

# FEZANA JOURNAL

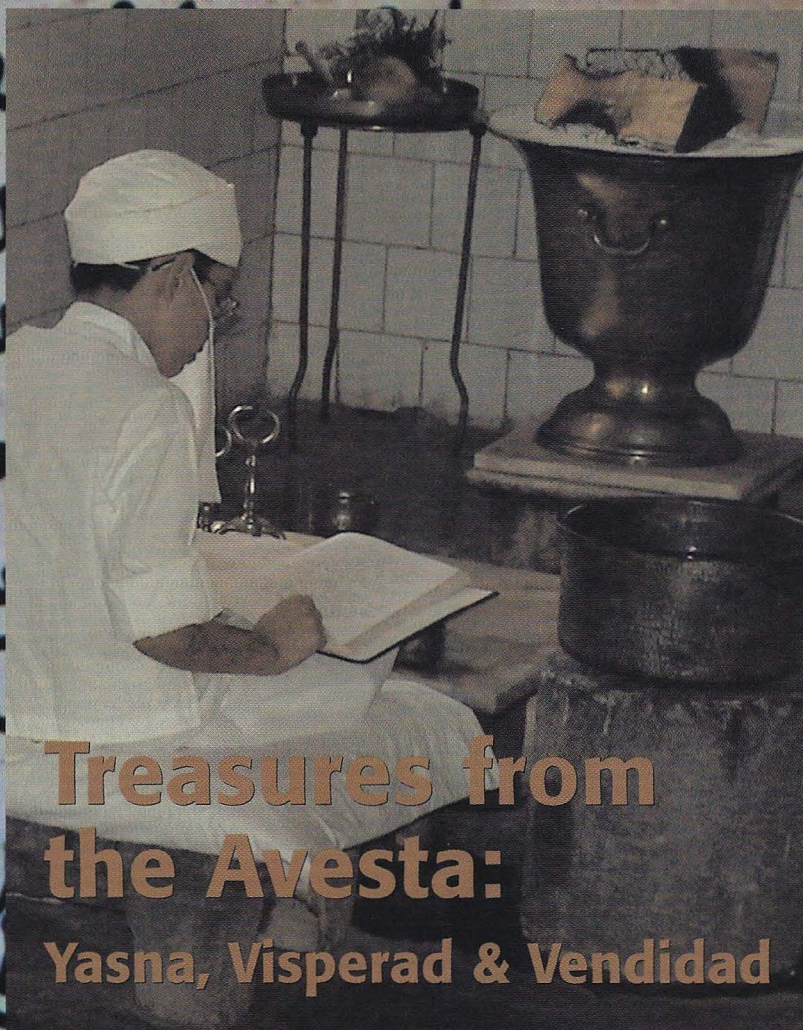


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## Treasures from the Avesta: Yasna, Visperad & Vendidad

PUBLICATION OF THE FEDERATION OF ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF NORTH AMERICA



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## **"Coming Together in Hamazori"** **lessons from our inner liturgies**

**N**ow that the seven high priests and the 40-plus anjumans led by Khojeste Mistree, have placed sanctions against the Indian Federation (FPZAI) from joining the proposed world body of Zarathushtis, for fear of "converts" marginalizing the Parsis [FJ Winter 2004, Spring 2005, and this issue, p. 32] ...

And now that the new "Parsi-Irani world body" (WAPIZ) [see page 34] "has been created to give our people the choice of joining a traditional world body of Parsi Irani Zarthoshtis as versus a cosmopolitan world body whose membership is open to non-Zoroastrians and converts," according to founder member Khojeste Mistree; and "WAPIZ has come into existence to thwart all attempts on the part of those Zarthoshtis who want to disregard our traditions and practices under the guise of misplaced pragmatism" per chairman Areez Khambatta in the WAPIZ inaugural brochure ...

Our community is polarized and a deep schism is forming in our ranks.

*How do we heal the wounds?*

*How do we assuage the fears?*

*How do we achieve our mission for our dispersed world community to "Come Together in Hamazori?"*

*How do we move forward to formalize the truly representative world body of all the federations and anjumans of the world, embracing all the diaspora and homeland communities, to Come Together and work together on cooperative projects to address the many pressing issues and challenges we face today?*

While the new WAPIZ (an organization of individuals) is recognized and

welcomed as a vehicle to express the traditional Parsi-Irani voice, it certainly does not fit the bill for the representative body of all the world's federations/ anjumans, that we have been seeking for decades.



**Towards the vision.** Such a world body has been developed, and gained consensual acceptance in principle, by the world leadership – the so-called 'G-10' (goup of ten) comprising of presidents and representatives from India, Iran (came later), UK/Europe, North America and WZO.

In this issue we present a background and current status of the world body [see "A Timeline of World Body Developments", p. 32] and excerpts from an impassioned "appeal to the intelligentsia" by Dr. Homi Dhalla ["The Imperative for a World Body of Zoroastrians," p. 35].

FEZANA president Firdosh Mehta, a member of the G-10 group secured a unanimous vote of confidence (with two abstentions) from member associations at the FEZANA AGM in May [see FEZANA AGM report on page 7].

Thus empowered, we now hope the G-10 leadership will continue steadfast on their noble vision. We hope they will go back to the drawing-board, and continue to tune the constitutions to reassure the detractors and assuage their fears, so that the sanctions by the high priests and the anjumans of India, against the Indian Federation joining the world body are lifted, and our world community can Come Together in Hamazori.

**Exploring the high liturgies.** From these present-day gyrations, this edition of the Journal takes readers back

some centuries to explore the "Treasures of the Avesta: Yasna, Visperad and Vendidad."

With a scintillating slate of authors – from scholar/high-priest Dasturji Firoze Kotwal, and scholars Jamsheed Choksy, Gernot Windfuhr, P. Octor Skjærvø, William Malendra, Helmut Humbach and Sarosh Manekshaw, to practicing mobed Er. Soli Dastur – guest editor and Avestan scholar Dr. Pallan R. Ichaporia explores the origins, practice and significance of these ancient high liturgies [pp. 40 ff].

Original research, shedding new light on cosmic patterns encoded in these rituals, gives a better understanding and will perhaps add meaning to these rituals for those who fail to see their relevance in today's world.

Though, to the faithful, like my dear *mamaiji*, whose vision is embedded in my memory – a simple, truly *ashoi* woman, always dressed in a white sari, head covered with a *math-oobanoo*, hunched in her chair, who would spend her whole day in prayer – such an understanding would matter little. For, as Benjamin Franklin said: "The way to see by faith is to shut the eye of reason."

**Strength in togetherness and importance of staying connected.** Some lessons I picked up from these articles was the message of 'strength in togetherness' from the bundle of barsom sticks girded with the date-palm cord, that is central to our inner liturgies; and the 'importance of staying connected' from the *payvand* (bridge) or connection the priests maintain with the *alat* at all times.

To those who would deny our world community, this simple but profound message of the *barsom* and the *payvand*, I would say,

**MAY GOOD SENSE AND REASON  
PREVAIL OVER FERVOR AND  
EMOTION!**

*Happy Reading!*

*Roshan Rivetna  
Editor-in-chief*



# Relevance of the ancient high liturgies

by Pallan R. Ichaporia  
Guest Editor

The spiritual aspects of the 'pav-mahal' rituals and the structure of the texts are given briefly for the first time, in this current issue of FEZANA Journal. I hope readers will find them interesting and educational.

**Role of high rituals.** New light shed on the high liturgies of Yasna, Visperad and Vendidad by foremost scholars will be enlightening for the laity as it shows the validity of Zarathushti rituals in modern times. As Gernot Windfuhr points out:

"There is no better demonstration of the emotional and spiritual need for community ritual in our world today, and of its power of bonding, than the complex inner and outer ritual complexes that were initiated by the recent death of Pope John Paul II."

For Zarathushtis, the high rituals of Yasna, Visperad and Vendidad have exactly the same effect.

Unfortunately in the diaspora in North America, even after fifty years or so, the new settled community lacks a consecrated fire temple, and as such, the high rituals cannot be performed.

The prerequisite for the Yasna ceremony is a "fixed enclosure, called a 'pavi,' the area being demarcated by means of furrows or channels built into the floor of that part of the temple building known as *Dar-i Mihr* – 'Court of the Lord of Ritual'" [Kotwal and Boyd, *A Persian Offering, The Yasna : A Zoroastrian High Liturgy*, 1991, p. 62].

**Relevancy.** The relevancy of the ancient high liturgies can be easily discerned when one finds the spiritual eschatology accompanying these ritu-

als. Readers will see such relevancy in the articles written by the contributing authors. As P. Octor Skjærvø writes:

"The purpose of the Yasna ritual is thus primarily rebirth and renewal. It differs from Videvdat Sade ritual, whose principal purpose is cleansing and healing. This difference of emphasis is reflected in the texts that accompany the two rituals."

Discarding the texts of Yasna, Visperad and Vendidad, along with the high liturgies, will be at the peril of the Parsi-Irani Zarathushtis settled in the West. This is more so when in the recent diaspora, scriptural knowledge of even the basic texts is less than desired among the majority of community members. Skjærvø has recently told me:

"The old Zoroastrian literature is one of the finest and the thoughts of its authors breath-taking in their inventiveness and versatility."

According to Choksy [*Purity and Pollution in Zoroastrianism*, 1989, p. 137]:

"... rituals remind the congregation that suffering and death are never final: they are, according to religious ethos, always followed by purification and resurrection; every defeat by evil is neutralized, counteracted, and transcended by final victory"

**Avestan citations.** The rituals we have inherited have been in existence for the last three millennia, and date from Avestan times. This is apparent from praiseworthy citations at several places in the extant scriptures with the recurring phrases for the 'enthousiasme' of these ritual traditions:

- *ayese yesti dregam upayanam* [Ys. 2.13]

"the rituals of long durations are praised herewith"

- *dregam upayanam yazamaide* [Ys. 25.6]

"we revere the rituals of long duration."

- *vispamcha datem daregham upayanam yazamaide* [Ys. 71.5]

"all the laws of the rituals of long duration are revered."

- *ayese yesti ... daregyao upayanyao daenyao vanghuyao mazdayasnoish* [Ys. 3.15]

"herewith we praise...the rituals of the good religion of the Mazdayasnis."

- *nivaedhayemi hankarayemi ... daathe zarthushtoish dregyao upyanyao daenyao vanghuyao mazdayasnoish* [Ys. 1.13].

"Consecrate and announce... the laws of Zarathushtra, the rituals of long duration and the good religion of Mazdayasnis."

- *haxaya datahe vidaevahe dareghayao upanayao* [Yt 11.17].

"(we are) the adorer of the laws against the demons, and of the rituals of long duration."

Finally, we have [*Siroza* 1.29]:

- *dreagham upyanam yazamaide*  
"we revere the rituals of long duration."

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## President's Message

***Jasa me avanghe Mazda!***  
*(O Wise Lord, come to our guidance!)*

*In keeping with this Journal's theme, I would like to present some thoughts on*

## **Zarathushtra's Spirituality – *as I understand it***

by **Firdosh Mehta**  
 President, FEZANA

**D**ue to the practical and pragmatic ethical values propounded by Asho Zarathushtra in the Gathas, and commonly practiced under the tenets of "Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good Deeds," it is easily perceived that the Mazdayasni faith does *NOT* include any spiritual aspects, until one leaves this world and faces Judgment at the Chinwad Bridge; thus giving a clear separation of the *menog* and *getig* planes. This is a narrow view of the lofty principles of spirituality embedded in our scriptures.

“ The human mind is also capable of discerning inner joy and peace, separate from the exhilaration and excitement of dominating, winning or possessing. ”

We need to inculcate not only ethical values and principles, but also inform ourselves regarding the means available in our faith that will imbibe religiosity, by which individuals can become cognizant of their own spirituality.

**The Amesha Spentas.** Besides the many doctrinal concepts illustrated in

our scriptures, such as monotheism, dualism, the eternal law of Asha, the ultimate prevalence of good over evil, the infinite benevolence of the Creator, the immortality of the soul etc., we find a well prescribed practice in life: to attain a level of consciousness, which is to be one with the Supreme Entity. This series of steps comes with the understanding of the Amshaspands or Amesha Spentas.

A step by step approach as described with the beginning of *Vohu Manah*, the Good Discerning Mind which, when it utilizes *Spenta Mainyu*, is able to recognize the Divine Law of the best truth, *Asha Vahishta*. This leads the soul to approach the Divine Kingdom, *Khshathra Vairya*, through the practice of Holy Devotion, *Spenta Armaiti*, which in turn brings about Wholeness and Perfection, *Haurvatat*, leading to Immortality of the Soul, *Ameretat*; that is, being one with Ahura Mazda.

These attributes of the Divine Presence have been described in our scripture in various formats. The Avesta refers to this Heavenly Council [*Hanjamana Gah* 2.8] and the Bundahishn shows the arrangement of the Council of Ahura Mazda. This is also described as a sitting arrange-

ment of the Zaotar and other mobeds in the ceremony mentioned in Nirangistan [*Hormazdyar Dastur Kayoji Mirza, Outlines of Parsi History*, p. 378].

These Amesha Spentas, also described as Holy Immortals in the later texts, have been assigned as the guardian angels of the good Creations of Mazda, such as the Earth, Water, Sky, Fire, Vegetation and Living Beings (which include animals and humans).

Over time this association with the day to day recognizable creations has taken the emphasis away from the divineness of these attributes, which is what we need to recognize and rejuvenate in our understanding of them from a spiritual perspective.

