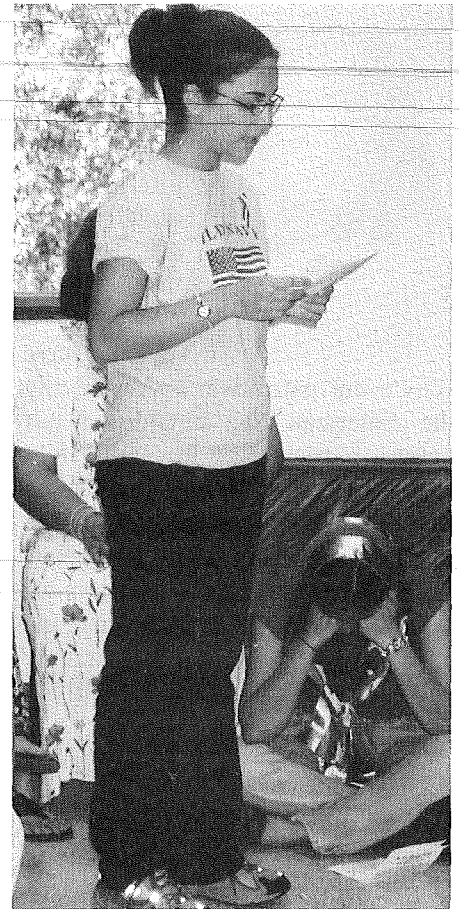
I personally learned that hatred is one of the most destructive forces on earth. It can cause great pain, and suffering. But love is an even more powerful force that will help us overcome hatred. It's a lesson that all of mankind must learn.

Anahita Kalianivala, daughter of Zarir and Nina Kalianivala of Fort Worth, Texas, is an eighth-grader and president of the Student Council at Fossil Hill Middle School, Dallas.

The events of September 11, were nothing short of a tragedy, but as my mom always told me, one of our goals in life should be to find at least one positive thing in every negative experience. When I try to find something positive about the incident on that Tuesday morning, I find that I have exceeded the goal I had set for myself.

I have managed to find many good things that have come out of this occurrence. These events have made us realize what is truly important to us: our family and friends, and our feelings for our country. Songs that we are all familiar with are being used as tribute songs. The weird thing is that we were never able to see the emotion and true meaning these songs held until they were linked to this awful tragedy.

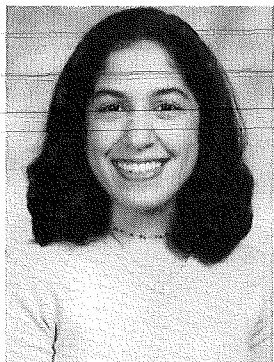
Patriotic feeling runs strong in the country, and the pledge and the flag



hold a new significance. The word 'heroes' has taken on a whole new meaning. Another remarkable thing that has come from this is that as Americans, we have all come together and made a wall of strength that no one else can get through and that absolutely no one can knock down. Although it saddens me to think that it took something like this to bring us together, hopefully our unity will remain unshaken, and we can always look back on these days and show the world why we are the **United States of America!**

Shereen Langrana is a senior at West Windsor-Plainsboro High School North. She lives in West Windsor, NJ with her parents Noshir and Dinaz Langrana and sister Anita.

In the aftermath of the September 11th attacks the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York united together with their fellow American citizens in volunteering their time, donating blood, money, and items of use to the Relief Fund. Even though



we were not personally or physically affected, we were definitely emotionally affected by this tragic event.

We have shown our patriotism by displaying the American flag outside of our homes, participating in candle light vigils, attending prayers at Darbe Mehr, as well as participating in the interfaith prayers in Long Island, New York. As American Zarathushtis we salute the firefighters, policemen and emergency personnel for their bravery and hard work. God Bless us All!

God Bless America!

Let me quote Mahatma Gandhi on religious tolerance and superiority of one religion over the other.

"The Allah of Islam is the same as the God of the Christians and Eswara of the Hindus. The names don't indicate individuality but attributes, and little man has tried in his humble way to describe the mighty God by giving Him attributes, though He is above all attribute, indescribable and immeasurable. Living faith in this God means acceptance of brotherhood of mankind. It also means equal respect for all religions. If Islam is dear to you, Hinduism is dear to me and Christianity is dear to Christians. It would be height of intolerance – and intolerance is a species of violence – to believe that your religion is superior to other religions and that you would be justified in wanting others to change over to your faith".

In our confirmation of faith prayer, we affirm that all religions that are, and are to be, are good and the Mazdayasni religion is good for me, now. It is my fervent hope that our community from this day forth shall become "One Zarathushti Community, Indivisible". ■



A Tribute

By Persis Commissariat
Shelton, Connecticut

The screen shows images,
Images too painful to see.
Why did it happen?

No one knows.
The crash, flashing lights, the sobs,
They all come back.
What happened to those people?

One by one,
as each plane was taken over,
Everyone was unaware of the future,
Each moment of their existence
slowly fading away.
Everyone's life lies in the balance.
The planes crash.

Two planes hit the side
of two buildings,
Like blind birds in flight,
And the two tall and
graceful buildings,
With hardworking people inside,
Exist no more.
People run, jump and scream as they
rush blindly in terror.
Some escape, some don't,
But the two buildings stand strong,
Not anymore.

There are still people looking,
Searching for a sign, memories,
Searching for a loved one to return
from under the ruins,
Searching for something that takes
away from the unsubiding pain,
Searching for happiness,
But none can be found.

The screen shows images,
Images too painful to see,
Why they did it, no one knows.
What we will do, no one knows,
But they will find out the hard way.

That Black September Day

By Maneck N. Bhujwala
San Jose, California

One clear morning people went to
work, like on any other day
They knew not that a tragedy would
strike so many that day

Two buildings tall and stately,
that stood proudly for the USA
With people like you and me,
who just started their working day
Then suddenly from the sky came
two planes to take them away

Some said their last goodbyes,
not sure of in their fate what lay
Even firemen who rushed in so
bravely, for many lives to save
They also did not know their fate,
and with others they died that day

And there were those innocent pas-
sengers in three planes that very day
With different plans and hopes and
dreams, they took them on their way

And on the planes there were some
men, with hearts all filled with hate
Who caused such grief and suf-
fering and took our dear ones away
With sadness in our hearts, we
grieve with the victims' families
today

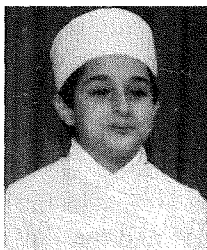
With numbness in our minds, we
ask: "What brought on this tragic
day?"

O God, bless the souls of those who
died on that black September day

O God, illuminate our minds and
hearts, so we throw the hate away.

Lessons learnt from September 11th

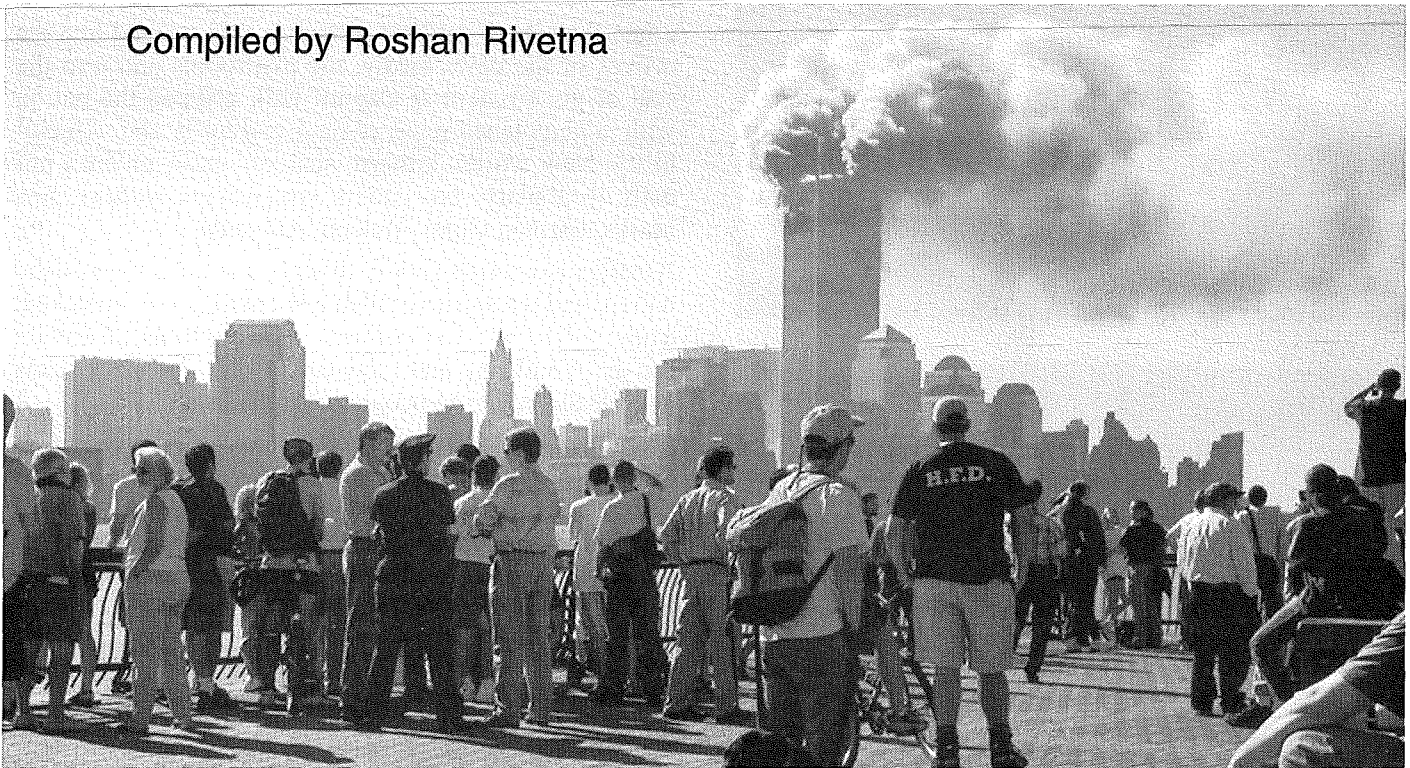
Ervad Mehernosh Minoo Bhada is in Class VIII of BVS Parsi High School in Karachi, Pakistan. He writes:



What happened on September 11th is no different from any of those thriller serials on TV, but the **only and most important difference** is that all the dreadful, horrible, sad and heartbreaking events that we saw on TV were real – the acts of a handful of desperate people who chose to take revenge on innocent people, for whatever cause or reason they may have to offer; it definitely needs to [Contd. on page 30]

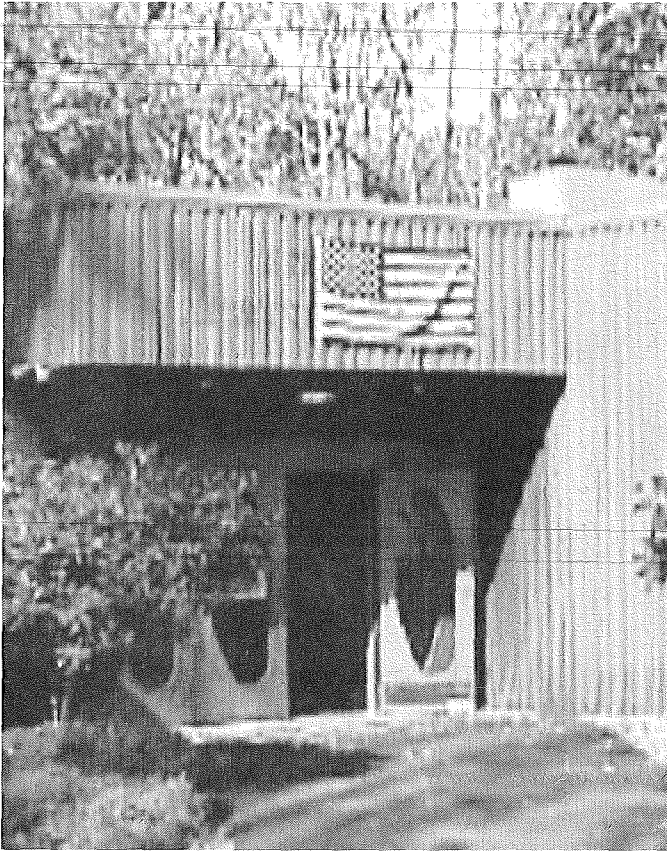
god bless america

Compiled by Roshan Rivetna



Lower Manhattan skyline shortly after American Airlines Flight 11 hijacked by terrorists struck the North Tower of the World Trade Center at 8:46 am on September 11. Photo taken by Natasha Treasurywalla, from the Stevens Institute of Technology, in New Jersey, on the Hudson River across from Manhattan.

In the weeks after September 11th, a day that rudely seared the very heart and soul (and pocketbook) of America, and the heinous acts of anthrax-terrorism that followed later, the way of life of all Zarathushtis, along with all Americans, changed. We wept and we mourned, we felt anger, we sought justice. But Americans are a tough people, and out of the rubble, rose the indomitable spirit of America to defend all that we cherish, our liberties, our freedoms, our nation. There arose a renewed patriotism, and a tremendous outpouring of solidarity. People of all colors and creeds became “Americans first” and the stars and stripes yet waves proudly. God Bless America!



And the banner yet waves

On September 11th we watched it all – in vivid color, larger than life, on TV screens around the world. We watched in shock as the twin towers, the very symbol of American enterprise, literally crumbled and fell and the Pentagon building exploded in fire and smoke. We saw planes crashing and people perishing, in scenes more horrific than any movie.

The suicide attacks of 19 terrorists sent a shock wave across the nation. The lives of thousands of innocent people, just going about their daily business, were snuffed out in a flash. 15,000 children lost a parent. The stock market plunged. Masses of newly laid-off workers put an already faltering economy to the test. The very way of life that Americans so cherish, their freedoms and liberties, their security and peace, were challenged.

Later, the acts of Anthrax-terrorism that reached into the offices of the news media, the mailrooms and into the seat of government at Capitol Hill, gripped the nation with a heightened sense of their insecurity and vulnerability. New words, hitherto scarcely used, entered our daily vocabulary: box cutters, crop dusters, anthrax, gas-masks, hazmat, Cipro, Taliban, Al-qaeda ...

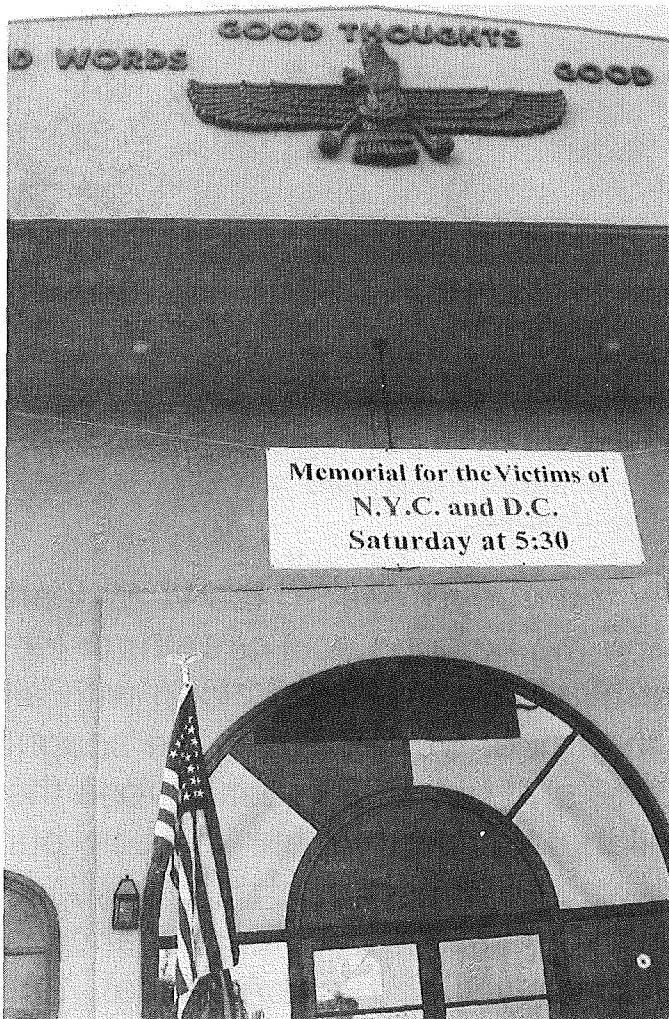
America is a tough nation, though, and a compassionate nation, and the spirit of its people could not be quenched. They rallied to raise millions upon millions of dollars for the rebuilding and recovery effort, for the victims and for the suffering people of Afghanistan.

From the anger and anguish, there arose a renewed patriotism like we had never witnessed before. For a generation that grew up with sports and entertainment heroes, the rescue workers, policemen, firemen, Red Cross, the military, the flag and the Statue of Liberty quickly became the new icons.

The nation was plunged into a new war to root out, in the words of President Bush, “the evil-doers” and “fight evil with good” (a most remarkable present-day reiteration of the very words of our Prophet 3500 years ago). Citizens of all colors and creeds and persuasions, rallied to defend their safety and security, their way of life, their ideals. Parsis and Iranians, Zarathushtis, Zoroastrians, Zartoshties and Jarthostis, along with citizens of all creeds and colors, became “Americans First”.

“God Bless America” became the battle hymn; the national anthem and the pledge of allegiance have taken on a new meaning, and the Stars and Stripes yet waves proudly all around us – from our homes, businesses, storefronts, cars, churches, temples, mosques, and yes, our darbe mehrs.

Top, American flag displayed at the Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr at its newly acquired building in Pomona, New York [photo courtesy Noshir Baria]; and, below, at the Rustam Guiv Dar-e-Mehr in Westminster, California, with banner announcing a memorial service [photo courtesy Ardeshir and Shida Anoshiravani].



Of horror and heroes

While a number of Zarathushtis work and live near the World Trade Center (WTC) and the Pentagon, there have been no confirmed reports of any Zarathushtis injured or missing in the terrorist acts of September 11th. Many rumors have circulated about missing persons – about two Kavarana brothers reportedly attending a business breakfast at the WTC; about 6 Zarathushtis missing according to a Persian TV station; about a Kashmira Patel listed missing in a Mumbai newspaper; about a “Tushar” lying unconscious in a hospital; and a Mr. Umrigar believed to be on the flight that struck the first tower. None of these, thank God, can be confirmed, and are hopefully not based in fact.

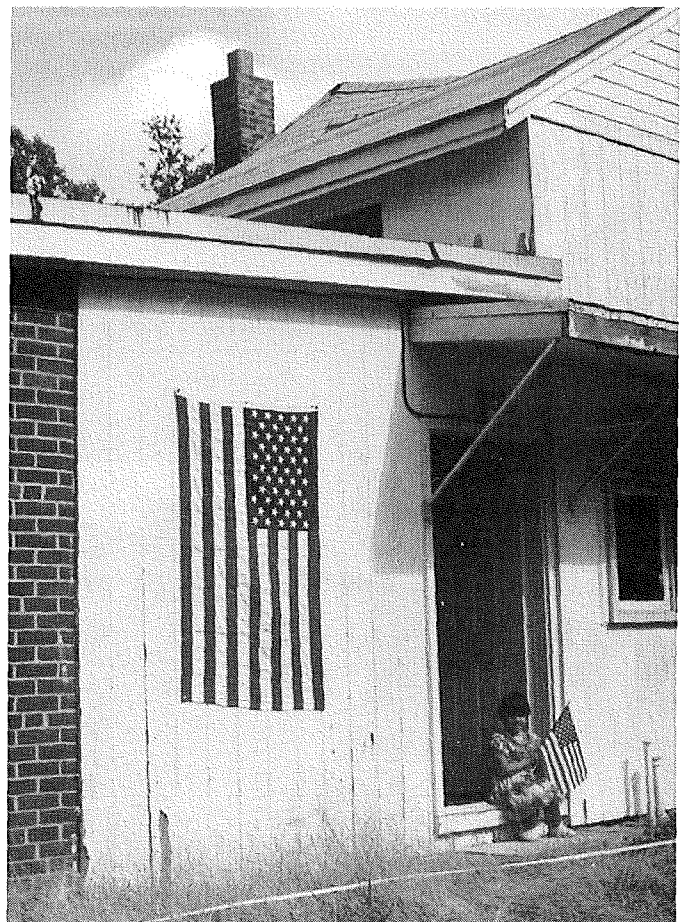
Several Zarathushtis, however, work at the WTC but were miraculously saved, and several others were in the vicinity and witnessed the horrors in Manhattan and DC.

Cyrus Davierwala is CEO and Rushad Cassad, vice president of Avesta Computing Services, Ltd. which had a 1400 sq. ft. head office on the 21st floor of One World Trade Center, facing the Hudson River [see Business Profile on page 81].

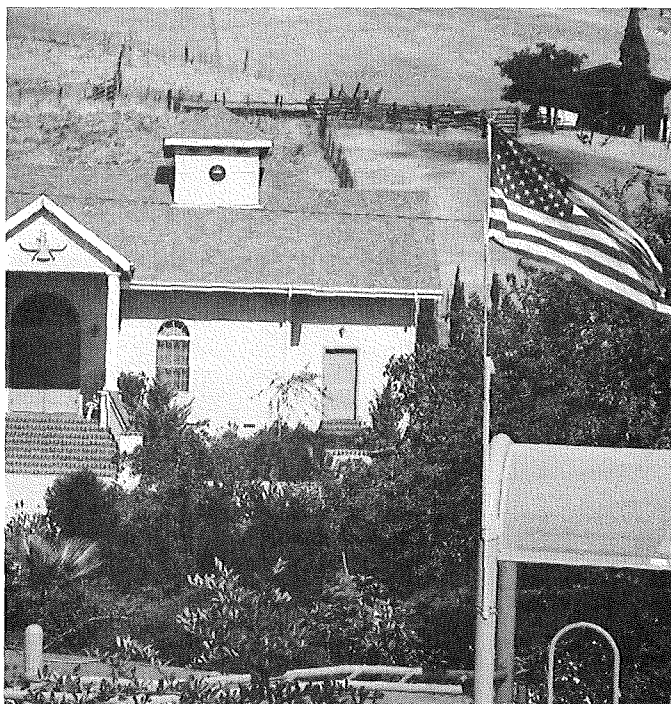
On September 11th, Cyrus was at their branch office in India. Rushad writes: “I was at work by 8:15 am at our New Jersey office, located across the Hudson River on the Jersey waterfront, directly opposite the WTC. I looked outside and saw WTC One on fire. I immediately made some phone calls – to my home, to Cyrus in India (by then BBC and CNN were broadcasting the news live in India), and to our WTC team to stay away if anyone was headed for WTC. Shortly afterwards, I saw WTC Two on fire. I walked downstairs and learnt that the towers were hit by planes.”

Avesta Computing has 115 employees, seven of whom work at the WTC office. The office opens at 9:00 and employees normally start coming in to work around 8:45.

“I came back up to be with the staff, picked up calls, and continued our efforts to account for all our WTC staff and others who could potentially be at WTC,” writes Rushad, “I heard a rumble, came to the window to find the South Tower was going down. About 30 minutes later, there was another rumble, and we saw WTC One crumbling. We got the staff together to calm our nerves, and reassure ourselves that we were all together, made a plan for taking the data backup and printout of contact information, recorded a voice mail saying our staff was



Top, Ervads Poras Balsara and Ratan Vakil leading the prayer vigil organized by ZANT (Dallas, Texas) at the Dallas Hindu Society facility [photo courtesy Bakhtavar Roshanravan]. Below, Arshya Bakhtiani at house on future site of the ZAMWI dar-e-mehr in Vienna, Virginia [photo courtesy Jimmy Dholoo and Ardeshir Bakhtiani].



safe, said a quick prayer wishing all well, and moved out of the office together to the nearby residence of a colleague, to eventually find our ways home as things kind of settled down later in the evening.” None of Avesta Computing’s employees are missing or injured.

Farrokh Shroff of Forest Hills, in Queens, New York, an accountant at RSI, a subsidiary of Marsh and McLennan, whose offices are on the 94th floor of One World Trade Center (the North Tower), recounts his day.

On September 11th, I took the subway to work as usual, and got off at the end of the line, at the WTC. I used my electronic pass at the security turnstile to enter the North Tower building. I pressed the elevator button. It was about 8:50.

As I stood waiting for the elevator to come, all hell suddenly broke loose. People were rushing out, screaming. Unaware of what had happened [At 8:46 am, AA Flight 11 had struck the North Tower near the 90th floor]. I had no choice but was swept along with the crowd. I ran outside onto the street, and saw the upper floors on fire. Thousands of people were standing around. I saw the gruesome sight of people jumping from the upper floors and I thought of my co-workers, up on the 94th floor. Our company has flex hours – I start work at 9:00 but others come in earlier.

I was about 1 1/2 blocks away when the second plane came in, very low, and hit the second tower. It was a horrendous experience. I walked north for about 1 1/2 hours to Grand Central Station in mid-town Manhattan. It was not until around 3:00 that my cell phone started working, and I met up with my wife. Around 5:00 the bridges opened, and we were able to drive home.

The most difficult part now, is going to memorial masses of colleagues and friends. Of 24 RSI employees, all 8 who were at work that morning on the 94th floor, perished. In all, the parent company Marsh and McLennan lost 300 people. An experience such as this makes one think about the fleeting nature of our lives. Had I pressed that elevator button just one minute earlier, I might not have been here today.

Paymon Farhadieh, son of Rouintan and Tira Farhadieh of Oakbrook, Illinois, is a financial analyst with J. P. Morgan. He was in New York for a 3-month assignment to work on a merger with Chase Manhattan Bank.

On September 11th, Paymon was headed for a meeting on the 84th floor of the WTC, but was a few minutes late

The Stars and Stripes proudly waves at the Zarathushti Heritage and Cultural Center [top] in Houston [photo courtesy Purvez Rustomji] and at the Rustam Guiv Dar-e-Mehr in San Jose, California [photo courtesy Bomi Patel]. Below is one of many store signs sporting “God Bless America”.

getting to work. Paymon was near the towers when the first plane hit, and watched the horrendous events from a block away. His apartment, a few blocks away is also uninhabitable and he lost all his belongings. "He is always late" says his mother, Tira. But this time, those few minutes possibly saved his life.

Xerxes Sarkary is a VP in Risk and Portfolio Management at Commercibank. His office is on the 31st floor of 2 World Financial Center, directly across the street from the North Tower. He recounts the events of that day.

I was at work by 8:15. I saw the fire in the North tower, and stood with other onlookers at the window, not knowing what had happened. As the fire spread, we saw the people jumping from the upper floors. As word spread that a plane had hit the WTC, the announcements blared: "Stay calm, stay away from the windows." As I walked back to my office, I saw the second plane approaching, from the southwest, very low. Then suddenly people were screaming and we saw the flames in the second tower.

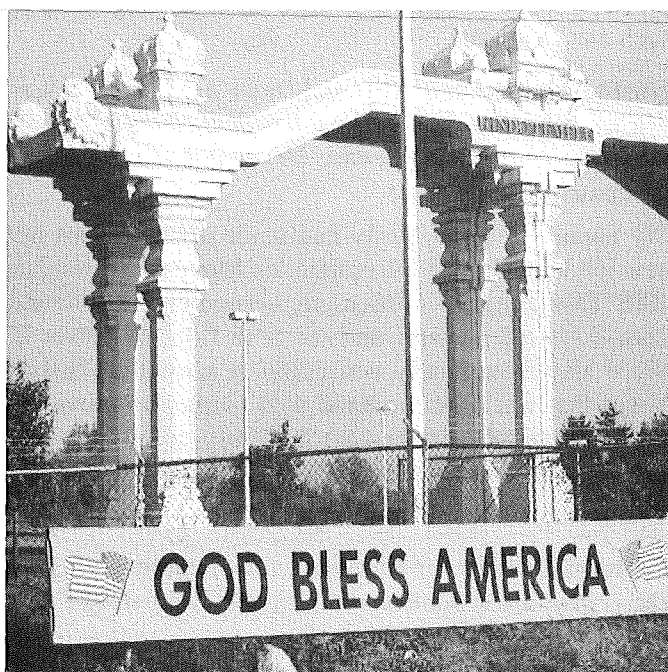
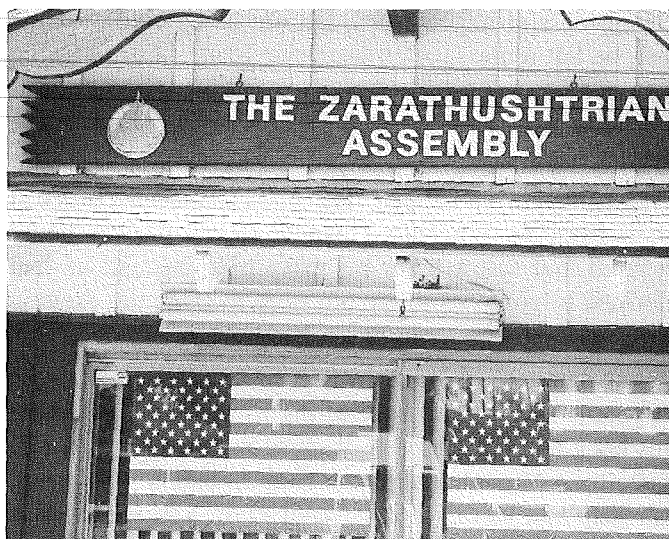
At this point, I collected the people in my office and walked down the stairs. It took about 20 minutes. I was in the Village about a 1/2 mile away when I saw the second tower fall. I walked to Grand Central Station at about 9:30, but it was evacuated. Later that afternoon I took the train home. The next day, we resumed operations from our Disaster Recovery Site in Rye and restructured people into our other midtown office.

Mahyar Hodiwala, 19, is a private in the Army Reserve Unit in Jersey City. Son of Meher and Dinyar Hodiwala of N. Brunswick, NJ, Mahyar is a sophomore at Seton Hall University in South Orange, and is also active in ROTC. Mahyar was called in to help with rescue efforts at Ground Zero.

Within an hour of the attacks, Private Hodiwala was called by his commander to active duty at Ground Zero. He was at the site 12-14 hours a day for the next 3 days, going back to his campus at Seton Hall for a few hours of sleep in between. His unit was helping the injured and shaken, searching for victims, and bagging bodies and body parts. The devastation and the horror of that day will live with him forever.

A colleague of Khorshed Jungalwala, at Concord Insurance Group in Boston, was attending a 4-day meeting of Insurance Executives on the 74th floor of Tower One.

At 8:27 am on September 11th, the young executive called Khorshed at her office in Boston to inform her of



Top, American flags adorn the Zarathushtrian Assembly building in Anaheim, California, the original home of the California Zoroastrian Center, donated by Arbab Rustam Guiv [photo courtesy Zarathushtrian Assembly]; center, the Hindu Temple in Lemont, Illinois; below, flags adorn a sign at a restaurant.

the successful negotiations, but not being able to reach her, he left a message on her voice mail. After hearing news of the attacks, Khorshed, her fellow employees and his young wife kept in touch with each other all morning, fearing the worst, but hoping for a miracle.

And a miracle did happen. He called Khorshed's office at 4:30 from St. Vincent's Hospital to say he was badly injured, but safe. After his early morning call he had decided to go down to the 6th floor to share the exciting news with a friend – a decision that probably saved his life.

When disaster struck, in the rush to leave the building he tripped and fell down several flights of stairs, and broke his back and hip. As he lay semiconscious, he was rescued by a Muslim gentleman from Lebanon who called for help and had him transferred to St. Vincents. He is now recovering in a Boston hospital and keeping in touch with the stranger who extended his hand to help at such a critical time.

Gustad Mody, son of Keki and Diane Mody of New Jersey, was about to start a new job with Garban Intercapital, at the World Trade Center. His aunt, Bachi Bilimoria of Lombard, IL, writes:

My nephew Gustad Mody had made plans to start his new job with Garban Intercapital on Monday, September 10th. This company's offices are located on the 25th and 26th floors of Tower 1 and the 50th floor of Tower 2. Since his whole family was going to a wedding in Las Vegas that week, he arranged with Garban to move his starting date to the following Monday – a decision that saved him from becoming a victim of this awful tragedy. Thank Ahura Mazda for small miracles!

F. Homi Cooper, of Chicago, a consultant with May Davis investment bank on the 87th floor of One WTC was on his way to WTC for a meeting.

Cooper was to take an American Airlines flight at 9:00 am on September 11th from Chicago to New York for a meeting at the May Davis offices on the 87th floor of One WTC. Half-way to the airport, he realized he had forgotten his airline ticket and went back home to get it. Of course he missed his flight, and never made it to New York.

Persis Khambatta is an assistant in the office of the President, National Endowment for Democracy, in downtown Washington, DC, two blocks behind the White House, across the river from the Pentagon. She writes:

I was at work watching the news about the attacks in New York, when we heard a loud roar and the building shook, as if there was a small earthquake. Minutes later we heard that AA Flight 77 had crashed into the Pentagon.

Being close to the White House, we knew we were in danger – of car bombs and the like. The local news was reporting bombs at the State Department and the Capitol and the National Mall, all in close proximity to our build-

ing. With so many visible targets around the city, one didn't know where to go or what to expect.

A friend and I proceeded to try and get across the Potomac into Virginia, where we both live. Many of the roads were closed, phone lines were down, traffic was at a standstill, as if in a Godzilla movie. Sirens everywhere; and bomb-sniffing dogs. The Metro happened to be open and we finally made it home.

In the next few days, airplanes were grounded; all we saw were F-16s flying overhead. Military police and National Guard were at every corner, and the Pentagon, visible from the highways, serves as a constant reminder of that fateful day.

Ferzin Patel, daughter of Khorshed and Firoze Jungalwala, a psychologist at a Manhattan psychiatric hospital a few blocks from the WTC, was witness to the tragedy.

Ferzin saw the first tower being hit from the train station nearby. A few minutes later, as she came close to her hospital, trying to negotiate through fleeing crowds, she

The Stars and Stripes fluttering atop cars, trucks, buses and bikes has become a familiar sight in American cities.



saw the second tower being hit. She could not call out as phone lines were down and could not go home to Pomona, NY, because the subways and George Washington Bridge leading out of Manhattan were closed. She finally got through to her family around 10 pm and had to stay overnight at the home of a colleague.

Usheen Davar is an Advertising Sales Representative at The Wall Street Journal (Dow Jones & Co. Inc.) with offices in midtown Manhattan. She writes:

September 11th was a horrific day. I was checking my email as an urgent message from my cousin in Australia popped up in my inbox alerting me about a plane that hit the World Trade Center. I recall running into the conference room and watching in shock at not only the TV screen, but outside my window. Although my office is in midtown, the conference room window has what used to be a beautiful view of the twin towers in the background. I remember holding on tight to my colleague who was weeping uncontrollably as the tower in which her husband worked fell before our eyes (he did manage to escape and came to our office later that day). My whole

office stood in our conference room watching the TV and looking out of the window in confusion and shock.

We rushed to our phones to call our friends and family, but the phone lines went dead. There was an announcement that the Times Square area was being evacuated because this may be the next target to be hit in Manhattan. Panic struck. I remember grabbing my purse and rushing downstairs with 5 of my colleagues. We practically ran uptown to try to get away from this mess. Thousands of pedestrians were doing the same. My feet were bleeding from the blisters as I headed 40 blocks uptown and through Central Park in my 2-inch heels to my apartment. There, I and my colleagues from work who could not make it home, sat glued to the TV.

The days following this incident were awful. Shock, anger, confusion, nervousness and helplessness. Headaches from the smoke in the air, tears from the stories I heard and read, constant visions of the incident occurring – it hit a little too close to home. My body felt exhausted.



Walking down the streets of a city that was once so vibrant is just not the same. A somber and scared look on each face still exists. The city seems quiet and the stores and restaurants empty. Walls of posters with photos and bios of loved ones plaster the city. Candles and flowers everywhere. The newspapers and TV still flooding stories of the tragic events. Living and working here you can't seem to remove yourself from it.

I am confident that we will move on. People will resume their daily activities and try to continue with their lives. And I, well, I'll never forget what I saw that day and the aftermath, but I too will try to move on.

Nerina Rustomji, is a Ph. D. candidate in Middle Eastern History at Columbia University. She writes:

On the corner of 112th and Amsterdam Avenue stands St. John's the Divine Cathedral whose bells pealed all Tuesday. The plaintive calls compelled Columbia University students and community members to the Gothic wonder's inner chambers. Soft gray darkness comforted and provided refuge from the perfectly cruel blue skies of

September 11. They gathered within the walls for strength and then emerged for duty: standing in line at St. John's hospital across the street to donate blood. They stared at the F-16s that circled overhead.

The next day provided no respite. As an instructor, I found myself at a meeting with administration and psychologists who urged us to continue teaching to provide structure for our students. I entered the classroom and found students who sought safety in the pages of Plato's Republic. They wanted class. And so I began a class where my heart and mind had vaporized with those we now call the missing. Plato links cities with souls, and as we concluded our discussion, one woman turned and said, "So our souls are in hell." Our city had been wounded, and now so were our souls. We looked at each other seeking the comfort that no one could offer.

Tamina Davar is a press officer at a health-related foundation on Manhattan's 57th Street (way above the WTC area, but a look down 5th Avenue offers a clear view downtown). She lives in Brooklyn. She writes:

"Get home safe." Everyone says it now. But it's not so simple. That morning, at least my family was safe. Cancelled Zarathushti youth dinner friends were safe.

My midtown office was safe. After its noon closing, I joined a dazed crowd watching outdoor big-screen CBS, fighter planes circling overhead. A nice white man who'd fled near-death downtown proclaimed "terrorists could be right here." He looked at me, then to a tearful young Bangladeshi guy whose officemates were now dead. I felt not-so-safe.

Walking 50 blocks uptown to a friend's, hundreds of overheard stories turned into one – who was dead, who needed a place to stay, who'd shaved off their goatee. Vendors set up impromptu boxes of peel-n-seal American flags. The customers – all shades of brown. Bracing for backlash.

Then calls from friends, on barely-working phones. "Are you okay?" Pause. "Has anything ... happened to you?" Pause. "Did you hear what happened to ...?" Their tears. "Call me when you get home! Please, please be safe!"

Within six hours, I knew at least my close friends were safe. But they all knew someone who'd been racially harassed, threatened, or attacked. Within 24 hours, almost all had been harassed themselves: light-skinned, dark-skinned; Latino, South Asian; Zarathushti, Hindu, Moslem, Christian. But I was still safe. For now. No guarantees. Hugging friends goodbye these days, I silently pray for "get home safe" to please work its magic until tomorrow.

Natasha Treasurywala is a junior at Stevens Institute of Technology and New York University. She lives in Hoboken, NJ on the Hudson River across from Manhattan. On September 11th she served as a vital link detailing road closures and subway updates to family and friends stranded in Manhattan. Later that afternoon, she joined in rescue efforts for survivors at Ground Zero.

Watching the World Trade Center crumble to the ground will remain one of the most horrific moments of my lifetime. For the past two years, I have looked out of my window each morning to see the sun play peek-a-boo from behind the structures and set each evening behind two pillars of twinkling lights of gold. Now, I can see them keel over and die every time I shut my eyes.

As I reminisce back to life before the tragedy, I realize that there are so many things that will never be the same again. Never again will I get into a PATH train labeled WTC, and sprint up the escalators to catch the 1 subway. Never again will I eat a yummy Cosi sandwich under a palm tree in the Winter Gardens. My dad and I will never be able to enjoy the boat races at the Yacht Club on Saturday mornings. I will never sit with latte in hand at the Borders store on the main concourse. Never again will I be able to tell folks who are visiting me to forget their maps and directions, and say "Look up and head toward the twin towers". So many memories, built over so many visits, will remain forever.

Now for the silver lining. At 9 am on September 11, 2001, the city of New York was transformed in another unexpected way. From its long-standing reputation of being a cold, dangerous and apathetic city, Manhattan morphed into the kind of place that would far surpass the warmth and comfort boasted by any small town. People were separated from their shoes, glasses, wallets, and keys as the massive exodus took place. But they held hands and ran through the cloud of smoke and the snow of ash, each relying on the person in front to lead them to safety. New Jersey commuters at the George Washington Bridge were ferrying complete strangers, packed like sardines in their cars to get them across the Hudson River. Doctors and nurses rushed to hospitals hoping to help the injured. Within hours, volunteers had set up a makeshift hospital at Liberty State Park. Paramedics and Emergency workers from the Bronx were making their way down to Hoboken to treat the walking injured. Stu-

dents at local colleges were helping with the Ferry operations from Battery Park City. Traffic in Manhattan was grid-locked, yet tempers did not flare. There was a quiet resignation to the fact that although being in one's car, not having moved an inch for three hours was not the optimal way to spend a Tuesday afternoon, there were many people living out a much worse alternative.

We awoke that Tuesday morning to a perfect New York day, and went to bed in fear, disbelief and grief. We knew that our world had changed. We came as close to war as I hope we will ever be privy to. The brutal terror will be on my mind for a long time to come. The amazing spirit and humanity of my fellow New Yorkers will remain in my heart for a lifetime.

Sherri Treasurywala is a consultant with McKinsey and Company and lives on the Hudson River across from where the WTC buildings used to stand. She writes:

Despite the tremendous tragedy, it is truly heartwarming to see the kindness and resilience of New Yorkers, as we all pitch in to clear rubble, move bodies and treat the injured ... It is going to be surreal to look out of my window each morning into what is now empty space filled with smoke – my view of the world in more ways than one, has changed forever. ■

From Iran

Ali Makki, formerly of USA, and his wife, **Mahsa**, now live in Tehran, Iran. He writes:

The horrifying September 11th terrorist attacks have taken an immeasurable toll on the world psyche, and I feel that the world has entered into an "apocalyptic state of mind". The world will surely never be the same again. God only knows why these terrifying incidents really occurred and who or what groups have planned and executed the attacks – Bin Laden seems to be a red herring! It appears that several groups were involved in a concerted effort.

Closer to home, a distant relative (neither blood-related, nor Zarathushti, but a very kind human being) Mrs. Touran Bolourchi, one of my uncle Khosrow's in-laws was a passenger on one of the planes that crashed into the World Trade Center.

I still can't believe how many lives had to be lost over something incomprehensible. There is absolutely no cause big enough in the entire universe that can justify such unspeakable acts. Incidentally, it is worth noting that as in many other nations around the world, Iranians also expressed their sympathy through candlelight vigils in honor of the victims of the terrorist attacks.

And from Pakistan

Toxy Cowasjee, president of the Karachi Zarhosti Banu Mandal in Karachi informs us:

Besides being worried about what will happen in this part of the world, we are all OK so far. The Zarathushtis in Pakistan have not been penalized or hampered in any way; we have always been treated with the utmost respect in this country.

There are no Zarathushtis that I know of in Afghanistan. In May 2001, we were 2,414 Zarathushtis in Pakistan, including:

Islamabad: 7 individuals (2 families)
Multan: 7 individuals (3 families)
Peshawar: 3 individuals (1 family)
Quetta: 32 individuals (16 families)
Rawalpindi: 29 individuals (9 families)
Sargoda: 5 individuals (1 armed forces family)
Gujranwala: 4 individuals (1 armed forces family)

As of today (October 2001), we are 2,220 in Karachi. There may be a few less now since many people are in the process of leaving.