**Experiencing existential spirituality.** Spirituality is a highly personal undertaking. However, there are daily occurrences that can allow us to experience this. One of the most common areas of spiritual uplifting is the recognition of God's perfection in all the Creations, especially in areas of calamities, physical disabilities, debilitating illnesses and life threatening diseases.

Unfortunately, the immediate reaction that we mortals undergo to these

**Spiritual.** Of or relating to sacred matters; concerned with religious matters.

**Spiritualism.** The view that spirit is a prime element of reality; sensitivity or attachment to religious values.

**Religiosity.** A natural tendency of mind towards religion; practice of religious norms and customs, rituals and rites.



calamities, are those of disgust, anger, pain and of being judgmental.

The human mind is so engrossed in worldly pursuits of winning and owning, that it sometimes forgets to recognize sharing and giving. Although it is in the nature of living things to survive at all costs, we compete and excel, and accept that to the winner go the spoils. This may lead us to believe that it is *NOT* in our nature to be spiritual, and that spirituality is beyond the day to day worldly activity.

The human mind is, however, also capable of discerning inner joy and peace, separate from the exhilaration and excitement of dominating, winning or possessing.

This can be gleaned through many of our scriptures and texts. The Spenta Armaiti of many *ashavans* can be interpreted as: Universal Love [*Farhang Mehr*, "The Zoroastrian Tradition," p. 27]; the Pahlavi works of the Dinkerd, which call it Complete Mindfulness; or Humbach and Ichaporia's interpretation as Right-mindedness [*Heritage of Zarathushtra*, pp. 23, 31] which is the state of mind that is devoid of worldly matters, and is in tune with the Divine spirit.

One might thus consider the human mind at that point to be synonymous with the human spirit that harmonizes with the Divine spirit, or human *mainyu* that harmonizes with the Divine *mainyu*, or the human will with the Divine will (Armaiti).

It is in this state of mind that one feels recognition of the Divine within and without.

It is in this state of mind that one learns that the true joy of receiving the benevolence of Mazda, is in the act of selfless giving, as the Ashem Vohu reminds us.

It is in this state of mind that one realizes the true perfection of God.

It is in this state of mind that one transcends to be God-like.

*THAT* is the experience of existential spirituality, that we are all capable of

experiencing, according to Zarathushtra.

**One with God.** This form of spirituality is promoted in the Gathas, where we are required to be "Mazda-like."

In the Rig Veda, one of the four *mahavakyas* is: *Aham Brahmasmi* ("I am one with God.")

In the Islamic Sufi writings we find the phrase, *Un-al haque* ("God is Me.")

The Buddhist tradition describes it as *moksha* or the "end of worldliness."

In Christianity it is Salvation unto the Kingdom of God.

In Zarathushti liturgy [*translation by Tehmurasp Sethna*] we recite:

Mun ano awayad shoodan,  
mun ano awayad shoodan,  
mun ano awayad shoodan.

"I have to realize Him,  
I have to realize Him,  
I have to realize Him."

## FEZANA COMMITTEES

*FEZANA Standing Committees and chairs, for the 2005-2006 year, are:*

**Coordination and Planning Committee.** FEZANA VP Bomi Patel

**Unity & Welfare (Critical/Medical Assistance).** Chair: Houtoxi Contractor (ZAPA); co-chair: Hosi Mehta (ZAC).

**Information Receiving and Dissemination (Publications/Journal).** Chair: Khorshed Jungalwala (ZAGBA); Editor-in-chief: Roshan Rivetna (ZAC).

**Funds and Finance.** Chair: Dr. Jerry Kheradi (ZAGBA).

**Census and Survey and North American Directory.** Noshir Jesung (ZAC).

**Youth (ZYNA).** Co-Chairs: Afreed Mistry (ZSO), Negin Sharyari and Freyaz Shroff (ZAF).

**Education, Conference and Scholarship.** Chair of Religion Education and Conference: Kayomars Mehta (ZAC); chair of Academic Educational Scholarship: Dolly Dastoor (ZAQ).

**North American Zoroastrian Congress.** Chair: Bomi Patel (ZANC).

**Small Groups of NA Zarathushtis.** Chair: Dr. Kia Kaviani (ZATAMBAY).

**Zoroastrian Sports (ZSC).** Chair: Bijan Khosraviani (CZC).

*FEZANA ad-hoc committees and chairs, for the year 2005-2006 are:*

**Heritage Preservation and Historical Research.** Chair: Dr. Jehan Bagli (ZSO)

**External Affairs.** Chair: Rohinton Rivetna (ZAC).

**Public Relations.** Chair: Fereshteh Khatibi (CZC).

**Canadian Chapter.** Chair: Sam Vesuna (ZSO).

**Constitution - Articles of Inc/By-Laws Separation.** Discontinued.

**North American Awards.** Chair: Yasmin Pavri (ZAH).

**N. A. Congress TOR Review.** Dr. Rustom Kevala (ZAMWI).

**UN/NGO.** Chair: Homi Gandhi (ZAGNY);  
co-chair: Behram Pastakia (ZAMWI).

**Creative and Performing Arts.** Chair: Anahita Sidhwa (ZANT);  
co-chair: Sherazade Mehta (ZAGBA).

**Strategic Planning.** Chair: Dr. Dolly Dastoor (ZAQ).

**ZYNA and Youth Congress TOR Review.** Chair: Afreed Mistry (ZSO).

**Financial Investment Advisory Council.** Dr. Jerry Kheradi (Funds & Finance), Rashid Mehin (Treasurer), Ardaviraf Minocherhomjee (ZAC), Pervez Patel (ZSBC).





*Members of the Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania (ZAPA) were gracious hosts for the two-day meet: ZAPA president Houtoxi Contractor [standing third from right] and Dr. Farhad Contractor, vice president Lily Dastur [seated front center], Meher Dastur [seated next to Lily], secretary Polly Vicaji [with baby], Farhad and Shahnaz Cama [standing third and fourth from left], Zarin Balaporia [seated left back] asst. secretary Avi Billimoria [standing right]. Helpers not in the photo are Khorshed Dick, Jeroo Kadwa, Vera Siganporia, and youth coordinator Dr. Laila Contractor. Popular musician Adi Tamboli [far left] had guests at the gala, dancing and singing till late into the evening.*

## FEZANA AGM 2005, in “city of bridges”

Connections are made and bonds renewed as FEZANA associations gather to celebrate successes and deliberate issues, in Pittsburgh, the “city of bridges.”

The 18th Annual General Meeting of FEZANA was held on May 28 and 29, 2005 at the SpringHill Suites by Marriott in Pittsburgh, PA. The Zarathushti Association of Pittsburgh (ZAPA), under the leadership of president Houtoxi Contractor and the ZAPA Executive Board members is commended for hosting this event and for the hospitality and welcome bestowed on the 40-plus delegates representing FEZANA member associations and committees. ZAPA pres-

ident Houtoxi Contractor welcomed delegates to the beautiful city of Pittsburgh and pointed out that ZAPA was a small but cohesive association and it was worth having even a small association to give an identity. She was happy to host this AGM in Pittsburgh, a city that the residents take great pride in having cleaned up and beautified. The ZAPA team’s wholehearted efforts, with homemade Parsi lunches, gala dinners and a city tour of the beautiful, new Pittsburgh, were

some of the highlights of this AGM. Thank you ZAPA!

### ELECTIONS

**Vice President:** *Bomi Patel* and *Noshir Jesung* were nominated. Bomi Patel was elected to serve for a two-year term.

**Secretary:** *Rita Engineer* was elected unopposed and will continue for a second two-year term.

### ALLOCATIONS OF FUNDS

● \$5000 was earmarked towards Sports Sponsorship. The committee

was requested to present a TOR, approved by the next AGM.

- \$5000 was approved to setup an escrow account for the Welfare Committee to use at their discretion.

- \$3000 would be transferred from the Welfare Funds to the Academic Education Scholarship Funds on basis of need.

- \$2500 was approved to subsidize ten youth to the upcoming Youth Congress in Miami, FL.

- \$10,000 was approved for the FEZANA Academic Scholarship Fund. An additional \$5000 would be coming from the Mehraban and Morvorid Kheradi Endowment Fund.

### OFFICERS' REPORTS

**President Firdosh Mehta** welcomed everyone present and thanked Houtoxi Contractor, Lily Dastur and ZAPA members for hosting the AGM and contributing their time and resources to successfully organize this event.

The Z-Games in Vancouver, July 2004, were successfully organized by ZSC (chair Bijan Khosraviani) with the support and cooperation of the host association ZSBC (president Homi Italia). ZSBC's contribution to FEZANA is acknowledged with thanks.

The North American Congress in San Jose, December 2004, was a resounding success, thanks to the efforts of then ZANC president Bomi Patel and his very efficient committee – the Ehlers, the Tarapores and others. He thanked Dolly Dastoor, Farrokh Mistree and Mahrukh Motafram for helping put together a FEZANA promo PowerPoint presentation; Sherazade Mehta and Negin Sharyari for moderating the Open Forum part of the FEZANA session; Rashid Mehin for his Farsi rendition of the proceedings; Celeste Kheradi, Rashna Mehta and Afsaneh Mehin

for their efforts and hard work in looking after the FEZANA table top presentation; Ness Lakdawalla and his secretary Louise Pratt for preparing and shipping the new rotating trophies. He gratefully acknowledged the generous contribution to the Awards Committee funds by the Joshi/Verahrami family and the family of Shirin Nariman Dastoor.

He noted that the UN-NGO continued to grow due to the untiring efforts of

He reported that the FEZANA Academic Education Scholarships Funds Committee (chair Dolly Dastoor) continued to award scholarships to students from these funds and from proceeds from the Mehraban and Morvorid Kheradi Endowment. He profusely thanked Jehangir and Celeste Kheradi for their generosity and their work on the Funds and Finance committee.

Firdosh thanked all committee chairs for their active participation and hard work through the year and welcomed new incoming chairs: Dr. Kia Kaviani for Small Groups, Farishte Khatibi for Public Relations and Bomi Patel for North American Zarathushti Congress. He commended the world-class publication, FEZANA Journal under the leadership of Khorshed Jungalwala and Roshan Rivetna.

Firdosh mentioned that since the World Body meeting in London in July 2004 there seemed to be a convergence on the World Body issue among the 'G-10' group (comprised of the presidents and their representatives of FEZANA, FPZAI, ZTFE and WZO.)

**Secretary Rita Engineer** thanked the Executive team for their support in her role as secretary and thanked the FEZANA Member Associations for their support in the execution of her duties. She urged everyone to respond and acknowledge information

sent to them. She requested that members be sure to put the subject matter in the subject line when sending emails to facilitate tracking the responses.

**Assistant Secretary Farrokh Mistree** reinforced what Rita Engineer had stated with regards to acknowledgement and using the subject header while responding. He mentioned that the FEZANA website has been in consolidation mode, that there were



*FEZANA executive officers: president Firdosh Mehta, asst. secretary Farrokh Mistree, secretary Rita Engineer and incoming vice president Bomi Patel. Not in photo, treasurer Rashid Mehin.*

Homi Gandhi and Behram Pastakia. The worldwide community now recognized the Welfare and Critical Assistance Committee as Houtoxi Contractor and Hosi Mehta continued their tireless efforts in providing services. These donations are possible in part by private donations and partly from the proceeds of the Damkevala Endowment. He thanked Freyaz Shroff for setting up the 800 hotline.



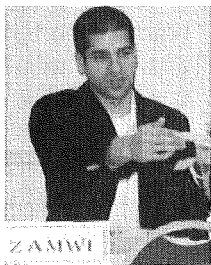
lots of links from the website and everyone should take a look. He touched on the topic of search engines, and “googling” to get a slew of information from the internet.

**Treasurer Rashid Mehin’s** [\*] report was presented by Firdosh Mehta. He thanked Sarosh Collector and Framroze Patel for their assistance to Rashid Mehin. The Financial Statement for January 1 through December 31, 2004 was presented and approved.

[\*] = Report submitted in absentia

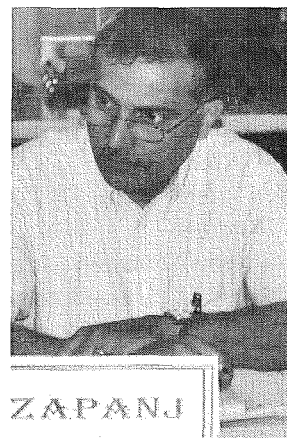
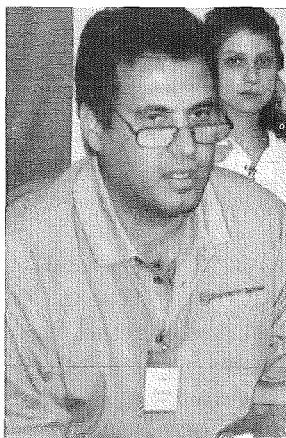
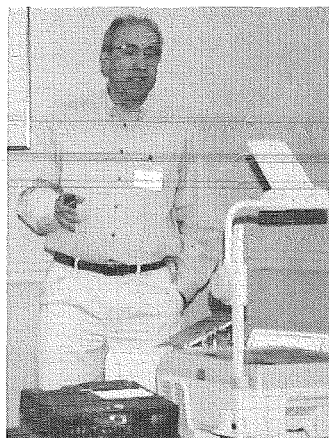
### ASSOCIATION REPORTS

Delegates of the associations made brief reports on their activities. All associations continued to report having religious classes, social events for celebrations of Nouruz, Jashn-e-Sadeh and picnics and outings. Youth participation was encouraged and highlighted within the associations as well as in FEZANA activities. Immediate past president of ZAMWI,



Behram Pastakia introduced Sarosh Olpadwala [left] as the new, next-generation president of ZAMWI.

Associations also reported success-



From top, left to right, ZAA (Atlanta) representative Dr. Cyrus Aidun; ZANC president Nazneen Ehler and ZANT president Behram Irani; ZAC (California) president Khushroo Lakdawalla; ZAPANJ vice president Porus Cooper; ZAGBA president and Performing Arts scholarship chair Sherazade Mehta; OZCF representative Kobad Zarolia and ZAC (Chicago) representative and Welfare co-chair Hosi Mehta; ZAH representative Roshan Sethna and Arnavaz Sethna [in back]; ZAQ president, Strategic planning co-chair and Academic Scholarship co-chair Dr. Dolly Dastoor, ZSO representative and ZYNA co-chair Afreed Mistry and Awards Committee chair Yasmin Pavri.



ful fundraisers and greater participation in events from their members. Yet others were happy to report the growing number of children in their communities, bringing home the need of having a strong culture base for their growth as Zarathushtis in this part of the world.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Academic Educational Scholarships Committee.** Chair **Dr. Dolly Dastoor** reported that during the academic year 2004-2005 the Committee received 40 applications – a 100% increase from previous years. **Minoee Modi** was named the FEZANA Scholar, and received the The Mehraban Kheradi Endowment Fund Scholarship (\$5000). Scholarships (\$1000 each) were awarded to: **Rodabe Amaria** (University of Colorado); **Zebalda Bamji** (Howard University); **Kaizer Cooper** (Colorado State University); **Anahita Dua** (St. George School of Medicine, NH); **Ayesha Dua** (University of Wisconsin); **Fariborz Farahmand** (Georgia Institute of Technology) - declined; **Nina Godiwalla** (Wharton School of Business); **Arya Goodarz** (University of California); **Noushin Isadvastar** (San Jose State University); **Dilshad Khambatta**; **Parendi Mehta** (Brown University); **Tushna Soonawalla** (University of Alberta) [see FJ Spring 2005 for profiles].

**Awards Committee.** Chair **Yasmin Pavri** thanked Firdosh Mehta for the Awards Banquet at the Congress; and the families of Dinshaw Joshi and Shirinbai Dastoor for the trophies. She welcomed two new members to the Committee – Thrity Pourbahrami and Arnavaz Sethna and expressed a need to have one more from Canada to have well-rounded representation. The TOR was circulated and she urged that nominations be sent in by the deadline.

**Census and Survey Committee,** Chair **Noshir Jesung** [\*]. In his absence **Farrokh Mistree** reported that the census form and its programming were completed a year ago,

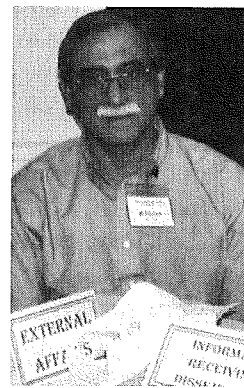


sent for approval to the executive committee, and finally sent out in 2005. Their goal was to get as many census forms to be filled out as possible to provide correct information.

**Zoroastrian Sports Committee.** Chair **Bijan Khosraviani**. **Shahram Gandeharizadeh** mentioned the upcoming 3rd Unity Soccer Games in September 2005 and the 10th Zarathushti Games in Los Angeles in July 2006. ZSC has provided the youth sport organizations of Iran and the North American youth chapters with financial assistance towards purchase of equipment and organizing events. It was decided to create a Zarathushti Sports Sponsorship and a TOR will be presented at the next AGM, in 2006.

ZSBC president **Homi Italia** [\*] submitted a report on the 9th Zarathushti Games, organized by ZSBC, in Vancouver, July 1 to 4, 2004 at The University of British Columbia. Homi Italia thanked the executive committee members Behramsha Mizan, Kourosh Edalati, Nooshin Kiani, Sharook Kapadia, Adi Desai, Ardeshtir Behi, Farhad Mistry and Pouya Bastani for their tremendous contribution in organizing this event; and Bijan Khosraviani and the ZSC for their guidance and cooperation in

bringing these games to fruition. Details are on the FEZANA website.



**External Affairs** chair **Rohinton Rivetna** [left] reported on the growing number of interfaith and outreach activities and affiliations: participation of 14 Zarathushtis at

the “Parliament of the World’s Religions,” in Barcelona, and Assembly of Religious and Spiritual Leaders, in Montserrat, Spain; Delhi “Peace Summit” followup; Police department diversity program; NCCJ interfaith calendar; participation at UN [see **Homi Gandhi** and **Behram Paskia’s** report]; URI cooperation Circles; NAIN; Harvard Pluralism Project; Taiwan Museum of World Religions and Faith-in-Place. Persons interested in joining an e-group of Zarathushtis working in the interfaith arena, contact rivetna@aol.com.

**Funds and Finance Committee.** Chair **Dr. Jerry Kheradi** reported that at the last AGM in May 2004, the Thousand Points of Light campaign had just reached the goal of 1000 points, totaling \$100,000. The





*From far left, Hoshedar Tamboli (chair Small Groups Committee) and Shahram Ganderizadeh (representative of the Zoroastrian Sports Committee); Dr. Jerry Kheradi and Celeste Kheradi (Funds and Finance Committee); Behram Pastakia and Homi Gandhi (co-chairs of the FEZANA UN-NGO Committee).*

Thousand Points of Light Campaign No. 2 was started in May 2004 and by March 2005, had collected the second \$100,000. Since the inception of the Thousand Points of Light Campaign, three years ago, a grand total of \$215,000 has been collected so far. The fundraiser, organized by Houtoxi Contractor and Hosi Mehta in Chicago in 2004, for the Welfare Committee, was successful in raising over \$30,000. FEZANA was also very fortunate to receive a large donation of \$15,000 from Dr. and Mrs. Hoshedar and Anahita Tamboli of Tampa, FL as the first installment towards an endowment fund to be named in honor of his father. The Kheradi family made a donation of \$18,000 towards the Kheradi Endowment Scholarship Fund, in memory of his mother, Morvorid.

#### **Information Receiving and Disseminating Committee.**

Chair **Khorshed Jungalwala** [\*] reported that each issue of the Journal has shown remarkable improvement in content and quality. The second print (3,000 copies) of "The Legacy of Zarathushtra" edited by Roshan Rivetna is now

available (\$9 each). Thanks to Jehangir Patel of Parsiana, for printing it at a very reasonable cost. Thanks to our contacts for help in overseas distribution: Parsiana (India), Rusi Dalal (UK), Toxy Cowasji (Pakistan), Sam Kerr (Australia) and several others. The brochure "Zarathushtis (Zoroastrians) Followers of an Ancient Faith in a Modern World" is now available for \$25 per box of 100, or 50 cents each.

Early this year, Roshan Rivetna informed the Committee that she wished to phase herself out of producing the Journal over the next 4 issues. One cannot put a monetary value on the monumental work that Roshan has performed with total dedication all these years. AGM delegates gave Roshan a standing ovation for absolute

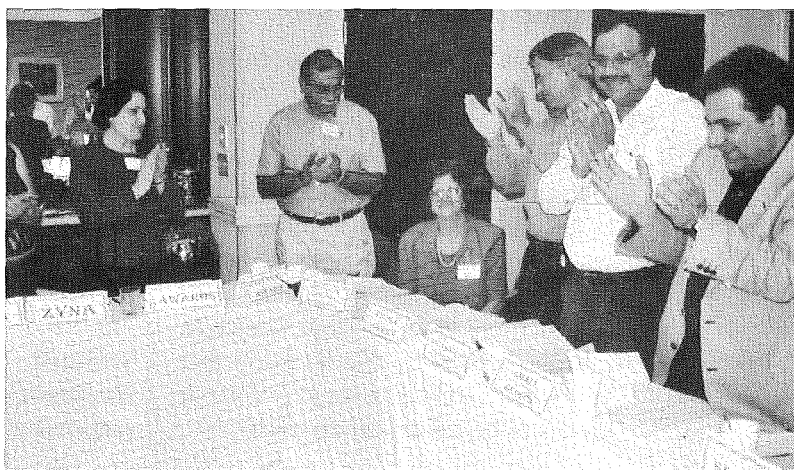
dedication and the level of excellence achieved in the Journal. Roshan's role will be distributed as follows, starting with the Spring 2006 issue.

Several options have been under consideration and by the time of the AGM, Dr. Dolly Dastoor was selected as Editor-in-Chief. At the AGM Afreed Mistry of Toronto volunteered her services and since then it has been decided that Afreed Mistry will do the design, layout and production, assisted by Armaity Bamji. After considering several options, including having the Journal produced, printed and distributed by Parsiana in Mumbai, and production help and printing at a discount price by Marzi Byramji, who owns Regal Press in Toronto, it is now decided to go with the latter. Mailing and distribution will be handled by

volunteers at the Zoroastrian Association of Houston. The rest of the Publications Committee remains unchanged, with Khorshed Jungalwala as chair.

**Religion Education Scholarship Committee**, chair **Kayomارش Mehta** [\*]. Firdosh

*Standing ovation for Roshan Rivetna*





Left, web manager Farrokh Mistree with webmaster Zubin Medora who was presented a plaque by president Firdosh Mehta acknowledging his many years of service in administering the FEZANA website. Above, at the beautiful country club dinner, Pittsburgh residents, Dr. Farhad, Houtoxi and Dr. Laila Contractor, and Cyrus and Betty Jassawalla. Facing page, it was a heartening sight to see the next generation beginning to take leadership roles in Zarathushti community affairs. Clockwise from front, ZAMWI president Sarosh Olpadwala, ZAGBA president Sherazade Mehta, Neville Dastur, Shireen Cama, Cyrus Dastur, Nashita Pagdiwalla, Suzie Karani, Laila Contractor, Rita Balaporia, ZYNA co-chair Afreed Mistry and Homi Bodhanwala.

Mehta reported that the 2004-2005 Moobed Faridoon Zardoshty Religion Education Scholarship was awarded to: **Zartosht Atropatene**, studying Zoroastrianism and Avestan Language, University of London; **Susan Karani**, studying for her PhD in Old Iranian Studies at University of Michigan; **Mandana Moavenat** studying PhD in Zoroastrianism, University of London; **Bahman Moradian** studying PhD in languages and culture of Ancient Iran, University of Paris; and **Burzine K. Waghmar**, PhD in Iranian and Central Asian Studies, University of London. FEZANA deeply appreciates the donations that make this possible, from the Zardoshty sisters in memory of Moobed Faridoon Zardoshty.

Outside of the activities of the Religion Education Committee of FEZANA, the Mehta family in Chicago has formed an independent organization "Zarathushti Learning Center of North America." Its goal is to serve as an independent Zarathushti religion educational organization.

**Small Groups Committee**, chair **Hoshedar Tamboli** announced that Dr. Kia Kaviani will serve as chair for the next term and wished him well. This year was relatively quiet for the Small Groups. Some organizations continue to question the nominal yearly fee and have asked justification for it. Others ask for financial support from FEZANA for their own groups. Hoshedar strongly urged more small groups to enroll themselves with FEZANA to facilitate their participation in Zarathushti activities in North America.

**Strategic Planning Committee**. Chair **Dr. Dolly Dastoor** mentioned that the focus remained on getting youth participation at their own association level and with FEZANA at large. The need to raise more funds was emphasized. Generate more fun activities to get the youth involved and then blend in religious doctrines into the activities. The question that yet remains to be answered is what it means to be a true Zarathushti?

**UN-NGO Committee**. Co-chairs **Homi Gandhi** and **Behram Pastakia** reported on the committee's involvement in the Millennium Development Project. The 49th Session of UN Committee on Women was well attended and represented. Dinyar Patel is working with Shernaz Cama to bring the UNESCO exhibition to the UN in 2006. The committee is working on setting up a FEZANA UN-NGO website and urges greater Zarathushti youth involvement. Behram Pastakia enumerated various ways ZAMWI youth were involved at local levels – World environment Day, clean up projects, bike rides to raise funds, etc. He mentioned the successful Operation Eyesight project. The eyeglasses were all sorted by power and labeled for easy distribution and this was done in a penitentiary in Calgary. This Operation has reached as far as Hong Kong.

**Welfare Committee**. Co-chairs **Houtoxi Contractor** and **Hosi Mehta** reported that they were able to raise





over \$30,000 at the gala fundraiser in Chicago, September 2004. She urged all associations to advertise the confidential hotline number (1-877-265-7273) and thanked all the professionals who were actively involved in this project. They have offered assistance to a number of people with domestic violence issues, some with counseling. Financial support was given to a Zarathushti social worker who volunteered three weeks to help rebuild lives in South India after the Tsunami tragedy. The committee is now working closely with the Scholarship committee to assist those in need (versus merit). The committee received approval for \$3000 to be distributed to ten students. The Committee's request for an escrow account to be started with an initial transfer of \$5000 was approved.

**Historic Research and Preservation Committee.** Chair **Dr. Jehan Bagli** [\*] reported that work on the book "Understanding and Practice of

Obsequies" has been completed and reviewed by Dastur Kotwal who also contributed a foreword. It will go to print shortly. Jehan Bagli contributed "Plant life in Zarathushtrian Liturgy" for FEZANA Journal. Maneck Bhujwala continued posting Shahnameh couplets and Epistles of Adurbad Mahraspand on Zarathushti e-groups; and pursued and publicized the quest of Zubin Mehta for misuse of the fravahar emblem in the movie 'Alexander.'