Cyrus R Cowasjee of Karachi, a businessman connected with shipping in Pakistan for the last 54 years, writes:

As I write this the coalition forces have started their bombardment of Afghanistan.

Zarathushtis in Pakistan, like all other reasonable and thinking people throughout the world, are naturally worried over these happenings. Particularly as we are literally in the vortex of the new coalition's response and the very severe reaction to the same in this country.

Although the violent protesters' percentage of the total population is small, as in all such cases, it is the violent minority that cause the main problems for the silent majority. The victims of New York and Washington cannot be avenged by bringing misery, displacement and starvation to the millions in and around Afghanistan just for the misdeeds of a few. Thought should be given seriously why these few act in this way. Man is never born evil. What drives him to such action needs to be looked into.

As our President rightly said to the world press, chopping off leaves and branches of the terrorist tree does not stop the tree from growing again. One must get to the root. In this case it has been the treatment of the poor and miserable citizens of the world by both their own leaders and leaders of the 'civilized' world.

Thankfully, to our knowledge none of the Zarathushtis originally from Karachi were directly hurt or killed in the New York or Washington episode.

Aban Rustomji of Houston, Texas, speaks of her family in Quetta:

My father, T. N. Hodiwala and Purvez's mother, Gool Rustomji have been longtime residents of Quetta. The influx of Afghan refugees means more hard times economically for them, fear of lax security, disruption of normal lives when protests and demonstrations are held. But our relatives are very stoic about it. They have no recourse

and just watch another chapter of history unfurl in front of their eyes. Purvez's grand uncle fought in the first Afghan War and I bet all the old stories are being retold.

All the Parsis in Quetta are quite old and their concerns are how we are coping here in the US and the inevitable question in their mind is, "When will we see you again?"

Reflections on September 11

Life, Death and Honor

Just one day before the fateful September 11, I took a young friend from India to see the Arlington National Cemetery. It was raining and the place had a surreal beauty. We saw hundreds upon hundreds of grave markers for men and women, all perfectly lined in all directions. We walked by the grave of John F. Kennedy, where an eternal flame is burning. Then we walked to the simple marker where Robert F. Kennedy is buried, overlooked by the imposing Lee Mansion. Then on to the Grave of the Unknown Soldier and watched the changing of the guard, performed flawlessly in the rain.

My friend was overwhelmed. She could not believe how much care, effort and expense was being incurred just to keep the memory of the dead alive. How many ceremonies, how many prayers, and how many eulogies must have been given at these sites? And how many more ceremonies, salutes and honors must have been given before bringing each body there for burial!

America has no imposing monuments like the Taj Mahal. No graves or mausoleums of saints and emperors. In Washington, there are monuments to George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, FD Roosevelt; and memorials for men and women who have died in wars and in the holocaust. Similar memorials and museums are found in many cities. The enduring theme is to honor the dead; and by honoring the dead, America celebrates their lives, no matter how humbly lived, no matter how they died, no matter where they died.

The next morning, September 11, we were discussing this while driving to Washington, D.C. to catch a bus to New York. Suddenly, the traffic seemed to come to a standstill. We turned on the car radio and could not believe what we were hearing. Then, right in front of us, we saw thick black smoke coming from where we had been yesterday. Actually, it was coming from the Pentagon, just behind the Arlington cemetery! We drove by the White House. There was no panic. People started pouring out of government buildings. We reached the bus station. Buses to New York had been cancelled. Trains had been cancelled. The cell phones did not work. It took us two hours to get back home, a distance of 12 miles.

And safely at home, we saw on television the same themes we had been discussing! Every one who had died needlessly was being honored: a husband calling home

from the burning building to tell his family he loved them, a young wife calling from the doomed airplane to tell her husband that they have been hijacked. 300 firemen lost in the collapse of the WTC while trying to rescue those who were trapped earlier. Over the next days, we heard eulogies to their lives, saw dignified funerals, silent grief. Obscure lives attained sudden significance – some simple words they may have uttered, a photograph in someone's home, a memory to be remembered. From their untimely death, will come memories of lives well lived.

By honoring and courting death, the terrorist denies any meaning or value to life! By honoring the dead, America honors their lives.

*Rustom Kevala,
Potomac, Maryland*

The Soul of Creation Cried ...

"The Soul of Creation cried ..." [Ys. 29.1]" this September 11. We stand witness to a vast historical juncture, an entire chasm, in the world's fate. The world suffers a wound taking generations before it is staunched.

We will defy. We will venerate the righteous. We will live our lives to protect freedom and effect justice. We will correct the mistaken and teach them *Vohu Manah*. We will endure until *Frashokereti*, in all arduousness and in valor.

We are not helpless. With every good thought, good word and good deed, we move the world forward. The smallest little phrase you offer to the next soul over may linger today in that fellow human's mind. It may take root and blossom beyond all your knowing. Not death itself can vanquish what is right, for our repute (whether a person's repute, the Good Religion's, America's, Truth itself and Freedom, the fine ideas and ideals of mankind ...) endures and will endure.

Do not despair, devastation must be the mother to hope. With such hope, we defy the violation and give strength to bright tomorrows which are yet bold.

For those sorrowful tomorrows, when the weapons of mass destruction savage life and again rend apart the world's soul, despair not on that day either. Take what is left and again give what is beautiful. Give good thought, word and deed, and make the world better. Indomitably, gently.

Another Spithrodates will live in *Frashokereti* and we do not forget the Youth that perished in infantry, mankind's great folly, 2600 years past.

Rhadamanthine and American,

*Natalie Vania,
Mountain View, California* ■

[Natalie Vania is a philosopher with recent association in Silicon Valley's venture and entrepreneurial communities]

If Dr. Seuss could say something about all this. . . .

Every U down in U-ville liked U.S. a lot,
But the Binch, who lived Far East of U-ville, did not.
The Binch hated U.S! the whole U.S. way!
Now don't ask me why, for nobody can say,
It could be his turban was screwed on too tight.
Or the sun from the desert had beaten too bright
But I think that the most likely reason of all
May have been that his heart was two sizes too small.

But, whatever the reason, his heart or his turban,
He stood facing U-ville, the part that was urban.
"They're doing their business," he snarled from his perch.
"They're raising their families! They're going to church!
They're leading the world, and their empire is thriving,
I *must* keep the S's and U's from surviving!"

Tomorrow, he knew, all the U's and the S's,
Would put on their pants and their shirts and their dresses,
They'd go to their offices, playgrounds and schools,
And abide by their U and S values and rules,

And then they'd do something he liked least of all,
Every U down in U-ville, the tall and the small,
Would stand all united, each U and each S,
And they'd sing U-ville's anthem, "God bless us! God bless!"
All around their Twin Towers of U-ville, they'd stand,
and their voices would drown every sound in the land.

"I must stop that singing," Binch said with a smirk,
And he had an idea – an idea that might work!
The Binch stole some U airplanes in U morning hours,
And crashed them right into the U-ville Twin Towers.
"They'll wake to disaster!" he snickered, so sour,
"And how can they sing when they can't find a tower?"

The Binch cocked his ear as they woke from their sleeping,
All set to enjoy their U-wailing and weeping,
Instead he heard something that started quite low,
And it built up quite slow, but it started to grow...
And the Binch heard the most unpredictable thing...
And he couldn't believe it – they started to sing!

He stared down at U-ville, not trusting his eyes,
What he saw was a shocking, disgusting surprise!
Every U down in U-ville, the tall and the small,
Was singing! Without any towers at all!

He *hadn't* stopped U-Ville from singing! It sung!
For down deep in the hearts of the old and the young,
Those Twin Towers were standing, called Hope and Pride,
And you can't smash the towers we hold deep inside.

So we circle the sites where our heroes did fall,
With a hand in each hand of the tall and the small,
And we mourn for our losses while knowing we'll cope,
For we still have inside that U-Pride and U-Hope.

For America means a bit more than tall towers,
It means more than wealth or political powers,
It's more than our enemies ever could guess,
So may God bless America! Bless us! God bless! - Anon.

On Grieving and Giving

The one heinous act of terrorism of September 11th was balanced by a million big and small acts of goodness and compassion, often unnoticed, as the efforts of the vast majority of good Americans. Zarathushtis, as did all Americans, found solace in prayer, vigils, and interfaith services; gave blood, raised funds and gave their share towards the recovery effort, each in their own way.

FEZANA president Framroze Patel sent a letter to President Bush, condemning the "terrible assault on humanity". "The healing has begun," he wrote, "Let us continue the process and gain strength from the infinite bonds we establish during our time of grief and regeneration." A letter was also sent, endorsed by several Zarathushti federations around the world and WZO, offering support to bring about a "rebirth of life with Vohu Manah (the Good Mind)". WZO sent a letter to President Bush. The North American Mobed's Council wrote a letter to the president, offering "prayers and unstinting support"; and urged member mobeds, and the local Californian ZAC and TMZA associations to join in prayers of 5 yathas and 3 ashems on Friday September 14th, the national prayer day, designated by President Bush.

Members from all the Zarathushti Associations in North America were well represented at a large number of interfaith prayers, meetings and vigils at churches, mosques, synagogues and temples and public venues across the USA and Canada.

Our good neighbors, the Canadians, also stood by with solidarity in America's hour of grief. ZAA (**Alberta**) held a prayer meeting along with their AGM in Calgary. ZSBC (**BC**) held a memorial service and jashan during their Mehregan/Unity Day observance. ZSO (**Ontario**) remembered the victims at all their meetings during September and October. ZAQ (**Quebec**) offered prayers for the victims at their gahambar jashan and made a donation to the Red Cross.

ZAGNY (**New York**) organized a prayer meeting on September 15th and a gahambar jashan for peace on October 7th, at which they raised \$4000. With subsequent contributions, they are donating about \$7000 to various relief organizations. Members volunteered at the the attack site, at the missing persons family center, gave blood and helped at a blood bank. ZAGBA (**Boston**) offered prayers at their gahambar jashan and donated to the Red Cross. ZAPA (**Pittsburgh**) held a prayer vigil, and raised funds for the freedom scholarship and families of victims. They participated in a peace rally in Market Square, Pittsburgh. Their youth will visit local fire stations during Thanksgiving, with gifts to personally thank their firefighters.

ZAC (**Chicago**) switched their Mehregan-Unity Day function from a catered celebration to a pot-luck gathering thereby raising \$1500 for the Red Cross. Hosi Mehta



kept his automotive repair shop (**Mehta Motors**, in Elmhurst, IL) open for business for 4 Saturdays; he, along with sons Shawn and Sheroy, donated their labor charges, amounting to \$1500 to the Salvation Army. In **Michigan**, Jamshed Udvadia represented Zarathushtis at an Interfaith meeting.

ZAMWI (**Washington, DC**) had planned a gala Mehregan celebration. It was cancelled and instead their youth and Avesta Class children, led by Vartamehr Ariaban, encouraged by her mother, Mojgan Ariaban, organized a car wash at Mehran Khadivi's garage. They raised \$1525 for the Red Cross's NYC/DC Disaster Relief Fund. Ester Bamji of **Maryland** raised

\$270 at a walkathon at the Jefferson Memorial.

ZAH (**Houston**) priests led the service at their Zoroastrian Heritage and Cultural Center on September 16, and members shared their feelings of sorrow; and initiated a fund-raising drive. ZANT (**Dallas**) held a prayer vigil [photo above] at the Hindu Temple and raised \$2,500. While itself struggling for years to raise funds for a "place of our own" the generous Dallas association dipped into their ZANT fund for an additional \$1,000 and sent \$3,500 for the September 11th Relief Fund.

In **Southern California** ZAC held prayer vigils and memorial jashans and organized collections for the victims; and CZC held a public Memorial Service at the Center in Westminster [see photo page 6]. In **Northern California**, ZANC held a prayer service at the Dar-e-Mehr in San Jose during their September 16th Religion Class – a beautiful memorial set among flowers, candles and oil lamps; and jointly sponsored a vigil with the Indian Federation in downtown San Jose. ZSWS (**Washington State**) held a memorial and jashan for Mehregan.

Then my best mind

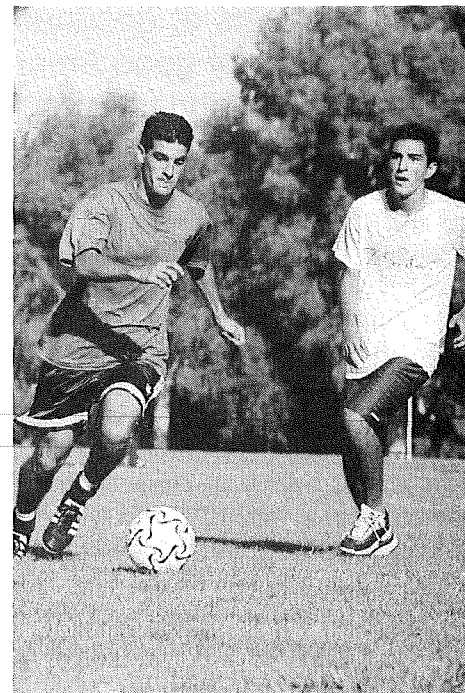
Through Vohu Manah (the Good Mind) shall strive

To win the mighty Khshthra – strength to serve,

By which grown strong,

We will vanquish all evil. [Yasna 31.4] ■

- By Roshan Rivetna



Left, at the ZSC's 2nd Unity Cup Soccer Tournament in September: 1st, 2nd and 3rd place teams – Kourosh, Fravahar and Javanan-e Vatan. Right, Siavash Fooladian and Sam Farkhondeh in action at the soccer tournament.

The Second Unity Cup Soccer Tournament

By Niaz Kasravi
Zoroastrian Sports Committee

The Second Unity Cup Soccer Tournament took place on September 2-3, 2001 at Will Rogers Park in Pacific Palisades, California. The event was a great success, drawing a good number of athletes and a large number of spectators (an estimate of 200) together for two days of soccer, picnicking, and bonding with old and new friends.

Twelve teams registered to participate in the event. Of these, four were teams of youth between the ages of 9-14 and eight were adult teams of 15 years and above. Each team consisted of five members and one substitute for the adult teams and four members plus one substitute for the youth. The teams played in two groups following round-robin rules,

with two teams rising up from these groups to compete in the play-offs and finals on Monday morning.

The youth teams consisted of: Iran, Z-Kids, Azad and Tehran, ranked respectively. Team Iran, consisting of Arsham Dianat (captain), Anahita Dianat, Zavash Rashidi, Soroush Amanat and Yasamin Amanat rose up and took first place.

ZSC is proud to witness the increasing number of young Zarathushti girls taking interest and participating in soccer as well as other sports competitions. We would like to extend our warmest congratulations and our most deep-hearted support to these young athletes.

A total of eight adult teams registered, however, only seven showed up to participate in the tournament. The teams were Kourosh of Orange County, Javanan-e Vatan of Los Angeles, Fravahar of the Valley,

Yaran-e Kourosh of Orange County, Z-Sidaz from mixed areas, Porty-Niners of San Jose, Shahmen of LA and Orange County, and Who Cares (no-show). Kourosh of Orange County, consisting of Essi Boostani (captain), Rostam Ezzati, Shahbahram Mehraein, Fereidoon Bastanifar, Mehrdad Mazdeyasni, and Barzin Pourjamasb won their way up and took home the first place trophy on Monday. Second and third place prizes went to Fravahar and Javanan-e Vatan, respectively.

Other activities were also organized for youth under the age of nine who could not participate in the games. Competitions such as tug-of-war and balloon tossing games were organized by our children's subcommittee. These smaller-scale competitions were conducted in between soccer games and all participants received prizes for their effort.

Lunch and refreshments were available for a small fee on both days for our athletes as well as the spectators. In addition, water and watermelon were provided on the fields to help quench the thirst of athletes and soccer lovers who spent most of the two days under the hot sun.

In addition, we hosted a disco-night on September 2nd at "The Green Cottage", or "Kolbey-e Sabz" in Woodland Hills. The disco provided an atmosphere in which Zarathushti youth enjoyed each other's company, music and good food.

The tournament concluded with an awards ceremony where prizes were handed out to winning teams. Mr. Iraj Mavandadi, Dr. Hooshang Kasravi, and Mr. Keikhosrow Behzisi were kind enough to honor us with their help in handing out trophies to our athletes. In addition to the small trophies given to each winning athlete, two large championship trophies were also handed out to both the adult and the youth first place teams, to be kept at the local Dar-e Mehr of each champion team.

The games were organized by the Zoroastrian Sports Committee (ZSC), the official sport committee of FEZANA. ZSC would like to thank all those who helped us in making this event a success. Whether they helped keep score, plan kids' activities, coordinate the games, serve lunch, collect addresses, film and take pictures, etc., all volunteers offered valuable services to our community and helped create yet another positive atmosphere for our youth to unite.

As always, we look forward to bigger and more successful events yet to come. With the help of all caring individuals in our community, this dream can only become a reality. For information on future Zarathushti sports events, see "Coming Events" in this Journal or contact the Zoroastrian Sports Committee at zsc@fezana.org and visit our website at www.fezana.org. ■

ZAC Honors Their Very Own

The new wing of the Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr in Chicago is dedicated to Rohinton and Roshan Rivetna



At the dedication ceremony of the Rohinton and Roshan Rivetna Hall, at the Darbe Mehr in Chicago, the Rivetnas [center, garlanded], Framroze Patel [far left] and some members of the ZAC Board and Building Expansion Committee.

By Aban Aspy Daboo
Aurora, Illinois

The dedication ceremony. To the sounds of "He's a jolly good fellow" and "Hip Hip Hurray" – the Rivetnas cut a huge cake that said "Thank You Rohinton and Roshan - ZAC".

On Monday, September 3, 2001, Chicago Zarathushtis celebrated the 18th anniversary of the inauguration of the Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr. This date will go down as a red-letter day in the history of ZAC – we celebrated completion of the expansion project of the Darbe Mehr.

When there is so much concern about 'dwindling numbers' of Zarathushtis, ZAC (like many of the other associations in North America) felt the need to expand its facilities to accommodate the growing needs of the growing congregation!

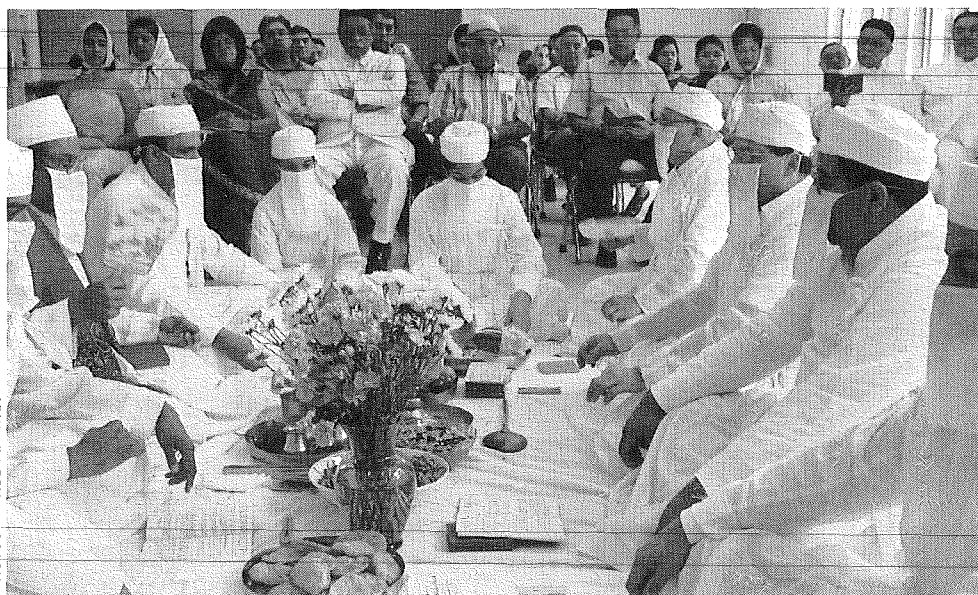
Unbeknownst to Rohinton and Roshan, the ZAC community had made a decision many months ago, to dedicate the new wing in their honor, in recognition of the yeoman services

they have rendered to the community over the last three decades.

This crisp summer morning, the Darbe Mehr had a festive air – decorated with *chalk-toran*, flowers, the stage was set for a grand jashan in the new hall. ZAC Head Priest, Dr. Kersey Antia, led the jashan performed by ten Chicago mobeds.

Roshan and Rohinton were then invited to "cut the ribbon", unveil the plaque and formally open the new wing. Up to this moment they were not aware of the decision to dedicate the hall in their name. To say the Rivetnas were totally dumbfounded, surprised and overwhelmed, is putting it mildly. The audience gave a spontaneous standing ovation and it was a very emotional and touching moment for all.

During the presentation ceremony the Rivetnas' long association with ZAC and FEZANA was acknowledged. ZAC President, Hosi Mehta, noted Rohinton's hard work and perseverance in driving the expansion



Jashan to inaugurate the new wing. From left, Hoshi Vazifdar and Zarvan Karanjia (not in picture), Head Priest Dr. Kersey Antia, Ardaviraf Minocherhomji and sons Farhad and Adil, Jamshed Antia, Jamshed Ravji, Behram Daboo, and Neville Vazifdar. Regretfully, Ervads Mazda and Jimmy Antia were out of town. It is truly inspiring to see the second generation of mobeds, sons of the mobeds that had performed the Grand Jashan of our Darbe Mehr 18 years ago, now sit at the jashan for this new wing.

project. "We always name things and events after people who give the most money, which is important," he said, "but we should also recognize people for giving of themselves." Dilshad Antia, chair of the Expansion Committee and Arnavaz Elavia, ZAC vice president, garlanded Rohinton and Roshan, and addressed the gathering, recounting the many ups and downs encountered during the construction and fund-raising, closing with: "We could not have done it without you, Rohinton".

FEZANA president Framroze Patel, who had come to Chicago especially for the event, presented a shawl to Rohinton on behalf of ZAC. He said: "The first generation of dar-e-mehr saw the light of day, as a result of magnanimous donations of Arbab Rustom and Morvarid Guiv and of the Zartoshty Brothers, Mehraban and the late Faridoon. Those righteous Zarathushtis did their part. However, in every location, there were 'Nar Ashos', righteous individuals, who worked tirelessly, night and day, to supplement the financial contributions. They provided 'sweat equity' ... that also needs to be recognized.

"During mid-1980s Zarathushtis in Canada and USA had organized into about fifteen associations. There was an obvious need that these entities come together and form an apex

Association of Associations (FEZANA). There was need for a leader who would convince the presidents of various associations of the necessity for such an apex body; to draft the Constitution ... ; and find the talent to nourish an infant organization. There is not a single university anywhere, which would prepare you for such a leadership position ... That university is one which teaches you 'there is no nobler act than serving your fellow human beings' ...

"It is time that we recognize the *Nar Asho* of this community for the last thirty years. On behalf of this eminent congregation and twenty-two other associations I want to recognize the paramount contributions, praiseworthy leadership of the highest order, and selfless service of our *Nar Asho*, Mr. Rohinton Rivetna. The Zarathushti community of North America is eternally indebted to you ..."

Aspy Daboo, active member of the Expansion Committee, presented Roshan with an Italian gold trimmed vase engraved with a commemorative message. He added his congratulations and also praised the dedication of the voluntary band of ZAC priests and the team of religious class teachers led by Kayomars Mehta.

Roshan and Rohinton were visibly overwhelmed with the show of affection and praises and the singular honor showered upon them. They

had not been aware of the behind-the-scenes activities in putting this event together. In spite of all the ZAC summer activities – muktad prayers, Pateti-Navroze, one wedding and two navjotes – in true ZAC spirit of teamwork the Board Members and the Expansion Committee had come together to execute the event with their usual zeal and style.

The felicitations were followed by *chasni* and delicious lunch of *dhan-dar-patio*, *gravy cutlets*, *sev-dahi*, *achar-chutney*, *lagan-nu-custard* and more, topped off with the huge chocolate cake. All who attended will remember the warmth and joy of this memorable occasion.

The building. From the very moment the expansion project was perceived Rohinton was actively involved at every stage – from planning through construction. At one juncture it appeared the project would have to be put on hold for lack of funds; Rohinton kept our hopes alive – persevered and did not despair. He was at the construction site every day, rain, snow, sleet or shine, and kept the expenses to a minimum ensuring there was no wastage of construction materials or labor. His able and worthy lieutenants were his brother Dara and his architect son Cyrus.

Major donors for the expansion project were: Mehraban and Faridoon Zartoshty (\$20,000); Dr. Jamshed

CIMNA makes decisions on women priests and descent of mobeds

The Council of Iranian Mobeds of North America (*Kankash Mobedan-e Iran-e Amrikay Shomali*) have made the following decisions at their Twelfth Annual General Meeting at the Los Angeles Dar-e Mehr:

(1) Mobeds need not be of mobed descent. Any qualified person who passes the required tests may become a full mobed.

(2) Women may also become full mobeds, after passing required tests.

To additional decisions were made:

(1) Creation of a foundation for electing suitable candidates for mobed profession, for their training and support.

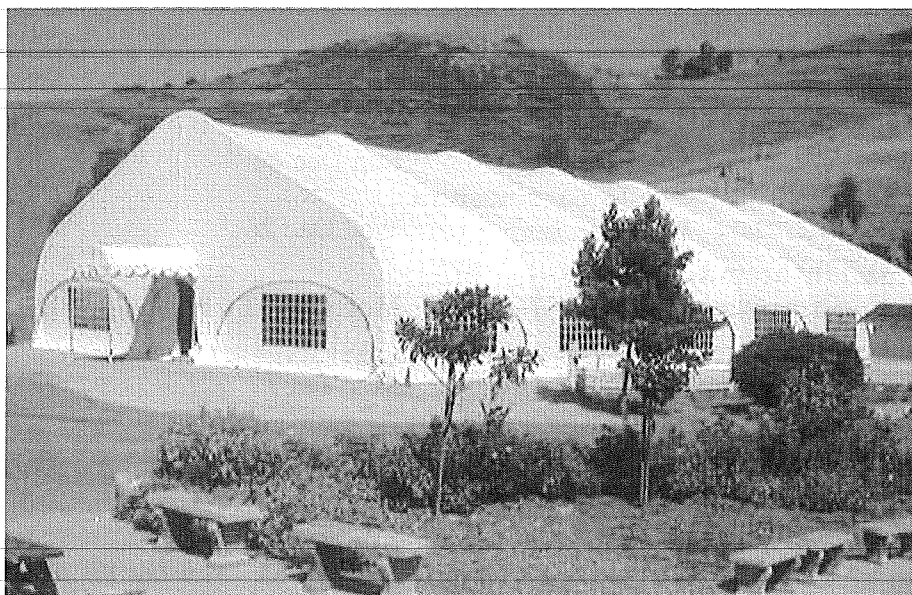
(2) Organizing more youth camps.

[From *Humata*, Fall 2001]

and Shirin Nuggad in loving memory of Ruttonsha and Soonamai Nuggad and Minocher and Goolbanu Chinoy (\$10,000); Maestro Zubin Mehta (\$5,000 plus fundraiser proceeds); Bachi and Maherji Bilimoria (\$5,000 for the kushti area). The rest was raised from local Zarathushtis.

The expanded facilities include the 2000 sq. ft. "Rivetna Hall" which increases the existing hall capacity by 50%; an expanded kitchen with more storage; a new commercial refrigerator (donated by Houshmand & Farida Sharyari); and new, larger rest rooms with showers for *nahan*. In the earlier phase of this project, we added two separate *kushti* rooms with hand washing facilities, a changing room for mobeds and storage for *sukhad-loban* and liturgical items. What more can we ask for!

May the ZAC community use the Rivetna wing for many years to come and may each generation of Zarathushtis have a "Rohinton" to turn their dreams into reality! ■



New Developments at San Jose Dar-e Mehr

PZO initiates new projects at the beautiful hilltop site of the Rustam Guiv Dar-e Mehr

The president of the current board of the Persian Zoroastrian Organization of California, Manoucher Mobed-shahi, shares some new developments taking place at the dar-e mehr in San Jose.

Additional land. With a donation from the Zartoshty Brothers (Faridun and Mehraban), a land parcel of approximately 0.7 acres was purchased. This lot is located behind the temple building.

Mobed residence. With a donation from the Zartoshty Brothers (Faridun and Mehraban) on behalf of the Council of Iranian Mobeds of North

America, a project to develop housing for a full time mobed to reside at the Darbe-Mehr and additional facilities for CIMNA youth camps has been initiated.

Permanent tent. A large, permanent 8000 sq ft tent [photo above] has been installed on a new concrete platform. This tent will serve well for large gatherings, public and private, sport and summer youth camps and other similar activities. Area improvements are also being done.

PZO invites everyone to visit the temple and the improvement projects.

- Jamshid Varza, www.vohuman.org

COMING EVENTS

Upcoming 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.

Upcoming North American Congresses

The **12th North American Zoroastrian Congress** will be held in Chicago, July 4-7, 2002 [for further details, see page 22]

The **13th North American Zoroastrian Congress** will be held in the San Francisco Bay area in 2004. The date is not yet set.

Calendar of Festivals

Yalda		
<i>Mah Daye, Roz Hormazd</i>	Sun Dec 16	(F)
Death Anniversary of Zarathushtra		
<i>Mah Daye, Roz Khorshed</i>	Wed Dec 26	(F)
Maidhyarem Gahambar		
<i>Mah Dae, Roz Meher -Bahram</i>	Mon Dec 31 - Fri Jan 4	(F)
Jashan-e-Daegan		
<i>Mah Dae, Roz Daepdin</i>	Mon Jan 7	(F)
Jashan-e-Bahmangan		
<i>Mah Bahman, Roz Bahman</i>	Wed Jan 16	(F)
Paitishahem Gahambar		
<i>Mah Sheherevar, Roz Ashtad - Aneran</i>	Sun Jan 13 - Thu Jan 17	(K)
	Tue Feb 12 - Sat Feb 16	(S)
Jashan-e-Sadeh		
<i>Mah Bahman, Roz Meher</i>	Wed Jan 30	(F)
Meher nu Parab		
<i>Mah Meher, Roz Meher</i>	Mon Mar 4	(S)
Ayathrem Gahambar		
<i>Mah Meher, Roz Ashtad - Aneran</i>	Tue Feb 12 - Feb 16	(K)
	Thu Mar 14 - Mar 18	(S)
Fravardegan/Panjeh/Hamaspathmedayem Gahambar		
<i>Five Gatha days</i>	Sat Mar 16 - Mar 20	(F)
Char-Shanbe-Soori (Heralding the New Year)		
<i>Tuesday prior to Nouruz</i>	Tue Mar 19	(F)
Nouruz or Jamshedi Navroz (New Year)		
<i>Mah Fravardin, Roz Hormazd</i>	Thu Mar 21	(F)
Khordad Sal (Birthday of Zarathushtra)		
<i>Mah Fravardin, Roz Khordad</i>	Tue Mar 26	(F)
Pir e Herisht Festival		
<i>Mah Fravardin, Roz Amardad-Khorshed</i>	Wed Mar 27 - 31	(F)
Ava Ardavisoor nu Parab		
<i>Mah Avan, Roz Avan</i>	Tue Feb 26	(K)
	Thu Mar 28	(S)
Fravardegan (Remembrance of the departed)		
<i>Mah Fravardin, Roz Fravardin</i>	Mon Apr 8	(F)
Jashan-e-Ardibeheshtgan		
<i>Mah Ardibehesht, Roz Ardibehesht</i>	Mon Apr 22	(F)
Atash-nu-Parab		
<i>Mah Adar, Roz Adar</i>	Wed Mar 27	(K)
	Fri Apr 26	(S)
Maidyozarem Gahambar		
<i>Mah Ardibehesht, Roz Khorshed - Daepmeher</i>	Tue Apr 30 - May 4	(F)
Zarathusht-no-Diso (Death anniversary of Zarathushtra)		
<i>Mah Daye, Roz Khorshed</i>	Sun Apr 28	(K)
	Tue May 28	(S)
Maidhyarem Gahambar		
<i>Mah Daye, Roz Meher-Behram</i>	Fri May 3 - May 7	(K)
	Sun Jun 2 - Jun 6	(S)

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

Next Zarathushti Games

The *8th Zarathushti Games* will be held July 4-7, 2002, at California State University. Contact zsc@fezana.org, website: www.fezana.org [see announcement on page 21].

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.

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.

Zarathushti Poetry Contest

Congress 2002 is sponsoring a Poetry Contest on the theme:

"Advancing Communities – Empowering Generations"

The First Place winner will receive a \$100 gift certificate to Amazon.com and have the poem read at the Congress. Congress 2002 reserves the right to publish entries in any Congress 2002 publication or in FEZANA Journal.

Poems should be in English, less than 50 lines or a 3-minute recitation. Submissions should be original works for which the author owns all right, title and interest. Participants may submit more than one poem.

Submit entries by March 1, 2002, to zcongress2002poetry@yahoo.com or mail to: "Poetry Competition", ZAC, 8615 Meadowbrook Drive, Hinsdale, IL 60521.



Closing Ceremony at the 5th Zarathushti Games, at California State University, in Dominguez Hills, CA, July 1995.

The 8th Zarathushti Games

The 8th Zarathushti Games are headed your way!

The Zoroastrian Sports Committee (ZSC) would like to cordially invite you all, athletes and sports lovers, to participate for five days of fun with Zarathushti youth from all over the world.

When: July 3-7, 2002

Where: California State University

Housing and dining facilities are available on campus. A Banquet, Disco Night and other social activities are in the planning. Plan ahead and make reservations early, as this is a popular event and space is limited.

Contact us at: zsc@fezana.org. Visit us at: www.fezana.org



World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce

Business Conference and Business Breakfast

The WZCC is planning a one-day Business Conference on July 3, 2002, and a Business Breakfast on July 4, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Chicago, just preceding the North American Congress. For more information visit the WZCC website at www.wzcc.org or contact WZCC president Rohinton Rivetna at rivetna@aol.com [also see page 80].

*All business persons,
professionals, entrepreneurs
and would-be entrepreneurs
are invited.*

Third World Zoroastrian Youth Congress

When: December 2002 (around the holidays)

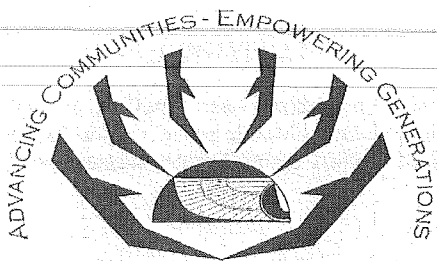
Where: India

The *Third World Zoroastrian Youth Congress* is planned for December 2002, in India. It will be organized by the Federation of Zoroastrian Youth of India, FOZYA, with financial support from the Bombay Parsi Punchayet. For information, contact Meher Amalsad at babameher@prodigy.net or FOZYA president Porus Karanjawalla, at porusk@indiainfo.com.

IN COMING ISSUES OF FEZANA JOURNAL

Spring 2002
Health and Aging.
Guest editors:
Dolly Dastoor and
Soonamai Desai

Summer 2002:
**Introduction to the Religion of
Zarathushtra – history, religion
and Customs.**



LOOP LINES

Your source for information on Congress 2002

The 12th North American Zoroastrian Congress

Hyatt Regency Hotel, Chicago

Thursday July 4 - Sunday, July 7, 2002

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

Welcome to "LOOP LINES" (named after Chicago's downtown area, "The Loop"), a monthly newsletter that is sent to associations and Zarathushti newsgroups, and posted on the Congress website, to keep you informed about Congress 2002.

Welcome to Chicago!

Chicago will embrace you on your arrival. Enjoy the world famous Grant Park Symphony Orchestra as it plays to brilliant music and spectacular fireworks against the backdrop of Chicago's acclaimed waterfront July 3, in celebration of Independence Day in the United States. Don't forget to bring a healthy appetite as you join millions of other hungry food lovers at the world famous Taste of Chicago, soaking up Chicago's ethnic diversity at the Taste, a culinary feast along the shores of Lake Michigan in historic Grant Park. With world-class hotels, museums, theater district and a slew of restaurants and nightclubs Chicago promises to deliver.

Registration

Take advantage of **Early Bird Registration** to save the most and benefit from preferred seating at the Congress. To qualify we must receive your registration form and payment postmarked by December 31, 2001.

For your convenience, you can register on line at the Congress website [see above] and pay on line by Visa, Master Card or Discover; or send a check by mail. Registration details and form are also available from your local association and from the Fall 2001 FEZANA Journal.

Hotel Reservations

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". Call before June 1 to qualify for the special discount rate.

The Hyatt Regency Hotel is located adjacent to the "Magnificent Mile" in the heart of Chicago's shopping and business district. We strongly encourage you to reserve rooms here. All Congress sessions and activities will be at the Hyatt and entry into and out of the city will be challenging due to holiday traffic and the Taste of Chicago festival (which attracts more than a million visitors to the city a day).

Exhibit Space

Zarathushti individuals, businesses and associations are invited to promote their business, product, service or talents at the Congress. 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).

Fundraising

To meet our fund-raising goals, we have launched the **Congress 2002 North American Raffle**. Six fabulous prizes will be given away (2 Accutron Swiss watches, 2 Hyatt hotel rooms and 2 free Congress registrations). Lucky winners will be announced at the Nouruz celebration in March 2002 at the Chicago Darbe Mehr. Winners need not be present. Get your raffle tickets from your association or contact Vera Dinshaw at (847) 202-0436, email: chicagoraffle2002@yahoo.com.

We also turn to the generosity of our friends at this time for individual **contributions and sponsorships**. Interested contributors are encouraged to contact Finance Committee co-chair Farobag Homi Cooper at (773) 955-5759 or (773) 955-9339.

Congress Information

For more information about Congress 2002:

- Visit the website [see above]. Read **LOOP LINES**.
- Get the color brochure and detailed registration package with registration forms, mailed in September to associations and many individuals in North America; and included in the Fall 2001 FEZANA Journal.

Congress 2002

"Advancing Communities, Empowering Generations"

Program Highlights

Team Congress promises to entertain and inspire you with a scintillating array of programs for all ages and all tastes.

- ★ *Chicago Sightseeing Tours*
- ★ *Youth "Ice-breaker"*
- ★ *Grant Park Festival*
- ★ *Taste of Chicago*
- ★ *Independence Eve Fireworks*
- ★ *WZCC Business Conference
and Business Breakfast*
- ★ *Opening Ceremonies*
- ★ *Gala Dinner Banquet*
- ★ *Zoroastrian Symphony Orchestra*
- ★ *Disco*
- ★ *"Gherno Ghambar" Parsi natak*
- ★ *Iranian Music & Entertainment Nite*
- ★ *Moonlight Cruise*
- ★ *FEZANA Awards Brunch*
- ★ *Closing Ceremonies*
- ★ *Jashan at the Darbe Mehr*

[Program details are on the Congress webpage, in the Registration Package and in the Fall 2001 FEZANA Journal]

Session Highlights

Sessions will focus on fostering an intergenerational perspective, presenting role models and heroes within North American Zarathushti communities.

Plenary

Advancing Communities, Empowering Generations. Focus on living a good Zarathushti life, enhancing interpersonal cooperation and cultivating intergenerational communication.

Regionalism

Showcasing how Zarathushti communities can strengthen and grow by developing regional communications and support structures.

Interfaith

Addressing the importance of understanding, sharing and growing with other religious communities.

Farsi Culture

Focusing on broadening our understanding of Farsi language, customs and traditions.

Elders

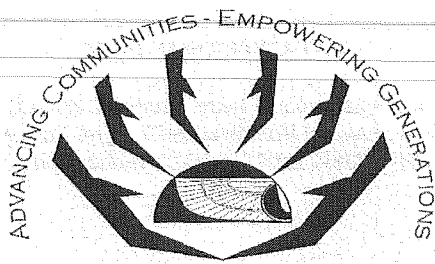
Focusing on issues confronting our growing elder Zarathushti population.

Wellness

Showcasing traditional and emerging non-traditional health and wellness techniques, to achieve a good and spiritually fulfilling life.

Youth

Presenting creative, interactive and thought-provoking open-mike sessions, small group discussions and creative presentations for the youth of North America.



LOOP LINES

Your source for information on Congress 2002

Advertising Opportunities. 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:

Souvenir Program Booklet

(8 1/2 x 11 high gloss)

1/2 page b&w	\$ 500
1 page b&w	\$1000
1 page COLOR	\$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

(5 1/2 x 8 1/2)

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.*

Congress 2002 Travel Discounts

AMERICAN AIRLINES will give a discount of up to 15% off the lowest applicable fare if booked 60 days in advance. Valid July 2-July 9, 2002. Call 1-800-433-1790, mention Authorization # A1972BA, Chicago Philharmonia.

AVIS will offer a substantial car rental discount for Congress delegates. Valid June 26 - July 2, 2002. Call 1-800-331-1600, mention Discount number D096447, Chicago Philharmonia.

North American Zarathushti Community Awards - 2002

Call for Nominations

The *North American Zarathushti Community Awards - 2002* will be presented in the following six categories during the Twelfth North American Zoroastrian Congress in 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
- Category F:* Paradise Award

Nomination Packages with details of the award categories, evaluation criteria, rules governing the awards, Nomination Form and other details have been distributed to FEZANA Member Associations and Small Groups for dissemination amongst their members. Nomination Package is also available upon request from Dinshaw Joshi, Chair, Awards Committee at dfjoshi@erols.com. The closing date for receipt of nominations by the Awards Committee is January 31, 2002. Nominations postmarked after January 31, 2002 will not be considered.

By Ken R. Vincent

Who were the magi and why were the magi at the birth of Christ? Like much information on historical Christianity, the answers have been known to scholars for over a century, but not to the general public. The magi were priests of the Zarathushti religion, the only religion in the ancient world other than Judaism that worshiped one God. That alone might have deemed the magi worthy to be the vanguard of gentiles to honor Jesus, but more specifically, their prophet had also predicted the coming of future "saviors."

It is often assumed that they add to the credibility of the story by their having been astrologers. More importantly, they too were looking for a savior. In the first century, their prophet Zarathushtra was revered in the Roman West as a sage and in the East as a prophet. His theology influenced Judaism from the time of Cyrus the Great, who was a follower of the religion of the magi, through the first century. In fact, the closer one gets to the time of Jesus, the more strongly Zarathushtra's message becomes blended into Judaism. Protestants who do not read the Jewish Apocryphal works such as the Book of Tobit miss the growing influence. The Zarathushti influence is even greater in the Dead Sea Scrolls, including the Manual of Discipline and the War of the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness.

In a very real way, the religion of Zarathushtra is the foundation of all Western religion. Skeptical? About 1600-600 BCE (like Abraham and Moses, the actual dates of his life are unknown), Zarathushtra had a series of revelations from God, whom he called Ahura Mazda (the Wise Lord). See if these concepts sound familiar:

God – Satan
Good – Evil
Light – Darkness

Archangels & Angels
Archdemons & Demons
Death – Judgment
Heaven – Hell

... and, at the end of time,
the Resurrection of the Body, and
Life Everlasting.