**Zoroastrian Youth of North America (ZYNA).** Co-chair **Afreed Mistry** gave an update on the Youth Congress in December 2005 in Miami; the website is up and registration now open. A budget of \$2500 was approved to subsidize 10 youths to attend this congress. The TOR was presented and after discussion decided that it be presented to FEZANA again in 3 months. ZYNA held an open discussion session for youth at the San Jose congress to get feedback from youth on activities and

youth congresses. The session was very informative and helped the co-chairs in planning the next congress.

**Creative and Performing Art Scholarship.** Chair **Sherazade Mehta** mentioned four awards presented this year of \$1000 each to: **Shahnaz Shroff, Farah Bala, Kayhan Irani** and **Dinyar Vania**. Next year \$6000 will be available for awards.

#### OTHER REPORTS

**The 3000th Anniversary Celebrations,** chair **Dr. Dolly Dastoor** thanked every association for the marvelous job done. A CD has been circulated of all the celebrations, which was put together by Aban Rustomji. The committee now stands dissolved.

**North American Congress.** Chair **Bomi Patel** reported an impressive 538 participants at the San Jose Congress (December 2004) with a 50-50 mix of Iranian and Parsi Zarathushtis. There was a perfect blend of religion and social activities

and not one complaint was received. In the words of Farhang Mehr, this was the best congress he had ever attended.

The FEZANA Award presentation was well attended. The next World Youth Congress is in Australia in 2007, and Afreed Mistry presented that support was needed from North America to send youth to Australia.

**North American Mobed Council, (NAMC).** Chair **Dr. Jehan Bagli** [\*] reported that several members of NAMC participated in various interfaith activities in North America: "Future of religion in a Secular world" at University of Toronto (Ervad Dr. Bagli); 20th anniversary of the Toronto Peace Garden (Er. Yezdi Antia); Halton-Peel high school interfaith meeting (Er. Nozer Kotwal); and International Community Council of Cleveland, OH (Er. Dr. Bagli). A condolence letter for the Pope, was mailed to the office of His Eminence Aloysius M. Cardinal Ambrozic of Toronto.

**World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce (WZCC).** President **Rohinton Rivetna** reported that membership is now over 800. There are 6 chapters in North America, 4 in India, and 1 each in Iran, Middle East, UK, Australia and Pakistan.

State-of-the-art networking is provided by the website ([www.wzcc.org](http://www.wzcc.org)) by Yazdi Tantra of OnLyne Systems, the [zchamber@yahoogroups.com](mailto:zchamber@yahoogroups.com) egroup by Zareen Araoz, and the new WZCC Journal, "SynergyZ" produced by WZCC-ME (Meher Bhesania), which was generously sponsored by Mr. Pallonji Mistry, Alayar Dabestani and Parviz Varjavand. A Trade delegation from India visited Iran in May.

The 2005 WZCC Recognitions are: Outstanding Entrepreneur: **Hosi Mehta** owner of Mehta Motors in Chicago; Outstanding Professional: scientist **Rusi Taleyarkhan** of Purdue University; and Outstanding Young Entrepreneur /Professional: hi-tech software engineer **Xerxes Wania**.

## WORLD BODY REPORTS

**Report by the FEZANA WB Adhoc Committee (WBAC) – Sarosh Collector, Homi Gandhi, Khorshed Jungalwala** (chair) [\*], **Farrokh Mistree** and **Purvez Rustomji** [\*] – appointed by Firdosh Mehta in March 2005 to facilitate the process of continuing and evaluating the direction laid down in the last AGM 2004.

**Homi Gandhi** presented the opinions of Member Associations on "FEZANA becoming a founding region of WZOF, as indicated in the drafts of IZO, WZOF and WZOI." Four associations (ZAQ, ZANC, ZAC and ZSO) were agreeable, and five associations (AZA, TMZA, ZAH, ZAPANJ and ZAGNY) disagreed. No response was received from the remaining 15 associations.

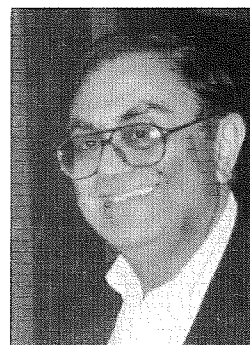
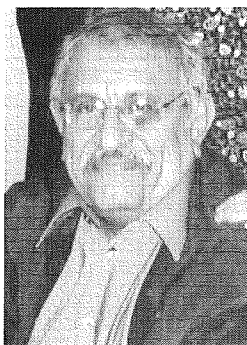
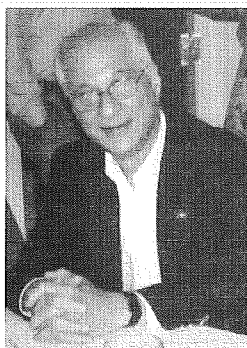
**Sarosh Collector** reported on the WBAC's evaluation of the IZO-WZOI-WZOF constitutions, to see if they met the "five foundational principles" [see *FJ Fall 2004*, p. 23] endorsed by members at the last AGM 2004. He presented many examples where the WBAC had found non-compliance, e.g.: autonomy was not absolute in terms of

religious doctrine, belief and practice – this precludes the world body from publishing books and supporting religious classes, and overtly or covertly subverting the autonomy of another region; the not-withstanding clause should be removed; associations should not be eligible to join WZOF where federations exist; associations should not be eligible to join WZOI; dissolution of IZO clause needs to be removed; the regions, election and voting procedures, allocation of votes, timings of AGMs, timing of elections, fiscal years, rank and titles, etc. should be the same in the two arms – WZOI and WZOF; and voting based on population is flawed – number of votes should be delinked from population (as in UN).

**Farrokh Mistree** presented the recommendations of the WBAC:

- (1) The FEZANA WBAC recognizes that the G-10 have attempted to operationalize the One World Body with Two Independent Arms construct and the underlying Principles of Operation that was endorsed by FEZANA Member Associations at it's AGM in 2004.

The FEZANA WBAC, after careful and detailed analysis finds that what has been proposed in the three docu-



### WZCC directors' meetings.

Availing of the opportunity of the FEZANA AGM, the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce (WZCC) held a directors' meeting, following the AGM, on May 29th afternoon and May 30th morning, at the SpringHill Suites Marriott in Pittsburgh. Clockwise from top left are Hoshang Karani (director-Special Projects), Edul Daver (corporate secretary), Rusi Gandhi (NY chapter chair), and Sarosh Collector (treasurer). Also at the meetings were Kobad Zarolia (director - Canada) and Rohinton Rivetna (president) and several other interested members.



ments does not embody the spirit nor the parameters of any of the five conditions that were endorsed by FEZANA Member Associations at its AGM in 2004.

Hence the WBAC is unable to recommend that FEZANA be a founding member of the proposed World Body as delineated in the current documents.

- (2) WBAC volunteers to critically evaluate the three documents and suggest how the One World Body with Two Independent Operating Arms construct could be operationalized within the guidelines of the five conditions endorsed by FEZANA Members at its AGM in 2004.

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In his report, "Coming Together – Some Points to Ponder", **Rohinton Rivetna** outlined developments since the 2004 AGM. At a breakthrough meeting of the 'G-10' group in London, in July 2004, the presidents/representatives of the four major stakeholders – India (FPZAI/BPP), North America (FEZANA), UK/Europe (ZTFE) and WZO, came to convergence in principle [see report in *FJ*, Fall 2004]. President Firdosh Mehta, assisted by Rohinton Rivetna and Behram Pastakia were the FEZANA reps on the 'G-10.' Subsequently, the constitutions of the triad of IZO, WZOI and WZOF were developed and sent to FEZANA Members for review in March 2005. The WBAC group has presented a critique of those three documents [see previous page].

**Developments in India.** Meanwhile, in India, the traditional lobby led by Khojeste Mistree, supported by a majority of 40-plus anjumans (out of 69) of the Indian federation, and the 7 high priests, have objected to the proposed world body and petitioned the leadership of the Indian federation (FPZAI) against joining it, their primary grievance being the membership clause [see page 34 for details]. A 54-page Power-Point document outlining their fears and grievances, was circulated by Firdosh Mehta to FEZANA Associations. On May 28, a new

organization, WAPIZ, representing the traditional Parsi-Irani voice was launched in Mumbai.

**Plan of action.** Rohinton proposed a plan of action, for the 'G-10' group to continue to find ways to assuage the fears, provide more safeguards, and strengthen the charters, also taking the critique of the WBAC group into consideration.

He presented his vision of a "Global Zarathushti Alliance" [*FJ Spring 2004*, p. 60]. Besides serving as the nexus between the governance arm (WZOF) and the Socio-economic-welfare arm (WZOI), IZO should also facilitate a continuing conference with other world-level 'institutions' such as religion (mobeds' councils), business and enterprise (WZCC), arts and culture (WZCF), the women's network (ZWIN), as well as the new Parsi/Irani voice (WAPIZ).

This should allay the fears of "takeover and manipulation," for the crux of this design is that: IZO is purely a link, a forum for discourse, a secretariat; all of IZO's 'powers' and 'objectives' are realized through its constituent arms; and each region/organization enjoys complete and unfettered autonomy. Yet all Come Together for discourse and dialog, and Work Together on the many challenges faced by our world community today.

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The following motion was passed:

"We empower FEZANA president and his appointees to represent us at World Body formation meetings as best he can, taking last year's five points of principle as guidelines, and report."

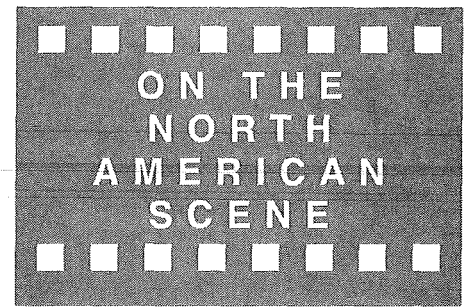
#### NEXT FEZANA AGM

Three bids were received for hosting the next AGM, from ZANT, AZA and CZC (California). Members voted as follows:

The 2006 AGM will be hosted by AZA, in Atlanta.

The 2007 AGM will be hosted by ZANT in Dallas area. ■

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Rita Engineer, FEZANA Secretary*



#### New ZAPANJ board

The new board of the Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, elected to a two-year term, starting in March 2005, is: **Katayun Kapadia**, kkatayun@msn.com (president); **Khorshed Vakil Unwala** (vice president); **Adil Masani** (treasurer); **Porus P. Cooper**, poruscooper@hotmail.com (secretary); **Dr. Behnaz Toorkey** and **Khushru Jokhi** (joint secretaries).

#### Cemetery plots in Washington, DC area, for Zarathushtis in North America

Through the generous munificence of a member of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington, Inc. (ZAMWI), a sizeable number of plots for burial of Zarathushti community members have been established in Parklawn Cemetery, in Rockville, Maryland, a suburb of Washington, DC.

Per the donor's wishes, these plots are available for any Zarathushti in need in North America, either resident or visiting. In view of the bulk nature of the acquisition of this property, we have a six-month window to purchase additional lots at a concessional rate.

Plots may be pre-purchased in the Zarathushti community lot in Maryland, with an option to reserve lots for family members upon appropriate payment.

Contact Kody Yazdanipour,  
yazdanipour@comcast.net,  
tel: 240-631-0362.



Putli Mirza [first row, in sari] and Ontario community members at evening satum prayers conducted by Er. Boman Kotwal, during the Muktaḍ observance at the Mehraban Guiv Darbe Mehr in Toronto.

## Muktaḍ ceremonies in Toronto

Two stalwarts of the Ontario Zarathushti community, Er. Boman Kotwal and Putli Mirza, with a slew of volunteers have maintained the practice and tradition of the annual 5-day Muktaḍ observance in Toronto since 1982.

by Dolly Dastoor, PhD  
Montreal, Quebec

"This is one time we put aside our differences – we are not liberals or conservatives, young or old – we put aside our egos, and we all come together, with 100% involvement for community service." With these words Coomi Sorabjee describes what a group of 72+ volunteers, coordinated by Putli Mirza can achieve in maintaining the religious custom of the Fravardegan days. Three satums and one afringan-farrokshi are recited by the mobeds each day.

Even though I live only 450kms away, I had not visited the Mehraban Guiv Darbe Mehr in Toronto during the 'muktaḍ' days. This year (2004) I decided to pay my respects to the first muktaḍ of my dear mother-in-law Shirin Dastoor. The experience was incredible.

The day starts at the crack of dawn, 4:00 am for the two mobeds and the eight resident women and men volunteers, who make the darbe mehr their home for the 5 days.

After undergoing the ritual bath, each started working on their assigned tasks. Khorshed Mandgaryan started making *chapats* for the morning satum, and to feed the volunteers for breakfast. Mehroo Kazak cleaned the rooms and did the *chalk* and *toran*. Hosy Surty cleaned and filled all the *divas* with oil. Ervad Nozer Kotwal cleaned all the prayer utensils and cut the roses for the flower vases. Er. Boman Kotwal prepared the fruit and trays of *papri-malido*, donated by community members for the afringan and farrokshi prayers.

Everything was ready for the satum prayers to start at 6:30 am in the presence of devotees of all ages, who had started coming in, before they went to work. The afringan and farrokshi

starts at 7:30 in the morning and all prayers finish by 9:30. It takes 45 minutes just to recite the 450 names of the dear departed.

By this time the 'cooking crew' had come in to prepare the meals. Betty Madan and Roshan Davar were the general and grocery co-ordinators: they did all the planning and grocery shopping for the three meals served each day to the volunteers and devotees. Every day about 6 to 8 women volunteers cooked the meals. In the afternoon about 75 to 100 community members attended the prayers and then shared in the lunch. In the evening about 200 to 250 devotees came to worship and pay their respects to the dear departed.