The first person to preach these ideas wasn't a Jew, a Christian, or a Moslem. The first was Zarathushtra. There are two differences between the

How
the Magi
Got to
Be Kings
or,
What Are
Zoroastrian Priests
Doing on My
Christmas Card?

Ken R. Vincent



Abrahamic religions (Jewish, Christian and Moslem) and the religion of Zarathushtra. One is that God is all good; evil comes from Satan, or, as Zarathushtra called him, the "Demon of the Lie." While many of his followers, especially modern ones, see Zarathushtra as a pure monotheist, preaching moral dualism rather than cosmic dualism, the Zarathushti din for the most part has been seen as cosmic dualism (God vs. Satan). According to Zarathushtra, God needs humanity and the rest of his creation to overcome evil. When this occurs, all humanity will be saved at the end of time. Then those humans who were more evil than good will have been purified in hell. Interestingly, the Universalist Christians also introduced this doctrine of universalist salvation.

The basic concepts and the imagery of Zarathushtra's religion reveal a universal God who is the God of Light, this being the oldest non-anthropomorphic view of God. Accompanying God are the archangels and the angels. Before the Jews met the magi, their religion did not possess these elements. Granted these ideas are more clearly associated with modern-day Christianity and Islam than they are with Rabbinic Judaism, but all of the elements listed above were clearly present in the first century Jewish world of Jesus.

The God of the ancient Jews was a tribal God who was definitely anthropomorphic: God *walked* in the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve. In Judaism before the Babylonian captivity, God did all the punishing of humanity. After the Jews met the magi, Satan took over, as a fallen angel able to lead humanity astray because of free will.

Regarding the afterlife, Judaism is very vague until the Zarathushti influence. The Books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes both asked the question, "Why be good, since after death all wind up in the same place, Sheol?"

Compare this to the post-Zarathushti influence evident in the story in the Gospel of Luke of the rich man and Lazarus. In this story, Sheol is now divided into paradise and punishment, and the two are separated by a great chasm.

After the Zarathushti Persians let the Jews go home from Babylon, a decree from Cyrus the Great was recorded verbatim into the Book of Ezra. Like Zarathushtra's vision of God, the Jewish God not only became God of the Universe, but God also became a lot nicer. This is especially true of the account in the latter part of Isaiah, often called Second Isaiah because it appears to have been written by a different author. Some of the latter portions of Isaiah appear to be paraphrases of the Hymns of Zarathushtra.

Though the Persian Empire came to an end with the conquest of Alexander the Great, the influence of the Zarathushti religion did not. The religion remained dominant in the Middle East in 235 BCE. The Parthian Empire lasted until 224 CE and was followed by the Sasanian Empire, which embraced the Zarathushti din as its state religion. The Sasanian Empire continued until the Moslem conquest.

While the Zarathushti religion was not practiced in the West, with the exception of the heresy Mithraism, Zarathushtra was nevertheless revered as a great teacher. It is said that in the library at Alexandria, over a million lines were attributed to Zarathushtra. Actually, his only known authentic composition is a Hymn to God and is about as long as the Gospel of Matthew.

It is important to realize that at the time of Jesus, the borders of the Roman Empire were located just outside Palestine in the Jordanian desert, where the Parthian Empire began. It is likely that the magi were "in the neighborhood" at the time of Jesus' birth.

The world of Jesus is a world of Zarathushti ideas embedded in Judaism: the good mind vs. the evil mind; angels of light vs. angels of darkness; the idea that heaven is the reward if your good deeds outweigh your evil deeds; and that the angels are recording good and evil deeds.

The idea of evil as separate from God was real to Jesus. He was tempted by Satan, cast out demons, and he stated that Satan's house could not stand if it were not by God that he performed miracles. Most importantly, Jesus talked about God being a good and loving God. The God of Jesus in a very real way was no longer the God of Abraham.

In the psychological terms of Kohlberg's moral development theory, the God of the ancient Hebrews in Genesis was a God of pre-conventional morality: humanity was not to ask why, but simply to obey God or

be punished. The God of Moses was a God of conventional morality and conformity: these are the rules, obey them for your own good.

On the other hand, the God of Jesus, like Zarathushtra, is post-conventional in its morality: God is universal goodness; one should speak and act from the heart. The God of Jesus is wholly good and is on our side for all time. We are to strive "to be perfect as our heavenly father is perfect."

“ In a very real way, the religion of Zarathushtra is the foundation of all Western religion. ”

The worship of one God and the high moral level of the religion of the magi set them apart in the ancient world and made theirs a religion most similar to Judaism. Additionally, Zarathushtra had predicted the coming of a savior. This places the Zarathushti priests at the birth of Jesus. It also explains why priests from the Temple of Jupiter or from the Temple of Isis and Osiris, who were certainly in the region, are not included in the story of those who came to honor Jesus, even though these other religions practiced astrology and might have also "followed a star."

We in the West forget that until the rise of Islam, Christianity was the second largest religion in the Middle East, behind the religion of Zarathushtra. If you wanted to make converts, to include the magi in the story of the birth of Jesus was a powerful entree into the Zarathushti world. The second century Arabic Gospel of the Infancy was very direct:

"And it came to pass when the Lord Jesus was born in Bethlehem, a city in Judea, in the time of Herod the King; the wise men came from the East according to the prophecy of Zarathushtra."

Today in the Middle East, there are still some Christians and Jews. There are even 12,000 Gnostic followers of John the Baptist in Iraq. Also, the Zarathushtis are still with us. There are 60,000 Zarathushtis in Iran, about 100,000 in India (where they fled to get away from the Muslims who had conquered Iran), and another 15,000 in North America.

One thing that always puzzles modern Zarathushtis is why their priests, the magi (this is a Greek mispronunciation of the Persian word *mobed*, which means "priest"), are depicted at Christmas looking like Arab sheiks from the cast of the Broadway musical *Kismet*.

The development of the magi in the art of the West is a story in itself. For the first thousand years, the magi were pictured correctly in all-white Persian attire. It is said that a Persian army once spared a Byzantine Church because of the fresco of the magi on it. During the Middle Ages, the magi were portrayed – like all ancient people – in the dress of the period. Today artists take all manner of liberties with the magi, but usually picture them as wealthy Arabs.

How did the magi come to be the Three Kings? Early Christian art and stories sometimes have two, four, or even twelve magi. The third century theologian Origen states that there were three wise men, probably because of the three gifts identified in the New Testament story. Another early church father, Tertullian, refers to the magi as "almost kings". By the sixth century, the Armenian Gospel of the Infancy provides names for the three magi, i.e. Melchior, who reigned over the Persians; Balthazar, who reigned over the Indians; and Gaspar, who reigned over the Arabians. This is more understandable when one considers that before Columbus, Europeans thought that Africa, India and China were all part of the "Indies".

As the legend grew, the magi came to represent the three races of humanity as well as the three stages of life:

youth, middle age, and old age. The mother of Constantine searched for and discovered many Christian relics, including the purported bones of the magi, which, after several moves, now reside in the cathedral of Cologne.

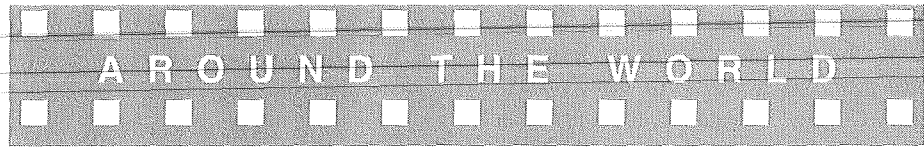
Now you know how the magi got to be kings.

What are Zarathushti priests doing on your Christmas card? They belong there for more than one reason. Our religion in the West is composed of layers of influence. Obviously the most influential person in the present world is Jesus. He is first in Christianity, second in status in Islam, and is known throughout the world. But behind Jesus is the religion of the magi and the revelation of their prophet Zarathushtra.

[Originally printed in *The Quest Magazine*, Winter 1997].



Dr. Ken R. Vincent recently retired from teaching psychology, including the *Psychology of Religious Experience*, at Houston Community College in Houston, Texas. He is the author of "Visions of God from the Near Death Experience." Dr. Vincent is a member of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion and the Foundation for Contemporary Theology. His recent book is "The Magi, From Zoroaster to the Three Wise Men", Bibal Press, 1999, web: www.dfscott.com.



President of Tajikistan Emomoli Rahmonov, right, displaying the Asho Farohar pin of Dr. Meher Master-Moos [left], explaining its ancient significance to scholars, historians and archeologists, at opening of Museum in Dushanbe.

Tajikistan Avesta Conference and Tenth Republic Anniversary Celebrations

From September 1-15, 2001, Dr. Meher Master-Moos, president of Zoroastrian College in Sanjan, India, attended the 10th Republic Anniversary Celebrations and Third World Avesta Conference in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. She was invited by the government in appreciation of her work for Indo Tajik friendship and development for the past ten years.

President Emomoli Rahmanov and the people of Tajikistan are proud of their ancient Kyanian ancestry. This highly educated Persian Dari speaking country reveres its poets, Firdowsi (whose *Shah Nameh* is part of the school curriculum), Rudaki and scientists like Avicenna. As part of the traditional and cultural revival, scholars of the Academy of Sciences and History published the first Book of Avesta in Cyrillic Russian Script with Tajik-Persian translation, which was released at the 3rd World Avesta Conference, along with a book published by Mazdayasnie Monasterie.

Mobed Jamshed Kamran of Sweden, performed several navjotes during this visit to Tajikistan as he had done during his 1999 visit.

The Tajik people would like mobeds to come and help in construction of two fire temples. They are prepared to provide lands and would like groups of six to twelve mobeds to stay for some months to perform navjotes, and educate the Tajiks about maintaining the fire temples. Financial support for this is sought from Zarathushti organizations and individuals.

President Rahmanov invited Dr. Meher Master-Moos and other guests to accompany him to Kulab. The Republic Celebrations parade at Kulab highlighted the progress made during the past ten years – starting of Tajik Airlines, railway tunnels through mountains, hydro electric power dam, hospitals, healthcare and educational facilities, privatization of state held factories and cultural dances with beautiful costumes and music.

Madame Maisara Kolonova, President of the Tajik Friendship Society, and gracious hostess for the Zoroastrian College delegation took pride in showing the music, dance and culture of Tajikistan to the visitors, including an Opera of Rustom and Sohrab, sung and performed in Persian. A play based on the life and teachings of Asho Spitaman Zarathushtra was also performed during the celebrations.

The Tajik Government is inviting industrialists, especially Zarathushti businesses from India and other countries to come into Tajikistan for industrial development. The country has rich mineral resources and agricultural economy. Visit www.privatization.tajikistan.com.

The population of this mountainous country of the Pamirs, is about 6 million, half of whom are proud of their ancient Zarathushti ancestry. The country is rich in ancient archeological sites. The president opened the Historical Heritage Museum which has excavations of 2500 year-old Zarathushti fire temples and palaces.

Persons interested in supporting the upliftment of Tajikistan, please contact Dr. Moos at mazocol@hotmail.com, tel: 91 22 266 0214.

Update on Roodaki

There are unofficial reports from Dushanbe that a certain fundamentalist group – Hezb Al-Tahrir was possibly involved in the unfortunate shooting of 27-year-old Roodaki Behdin, leader of the Zarathushti community in Tajikistan [see *FEZANA Journal*, Fall 2001]. Within a few weeks of Roodaki's murder, the right hand man of Tajikistan's President Rahmanov, Karim Yoldashov and the Cultural Minister of Tajikistan, both were assassinated. Investigation is ongoing and no arrests have been made to date.

Following her trip to Tajikistan [see above], Dr. Meher Master Moos writes: "I personally met the late Mr. Roodaki's widow, her sister and Mr. Afzal, who is now head of the Mazdayasnan Anjuman in Dushanbe.

[Continued on page 45]

ZWIN

Women's Network

ZWIN the Zoroastrian Women's International Network, born on March 21st, 2001, now has 160 members in four continents and 17 countries. Our members hail from India, France, UK, Singapore, Australia, China, Jordan, Iran, Italy, Canada, Pakistan, Spain, Russia, Yugoslavia, UAE, Switzerland and 14 states in America.

Our vision is for the Network to one day connect every Zarathushti/Zoroastrian woman worldwide. Please visit our web site at www.ZWIN3.net to explore our mission and sign up to be a member. Or send an email to zwin3-subscribe@yahoogroups.com or to zareen@managingcultures.com.

As part of its activities, ZWIN was planning several youth exchanges, including a Heritage Tour to India in December and bringing deserving Indian youth to the US in the summer. Given the current situation we have postponed the trip until next year. However, we would still like to help those who expressed so much interest to connect with Zarathushti youth and families in India and get to know each other and their culture better. Mr. Tamboly, Silloo Kavarana, Sarosh Bana and the WZO youth group in Mumbai are supporting this effort. Contact Dr. Zareen Karani Araoz at zareen@managingcultures.com or Dr. Dolly Dastoor at dastoor@total.net.

We have lots more planned, including: professional interest groups, mentoring programs, resource sharing, a youth friendship circle, and other networking activities.

We are developing other ideas and ways to showcase our members' talents and professional works as well, and will be featuring supportive activities to help connect and enhance our communities and build more harmony worldwide. Any additional ideas are always welcome.

The History of Afghanistan

Zarathushti Connection

Given below is a short chronological history of Afghanistan, with special attention to historical Zarathushti references.

50,000 BCE – 20,000 BCE

Archaeologists have identified evidence of stone age technology in Aq Kupruk and Hazar Sum. Plant remains in the Hindu Kush mountains indicate that North Afghanistan was one of the earliest places to domesticate plants and animals.

3000 BCE – 2000 BCE

Bronze might have been invented in ancient Afghanistan around this time. First true urban centers rise in two main sites in Afghanistan – Mundigak and Deh Morasi Ghundai.

Mundigak (near modern day Kandahar) had an economic base of wheat, barley, sheep and goats. It could have been a provincial capital of the Indus valley civilization.

Ancient Afghanistan was the crossroads between Mesopotamia and other civilizations.

2000 BCE- 1500 BCE

Aryan tribes in Aryana (ancient Afghanistan). The city of Kabul is thought to have been established during this time. The Rig Veda may have been created in Afghanistan around this time. Evidence of early nomadic iron age in Aq Kapruk IV.

600 BCE (Some scholars place this date to be much earlier). Prophet Zarathushtra (Zoroaster) introduces a new religion in Bactria (Balkh) – the Zarathushti din, a monotheistic religion. Zarathushtra dies during a nomadic invasion near Balkh.

522 BCE – 486 BCE

Darius the Great expands the Achaemenid (Persian) empire to its peak, when it takes most of Afghanistan, including Aria (Herat), Bactriana (Balkh) and present-day



Present-day map of Afghanistan

Mazar-i-Sharif, Margiana (Merv), Gandhara (Kabul, Jalalabad and Peshawar), Sattagydia (Ghazni to the Indus river), Arachosia (Kandahar, and Quetta) and Drangiana (Seistan).

The Persian empire was plagued by constant bitter and bloody tribal revolts from Afghans living in Arachosia (Kandahar and Quetta).

329-326 BCE

After conquering Persia, Alexander the Great conquers Afghanistan, but fails to really subdue its people. Constant revolts plague Alexander.

323 BCE

The Greeks rule Bactria (Northern Afghanistan).

170 BCE – 160 BCE

Bactrian – Parthian rule in Afghanistan.

50 CE

Kushan rule under King Kanishka. The Graeco-Buddhist Gandharan culture reaches its height.

220 CE

The Kushan empire fragments into petty dynasties.

400 CE

Invasion of the White Huns. They destroy the Buddhist culture and leave most of the country in ruins.

425 – 550 CE

Independent Yaftalee rule in Afghanistan.

550 CE

The Persians reassert control over all of what is now Afghanistan. Revolts by various Afghan tribes.

652 CE

The Arabs introduce Islam.

Zarathushtis in post-Islamic Afghanistan

The religion of Zarathushtra flourished in the area that is now Afghanistan until about the tenth century. Fire temples were functioning until that time, some even in regions that are now in China. Significant communities survived even after that. Today there are

people of Zarathushti heritage in Afghanistan, but the religion is not publicly practiced. Some of these are Tajik. Some Zarathushtis moved from Afghanistan to Iran a couple of centuries ago to escape persecution. The Taliban have recently banned the celebration of Nouruz.

During its long history, practice of the Zarathushti din, Buddhism and Hinduism often overlapped. King Kanishka (c. 50 CE) supported all three. Some of the Rajputs of India had Zarathushti heritage, and many were also supporters of Buddhism.

The city of Mazar-e Sharif

Battles for the city of *Mazar-e Sharif* have been in the news recently. This city perhaps should be of great interest to Zarathushtis.

Mazar-e Sharif is an extension of the ancient city of *Balkh*, once one of the greatest cities on earth, sometimes called the 'mother of cities'.

Mazar-e Sharif is the greatest pilgrimage center of Afghanistan because of the tomb of Prophet Mohammed's son-in-law and the fourth caliph, Ali. The tomb was discovered in the 15th century, but Balkh was a great pilgrimage center of pilgrimage even before that. Balkh was a major Buddhist center for a long time.

To Zarathushtis, Balkh was as sacred as Kaaba is for Muslims. According

to some scholars, Zarathushtra was born in Balkh; he started teaching there, established a fire-temple and planted special trees; here he wrote his books; he also died in Balkh.

The fire temple of Balkh was very famous.

The founder of the Samanid Dynasty was a descendant of a Zarathushti family of Balkh. The family of Mahmud of Ghazni were slaves under them. It was under Sultan Mahmud that the Shah Nameh was written. Both Firdowsi and Al-Biruni were from the Khorasan region. A famous Muslim scholarly family, Barmacides originated from Balkh where they were Zarathushti or Buddhist. They moved to Basra and became Muslim there. Jalaluddin Rumi, the Sufi poet, was also born in Balkh and refers to the religion of Zarathushti.

[By "MA" of the Arya Buddha Association, website: www.geocities.com/aryabuddha, email: aryabuddha@yahoo.com. Chronology from www.afghan-web.com/.]

Archeological Explorations in Ancient Chorasmia

Western Uzbekistan is one of the regions suggested as the possible heartland of the ministry of Zarathushtra. One tradition has it that Zarathushtra was a native of Media (Rhages or Ray, now a suburb of Tehran), but his first influential convert was Vistaspa, traditionally regarded as a ruler of Chorasmia, near the Aral Sea.

Currently a major city and a temple complex associated with the veneration of fire, both dating in the period from perhaps as early as the 6th century BCE up to the 2nd century CE are being excavated here. The project is currently funded by a private volunteer scheme and through support from the Australia Research Council.

The discovery of the fire temple and its apparently early date and the possibility of a second temple in the city has made us realize the potentially very great importance of the findings. Archeologists realize that the story of

what is a little known and remote region could have far reaching effect.

Since this work focuses on the history of the Zarathushti faith, the Australian Zoroastrian Association has been approached to discuss future plans, with the aims (1) to ensure that the work respects the faith of Zarathushtis today, (2) to disseminate information within the Zarathushti communities and (3) to elicit financial support.

A draft document outlining the work is available with Dinaz Mistry, at dinaz_mistry@hotmail.com.

[From Manashni, AZA, Australia]

Uzbek Zarathushtis

[From posting by sirknight67 at zoroastrians@yahoo.com].

"According to Jamshid Choksy, at least half the population of Sogdiana (modern Uzbekistan) was Zarathushti at the time of the Mohammedan invasion in the 8th century CE. In the cities of Bokhara and Samarkand, Panjikant (Tajikistan), Sharhresabs, Kish and others, the Iranian Sogdians predominantly practiced the religion of Zarathushtra, but other religions such as Manicheism, Mazdakism, Buddhism, Judaism and Christianity had also taken root.

"Today the ethnic composition of the once Iranian Uzbekistan has drastically been changed. In spite of this, some 5% or more of the Uzbek population is Tajik (Iranian). Islam has taken firm root in Uzbekistan, but because of the Soviet occupation and the current presence of large numbers of Russians, Ukrainians, ethnic Germans and others, the newly born republic is largely multi-religious (87% Muslim). Because of the large Russian populace, there is a firm barrier to fundamentalism. Many have sought their ancestral religion and roots by taking up the Zarathushti religion."

Photo and text from posting by Rustam Abdelkhaminov [far right], email spanta@freenet.uz, at zoroastrians@yahoo.com

Lessons Learnt ...

[Continued from page 4]

to be condemned by all sane people of the world.

Pakistan and its people joined hands with all the freedom loving people of the world in not just condemning these acts of terror but also chose to join hands with the world community to help fight the menace of terrorism once and for ever.

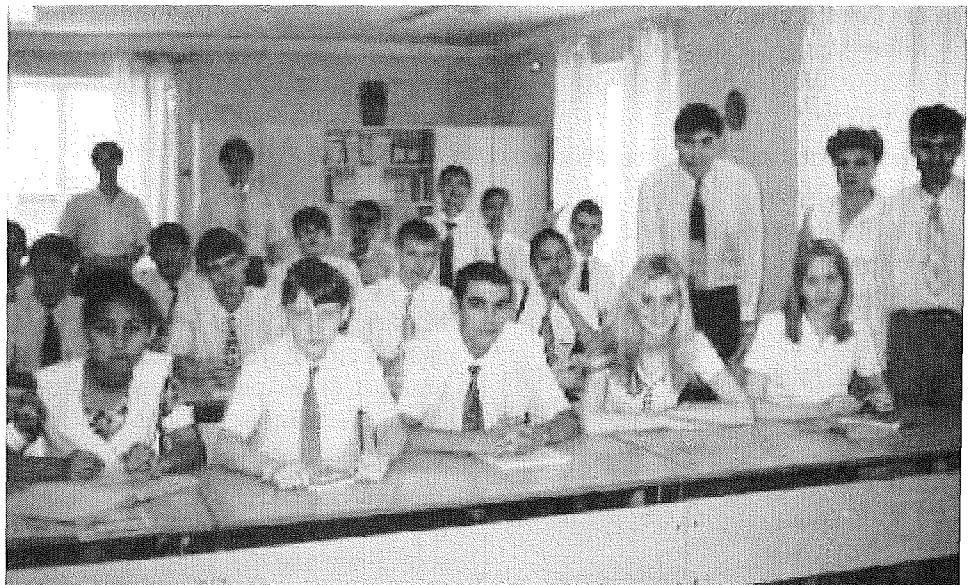
As to why these men chose to sacrifice their precious lives and cause so much chaos, pain and agony to people the world over, one can only conclude that probably they felt injustice was being done in dealing with their issues, felt isolated and deprived, saw no ray of hope, and in a fit of desperation planned and executed the September 11 events.

The first lesson that we have learned is "be impartial, do not do injustice, and help solve problems of those who look upon you for your support and justice." It will surely help them maintain their sanity, avoiding such events.

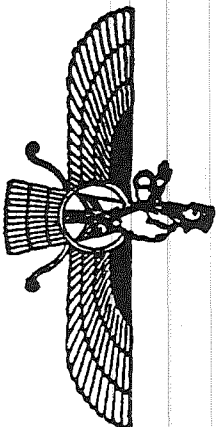
Many countries of the world, have now got together on one platform and

formed an alliance, pledging to wipe out terrorists, their organizations, and to take care of countries protecting and assisting these desperate people of all castes, color and creed. A beginning has been made in Afghanistan. This may bring some temporary relief to begin with, but I was very convinced when I heard our President Musharaf speak on TV tonight, declaring that military action alone is not the only solution. He said: "Consider terrorists to be the leaves on a tree and their organizations its branches. If we chop off the branches, we will get rid of the terrorists and their organizations ... But the very roots of these trees still remain steadfast, and after sometime, will once again give growth to the branches and the leaves."

The second big lesson, therefore, is that all the countries locked in disputes and all the people who matter, need to brush aside their differences, get together and find a lasting solution to all their existing problems. Should these continue to remain neglected and unsolved, the ghost of September 11 will keep haunting us for times to come. ■



"Zarathushtrian children in ex-USSR Uzbekistan (old Sogdiana, Bactria and Chorasmia). Here are our children of Uzbekistan Zarathushtrians, learning the Gathas. The language of the learning is Russian because it is the most used intellectual language in the ex-USSR. We use the Parsi language too. We are looking forward to hearing from you. Wish you best successes for spreading the Good Religion. – Rustam on behalf of Uzbekistan Zarathushtrians."



" گفتگوئی دوستانه با والدین "

فرشته یزدانی خطیبی

چگونه روابط دوست داشتی در خانواده برقرار کنید

برقرار نمودن یک الگوی سالم و درست خانوادگی برای فرزندان لازم و ضروری میباشد.

ازواج سالم و عاشقانه و دوست داشتی و محیط خانوادگی گرم و محبت آمیز اثرات بسیار مثبت در زندگی فرزندان و جوانان خواهد داشت.

داشتن روابط خوب و محبت آمیز بین والدین و همچنین با زبودن مکالمات بین فرزندان و والدین محبت و اعتماد نفس بین فرزندان و والدین بوجود می آورد و در نتیجه این امر فرزندان به خانواده خود علاقمند شده و حتی بعد از ترک کردن خانواده خود با آنها عشق میورزند و همیشه از نظرات والدین در زندگی خودشان بهره گیری خواهند نمود.

یکی از دانشمندان سایکولوژی عقیده دارد که ۵ راه زیر روابط فرزندان و پدران و مادران را بهم نزدیکتر و محبت آمیزتر خواهد کرد.

۱- پدران و مادران باید سپاس و تشکر خود را به فرزندان نشان دهند و از آنها همیشه قدردانی کنند.
۲- پدران و مادران باید همیشه و در همه حال برای فرزندان پشتیبان باشند و از آنها حمایت و پشتیبانی کنند.

۳- پدر و مادران باید فرزندان خود را قبول کرده و بدانند که آنها بهترین هستند و مقایسه ای بین آنها و دیگران انجام ندهند.

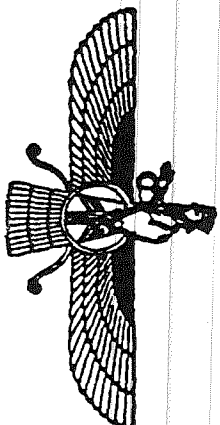
۴- پدر و مادران باید محبت خود را به فرزندان نشان داده و به آنها مسئولیت داده و از آنها مسئولیت را بخواهند.

۵- پدر و مادران خود باید روابط دوستانه و صمیمی و سالم داشته باشند. از دروغ و دورنگی پرهیز جسته و محیطی بسیار سالم مبتنی بر گفتار و کردار و پندار نیک برای فرزندان خود آماده نمایند.

افضاء خانواده را در مسائل مذهبی درگیر نکنید.

والدین باید یک الگوی منظم مذهبی برای خود و فرزندان بوجود آورند و نمونه ای باشند که فرزندان آنها را پیروی نمایند. با وارد شدن مذهب و داشتن دل مذهبی نه تنها باعث دوستی سالمتر بلکه باعث روابط نزدیکتر بین فرزندان و والدین میگردد.

فرزندان را نباید با فشار فراوان به نیایشگاهها برد بلکه با پستی عملا " به فرزندان کمک کرد که پایه و اساس دین و مذهب را فرا گرفته و در هر کجا که مایل هستند به نیایش بپردازند. محققین تاکید مینمایند



فرشته یزدانی خطیبی

که شرکت در مراسم مذهبی کمک فراوانی به فرزندان، مینماید که در آینده زندگی خانوادگی سالمتر داشته باشند.

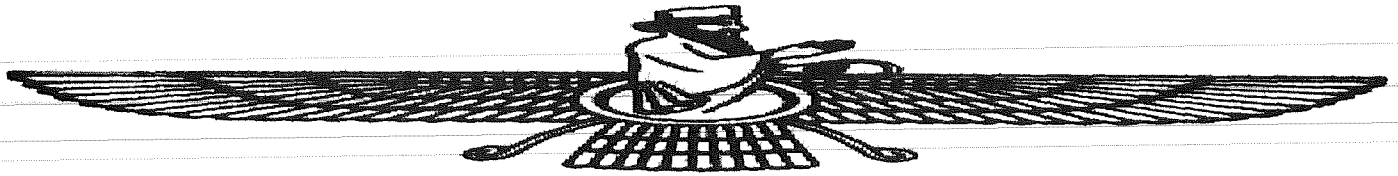
مذهبی یک تجربه مثبت برای جوانان میباشد. جوانانیکه اعتقادات مذهبی دارند کمتر موردتهاجم افراد نادرست و اعمال ناشایسته قرار میگیرند. اعتقادات مذهبی یکی از مسائل مهمی است که در پیشرفت جوانان اثرات مثبتی دارد. فرزندان خود را در مسائل مذهبی یاری و پشتیبانی کنید و آنها را با درستی های دین خود آشنا کنید.

عقد رضایت خود را بیا ن. کنید.

چنانچه از عملی که فرزندان انجام داده ناراضی هستید فوراً " همان موقع به آنها تذکر داده و دلائل خود را بیا ن. نشانید و با آنها وارد بحث و گفتگو شده. سعی کنید که به سخنان آنها گوش فرا داده و دلائل آنها را با دلائل خودتان مقایسه کنید. هیچوقت به آنها بی تفاوت نباشید اگر کار اشتباهی کردند حتماً " به آنها تذکر داده بی تفاوتی و عواقب بسیار بدی در زندگی فرزندان خواهد داشت. مادران نقش مهم تری در این امر بعهد دارند؛ فرزندان منتظر هستند که اگر کار اشتباهی انجام میدهند ابتدا با اعتراض مادران روبرو شوند.

سعی نکنید اگر آنها کار نادرستی انجام ندادند از آن بگذرید و بگوئید در آینده درست میشود. بزرگترین لطمه را به فرزندان خود نرود می آورید چون در اینجا او فکر میکند که شما به او بی تفاوت هستید.

به امید آینده بهتری از امروز و دیروز



~Youthfully Speaking~

“The mouthpiece for the next generation”

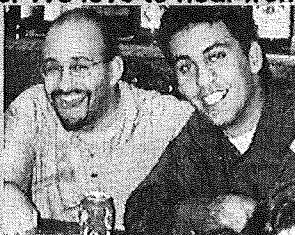
“Welcome to another edition of Youthfully Speaking! Our staff is always on the lookout for ideas and suggestions for future issues. We look to the youth in the community to supply us with their thoughts on the religion and community. Take this opportunity to let others know what is on your mind. Use 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...

If you could say that there is one characteristic that defines you as a Zarathushti, what would it be? On a similar note, what is the one characteristic that distinguishes Zarathushtis from non-Zarathushtis?

The one characteristic that defines me as a Zarathushti youth would be the fact that I help others. I strive to help others when I know that it will do well for them, and not affect me. It is our duty, morally, to help someone out when we possibly can.

Sasan Jamshidi
Montreal, Canada

A characteristic that defines me as a Zarathushti would be the fact that I feel this sense of duty inside myself that always tells me that I must do the 'right' thing. It might not make sense, but I always look at the consequences before making a decision, and I realize that the one that can do good for others, the one that doesn't do harm, will be the right choice. I feel as a Zarathushti, we are more religious than those of non-Zarathushti descent, and feel more attached to our religion.

Farshad Mirza
Atlanta, GA



ZOROASTRIAN STUDENTS ASSOCIATION OF UT

By: Nikan Khatibi



As I continue my trip around the globe, I decided to make a stop in Austin, Texas to visit the local Zoroastrian Students Association at the University of Texas main campus. What I witnessed there in Austin made me proud to be a Zarathushti youth. Four Zarathushti students, Amy Godiwalla, Xerxes Sidhwa, Ayesha Sagar, and Diana Engineer, started this students association in February of 2000 with good intentions. Their aims were simply to:

- 1. Further educate Zarathushtis about the Zarathushti religion and culture.*
- 2. Educate others about the Zarathushti religion.*
- 3. Unite the Zarathushti students of the University of Texas.*
- 4. Help the city of Austin through various community service projects.*

The Association's major functions are usually centered on important cultural and religious Zarathushti events. I would be stating the obvious when I remark that I was captivated by the dedication and hospitality of my fellow Zarathushtis. In a time when our religion is dwindling in number, I am proud to say that, at least in UT, the quality and dedication of the ZSA is great. The club has occasional get-togethers where the students share experiences, discuss problems, and debate over several cultural and religious topics.

However, what truly struck me was that such events were not nearly as grand as the first campus-wide Nouruz celebration that was a coordinated effort of the ZSA, Iranian Students Association, and the Bahai organization. The celebration displayed chalk decorations, free sweets, music, dancing, religious and cultural literature, and even featured a trivia game. The event was a grand success and was also aired on two local news channels and reported in the campus newspaper.

If this event has taught me anything, it is that our Zarathushti youth are a generation of leaders. As a college student, I can understand how stressful academic life can be. Accordingly, I feel that the fact that these students actually dedicate a vast portion of their time to planning such an event proves that they have a tremendous amount of character. It is almost a discouraging thing to come to an American university campus and see how there are religious groups and clubs for almost every other religion. The founders of this club must be given credit, not only because they were willing to take the initiative to have their own religion represented, but also because it will give the future generations of Zarathushtis at UT a chance to actually see their religion represented. My hat goes off to these four founders and to the officers that are continuing their established tradition. I can only hope that others nationwide, and even globally, will follow their example.





~Youthfully Speaking Editorial~

By Nenshad D. Bardoliwalla



On September 10, 2001, at 8 pm, I was sitting in a plane parked on a runway at Newark International Airport. Destination: San Francisco, California. Weather delays led the captain to believe that we could be sitting on the runway for at least an hour, and to advise us that, if we wanted to make alternate travel arrangements, we could get off the plane. My companion and I discussed traveling the following morning, but eventually decided that we should just stay on the plane and get back to California as soon as we could. We reached safely in the early hours of the morning of September 11, blissfully unaware of how close we were to being a part of one of the worst disasters in recent memory.

One amazing process we've witnessed since September 11 is the incredible capacity of the human spirit to help, heal, and rebuild. The surges in patriotism, volunteerism, and contributing to relief efforts have all been comforting to watch. Having witnessed and experienced the initial and lingering emotions of terror, many of us are now trying to use our emotions to fuel acts of good. Yet, a part of me is very weary that the emotional terror of September 11 may preclude us from using our good minds to make rational decisions about how best to proceed next as a nation. As Zarathushtis, I believe that our religion's emphasis on the paramount virtue of seeking truth can serve us well in these difficult times.

When emotions run high, our minds often fail to allow truth to be internalized objectively and evaluated judiciously. When truth itself is hard to come by because propaganda has taken its place, we have the classic politically combustible mixture of 80% emotionality and 20% information. Because our collective emotionality is at an all time high these days, we are very willing to go along with militaristic solutions to punish those who terrorized us. It makes us feel patriotic and vindicated, and our current polls indicate that the vast majority (90% and higher) of Americans support these actions. Yet common Americans have been shown exceedingly little evidence linking the perpetrators to these attacks in the name of protecting our national security. Worse still, all of our information sources (i.e., "The Media") are virtual clones of one another, devoid of independent thinking and analysis. If all our information comes from one source, it's a safe bet that we probably don't have all the facts.

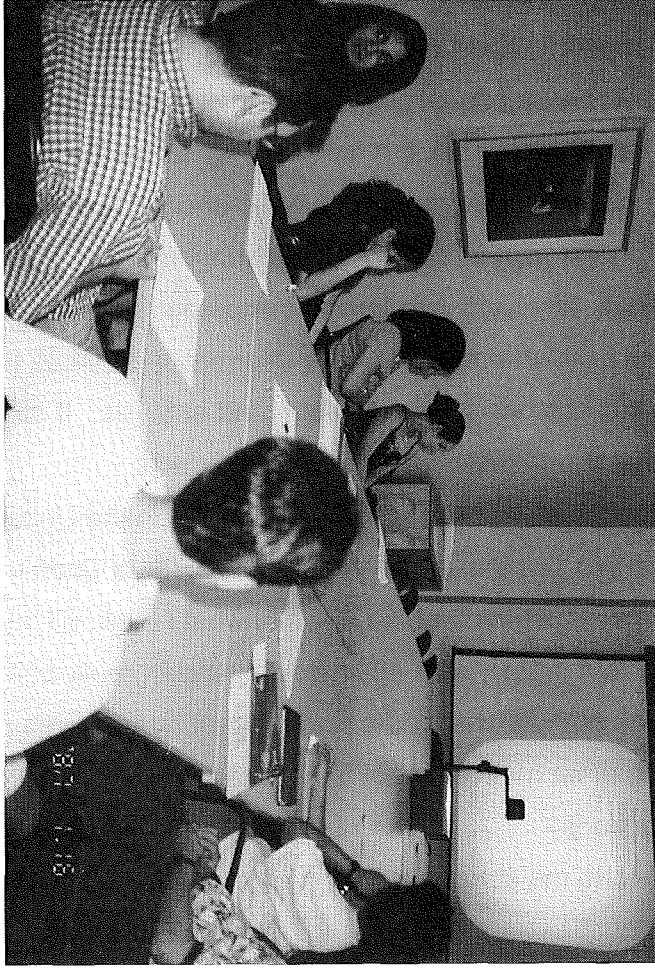
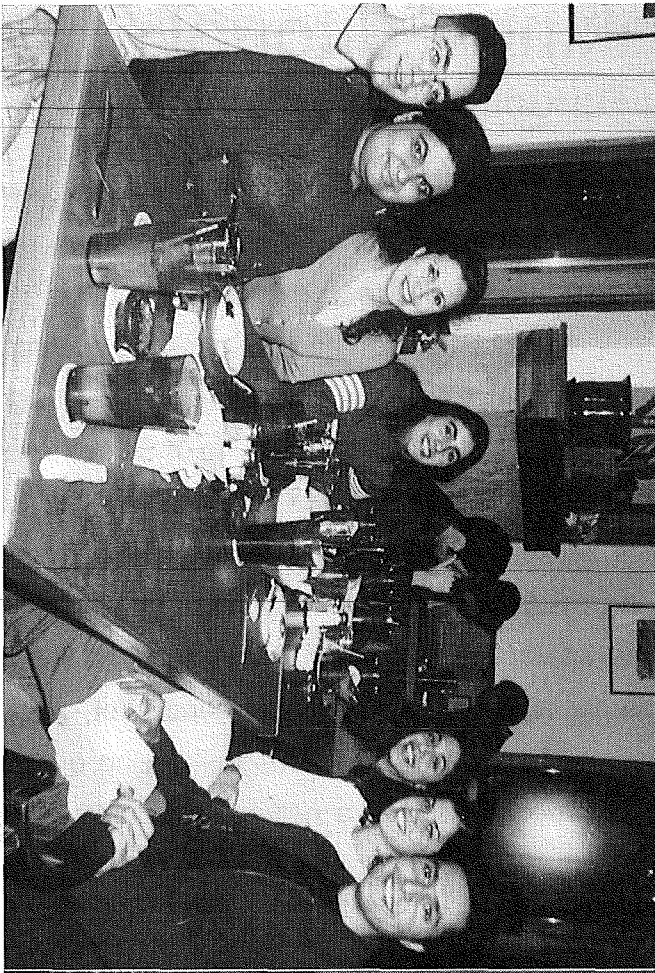
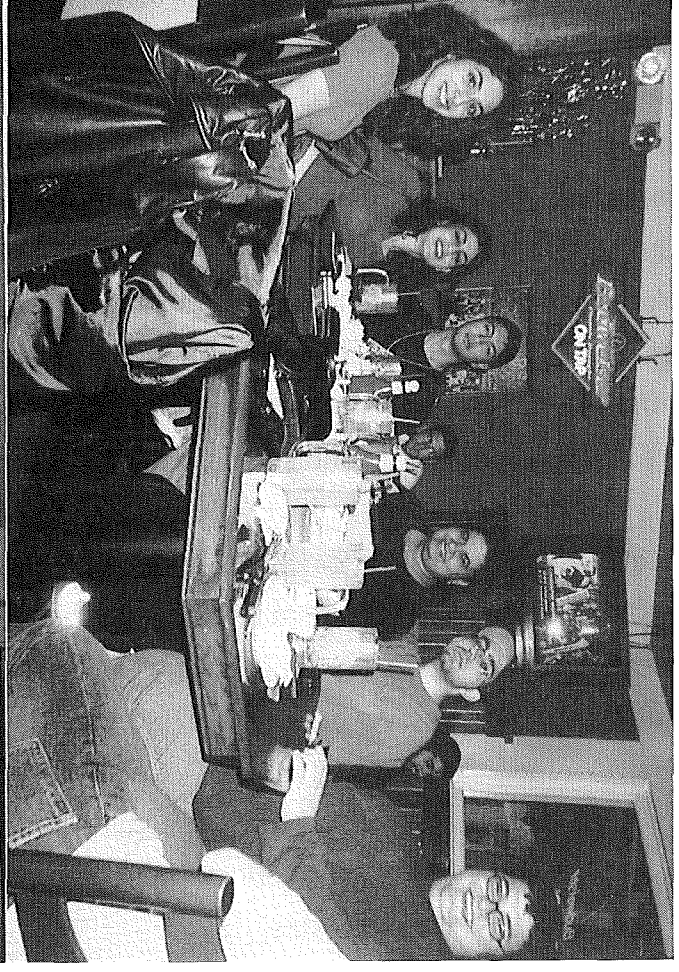
"One nation, under God, with liberty and justice for all." These are the final words in the United States Pledge of Allegiance. To be sure, all of us want to see those who wrought such terror upon us be brought to justice. But here are the questions that I pose to you at the dawn of what I think will be remembered as a new era in our history: Will the current military acts against Afghanistan really bring 'justice'? Will there ever be an end to the 'War on Terror'? At what costs too innocent human lives are

we willing to conduct this war? Could there be other motives other than "justice" behind our government's current military incursions?

As always, I welcome your individual responses to me at nenshad@yahoo.com.

Until next time...be safe.





Survival of the Zarathushti religion and culture, both in its motherland Iran and in India is indeed an amazing story that defies all statistical and sociological norms. In spite of the long separation and the two different paths that history has predicated upon the two groups, the number of similarities and the sense of kinship that exist between the Parsis of India and the Irani Zarathushtis is simply amazing. It is our hope that publication of this special issue of FEZANA Journal will help create greater awareness of the similarities and differences, and identify measures we need to adopt to ensure the future of our religion on this continent and the world over.

DAWN OF A NEW ERA

REUNION IN THE WESTERN DIASPORA

Guest Editors Ardeshir Anoshiravani and Mehrborzin Soroushian

Ardeshir Anoshiravani, M.D. was born in Kerman, Iran in 1944. He finished his studies in Tehran University, School of Medicine in 1968 and immigrated to the USA in 1970. He became a Board Certified psychiatrist in 1976 and has been in private

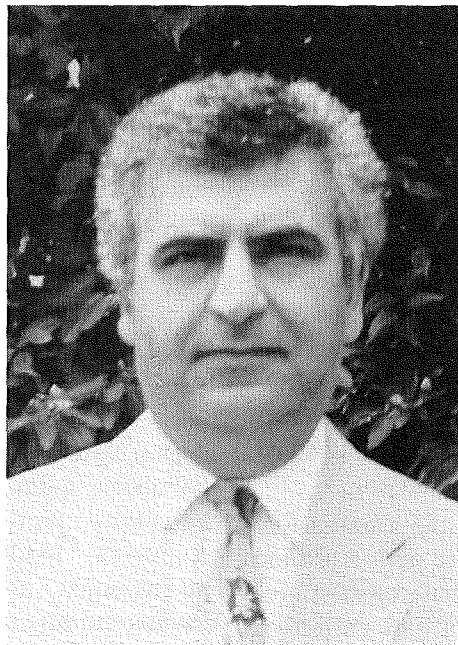


practice in Southern California for the past 20 years. Additionally, he is currently a Clinical Associate Professor of psychiatry and human behavior at University of California, Irvine Department of Psychiatry.

He is a past president of the board of directors of California Zoroastrian Center and a current life member of

this organization. He is also the past vice president of FEZANA.

In the past 16 years, he has been an invited speaker at many religious conferences and colleges, speaking about the teachings of Asho Zarathushtra and present condition of the Zarathushti community in diaspora.



Mehrborzin Soroushian, Ph.D. was born in 1952 in Kerman, Iran, where he undertook his schooling at the Kaviani and Iranshahr Zarathushtrian elementary and high school for boys. He completed

his BSc studies in Physics at the University of London, and his MSc and PhD at UCLA, the University of California at Los Angeles.

He is currently engaged in telecommunication engineering and lives in San Diego with his wife Mehrbanou and their sons Vishtasp and Viraf.

THE CHALLENGES OF PRESERVING A COMMON HERITAGE

The survival of the Zarathushti religion and culture, both in its motherland Iran and in India is indeed an amazingly unique story that defies all statistical and sociological norms.

Survival in India and Iran. It is miraculous that a small band of immigrants could establish their religion and their culture and eventually become a predominant force in the ocean of humanity called India. It is a well-known fact that in order for a group of people to be able to preserve their culture over a long period of time; they need to keep their size above a particular critical mass. The Parsis of India, even at the height of prominence did not exceed 170,000 souls.

To bring the best thinking in charting the future course of our community aimed at its survival and prosperity we need to analyze the measures and factors that not only enabled the Parsis over a period of more than 9 centuries to preserve their religious identity, but also to prosper and propel themselves into a position of national prominence. One can only presume that they compensated for their meager numbers by their intelligence, adaptive skills, religious vigor, truthfulness, open-mindedness and overall integrity as citizens of a huge and relatively tolerant country.

On the other hand, the Zarathushtis of Iran over the same period of time witnessed gradual but constant erosion of their ranks and authority. From the very beginning, after the defeat of the Persian Empire at the hand of the nomadic Arab invaders, they were faced with a group of zealous, violence-prone rulers and their newly converted cohorts bent on their destruction.

According to reliable historical accounts, it appears that at the beginning of the Safavid Shiite dynasty (about 450 years ago) there were still approximately 2 million Zarathushtis living in their motherland, Iran with a total population of 14 million. By mid 19th century, under Qajar rule, the Zarathushtis of Iran having suffered multiple genocides, and subject to systematic persecution, kidnapping of youth and their forceful conversion to Islam, and discrimination of all sort, had been reduced to a tiny community of 6000 mainly poor farmers deprived of their basic rights residing in the southern margins of the great central desert of Iran.

In only 30 years after the advent of the Pahlavi era of the 20th century, illiteracy was almost completely wiped out amongst the Zarathushtis over 40 years of age (the illiteracy rate for general population of the country was 85%) and Zarathushtis rose to the position of a very influential minority.

“ We indeed must be able to show the same degree of vigilance, adaptability, flexibility and intelligence that our ancestors manifested in their times, if we intend to prosper in the novel circumstances of this modern diaspora. ”

Very soon after this the children of those oppressed illiterate poor Zarathushti farmers became high ranking politicians, military leaders, teachers, university professors, physicians, engineers, industrialists, bankers, businessmen and philanthropists, leading the way towards the development of their motherland.

So far, with the exception of a few anecdotal writings, there has been no methodical study elucidating the secret of Irani Zarathushtis' survival under those unspeakable harsh conditions and their later rapid climb to

prosperity. Undoubtedly, their sense of historical dignity, their intelligent defensiveness and their righteous awareness of the wrongdoings of the aggressors, played a role in their survival and their eventual climb to prosperity.

Long separation. In spite of the long separation and the two different paths that history has predicated upon the two groups, the amount of similarities and the sense of kinship that exists between the Parsis of India and the Irani Zarathushtis is simply amazing. However, we should also pay close attention to, and manage the differences effectively and constructively to ensure that no wedge is created between the two groups. Ignoring the differences for an undue period of time may exacerbate the situation.

As a process of their adaptation over a period of many centuries, the Irani Zarathushtis may have been influenced by some of the Arab ways of behavior. By the same token, some Parsis may have unconsciously adopted certain Hindu, Christian and other practices, which are not readily recognized by their Irani counterparts as being necessarily a part of Zarathushti culture. Ultimately the Zarathushtis of the 21st century living in North America need to make an effort to purify their religious practices according to a better understanding of the teachings of their faith's founder.

In the modern diaspora. It is our sincere hope that the publication of this special issue of FEZANA Journal will help create greater awareness of the similarities and differences, and identify the measures we need to adopt to ensure the future of our religion on this continent and the world over. In this new diaspora, we desperately need to examine and determine what part of our forefathers approaches to their ethnicity and reli-

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.



Left, the late Ateshband couple of the village of Ghassemabad near Yazd, Mah Khorshid and Bahram Rashid, early 1900s. They are grandparents of Mr. Iraj Mavandadi of California. Right, young Kermani couple from the early 1900s. The child is Mr. Ardeshir Farhangi, now 87 years old, father of Shida Anoshiravani. [Photos courtesy Ardeshir Anoshiravani]

giosity are applicable and relevant in the context of our time and what parts have become anachronistic. We indeed must be able to show the same degree of vigilance, adaptability, flexibility and intelligence that our ancestors manifested at their times, if we intend to prosper in the novel circumstances of this modern Diaspora.

In this issue. Organizationally, the first few papers of this series cover the

evolution of the Zarathushti religion from its inception down to the 20th century, and the circumstances surrounding the arrival of large numbers of Zarathushtis in North America. The second set of paper explores the possibilities and prospects for the future of the religion a few centuries from now. The last grouping of papers focuses on measures our community must undertake now to enhance its future prospects.

We express our appreciation to the invited writers for their valuable and insightful papers featured in this issue, and hope that the readers will benefit from the discussions included. We are also hopeful that follow-up measures will be initiated by FEZANA, associations and the individuals to consider these recommendations. ■

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development of zarathushti communities in the homeland & diaspora

In recent decades differing religious ideologies have been springing up amongst the Zarathushti populations of the world. Previously, terms such as conservative, orthodox, progressive, neo-Zarathushti, Kshnoomite and Pundol were basically unknown to most Zarathushtis. In this article the author attempts to elucidate the history behind the current situation and analyze the basic differences between these philosophical versions from a historical perspective.

By Ardeshir Anoshiravani
Corona Del Mar, California

History. Until recently, there were only two recognizable groups in the world Zarathushti community, namely the Parsis of India and the Zarathushtis of Iran. Although, both communities have changed through many centuries, they have always kept their distinctive characteristics.

The Iranian Zarathushtis, with a few exceptions, have been basically in a *dignified survival* mode since the Arab invasion of 652 CE. The Arabs and their domestic surrogates did not leave them with any other viable alternatives. In spite of the valiant resistance which is adequately documented in the history of post-Zarathushti Iran, the Zarathushtis finally succumbed to the forces of a relentless discrimination, persecution and genocide.

It is noteworthy that the Zarathushtis of Iran, despite being relegated to the ranks of 'kafars', continued to be fairly influential and impressive, both in terms of their actual authority and their numbers for many centuries. However, with the advent of the Shiite dynasty of Safavids approximately 450 years ago, they gradually were thoroughly overwhelmed as a result of a more aggressive implementation

of their anti-Zarathushti and genocidal methods.

At the end of the Qajar dynasty about 80 years ago, the population of Zarathushtis in Iran declined to only about 6,000 souls (from at least 2 million at the time of the Safavids), consisting mainly of poor farmers residing in the villages surrounding the two cities of Kerman and Yazd. Interestingly, even during this period of oppression and despair, according to many reports the literacy rate among Zarathushtis was much higher than the general population. Among other factors, an enduring decree by the Islamic Mullahs of these two cities was responsible for this unintended distinction.

Apparently, it had become a customary practice that the Zarathushtis 'jizya' (nonbeliever's taxes) could be reduced by submitting a certain amount of Avesta and other religious texts for the purpose of offi-

cial confiscation and burning. Therefore, Zarathushti families were financially motivated to educate their children in order to be able to copy and bind the Avesta in sufficient numbers to preserve their meager means.

After the celebrated journey of Manekji Limji Hataria [photo below, courtesy of M. Soroushian] the most outstanding emissary of the "Amelioration Society" to Iran in

1854, the condition of the Iranian Zarathushtis began to stabilize. As a result of Parsi assistance to their less fortunate brethren in Iran, the population decline was controlled, Zarathushti schools were established, places of worship were repaired, new dokhmas were built, the practice of abduction of Zarathushti girls was curbed, and finally *jizya* was abolished in 1882. All these accomplishments served as a breath of fresh air for





A group of Kermani women and children of the Qajar era in the first decade of the nineteenth century [Photo courtesy of Mrs. Malekeh Kamdar].

the soul of the oppressed Zarathushti population and prepared them for the uplifting events yet to occur during the Pahlavi dynasty.

The history of the Parsis of India (and Pakistan) since their immigration from their motherland close to a millennium ago has been well documented. They seem to have been engaged in **preservation of their identity, dignity and religious beliefs** for themselves, as well as a journey of progress and charity for others.

Although they constitute a miniscule fraction of the massive population of India (only 0.01%), their scale of influence in every aspect of modern Indian life has been astronomically high. Indeed, the scope of their accomplishments in the areas of science, politics, philanthropy, military, education, and industry has been so great that even a mere mention of the names of the nationally prominent Parsis of the past century would be beyond the realm of this article.

Contemporary issues. The advent of the new circumstances in our

ancient religion are related to two factors: the rediscovery of the actual meaning of the Gathas and new technological advances.

Although Zarathushtis were “the keepers of the flame” of the Zarathushti din for at least three and half millennia, they did not have the ability to understand its message in its entirety for most of those centuries. It has been said that even at the time of Koroush (Cyrus) the Great, Iranians had no understanding of the Gathas, as the Gathic language was already considered a dead language. However, during the sixth decade of the 18th century, European philologists began showing an interest in the religion of Zarathushtra and started educating themselves about the language of the Gathas. Though initially they began with the assistance of some erudite Parsis, they continued their efforts independently for another century and a half.

This exciting linguistic endeavor has come to a full circle over the past

sixty years as Parsis and Iranians have assumed a leading role in analyzing and translating the Gathas of Zarathushtra. These efforts, and the light they have shed on Zarathushtra's message have opened up new horizons for the Zarathushti community.

First, many born Zarathushtis have been reintroduced to the original message of Zarathushtra's Gathas, often with life-changing effect. Second, with the development of staggering advances in worldwide travel and information technology, access to information about Zarathushtra's message has transcended its traditional bounds. As a result, there has been an unprecedented interest amongst many peoples of Persian stock and others who increasingly find the religion of Zarathushtra rational and consistent with a progressive way of life.

The Parsi reaction. The above new circumstances have created an obvious rift among the Zarathushtis of India who for a long time have thought of themselves as the guardians of the religion. Indeed for

many decades, both religiously and economically, they had a great deal to guard and preserve. Because of their success on both fronts, a large group of them continue to adhere to the same principles that had served them and their beloved religion so well for centuries. While a large number of traditionalist Parsis have raised their concerns about the aforementioned matters, a smaller group have reacted fairly vociferously and have been vocal about their concerns, both inside and outside India.

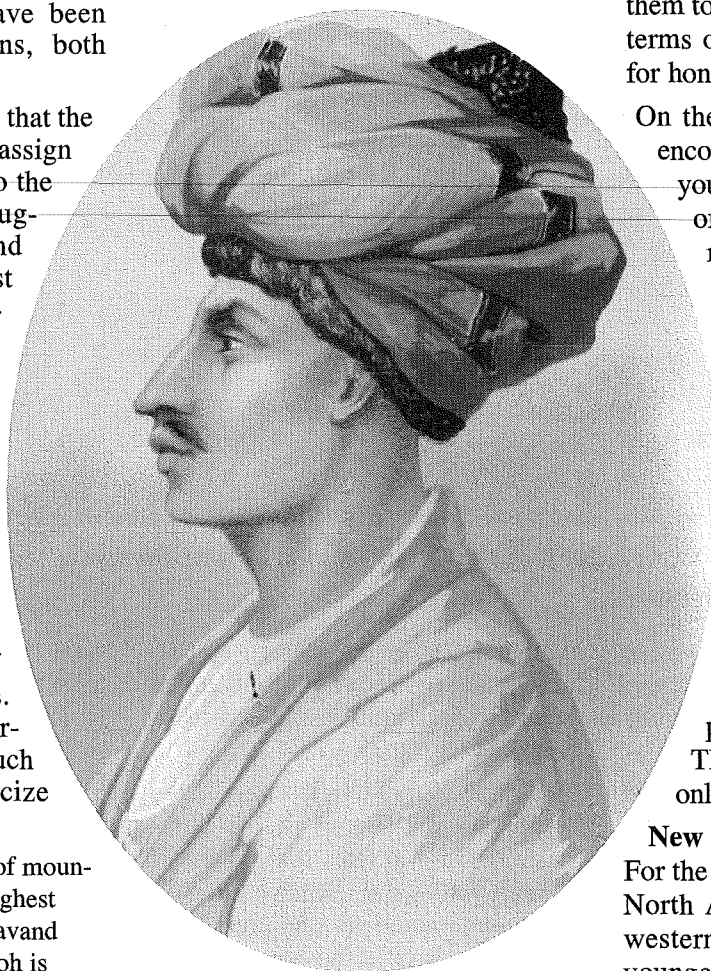
Their opponents often claim that the followers of these groups, assign racial and occult qualities to the religion of Zarathushtra, suggesting that the cultural and religious views of their host country have had a significant influence on their attitudes. Their detractors also accuse them of following the pre-Zarathushti philosophies and practices. The followers of *Ilm-e Kshnoom* (*Ilm* is the Arabic word for knowledge) and *Pundol* have distinguished themselves as the major representatives of these heterogeneous groups. Their progressive counterparts often use statements such as the following to criticize them:

"In Iran there exists a range of mountains known as Elburz, the highest peak of which is called Demavand Koh ... Part of Demavand Koh is invisible due to divine fortification with the help of our Avesta Manthra-vani according to the wishes of our great Prophet of Prophets, Vakshur-e-Vakshuran Asho Zarathushtra Saheb. This invisible part is called Demavand Kas ... also known as Baaten, i.e. hidden ... The total population of this place is about 12 to 14 lakhs ..."

The ongoing controversies have further defined the delineation between the "orthodox" and the "progressive" groups in the Parsi community and also have had some effect on the Zarathushtis of North America.

Iranian Zarathushti reaction. After the short-lived pleasant interlude of

the Pahlavi era, the Zarathushtis of Iran once again find themselves declining into the familiar defensive role of second-class citizens in their own land. Zarathushtis can no longer hold any positions of authority and leadership, whether school principal or military commander. Indeed, all Zarathushtis of different walks of life and various age groups are constantly,



Zarathushti man in Yazd, wearing the uniform that identified him as a Zarathushti, which made him a target for physical and verbal abuse. From a drawing by a French traveler, early 19th century [photo courtesy M. Soroushian].

consciously or subconsciously, preparing themselves for the eventual overt or covert assault that the next day might bring. Every student is in the state of readiness to respond to a teacher or classmate who might say something derogatory about his or her religion. Every businessman has to live with the fear of a new decree by a

local mullah threatening his livelihood as a Zarathushti; and they all collectively worry as to when some of their other liberties as official members of a small minority might be taken away by decree or law.

These anxieties have created certain instability and have caused further deviations from their traditional way of life, that historically had helped them to preserve a unique position in terms of a well-deserved reputation for honesty and truthfulness.

On the other hand, there are some encouraging signs. The Zarathushti youths who had fallen into a state of indifference regarding their religion, are becoming more aware of the freshness and appropriateness of the tenets of their religion. They appear to have adjusted to the new discoveries and controversies in their religion without embracing any extremist positions. The Zarathushtis of Iran seem to have easily accepted the central role of the Gathas, the possibility of converts, and the shedding of pre-Zarathushti concepts. They also currently adhere to only one calendar, unanimously.

New era in the second diaspora.

For the most part, the Zarathushtis of North America and the rest of the western world – particularly the younger generation – seem to have adopted a flexible and open-minded attitude regarding all the matters of controversy. They seem in particular to have an apathetic stance regarding extreme points of view. While they seem quite excited about the resurgence of the Gathas, they are equally diligent regarding the preservation of the good religious traditions. For example, the Iranian Zarathushtis who had become lax about navjote in the motherland, have experienced a renewed commitment toward this high religious tradition.

The Parsis, who in their ingenious ways were able to preserve the Zara-

thushti traditions while adjusting to the host culture and thriving in it, are uniquely adept at coping with the circumstances of the new diaspora. However, for a small minority from their ranks, adapting to the circumstances of their second diaspora seems to be exceedingly stressful. They appear to have forgotten about their own long and successful journey of adaptation, adjustment and flexibility. Consequently, they prescribe total adherence to all traditional concepts even the ones that are incompatible with the Gathas and obviously belonging to the pre-Zarathushti era. Unfortunately, these harsh attitudes have alienated their own children that in turn has alarmed them further.

Also, in the North American continent there has been a surge of individuals from a variety of backgrounds who have been attracted to the religion of Zarathushtra. This has caused a great deal of consternation and concern with a group of very devout and well-intentioned Zarathushtis of Parsi and Iranian origin.

These individuals feel quite puzzled by this new situation. They never before had to deal with this type of situation. For centuries, they have been psychologically prepared to deal with seeing people leaving their communities, either willingly or by force, but they have no experience for welcoming new converts to their ranks. Fortunately, due to the resilience of the majority of Zarathushtis this problem has not created any crisis in the community and does not seem to be capable of doing so in the future.

A major issue that requires urgent attention by the Zarathushti inhabitants of North America is the gradual shift of the locus of religious, scholarly and social authority from India to their continent. The way Zarathushtis of North America choose to manage their own affairs, will have a profound effect on the future of the Zarathushti din all over the world. ■

two branches of the family tree: iranian zarathushtis and parsis

We Zarathushtis have had a millennial separation, and have developed group personas shaped by two distinct and strong cultural environments: Hindu and Muslim. Our level of “differentness” is, in this context, not surprising. But it need not be permanent. I would suggest that with some hard work – namely, reflection on Zarathushti history – we will go a long way towards solving the “problem”.

By Rashna Writer
Buckinghamshire, UK

Approximately midway through its recorded history, between Cyrus the Great and the present time, Iran adopted a new Supreme Deity whose prophet and his book substituted the older, indigenous theology of its own native prophet. This seminal even in Iran’s history has implications for the Zarathushti world to this day; it marginalized the Zarathushti in the land of his fathers, while another part of the community sought refuge in a foreign land.

Historical events. To do justice in tracing historical events covering some thirteen centuries would take libraries to accomplish, but references to even a few brief sign-posts might help us understand present-day events. The Arab invasion of Iran inadvertently helped create two sets of Zarathushtis, those who hailed from Iran, and the Parsis from the Indian sub-continent. The Islamic Revolution of 1979 played its part in the migration of substantial numbers of Iranian Zarathushtis to the West, where they were to meet up with their Parsi kinsmen.

This historic event – the reacquaintance of the two sets of Zarathushtis in a truly foreign environment – has

been traumatic for some, and fairly baffling for others. By and large, both sets had remained in ignorance of the other, and thus the meeting in the western diaspora came as something of a shock. To the Iranians, the Parsis appeared “Hindi”; the Parsis on the other hand, were mystified by the lack of Zarathushti “ritual” in everyday Iranian Zarathushti lives. But there are reasons for these misunderstandings. We need to take the time to learn a little about our respective experiences in Iran and India, so that we can put both sets of idiosyncrasies in context.

The Islamization of Iran led to the emasculation of the Zarathushtis. By the mid-ninth century, the Abbasid caliphate, ruling from Baghdad, was at its prime; and antagonism between Arab and Iranian had yielded to antagonism between Muslim and non-Muslim. While the Zarathushtis managed to remain a considerable minority and experienced a brief renaissance in compiling, composing and editing Pahlavi literature, persecution of non-Muslims was intensified from the late ninth century.

In 917, the founders of the Parsi community left their native Khorasan, having abandoned hope of ever finding justice and peace under Muslim rule.

For those Zarathushtis remaining in Iran, there was worse to come: the plunder of Iran by the Seljuk Turks followed by the Mongol invasions. Fars had submitted to the Mongols early in their march across the plateau, and thus avoided large-scale slaughter. And it was here, in Fars, around the oasis city of Yazd and in the more remote province of Kerman, that the Zarathushtis came together to seek a final refuge for themselves.

Thus in a very real sense, all of us today are, in one way or another, descendants of those Zarathushtis who came to be domiciled in Yazd, Kerman and Gujarat. The socio-political conditions of these areas have played their part in all our personal histories.

The Parsis. In accepting the protection of the Hindu rajah, upon arrival in India, the Parsis were, by degrees to acquire a certain level of Indianization. Total assimilation into India has never convincingly been acquired, despite long residence in the country. However, outward manifestations of Indian influence are in evidence to the present day.

The Parsis acquired the Gujarati language and wore the sari in the particular style of the women of Gujarat. Other cultural adaptations, such as staining the forehead with vermillion, the wearing of red bangles by married women are, without question, adoption of Hindu customs.

The list of borrowings are in fact, legion. The congenial environment of Hindu India, as opposed to their collective memory of persecutions suffered in Iran, doubtless encouraged the Parsis to accommodate themselves to the culture surrounding them. Concessions made by the Parsis, originally to conciliate the prejudices of their Hindu hosts, and gradually as a product of acclimatization to their adopted country, did not, however, dilute their

intrinsic Zoroastrian-ness in terms of 'national' identity.

Even so, the Parsis remained a marginal group in India and were subject to the vicissitudes which affected the land. A reversal of the Mughal Emperor Akbar's policy of tolerance and the reintroduction of the *jizya* by his successors meant that Muslims were once again given precedence over other Indians.

Once the British arrived in India, Parsi fortunes were to change yet again. In 1661, Bombay became a British possession, and the new rulers of India encouraged the different 'nations' to manage their internal affairs through their own representatives in the developing metropolis. The Bombay Parsi Punchayet was constituted in 1728 to oversee the affairs of a burgeoning community.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Parsis had become the foremost economic figures in Bombay. Proximity to the English, their language, customs, education, form of government, resulted in the eager acceptance by the Parsis of the

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opportunity to fully avail themselves of educational opportunities which opened up careers in the sciences, law and government amongst others, while imbuing them with a respect for, and oftentimes deep attachment to the British system of governance. A certain level of assimilation into the 'English' way of life developed, more especially among the urban Parsis.

The special character of the Parsi community as it came to be, is com-

posed of three essential ingredients: its Iranian stock; the Hindu-Indian socio-cultural dimension, and its voluntary acceptance of Western (specifically British) educational and secular value system. These three factors may vary in magnitude among individual Parsis, but its impact on the group is evident.

Iranian Zarathushtis. The history of the Zarathushtis who remained in Iran, following the Islamization of the country was clearly distinct from their kinsmen who had found refuge in India. Those who survived in the "strongholds" of Yazd and Kerman remained a minuscule community with minimal contact with the world beyond. The 'gaur' or 'gabr', the pejorative terms in continuous use to describe Zarathushtis, were subject to systematic persecution. Their relentless decimation is well illustrated by one – among several – historical events. In 1719, the invading Afghan army which was to overthrow the Safavid dynasty, slaughtered an untold number of Zarathushtis on its march through Kerman. The Kermani Zarathushtis had been compelled by the Safavids to leave the city and live in the outer suburbs, which meant that they suffered the brunt of the Afghan onslaught.

Their lives were to remain harsh; during Edward Browne's visit to Persia (1887 - 88) he noted that "a Zoroastrian was bastinadoed for accidentally touching with his garment some fruit exposed for sale in the bazaar, and thereby, in the eyes of the Musalmans, rendering it unclean and unfit for consumption by true believers."

A major historical event in the not so distant past – the establishment by benevolent Parsis of the Society for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Zarathushtis in Persia – would, in due course, revolutionize the lives of the Iranian community. The truly remarkable Manekji Limji Hataria

began his career as the Society's emissary in 1854, and within some 30 years had, with Parsi financial muscle, helped establish Zarathushti schools, renovated dokhmas, atash bahrams, and much more. His greatest accomplishment was the abolition, in 1882, of the hated jizya.

The close cooperation between the more affluent Indian Zarathushtis and their depressed Iranian brethren is a remarkable chapter in the immensely long history of the Zarathushtis, where a faithfulness to the memory of their collective ancestry had been kept alive, and the striving for a better life for those less fortunate than themselves had continued until it was achieved.

Even though the jizya had been abolished in 1882, Muslim prejudices did not disappear simultaneously with the poll-tax. Dr. Rostam Sarfeh came to Yazd in 1910 at the age of two, having been born of Zarathushti parents in Kerman. When I spoke to him in 1989, among his reminiscences that struck a cord was his recollection that Zarathushtis were mandated to wear "special" clothes: "Turban, no shoes, only slippers". He spoke of: "... carrying a shawl, and if you have to go into a Muslim home, you must place this shawl on the floor and sit on it because we Zarathushtis are 'najes' (polluted). We could not wear anything black which was a color only for the Muslims ..."

Understanding our history. It is virtually impossible for the Zarathushti today, domiciled in the affluent West, to fully grasp the real hardships endured by those who grew up in Muslim Iran. An added complication in the re-acquaintance story, and arguably a source of much misunderstanding between Parsi and Iranian Zarathushtis, is the fact that neither side has factored into the equation the socio-cultural parameters of both India and Iran.

The underlying *raison d'être* of Hindu India is the notion of caste,

where every individual is ascribed his station in life according to the accident of birth. Although beyond the Hindu "catchment", the Parsi has been perceived as "upper caste"; to

“ Oral history has a vital role to play in the consolidation of group identity; the retelling of individual and group stories, from one generation to another should not be underestimated. No matter how technologically sophisticated we become. ”

which has been added the Parsi self-perception of "superiority", given their record of success and wealth acquired during the British Raj.

The Iranian Zarathushti has endured centuries in a Muslim environment, where the underlying rationale is that of universal brotherhood under the aegis of Islam, where those outside it are deemed at best, outsiders, at worst, as being beyond the pale.

Not surprisingly, the self-perception of the Parsi and Iranian Zarathushti is dissimilar. However, I do not subscribe to the view that our misunderstandings are inevitable and permanent. I do, however, strongly maintain that they are caused by, and made more intractable because we as a people, have paid insufficient attention to understanding our history, both written and oral. Oral history has a vital role to play in the consolidation of group identity; the retelling of individual and group stories, from one generation to another should not be underestimated, no matter how technologically sophisticated we become.

I will leave you with a thought. East and West Germany were separated after the Second World War; and the East was once again incorporated into the whole, some four decades later. Despite the short separation, the two sides have yet to affect an understanding of the other. We Zarathushtis have had a millennial separation,

forced on us through the circumstances of history, and have developed group personas shaped by two distinct and strong cultural environments: Hindu and Muslim. Our level of "differentness", one from the other is, in this context, not surprising. But it need not be permanent. I would suggest that with some hard work – namely, reflection on Zarathushti history – we will go a long way towards solving the "problem". ■

Dr. Rashna Writer has published and lectured widely on the Zarathushti religion and communities. She is author of "Contemporary



PHOTO: PARSIANA, NOVEMBER 1994

Zoroastrians: *An Unstructured Nation*, reviewed in FEZANA Journal, Fall 1994; and is co-author, with S.

Shahrokh, of "Memoirs of Keikhosrow Shahrokh", reviewed in FEZANA Journal, Spring 1996.

Roodaki [Contd. from page 28]

They all assured us that the shooting of Mr. Roodaki was because of a business quarrel over some large loan amounts, and had nothing to do with the Zarathushti religion ... there is no religious discrimination against Zarathushtis."

At this point in time, there is no official confirmation of the circumstances surrounding this unfortunate murder.

WZO sent two letters of concern and a request for bringing the perpetrators to justice, to President Emomoli Rahmanov, immediately after the murder. A letter of sympathy and condemnation of acts of violence was also sent by WZO to the leader of the Dushanbe Zarathushti Anjuman. ■

the religious tradition of zarathushtra and its future

What can the future of this religious community be? That will depend on how well the community will comprehend the teachings of the prophet; strive to understand the rituals; evaluate the social practices; and commit to holding the core of the teachings of the prophet and maintaining the rest of the tradition, appropriately adapted to the rational requirements of the contemporary world. Either it adapts or it perishes!

By Kaikhosrov D. Irani
New York, New York

It seems worthwhile to look at the long heritage of the tradition of the faith of Zarathushtra and view its complex history. Consider how much of it is part of the living faith of present day Mazdayasnis, and what could and can be preserved in the living future of an educated and an enlightened community.

The Avestan speaking Iranians in the North-Eastern region of their settlements lived an essentially tribal existence, in the latter part of the 2nd millennium BCE. They were pastoralists constantly at war with the neighboring tribe regarding pastureland, raiding each other's herds. They worshiped nature divinities who were to give them good pasture and comfortable living; but they also had a tribal divinity which protected the tribe and gave it identity. Other Indo-European tribes in India and the continent of Europe were in exactly the same situation. Religious rituals were mainly sacrificial offerings with requests for various benefits, particularly military success.

A transforming religious vision. It was in this environment that Zarathushtra preached a completely transforming religious vision. He rejected

the prevailing divinities as demons (daeva, in Avestan), evil because they manifested no moral concern. The old divinities were engaged in an exchange arrangement. They received offerings and lavish praise, in return providing benefits for the worshippers.

Zarathushtra claimed that he had received a vision from the One Divinity, Ahura Mazda, the Wise Lord. This vision is a complex of a moral perception and a moral directive. The doctrine, in brief, is that Ahura Mazda envisioned an ideal of evolving Goodness towards Perfection, called Asha, meaning the Truth. It is the Ideal Truth underlying Existence.

The universe created to achieve this is only partially successful. In the universe there are two moral directions; one to move towards realizing Asha; hence Good, Spenta Mainyu; the other to move toward frustrating Asha; hence Evil, Angra Mainyu (this term is not used in the Gathas, but used later). Thus Zarathushtra asks his followers to look at the world as a moral reality. The way of life he offers is one of striving to see what would be right in any given situation i.e. according to Asha, and implement it. Such action is the offering of faith a Mazdayasni should make to Ahura Mazda.

Notice the contrast between this religion and the pre-Zarathushtra tradition, as we itemize the principles we derive from the poetic wisdom of Zarathushtra:

An essentially ritualistic religion of offering and asking was replaced by a fundamentally moral vision of the universe, in which humans are to be viewed as co-workers of the divinity, who make offerings of their goodworks to Ahura Mazda.

Humans are beings granted freedom of will. Only a freely chosen faith can be an act of religious commitment. Hence, this is a Religion of choice, not of obedience.

The faith of the implementation of the chosen moral vision is directed to the human race and not to a tribe.

Whatever ritual practices one engages in must be either veneration of ideal creation of the divinity, and the good divinity Himself, or must be the expression of our commitment and resolve to the holy way of life; and be understood as such.

“ ... the pressing and drinking of the juice has no relevance to the religious message of the Gathas ... ”

Pre-Zarathushtra practices. There is no doubt that the first few generations of believers comprehended Zarathushtra's teachings. But probably within two or three centuries of the time of the prophet, earlier practices began to seep into the lives of the faithful. A very important one was the ritual and veneration of haoma. This was a divinity that resided in a plant supposed to bring spiritual visions to the devotees. In the Hindu tradition, this plant named soma, provided spiritual vigor, even to the gods. In the Mazdayasni tradition, the haoma juice is extracted and drunk with the accompaniment of the recitation of the 72 chapters of Yasna.

Historically, this memorized recitation preserved the Gathas, which constitute 17 of its chapters. However, the pressing and drinking of the juice has no relevance to the religious message of the Gathas, even though it may have had an abiding pietistic bond to the religious sentiment of the Indo-Iranian peoples.

The other tradition of pre-Zarathushtra days coming into the lives of the Mazdayasnis, was the veneration of minor-divinities, the Yazatas. Prayers, called Yashts, were composed to venerate them. Of course, they were, as one might say, Zoroastrianized, by having the divinities participate in the promotion of the Good against Evil. This practice may have helped in the spread of the faith in the countryside, where the prophet's teachings of commitment and responsibility may have been too abstract, and people looked for an avenue of devotion. But, though the Yashts add to our knowledge of ancient Iranian beliefs and its legendary history, they do not concern themselves with the Gathic way of life.

There was, one may be sure, some more material in the tradition, but all of it suffered destruction during the invasion of Alexander. After the end of the Seleucid period, during the Parthian period, efforts were made to collect the Mazdayasni religious literature from whatever sources one could find, and much material was saved, probably with casual additions. During the Sasanian period further collections were made, with the Magian addition of purificatory rituals. Rituals and prayers proliferated in this period of enormous social and political impact of the priests.

Post-Sasanian practice. At this time, i.e. the 7th century CE, Iran fell

to the Arab invasion, and the Mazdayasnis in an effort to preserve faith in the face of the Islamic proselytization, fixed liturgy, ritual and even belief. It is that which the dwindling community of Iranian Mazdayasnis, and Parsi migrants to India inherited. What was that? The teachings of the faith, not in the abstract form in which the prophet presented it, but

“Unfortunately for the community, most members do not understand the language of their prayers, nor their meaning, nor the commitment they are implied to be making.”

heavily mixed with the mythology of a book on Creation, called Bundahishn; a set of rituals, and a complex set of social practices to set the faithful apart. Added to that is a powerfully generated attitude to preserve and maintain the faith and the community; maintaining the tradition of commercial and religious life being the accepted method.

This is the present situation. The Zarathushti community world wide lives by religious and social practices which are essentially, with slight geographical variations, the residue of post-Sasanian Iranian practice of the 9th century when the dispersion started. To that may be added the social in-breeding tradition of the Magian priestly class, now generalized to the whole community. Unfortunately for the community, most members do not understand the language of their prayers, nor their meaning, nor the commitment they are implied to be making. But those devoted to traditionalism seem to

think that incomprehensible recitation, as long as it is traditional, makes them truly Zarathushti Mazdayasnis. For a religious tradition in which the prophet calls for a reflective commitment, is this situation not one of absurdity?

What can the future of this religious community be? That will depend on how well the community will comprehend the teachings of the prophet; strive to understand the rituals; evaluate the social practices; and commit itself to holding the core of the teachings of the prophet and maintaining the rest of the tradition, appropriately adapted to the rational requirements of the contemporary world. Either it adapts or it perishes!

When the so-called traditionalists call for maintaining a tradition, we must inquire whose tradition, and of what period, and for what purpose it was instituted. It must be seen to reinforce the core commitment of the faith in this day and age. If not, it performs no religious function in the minds and hearts of the believers; it may be made to persist out of sheer historical piety, but by its lack of intrinsic credibility it perishes and damages the attitude of faith in the believer.

Understanding with intelligence and making rational decisions regarding the commitments the faithful are called upon to make, is the demand with which the Mazdayasni religion can and will survive and flourish. ■



Professor Kaikhosrov D. Irani is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at the City College, City University of New York. In 1996, the North

American Congress awarded Prof. Irani with the "Lifetime Achievement Award". In 1998, his students and peers endowed the "K. D. Irani Chair of Philosophy" at City College.

*When you talk, you repeat what you already know,
When you listen, you may learn something.*

- Jared Sparks

planning for the future, mindful of the past

By Mehrborzin Soroushian
San Diego, California

We conceived the necessity of this special issue of FEZANA Journal in the aftermath of the 7th World Zoroastrian Congress in Houston in December 2000. This was the first time the world congress was hosted outside the main stronghold of world Zarathushtis, namely Iran and India. Being a combination of the 7th World Congress, the 11th North American Zoroastrian Congress, and the Zoroastrian Olympics it became the largest gathering in the history of Zarathushti world congresses, with over 2400 people from all over the world in attendance compared to previous congresses that had never exceeded 1000 attendees.

The ability to stage such a monumental event was confirmation of the capabilities that the relatively small but economically viable North American Zarathushti community of recent vintage can muster. Yet, the debates and political maneuvering leading to this gathering brought into focus the divergent views and challenges it presented to these new Zarathushti arrivals from Iran and from the diaspora in India and Pakistan to the shores of North America in the past few decades.

Genesis of the divergence. It is clear that since the separation of Zarathushtis a millennium ago, the evolution of the religion in its homeland of Iran and in the Indian diaspora have taken different paths. In Iran, the Sasanian version of the Zarathushti religion was deprived of patronage by

the State and was the subject of systematic efforts towards its destruction by the new rulers. With its followers subject to much hardship they gradually shed many of the elaborate traditions of the Sasanian era. The effect of the Iranian Zarathushti experience was an adjustment to new realities of their circumstances which got them through the darkest days in their history. Subject to incredible duress, the much diminished Zarathushti community of Iran managed a miraculous survival against all odds, and mostly stayed faithful to the vision of the Zarathushti religion as a universal faith.

The Zarathushtis in India, Parsis, learned quickly to manage their survival in hospitable India whose society included the caste-class system committing each group to an impenetrable and closed entity. This social alignment gave the Parsis a great degree of protection in the ocean of Hindu humanity. As intelligent and hard working people, the Parsis quickly adapted to their new environment, and became leading citizens, heading the charge towards modernization and independence of their adopted homeland.

All along, they held steadfastly to the version of the Zarathushti religion that the first settlers had taken with them to India from Iran. It is as though the view of the religion and its elaborate traditions as developed by the Sasanians was preserved and passed down through the generations in the Indian diaspora.

By contrast, in its birthplace of Iran, the practice of the religion of Zarathushtra was continuing to evolve by

Given their diverged religious experience, mindset and spiritual aspirations, the coming together of Zarathushtis from Iran and India, in the last quarter of the 20th century, presents unique challenges and opportunities for the North American diaspora.

its diminished followers whose heroic struggle to cling to their ancestral faith in many cases at the ultimate cost of their lives, is still one of the best kept secrets of humanity.

The coming together. Finally in the fourth quarter of the 20th century, the changing socio-political realities in Iran, India, Pakistan and the countries of the British commonwealth, saw the migration of a steady stream of Zarathushtis to the shores of the new world for settlement in the United States and Canada.

This coming together of the 'Zarathushtis-by-birth' in the new world, given their diverged religious experience, mindset and spiritual aspirations has had the making of a challenging coexistence. The reunion in the new North American diaspora presents Zarathushtis of the 21st century with unique opportunities not available to previous generations. It is likely the next generations of North American Zarathushtis growing up on this continent will be more united in their mindset towards their common heritage than their parents.

A profound challenge facing the current generation of Zarathushtis in the New world is whether they will find the courage to revert to the original, universal vision of Zarathushtra, or whether they will choose the historically modified version including the recent modifications, as the preferred way. This choice will have a major effect on the future of the community.

The aim of the articles featured here is to focus on matters warranting action, so that well advised decisions can be

defining a value proposition for the next century's zoroastrianism

Compiled by Natalie Vania

with input from Mazda Antia, Arman Ariane, DhunMai Dalal, Arthur Pearlstein,
Trity PourBahrami, Magdalena Rustomji, Shahriar Shahriari and Jamshid Varza

OVERVIEW FOR A VALUE PROPOSITION

The previous articles explored our ancient heritage and first steps transitioning to North America. For the future unfolding of the religion, we should provide its "value proposition" and explicate the singular vision of our religion in it. In subsequent papers, we'll see progressive and practical ways for the North American to implement the value proposition actively in the surrounding culture.

The religion of Zarathushtra will have a future-history far beyond our era and the lives of all whom we know today. Why will the future Zarathushti need the religion and what will be its value for our people in another hundred years? Let us project to the extraordinary future, asking that the stunning outlook of Zarathushtra is loved in a very distant time and wholesomely creates the surrounding world. We can ask three questions:

made. The next article captures thoughts surrounding future Zarathushtis. The other articles cover a wide range of ideas from community affairs, to taking an active role in the mainstream political system, to informing others of our unique identity. Supporting educational initiative discussions will be covered in a subsequent issue of the FEZANA journal. These are all critical measures to be implemented on individual and community wide basis to enhance the future prospects of our community. ■

(1) **What prototype?** What might be the profile of the future Zarathushti person? What prototype can we foresee? Perhaps we cannot predict how many Zarathushtis there may be or how far the ethnic backgrounds of future Zarathushtis will have shifted. Yet the prototypical profile will be someone who functions in a highly technological society and enjoys extraordinary access to instant information and communication.

Humanity exists now at the early threshold of a new information era. Advances in science and technology are occurring at an explosive pace. These advances will outstrip whatever our imaginations can foresee. The future Zarathushti will exist in a time resulting from unprecedented intellectual ferment and change. By valuing the Good Mind, Zarathushtis incur epistemic concerns, evidenced today by our people's high regard for education and literacy. So indeed, our future people may well be among those leading and using the intellectual growth from a new era.

As well as contending with the growth of knowledge, the future prototype will be a person dealing with the host of moral, political, social and cultural issues of the future time. Concerns such as society's protection for vulnerable groups and individuals, consequences of the biotech revolution and cloning, social change from globalization, altering political structures, and protecting the environment will be important for the future prototype.

Keeping the spirit strong throughout the challenges of new knowledge and challenges to values leaves a sure role for a Zarathushti value proposition.

(2) **The 100-200 year Zarathushti value proposition.** What will be the value of the Zarathushti religion to the people in one hundred or two hundred years who will call themselves Zarathushtis? Consider a challenge to religion. If people are highly intellectual, controlling their environment with little fear of the unknown, do they still have a need to assemble with co-religionists? Do the future people need to conceive themselves as Zarathushti or to call themselves Zarathushti? Suppose intellectually sophisticated future Zarathushtis lead principled lives, feeling little need for social gatherings, camaraderie and value reinforcement. What then is the need for the enlightenment offered by the Zarathushti religion?