In the evenings a mobed led the congregation in the *humbandagi*, followed by a talk on a religious subject. On the day I attended Er. Boman Kotwal gave the talk. Everyone in attendance had dinner together.



The custom of preserving the ritual practice and tradition of the muktad ceremonies started in 1982, when Er. Boman Kotwal requested Putli Mirza to co-ordinate the 'kitchen,' and look after the *chasni* and food aspects of the ceremonies. Since that time these two stalwarts of the Ontario Zarathushti community have forged ahead in maintaining the tradition for future generations. From modest beginnings when 25 names of dear departed family members were prayed upon, today 450 names were submitted by the community.

The community appreciates the efforts of the mobeds and volunteers by responding with generous donations of cash and kind by way of food, flowers, *sukhad*, *tacho*, *loban* and *kakras*. Attendance and interest has grown tremendously.

This continuity of the religious tradition in North America is an experience to cherish and preserve for both young and old. ■

### 'Michiganders' celebrate Nouruz

At the Nouruz 2005 celebration in the Detroit area, the Michigan Zoroastrian Youth Group proudly presented their works, including a timeline of Zarathushti history [photo at right]. 1st and 2nd graders brought items for the Nouruz table, while the 3rd graders and above demonstrated the importance of protecting Ahura Mazda's creations by making posters of the creations and writing about harmful and beneficial human impacts. A good time was had by all with a *dhan-dal* and *patio* lunch by 'ParsiChef' Aban Daboo. The event was organized by Rusi and Villoo Tavadia and Behroz and Baji Ghandhi and their band of helpers.

The Youth Group, organized by Shirin Gandhi (sfgandhi@yahoo.com) [shown at right, in floral skirt] in three age groups, meets every month to learn about Zarathushti religion, history, rituals and customs in interesting and innovative ways. ■



**New ZAGNY board** members on the grounds of the Arbab Rustom Guiv Darbe Mehr in Suffern, NY: from left, Sherazad Mehta, Nawaz Merchant (vice president), Minoo Bengalee (treasurer), Homi Gandhi (president), Ferzin Patel, Khursheed Navdar (secretary), Michael Reid, Vispy Kanga and Kerman Dukandar (jt. secretary).

The new board of the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York was elected for a three-year term (2005 - 2008) at the 2005 Nouruz function. A new member writes, "It was the consistent reassurance and support from the previous board members who encouraged the new board to take on leadership positions and carry the torch towards making our community stronger." ■



# Shirin Ebadi on "Human Rights, Democracy and Islam."

2003 Nobel prize recipient delivers a passionate talk at UC Davis.

by Ardeshir B. Damania

In 2003, Shirin Ebadi of Tehran, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize [see *FJ*, Spring 2005, p. 17] for her tireless efforts to promote human rights, especially of women, children, and political prisoners in Iran. She is the first Iranian national and the first Muslim woman to receive a Nobel Prize in any field.

"She is a hero to a lot of people, especially Iranian women," said University of California (Davis) chancellor Larry Vanderhoef. Delivering a full-house lecture at UC Davis's Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts [photo right] on May 17, Dr. Ebadi expressed gratitude to universities in the US for providing academic education to Iranian students. These students have arisen to positions of prominence in Iran today, she observed, and they thank the US.

**The early years.** Born in 1947 into a family of academics and practicing Muslims, Ebadi told me that she received her early education at the Anoushiravan Dadgar Zoroastrian Girls High School in Tehran. (This school, which opened in 1936, was built as a result of a seminal donation



At Sacramento airport: 2003 Nobel Peace Prize recipient Dr. Shirin Ebadi [center] with Ardeshir and Parvin Damania. [PHOTOS COUTESY A. B. DAMANIA]

of Rs. 100,000 from Ratanbai Edulji Bamji in memory of her father Nusserwanji Ratanji Tata.) Ebadi has a law degree from the University of Tehran, and subsequently, became the first woman in the modern history of the Iranian legal system to serve as a judge. She earned a PhD with honors from the University of Tehran in 1971. In 1975, she became the president of Bench #24 of the Tehran City Court. Unfortunately, Ebadi's career on the bench was cut short soon after the Islamic Revolution in 1979.

"Since the belief in Iran was that Islam forbids women to serve as judges, I and other female judges were dismissed from our posts and given clerical duties," Ebadi reported sadly. Despite many protests, the Iranian legal administrators demoted all former female judges to 'experts' in the Justice Department, and consequently she requested an early retirement because she could not tolerate that status. She was housebound for the next 13 years (with a husband and two children) until the laws were relaxed. In 1992 she set up a private practice in

Tehran. Ebadi litigated cases of national interest dealing with bringing to justice serial killers who murdered allegedly 'loose' women, journalists who were unfairly persecuted on freedom of expression issues, child abuse cases, and defended wives who had lost custody of their children in divorce court.

**Women's struggle.** Ebadi decried the status of women in Iran today. "They are considered second-class citizens," she observed. In court cases two women witnesses are equal to one man's testimony, for a woman's testimony is still considered unreliable and less believable.

"A woman's worth is still judged by the number of sons she produces and not by her intellect. There are several discriminatory laws in Iran today," she said. For example, if a woman and man were both killed in an accident, the woman's family receives only half the amount of compensation paid to the man's family.

Ebadi told the audience that although more than 63% of Iran's university students are female, unemployment among educated women is three times higher than men due to lack of equal and fair opportunities. More-





Mayor Richard Murphy of San Diego [left] shown with Dr. Badi Badiozamani, unveiled the monument [right] on Sunday, March 27, 2005, which was declared to be "Cyrus the Great Day" in San Diego.

# Cyrus Cylinder in San Diego

Mayor of San Diego unveils monument of Cyrus the Great's celebrated 6th century BCE declaration of human rights in San Diego's Balboa Park



A replica of Cyrus the Great's (585 - 529 BCE) cylinder that bears testimony to his views on human rights was unveiled by San Diego mayor Richard Murphy on March 27, 2005 (7th of Fravardin 1374). The monument is located in San Diego's lush and historical Balboa Park on a rolling hilltop, close to downtown, and a major tourist attraction, where the noted San Diego Zoo and many of the museums are also located. The display is near the House of Iran in the International Village of Balboa Park.

The efforts of members of the House of Iran were instrumental in bringing about this "first of a kind" monument in North America. The House of Iran came into realization two years ago through the efforts of Iranian civic leaders. Dr. Badiozamani encourages admirers of ancient Iran in other North American cities to contact him (badi@badiozamani.com) in connection with erecting similar monuments in other major cities. Also visit [www.houseofiran.info](http://www.houseofiran.info). - by Mehr Soroushian

over, women are denied opportunities for high political or judicial positions making it difficult to change laws affecting them.

Ebadi noted a distinction between the status of women in the West and the Middle Eastern countries. While Western women enjoy legal rights they are not fully represented in financial (there are hardly any women among billionaires), economic and political leadership positions. Middle East women, on the other hand, are

faced with the more fundamental problem of lacking legal and economic rights. A 'patriarchal' or 'tribal' culture exists in Iran that condones such practices as polygamy and makes it almost impossible for women to get a divorce, she observed.

**Conclusion.** Ebadi acknowledged the scientific achievements of US educational institutions and desired that scientific knowledge be shared. She pleaded for the separation of the

terrorist attacks of 9/11, which she blamed on a few individuals acting on their own initiative, from the religion of Islam and Islamic culture. She said, the desire for democracy should come from within a country and cannot be imposed from outside. Such imposed democracy would not last, if it were against the will of the people (obviously referring to the current situation in Iraq). Despite everything, the women's rights movement is on a strong footing in

Iran, and with the correct type and amount of international pressure and assistance it will gain even more strength. 'The hand that rocks the cradle will rule the world' was the take-home message I got.

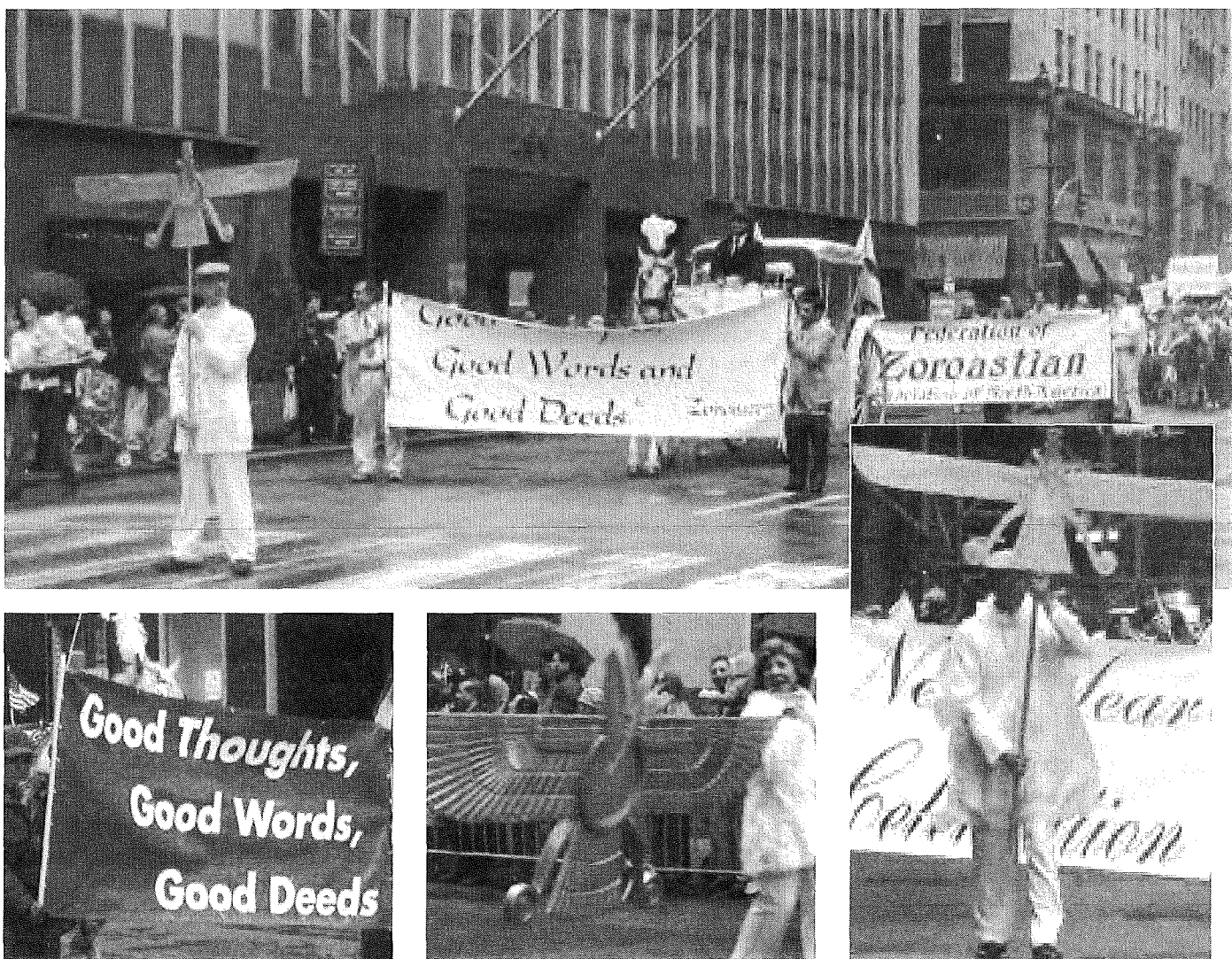
The next day, my wife Parvin and I had the privilege of driving Dr. Ebadi to Sacramento International Airport [photo p. 18] for her next engagement on a whirlwind tour of speaking venues throughout the US. Dr Ebadi is completing her memoirs in a book to be published later this year in the US. Thus ended our meeting with this remarkable woman. ■

## Artist Jimmy Engineer on US tour

During February and March, Jimmy Engineer, artist, humanitarian, peace activist and world citizen, inspired audiences across the US – in Washington, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, New York, Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Louis and California, with his life story, his artistry and his humanitarian work. Professionally an artist, his passion in life is being a social crusader. He participates in peace marches, and organizes music, art and food programs for the underprivileged. Jimmy's 'partition paintings' of the massacre of millions in 1947 at the birth of the new nations of Pakistan and India, draw attention to the tremendous tragedy, and challenge the world to try and resolve conflict through dialogue rather than genocide.

Mr. Engineer has received many awards including the Rotary Youth Leadership award, the National Endowment for the Arts award, gold medals from the International Rotary Club and Lifetime Achievement Award for Humanitarian Services. [Also see next page]. ■

PHOTOS: WWW.IRANIAN.COM



**Persian Parade 2005.** Zarathushti banners and motifs, especially the fravahar symbol, were very much in evidence, as were a large number of Zarathushtis from the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York and the Iranian Zoroastrian Association, at the second annual Persian Parade down Madison Avenue in New York on Sunday, March 20, 2005. The parade, orchestrated by the Persian-Iranian Parade Foundation, to celebrate Nouruz, drew a huge, cheering crowd of Iranian Americans, curious tourists and mainstream Americans. [Source: [www.persianparade.org](http://www.persianparade.org)].

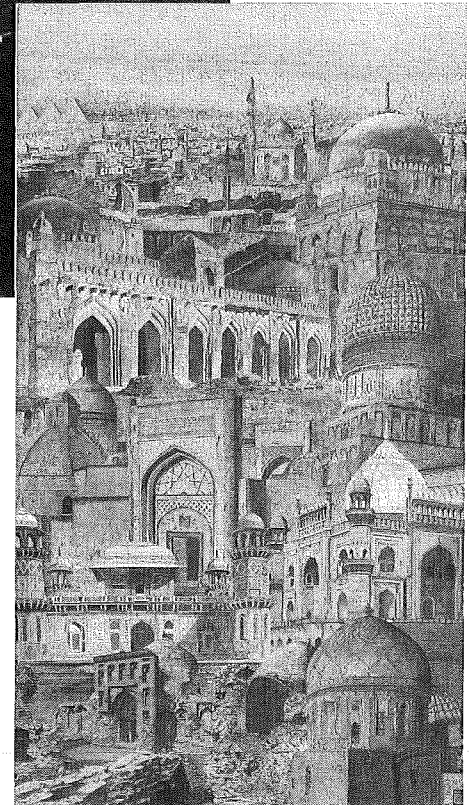




*Left, Jimmy Engineer [center in black kameez] with members of the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago, after a presentation by the artist at the Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr in Chicago.*



*Above, four commemorative postage stamps issued by the Pakistan post office on August 14, 2000, based on a painting of the Indo-Pakistan partition of 1947. Right, Composition #4 (oil on canvas, 7 ft by 4 ft) from the award-winning Architectural Compositions series by Jimmy Engineer.*



## Artist and social crusader Jimmy Engineer

On March 6, the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago had the opportunity to meet a well-known Pakistani artist, Jimmy Engineer at the Darbe Mehr. Dressed in traditional Pakistani attire of a white *shalwar* and pin-striped *kameez*, the tall, bearded Pakistani shared prints of his artworks, life stories and thoughts on humanitarian work with the Chicago community.

Mr. Engineer has been drawing and painting as a child. Having survived a fatal kidney disease he feels blessed. He humbly describes himself as a student of the Creator of the World. In the early 1970s he started experiencing dreams of the 1947 Partition era. His dreams of burning trains, refugees in exodus were interpreted by a Sufi as a preparation by nature to create paintings depicting the holocaust occurring in the Sub-Continent. His Partition

Era paintings won him fame as an artist in Pakistan. Acclaimed internationally, Jimmy has produced over 3,000 paintings, donating many of them, worth over \$2 million, to charitable causes. He truly believes that charity should be done from one's own pocket. A peaceful crusader for the oppressed, Jimmy has undertaken numerous walks for the promotion of human rights and creation of an equitable civil society.

Learn more about this remarkable artist, human rights activist and social crusader, at [www.jimmyengineer.com](http://www.jimmyengineer.com). His paintings are not protected under copyright laws and can be downloaded. In fact, Jimmy would be delighted if Zarathushtis would use his paintings for cards, posters and other artwork.

*- by Rashna Ghadialy*



At the felicitation at the California Zoroastrian Center: Mobed Zarrir Bhandara, wife Tenaaz, their son and daughter, with global leaders and delegates.

## Hamazor to Mobed Zarrir Bhandara A present celebrity – a future legacy

by Meher D. Amalsad, author of *Bread For The Head™*

**A few of the many felicitations and salutations received on the occasion, from high priests and Zarathushti leaders from North America and around the world:**

I wish all success on this auspicious occasion and pray to Ahura Mazda to bestow his divine blessings on Zarrir till the last breath of his life. So may it be as I bless. Yours in His Service.

*Dastur Dr. Firoze M. Kotwal – High Priest, Mumbai, India.*

I wish you a life blessed in the service of Ahura Mazda and pray that you will continue to inspire our future generation to serve our community by keeping the flame alive.

*Mobed Bahram Shahzadi – Head Priest, California Zoroastrian Center*

... in recognition of exceptional community service ... we wish to show our gratitude for his selfless service, priestly dignity and deep sense of religiosity. His efforts in creating awareness of our faith amongst the community-at-large, has made him a goodwill ambassador of our Zarathushti community ...

*Firdosh Mehta – president, FEZANA*

... our felicitations and good wishes for rendering over 33-years of selfless service to the Zarathushti community in India and North America. It is gratifying to see that his services in creating heightened awareness of Zarathushti religion are duly recognized by the community members. May Zarrir be blessed with a peaceful, blissful and long life of happiness and success through the grace and guidance of Ahura Mazda.

*Er. Dr. Jehan Bagli – president, North American Mobeds Council*

“Appreciating the efforts of human beings in their lifetime is so much more appropriate rather than singing their praises after one is gone,” says Toxy Cowasjee – past president of the Karachi Zarhosti Banu Mandal. This sentiment is not only in harmony with Zarathushtra’s philosophy of venerating people promoting righteousness during their lifetime, but also the cornerstone of honoring Mobed Zarrir Bhandara for his 33-years of selfless religious and spiritual services to our community.

The function, on April 16, at the California Zoroastrian Center was attended by about 20-representing delegates and 250 members of our Southern California Zarathushti community, and graced with felicitations and salutations from high priests and community leaders from around the world.

It was an occasion not only for Mobed Zarrir Bhandara but also for all those who over the years stood beside him and for every Zarathushti priest across



the globe who now has a chance to be honored in the future – a special door has now been opened for all of them.

Mobed Bhandara was honored to be a pioneer of this trend. We hope that it will ignite a spark of appreciation for all our mobeds and create a model of inspiration, a tradition that will encourage our Zarathushti youth to take the initiative for becoming future religious leaders of our community.

**Early years.** Though Zarrir was born in a priestly family, his father was not an ordained priest. It was destined for him to be initiated into priesthood, because from his early childhood, he has been a clairvoyant and a healer.

Mobed Bhandara's priestly training was at the Athornan Madressa in Andheri under Dasturji Kotwal, with *navar* initiation at Dadar Rustam Faram agiary and *martab* at the Banaji agiary. In the past 14-years of his service in California, Zarrir pioneered the tradition, of holding a unified 'festival of all souls,' through only one communal prayer ceremony. He started religious and spiritual training



*Zarathushti youth honoring Mobed Bhandara: Anahita Amalsad presented the garland and Armita Dalal presented the plaque, which reads:*

***"Under the guidance of Ahura Mazda with Good Thoughts, Good Words, & Good Deeds, the Southern California Zarathushti Community honors Mobed Zarrir Bhandara in recognition for 33-Years of Outstanding Dedication, Commitment & Service to our Zarathushti Community."***

classes for Zarathushti children in Southern California. He also intends to organize a weekly communal *hum-bandagi* in Southern California.

Mobed Bhandara believes that a priest should be a living witness, reflecting a life of a true Zarathushti and taking care of all living beings, as Zarathushtra did. Their lives need

to attract and inspire everybody they meet. We know that Mobed Bhandara lives what he believes. It is because in his love of truth he has demonstrated the truth of love, and instead of the love of power he has always focused on the power of love, for which we salute him. ■

*[Copyright 2005 Meher Amalsad]*



**A ZYNA event** including a trip to Whistler and ZSBC's Nouruz function in Vancouver was held over the Easter weekend, March 24 - 27. Among the youth who participated were: Canadians Zinnia Pardiwala (Salt Spring Island), Afreed Mistry and Visda Vokhshoori (Toronto) and Abad Mahava (Edmonton), and Americans Navroz Gandhi (Washington, DC) and Hutoosh Sadri and Hormazd Romer (San Francisco).

The youth were hosted at Roshan and Dinyar Mistry's residence in Langley, BC. On Thursday 24th, over 50 local youth had a potluck bringing a variety of foods from *aush* to *pullav*. The next day started in true Parsi fashion with a tasty *akuri* breakfast followed by local sight-seeing – Simon Fraser University, Capilano bridge [photo left], Cyprus Mountain, Stanley Park, and English Bay. After taking in a movie, the

busy day ended at 3:00 am with a few games of Cranium and Charades. Saturday the group went off to Whistler. In the evening they attended ZSBC's Nouruz function with 300 local Zarathustis. On Sunday morning the youth went on to Eddie Madon's "Bombay Bhel" in Burnaby for a very tasty lunch of bhel, pani puri, and other delicacies followed by an evening on Robson Street. The next ZYNA event is already being planned. To learn more, visit "Zpeakerbox" – an online Zoroastrian youth forum ([www.zpeakerbox.narius.net/nuke](http://www.zpeakerbox.narius.net/nuke)) hosted by Narius Dastur of Vancouver.

*by Farhad Mistry (farhad@executivehotels.net)*



**Mithai making demonstration.** At the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago's recent "Mithai Cook-Off" 'chefs' demonstrate their favorite sweet dishes. From left, Neville Karanjia (penda and gulab jamun), 'sous chef' Zarin Press, Rohinton Rivetna (mehsoor, as made on a campfire in the scouting days), Jaloo Captain (sandhara made in the microwave), 'sous chef' Dinsoo Rivetna and Bomi Damkevala (sooterfani made with shredded fillo pastry).

## ■ INTERFAITH-INTERALIA ■

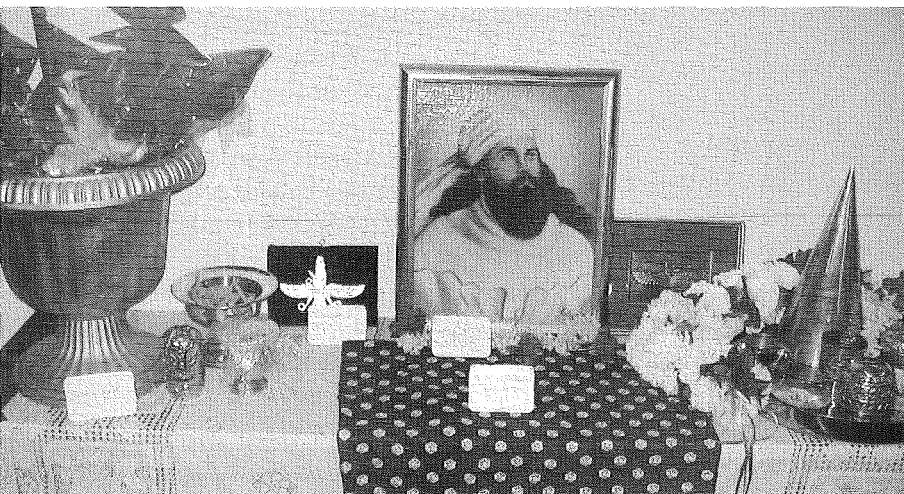


### **Cleveland Interfaith Council.**

On October 3, Zarathushtis of Cleveland, Ohio [photo left] were honored to have Er. Dr. Jehan Bagli in our midst, for a presentation to the Cleveland Interfaith Council, arranged by Council representative Kamal Mehta.

Dr. Bagli spoke eloquently about the Zarathushti religion to the 60-70 Council members and guests. A lively question and answer session followed.

A delicious Parsi lunch of *dhansak*, vegetables, *raita* and *mithi sev* was enjoyed by all. The two display tables, set up with books, saris, *kors*, *jhablas*, *ses* and *afarganyu* [photo left] were viewed with much interest and appreciation.



During his weekend stay, Er. Bagli performed a jashan at Kamal Mehta's residence for the local Parsi community. He was also interviewed by the local newspaper 'The Plain Dealer' for an article and talked to the local NBC affiliate for a possible interview about the Zarathushti faith at a later date. All in all a wonderful and enriching weekend was had by all.

- by Kamal Mehta



# The story of a Zarathushti youth experiencing the UN and international politics

by Kayzad Namdarian



*FEZANA reps at the 49th CSW conference: Afreed Mistry, Farhad Mistry, Homi Gandhi and Kayzad Namdarian.*

*Left, the General Assembly Hall at UN headquarters, NY.*

**F**our FEZANA representatives attended the 49th CSW (Commission for the Status of Women) conference at the UN in New York, February 28 - March 11.

This conference was also called "Beijing + 10." It has been ten years since the groundbreaking conference in Beijing where the "Platform for Action" was created for countries and NGOs to promote gender equality and reduce women discrimination.

The conference was essentially about finding out what countries and NGOs have done towards achieving their stated goals. Gender equality and anti-discrimination is linked to all 'Millennium Development Goals' (MDGs) of the UN, which need to be achieved by 2015. MDGs are goals that the UN focuses its operations on – such as lowering poverty, increasing education and improving gender equality [see next page].

At the CSW conference there were three tiers of events or sessions. First were the high level events, held in the General Assembly Hall, where ministers, first ladies and even a

princess spoke on behalf of their country. They spoke of national programs, law reform, constitutional reform or institutional reforms to improve gender equality and women's rights.

The second tier events, for sessions with UN agencies or large NGOs were held in conference rooms.

The third tier events were held in smaller, more intimate rooms. This is where FEZANA organized a presentation titled "Zoroastrian contributions to the MDGs: Past, Present and Future" on March 8th [see next page]. Afreed Mistry, Farhad Mistry, Homi Gandhi and myself, were present at the UN on behalf of Zarathushtis.

Security around the UN was tight and strict rules were enforced. My personal highlight was when I heard Kofi Annan at the opening session. In the General Assembly Hall I heard country representatives from all over the world. The US presented a controversial statement in regards to demoting the women's human right of abortion. The Middle Eastern states seemed to be far more political

with less emphasis on what their respective countries have done to improve gender equality.

My home country, Australia, presented an item that did not seem appropriate, a scheme which pays new mothers \$3,000. It was interesting to see how a government can turn such an irrelevant controversial thing, which has been promoted locally to create a baby boom in Australia, into something that is supposed to increase gender equality, on the world arena.

In the closing draft sessions country delegations had to develop a resolution that represented the action of the conference. Some of the proceedings gave me the impression that the people who are leading the countries of the world may not be the most ideally perfect people to do so. Nevertheless they are all humanity has to offer. ■

**Kayzad Namdarian**, 24, lives in Melbourne, Australia. He has a B.Com and B.InfoSys, is currently studying for a Masters of Diplomacy and Trade, and working as a trainee at Australia and New Zealand Bank.