Religion is of the spirit and the spirit needs support even when humanity is directed intellectually. Meaning, purpose, and significance are qualities found and reflected in spiritual depth. The distinct World Outlook or conception offered by a religious scheme gathers its force and resonance in a lived religious life of adherents. Well-loved philosophy (the study and love of wisdom), myth, tradition, and ritual convey the timelessness of the human quest to contend with life's eternal questions and challenges. Consider as well that intellect and religion indeed cooperate, rather than oppose one another, giving each a

deeper level of insight and applicability. The dangers of over-intellectualism grow when the chains of ignorance and fear upon the human spirit are not resisted. Religion can confront such chains and assist to locate us in the beneficent and light-inspired cosmos of Ahura Mazda. As we engage in an enlightened life, surety of our epistemic and moral commitments, and joyful wonder over creation, are gifts of spirit we may gather through religion.

Each great world tradition offers a distinct and valued outlook, and so too our religion. Followers absorb and reflect it as their living culture unfolds. What are the features the noble Zarathushti heritage gives to the future beyond today's horizon?

In considering this, we find there is value to us today in addressing the value of the Zarathushti religion for the future.

(3) Today's benefit from tomorrow's value. How can we benefit today from defining and internalizing the value proposition of the religion to the future prototype? What is the value to us in considering the future Zarathushti?

In the contemporary moral philosophy of the Academy, the subject of study known as "The Problem of Future Generations" inquires over the obligations present generations owe to future generations [Leading analytic treatment of the subject is offered by Derek Parfit in "Reasons and Persons", Oxford University Press, 1982]. As we think about (1) the future prototype and (2) the value of the religion to the future prototype, we contend with the problem of future generations.

Our consideration of future generations is so utterly real (rather than mere academic talk!), that we live and breathe the very concerns of the subject. Today's benefit from considering how the future prototype will value the religion is our contention with a moral quest. Our lives gather an added significance by that quest.

Capturing the 'value proposition' to the future helps us today to provoke

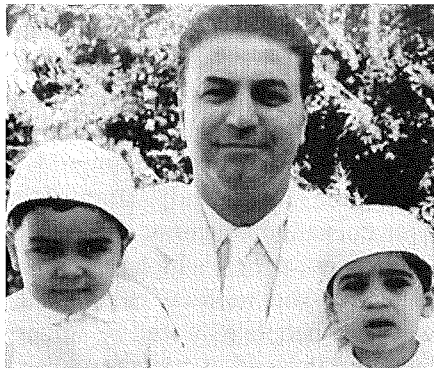
adherence and commitment to a Zarathushti way of life. It provides a 'why' for the undertakings outlined in later articles.

Each contributor for this section provides an article expressing a core understanding and appreciation of the distinct Zarathushti proposition. Each understands with his or her Good Mind, and fine aspects of the Zarathushti religion emerge with nuances or highlights each author thinks worthy of emphasis.

This is one way of giving our love to the bright future ahead, in which a thoughtful youth and an eager people will be holding Zarathushtra's message in their hands.

Let us start with Arman Ariane, who tells us of the special way a future prototype can be inspired by Zarathushtra's message to become an extraordinary person:

"Preserving values of an old faith in a new time and place, mandates a new way of conveying the essence of our heritage to the next generations. This method needs to offer a revised format from what was used in India and Iran centuries ago."



Arman Ariane is a long time participant in many Zarathushti organizations. He came to Europe and North America in 1975 from Tehran and pursued a course of study including history, geography and language. He is a businessman and lives with his wife and two sons in Los Angeles.

PRESERVING THE GOOD RELIGION IN THE NEW ERA

The declining numbers of Zarathushtis is a common concern of all different groups of the community. As reformist or traditionalist, liberal

or fundamentalist, many of us share the fear of extinction. As a result of that, interfaith marriage and conversion are some of the hot topics of many Zarathushti forums.

I'd like to bring up another factor, which is a cause for the ever-shrinking state of the Zarathushti community in the last millennium, an issue overlooked by many Zarathushtis.

This is an era when people perform religious mass suicides right here in the modern world, a time when people kill and get killed to serve God on all corners of the planet, an era when animal sacrifices are the rituals of so many cultures. I am not referring to the 10th or 11th century, I am talking about the 21st century, when black magic and the usage of human body parts for religious ceremonies are on the rise.

So, how do we promote a faith free of superstition in times like these? How do we preserve the religion of Zarathushtra, a doctrine gifted to humanity 4,000 years ago, but still well advanced for today's mankind?

Even some of the more moderate religions use a sense of fear and guilt to gain the commitment of their members. Fear of God and hell by some and the sense of guilt of a sin never committed but which we are born with, are some of the means used by these fast growing religions. One cannot use any of these means in the religion of Zarathushtra. Here one has the best Truth to promote Truth itself as we see in the *Ashem Vohu* prayer. The prayer recommends being good for the sake of goodness itself and not out of fear or for a reward. Manifestly, where God is Ahura Mazda "Supreme Intelligence" and the friend, our verses are progressive and fresh. The Messenger is an environmentalist opposing superstitions.

How is it possible to promote these thoughts in a time when modern man is still a believer of supernatural events performed by prophets of doom? History is full of tales of wars, massacres and other atrocities by religious leaders.

It seems that the only way to pass on a belief or "Do's" and "Don't's" to the

next generations is to attach them to some sort of a story.

We are born as a being and as we grow, we are taught varied stories, which supposedly happened in the past. We eventually become a part of the story ourselves and forget, that we are beings in the present. There is a 'domain of events' (something that happened) and there is a 'domain of interpretation' (putting a meaning to what happened, such as the murder drama of a prophet). But these two domains collapse, creating a vicious circle that traps humans. This is also described as 'determined destiny' or 'experience before doctrine' by some scholars.

Zarathushtra's Gathas have no bloody drama and no 'vicious domain' to trap common people. Could this be another reason for the shrinking state of the Zarathushti community? In spite of conflict with Zarathushtra's Gathas, there are Zarathushtis who have to rely on pre and post Gathic superstitions in order to maintain devotion and commitment for the preservation of their ethnic identity.

But how about preserving the Good Religion? Are there other options, other than adding stories to Zarathushtra's doctrine and creating a vicious circle?

Preserving values of an old faith in a new time and place mandates a new way of conveying the essence of our heritage to the next generations. This method needs to offer a revised format from what was used in India and Iran centuries ago.

There is hope. Advancing science and logic are giving new hope to intellectual development. More and more are earnestly searching for higher Truths. One can see the rising interest in intellectual doctrines within Buddhism, Sufism and certain modern thought-provoking orders. Intellectual growth is on rise so much so that one can foresee that people with (only) blind faith will be, sooner or later, enlightened.

In the 'first world countries', modern ways of education are on the rise.

One thought-provoking educator is reported to have successfully transformed over hundreds of people yearly all over the globe. In only three days the educator switches individuals from superstition to a belief in integrity and righteousness.

"Power listening, breakthroughs, transformation, self-expression, enrollment, possibilities" are thought to be keys to this method.

Transformation is the genesis of a new realm of possibility. With this method, you are able to leave the past in the past, to step beyond the limits of your identity and to move into a future mapped by what is possible, not just by what has been.

In only one weekend, individuals shift from believing in stories to believing in the power of integrity. They transform themselves from superstitious to extraordinary enlightened people.

Starting confused on a Friday morning, they finish the course on Sunday, high with a new way of thinking. They go back to their lives on Monday transformed. The group comes back together on Tuesday to share what every one of them experienced that Monday as a new person, enjoying the power of righteousness, dignity and the powerful ethical means which originated from the doctrine of Zarathushtra.

Transformation in such a short time is created by an emotional roller coaster (of crying and laughter) which leads the participants to 'breakthroughs' and not easy answers, tips or rules. Breakthrough is thought to be best understood by direct experience than by explanation or description.

Breakthrough is something unpredictable that brings a new dimension and casts a new light on the situations and events that make up our lives.

Zarathushtra is such a breakthrough, but a breakthrough in what is possible for humanity, a breakthrough in *Asha*. That's why his verses are '*manthras*' (thought provoking). The religion of

Zarathushtra is a means of gaining insight into fundamental premises that shape and govern our lives, the very structures that determine our thoughts, our words and our deeds.

His message is in extraordinarily powerful songs. He was probably the first and best Narrator of Prolific Proportions, a 'forum leader', who could convey his message in an inspirational way, that could lead the laity to breakthroughs. He had the ability to transform superstitious people of 4,000 years ago to a standard of thinking, way above today's modern man of the 21st century. He was a *Saoshyant*.

He must have put King Vishtasp in an emotional roller coaster and led him to breakthroughs in order to transform not only the emperor, but also his entire empire!

There is only one way to preserve and promote the Good Religion in today's world and that's Zarathushtra's way.

He was able to present miracles, which would rise out of goodness, integrity, righteousness and love. With these miracles, ordinary people become extraordinary and powerful individuals, who refuel themselves by enlightening others with the new discovery. Silent people discover the powerful tool of 'self-expression'.

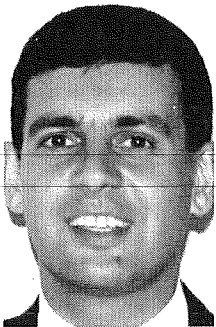
Enrollment in promoting the new way of thinking is the essence in preserving the cause.

Future Zarathushtis a hundred years from now may be extraordinary people who truly have the idea expressed in the Ashem Vohu prayer at the center of how they live. Unlike the caste system in India, they will be living in a cultural melting pot, unlike in Iran and India they will have to promote the religion in order to preserve it.

Listen to the thought provoking songs, experience breakthroughs, witness the miracles, enjoy the benefits of being an extraordinary individual and enroll yourself in promoting the Asho way of life in this new world. ■

Shahriar Shahriari expresses the value of *The religion of Zarathushtra* now and in the future in its special approach for happiness:

"In Ahura Mazda's hospitable and friendly world we can be at our best and choose to be happy only if we are also free to choose being miserable. Happiness is found in having a deep spiritual sense of our world."



Shahriar Shahriari is the author of "Thus Spake the Real Zarathushtra" and "The Z Factor", as well as the creator of www.Zarathushtra.com.

Shahriar and his wife Mahboobeh currently reside in Los Angeles.

HAPPINESS

Happiness be the lot of him who works for the happiness of others.

May the Lord grant him health and endurance.

[Ys. 43.1, D. J. Irani translation]

Or should we say, "May the Lord grant him the patience, the serenity and the sense of martyrdom needed to put up with the failures, the ridicule, the alienation, and the spurn of those whom he serves!"

For what kind of happiness is it, if it is to be mandated? If it is stated "Thou shalt have happiness, only and only if thou workest for the happiness of others", happiness becomes nothing more than an externally imposed rule. Yet another scale on Nietzsche's dragon!

A 'Thou shalt' commandment can lead to nothing more than a sense of guilt and contempt. "Thou shalt be spiritual" can only lead to contempt for spirituality, and the adherent would follow the commandment only for the fear of not being spiritual, and for avoiding the possible consequence of disobedience.

Likewise, "Thou shalt be happy..." can only lead to contempt for happi-

ness, which in turn will lead to unhappiness. Happiness that is imposed through the force of fear, guilt or limitation is not, and cannot be true happiness, just like "Thou shalt be free" is an injunction to impose freedom, which itself becomes dictatorial and enslaving.

So what was Zarathushtra talking about? Zarathushtra was talking about a deeper level of happiness that comes not from a compulsion to serve, but from an innate impulse to connect and to bring joy to others.

A deep spiritual understanding of our world can only lead us to recognize the interconnection among all of us. Such understanding makes us realize that we are not separate, that your happiness is my happiness, and my happiness is yours.

This understanding will also help us realize that I am most alive, not when I move or act, or achieve, or accumulate. I am most alive when I am in touch with my uniqueness, and work towards contributing and giving away my gift. The gift that only I can bring to this world, and that no other comes close to in the unique quality of my contribution.

As a corollary, we allow others to also contribute their unique gifts to the world, and become willing to receive their gifts into our lives. What's more, we can be most effective when we work on the thing that we are most effective at – and that is our unique contribution. We become energized. We experience a sense of vitality. We become unstoppable. Thus, we push the boundaries of the quality and the scale of our contribution.

The "others" who become the recipients of our contribution, can gain the maximum benefit from what we excel at, which is nothing other than our gift.

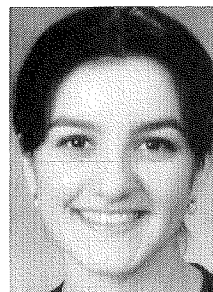
The genius of the design of this physio-spiritual universe is that it is completely interdependent. We make others happiest, when we are at our happiest; and we are at our happiest, when we make others the happiest we possibly can.

This is why Zarathushtra says, "May the Lord grant him health and endurance." May the Lord grant us the physical health to be able to utilize our gift, and the mental health to be able to discern our uniqueness, give ourselves permission, have the courage to manifest our gift and thus contribute to our world.

May the Lord grant us the endurance to overcome all obstacles and all failures, real or imaginary; as well as to not be swayed by the nay-sayer, the jealous or the resentful. ■

Trity PourBahrami wishes Zarathushtris share a passion for taking an active role in the community:

"Individuals have the power and responsibility to "renovate and renew" the world [Ys. 30.9]. By taking an active role and striving to make a difference in our local, national, and international communities, we will not wait resigned for another at the end of time to cleanse our mistakes. ..."



Trity PourBahrami is an active member of the North American and world Zarathushtri community. She works in the field of International

Health with a special interest in Women's Health. She has recently become engaged to a wonderful man who shares her passion to take an active role in the community. Trity resides in Ottawa, Canada.

THE CHOICE TO

RENOVATE AND RENEW THE WORLD

A unique and empowering aspect of Zarathushtra's philosophy is that the individual is given the power and responsibility to "renovate and renew the world" [Ys. 30.9]. What does it mean to renovate and renew the world? Where do we start? Within the family? Locally? Nationally? Internationally? How do we go about it?

We can begin by becoming more aware of the daily opportunities we

have to make a choice. Often, when shopping we look for sales, the popular brand, or the brand we are accustomed to purchasing. We may buy Kraft Macaroni and Cheese because it is on sale, but are we aware that a percentage of the company's profits will fund tobacco companies? Buying Nike shoes will help the teenager "fit-in" better at school, but it may also support sweatshops and child labor? It is not a matter of being immoral or moral, bad or good, wrong or right. It is a matter of being aware of our choices.

In life we often fall into a routine or habit. This may bring continuity and comfort to us, but at the risk of not making the best choice. When doing something out of habit, we rarely take the time to consider the alternatives before choosing the habit. Therefore awareness of our choices is one way to approach the objective of renovating and renewing the world.

To be confident of our choices, we need to have a good awareness of our surroundings. Gaining such a realistic and up-to-date understanding of our surroundings is difficult and requires continuous commitment. For instance immigrant parents, who are working extremely hard to ensure their families have every opportunity, may not have the time and energy to continually update themselves on popular culture. Suppose one such parent is asked by her child for a music CD by a popular artist. Would the parent deprive her child of such a simple pleasure? What if she knew that the artist's lyrics promote abuse and domestic violence? By buying the CD is she supporting domestic violence? This example is not intended to criticize one choice over another. It is to highlight the importance of being aware of our surroundings before making choices.

Other factors to consider when making the choice to renovate and renew the world are the many resources available to us. These resources include facilities and services as well as other individuals and groups.

Zarathushtra states "May we be among those who ...", hence implying that there are others who have the same vision. There are many in our local, national and international communities who share our objective to renovate and renew the world and they face challenges similar to our own. They may come from different cultures and faiths, but this is a great asset in tackling the complex issues of our times. Diversity is not only essential to the survival and success of a species, but also to that of a community. In the previous example of the choice to buy the music CD, the immigrant parent may gain more insight into the issue by sharing her child's request with a friend or colleague who is more aware of popular culture. This may seem like a trivial issue on which to consult another but it can help break communication barriers for discussion of more significant issues.

The tragedy of a Zarathushti family in Vancouver, where three lives were taken and two children were orphaned, may have been prevented if the lines of communication, between the family and the larger community were more open. How many of us know about the resources available to women and children who are abused? How many of us feel comfortable enough to discuss the issue of domestic violence within the community? To be among those who are renovating and renewing the world, we need to become familiar with the plethora of resources available to us at the local, national and international levels.

Zarathushtra's vision of renovating and renewing the world is a source of inspiration to all that have the opportunity to learn about it. As North American Zarathushtis we can choose to be empowered by this vision and take responsibility or we can choose to take comfort in our habits. Let us make the choice that will ensure a brighter future for our great grand children. ■

DhunMai Dalal is attuned to the great shifts in geopolitical terms affecting the future generations.

"Geopolitical change will be immense. We can make the best of that change to enjoy and build a strong, thriving and united Zarathushti community."



DhunMai Dalal is a Zarathushti community leader who has led the Zoroastrian Association of California, Zarathushti Congresses, and

global initiatives. She lives in Los Angeles with her husband, sons, and new grandchildren.

GEOPOLITICS FOR A NEW CENTURY

The geopolitics of this new century will affect our Zarathushti community as it will all society. The global marketplace and socio-economic changes will be so great that Zarathushtis all over the world should look forward to a dynamic, vibrant and prosperous 21st Century. Leading these developments will be the technological revolution that has already begun. "The world is moving so fast, these days that the man who says 'it can't be done' is generally interrupted by someone doing it." wrote the publisher, Elbert Hubbard.

As an optimist, I see many positives in what are construed today as negatives. The present day diaspora is a great threat as many of our community are lost to assimilation not only through inter-marriage but by adoption of new beliefs in their new environments. We try harder to create successful congresses and promote an inclusionary attitude. The tragic uprooting of families from Iran during the revolution of 1979 presented Zarathushtis, especially the youth, with the opportunity to meet their kin, originally from the sub-continent. What joy! To make friends, to

play together, to marry each other and learn from one another for the first time in centuries.

Today's differences will be forgotten, as future North Americans will have one culture – enjoying the same food, music, dance, dress, language and life-style and remain as yet, distinctively Zarathushtis. Hopefully, growth in our numbers should increase and should be encouraged. Families must stay together and parents and grandparents preach and teach our Prophet Zarathushtra's great message to our children and grand-children. It will be our faith that binds us.

Not having a homeland, perceived as a negative, can be also a positive as Zarathushtis venture to areas of the greatest growth and advancement. We are citizens of the world and certainly have great opportunities for leadership, influencing the nations of the world in the pursuit of freedom of speech, freedom of thought, freedom from want and freedom of religion. At the least, with our highly educated community, I foresee many Zarathushtis heading large and small corporations and businesses, being in the forefront of all professions as doctors, biochemists, lawyers, teachers, scientists, traders and even politicians as all opportunities are open in secular nations such as the USA and Canada. Samuel Goldwyn once said: "I think luck is the sense to recognize an opportunity and the ability to take advantage of it. Everyone has bad breaks, but everyone also has opportunities."

Some of our fellow Zarathushtis in the old country fear change as disruptive and frightening. They proceed to divide us and consider it beneficial if we go our different ways. But change is inevitable. Only evolving societies can survive. Are Zarathushtis that no longer cover their heads or arms and legs or women that continue their everyday work without sitting apart during menstruation, considered non-Zarathushtis? The active, changing society has made us healthy and in step with the times. Are Zarathushtis living outside the old countries over-

seas, without the consecrated temples and without the traditional Towers of Silence, considered non-Zarathushtis? Of course not! Then there are those others, who fight for a rapid change, see separation between the two ideological groups as inevitable and also encourage that division. Both sides are wrong! The silent majority wants unity.

In the interest of unity, we can even show our patience with less than reasonable viewpoints and still be ahead when considering the future of our community. To keep us united and as one society, we must uphold our traditions and respect our forefathers who gave us so much to be proud of – our self-sufficiency, our unity, our charities and our freedom to practice our great religion. The education, the progress and the dynamic optimism learned in keeping with our Gathic traditions and philosophy has helped us in the past and will help us in the future. We are and will be what we want to be! We are one miniscule co-religionist group that must be united and find strength in that unity.

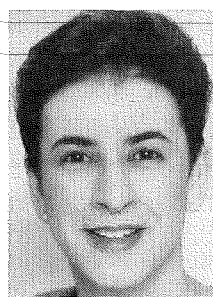
World Zarathushti organizations or cohesive global groups must not be political. As the representative of all the regions of the world, a global organization should not be partisan. Today's trivial arguments between Zarathushtis will appear petulant and unimportant to future generations who strive to perfect the Gathic message of Zarathushtra in a more progressive and morally advanced civilization. Our world bodies should work for all Zarathushtis for our social, economic and educational health. A world body must promote unity. Even if the regions of the world are opposed politically, it should not affect our community. We must protect our own. That will be our success and indeed our survival.

The eminent Dastur Maneckji Nusserwanji Dhalla wrote, "Our millennium of perfection lies ahead of us, and we are advancing toward it. Hope bids us look ahead, and ahead lies our way to the perfect world that is in the making."

In conclusion, I see Zarathushtis all over the globe in an inter-connected world as a very successful and dynamic people. May Ahura Mazda always protect and guide us! ■

Natalie Vania thinks the future prototype will be moved by four touch-points of Zarathushtra's vision:

"The future Zarathushti, Spithrodates, will be a contributor in an eternal process of Truth, Light and Right towards frashokereti, and Existence made brilliant by Truth."



Natalie Vania is one of Springfield, Illinois' first Zarathushtis. She is a Doctor of Philosophy, taught as a Professor, and is a Charlotte W.

Newcombe Fellow of The Woodrow Wilson Foundation. Recent work has brought her into association with Silicon Valley's venture and entrepreneurial communities.

A VISION FOR SPITHRODATES: LIGHT, TRUTH, RIGHT AND FRASHOKERETI

Spithrobates was a Zarathushti youth. When he was eighteen, he attempted to obstruct the entry of Alexander into the Persian Asia Minor territory. In hand-to-hand infantry combat, the attempt cost his life.

"To the Persian [Spithrobates], it seemed as if this opportunity for a single combat was god-given. He hoped that by his individual gallantry Asia might be relieved of its terrible menace, the renowned daring of Alexander arrested by his own hands, and the glory of the Persians saved from disgrace ... the Persian drew his sword and drove at Alexander; but the king recovered his grip upon his lance in time to thrust at the man's face and drive the blow home. The Persian fell, but just at this moment, Rhosaces, his brother, galloping up brought his sword down on

Alexander's head with such a fearsome blow that it split his helmet and inflicted a slight scalp wound. As Rhosaces aimed another blow at the same break, Cleitus ... dashed up on his horse and cut off the Persian's arm." Next, Spithrobates was felled.

[Plutarch, Alexander, translator, John Dryden.]

One hundred years from now a Zarathushti youth, call him Spithrodates, will meet no such stark end. Rather Spithrodates, I hope, will do college lessons in an advanced age. During an age of learning and contributing to shared betterment of the human prospect, the glory of the Zarathushti heritage and vision will sustain Spithrodates.

The vital Zarathushti outlook incorporates a distinct understanding and evaluative thrust towards the universe and our place in it. The outlook lies behind much in world thought over thousands of years and its resonance with the human condition insures it will always serve at the center of life. Whether people have awareness of Zarathushtra's particular offering of the Zarathushti vision, its aspects inform the condition of humanity and thought, and so will continue to touch the human spirit. The vision Spithrodates will share resounds in the four shining touch-points of Light, Truth, Right and Frashokereti.

Throughout the sun-filled Persian landscape, Light informs our basic human situation. The very universe itself is construed as cleaved into Light's brilliant clarity and obscure darkness. From the start, the cosmic terrain is profoundly normative, as Light carries a beneficent association with Truth. Bathed by the sun's light in the striking Persian steppes, people gather its sustenance for pastoral life, food, warm shelter, and connection with a wider atemporal, aspatial cosmos. Sustenance fortifies mankind against cruel cold and plunder aided by darkness.

The metaphor of Light is co-joined to Truth, the most powerful and singu-

lar virtue of the Zarathushti system. Nowhere in world thought is the regard for Truth higher than in the Zarathushti. Indeed, Light itself may be thought Truth construing, as it removes the hiddenness by which deceit typically operates. Truth is both descriptive and normative. In distinction from deflationary accounts of Truth, Truth both represents the world with the one-to-one accuracy presumed in Aristotelian thought and implicitly persists along a trajectory of cosmic structure by which incremental and enduring progress attains in its furtherance. Truth is "the Highest Virtue" for the individual respecting it and the underlying vector of unfolding world history. As the Highest Virtue, other virtues or excellences, are subsidiary and incorporate in it.

To think, speak and act for Truth is to act rightly. Right action of the individual is placed within the grand cosmic scheme of the Zarathushtrian vision and sets the standard for what constitutes a happy and good human life. One is tied to the wider universe in their right act and morality then is a connection a person enjoys beyond the constraint of one's particular temporally and spatially situated location. One's choice of rightness, by one's Good Mind, incorporates one in a larger moral project.

Brilliant Light, the metaphor so in service for the picture of what the world is like, must have offered our antiquity a very hopeful concept regarding the trajectory of history. Frashokereti, the world made fresh and new, is that acme of the historical vector. Though Truth be abused, individuals suffer in its behalf, and travesty arise, the incremental and never-ending unfolding of action, time, and cosmos leads in the direction of a Light-filled world, bright and strong. The normative thrust in the vector of history and Truth is towards such a brilliant world and existence, in which "The City of God" is a shining dream for all humanity entwined together in its constitutive being.

Light, Truth, Right and Frashokereti address the human condition, serving as touch-points throughout incidental, contingent difficulty within the World's possibility and promise. We do not know, but that Spithrodates may be very different from today's human youth and we can project a few of the differences.

Spithrodates uses artificial intelligence assist-modules as plug-in devices to his brain when he needs a foreign language. He has an implanted GPS-locator chip tracking him from birth. All data he generates is compiled by collaborative agents of himself, corporations, and governments. His pre-gestational incubation had no sole parentage and began with genetic material from twelve or dozens of Zarathushti forebears (some of many thousand year-old recovered DNA from ancient remains discovered in the Siberian tundra!). His blood has nano-robots hunting out destructive cholesterol; his ears and hair have chlorophyll appendages producing energy; and wing-accessories are not a distant-step.

His lifespan is many eons over ours today. His schooling places him in tele-immersive, global, pervasive, long-distance educative communities. Mind-melds with groups of informed and intriguing people are the norm. The world nexus of power and money puts decisive control again into the hands of youth instead of corrupt parties, and Spithrodates helps negotiate constitutional points for Russia's Georgia with the help of a Western-informed freedom. Tools and access to advanced spirituality are opened with refreshed methods we cannot imagine and empathic knowingness from the East is refreshed in Spithrodates' repertoire of life skills. Spithrodates speaks in sublime poetic verse, and moves, dances and sings as a supple Dionysus we have never seen!

If Spithrodates is at all like Youth today, he will have his ups and downs in the course of his outstanding life. He will understand, along with the extraordinary heritage, his-

tory and devotional observance of the Zarathushti peoples, that four bright touch-points are guides to our purpose here and to the projects our community undertakes for Spithrobrates of yore. And did undertake for him, the Spithrobrates of tomorrow. ■

Magdalena Rustomji, *seeing us working actively to create the future's improved social order:*

"The religion of Zarathushtra offers a distinct view of the world and way of life which we can advance through dedicated activism towards a better society."



Magdalena Rustomji is a founding member of the Zarathushti Study Group in Houston, Texas, and provides dedicated service to the Zarathushti

community. She is a licensed professional counselor (psychotherapist) working with "recent arrival" immigrant high school students and is based in Houston with her husband Yezdi.

THE BEHESHT FORCE

We have begun a new millennium and must now reflect about the future of our Zarathushti community. What is the value, worth, significance of our religion and its relevance to the Zarathushti of the future? What value is there in even in thinking, verbalizing and acting upon this *now*?

In my early introduction to the Zarathushti religion, I learned from Prof. Kaikhosrov Irani that, the greatest of values and worth of the religion, is that it offers a way to view the world and a way of life. This great philosophy is contained within the Gathas. With the challenges facing us in a new era, we must make concerted individual and collective efforts to truly understand and master this 'way' and this 'view' and apply the same to our daily lives and to the great questions of life.

Abraham Maslow said, "Education must be seen as at least partially an effort to produce the good human being, to foster the good life and the good society." Zarathushtra spoke and taught about social units. He gave us a framework within which to work to promote the progress of the world. So, beginning with the household and continuing on to all our social units [Ys. 31.16] one strategy for the future which will greatly benefit us now is to learn and to teach, this view of the world and way of life and to use it as an approach to our family life, our Zarathushti community life, our careers, and in all our social institutions.

"The goal of Gathic Teaching is to transform the world (afflicted with suffering, inequity, and imperfection) and bring it to perfection in consonance with truth" [Understanding the Gathas, D.J. Irani]. We must understand the 'Behesht Force' that Ahura Mazda gives us, this force that expresses unity and meaning of the universe and the order of the universe, from the Gathic teachings. Realizing and affirming this in terms of a way of life and a view of the world, will uphold our vision of the future.

Social responsibility and activism.

Having the best understanding of this Gathic view of the world and this way of life is a beginning. Then, in keeping with the precepts, we must devoutly and passionately, become more socially responsible. The social responsibility is, of course the third part of the tenet of good thoughts, good words – it is the good action. This social activism includes the areas of religious education, freedom, benevolence, tolerance, and social progress. Together, through the miracle of electronic communication, we might begin to explore our part and responsibility to the evolution, integration and direction of family, village, province, country, and world. We could then follow up the exploration period by forming collaborative forces which can think critically, speak articulately and act

purposefully, to bring to a fruitful conclusion, endless years of bickering about the formation of such social units as a world body, council of elders, lobbies for social issues, a collective translation of the Gathas and protests of human rights violations. As social activists we could begin to form groups throughout the world to participate in world agendas and even in local agendas which would address with collective efforts and resources, those issues.

In summary, a very partial list of objectives which we could begin with now, might be:

(1) Bring about a *renewal* of the Gathic way of life.

(2) Bring about a *renewal* of the Gathic view of the world.

(3) Work within our social units to establish and bring about social order and the righteous order in the following areas:

- Encourage and support religious education in our social units.

- Reform our social units in accordance with Gathic principles (e.g., recognize that religious education does begin with the family unit, begin to lay the structure for a Council of Elders (to include women), begin collaborative forces on other issues such as women's issues, youth, the elderly, the actual formation of a world body (not yet another study)

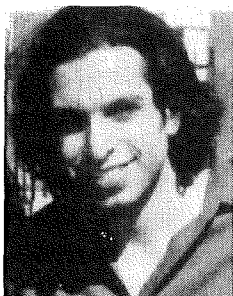
- Encourage and support the work and creativity of our human resources – our priests, writers, lay religious educators, religious scholars, etc.

- Religious Texts: recover, reprint old texts, work on a collective translation of the Gathas, encourage and support the writing of new texts and religious literature, especially for the youth and for the lay religious educators, collaborate to set up libraries in all our associations.

- Social activism from the local all the way to international levels (from the family to local interfaith groups to world bodies such as the UN). The

Mazda Antia finds interconnectedness between humans in the Zarathushti outlook:

"Doing what is good or 'best' in each situation is often different than doing what is advantageous or convenient to an individual ... A butterfly flaps its wings in one part of the world and sets into motion events causing a hurricane far away: Zarathushtra's message can be the wing moving people's minds – changing the life they lead from focusing on what's best for one alone, towards a life improving the world for all people and beings."



Mazda Antia is one of the very first Zarathushti priests from America, having grown up in the Chicago area. He currently lives in Florida,

where he is an attorney. Mazda served as co-chair of the Youth track of the 7th World Congress in Houston in December 2000.

ZARATHUSHTRA'S VITAL MESSAGE

3,738 years later the message is still relevant. Still vital to our success in this life. Still vital to our success in delivering the ultimate goal of the religion of Zarathushtra, Frashokereti - the renewal of the Earth.

One of my favorite things about Zarathushtra's philosophy is that it empowers those who choose to accept it and live by it. We are not victims of a wrathful illogical God; we are not sinners; we do not have to submit to a powerful God (and his supposed representatives on Earth) to be saved; and we don't have to take on faith irrational concepts and beliefs.

Rather Zarathushtra empowered humans, perhaps for the first time, to understand how the world could be and how to work to perfect it. Basically, we become co-creative with Ahura Mazda. Zarathushtra was the

first prophet and philosopher to proclaim that there is one wise creator; that the world evolves according to some basic laws of goodness; that humans have an element of godliness in them that gives them the power to think and choose righteousness or goodness in everything we do; and finally, that humans can and should co-create and perfect the world through their good choices.

The principles of the religion of Zarathushtra are based on truth and justice, connected with wisdom and tied together with the concept of free choice. When they ask what the purpose of our existence is here on earth we have the answer. It is to renew the world, through righteousness!

The Zarathushti religion forces us to think of issues greater than those that concern us individually. We have to focus on the world at large. What Zarathushti solutions can we come up with for problems that all humans are facing? What we care about as a community, the things we do for the world and for others, may be the best indication of who we are as a community of Zarathushtis. The goal of the religion is not the happiness of the individual but making others happy.

Zarathushtra's message shifts the focus from an individualistic highly personal way of thinking to a much broader, less self-absorbed way of thinking, acting, and living. That is, doing what is good or "best" in each situation is often different than doing what is advantageous or convenient to an individual. This has implications for how we live our lives, how we interact with others in person and in a societal setting, and how we choose leaders.

I like to think of Zarathushtra's message as that of the image of a butterfly flapping its wings in one part of the world and setting into motion a series of events perhaps causing a hurricane in another part of the world. Zarathushtra's message can be the wing moving people's minds in a small way completely changing the kind of life they lead – away from

living a life focused on what's best for one alone, and towards living a good life that improves the world for all people and beings in the world.

What does all this mean? It means we have to work towards perfection in every aspect of our lives. Each individual has God's most important attribute within him or her – the attribute of the Good Mind. Each individual has full freedom to choose to think and speak and act in good and righteous ways (according to the law of Asha). Those who choose to follow their good mind and transform good thoughts into words and action everyday and in each and every choice, large and small, help move the world closer to completion and perfection. In this way each person has the potential and ability to be a co-leader with God in renewing and perfecting this world.

As individuals we must continually strengthen our Good Mind, that ability to know the right path or choice in a situation, and the capacity for loving others within ourselves. We have to strive to understand and choose the right and good path in every choice we make in our lives, not for any reward, but because it is the right thing to do. This process starts within ourselves; and as we individuals are transformed, it affects our families, then our neighbors, then our communities, then our countries and ultimately the entire world. ■

Jamshid Varza is sanguine that lessons within the future are also lessons of the past.



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teaches youth Zoroastrianism in Northern California and, with his wife Mitra, educates the larger American community about our religion.

"It can be a danger predicting the future until we comprehend what the future has in common with the past."

When I accepted Natalie's invitation to write this article I thought I had pushed myself into a corner. Predicting the future during the last two decades has made "fools" of many lead futurists. An article in the October 1995 issue of Scientific American reviewed all the predictions made in the October 1985 issue and concluded that predictions were far behind the reality of the time. In short, futurists were all wrong and reality had surpassed their imaginations. The article ended with a statement from the lead futurist, Paul Saffo, "Future is not what it used to be."

On the surface how could I predict something a century ahead while many experts seem to be proven wrong predicting 10-15 years in advance? Well, that looked like a corner for sure. As I thought more about this important question I remembered the point made by Bertrand Russell "In order to know where we are going, we must know where we have come from."

This statement gave me a clue to look into our long past and see what I could derive. I took several known points in the long history of the Zarathushti religion when the words of Zarathushtra were clearly heard and used by his followers (1) about 17th century BCE when Gathas and older Avesta were composed; (2) about 5th century BCE the words of Cyrus, Darius, Xerxes and other Achaemenians; (3) the Younger Avesta and complementary scriptures giving us the same meanings from the Sasanian era of Iran; (4) the rise of Parsis of India attributed mainly to their Zarathushti values; (5) the flourishing of the Iranian Zarathushti community after abolishment of jizya (the crushing head-tax imposed on non-Muslim population of Iran) with influence and help from Parsis.

What I easily see is that the core Zarathushti values have always survived to shape the *daena* of his fol-

lowers. Then, the next one hundred years look insignificant compared to four millennia of Zarathushti survival. Contradictory to our contemporary futurists, I must say the "Future will be what it used to be." But let us not be the loose link in that long-long chain. ■

CONCLUSION FOR A VALUE PROPOSITION

Tomorrow's Zarathushtis give us reason today too for the Zarathushti life. Both as individuals and together, we enter a timeless moral quest through our journey with the religion and its future. These 'whys' we gather up in life lend it excitement and fullness by entwining us in the quest.

What does the future hold? Our contributors put forward various themes; transformation to enlightened personhood, deep happiness through mutual gift to one another, choice for renewing the world, substantial Zarathushti grounding and contribution in a dynamic geopolitic era, vision for a person – the new Spithrodates, a Behesht society of ongoing progress and hope, interconnectedness through our righteous choices, and bringing the fine Zarathushti past into the future. All these are ahead, among the possibilities that our lives and our good fortune create!

But "Defining a Value Proposition for the Next Century's Zoroastrianism" is not a concluded project. We have not attempted to gather all possibilities that are wished or may arise in the future's unfolding. From now to beyond, the future will unfold unconditioned possibility to contingent actuality and bring something unknown.

The reader is invited to pursue our inquiry. Just as the contributors here have found value in this project, each reader will find value in his/herself defining the Zarathushti value proposition. Each has a gifted insight, a Good Mind, to share in the quest. What is the Future Zarathushti Prototype, what will be the value of

Zarathushtrianism to people in a hundred or two hundred years, and how does internalizing that future proposition provide us with value today? As practical philosophers, we have asked these questions, and as caring community advocates, shared our insights on the subject with you. And as good Zarathushtis, you will cause our communities to reflect and enrich good thinking with your Good Thoughts. Ashem Vohu. ■

Silent Tenders of the Flame

***By Thomas Moore
From the epic Lalla Rookh,
The Fire Worshippers***

'Twas night when to
those towers they came,
And gloomily the fitful flame,
That from the ruined altar broke,
Glared on his features as he spoke:
'Tis over,
What men could do we've done,
If Iran will look tamely on,
And see her priests,
her warriors driven
Before a sensual bigot's nod,
A wretch who shrines
his lust in heaven,
And makes a pander of his God.
If her proud sons, her high-born souls
Men in whose veins, O last disgrace
The blood of Zal and Rustam rolls,
If they will court that upstart race,
And turn from Mithra's ancient ray,
To kneel at shrines of yesterday.
If they will crouch to Iran's foes ...
Why let them, till the lands despair
Cries out to heaven,
and bondage grows
Too vile for even the vile to bear!

[Lalla Rukh is a tale of love, longing and sacrifice, but most important, it is a tale of Zarathushti valor and sacrifice in the face of untold adversity. In this tale, Hafed, the Zarathushti revolutionary shuns Hinda, the girl he is desperately in love with, because she is the daughter of an Arab chief. [From a posting by Maneck Bhujwala]

building our north american zarathushti community

We as Zarathushtis have a responsibility and duty to keep the great and beautiful religion revealed to us by Asho Zarathushtra alive and thriving. This paper, though by no means exhaustive, explores some important issues we need to address in North America to succeed as a religious community.

By Sam M. Vesuna
Unionville, Ontario

The Zarathushti migration to North America starting at the end of the last millennium was not like the planned or a compelled migration to India more than a 1000 years ago. Immigration to Canada and the USA is mainly one of personal choice, motivated by economic reasons, education and career opportunities for the young, and social security for the aged. In recent times, there is also migration from some countries, due to subtle religious discrimination.

Often, as new immigrants we are only concerned in seeking opportunities and forget the risks that we face down the road as a very small religious group, with relatively small migration numbers and the absence of strong established religious bases in Canada and the USA. With the vision of a few generous philanthropists and dedicated community leaders we have made a reasonably good start. However, we cannot afford to be complacent. The increase of Zarathushtis in North America, Western Europe and Australasia are at the expense of our population in Asia. In the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent apart from migration the population is diminishing for other reasons. We must ensure that in our newly adopted countries we successfully address this danger with positive vision and imagination.

With no central religious authority and our many divergent religious viewpoints we have to learn to be tolerant and accept changes in some of our customs and practices. Change is not new to us; we have accepted changes in Iran and India. As an educated and intelligent community endowed with our religious edict to reason our actions, we should not be afraid of change, as long as we plan and accept only those changes that are necessary and do not comprise our basic religious principles. We must avoid consuming our energies on endless controversy, related to practices or customs that have no real significance and are impractical or have negative implications in our newly adopted countries. I place great hope in our youth in this regard.

We need to help in whatever way we can our new Zarathushti arrivals. This will make them feel more secure in the knowledge that there is a Zarathushti community and the desire of contact between Zarathushtis is strengthened as also their future commitment to the community.

Our greatest efforts must be directed to our youth. They are the most vulnerable and susceptible to peer influence. We must inculcate in them the fervor, pride and knowledge of their religion, history and heritage. This is best done by example and practice by the elders who should themselves be knowledgeable. We should encourage and increase participation in religious

classes, youth exchanges, youth meetings and events to overcome their isolation from other Zarathushti youth because of our small numbers and the large physical distances that divide many of us. Youth should be fully involved in planning and conducting youth activities, but need subtle persuasion, direction, encouragement and financial assistance.

Parents should keep at home, books, pictures and videos and encourage discussions and stories on Zarathushti religion, culture and history. We are making progress towards providing scholarships to our youth, which will not only help them financially but also strengthen their communal ties. Elders must not be derogative of other religions and races, because not only is it wrong and misleading but is also confusing and conflicting with what the child is taught in school.

Our religion, which has profoundly influenced all the other messianic religions, is relatively unknown. A documentary or movie on the life of Zarathushtra and his religion, which is professionally and religiously worthy of merit will be a great boon. We are making positive strides in producing quality short videos for our Zarathushtis as well as the general public, but we need to improve distribution and when possible try to broadcast frequently and at acceptable times. Productions are expensive but if done collectively the costs

can be shared. The Internet and web sites should be used constructively and not to insult each other publicly on matters of disagreement.

In North America through multifait activities we are slowly making our religion known. Also educational and government institutions in larger cities are aware of us and communicate with us. In Toronto we get organized visits to our center and dadgah from school classes and university students studying comparative religion. Each year in Ontario we submit a list of Zarathushti holidays to the Government and school boards.

We have very few religious books in schools, university and public libraries and books on comparative religion only contain a small chapter on our religion. We must make an organized effort to have selected books on our religion housed in schools and universities and major public libraries in cities with a Zarathushti presence.

We should consider setting up a chair for Zarathushti studies at a major university in North America. The importance of awareness in North America of our religion especially for our children is immense, as they do not have to explain most of the time who they are or feel unknown.

We need to seriously consider the education and ordination process of our priests within North America. Priesthood should be a chosen and not necessarily a hereditary vocation, at an age when the person can make a mature personal commitment. Just as there are scholastic prerequisites to entering the study of all other professions, priesthood should be considered with equal respect and status. Priests education, in addition to study of our religion and practices should also cover study of philosophy, comparative religion, family counseling, and the ability to give sermons to the laity. The community should also be prepared to give scholarships and adequate remuneration. Today in

North America we are fortunate and thankful to have ordained priests, engaged in other professions, volunteering their religious services to the community. We hope their sons will continue to do so, but we should not take it for granted.

Our community rightly does not indulge in the active and aggressive practice of proselytizing. To become a Zarathushti in our religion should only be a personal and reasoned choice and not due to the persuasion of anyone. We should seriously consider changing our refusal to accept anyone not born of one or both Zarathushti parents, if that person wishes to, after proper study and love of the religion to be accepted as a Zarathushti.

“ We cannot ignore, that there are cultural differences caused by years of separation and circumstances ... we should, however, endeavor to learn and appreciate each other's culture, mix more often socially, intermarry extensively and within a generation or two become one again. ”

Any kind of discrimination because of marriage to a non-Zarathushti is self-defeating and based on fear and not reason. We often lose children of one Zarathushti parent and even the Zarathushti spouse because of discrimination. This is morally wrong and is harmful to the community. We should of course make all efforts to promote marriages within the community but when a mixed marriage occurs we should not discriminate against the non-Zarathushti spouse, but also accept them into our faith, if it is by free choice and knowledge of the religion has been attained. Above all, we must go out of our way to bring the children of mixed marriages into our fold and make them feel welcome and wanted.

The basis of acceptance should be carefully thought out and introduced gradually so that we can improve the

process by our experience within North America. In this respect we should have a constructive dialogue with all Zarathushti communities including declared groups of Zarathushtis in Europe, Tajikistan and the USA.

In many communities we divide ourselves organizationally as Irani or Parsi Zarathushtis. We cannot ignore, that there are cultural differences caused by years of separation and circumstances, the most important being language and the calendar. We should however endeavor to learn and appreciate each others culture, mix more often socially, intermarry extensively and within a generation or two become one again. A uniform calendar

would be a great boon in this respect and we should make efforts to somehow overcome this emotional hurdle without causing serious friction or expending too much energy.

As Zarathushtis (and this is true of all religious communities) when we disagree with a certain issue or viewpoint we often declare it is influenced by the liberal or traditional section of the community. Sometimes we do not bother to study or understand the issues or viewpoint and declare it as unacceptable because it comes from a perceived, liberal or traditional source. Whereas the numerically larger religions have the luxury of dividing themselves into groups with appropriate labels, for us Zarathushtis it is impractical and dangerous.

We should always maintain a dialogue with Iran and India on religious issues or customs and seek their advice and viewpoint, but in the final analysis we must make our own decisions as our forefathers did when they came to India. In times of need of Zarathushtis anywhere, we should think universally and not nationally. Although much progress has been made towards a World Zoroastrian Organization it is still beset with

deep-rooted suspicion and mistrust. In time we will overcome this hurdle in which North America will play a leading and constructive role.

I have expressed my personal opinion as to what I consider to be the important issues we need to address in North America to succeed as a religious community. My views are by no means exhaustive, and some will be considered as controversial, although this was not my intention. We as Zarathushtis have a responsibility and duty to keep the great and beautiful religion revealed to us by Asho Zarathustra alive and thriving. ■

Sam M. Vesuna is a retired business executive active in community affairs. Fellow member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, Sam is also an associate member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ontario, Canada. He is a past and current president of the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario, and a director of the Rustom Guiv Foundation (Ontario) since its inception. He is a founder member of FEZANA and past secretary and treasurer of the Incorporated Parsi Association of Europe, whose name is now changed to Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe.



FEZANA JOURNAL invites you to Adopt-a-Reader

Please consider donating to the "Journal Subscription Fund" for interested readers in India, Iran and other countries, who would love to read Fezana Journal, but cannot make the payment. Send your check to Rustom Kevala [see front cover].

are we ready for conflict resolution?

We seem to have acquired the wisdom, knowledge, skill and tact of getting along with other cultures and communities, but somehow the art of getting along among ourselves seems to have eluded us.

By Astad J. Clubwala
Ridgewood, New Jersey

It has often been said, sometimes in jest, sometimes in frustration and sometimes with pride, "If you put two Zarathushtis together you get three opinions". As a community we seem to have taken the concept of 'freedom of choice' to new heights. If it were possible to calculate the opinions, disputes and conflicts on a per-capita basis, it is likely that our community will be near the top!

There are of course various levels of conflict – the minor day-to-day family level quarrels that seem to resolve themselves relatively quickly after both sides let off some steam; the disagreements among groups of friends which take a bit longer to resolve; our local Zarathushti Association type disputes which at times lead to heated exchanges; the FEZANA level arguments that most of us are familiar with and finally controversy at the world level such as recently in relation to the organization of the World Zoroastrian Congress.

Our conflicts, generally speaking, tend to be internal in nature, within our own community rather than external with other communities or religions. We seem to have acquired the wisdom, knowledge, skill and tact of getting along with other cultures and communities but somehow the art of getting along among ourselves seems to have eluded us.

Our Zarathushti conflicts could be classified under two headings: 'reli-

gion-based', such as the disagreements regarding conversion, inter-marriage, *Nirang-din* ceremony, Dokhmanashini etc., and 'organization-based' such as internal association disputes, world congress disagreements and the marathon negotiations regarding the formation of the world body.

Conflict, in reality, is normal, natural, historic and unavoidable. All religions, cultures and governments experience their fair share. It is how a community handles and resolves conflict that determines the maturity, stature and enlightenment of the community. There are two unique aspects that should be of concern as we in North America focus on the long-term survival and prosperity of our community – our diminutive population and our lack of a central decision making authority. The challenge therefore is how to move forward united, within the framework and uniqueness of our diversity. Freedom of choice also means, freedom to reduce conflict, freedom to work out disagreements and freedom to move forward with one voice.

Volumes have been written about the subject. It goes by many names – conflict resolution, conflict prevention, conflict management, preventive diplomacy and so on. Basically they all convey the same concept that preventing conflict or resolving it at an early stage is preferable to living with it later. An effective procedure, favored by many, is the process of mediation.

When is a mediator necessary?

telling others who we are

By Tenaz Dubash, Khosro E. Mehrfar, Shahrokh Mehta and Mehrborzin Soroushian

(1) *How do we as Zarathushtis living in United States and Canada learn more about our religion and then create awareness of the Zarathushti religion and community for our North American neighbors (NAN)?*

(2) *How do we highlight Zarathushti religion and history so that our North American neighbors (NAN) can be aware of our religion's important message, appreciate our communities' efforts to preserve our religious identities, and understand our challenges to maintain families and communities that practice and value the Zarathushti religion?*

(3) *How do we equip our youth with the knowledge and tools to perpetuate and proudly practice our Zarathushti religion among the predominately Judeo-Christian North American neighbors (NAN)?*

The authors explore these issues and hope that the objectives presented here will be taken to heart and the projects proposed will be adopted by individuals, small groups, associations and combined associations.



OVERALL OBJECTIVES:

(1) To inform and educate North American Zarathushtis to understand their religion and be able to effectively communicate it to our North American Neighbors (NAN). To provide Zarathushti individuals and families with pertinent materials that can expand their knowledge and enhance their understanding beyond clichés (“good thoughts, good words, good deeds”), unsubstantiated myths, superstitions, outdated practices and controversies that are disguised as traditions.

(2) To enhance the NAN's understanding of Zarathushtis by highlighting living Zarathushti individuals to whom the ‘average Joe’ can relate. To create contemporary and realistic portrayals of Zarathushtis formulated against the backdrop of today's realities rather than Zarathushtis of the past.

(3) To create materials on the Zarathushti din (videos, books, music, art, etc.) that the average NAN can relate to and understand. To make these resources available to libraries, educational settings, retail establishments, media organizations, etc.

(3) To cooperate and collaborate with research centers that study religions in North America. To participate in and initiate multicultural and interfaith opportunities locally and nationally for creating greater awareness.

(4) To promote and engage in Zarathushti charity, community service, and volunteer activities in local and regional communities under the Zarathushti community banner.

SPECIFIC PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS

Disseminate existing materials:

❖ *Collect current published materials* on the Zarathushti religion such as ZAGNY's *The Good Life*, FEZANA's text *The Zarathushti Religion*, Zarathushtrian Assembly and Kankash-e-Mobedan publications and education curriculum from different associations and FEZANA. Identify facilitators in each region to gather materials, share information with other associations and disseminate the compiled materials to Zarathushtis within their regional communities. Use these materials to help Zarathushtis better understand

their religion and be able to communicate it to NAN.

❖ *Distribute books and films*, e.g., *In Footsteps of our Forefathers*, to educational institutions, media channels, interfaith centers, and book/film festivals to give NAN introductions to the Zarathushti religion and community.

Write and produce videos and books:

❖ *Create high-quality videos and books* for different audiences comparable to those of other cultures and traditions. Work closely with producers of video/book series to create similar resources for Zarathushti religion, culture and festivals. Produce and market comparable Zarathushti-focused videos/books independently if there is no interest from series producers. Encourage schools, public libraries, Zarathushti families, and associations to add these books/videos to their collections.

❖ *Use as models existing video series:* *The Multicultural Peoples of North America* includes emigration to North America, unique traditions,

and three generations of family members. *American Cultures for Children* focuses on everyday life for kids in other countries as well as in America. *Lost Civilizations* and *Ancient Civilizations for Children* use location photography, computer animation, and storytelling to depict events, legends, and customs. *Holidays for Children* explores customs using traditional music, illustrated folktales, and animation. In *World's Religions and Their Festivals* children introduce their traditions on key religious holidays. Create comparable videos about Zarathushti culture, Persian history and Nouruz.

❖ **Use as models existing books series:** *History Opens Windows - A Look at Ancient Culture, Understanding People in the Past*, and *Growing Up in Ancient Times* introduce ancient life, religion, clothes, etc. using informative text and colorful photographs. *Celebrations Around the World: A Multicultural Handbook* contains background and activities for over 300 holidays; *New Year's to Kwanzaa* includes entertaining stories and *Calendar of Festivals* traces the origins of cultural holidays and festivals. Bring about inclusion of Ancient Persia and Zarathushti festivals (Nouruz, Mehrgan, Yalda, Tirgan, Sadeh).

❖ **Write and produce a single film or series** of short biographies of extraordinary contemporary Zarathushtis in North America. Include musicians, authors, business professionals, artists, educators, athletes, clergy, engineers, scientists, physicians, lawyers, etc. along with their early influences, challenges and achievements. Target video to appeal to a broad audience. Create similar book with photographs or illustrations.

❖ **Collaborate with writers and producers** at History Channel, HBO, Public Broadcasting Corporation, National Public Radio, Discovery and Travel Channels, National Geographic, etc. to create programs of interest to their audiences that highlight aspects of Zarathushti religion, history, culture, and global community.

Compose Zarathushti-inspired music, art, poetry and dance

❖ **Commission works of music, poetry, dance and art** based on musicians' and performers' conceptualizations and artists' visualizations of themes uniquely related to the Zarathushti religion such as Amesha Spentas. Showcase these works by organizing performances and exhibitions for wide audiences as an introduction to Zarathushti themes. For example, the music of Mehdi is helping to create awareness of Middle Eastern themes.

❖ **Write and illustrate poetry, song and storybooks** on Zarathushti themes, festivals and stories. Teach Zarathushti children and other school children songs for performances at Zarathushti events as well as multicultural and interfaith events.

Develop a portable booklet:

❖ **Develop a booklet** on the Zarathushti religion and community that could fit in a jacket pocket or purse. Summarize in 20 pages (with illustrations) the Zarathushti religion as a 'living' religion and focus on its unique characteristics, doctrines, contributions and comparisons to other religions. Ensure professional and unbiased writing targeting the professional NAN audience. Avoid controversial issues such as conversions, methods of disposal of the dead and different brands of the religion, while concentrating on mainstream Zarathushti views. Make booklet available to all Zarathushtis for distribution to interested NANs.

Take FEZANA Journal to its next level:

❖ **Elevate FEZANA Journal** to a new level of professional journalism and quality standards. Acknowledge that the Journal has evolved from a newsletter into a globally distributed periodical. Recognize that this Journal serves an educated North American community of over 20,000 and it may be time to raise the bar and bring it in line with other comparable community journals such as *Parsiana*, which is published monthly and

managed by paid professionals. Take advantage of the growing Zarathushti appetite for contemporary issues, religious knowledge, and increased awareness of our identity in North America. Consider publishing *FEZANA Journal* with fewer pages on a monthly basis with a professional staff rather than publishing quarterly with a few good-hearted volunteers. Raise the annual subscription rates from the current subsidized costs to competitive magazine subscription rates. Increase the number of readers and subscribers around the world. Increase advertising by encouraging Zarathushti businesses and enterprises along with the newly-formed Zarathushti Chambers of Commerce to use this publication for their marketing and promotion. Send the sample publications to interfaith organizations and interested NANs.

Create and maintain a website:

❖ **Develop and manage an active North American Zarathushti website** that can be promoted to schools, universities, and interfaith organizations. Recognize that none of the current websites on the Zarathushti din as a religion and Zarathushtis as a North American community cater specifically to NAN interest and psyche. Create the website to include history, religion, emigration to North America, overview of ceremonies, basic prayers and translations, an overview of who we are and our contributions to the North American sociocultural fabric. Consider disseminating this information in the form of CD-ROM to interested NAN, specific institutions, and targeted organizations.

Prepare curriculum:

❖ **Write syllabi and teaching resources** for elementary, junior and senior high schools that contain age-appropriate information about the Zarathushti religion and ancient Iran. Encourage school curriculum boards and social studies teachers to adopt some of this material for their classroom.

❖ **Work with university deans, department heads, professors and researchers** to institute courses on

Zarathushti studies and establish chairs of Zarathushti studies at various universities in North America. Encourage the Zarathushti religion to be included in introductory courses in religion especially those featuring Asian religions.

❖ Prepare accurate and age-appropriate *materials for Zarathushti parents* to present in their children's local classrooms regarding festivals such as Nouruz and Mehregan. Include hands-on and interactive experiences such as creating or coloring artwork, wearing clothing, learning songs, making or decorating crafts (*torans*, flower garlands), or cooking a dish.

❖ *Develop materials to be used by college-age Zarathushtis* for presentations in courses such as Asian studies, religion, and sociology, as well as for extra-curricular clubs such as Asian Society and interfaith collegiate organizations. Include slides (i.e. historic locations and places of worship), overhead transparencies, Powerpoint presentations and summaries for handouts.

❖ *Prepare curriculum* for Zarathushtis to present in their local communities such as college campuses, local churches, synagogues and temples, as well as interfaith organizations. Include topics such as history, culture, religion, and prayers emphasizing contributions, influences and similarities, especially how Zarathushti ideas shaped cultures, changed history and left its mark on humanity. Provide this basic information to Zarathushti families to share with their NAN informally in their own homes and social groups.

❖ Create games of fun and faith similar to *Bibleopoly*, *Traditions* (Jewish) and *Life Stories* which Zarathushti children could play with friends and family, encouraging the sharing of stories and the learning of important historical, religious, spiritual, ritual, ceremonial and cultural information in a fun atmosphere. Create flash cards (trading cards) for children to learn key information

about historical locations, religious principles, prayers, places of worship, calendar, historic personalities, etc.

Publicize, reach out and open doors:

❖ *Invite local news media reporters* to attend functions such as Nouruz, navjotes, jashans, wedding ceremonies, lectures and Sunday school, etc. Advertise upcoming events and functions in appropriate local radio, TV, and publications.

❖ *Prepare and present lectures for the public* on interesting Zarathushti topics at local libraries and public places.

❖ *Institute a Mediawatch and Resource Task Force* (watchdog group) to respond to misinformation about the Zarathushti religion in local and national media including movies, newspapers, TV and radio programs, music, websites, reference books and educational materials. Mobilize a designated 'activist' team of Zarathushtis throughout North America to participate in countering inaccurate or anti-Zarathushti information through letters, telephone campaigns, e-mails, etc. Create a channel for individuals who encounter instances of misinformation to bring it to the immediate attention of the Task Force for prompt and appropriate response.

❖ Encourage Zarathushti individuals and associations to invite friends, neighbors and coworkers to community events like Nouruz, navjotes, picnics, lectures, gahambars, jashans.

❖ *Participate in projects such as multifaith calendars* (e.g. National Conference for Community and Justice), *Sourcebook for Earth's Community of Religions*, prayer collectives (worldprayers.org) etc. Participate in interfaith activities that include prayer, discussions of local community issues, inter-religious dialogue, visions of peace, etc.

❖ *Contact existing institutes and interfaith forums* such as Council for the Parliament of the World's Religions, Harvard Pluralism Pro-

ject, and religious journals. Consider networking with religious experience projects affiliated with universities, divinity schools and societies that study religion. Provide Zarathushti curriculum materials as well as provide updated lists of educated individuals as speakers or resources for Zarathushti topics.

❖ *Contact electronic interfaith sites, religious journals and inter-religious initiatives* with whom Zarathushtis could collaborate. Create partnerships, share resources, and work to increase awareness and create new resources. Contact global online interfaith websites toward the goal of creating better understanding of religious traditions. Contribute regularly to on-line electronic religious and theological journals as well as print periodicals.

❖ *Contact Religion, Sociology and Anthropology, Eastern Studies departments* at universities and provide resources as well as contact information for students and faculty interested in research projects involving Zarathushtis.

Participate in community service:

❖ *Give part of our self to the North American culture* to make our presence felt in a lasting way. Recognize that Zarathushtis have a broad range of professional talents – doctors, dentists, optometrists, nutritionists, lawyers, investment consultants, accountants, etc. Designate a "Zarathushti Day" and provide free services to disadvantaged people in cities and rural areas across the country. Locations with large populations of professionals may consider outreach activities. Consider collaborating with organizations such as Indian American Medical Association that participated in a free health fair in the Washington D.C. area with free evaluation and counseling of height and weight, blood pressure, vision and hearing tests, dental exams, nutrition counseling, alternative medicine, etc.

❖ Coordinate Zarathushti associations and local small groups in North America to *participate in community*

service during an annual Zarathushti Day or Zarathushti Week, during Nouruz or gahambars. Encourage Zarathushti families to feed the homeless, stock a food pantry. Mobilize youth to work with park authorities to help clean up, plant trees or engage in activities that will help improve our ecosystem. Create variety in the approach by having each association pick a different project. Recognize that through these activities local groups and organizations can promote and perpetuate the Zarathushti community as responsible citizens in North America as actions speak louder than words.

❖ Mobilize local Zarathushti teams of dedicated workers to *participate in existing nationwide projects* such as Earth Day (April 21), National Rebuilding Day (April 28) sponsored by Christmas in April, City-year Serv-a-thons, etc. that match teams with projects throughout cities (including painting, cleaning-up, repairing). Participate in Walk-a-thons (i.e. Walk Against Hunger), telethons, collection drives, mentoring programs and other volunteer activities under the Zarathushti banner.

❖ *Walk with Zarathushti banner in local community parades* such as Memorial Day Parade, Indian Pride, Asian Heritage, etc. Participate in multicultural fairs celebrating diversity by highlighting Zarathushti religion, history, and culture (food, art, music, crafts). For example, the International Festival in Boston (October), Chicago (October), Detroit (November), Philadelphia, and Washington DC (May) has had over a million visitors since 1992.

❖ *Plan a cultural festival* (similar to those by Greek and Ukrainian communities) to promote awareness of Zarathushti culture as well as to raise funds. Include food, cooking demonstrations, dance, video, handicrafts, fashion show, lectures and other culturally relevant activities. Dress in traditional costumes. Consider this activity in larger communities with darbe mehr centers.

❖ *Host an Open House* to invite neighbors and local town residents to

darbe mehr and community centers. Provide opportunities for NANs to learn about the Zarathushti religion and community through structured and unstructured activities.

❖ *Create T-shirts, baseball hats, or pins* with Fravahar (Farohar) and words "Proud to be a Zarathushti (or Zoroastrian)." Encourage North American Zarathushtis to wear these items to public community volunteering and fair-type activities.

ACTION PLAN

The thoughtful and professional development of materials, the creation of partnerships with a variety of institutions as well as the implementation of these ambitious community activities can make a tremendous difference not only in enhancing the knowledge of Zarathushtis about their religion, but contributing toward creating an awareness of the Zarathushti people and their religion for the North American Neighbor (NAN). It is an important goal to provide opportunities and a means for NAN to better understand the Zarathushti religion and people and to appreciate the Zarathushti way of life.

The financial resources needed to complete these projects can come from private donations, sponsorships, grants, collaborations and ongoing association-level fundraising programs. Volunteers from a variety of backgrounds with a range of skill sets will be needed to develop the projects and participate in these activities.

Each and every North American Zarathushti is invited to participate with their professional talents and time. Zarathushti organizations and associations can take on individual projects. The professional skills that will be needed are extensive and varied. They include, but are not limited to scholars, priests, historians, researchers, librarians, teachers, visual and performance artists, composers and performers of music, creative writers, illustrators, poets, journalists, producers, photographers, film makers, narrators with eloquent and clear voices, critical

thinkers, creative writers, proofreaders, copy writers, journalists, typists, editors, grant writers, fund-raisers, advertisers, public relations, web page developers and webmasters, websurfers, providers of printing services, journalists, broadcasters, news media, producers, publishers, accountants, financial analysts, financial managers. Also people with expertise in networking, job placement, project management, program management, performance reviews, correspondence, strategic planning, organizational development, team facilitation, goal-setting and time-management.

This is a comprehensive blueprint of a variety of ideas put together by the authors of this paper. The success of many of these projects will depend on the support of dedicated volunteers and committed associations that are willing to lead the effort and embark on the mission to enhance Zarathushti awareness in North America. In order to achieve these goals, a networking system will need to be developed where professionals from various backgrounds can work together developing these proposals to SMART goals - that is, goals that are Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic and Timely.

To facilitate, administer, and manage the projects from concept to completion a website, newsgroup, or efficient communication channel needs to be created. Using this communication medium, individuals, groups, and associations in North America (also Australia and UK) can share successes of their local communities, share progress on projects, teach or provide detailed information to other associations and groups about curriculum, volunteering, interfaith and network projects. This would allow for collaboration to solicit further ideas, invite participation and maintain contact between projects so that the wheel is not being reinvented in each community and for each project. Volunteers around the country could review a project to assess community input, create solutions, manage performance,

express concerns, provide updates, manage constructive criticism, develop strategies, recognize and reward milestones and post results. Coordination and cooperation between Zarathushti professionals and associations is necessary, but more will be achieved if the hierarchical, bureaucratic or top down approach is eliminated from the equation.

An ambitious timeline is proposed starting from the time of the appearance of this article in FEZANA Journal and continues till projects are completed.

Time Zero:

Proposal published in this (Winter 2001) FEZANA Journal.

Month 1:

Send copy of proposal to FEZANA leadership, existing committees, FEZANA associations and small groups, other groups, e.g. Kankash-e-Mobedan, ZWIN – Zoroastrian Women's International

Network and the Zarathushti alias, and known active individuals in North America.

Set up website/newsgroup/communication channel for administration and discussion.

Month 2:

Volunteers from regions and local associations should take on the initiative to administer projects – recruit, coordinate, strategize, manage, fundraise, etc.

Months 3-6:

Conduct research, further develop and prioritize projects, make assignments public, ask for continued financial and resource support and input, recognize individuals and associations that are taking ownership and championing different proposals.

Months 6-12:

Develop initiatives, forge partnerships, and participate in activities.

Year 1:

Publish Follow-up report in FEZANA Journal.

Months 12-18:

Continue work on projects.

2 years:

Publish follow-up report in FEZANA Journal.

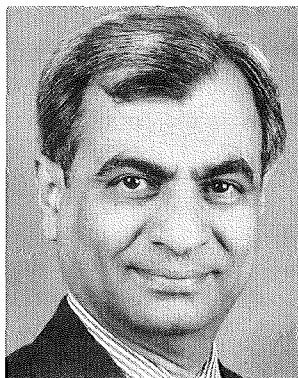
2-10 years:

Continue to develop, produce and compile materials on the Zarathushti religion and community. Continue participation in ongoing community and interfaith activities creating Zarathushti awareness in our NAN.

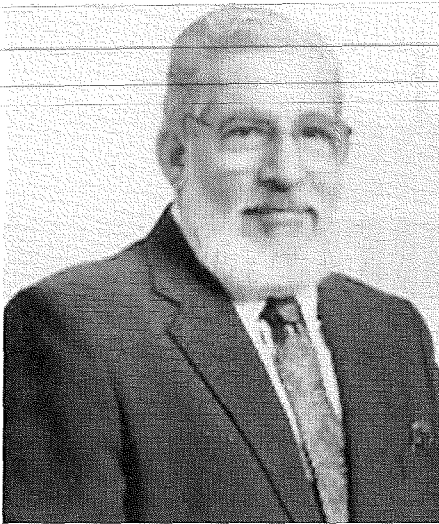
Presented in this article are thoughtful concepts and implementation plans. Until a network of communication and a team of volunteers and professionals are brought together, the authors of this paper can serve as potential resource advisors, encouraging dialog, matching up people with similar interests, incorporating additional ideas and helping those projects and activities that are immediate and under way. For example, those interested in assisting in an editorial or fundraising capacity on the follow-up to the *Footsteps of Our Forefathers* video can contact tdubash@aol.com as this project is already in early stages of planning.

This is a project of grand scale, but certainly achievable. Implementing the solutions presented in this plan requires the time, interest, commitment, funding and teamwork of Zarathushtis in many different capacities. This is a dynamic plan that can change according to the dynamics of the time and interacting elements. A detailed and updated plan can be created later once enough interest is observed within the North American Zarathushti communities. This paper should be seen as a springboard for individuals and communities to select and take the initiative on specific projects and pursue them to completion with the raising of financial and creative resources along with the commitment of volunteer teams.

Working together on these projects and activities will help Zarathushtis learn more about their religion and



Tenaz Dubash [left] 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. Contact Tenaz at Tdubash@aol.com. **Khosro E. Mehrfar** [center] was born and raised in Tehran. He has a bachelors in Engineering from University of Tehran and a PhD from the US. Since 1981, he has been in Information Technology Management focused on Internet-related industries. He was active in Faravahar and student organizations in Iran, is a founding member of Vohuman.org and co-manager of California-ZoroastrianCenter.org. **Shahrokh Mehta** was born and raised in Karachi, lived in Iran for 15 years and was Managing Director of Carrier Corporation in Tehran before immigrating to USA in 1980. Shahrokh is a Certified Management Consultant and president of Integrated Technologies, LLC – a nationally recognized management consulting and training organization. In July 2001, Shahrokh conducted a "Community Building" workshop for members of ZAGBA. He has been member of ZAGNY for the past 21 years and lives with his wife Gool in Syracuse, NY. **Mehrborzin Soroushian** [see page 37].



getting involved with the political system

Participating in the political arena is a necessary first and powerful step towards becoming an integral part of the community we live in.

Prof. Maneck S. Wadia has been in USA since the 1950s. He is an internationally prominent professor, author, speaker and consultant to over 300 organizations and companies here and abroad. He has a PhD and MBA from Indiana University and served on the faculties of Stanford, Indiana and other universities. He is also a very successful entrepreneur with diversified interests and author whose books on management are used by universities worldwide. He has served as director of numerous corporations and is listed in various "Who's Who".

community as well as develop friendships and connections. Working on these projects may in itself help advance some of the objectives listed in the beginning of this paper. Success on these projects will provide evidence of a thriving community and may in fact be a lasting legacy for the Zarathushti youth of North America.

The authors of this proposal sincerely hope that the objectives mentioned here will be taken to heart and the projects proposed will be adopted by individuals, small groups, associations, and combined associations. These individuals and groups will recruit volunteers, invest time, raise funds, and implement projects toward the overall goal of increasing awareness, developing mutual understanding, and building partnerships with our North American neighbors.

By Maneck S. Wadia
Del Mar, California

I appreciate Mehrborzin Soroushian's invitation that I share with you my personal experience in participating within the political arena of the USA. My experience is very limited but I am happy to share it with readers in the hope that other Zarathushtis will benefit from it.

As it often happens, one gets involved accidentally in the political arena. I was working as a management consultant and lecturer to some law enforcement agencies. The man who had retained my services had seen my home. He requested that I permit the pro-environmental party in Del Mar to hold one of their meetings in our front yard. My wife and I agreed and from then on we were hooked. It provided both a social and intellectual stimuli.

We often opened our home and yard to this so called 'green' party. We were committed to making Del Mar more a village type community than a highly developed city. We donated our time, money and our house to this cause. We developed a reputation that any candidate who had his kick-off reception in our home, always won. This was true for members of our City Council, for the post of Sheriff for San Diego County, for Barbara

Boxer, the incumbent US senator from California and many others.

We believe that participating in the political arena is essential to being an integral part of the community. Through this participation one can also share our Zarathushti values with the community at large by emphasizing ethical behavior in the realm of politics. Participating in this arena also gives one a modicum of 'power' to help those in need. For example, when some friends were having great difficulty, and delays, in securing immigration papers, they were greatly helped by our political contacts.

It is important that good people participate in our political process. Otherwise the vacuum will be filled by those who do not necessarily share our values. For example, the increasing political clout of the Christian right wing, with its belief that only those who accept Jesus as their savior will go to heaven, and their emphasis on proselytizing, can be a threat to other religions, including ours. Supporting politicians who oppose the philosophy of this Christian right wing can be viewed as a moral duty for Zarathushtis.

There are many other good causes that we can espouse. What causes you espouse are your choice, but participating in the political arena is a necessary first and powerful step. ■

Note: This article was written and submitted by the team of Dubash, Mehrfar, Mehta and Soroushian in June 2001. The tragic events of September 11, 2001 present a whole new perspective. Telling our NAN about the Zarathushti religion and community has become more important and urgent than ever. ■

training the priests of the future

Introduction. Although institutionalized priesthood evolved later in the history of the Zarathushtrian religion, the insemination of a priestly class, can be traced back around the 6th century BCE, when the magi took over the reigns of the religion of Zarathushtra from the athravans of Eastern Iran. It was not until the Sasanian era (226-641 C.E.), that the clergy was empowered to interpret and administer religious measures, sometimes at the expense of the laity [1].

Priestly function. A magi is described by Pseudo-Lucian as "an order of seers who are dedicated to the service of Gods ... their profession as magi makes it incumbent on them to observe strict rules of life" [2]. Doctrinally, the life of a Zarathushti priest should be in tune with precepts outlined by the prophet in his profound hymns [3].

Priesthood of the early migrants to India, continued the Sasanian tradition of rigorously and rigidly enforcing the purity laws [4], in an effort to maintain and reflect what they sincerely perceived as a necessary constituent of religiosity. While they expected the laity to follow strict purity laws, their own observance of these rules was even stricter. This led them to focus solely on the ritual, essentially to the exclusion of intellectual understanding of the various facets of duties of a professional clergy. Even those in the position of leadership, have essentially restricted their intellectual efforts in the area of philology, and need for the observances of rituals. Furthermore, heredity, poor remuneration and lack of respect for clergy are the major reasons for failing to attract intellectuals to the priestly profession.

Mobeds in the western world in general and in North America in particular, have faithfully served their religion on a volunteer basis, despite their professional commitments, and often sacrificing their family obliga-

What better legacy for the present Zarathushti community to leave for the enlightenment of generations to follow, than to bring an insightful and erudite priesthood into reality.

tions. These services are largely limited to the performance of the rituals and special prayers. Nevertheless, many of these dedicated individuals, despite their ardent volunteerism, take little time or interest to reasonably familiarize themselves with the philosophy, history, spirituality and/or theology of the religion they help perpetuate.

The changing socio-cultural fabric, will compound the job of the future priesthood to bridge the vacuum of a worldly society, with the notions of spirituality and piety. In the western world, and to some degree globally, advances in biotechnology coupled with genetic engineering, add a new dimension to the responsibility of priesthood in general and Zarathushtrian clergy in particular. Issues such as organ donation, abortion, euthanasia, use of fetal tissues or stem cells, cloning and different modes of procreation have significant socio-psychoreligious ramifications that will greatly accentuate the need for proper priestly guidance. An ideal Zarathushti priest of the future, must play a unique role in *leading the 'moral and spiritual consciousness' of the Zarathushti community.*

Training. By any guideline, the instruction for priesthood in general, and of the Zarathushti mobed in particular, is a prolonged process, that must involve an intensive training period. It demands for self-sacrifice, dedicating oneself to the priestly call-

ing and a commitment to serve Ahura Mazda spiritually. It entails a service to fulfill the spiritual needs of the community, to propagate and perpetuate the religion and to spread the message of Zarathushtra not only to the community but also to humanity at large to refresh the world as Asho Zarathushtra implores us in Yasna 30.

The rivayats, spanning from that of Nariman Hoshang in 1478 to the last one brought by Ervad Mulla Kaus in 1780, clearly demonstrate some striking differences between the Zarathushti priests of Iran and India, in their theological comprehension of religious issues such as acceptance and importance of rituals. The focus of the Iranian priesthood has remained on the Gathic scriptures and finding their religiosity in living a life following the Zarathushtrian philosophy. Rituals are perceived as a means to an end. In contrast Parsi priesthood regards rituals as means to attune with the divinity and find therein the sole source of spiritual strength. These differences in turn, have reflected in the training of Iranian and Parsi priests.

Training of the Parsi priests at the seminaries (madressas) in India, is at present directed primarily toward producing ervads capable of performing inner and outer liturgical ceremonies. In contrast the responsibility of training of priests in Iran, rests with Kankash-e-Mobedan (an association of Iranian priesthood).

They have a training program for lay youth as 'mobedyar' who in time can evolve to be full-fledged priests of the future. Both Indian as well as the Iranian training involves several years of study and memorizing of prayers. However, Iranian priests often choose to read their prayers instead of learning them by rote.

Presently, Iranian Mobeds in North America follow the training pattern that evolved in Iran. Laymen are invited to come forward, who are trained as mobedyar, following a prescribed curriculum of prayers and the message of the prophet. In contrast Parsi families induct only the sons of priestly heredity into priesthood, *regardless of their personal interest, the majority of whom hardly practice after becoming an ervad.*

While the heredity principle has the advantage of replenishing the ranks of the priests, it hardly guarantees the quality. This in time has emerged as one of the major reasons for loss of respect by the laity, for the profession and its practitioners. The intellectual community in North America must understand that this criterion, that was introduced in the era when the Medean tribe of magoi seized control of the Zarathushtrian religion back in 6th century BCE. The heredity principle has become a part of the tradition, but has absolutely no doctrinal bearing. It has served its purpose, and the time is here for it to go.

It is of little practical value to induct youth into priesthood, whose heart and soul is not in tune with the commitment, but are persuaded to appease and satisfy parental ego. A North American youth ordained as a priest in India, just for the sake of being ordained, has explicitly no knowledge of how to perform even the common outer liturgical ceremonies of navjote or jashan. They have no alternative but to learn to

perform these rituals with other knowledgeable priests. Without such training, they are only priests in name, unable to satisfy the spiritual needs of the community.

The training of Zarathushti priesthood in North America should be open to all Zarathushti men and women who innately get the calling.

The question of gender in serving the religion has been debated *ad nau-*

“Despite that egalitarian position clearly vindicated by Asho Zarathushtra in the Gathas, and despite historically, the significant religious contribution of women over the centuries, the tradition has chosen to retain the patriarchal character of the past, and dragged it into the core of the religion.”

seum. Many research articles have already been written to demonstrate that doctrinally and theologically, men and women are a part and parcel of the same whole – the fellowship of mankind.

Despite that egalitarian position clearly vindicated by Asho Zarathushtra in the Gathas, and despite historically, the significant religious contribution of women [5] over centuries, the *tradition has chosen to retain the patriarchal character of the past, and dragged it into the core of the religion. The basic principle for maintaining ritual purity as expounded in the Sasanian Vendidad is in fact gender-free*. Ritual purity must be maintained, as the principle is based on regarding as 'nasu' (impure) anything that parts from the body of man or woman.

The decision regarding an important commitment such as this, cannot be expected of a child 10-12 years of age. Just as a child goes through the process of choosing a professional career at a mature age, the decision to undertake religious commitment should also follow the same pattern. While the process of imparting

knowledge of the religion should be initiated at an early age, the decision for priestly commitment must await at least, till 16-18 years of age and must evolve as a gradual but deliberate choice.

At the outset it must be realized that every individual is a different and unique entity, and among those who do commit themselves, there will be broad variations in their ability as well as in degree, of their dedication and enthusiasm. While some will find satisfaction in serving the community through ritual performances, a select few will continue to evolve through scriptural studies to find the deeper meaning of the teachings of the prophet. This may result in different grades of priests. Regardless, all should have the opportunity to be exposed

to the same training curriculum.

Needs of the North American community are also diverse, based on its cultural background. Religiosity of some members may be anchored more to rituals and prayers, while for others, the expression of religiosity may focus on the message of Asho Zarathustra. A priest of the future must cultivate tolerance for harmonizing such differences. Furthermore, even among the priests, there will be differences in the understanding of certain aspects of rituals and/or theology. It is however imperative to imbue in a mobed of tomorrow the sense that

● “There is great healing in acknowledging mine is not a better way, mine is merely another way” [6] to the same spiritual goal.

● A priest should be able to discern the crust of the tradition from the kernel of the message. This is not to imply that the crust be discarded. In fact, they should gradually evolve, the ability to evaluate rationally the adequacy of the tradition and discover its theological basis.

● A priest must be intellectually capable to impart the spiritual rationale implicit in the rituals.

In the coming decades, effort should be directed, in concert with Iranian and Parsi priesthood, to intertwine and unify the various modes of instruction, to evolve an infrastructure for investiture of young priests in the western world. The knowledge of the actual languages, such as Avesta and Pahlavi is desirable, but the proper accent and intonation of the recitation of the prayers are essential. Past and present generations have done an excellent job of making accessible the English translations of much of the Older and Younger Avestan literature.

“ The heredity principle has become a part of the tradition, but it has absolutely no doctrinal bearing. It has served its purpose, and the time is here for it to go ... ”

Besides the history, theology and philosophical aspects, the future priest must have some exposure to the study of Comparative Religion, in order to understand the unique features of various faiths and how they compare with the contemplation of God and spirituality in the Zarathushtrian religion. To equip priests to deal with contemporary ethical issues, some exposure to psychology and sociology as they relate to the prevailing way of life on this continent, should also constitute a part of their training.

This is a tall order and would require the organization of a body of priests

and laity, of Parsis and Iranian, with sufficient expertise in various disciplines to work in concert and harmony to evolve a curriculum for such an undertaking. The group will constitute an Advisory Council to formulate the Curriculum for Training of Zarathushti Priest (CTZP) or of Mobed (CTZM). It will require proper coordination of time and effort to bring together the teachers and the disciples at suitable locations, two to three times a year to impart global knowledge of both the theory and practice of the Zarathushtrian priesthood in North America.

A process such as this, will take varying length of time for different persons. It will be the responsibility of the individual to display their preparedness for the commitment. A committee, selected from among the Advisory Council may best render the unbiased decision of the candidate's ability to serve the religion. As an interim measure, such a training should be offered to those ordained priests, who wish to further their knowledge and ability to better serve their community.

All this cannot be achieved without inspiration and sacrifice. That sacrifice must come, not only from the priests-to-be, but also from the community. This can only happen if the community wants it to happen. In order for the community to express their motivation, the grass-root must lead the way. The community must vitalize the fiscal base. Yes, it is time consuming to think, and even more consuming to put the thoughts into words, but all that is far, far cheaper than putting it all into action.

To generate the ecclesiastical infrastructure of this new millennium, to furnish the spiritual enlightenment for the generations to come, can be a monumental task – the project of the millennium. Nothing short of a healthy endowment which can feed a constant stream of funds can fulfill such a dream. For a project of this magnitude, the need, the desire and the financial contribution to make it

happen, must come from the grass root community. If the community wishes, it shall happen!

One cannot think of a better legacy for the present zarathushti community to leave, for the enlightenment of generations to follow, than to bring an insightful and erudite priesthood into reality.

Atha zamyat yatha afrinami! ■

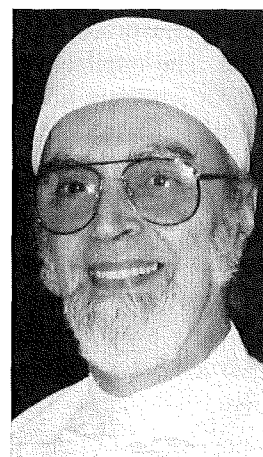
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The editors are thankful to Dr. Kersey Antia for a critical evaluation of this paper. His comments and contributions are gratefully acknowledged.

Ervad Jehan Bagli retired as



Distinguished Research Fellow of Wyeth/Ayerst. He has a Ph. D. in Medicinal Chemistry. Dr. Bagli is an ordained priest through Navar and Martab ceremonies. He

was a founding member of ZAQ and editor of Gavashni. He is presently chair of FEZANA's Research and Preservation Committee, and a recipient of FEZANA's Excellence in Profession/Business Award. He is in charge of training Mobedyars and has co-authored "Understanding and Practice of the Jashan Ceremony".

Camels a Part of Parsi History

By Dinaz Kutar Rogers

This is yet another faith-based story, that would make any Zarathushti proud of his heritage. Jadiv Rana, the Hindu king of Gujarat, gave our ancestors not only refuge in his land but also the freedom to practice our religion in peace.

In those days there was a little hamlet of Oontwada ('oont' is the Gujarati word for camel) where camels were housed. The Rana was childless and the Parsis, as a display of their eternal gratitude, performed religious ceremonies (I know not which ones) evoking Ahura Mazda's blessing upon the kind and generous king and behold, in no time the king was blessed with a son, an heir to the throne.

Jadav Rana was most grateful and deeded Oontwada to the original seven Parsi families and community.

This name, over time, came to be known as Udvada, the holiest place for Parsis in India. The place was given to set up a fire-temple and was never taxed, and later on, even the former rulers of India, the British, exempted this property from taxes.

According to legend this deed was written on a pure silver tablet. ■

[This story was told to the author by a cousin. If any of our readers have further knowledge about this episode in Parsi history, please let us know].



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, lore, 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.

Of Camels and Horses

“When you can do the common things in life in an uncommon way,
you will command the attention of the world.”

- George Washington Carver

“Aapro Rajo ghano hooshiyar hatho... (Our king was very clever ...)” were the opening words for many stories that I grew up with. After all, our kings in those tales, were always clever, resourceful, brave – besides which they just happened to be Iranians and followers of Ahura Mazda.

"Cyrus the Great, after defeating the Medes, set his sights on further expansion of his kingdom," our storyteller, Jamshedjee began, on a particularly hot and humid Bombay morning.

“His next step was to conquer the opulence and power that was Lydia, in modern-day Turkey, ruled by Croesus.” Knowing one of his young and *chavat* (mischievous) listeners might crack a joke, Jamshedjee quickly added “Turkey as in country and not bird.”

We all laughed even though most of us had no idea what a turkey bird looked like; all we could hear and see was the cawing of the crows perched

on the *agassi* (verandah) of Jamshed-
jee and Najamai's 3rd floor flat.

Cyrus' reasons for such an invasion could have been for trade or warfare – we are not quite sure – but his empire had no accessibility to major waterways and the kingdom of Lydia just happened to be on the Mediterranean Sea. Then, of course, the legendary riches of Croesus might have been another objective.