## Zarathushti contributions to the UN's Millennium Development Goals

At the UN Millennium Summit in 2000, the UN General Assembly adopted the Millennium Declaration, affirming its commitment to advancing human rights, good governance and democracy. The most striking points of the UN resolution are outlined in the 'Millennium Development Goals' (MDGs), a set of quantifiable objectives that all 191 UN Member States have pledged to meet by the year 2015. The eight MDGs are:

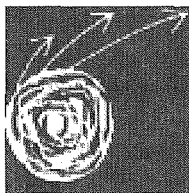
- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.
- Universal primary education;
- Promote gender equality and empower women;
- Reduce child mortality;
- Improve maternal health;
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, etc.
- Ensure environmental sustainability; and
- Develop a global partnership for development.

Four FEZANA representatives [see page 25] presented a panel discussion entitled "Zoroastrian Contributions to the Millennium Development Goals: Past, Present and Future" at the 49th session of the Commission on the Status of Women at UN Headquarters, NY.

This two hour interactive session started with an introduction to the history and major tenets of the Zarathushti religion, but focused on the efforts that Zarathushtis have made – and continue to make – to meet the humanitarian objectives of the Millennium Declaration.

The talk was followed by an interactive session on how the Zarathushti community can work with other communities and NGOs to create development networks around the world.

Contact Afreed B. Mistry at [afreed.mistry@gmail.com](mailto:afreed.mistry@gmail.com). Visit [www.un.org/millenniumgoals/](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/)



### UN's Year of Microfinance 2005

A Zarathushti delegation presented a panel discussion at UN headquarters in March 2004, at the Commission on the Status of Women on the topic of "Microfinance: A step for the upliftment of women" in anticipation of the declaration of the UN Year of Microfinance 2005 [see FJ, Summer 2004, page 9].

Recently, the UN asked a question to which one of our youth delegates, Roxanna Mirza from Toronto, provided a response. Her submission was selected for publication by the UNCDF newsletter [Visit [www.uncdf.org/mfmatters](http://www.uncdf.org/mfmatters)].

*Question: "What do you think the role of microfinance should be in the post disaster context?"*

The catastrophic state in which the tsunami has left its mark in the regions that were affected is incomprehensible. However, those of us fortunate enough to have escaped its wrath should first collect our thoughts, and understand to what capacity help is required of us, before imposing our services in areas we assume we are needed.

The role of microfinance in the post-disaster context should be considered from an internal, individual needs basis. Microfinancing serves as a wonderful tool in many regions of the world, and such projects can be successful in South Asia and other post-disaster stricken areas as well, provided that our external guidance is strictly that, guidance.

The entire concept of microfinancing is to provide tools to those less fortunate, so they may become empowered and self-sufficient. We have a global and humanitarian responsibility to look after each other in times of need without anyone having to feel needy. Microfinancing projects allow this united growth progress to occur efficiently.

Roxanna Mirza, N.D.

[roxannamirza@yahoo.com](mailto:roxannamirza@yahoo.com)

Representative, FEZANA, UN NGO



### Interfaith Council float in parade

Maneck Bhujwala [far left] dressed in red, white and blue, carrying a small banner which read "Zoroastrian. Happy Independence Day!" joined members representing the Christian, Jewish, Bahai and Muslim faiths, on the float of the Huntington Beach (California) Interfaith Council, in the 4th of July parade. The float won a major parade award, and helped get the message of interfaith acceptance and cooperation to the 250,000 people who lined the three-mile route down Main Street.



*Jehangir Sarosh [in black Nehru jacket] is the Zarathushti delegate at the funeral of H.H. Pope John Paul II, in St. Peter's Square, on April 9th.*

PHOTOS: YUICHIRO TAKEJANI



## Zarathushti presence at pope's funeral

*by Jehangir Sarosh*

**T**he Zarathushti community was privileged to pay last respects to His Holiness Pope John Paul II. Jehangir Sarosh was invited to represent the World Conference of Religions for Peace (WCRP – Religions for Peace) at the funeral of His Holiness, in his capacity as president of the European Region.

On arrival at St Peters Basilica, Fr. Felix Marchido (who is originally from Mumbai) requested Jehangir to move from the second row to the front row stating, "As a Zoroastrian you sit here." Later, Jehangir learned

that that particular seat had been reserved for Fr. Marchido himself, which he gave up. Our special thanks to Fr. Marchido.

On the steps of St. Peters, to the right of the coffin, were seated leaders from different Christian traditions including the Anglican, the Greek Orthodox, the Russian Orthodox, and Patriarchs, Archbishops and other high ranking Christian leaders from different parts of the world.

Facing the coffin and St. Peters Square, were the Catholic cardinals, with the political leadership to the left of the coffin. Next to them the "other world faiths" – Buddhist,

Hindu, Jew, Muslim, Sikh and Zoroastrian were given due place of respect on the steps of St. Peters. Archbishop Michael Fitzgerald came and greeted each one of us and thanked us for our presence; whereas we should and do, thank him for arranging for us to be given the opportunity to pay our last respects to this great man, lovingly referred to as Papa Giovanni by so many.

Immediately below, in The Square was a congregation of lay Catholics with dignitaries from political and military establishments and next to them a large delegation of the Catholic clergy. Behind them thou-

sands of pilgrims from all over the world, with a very large contingent from Poland.

Sitting in this privileged position, and seeing the political leadership seated in alphabetical order, rather than large or powerful states being given special privilege, was humbling.

The three-hour service with the mass was spiritually uplifting and unifying to people of different faiths, and none.

Papa Giovanni had worked all his life for peace and harmony and his legacy was outstandingly visible. Seeing members of such varied faiths and political leaders, not only being together at the funeral ceremony, but afterwards these leaders and the laity mingling inside St. Peter's as equals in total humility, was an example of humanity at its best.

We are grateful for his presence in this world, may he rest in "the Abode of Songs."

**Jehangir Sarosh** [*wcrp@btconnect.com*] is the European chair of the World Conference of Religions for Peace. Due largely to his efforts, the Zoroastrian community of Europe has close links with the Vatican, and enjoys tremendous respect.

## HIS HOLINESS POPE JOHN PAUL II

MAY 18, 1920 - APRIL 2, 2005

Karol Jozef Wojtyla, known as John Paul II since his October 1978 election to the papacy, was born in Wadowice, a small city near Cracow, Poland.

Upon graduation from high school, he enrolled in Cracow's Jagiellonian University and in a school for drama. When the Nazi occupation forces closed the University and the young Karol had to work in a quarry and then in a Solvay chemical factory to earn his living, and to avoid being deported to Germany.

In 1942, aware of his call to the priesthood, he began courses in a clandestine seminary run by the Archbishop of Cracow. At the same time, he was one of the pioneers of the "Rhapsodic Theatre," also clandestine.

After the Second World War, he was ordained in Cracow, in 1946. He continued his studies in Rome, and received a doctorate in theology, and later became professor of moral theology and social ethics in Cracow and Lublin. He exercised his pastoral ministry among the Polish immigrants of France, Belgium and Holland.

In 1958, he was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Cracow by Pope Pius XII. In 1964, he was nominated Archbishop of Cracow by Pope Paul VI, who made him a Cardinal in 1967.

Since the beginning of his Pontificate, on October 16, 1978, Pope John Paul II completed 104 pastoral visits outside of Italy and 146 within Italy. As Bishop of Rome, he visited 317 of the 333 parishes. His principal documents include 14 encyclicals, 15 apostolic exhortations, 11 apostolic constitutions, and 44 apostolic letters. The Pope also published five books.

No other Pope encountered so many pilgrims, Heads of State and other persons of all faiths. To everyone, he was a voice of conscience on global issues that challenged the world.

[Source: Holy Name Cathedral, Archdiocese of Chicago]

## Chicago Police department forum to strengthen relations between the police and the city's diverse communities



The Chicago police department convenes a MultiCultural Forum to "strengthen relations between the police and Chicago's diverse communities." The program, supported by the Mayor of Chicago, was initiated after the events of 9/11, when Muslims, Sikhs and some nationalities were unfairly targeted by citizens and at security checkpoints. The Forum aims to cultivate positive relationships between the police and Chicago's diverse racial, ethnic and religious communities; and awareness and understanding of religious and ethnic customs and beliefs. Rohinton Rivetna [top left] represents the Zarathushti interest at Forum meetings, which are held on a regular basis at Police Headquarters.



## COMING EVENTS

### NAMC Mobeds Council Seminar 2005

North American Mobed Council seminar will be held at the Ruston Guiv Darbe Mehr in Pomona, NY, on July 30th, 2005, hosted by ZAGNY. Contact NAMC president Er. Jehan Bagli at jbagli@rogers.com.

### 4th Zarathushti Unity Cup Soccer, 2005

The Zarathushti Unity Cup Soccer Tournament is held on Labor Day weekend of odd years. The 4th tournament will be held September 3-4, 2005, in San Pedro, CA. [See ad next page].

### Conference and exhibit at British Museum

A conference will be held on the "Persian Achaemenid Empire," September 29 - October 1, 2005 in the British Museum, in conjunction with the exhibition of the "Forgotten Empire: The World of Ancient Persia" at the Museum from September 8, 2005 - January 8, 2006.

### Seminar at SOAS

"Keepers of the Fire," the story of the Parsis will be presented by the London Middle East Institute at SOAS and Association Sargam, at the Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre, SOAS, London, in October 2005. An exhibition of maps, texts and artefacts will be on display October to December 2005. Contact LMEI at ss7@soas.ac.uk.

### Next NA Youth Congress, Florida, December 2005

The 2005 North American Zoroastrian Youth Congress will be held from December 28-31, 2005 in Miami, Florida. The theme will be "ZEESTAN - Living a Zarathushti Life," Visit [www.fezana.org](http://www.fezana.org), or [www.zeestan2005](http://www.zeestan2005) or contact ZYNAangels@aol.com [also see next page].

## Calendar of Festivals May - December

### Daye Mah nu Jashan

*Mah Daye, Roz Fravardin* Thu May 5 (K)  
Sat Jun 4 (S)

### Maidhyarem Gahambar

*Mah Daye, Roz Meher-Behram* Mon May 2 - Fri May 6 (K)  
Wed Jun 1 - Sun Jun 5 (S)

### Pir-e Sabz Festival

*Mah Khordad, Roz Ashtad-Aneran* Tue Jun 14 - Jun 18 (F)

### Pir-e Banu Festival

*Mah Tir, Roz Meher-Behram* Mon Jul 4 - Jul 8 (F)

### Maidyoshem Gahambar

*Mah Tir, Roz Khorshed-Daepmeher* Wed Jun 29 - Jul 3 (F)

### Jashne Tirgan

*Mah Tir, Roz Tir* Fri Jul 1 (F)

### Fravardegan/Muktd/Hamaspathmedayem Gahambar

*Five Gatha Days* Sat Jul 16 - Jul 20 (K)  
Mon Aug 15 - Aug 19 (S)

### (Pateti) Navroz

*Mah Fravardin, Roz Hormazd* Thu Jul 21 (K)  
Sat Aug 20 (S)

### Khordad Sal (Birthday of Zarathushtra)

*Mah Fravardin, Roz Khordad* Tue Jul 26 (K)  
Thu Aug 25 (S)

### Fravardian Jashan

*Mah Fravardin, Roz Fravardin* Mon Aug 8 (K)  
Wed Sep 7 (S)

### Maidyozarem Gahambar

*Mah Ardibehesht, Roz Khorshed - Daepmeher* Tue Aug 30 - Sat Sep 3 (K)  
Thu Sep 29 - Mon Oct 3 (S)

### Paitishem Gahambar

*Mah Sheherevar, Roz Ashtad - Aneran* Mon Sep 12 - Fri Sep 16 (F)

### Jashne-Mehergan

*Mah Meher, Roz Meher* Sun Oct 2 (F)

### Ayathrem Gahambar

*Mah Meher, Roz Ashtad - Aneran* Wed Oct 12 - Sun Oct 16 (F)

### Jashne-Avangan (Avan Ardivisur Parab)

*Mah Avan, Roz Avan* Wed Oct 26 (F)

### Maidyoshem Gahambar

*Mah Tir, Roz Khorshed - Daepmeher* Sat Oct 29 - Wed Nov 2 (K)  
Mon Nov 28 - Fri Dec 2 (S)

### Jashne-Adargan

*Mah Adar, Roz Adar* Thu Nov 24 (F)

### Death Anniversary of Zarathushtra

*Mah Daye, Roz Khorshed* Mon Dec 26 (F)

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

### **FEZANA AGM, 2006**

The 19th *FEZANA AGM* will be held May 27-28, 2006 in Atlanta, GA, hosted by Atlanta Zoroastrian Association (AZA). Contact Rita Engineer, secretary, RitaEngineer@yahoo.com. tel: 561-487-4343.

### **Next Zarathushti Olympic Games**

The *Tenth Zarathushti Olympic Games* will be held in Summer 2006. Contact the Zoroastrian Sports Committee of FEZANA at [www.fezana.org](http://www.fezana.org). [zsc@fezana.org](mailto:zsc@fezana.org).

### **Conference at Oxford**

The *Centenary Conference* on the Iranian Constitutional Revolution will be held July 30 - Aug 2, 2006 at Oxford University. Contact Heritage Foundation, London, tel: 44 20 7499 9293, [info@iranheritage.org](mailto:info@iranheritage.org).