“At first Cyrus tried a peaceful, non-military approach. He tried to topple Croesus by unsuccessfully fermenting rebellions in the Greek colonies on the Ionian coast. The Persian king took to a more aggressive approach.”

Jamshedjee paused to take a breath.

“However, Croesus, last of the Mermnad dynasty, like any sensible yet cautious Greek, especially of the royal class of his day, did the usual, prudent, thing. He consulted a seer. Just not any, but only the best – the oracle at Delphi. It is said that a

Spend your life lifting people up, not putting people down.

- Fed Newsletter.

1,000 pounds of gold, all his wife's jewelry and other innumerable valuables bought one of the most momentous prophecies in history."

"How can one buy prophecies?" One of us thought out loud.

"What was the prophecy?" I was eager for the story to continue.

"*You will destroy a great kingdom,*" Jamshedjee stated in a serious tone. "This divination pleased Croesus to no end. Presuming that we would destroy Cyrus the Persian, and his empire, Croesus never thought of asking the seeress *which* empire she was referring to. History was not on the side of this king."

Jamshedjee paused for the cawing crows to cease and desist, but that was not to be.

"History, my dear children told a different tale of this Greek king who was legendary for his fabulous wealth, hence the expression, as rich as Croesus.

"If Cyrus had expansionist aspirations, so did Croesus. Flushed with confidence from the priestess' words, Croesus took the initial step in the war against the growing strength and power of the Persians by invading and capturing the former Median fortress of Pteria in Cappadocia in 547 BCE and waited for the Persians to defend this aggression. Cyrus II and his Medes and Persian soldiers marched toward northern Mesopotamia, a 1,200 mile journey from Susa to meet up with Croesus." Jamshedjee paused.

"Hey at last a sword fight," Pesi, home for the holidays from the orphanage in Poona chimed in.

"For one day, in early summer these two mighty adversaries of the ancient world met in battle at the town of Pteria, near the Halys river." Looking directly at Pesi, Jamshedjee continued. "The Persian cavalry fought with short swords and arrows and the Lydians with lances. It was a bloody, inconclusive battle and, claiming he was outnumbered, Croesus left for Sardis, the Lydian capital. Pteria, perched on the top of a hill had a reputation for its invincible fortification, but that fell short of its renown to Cyrus' men.

"Now one must remember that armed conflicts of ancient times were waged to meet the needs and wants of those days. Times were different then and armies fought on distinct life-rhythms and life-requirements. Warring, or all that sword-fighting ..." the kindly, gentle man looking at Pesi with an indulgent smile, continued, "ceased in the evenings as the men rested, tended to their wounded and dead; generals assessed their losses and plotted strategies for the coming days. In those times of long ago, seasonal warfare was the norm as was consulting oracles. The shepherd-farmer-soldier would join the army in the spring, fight all summer, pack up and go home for fall and winter to tend to his family, flock and farm."

I hurriedly made mental notes of storing all this incoming information in my head.

"It would be like a cease-fire, time-out for a long lunch recess was part of those wars." Jamshedjee paused to sip on warm home-made lemonade and the rest of us followed suit with ours.

"With such obligations in mind and having been outnumbered, Croesus disbanded his mercenary army. Feeling confident in that Delphian prophecy, he set out to get ready for the next spring's clash with the Persians. He plotted the annihilation of the Persians by lining up troops from some of his allies, Egyptians, Spartans and the Babylonians; but Croesus had sadly underestimated his adversary, Cyrus the Great."

"Well, of course, after all he was dealing with *our* Cyrus." Much to our surprise, Shirin the shy and quiet one remarked.

The story continued. "For in the meantime Cyrus did not wait and pause for the winter shutdown and arrival of spring. He waited long enough for Croesus to disband and dismiss his army and then marched on to Sardis, on the Mediterranean coast. Alarmed at this unexpected development, Croesus quickly recalled and regrouped his scattered armed forces."

Anticipating what was to come, all of us applauded. "It was on these grounds of a battlefield near Sardis, in 546 BCE, that a mighty empire came to an end," Jamshedjee stated with authority and pride. "With their legendary mastery over horses and deadly expertise with spears, the brave and formidable cavalry of Croesus thundered head-long into the heart of the Persian army."

"Oh no!" Some of us gasped at this unexpected turn of events.

"But remember, children, our king was very clever. *Aapro rajo ghano hooshiyar hatho.*" Oh how well I remember those lines.

"And then something happened." There was pin drop silence.

Out of nowhere came my "What happened?" Needless to say this was met with "Shhhh..."

"Yes, something did happen. Lo and behold, all of a sudden, the horses ran hither and fro, throwing the riders off their backs. There was chaos and confusion and Croesus' cavalry, along with his military strategy and ambitions, crumbled and fell apart."

"Hip, hip, hurrah," a mixed choir of young voices followed. Undaunted, I repeated, "What happened?"

"Our ingenious and resourceful Cyrus, instead of using horses for his cavalry, used *camels*. He replaced packs and bundles from the humps of these beasts of burden with armed riders and placed them in the forefront of his army."

"Camels?" We all retorted.

Oblivious to our interjection, our storyteller continued. "It was not their unusual looks but their rancid, strange odor and an inherent fear of camels that frightened those noble horses and sent them scurrying around wildly, throwing their armed Lydian riders off their backs, and along with it the entire progression, harmony and decorum of the battle. It must have been quite a sight," Jamshedjee chuckled softly.

"And this is how our Cyrus won one of his many battles, by using the ele-

ment of surprise and being so innovative," our storyteller concluded.

Our enthusiastic clapping was met with equal passion by the cawing of the crows. To us it was just another adventure story, but at that time, little did we know it was a part of our ancient heritage and impressive history.

"silent enim leges inter arma"

Laws are inoperative in war.

Pro milone 1V xi
CICERO

POSTSCRIPT

If only Croesus had inquired of the oracle as to *which* great empire he would destroy, then maybe, he might have employed a different strategy. But who could foretell, who could foresee? Not even the great god Apollo himself, speaking through the oracle at Delphi!

Living up to his title, Cyrus the Great, this magnanimous king, instead of executing his vanquished foe, spared his life and gave him a position of advisor in his royal court.

Even though camels have been employed in hard work by humans, their behavior has always been unstable and erratic. Bactrian, the two-humped camel from Mongolia and Turkistan (Bactria in ancient times) may spit, but along with the dromedary camels of the Arabian desert, they all kick! I was unable to ascertain which of these two, Cyrus used to spook Croesus' horses, but either way it must have been quite chaotic on that battlefield of a long time ago.

The names of the storyteller and children have been changed and are quintessential composites of the many I have known. Those storytellers who have regaled me with tales of far away and near ... and those childhood friends who sat by my side, their individual and distinctive witticism shining through their silly giggles, unsurpassed laughter, astute observations and insightful commentaries in inimitable Parsi-Gujarati and English.

At times, we were just typical, *chavat* Parsis, we ate Parsi food and

My mother used to say...

"The old forget. The young don't know." - Japanese proverb

"Taray monay saakar"

May sugar always be in your mouth. May your kind words come true. This is uttered when someone predicts something good, e.g. if one lady says to another that your daughter will marry a rich and handsome boy, the other retorts with this saying.

"Jaynay chori laaj, tanay paythay raj"

One who has no shame, shall inherit a kingdom. Those who are dishonest and have no shame, often acquire wealth. My late father-in-law used to say this when describing a corrupt government official. He also used it to describe those who became rich by cheating him out of money or business.

"Boodhi ghorree nay lal lagaam"

The old mare with a red bridle. This is used to describe someone who dresses inappropriately; when someone old dresses like a teenager or puts on flashy clothes. It is sometimes used when someone is jealous of another.

"Bhalay vaandro boodho thai, pun golaat khavanu nahi bhulay"

A monkey may get old, but he will still not forget how to somersault. This saying is similar to "The leopard never changes its spots." E.g. when an elderly Parsi matron catches her husband making a pass at a younger lady, she may want to use this saying while leading him away by the ear!

"Ujjar gaam ma erandiyo pradhan"

In a barren village, the castor plant is king. This is equivalent to "In the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king." Used when a person is hailed for even mediocre accomplishments, because there is no competition. The *erandiyo* or castor plant is not usually welcome due to its thorny appearance and the much-maligned disagreeable taste of castor oil; but when there are no other trees around, even a castor plant is welcome. This brings me to the next saying.

"Erandiyo(n) pidhoo hoy tayvu monoo kidhu"

To make a face like he/she had drunk some castor oil. Used to describe someone who makes a very disgusted or sad face. The taste of castor oil is traditionally hated by children, who were forced to imbibe a table-spoon as a remedy for constipation. As the castor oil went down the throat, the child would invariably make a horrible-looking face.

"Saa(n)p gayo, pun lisota rahi gaya"

The snake may be gone, but his tracks remain. After a snake slithers through a sandy patch, the impressions made by its long body remain (in the US, a sidewinder snake behaves this way). The snake is a feared reptile in India; all snakes are considered poisonous in the rural areas. This is used to denote that the consequences of a dark deed remain long after the perpetrator is gone.

[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]

shared with each other the beauty and wonderment of our heritage, traditions and faith of long ago.

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The blessing in the prayers of Mobed Zarir Bhandara

Prayer is a matter of personal conscience, which eventually becomes communal acceptance.

By Meher Dadabhoy Amalsad
Author of "Bread for the Head™"
Westminster, California

It is said that spiritual growth resides in the blessing of prayers. Thus, I like to honor the blessing of the prayer services offered by my good friend Mobed Zarir Bhandara towards strengthening this spiritual growth in our Zarathushti community.

Over the past 29 consecutive years – 19 in India and 10 in Southern California, – Mobed Bhandara has relentlessly performed prayers for the Festival of the Souls – *Muktad*.

That makes Zarir the only practicing mobed with such a distinctive record among the Southern California Zarathushti community.

In these special *Muktad* prayers the spirit of the departed souls are invoked to seek their guidance in the material world.

By the grace of Ahura Mazda, I have personally attended the *Muktad* prayers performed by Mobed Bhandara and have been touched by the heightened awareness of consciousness created in his prayers through the spirit of love, light, peace and grace. After the prayer ceremony there was a special *humbandagi*, the communal prayers, followed by a special session of group meditation.

Even though the concept of meditation in the Festival of the Souls was unique to many people in Southern California, they still enjoyed the experience of its bliss and serenity. One participating Zarathushti with a chronic ailment was actually healed due to this special meditation without the use of any medication.

Out of curiosity, I asked Mobed Zarir, what inspired him to get actively involved in this very special service for humanity and he said:

"I always had a dream when I was in Bombay, that one day, instead of performing scores of ceremonies, I would just perform one ritual every day during the *Muktad* days, which would be purely dedicated to all the dear departed souls of our community members. A ceremony which would be performed in the most purified and sanctified way in the cleanest environment and in a non-commercialized way, totally satisfying the spiritual needs of the participants. My dream came true, when I reached across the ocean – from the east to the extreme corner of the west.

"I like to express my deep gratitude to all of you, and especially to members of my wife's family – the Bamboats and the Alamshaws, for their active participation in making this a successful prayer event for the past ten years in Southern California. I thank all my teachers and specifically the Athravan Education Trust and it's co-workers. A special thanks from the bottom of my heart goes to that very special person in my life without whose painstaking efforts I would not have been initiated into priesthood – my mother Khorshedbanoo F. Bhandara."

I admire people who honor the contribution of their mothers.

I believe that a life well lived is the loveliest prayer of all. With that sentiment, I thank Zarir for sharing the gift of his life through prayers with our Zarathushti community. ■

[For information about the author's work, visit: www.Bread4theHead.com]

Is Religion a necessity or a privilege?

I think it is a necessity. I think that it would be hard to convince the majority of people to be 'good' without the clout of a supreme being who will reward the good and punish the bad. I don't think that it is innate in humans to be 'good'. In cases where being 'bad' is easier and has the potential for great personal gain the thing that keeps one from taking the 'bad' route is one's sense of right and wrong. This sense is instilled in us by our religion.

Without religion there would be less impetus for doing good and more incentive to take the most expedient self-benefiting route. Thus, even though sometimes people maliciously use religion to discriminate and persecute, I think the absence of religion would lead to more, not less, death and destruction.

Ava J. Udvadia
Durham, North Carolina

[Ava is a neuro-biologist doing research at Duke University]

He is there ...

Leave this chanting and singing and telling of beads! Whom dost thou worship in this lonely dark corner of a temple with doors all shut? Open thy eyes and see thy God is not before thee!

He is there where the tiller is tilling the hard ground and where the pathmaker is breaking stones. He is with them in sun and in shower, and his garment is covered with dust. Put off thy holy mantle and even like him come down on the dusty soil!

Come out of thy meditations and leave aside thy flowers and incense! What harm is there if thy clothes become tattered and stained? Meet him and stand by him in toil and in sweat of thy brow.

Gitanjali by Rabindranath Tagore
From *Informal Religious Meetings*

READER'S FORUM

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.

On "Lest We Forget"

I thoroughly enjoyed reading Dinaz Rogers' emotional account of the little Shoeshine Boy at Navsari Railway Station [*"Lest We Forget"*, *FEZANA Journal*, Summer 2001]. I look forward to reading similar essays from her in future.

Rostam Chami
Perth, Australia

On "Jive Talking"

I would like to commend your youth editor Nenshad Bardoliwala for sharing his heart and spirit with our Zarathushti community on the topic of intra-generational communication [*"Jive Talking"* in *Youthfully Speaking*, *FEZANA Journal*, Fall 2001].

I fully concur with Nenshad's statement: "There is never a reason to let our disagreements devolve into denigration ... If we can agree to disagree amicably, while still respecting each other, we can all go a long way ..."

Thank you, Nenshad, for guiding our youth in an affirmative direction.

Meher Dadabhoy Amalsad
www.bread4thehead.com
Westminster, California

Thank you for Nenshad Bardoliwala's wonderful article, "Jive Talking" in the Fall 2001 issue of *FEZANA Journal* ... It was the best article in the issue ... Indeed a pleasure to read this thoughtful and enlightening article ...

Maybe there are reasons or root causes for this adverse attitude. However, behavior can be changed, and Nenshad's article is appreciated as when read and followed, it could change behavior for the better ... I hope all Zarathushtis of all ages read and learn from it ...

Porus Dadabhoy
Downers Grove, Illinois

On Yasna 30.1

In the Summer 2001 issue of *FEZANA Journal*, several writers had quoted Ys. 30.2:

"Hear with your ears, the highest truth I preach, and with illumined mind weigh them with care ..."

In *Zartosht, Mazdayasna and Governance*, the author, Jallal Ashtiyani, citing Ys. 30 and 31, has summarized Zarathushtra's message of liberty, or the quintessence of his teachings as follows:

"Liberty, wisdom and intelligence are the greatest bounties granting dignity to humans that distinguish them from animals. O'men and women, with your ears, by wisdom and bright mind, realize the truth in order to tread the path of true worship, and attain the divine light and serene abode of the Wise God. This is the real heaven that you establish in your inner self and within your society. O'men and women awaken and discern the joyous breeze of humanity and listen to the melody of freedom in order to attain the divine virtues.

"As the progeny of humans, you are born free to choose your path with full freedom. Adorn yourself with the ornaments of knowledge, righteousness and good thinking, and choose your path and destiny.

"Unlife and non-existence in fact, comprise the state of ignorance and absence of wisdom. They result in the victory of falsehood, deception, cruelty and injustice. The real life is in liberty, knowledge and wisdom.

"The living man is one who is free; a man captured by the shackles of ignorance, falsehood and deception, is in fact deprived of life. Hence, the essence of lies generates unlife, and the spirit of righteousness breeds true life. Those who tread the path of truth please God, and the ones who sacrifice

man's dignity by their wrong desire are actually demons disguised as humans who rule through evil thought.

"By the power of good mind, shatter the wrong and deliver falsehood into the hands of righteousness, so that society thrives and life becomes fresh. This message is not pleasant for those who have usurped power through falsehood and deception."

Daryoush Jahanian, M.D.
Kansas City, Kansas

The Gathas - their infinite interpretations

FEZANA Journal [Summer 2001] is replete with articles on the almost infinite interpretations of the Gathas. We have made the theme so complicated, by stretching it to be made applicable to all walks of life, including business management.

Zarathushtra had never meant for his message to be dissected and analyzed by his followers. It was a simple message, it had to be, for after all, he was talking to hunters, warriors and farmers, and not to the present-day computer buffs.

He gave us an iron clad code of conduct, with ecology as its base. The religion of Zarathushtra is a religion of happiness and laughter, create wealth and always be merry. However, it enjoins that all the above must be enjoyed on the three pillars of Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds, bound together with a band that stipulates that "Happiness comes only to those who give happiness to others."

This is the only religion that I know of, that has no rituals, no dogmas, no penance and no fasting. Any rituals that the Zarathushtis observe are those borrowed from the country which gave them shelter, viz. India. The Gathas certainly makes no mention of any such rituals.

Finally, the Gathas accept that religion was made to serve man, and that man was not created to serve religion, which therefore must bend to accommodate the changing social needs of man. As such, there is no need for

man to sacrifice his worldly interests to serve his religion, as long as he serves his fellow men. It is for this reason that this, the most ancient of all religions, never gets out of date ...

My purpose for writing this letter is to anticipate that at the coming North American Congress in Chicago in July 2002, the theme and agenda will be so simple and down to earth, that even a dull army mind like mine, will be able to comprehend it.

*Brig. Noshir B. Grant, AVSM (Retd)
Pune, India*

Thoughts on Shenshai Nouruz

Along with Shenshai Nouruz greeting a friend wrote that God would be happy if we Zarathushtis followed just one standard calendar. My reply follows:

I do not think He cares. He knows we got it all wrong any way. Did the Big Bang occur around the vernal equinox on earth? So for Him that is the New Year or really the New Age. But just for us on earth, it would be desirable for all to celebrate at one time.

The priests say that because of their 'alat' it would not be possible to change. So they are saying that ritual is more important than truth. The alat is more important than recognizing our mistake in maintaining a calendar of only 365 days even though we knew 300 years ago that we are missing a few hours reckoning. This is the sort of failing that reduces the interest of the inquiring mind in religious practice.

This also indicates our failure to adapt. Most species that could not adapt to changing circumstances died out. The Zarathushtis who cannot adapt to more correct knowledge will die out too – I do not mean the community – only those of the community who refuse to adapt.

(I am sure FEZANA Journal would be happy, because they would not have to print three different sets of dates for the festivals).

*Jamshed R. Udvardia
Lansing, Michigan*

Interest from Belarus

Thank you very much, I have received a very big package of past editions of FEZANA Journal, and am immensely grateful to one of your readers for sending them.

Now our organization, Avestan Republican Byelorussian Association [see FEZANA Journal, Winter 2000] does not exist anymore. In Belarus the internal situation is very uneasy. ARBA was replaced by PASARGAD Cultural Foundation under the aegis of the Zarathushti community in Gothenburg, Sweden. It is the only Zarathushti organization in Belarus.

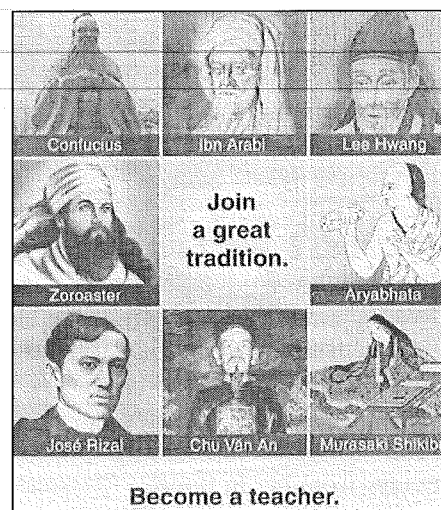
We are a small group of about 50 persons. Among us are some people who only want to study the religion, but there are many who count the Zarathushti din as their own religion. Last year we organized seminars, published books, studied the Avesta ... I also developed the website on Avesta, in Russian. We will appreciate any help to get books on Avesta. Dictionaries are a first and necessary thing. We cannot buy, our salary is about 70 USD per month.

*Yuriy Lukashevich
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Zoroaster - a teacher?

I wrote the following letter to the director of "Calteach" an organization that hires teachers for schools in California. Readers are invited to also write to calteach@calteach.com.

"An advertisement for Calteach has been running in India West Newspaper for several issues, showing Prophet Zarathushtra (Zoroaster) in the company of other 'teachers'. With no disrespect to the others shown, who are all great teachers no doubt, Prophet Zarathushtra is more than a teacher to his followers, the small community of Zarathushtis (Zoroastrians). In fact Zarathushtra was the first prophet who declared that there is but one God and founded a great religion based on monotheism, that was



the religion of three mighty Persian Empires in the ancient world. Other prophets, who came after him, repeated this basic belief.

"To include the picture of our Prophet Zarathushtra in the context of merely a 'teacher' in the Calteach ad is not appropriate, and may even hurt the sentiments of some Zarathushtis." ■

*Ardeshir B. Damania, PhD
Davis, California*

■ ERATTA ■



Farah



Leila

● FEZANA Journal deeply regrets that the Shahbanou Empress Farah's photo [left] mistakenly accompanied the obituary for her daughter, Princess Leila Pahlavi [right] on page 74 of the Fall 2001 issue.

● Niaz Kasravi's name was misspelt on page 5 of the Fall 2001 issue.

● The caption of the picture on page 17 of the Fall 2001 issue was incorrect. It should be "King Feraydun".

FEZANA Journal deeply regrets these inadvertent errors. ■

President Bush uses the language of Zarathushtra

This article, submitted to FEZANA Journal by Mehrborzin Soroushian, appeared in the San Diego Union Tribune on October 21, 2001. The author, A. J. Shragge, professor of history at University of California, San Diego, writes about the American response to terrorist attacks, in terms of a war of "good" against "evil". In recent days, President Bush has repeatedly described the terrorists as "evil-doers" and spoken of his resolve to "fight evil with good". These terms, of course, are all too familiar to Zarathushtra, for the Gathas are replete with such utterances by our Prophet Zarathushtra 3,500 years ago:

*"... through Vohu Manah
(the Good Mind) ...
we will vanquish all evil"*

[Ys. 31.4]

It is gratifying to read that A. J. Shragge recognizes and acknowledges this fact in the opening paragraph of his article.

- Ed

'Greatest Generation' set standard in overcoming adversity

By A. J. Shragge

October 21, 2001

Since Sept. 11, President Bush has repeatedly framed the nation's response to the terrorists' atrocities in terms of a war of good against evil.

In the history of civilization, such language dates back more than 2,600 years, at least to the time of the Persian prophet Zoroaster, whose cosmology taught that by making the right moral choices, humankind could triumph over evil. Christian theologians, most notably Augustine of Hippo (354-430) and Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), argued that nations could harness evil in the form of warfare in order to defeat a greater evil.

In our own much shorter history, Americans have always invoked this worldview when we've taken up arms against an enemy. World War II remains the most outstanding example in recent memory ...

Rather than dwelling on its horrors, we have tended since then to cherish our collective memory of World War II as "the good war" ...

Our leaders tell us of a two-pronged objective driving this war: to eliminate terrorism and to vanquish evil.

Our real world goal is to topple any government that hides or supports the terrorists, so that we may "bring the evil-doers to justice" ...

[The full article may be viewed at www.uniontribune.com/]

America: The Good Neighbor

[Reprinted from an editorial broadcast from Toronto by Gordon Sinclair in 1973, as the US was withdrawing from Vietnam. Some points made then, may not be accurate today, e.g. the Airbus aircraft is not a US plane, and the UK has stood steadfastly behind USA on military strategy.]

This Canadian thinks it is time to speak up for the Americans as the most generous and possibly the least appreciated people on all the earth. Germany, Japan and, to a lesser extent, Britain and Italy were lifted out of the debris of war by the Americans who poured in billions of dollars and forgave other billions in debts. None of these countries is today paying even the interest on its remaining debts to the United States.

When France was in danger of collapsing in 1956, it was the Americans who propped it up, and their reward was to be insulted and swindled on the streets of Paris. I was there. I saw it.

When earthquakes hit distant cities, it is the United States that hurries in to help. This spring, 59 American communities were flattened by tornadoes. Nobody helped.

The Marshall Plan and the Truman Policy pumped billions of dollars into discouraged countries. Now newspapers in those countries are writing about the decadent, war-mongering Americans.

I'd like to see just one of those countries that is gloating over the erosion of the United States dollar build its own airplane. Does any other country in the world have a plane to equal the Boeing Jumbo Jet, the Lockheed Tri-Star, or the Douglas DC10? If so, why don't they fly them? Why do all the International lines except Russia fly American planes?

Why does no other land on earth even consider putting a man or woman on the moon? You talk about Japanese technocracy, and you get radios. You

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With new postal regulations, FEZANA Journal may not be forwarded to your new address automatically; and the Journal office may not be notified of your address change. If we are notified, the Post Office charges us several dollars per copy. So please send all address changes (including your old and new address, telephone and email) promptly to Subscriptions Manager Rustom Kevala by mail, email, phone or fax [see front cover].

talk about German technocracy, and you get automobiles. You talk about American technocracy, and you find men on the moon and safely home again.

You talk about scandals, and the Americans put theirs right in the store window for everybody to look at. Even their draft-dodgers are not pursued and hounded. They are here on our streets, and most of them, unless they are breaking Canadian laws, are getting American dollars from ma and pa at home to spend here.

When the railways of France, Germany and India were breaking down through age, it was the Americans who rebuilt them. When the Pennsylvania Railroad and the New York Central went broke, nobody loaned them an old caboose. Both are still broke.

I can name you 5,000 times when the Americans raced to the help of other people in trouble. Can you name me even one time when someone else raced to the Americans in trouble? I don't think there was outside help even during the San Francisco earthquake.

Our neighbors have faced it alone, and I'm one Canadian who is damned tired of hearing them get kicked around ...

ON THE INTERNET

ZTFE launches "new look" website

The Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe (ZTFE) has launched a "new look" web site: www.ztfe.com. It will provide a portal for the Zarathushti community in Europe, containing information on the Zarathushti religion in general and activities and projects of ZTFE, in particular the "New Premises" and consecrated atash dadgah projects.

Mumbai scout group launches website

Sethna's 18th West Bombay scout group (the oldest in India, founded in 1914) has launched its website, at:

<http://sethnas.org>

ZARATHUSHTI ENTERPRISE ■ PRODUCTS AND SERVICES ■



WZCC Business Digest

Director's meeting. A meeting of directors of the World

Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce was held in New Jersey, September 21-23. A six-month plan was drawn up to meet the objectives and goals of the WZCC, which are:

- (1) To facilitate, encourage and promote the spirit of entrepreneurship amongst Zarathushtis
- (2) To promote the high standards and practices of Zarathushti business worldwide
- (3) To promote cooperation, networking and solidarity amongst Zarathushti businesses and professionals
- (4) To gather appropriate statistics of Zarathushti businesses and professionals worldwide
- (5) To develop an educational program for members.

On September 22, the New York chapter of WZCC, chaired by Rusi Gandhi, held their chapter meeting at the Darbe Mehr in Pomona, NY. It was an excellent opportunity for the directors to gather valuable inputs and insights from chapter members.

It came home to us that the purpose of this chamber, above all, is for businesses and professionals to help one another grow and prosper. As individuals prosper, we all prosper and our community prospers as well. Our motto could very well be:

"You Prosper, We All Prosper"

Chapter News. WZCC chapters are now formed and functioning in New York, Houston, Toronto and Chicago. Business persons and professionals are encouraged to form local chapters in your area.

Membership invitation. All persons interested in promoting Zarathushti business and enterprise are invited to become members of WZCC. Visit www.wzcc.org.

Business Conference and Business Breakfast. The WZCC is planning a one-day Business Conference and a Breakfast, preceding the Congress (July 4-7) in Chicago. This will be an excellent opportunity for Zarathushti businesses, professionals, entrepreneurs and those wishing to support the Zarathushti entrepreneurial spirit, to network and showcase your products, services and businesses. Youth and 'would-be' entrepreneurs are especially welcome. Exhibit Tables will be also be available. The program will include:

Business Conference:

Wednesday, July 3, 2002,
10 am - 4 pm at Hyatt Regency,
Chicago. Program includes presentations, panel discussions, keynote address and lunch.

Business Breakfast:

Thursday, July 4, 2002,
9 - 11:30 am at Hyatt Regency,
Chicago. Fee: \$25

Exhibit Space:

Exhibit tables will be available
July 4-6. Fee: \$50

To register: Registration information for the Business Breakfast and Exhibit space is included in the Congress 2002 registration package available from your Zoroastrian association, from the Fall 2001 FEZANA Journal or from www.zac-chicago.org. To register for the Business Conference, please await further details.

For further information on WZCC and the business conference, visit:

www.wzcc.org

Rohinton Rivetna
President, WZCC

A Growing Enterprise - Avesta Computer Services, Ltd.

"Inc. 500", the "birthplace of entrepreneurial superstars", ranks Avesta Computing Services, at One World Trade Center, as No. 97 among America's 500 fastest-growing private companies.

On September 11, Rushad Cassad, vice president of Avesta Computing Services, Inc. was in their New Jersey office on the Hudson River directly across from the World Trade Center, and literally saw their head office, at One World Trade Center, crumble and fall. Founder president and CEO, Cyrus Davierwalla was at their off-shore office in Pune, India and saw the whole drama unfold, live on TV. [see story on page 7].

Avesta today. Avesta Computers had moved into the 1,400 sq. ft. head office, Suite 2153, with views of the Hudson River and New Jersey skyline, in 1995. They now have 115 employees, with 7 at the head office at WTC, and the rest at branches in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, California and Pune (India). Dadi Sethna (financial controller), Farrokh Tuner (manager resources), Eric Gagrut (senior marketing executive), Navrooz Irani, Nekzad Shroff and Vispi Patel (software engineers) also work with Avesta and have contributed to its progress. They are also grateful to Cyrus Nallaseth for handling their immigration and legal work, and to Rustom Irani and Homsy Patel of RBT Trading – a great example of Zarathushti businesses helping each other.

It was their substantial growth, from about \$592,000 in sales in 1995, to over \$13 million in 1999, that placed them in the "Inc. 500" list of fastest-growing private businesses. Their revenue in the year 2000, was \$16 million.

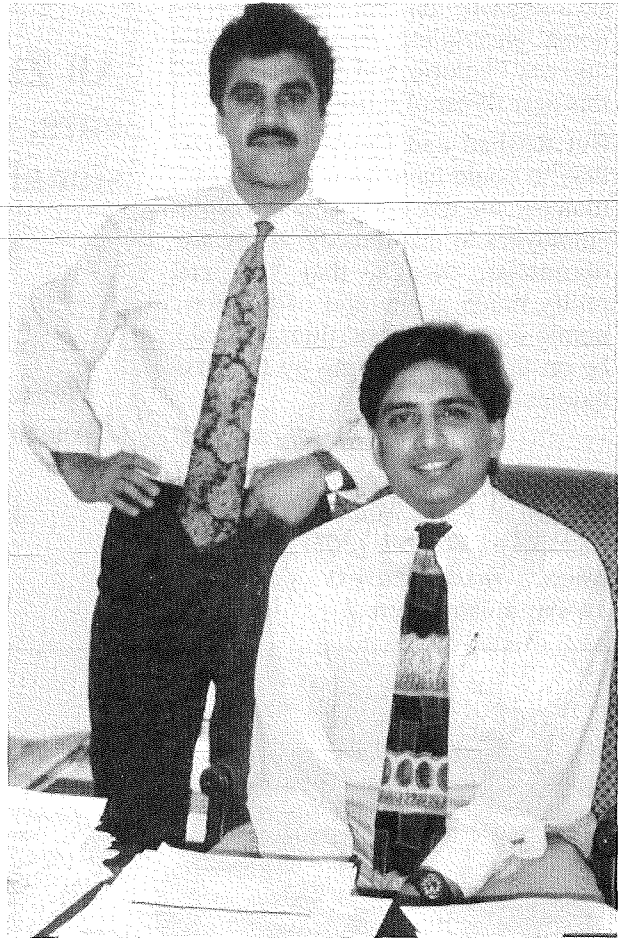
Avesta Computers provides computer consulting services to corporations nationwide in the US. It has a large pool of qualified technical full time employees specializing in niche technology and functional areas that

are made available to large corporations for time frames ranging from a couple of weeks to a year. Their areas of specialization include internet/intranet, Java, HTML, Object Oriented technology, GUI, ERPs (SAP, Peoplesoft ...), databases (Oracle, Sybase ...) and such.

Among Avesta's clients, are Cisco, Bank of New York, Apple, JPMorgan-Chase, Merrill Lynch, Intel, IBM, AT&T, several large banks, telecommunications, insurance, pharmaceutical and IT companies.

Early days. Cyrus Davierwalla started Avesta Computing in 1994. He came to the USA in 1991 for a Masters in Computer Science. "I wanted to do something of my own," he says, "and America is the best place to do it." So he gave up the family hotels (Il Palazzo in Panchgani, Surat and elsewhere), sponsored himself on an H1 visa, developed some contacts in the computer field, took a loan from his sister to buy the first computer, and started his business – from his sister's home and his dormitory room at the University of Massachusetts. Looking for a unique name, he selected "Avesta Computing", on a suggestion by his sister.

"Make sure you have enough capital", says Cyrus, who is grateful to his family who helped out when he was down to \$80 in the bank.



Left, founder-president and CEO Cyrus Davierwalla, and vice president Rushad Cassad, at the Avesta Computing office at One World Trade Center.



Avesta Computer Services Ltd.

One World Trade Center, Suite 2153
New York, NY 10048

Rushad Cassad came to the US in 1992; he was working for Intec Systems, who, in April 1992, established a small setup in NY city.

To someone trying to start their own business, Cyrus simply says: "Just do it." Rushad adds: "Grasp the moment, breathe 'the effort', cherish your associations and embrace the outcome."

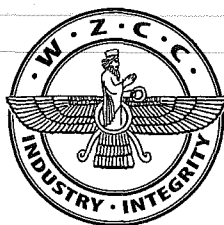
Rebuilding. Since the tragedy, Avesta Computers has relocated employees to its New Jersey office while some worked from home. They reconfigured computer, telephone, email and networking systems, restored data from backups kept in their Jersey office and started rebuilding.

"Conservatism, caution and negativity seems to be the mood right now," says Rushad, "on account of the economic uncertainty, fear of the ongoing war rhetoric and emergence of this new threat of terrorism."

But Rushad and Cyrus both agree that "It could have been worse; fortunately we did not lose any of our employees to this tragedy. They are optimistic, though, that "we are pretty much at the end of the economic down turn, and things should be on the upward swing by the first quarter of 2002.

- By Roshan Rivetna

[Avesta Computing is at 15 Exchange Plaza, Suite 210, Jersey City, NJ 07302, Tel: (201) 369-9400, email: rushad@avestacs.com or cyrus@avestacs.com.]



World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce

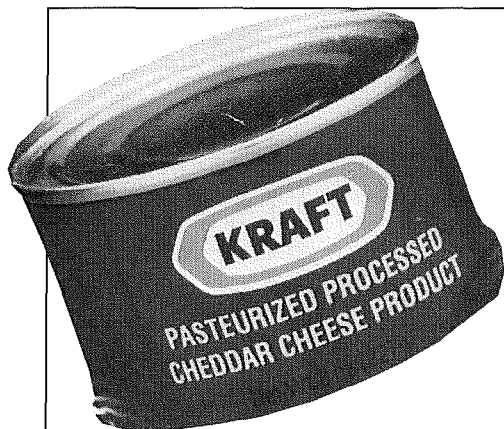
WWW.WZCC.ORG

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



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FRIENDS WORLD PROGRAM



FEZANA Financial Progress Report



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

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I am typing this short progress note today, October 11th, reminding us all of the most horrific and awful tragedy that has occurred in our country a month ago. It is with a very sad heart that I write this article and I am hoping that by the time we all read this Journal our hearts will be starting to mend and not be aching as much as it did last month. However, we will never forget what happened on September 11th and continue to pray for the family and friends of the innocent people who perished in this dastardly attack.

"Thousand Points of Light". After speaking to our treasurer, Rustom Kevala, I was further saddened to find out that in the last quarter, donations coming to the FEZANA funds have diminished. As all of us know, the financial markets have also been doing very poorly. I understand donating to FEZANA is not a priority for all of us at this time of sorrow; we should, however, try to fulfill our new campaign of the **"Thousand Points of Light"**. We can do this by just giving \$100 individually or per family. Some of us have already started this pledge and for that we are very grateful. For those of us who are not familiar with this new campaign of the **"Thousand Points of Light"**, here is a short summary.

"Thousand Points of Light" is a campaign directed at the future of FEZANA and the future of our youth. We need 1,000 people from our community to contribute \$100 each to initiate this program. This will yield \$100,000 towards our ultimate goal of reaching \$1,000,000 by the year 2010. All donors of \$100 or more 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"**. Donations can be made towards any FEZANA Fund of your choice. Kindly mail your contributions to:

FEZANA, c/o Rustom Kevala, Treasurer
8812 Tuckerman Lane, Potomac, MD 20854

Beginning with this issue, we shall be printing all the names of the donors for this campaign and we hope to mail out certificates to all the donors in the near future.

Receipts and disbursements. On July 10, 2001, FEZANA received a check for \$60,000 from WZC2000. This is approximately half of the surplus remaining after holding the World Zoroastrian Congress in Houston. The other half of the surplus went to the Zoroastrian Association of Houston, which had hosted the Congress. Any balance after final settlement of WZC 2000 accounts will also be divided equally between FEZANA and ZAH. FEZANA is pleased to receive this **"windfall"** due to the generosity of numerous benefactors and the astute financial management of the Congress Board. These funds, along with other donations received for the FEZANA General Fund will be distributed to the FEZANA Funds for Scholarships, Religious Education, Welfare, Critical Assistance, Youth Activities and Properties.

During the past quarter, FEZANA donated over \$4,000 in response to various appeals for medical assistance to Zarathushtis in India. FEZANA also sent a donation of \$1,000 to Miss Rati Cooper, principal of Rajkumar College, Rajkot for rehabilitation of buildings damaged during the January 27 earthquake. In addition, over \$1400 received from various donors were given to Gram Seva Trust, where Dr. Roda Patel of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago is serving as a visiting physician [see *FEZANA Journal*,

FINANCIAL CORNER

Summer 2001]. A small donation was also sent to the Udvada Pilgrim Center, which is managed by the Youth Wing of WZO.

Thank you for your continued support, in the name of Ahura Mazda,

Jerry Kheradi, MD, chair,
Funds and Finance Committee

Rustom Kevala, PhD, Treasurer

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

Priceless Gifts

These priceless gifts are not seasonal! We can give them all year long. And as we give them, we will find that the giving enriches us as well as the recipients. They are worth a million dollars but they don't cost a cent.

The Gift of Listening

But you really have to listen. No interrupting, no planning your response. Just listening.

The Gift of Laughter

Clip cartoons. Share great articles and funny stories. Email especially good ones to people you know are feeling blue. Your gift will say, "I love to laugh with you."

The Gift of a Written Note

It can be a simple "I love you" or "Thanks for you help." A brief, handwritten note may be remembered for a lifetime, and may even change a life.

The Gift of a Compliment

A simple and sincere "You look great in red," or "You did a super job," or "That was a wonderful meal" can make someone's day.

The Gift of Favor

Every day, go out of your way to do something kind. Try it on your drive to work today.

The Gift of Solitude

There are times when we want only to be left alone. Be sensitive to those times, and give the gift of solitude to others.

The Gift of Good Cheer

The easiest way to feel good is to make others feel good.

- Author unknown

"Thousand Points of Light"

"Thousand Points of Light" is a campaign directed at the future of FEZANA and the future of our youth [see details on page 83]. You can join today by sending a donation of \$100 or more to any of the FEZANA Funds. The following are members of this elite group of leaders. All 2001 donors who qualify are listed:

	Fund	Points
Dr. Babak Abadi, PA	Sch	1
Dr. Cyrus F. Austin, AZ	Wel	9
Firdaus & Jasmine Bhathena, MA	Gen	1
Homi & Ellen Byramji, NJ	RelEd	1
Cyra & Lyla Contractor, PA	Gen	1
Houtoxi Contractor, PA	Gen	1
Ardeshtir B. Damania, CA	Crit	1
Diana Damkevala, CA	Wel/Crit	1
Soli P & JoAnn Dastur, FL	Gen	2
Homi Davier, TX	Gen	1
A.D. & G. A. Dutia, AL	Sch	2
Sorab Ghandhi, CA	Wel	2
Rashna Ghadialy, IL	Gen	1
Noshir L. Hansotia, MO	Gen	1
Jamshed & Rita Kapadia, MA	RelEd	1
Hormuz & Shahdookht Irani, GA	Gen	1
Behram K & Fareida Irani, TX	Crit	2
Rustom & Yasmin Kevala	Wel	1
Delara Kheradi, NY	Sch	1
Celeste Kheradi, RI	Sch	15
Jerry Kheradi, RI	Sch	15
Jasmin & Maneck Kotwal, NJ	Gen	1
Borzoo Kushesh & Mahindokht Yazdani-Bioki, NY	Gen	1
Zenobia & Shahrookh Lala	Gen	1
Dolly Malva, CA	Gen	1
Tehmtan & Aloo Mistry, MO	Crit	1
Percy K. Nikorawalla, NJ	RelEd	1
Jamshed & Farzana Palsetia, MA	Gen	1
Farhad & Firoza Panthaki, MA	Sch	10
Dr. Parvez Pohowalla, OR	RelEd	1
Purvez & Aban Rustomji, TX	Sch	1
Khurshed M. Tengra, ID	Gen	1
Jamshed Udvadia, MI	Crit	5
Rayomand J. Unwalla, PA	Wel	1
Dick Vazir, Hallendale, FL	Wel	1
Jer Vijan, AZ	Wel	1
ZAPANJ, PA & NJ	Gen	1
Farangis Zardoshty & Family, AZ	RelEd	10
Zoroastrian Assn of Alberta, Canada	Crit	3
Zoroastrian Assn of Atlanta, GA	Wel,Sch	1
Zoroastrian Assn of N. California	Gen	1

Funds: Crit=Critical Assistance, Gen=General, RelEd=Religious Education, Sch=Scholarship, Wel=Welfare.

Healthy and Wealthy

Cancer of the Colon and Rectum – Screening and Prevention

Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in North America and Western Europe. About 95% of the colon cancers begin as *benign polyps* (a small non-cancerous growth on the inside wall of the large intestines called colon). The polyps usually grow for seven to ten years before becoming cancerous. It takes another one to three years before this cancer spreads into the wall of the intestine, then to the lymph nodes and finally to the liver. This slow progression provides an opportunity for the detection of benign polyps before they turn into *malignant polyps or cancer*.

Unfortunately, because of a lack of widespread screening programs, most US patients are diagnosed when they have already developed symptoms, such as change in the frequency, shape or size of the stools; blood in the stool or rectum; unexplained anemia; a change in bowel habits with persistent abdominal pains; or a feeling of rectal fullness. Routine checkups should be done to prevent cancer of the colon.

A simple test called ***fecal occult blood testing*** (FOBT) should be done by your family physician in the office at least once a year. This is done by digital rectal exam, in which your

doctor feels the inside of your rectum with a gloved finger. An x-ray test called Barium Enema is one way of looking at the large bowel, but small lesions can be missed. Another screening test is called **flexible sigmoidoscopy**. This test involves inserting a slender, flexible lighted tube into the rectum and examining the lower large intestine. Since half of colon polyps arise in the lower third of the large intestine, many **lesions** (any growth on the lining of the bowel) can be diagnosed by this procedure. However, if your doctor sees a polyp or any other growth by this method, he should definitely refer you to a gastroenterologist who is a specialist in this kind of procedure, to carry out a full **colonoscopy**. It should be noted that colonoscopy is the gold standard for diagnosing all pathology of the large bowel. Colonoscopy is carried out under mild sedation by inserting a longer, slender flexible lighted tube through the rectum and examining the entire large bowel which is made up of the right side called the ascending colon, the middle called the transverse colon and the left side which is made up of the descending colon, the sigmoid and the rectum. During colonoscopy, the doctor can look at the inside of the entire large bowel and if there is any suspicious area,

he/she can take biopsies and send them to the pathologist. If there are any polyps, he/she can remove them in total and send them to the pathologist to find out if they are benign or cancerous. Besides polyps and cancer, he can look for various types of colitis, especially ulcerative colitis and Crohn's colitis.

For people with average risk, screening should begin at age 50; for those with higher risk, i.e. a family history of cancer of the colon or patient having ulcerative colitis or Crohn's colitis, should start having screening colonoscopy at age 40 or earlier, leaving it to the discretion of the gastroenterologist.

Reduce your risk. While you cannot change your family background or medical history, research indicates you can lower your risk for colorectal cancer if you:

- (1) Keep your fat and alcohol intake low.
- (2) Eat plenty of fiber; at least five daily servings of fruits and vegetables and six servings of plant food, including whole wheat bread, bran cereals, rice, pasta and beans.
- (3) Don't smoke.
- (4) Exercise for 30 minutes every day, like a brisk walk.
- (5) Maintain a healthy weight. ■

Read

FEZANA JOURNAL

Be informed. Be inspired. Be educated.

Send a gift subscription to family and friends.

*He who loses money
loses much;*

*He who loses a friend
loses much more;*

*He who loses faith
loses all.*

Acknowledgments

FEZANA gratefully acknowledges donations received in the last quarter through September 30. Note: the Thousand Points of Light donors, are listed separately [see page 84].

General fund. Tahamton & Godi Aresh, Newport Beach, CA, for National Union Catalog project (\$5000); Sam & Pouru Bhathena, Silver Spring, MD (\$10); Adi & Pervin Davar, Falls Church, VA (\$19); Sarosh Hodiwalla, Queens, NY (\$21) Dr. Rustam Mehdiabadi, Lubbock, TX (\$40); Faridon Namdarian, Houston, TX (\$20); Er. Pervez Patel, Elmhurst, NY (\$10); Kershasp Pundole, Shaker Heights, OH (\$50); Ms. Prochy Sethna, San Jose, CA (\$75); Ardeshir Sidhwa, Scottsdale, AZ (\$20).

Critical Assistance Fund. Purviz Batliwalla, Fullerton, CA (\$25); Xerxes Bhappu, New York, NY (\$80); Er. Jal Birdy, Corona, CA (\$25); Banoo Damkevala, Potomac, MD (\$25); Mrs Mazi Kapadia Pavri, Mesa, AZ (\$20); Zoroastrian Association of Florida (\$569) for Gujarat earthquake.

FEZANA Journal. Navroze Chenoy, Toronto, ONT (\$20); Sunnu Gollwalla, Karachi, Pakistan (\$20); Rohinton & Mickie Katgara, Toronto, ONT (\$31); Dinaz Rogers, Albany, OR, for foreign subscription assistance (\$110); Mr & Mrs Hormuz Vania, Springfield, IL (\$20).

Journal Advertisement. Mapin Publishing, Ahmedabad, India (\$200); Silloo Mehta, Cypress, CA (\$50); Jer Vijan, Mesa, AZ (\$30).

Religious Education Fund. Pervin Bhathena, ONT (\$31); Adi J Unwalla, Marlton, NJ (\$10).

Scholarship Fund. Atlanta Zoroastrian Anjuman, ashodad from Jashan by Er. Rustom Kanga (\$52.50).

Welfare Fund. Anonymous, Potomac, MD, in memory of Erach and Gool Choksi, Mumbai (\$1000); Anonymous well-wisher, TX: (\$101); Atlanta Zoroastrian Anjuman, Atlanta, GA, ashodad for Jashan performed by Er. Rustom Kanga (\$52.50); Purviz Batliwalla, Fuller-

ton, CA (\$30); Rustom Damania, Covis, CA (\$50). Mehraban & Dr. Parvin Dinyarian, San Antonio, TX (\$50); Behram & Farieda Irani, Plano, TX (\$350); Jal & Sunoo Godiwalla, Carrollton, TX (\$101); Roda Mistry, Bedford, TX (\$201); Phiroza & Satish Modi, Poughkeepsie, NY, ashodad for Jashan performed by Er. Noshir Hormuzdiar (\$1001); Khushrav Nariman, Sugar Land, TX (\$25); Hoshang Unvala, Irvine, CA (\$10); Dick & S Vazir, Hollywood, FL (\$20). ■

FEZANA Scholarship Recipients

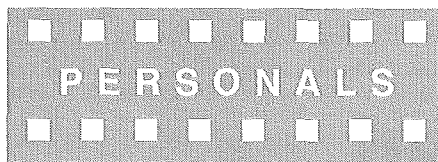
The FEZANA Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce the winners of Academic Scholarships for 2001-2002:

Farhad Ardeshirpour (\$1000)
Farhad is working towards a Bachelor of Science in biology and chemistry at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Rukhshana Gheyara (\$1000)
Rukhshana is working towards a Bachelor of Science in physical therapy at McGill University.

Roxanna Mirza (\$500)
Roxanna is working towards a Doctor of Naturapathic Medicine at the Canadian College of Naturapathic Medicine.

Natasha Mody (\$500)
Natasha is working towards a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design and Visual Communications at the Art Institute of Southern California. ■



Mrs. Gulrose Patel of Northern California is looking for **Mrs. Dhun Ardeshir Irani**, daughter of Mr. Jal Ardeshir Moos, who lives either in USA or Canada. If anyone has information, please call Mrs. Patel at (415) 492-8367, or email pervezpse@aol.com.

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]

Dadar-Matunga Parsi Zoroastrian Association

Rustom C. Chothia, president of the **Dadar-Matunga Parsi Zoroastrian Association** has sent an "Appeal to all Zoroastrians Worldwide" for donations to help support its charitable work for the aged, the needy, infirm, handicapped Zarathushtis. Among its laudable projects are: cash assistance of Rs. 100 per month to 200 needy Zarathushtis, annual gahambar for 500 at Palamkote Hall; annual sale of homemade wares; making sudrehs; a Dadar Parsi Colony directory and more. Please send donations to FEZANA [see above] marked "Dadar Association".

Medical assistance for Farhad Navdar

Ervad Farhad Navdar, 39, suffered brain hemorrhage and paralytic stroke in May 21. With two surgeries, complicated by renal problems which needed dialysis, and many months stay at Hinduja Hospital, his recovery is expected to take up to a year, and may need additional surgery. The family has incurred medical expenses of Rs. 11 lakhs to date. His wife, Dinaz writes: "This sickness has shattered our lives. We have an 8-year-old daughter and a 1-year-old son," and is appealing for help "in this hour of crisis." Please send donations to FEZANA [see above] marked "Navdar Medical Assistance".

Jenafrin's heart surgery

One-year-old *Jenafrin Bavaadam* was born with a congenital heart disease, and has already undergone a closed heart surgery and a 'balloon pulmonary valvuloplasty' surgery. In January, Jenafrin will undergo open heart surgery at Madras Medical Mission Hospital, at an estimated cost of Rs. 200,000. The family is of extremely modest means. Donations are requested to give Jenafrin a chance on life. Please send your checks, to FEZANA [see above], marked "Jenafrin Medical".

Medical Appeals

In addition to the above, medical assistance funds are also needed for various other appeals: chemotherapy, kidney transplant, HIV treatment and surgery/treatment of accident injuries to Zarathushtis in India. Please send donations to FEZANA [see above] marked "Medical Assistance to Zarathushtis".

■ MATRIMONIALS ■

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

Gentleman, 65 (but looks 45), retired, well-settled, resident of Sweden for 25 years, now in London; good natured, good looking, very compatible, in excellent health. Willing to settle in US or Sweden. Call sister at (702) 645-6139. [M01-22]

Young lady, 30, PhD, assistant professor in US university, fond of outdoors, camping, western classical music, photography; interested in professional gentleman with similar interests. Call (620) 343-9002 or email frupav@hotmail.com. [F01-23]

Gentleman, 43 (but looks 35), 5' 9", accountant in Mumbai, Bachelor of Commerce, fair, goodlooking, caring, hardworking, likes traveling, sports, nature. Interested to settle abroad. Widow/divorcee is fine. Tel: Mumbai, 91-22-209 2898 or email hormazi@hotmail.com. [M01-24]

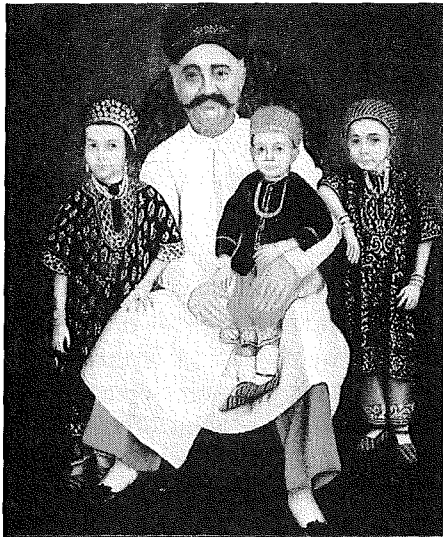
Parsi Lady, 52 interested in meeting gentleman with a view to marriage. Call (541) 552-9177. [M01-24]

Male, 33, business major, working as customer service representative for airlines; ambitious, openminded and easy-going. Call (714) 751-4322. [M01-24]

■ MILESTONES ■



Above, Sarosh Adil Irani, son of Zenobia and Adil Irani of Dallas area, at his navjote ceremony in Dallas on roz Zamyad, mah Bahman, 1370, July 14. Mobeds Ratan Vakil [left] and Porus Balsara officiated.



Portrait of a Community

Donations are earnestly sought for "Portrait of a Community", an exhibition at National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai, in October 2002, aiming to "preserve the rich heritage of our proud but dwindling community". CDROMs of the collection will be produced to perpetuate it for posterity. Send checks to FEZANA [see above] marked "Portraits". [Also see FEZANA Journal, Summer 2001, page 82].

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)



Left, Naaman Karbhari and right, Nita and Chitra Kavouspour with officiating mobeds Porus Balsara and Ratan Vakil [see Navjotes below].

Births

Persez Amaria, a girl, born to Sonita and Rustom Amaria, sister to Zarmesh, granddaughter to Lily and Pesi Amaria and Zarine and Hoshang Lawyer, in Mississauga, ONT, on July 25.

Shahvir Anklesaria, a boy, to Gustad and Rukshana Anklesaria, in Houston, TX, on July 17.

Arshia Dehgan, a girl, to Afshin and Shahla Dehgan of Dallas area, on August 10.

Jasmine Khumbata, a girl, to Michelle and Hamavand (Harry) Khumbata, in Edmonton, Alberta; sister to Eric, and granddaughter to Fali and Jaloo Khumbata, and Nergish and the late Eddie Sapurji.

Kiarash Makki, a boy, to Ali and Mahsa Makki, at Pars General Hospital in Tehran, on October 6.

Hope Tamboli, a girl, to Pheroze and Leslie Tamboli, in Houston, TX, on July 23.

Kassaundra Divecha, a girl, to Vicky and Kaezad Divecha, sister to Alyssia, granddaughter to Villie and Rohinton Divecha, and great granddaughter to Mani S. Divecha and Gool H. Patel, in Toronto, ONT, on August 22.

Roxanne Hope Irani, a girl, to Drs. Natasha and Adel Irani, granddaughter to Drs. Katie and (late) Dinshaw Irani and Drs. Dolly and Pheroze Dastoor, in Houston, TX, on October 2.

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 Minocher and Shahnaz Pithawala, niece to Nancy, Jerry,

Rashna, and Sharon, in Toronto, Ontario, on May 22.

Navjote, Sedreh Pushi

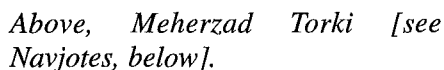
Zubin Anklesaria, son of Jennifer and Jimmy Anklesaria, at their home in Del Mar, CA, on September 1. Ervad Ratansha Vakil officiated. A celebration dinner followed for about 100 friends relatives from India, California, New York, Georgia and Texas.

Xerius and Zenita Anklesaria, in Richmond, BC, on July 15.

Saleena and Anoushka Irani, daughters of Mehar and Jehangir Irani, in Toronto, ONT, on August 5.

Anahita Behmardian, daughter of Mehrdad and Mahnez Behmardian, in California, on July 14. Mobed Bahram Shahzadi officiated.

Sarosh Adil Irani, in Dallas on July 14. [see photo page 87].



Weddings

Goolnar Patel, daughter of Katy and Khurshed Homi Patel, granddaughter of Gool Homi Patel and of the late Jer and Nariman Vatcha, to **Lee-Michael Haw**, son of Anita and Forbes Haw, in Mississauga, Ontario, on July 1.

Deaths

Jalejar H. Dhabhar, husband of Dinamai, father of Roshan, Ruby, Phiroza, Farrokh and Jamshed, on September 23, in Navsari, India [ZS0].

Perin Firoze Giara, 82, mother of Arnawaz Baijan Aga, Dinaz (Toronto) and Minoo, sister of Bahadur Patel (Toronto), Pacy and Zarin, aunt to Shehlah, grandmother to Dinshaw, Kayan, Ava, Adil and Kaizad, in Karachi, Pakistan, on July 27.

Shirin Yeganegi, 23, daughter of Shahbehram and Shekoufeh Yeganegi of West Vancouver, BC, sister of Shahram Mehraban and Esfandiar Yeganagi, granddaughter of Homayoon Farin and Morvarid Yeganegi, in Ontario, on May 17. ■

Farishteh Pithawala, daughter of Minocher and Shahnaz Pithawala of Toronto, at Cama Baug, Mumbai, on December 16.

Treat people as if they were what they ought to be, and you help them to become what they are capable of being.

- Fed Newsletter

Firoza Marker (1951 - 2001)

A CARING, GIVING PERSON, WHO TOUCHED THE HEARTS OF ALL

Firoza Marker, 50, daughter of Ambassador Jamsheed Marker passed away on September 4th, 2001 following a tragic accident in upstate New York on August 25th. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

Family and friends still grieving at this unexpected and sad loss of their precious 'Fuzz', as she was affectionately known, have no words at this time to express their feelings. Firoza touched the hearts of everyone

she came into contact with – at her work, her friends far and near, and her family.

An occupational therapist, Firoza was dedicated to uplifting the lives of those most needing help, even if it meant working in not so safe neighborhoods. She loved children. Her dedication was so great that she recently related an incident to her grand-mother, Mehramai Marker who stated how she rebuked an inspector who refused to accompany her into the homes of the poor blacks. Her grand-mother celebrated her 100th birthday just a month earlier, and Fuzz took photographs of family and friends enthusiastically on this memorable centenary occasion. She was passionate, lively and caring.

Firoza was generous and giving of herself to everyone. She shared her clothes when a friend spent an unexpected lengthy stay in New York. She willingly accompanied visitors to the city and arranged their appointments. She would telephone her friends on her way to the grocer asking if she could pick up something for them.

Her cousin, Aban whom she visited in London while Aban was sick in hospital says her life was so interwoven with all of ours, that with her passing we feel the tearing of the web. A web

which, if we are to be loyal to her spirit, we must repair again, strand by strand. We cannot hope to fill the void she left, but we can, as we walk around it, be there for each other, as she would have been for us. And that will keep her happy.

Arnaz, her father's wife of twenty-one years, named 'Teach' by Firoza for giving Nilly and herself dancing lessons, says that Firoza was the most precious of all – a gem of a person. In the spiritual

healing world, her name means 'love' and Arnaz feels grateful for the love, laughter and courage shown to her and the wonderful years shared together. May her soul rest in everlasting peace!

Fuzz's sister, Niloufer (Nilly) was as close to her as two sisters could be – Firoza loved and respected her older sister. Most of all, Feroza's admiration, pride and love shone on her face at the mention of her father, Jamsheed who was ambassador of Pakistan to many countries and to both super powers. His immense contributions to peace in Timor as a special envoy of the Secretary General of the United Nations, his diplomacy and his outstanding knowledge of current affairs, music and his prominent friendships among those in all walks of life, was known to those concerned.

From presidents to pianists Jamsheed is highly regarded and loved by those in Pakistan and worldwide. He is a man of infinite probity and sagacity. His community is extremely proud of him.

Jamsheed is recuperating with ongoing therapy after the accident in which his wife, Arnaz and his darling daughter Firoza were involved while on their way to a family wedding. His home in Florida is now inun-



Jamsheed Marker with daughter, Firoza. [Photo, courtesy KZBM]

dated with journalists and analysts wanting his opinion on the events on the international scene and in the strategic theatre of this current campaign by the US government and its coalition of nations.

Firoza leaves behind a huge void in the hearts of her father, Jamsheed, his wife, Arnaz and her sister, Niloufer, her grand-mother, Mehramai and many cousins, friends and family. Our hearts and prayers are with them at this time.

- DhunMai Dalal

Jal Khan

REVERED SCOUT LEADER
OF DADAR PARSI COLONY, MUMBAI

It is rare when one can reflect and say that a person outside one's immediate family circle molded one's outlook on life and enriched one's life, by teaching and breathing into them, a sound sense of values.

Such a man was Jal Khan, my cubmaster and scout leader, who transformed not just mine, but the lives of so many young cubs and scouts whom he influenced, for over a half century in Dadar Parsi Colony. Literally hundreds of his cubs, now spread out across the world, with many in USA and Canada, are indebted to Jal and also to his devoted wife, Perin.

With his passing, Jal Khan leaves a void that is hard to fill. So many of us may not have reached our stations in life, were it not for his example, and for his constant, unconditional love. He loved his cub scouts dearly and his scouts loved him back even more.

Jal was an improviser, a man who could deliver, no matter how strange or difficult or exacting the circumstances or how frugal the budget.

He is like an old soldier – now faded away from our lives – but his teachings and the values he instilled, will linger, not only in us, but in our children as well. His cubs, now living all over the world, pay him tribute.

THANK YOU, JAL!

- Rohinton M. Rivetna



Princess Soraya Esfandiari Bakhtiari

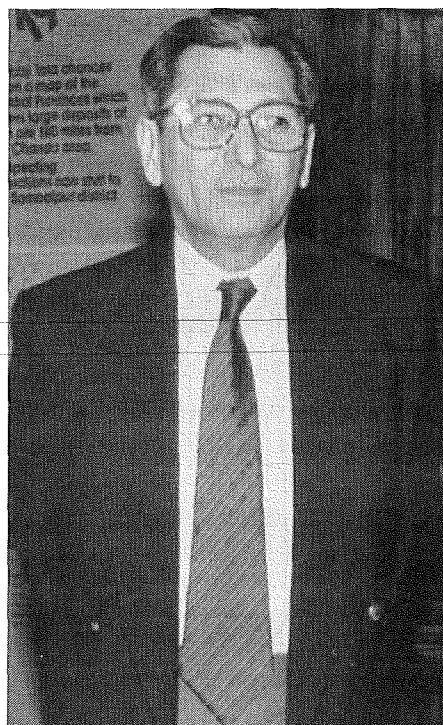
JUNE 22, 1932 – OCTOBER 25, 2001

Soraya Esfandiari Bakhtiari, 69, the second wife of the Shah of Iran, was found dead, apparently from natural causes, in her Paris apartment on October 25th.

The former princess, renowned for her beauty, married Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi in 1951 after his divorce from Princess Fawzia, sister of King Farouk of Egypt, for failing to produce a male heir. The Shah ended his second marriage, in 1958, after Soraya was unable to bear children, and later married a young architecture student, Farah, who bore him four children. After being swept from the throne by the Islamic Revolution in 1979, the Shah died from cancer in Egypt, in 1980.

Soraya came from a prominent family of the powerful Bakhtiar tribe in southern Iran. Her father was an Iranian Muslim and her mother a German Protestant. After her divorce, Soraya lived in Rome, and aspired to a career in the cinema. She appeared as a nightclub dancer in the movie *She*, with Ursula Andress. She was married for five years to Italian film director Franco Indovina, who died in a plane crash in 1969. Soraya settled in Paris, and, with age, bore her misfortunes with grace and dignity. ■

PHOTO: BOMBAY PARSIS PUNCHAVET REVIEW



Dr. Aban N. Daruwalla, of the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Corona Division, California, received an award for her work at a Navy symposium

in Washington, DC and another in July for technical excellence. In a message of appreciation the director of Naval Surface Warfare Center, Port Hueneme, Louisville writes:

"... sincere appreciation to Dr. Aban N. Daruwalla for her dedicated and outstanding support of Gun Weapon Systems during the 1994 - 2001 time frame. Dr. Daruwalla's technical expertise and tireless efforts were instrumental in establishing and introducing Gun Weapon System readiness measurements utilizing the Material Readiness Database ...

"Dr. Daruwalla's professionalism, dedication and subject matter exper-

The president of India has appointed **Justice Sam Piroj Bharucha**, 64, the senior-most judge of the supreme court in India, to be the new Chief Justice of India. He took the oath of office at a ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan on November 1.

Born in 1937, Justice Bharucha enrolled as an advocate of the Bombay High Court when he was 23 years old. He was elevated to the Supreme Court in 1992. He is regarded as a strict constructionist and has several landmark judgements to his credit.

The crucial judgement he delivered last year in the 'Veerappan' case saved India from a major embarrassment of two State governments surrendering before the forest brigand who had taken superstar Rajkumar hostage. ■

tise have been unparalleled in supporting Gun Weapon System readiness issues ..."

In October, **Dr. Dolly Dastoor** was elected District Governor of ZONTA for District 2 (New York State, Quebec and part of Ontario). ZONTA is an international service organization for women. In its 82-year-old history, Dr. Dastoor is the first ethnic (non-white) governor of this district. She will take office in July 2002, after the International convention in Sweden.

Zubin Engineer, 31 [photo next page] managing director of the Bangkok based "Zubin Sport Online Company, Ltd.", may be the only Parsi professional tennis coach. The company is involved in developing national teams and training Asian players for international events.

He is part of the Britannia Amritraj Tennis (BAT) team that aims at producing India's next generation of

Davis Cup players and a Wimbledon champion; and BAT boys have now become a regular feature of the Indian Davis Cup team.

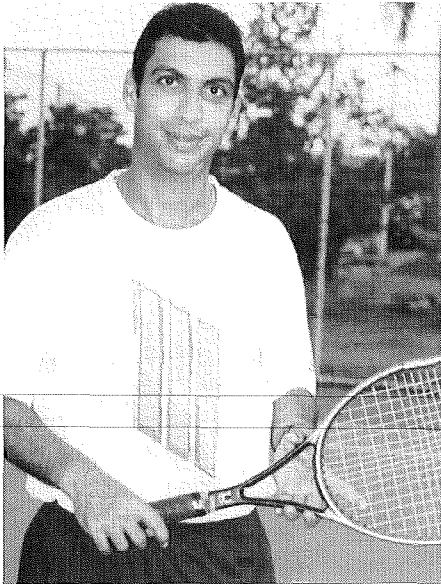


PHOTO COURTESY DORABJI ENGINEER

Engineer is on the search for young Zarathushtis wanting to excel in tennis. He feels he is positioned to help any Zarathushti who shares his love for professional tennis. Email: zubin_dara@yahoo.com, website: www.pauldaletennis.com. [From *Parsiana*, January 2001].



Frene Ginwala, the speaker of the South African Parliament, was named the first recipient of the Woman of the Year Award, instituted by the Faculty of Law at the University of Pretoria, South Africa, in September 2000. Ginwala received the award for devoting her entire life to the cause of securing democracy in South Africa.

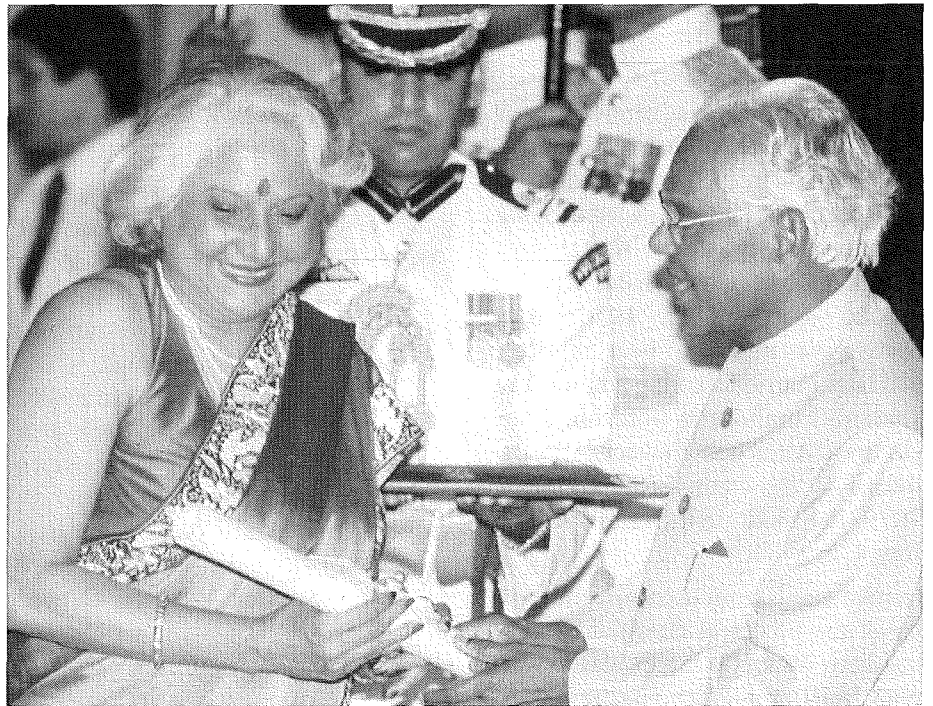
Langrana Awarded Teaching Chair

Noshir Langrana is the first holder of the Mary W. Raisler Distinguished Teaching Chair at Rutgers



At a ceremony on October 17th, **Professor Noshir Langrana** was invested as the first holder of the Mary W. Raisler Distinguished Teaching Chair in Mechanical Engineering. The chair is designed to recognize and foster excellence in teaching and scholarly activity in the mechanical and aerospace engineering department. "Dr. Langrana is an exceptional choice for the award," said Andrew Norris, chair of the department, "He integrates research and teaching to provide excellent educational opportunities." "Langrana has distinguished himself with leading-edge research in the area of spinal column injury and recovery," said Rutgers President.

Langrana, has a doctorate from Cornell University, and joined Rutgers' School of Engineering in 1976. He was named a full professor in 1987 and served as the undergraduate director from 1989 to 1998. His research in biomechanics and computer-aided design has been awarded continuous external support over his 25 years at Rutgers.



Dr. Katayun Ardeshtir Dinshaw, director of the Tata Memorial Center, Mumbai, received the prestigious **Padma Shri** award from President Narayanan of India, at an investiture ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi, on March 21, 2001. Dr. Dinshaw, who has a DMRT and FRCR from Cambridge, UK (London University) joined the Tata Memorial Hospital as an Assistant Radiotherapist in 1974 and was appointed Director, Tata Memorial Hospital in 1995. She was the recipient of the Indo-American Ulrich Henschke Memorial Award in 1993 and the Award for Excellence in Professional Competence by the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans in India, in 1997. Katayun is the sister of Navaz (Jim) Modi of Chicago area.

Recognitions for educator Dr. Dilafruz Williams and son James



Dr. Dilafruz Williams, professor in education and director of Community-University Partnerships at Portland State University, in Portland Oregon, is recipient of the 2001 *Thomas Ehrlich Faculty Award* for Service-Learning. The award was presented in June, at Butler University, in Indianapolis.

The \$2000 award which carries national recognition, is presented annually by *Campus Compact*, a coalition of over 700 college and university presidents, committed to helping students develop the values and skills of citizenship through participation in public and community service.

From over sixty qualified educators who were nominated, Dr. Williams was selected for the prestigious award, as the faculty member "whose teachings, scholarship and leadership, both on campus and in the community, exemplify exceptional 'service-learning' practices." Service-learning is an educational method through which students actively participate in community-based projects.

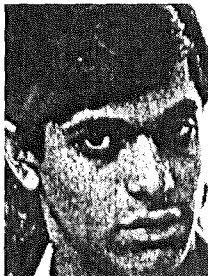
The award is named in honor of Thomas Ehrlich, president emeritus of Indiana University and a Senior Scholar at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in

California. Incidentally, Dr. Ehrlich's personal assistant at Carnegie Foundation, happens to be Ruby Keralwalla of California.

Dilafruz, originally from India, studied at the J. J. School of Art in Mumbai and has been in the US for many years. Dilafruz is the sister of Gulnar (Percy) Kawas of the Bay Area.

James Williams, Dilafruz's son was featured in an article "The Education of an Idealist" in the *Portland Tribune* of July 31, 2001.

Williams, 17, is student body president at Lincoln High School in Portland. Last year, he served for a one-year term as student representative on Portland's School Board.



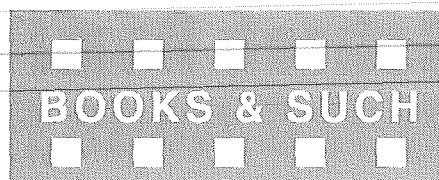
"With fiery words and a dose of political gamesmanship," says the *Tribune*, "Williams pushed through a significant change in student-involvement policies."

"He often outdid other board members, with his passionate, sometimes angry and often applause-generating speeches about education."

By the end of his year on the School Board, Williams had "wowed district leaders and watchers with his maturity and savvy, the same way he's wowed adults around him for years,"

Williams grew up in Syracuse, NY. After his father died, he moved to Portland with his mother Dilafruz. Though also on the school water polo and swim teams, his passion is politics. He has already started on his "Williams in 2020" campaign, for no less than the top job in the White House, as soon as he is eligible, when he turns 35.

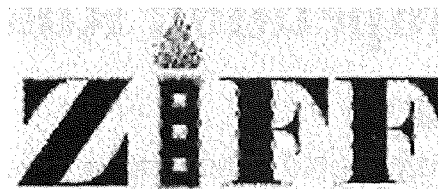
[Compiled by Roshan Rivetna from materials submitted by Ruby Keralwalla]



Rah-e-Asha

*Edited and published by
Mehraban Oshidari*

RAH-E-ASHA (the Path of Truth and Righteousness) is a Farsi language magazine, with articles on Zarthushti religion, history and culture. To order, please contact Mehraban Oshidari, 20900 Homestead Road, Apt. B11, Cupertino, CA 95014, tel: (408) 253-7719, fax: (408) 273-3835.



Feraydoon Demehri has announced the *Second Zarathushti International Film/Video Festival*. Films/videos are invited in two divisions: "Competition" (for amateurs) and "Non-competition" (for professionals). ZIFF is held bi-annually; films from the first Festival were screened at the World Congress in Houston. The Second Festival is planned for 2002. Contact F. Demehri at fdemehri@hotmail.com.

ZS launches fourth Music Cassette and CD

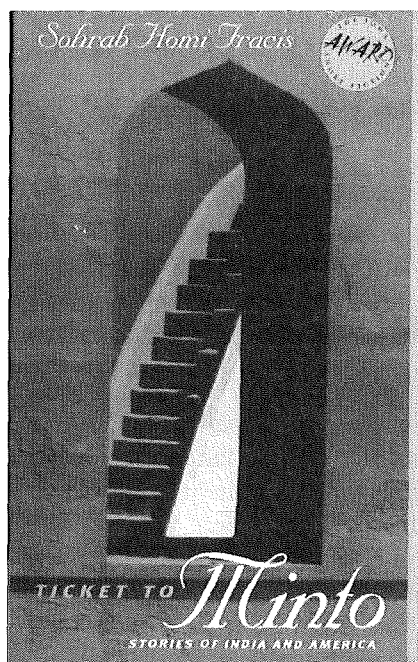
Zoroastrian Studies launched its fourth cassette/CD of Gujarati traditional and folk songs, "*Gao Khushi na Geet*" produced by Shehnaz Munshi, at a gala evening last September. Pop music icon Shiamak Davar, the Crystal Choral singers and colorfully costumed school children sang songs with commentary by Khojeste Mistree. Order cassette (Rs. 120) and CD (Rs. 350) from Zoroastrian Studies at tel: 91-22-283-1511, email: zstudies@bom3.vsnl.net.in.

Sohrab Homi Fracis Wins Prestigious Fiction Award

Ticket to Minto Stories of India and America

By Sohrab Homi Fracis

Paperback, 226 pages, \$15.95.
Available at local bookstores or by
calling University of Iowa Press at
1-800-621-2736, or visiting their
web-site at www.uiowapress.org.



"A subtle understanding of human nature, clarity, and intelligence inform this splendid collection. Sohrab Fracis' accurate eye for sensual detail is as evocative of the sights, sounds, and smells of India as it is of the lonelier landscapes of his domicile America. An original voice, stamped with veracity."

— Bapsi Sidhwa, author of

The Crow Eaters and Cracking India

"Reading Ticket to Minto was an emotional and intellectual joyride I did not want to end. Here is a writer who leaps headlong into the creative furnace—daring, energetic, fresh! This collection of stories will haunt me for years to come."

— Susan Power

Poignant and daring, Sohrab Homi Fracis' story collection. *Ticket To Minto: Stories of India and America* underlines the harsh realization that the immigrant never truly arrives but is in constant limbo between two worlds. As one character relates, "There's a part of me that's American and a part that's Indian. I'm clear about that and comfortable with it, except that sometimes people want me to be just the one or the other."

Originally from Bombay, Sohrab Homi Fracis has been awarded a Florida Individual Artist Fellowship in Literature/Fiction, 1999-2000. His fiction has won awards and publication at magazines in America and Canada. He teaches creative writing and literature at the University of North Florida. He is a fiction and poetry editor at The State Street Review and a proofreader at Kalliope. His *Ticket to Minto* was a finalist for the Flannery O'Connor Award for Short Fiction, 1999, before it won the Iowa Short Fiction Award, 2001, presented by the University of Iowa Press.

Zoroastrian and Parsi Studies

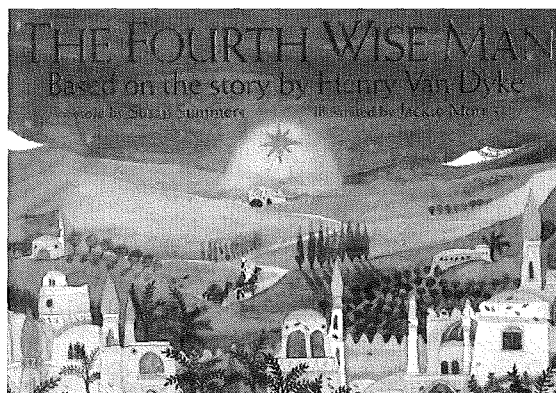
Selected works of John R. Hinnells

By John R. Hinnells

Hardcover, 430 pages, 2000.
ISBN: 0-7546 1501 4, \$89.95.
Ashgate Publishing Co, website
www.ashgate.com.
US orders, call 1-800-535-9544.

Review by Dr. Kersey H. Antia

As the title suggests, this is a collection of publications by John Hinnells over his long and distinguished scholastic career. It is a veritable labor of love for Zarathushtis and the religion of Zarathushtra by a non-Zarathushti scholar whose effort and insight shines through every page. It is a mammoth scholarly endeavor at researching diverse topics such as the Zarathushti influence on Judaism and Christianity, Anglo-Parsi relations, Parsi charities, contemporary Zarathushti philosophy, the modern diaspora, a comparative study of Zarathushtis, and many more.



The Fourth Wise Man

By Susan Summers

Hardcover, color, ISBN 0-8037-2312-1, publisher Dial Books for Young Readers, Penguin Putnam, 375 Hudson Street, NY, NY 10014.

AT LAST, a storybook for little children that actually refers to the magi as "Zoroastrians". This inspiring story, based on a work by Henry Van Dyke, "The Story of the Other Wise Man" written over 100 years ago, recounts the adventures of the fourth magi, Artaban, described in the opening paragraph as "a follower of the faith of Zoroaster ..." It is a beautiful tale of faith and devotion, about Artaban's lifelong search for virtue.

— By Roshan Rivetna

[Acknowledgements to Khurshid Bapasola of The Zoroastrian Shop, for "discovering" this book.]

Prof. Hinnells' research is thorough and impeccable, even though one may not always agree with him, since, as human beings, we are all subject to the views and theories we were exposed to in our formative years as students. He had the distinction to come under the influence of the greatest scholar of our own times, Dr. Mary Boyce, and shares her views about the continuity of the Zarathushti tradition and the importance of the ninth century Pahlavi scriptures and writers who emphasized dualism. Thus, he sees the views of another Boyce protégé, Khojeste Mistree, as almost the only Parsi view of the religion of Zarathushtra that is faithful to the tradition, though he admits it does not sit squarely with many Parsis. His own research reveals that present-day Parsis believe in many things such as reincarnation and other Hindu beliefs that are antithetical to the religion of Zarathushtra.

Hinnells' warning on intermarriage in India in general and in North America in particular, as leading fast to the disintegration and disappearance of the community is well taken, especially as their progeny are not fully accepted by the community. To me personally, his dedication to take up the cause of representing Zarah-

thushtis in the right light and expose any unfair distortions about them is best represented in his article about the much maligned (rather unfairly) Parsi M.P. of the British Parliament, Muncherji Bhowanagare.

There is not enough space to bring out the importance of this volume to Zarathushtis who, for the most part, are not aware of their own history and religion. Every Zarathushti household ought to have this book – the price is not higher than a dress – but it will be the best thing your children can inherit and be proud of.

This book is mostly free of mistakes, though some minor typos are self-evident. Some facts such as "M. N. Dhalla was born in Bombay" [p. 187] instead of in Rustumpura in Surat, do not do credit to this one-of-the-best research ever on Zarathushtis; nor do his rather frequent terse mention of this great Dastur as "M. N. Dhalla", when he invariably describes Jamasp Asa and Kotwal as "Dasturs" – except when describing the reverence Karachi Parsis still feel for him, even though he died in 1956. An unconscious bias, maybe?

The irony is that Dastur Dhalla was born and raised in an extremely tradi-

tional milieu, and he proudly declared himself to be a staunch orthodox until, as he himself claimed, reason won him over when he studied at Columbia University in New York around 1905. Whereas Khojeste Mistree, the Parsi author best representing Zarathushti tradition per Hinnells, seems to have lived almost in a religious vacuum and was mostly ignorant of the Pahlavi language and tradition, but seems to have uncritically and whole-heartedly embraced the Pahlavi tradition as a result of studying under Mary Boyce in England. Can it be that all other renowned scholars and Dasturs had had good grounding in the religion to properly weigh the importance of the ninth century Pahlavi books against the whole array of other scriptures and factors?

It reminds me of a poem by Kavi Dalpatram about someone excelling in playing the flute because he did not play other instruments. Maybe Hinnells does not have the last word in this matter.

Nevertheless, his work is not likely to be replicated in a long while, and we are so grateful to him for, as a scholar, adopting us so ardently and caringly. Long life, Professor Hinnells!

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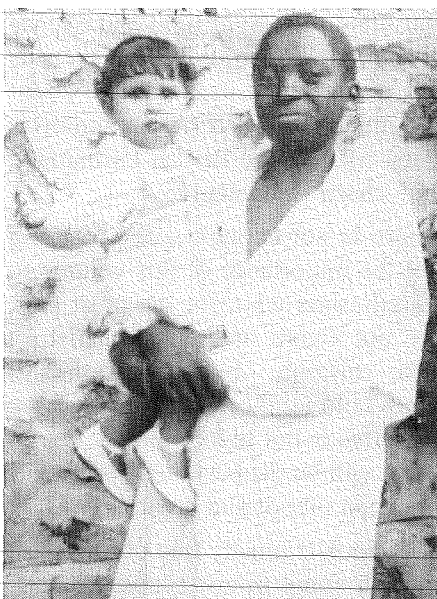
Jambo Paulo, Jambo Mykol

By Kersi Rustomji

An autobiographical work describing the author's life growing up in Tanganyika and Kenya.

Jambo Paulo, Jambo Mykol, in Swahili, the lingua franca of the East African nations of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, means "Hello Paul, Hello Michael". This work is written essentially for the author's two sons Paul and Michael. Kersi has also written African animal legend stories, East African Animal Tales, which is produced on a CD and has been well received in England.

Kersi would be happy to have sponsorships to have the autobiography published. Contact him at 375, Urana Road, Lavington, NSW, 2641, Australia, or email him at: rustomji@austarnet.com.au.



Kersi Rustomji's father Minocher Rustomji from Rustompara in Surat came to Uganda in 1933-34 to work in a bank, at the capital Kampala. His mother Jeroo Commissariat was born in Nairobi in 1913. Her maternal grandfather was an engineer on the Kenya Uganda Railway. Her father Burjorji Commissariat also worked in a bank at Mombasa in Kenya. She married Minoo at Mom-

basa in 1934, and moved to Kampala, where Kersi was born. The Rustomjis then moved to Mwanza in Tanganyika, when Kersi was three months old.

Both as a child and as an adult Kersi had a very exciting life as the only Parsi boy in the midst of various ethnic communities. His first mentor, Simba of the Sukuma tribe [photo left, with Kersi in Mwanza] initiated him in the love of wild animals, the wilderness and bushcraft, which he later pursued in various personal ventures.

This book is also a chronicle of the vicissitudes of a Parsi family, in a small East African town on the southern shores of Lake Victoria. Death of a brother, loss of his arm and the family mishaps, of one of the only two Parsi families in the town are an interesting socio-ethnic record from the Zarathushti view. Kersi now lives in Albury, New South Wales, Australia, where he migrated with his first wife Leigh in 1974. He has two boys Paul and Michael who also live in Australia. ■

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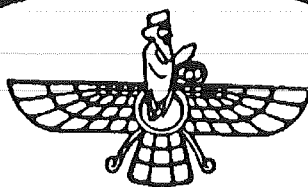
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The Triangle Fraternity Education Foundation is pleased to announce the creation of the Keyannejad-Kapadia Zoroastrian Scholarship Fund (endowed by Mr. Homi Kapadia and his sister Mrs. Mahrokh Keyannejad). The scholarships generated by this fund may 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:

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- Not citizens or Permanent Residents (Green Card) of the USA
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