### **Conference at SOAS**

The *Sixth Biennial Conference on Iranian Studies*, organized by the International Society for Iranian Studies, Iran Heritage Foundation and London Middle East Institute, will be held at SOAS, London, August 3-5, 2006. Tel: 44 20 7499-9293, [info@iranheritage.org](mailto:info@iranheritage.org), [www.iranheritage.org/sixthbiennial](http://www.iranheritage.org/sixthbiennial).

### **"Year of Aryan Civilization", Tajikistan, 2006**

President Rahmonov of Tajikistan has declared year 2006 as "The *Year of Aryan Civilization* to further protect and value the intellectual treasures of our ancestors ... and strengthen the national identity of the future Tajik generation" [*FEZANA Journal*, Winter 2003, page 37].

### **North American Congress, Toronto 2007**

The XIV North American Zoroastrian Congress will be in Toronto, July 1-4, 2007, hosted by Zoroastrian Association of Ontario. Contact [sam.vesuna@sympatico.ca](mailto:sam.vesuna@sympatico.ca).

### **5th Zarathushti Unity Cup Soccer, 2007**

The 5th Soccer tournament will be held on Labor Day weekend, 2007.

### **Zoroastrian Sports Committee**



Proudly Presents

## **4th Zarathushti Unity Cup**

"The Field of Dreams", San Pedro, California



**Saturday and Sunday  
September 3rd and 4th, 2005  
(Labor Day Weekend)**

For more information  
see us at:

**[www.zathletics.com](http://www.zathletics.com)**

Or email us at:

**[zsc@fezana.org](mailto:zsc@fezana.org)**

Zoroastrian Sports Committee (ZSC) is the Sports Committee of the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America  
ZSC, P.O. Box 66828, Los Angeles, CA 90066  
[www.FEZANA.org](http://www.FEZANA.org)

## **ZEESTAN 2005**



***Calling all youth between 15 to 35.  
Meet and enjoy each other's company at the***

## **2005 North American Youth Congress**

***In beautiful and exciting Miami, Florida,  
December 28 - 30, 2005***

For further details, check out:

**[www.zeestan2005.com](http://www.zeestan2005.com).**

**or email: [ZYNAangels@aol.com](mailto:ZYNAangels@aol.com)**

Organized by ZYNA, Zoroastrian Youth of North America,  
sponsored by FEZANA ([www.fezana.org](http://www.fezana.org))  
and hosted by the Zoroastrian Association of Florida.

Venue to be announced. Contact  
zsc@fezana.org.

### **World Youth Congress, Australia, 2007**

The *Fourth World Zoroastrian Youth Congress* will be held December 27, 2007 to January 3, 2008, at the University of Ballarat, in Victoria, Australia. Contact Shiraz Mistry Smileysjm@optusnet.com.au [see ad this page].

### **World Zoroastrian Congress, 2009**

The next (9th) World Zoroastrian Congress, to be held in 2009 has been awarded to Dubai. Contact Meher Bhesania, email: meher\_bhesania@hotmail.com. ■

### **UN/NGO events**

Zarathushtis are invited to participate on the FEZANA team in future UN/NGO activities.

- *World Summit on the Information Society*, Phase 2, in Tunis, Tunisia, November 16-18, 2005.

Interested individuals may send CV to Homi Gandhi (*Homi\_Gandhi@usa.net*) or Behram Paskia (*bpaskia@aol.com*).

### **IN COMING ISSUES OF FEZANA JOURNAL**

*Fall 2005:*

**Eighth World Zoroastrian  
Congress, 2005**

*Winter 2005:*

**Death and the Hereafter**

*Upcoming:*

**Focus on Youth**

*Guest Editor: Mahrukh Motafram*

**Social Justice in the  
Religion of Zarathushtra**

*Guest Editors:*

*Suzie Karani & Freyaz Shroff*

**Neo-Zarathushtis**

**Guide to personal rituals,  
customs & festivals** ■

### **AROUND THE WORLD**

### **Record rains paralyze Mumbai**

Record rains of over 37 inches in 24 hours, on July 26th, and for several days thereafter, have caused havoc in Mumbai. The airport was closed, and vehicles were abandoned on roads under neck-deep water. With all public transportation at a standstill, office-workers stayed behind at work, or walked for hours or even days, through flooded roads, to get home. Most areas were without electricity. Several hundreds have been reported dead or missing in the flooding and ensuing landslides. ■



*Stranded  
pedestrians  
after the del-  
uge in Mum-  
bai paralyzed  
all forms of  
transportation.*

[PHOTO COURTESY  
MINOCHEHER  
DAMANIA]

# **The Fourth World Zoroastrian Youth Congress**

## *Back to the Future*

**University of Ballarat, Victoria, Australia  
December 27, 2007 to January 3, 2008**



### **GOING FOR GOLD ...**

The Executive Team is working hard to make this the *BEST CONGRESS EVER* - in true Aussie style. So please start saving those cents/paisas/pence - so as to be there, or forever be square! Earlier, we had mentioned the Aussie Olympics and Going for Gold - well we've decided to welcome you with gold too. Be sure that a Golden prospect awaits all who choose to participate! We're a young Nation on the brink of a blossoming, and that's what we will showcase - the colorful vibrancy, the zest for living, the sporting eagerness, the happy positivity of our Aussie Zarathushti Youth! The future lies ahead. We want it to be as glorious as our past - in fact we mean to make it even better! *SO, COME ON DOWN UNDER IN DECEMBER 2007!*

*Shiraz J. Mistry*  
*Chairman*

*Delara C. Mistry*  
*Vice-chair*

*Shirin J. Mistry*  
*Hon. secretary*

*Khushroo N. Patel*  
*Financial controller*

**Tel: ++ 61 3 9562 0543 • Email: Smileysjm@optusnet.com.au**



# A Timeline of World Body Developments

A brief look at the long saga of the formation of the “world body” for Zoroastrians, from early concepts to the present-day scenario. *by Rohinton Rivetna*

## NEED FOR A WORLD BODY

Today we are a “*Community Without Borders*.” After leaving our original homeland of Iran, the ‘first diaspora’ lived and prospered as the Parsis in India for a thousand years. In the past century, Zarathushtis of the ‘second diaspora’ have spread from the homelands of Iran and India and now live in pockets around the world.

Wherever we may reside though, there is a remarkable bonding between us. Our actions must be deliberate to strengthen, not fragment, these bonds. For our tradition teaches us, and history confirms that “In togetherness lies our strength.”

One bounden duty the first generation must perform before they pass the torch, is to establish formal connections between the diaspora and their roots in the homelands.

At this juncture in our history, it is critically important to formalize a cohesive infrastructure embracing all the far-flung diaspora and homeland communities.

In this age of globalization and hi-tech communications, it is now becoming easier and all the more imperative to develop a formal structure for Coming Together for responsible dialogue and discourse, with commitment and follow-up. Such follow-up is not conceivable in any meaningful way between thousands of individual Zarathushtis, scattered across the globe, but is very viable, in a properly structured, world organization.

**1960s**—The idea of a world body was mooted at the First World Zoroastrian Congress, in Tehran, in 1960 and re-inforced at the 2nd Congress in Mumbai in 1964 and at each succeeding Congress thereafter.

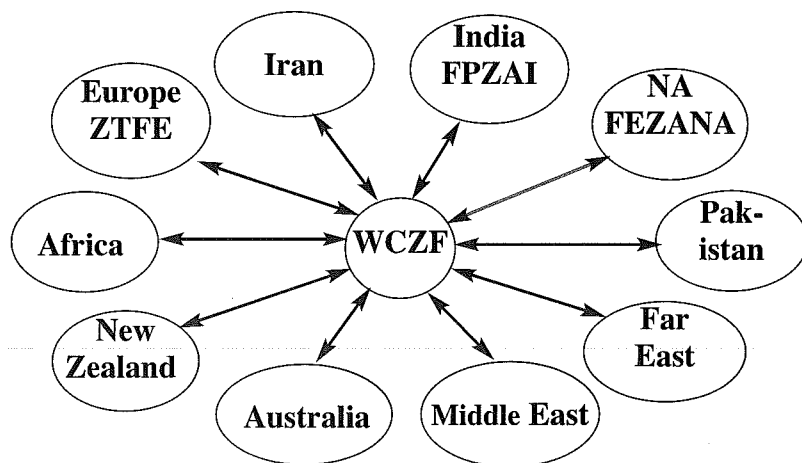
**1970s**—The Indian federation (FPZAI) is formed.

**1979**—World Zoroastrian Organization (WZO) is formed in London.

**1986**—The North American federation (FEZANA) is formed.

**1991**—**Early drafts of WCZF.** Following meetings convened during the Fifth World Zoroastrian Congress in Mumbai in 1990, a draft constitution for a “*World Council of Zoroastrian Federations (WCZF)*” was written by Rohinton Rivetna of FEZANA. Several iterations were circulated and reviewed by regional leadership and WZO.

The vision of WCZF accepted, in principle, by all regions was a simple Coming Together of the federations/anjumans of the world, much along the lines of the FEZANA model.



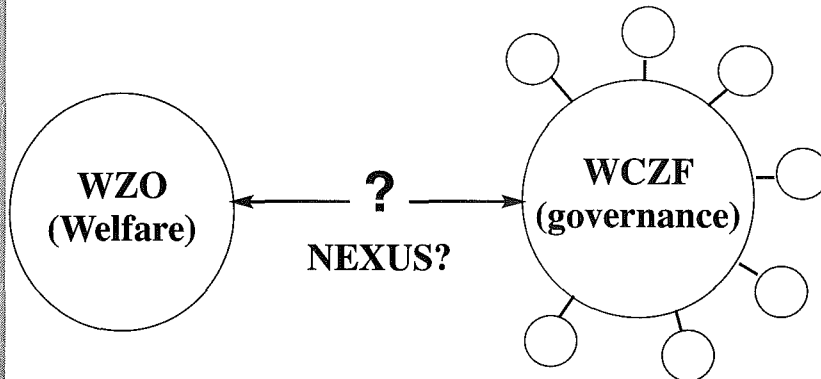
**1993**—Constitutional Convention is convened in Chicago. It was recognized that the existing WZO, while not structured to serve as a representative world body on account of its individual membership, should, nevertheless be included in the evolving world body structure. A bicameral approach with WZO was therefore, developed.

**1997**—FEZANA AGM, Crestone, Colorado. WCZF charter (Version 6) was presented. WZO proposed a restructure of its constitution (to include a Council of Individuals and a Council of Federations)

FEZANA sentiment continued to be in favor of *ONE* world body. The challenge was to seek a formula to bring WZO and WCZF under the umbrella of *ONE* world body.

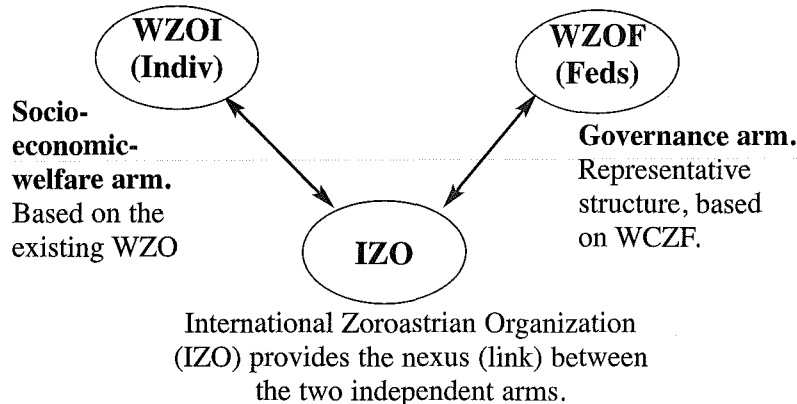
**BPP** = Bombay Parsi Punchayet. **FPZAI** = Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India; **G-10** = Group of 10, regional leadership; **IZO** = International Zoroastrian Organization; **WZOI** (WZO - Individuals) is based on **WZO** (World Zoroastrian Organization); **WZOF** (WZO - Federations) is based on **WCZF** (World Council of Zoroastrian Federations).

**Looking for the Nexus.** Over the ensuing years, numerous formulae were developed seeking this elusive ‘nexus’– the link or connection, between the WZO (the socio-economic-welfare body, with individual membership) and WCZF (the truly representative governance body, with federations/anjumans as members). Numerous meetings were held, in: New York (1998), Washington, DC (1999), Mumbai (Jan 2000), Houston (May 2000), London (November 2000), Houston (Congress December 2000), New York (Apr 2001) ...



**2002**—The FEZANA World Body Working Group (chair Khorshed Jungalwala) evaluated several models: WCZF, the Restructured WZO, the ‘Houston Model’ and a new ‘Two-chamber’ model, and presented their recommendations.

**2003**—A breakthrough developed at the meeting of regional leaders in Mumbai, and during subsequent discussions with WZO [see full report in *FJ*, Spring 2003]. The concept of “One World Body with Two Independent Arms,” gained consensual acceptance, in principle, from the leadership of India (FPZAI/BPP), North America (FEZANA), UK/Europe (ZTFE) and WZO.



**2004**—At a landmark 2-day meeting in London, the “G-10” group (comprised of presidents and their representatives, of FPZAI/BPP (India), FEZANA (North America), ZTFE (UK/Europe) and WZO) came to convergence, in principle, on the draft charters of IZO, WZOI and WZOF. A timetable was drawn up to update the three draft charters after listening to all concerns and suggestions, iterate them through their respective constituencies for ratification, as well as through the leadership in Iran, initiate the registration process and announce the new world body a year later at the World Congress in London. [See full report in *FJ*, Fall 2004].

After a long and tortuous journey, spanning well-nigh two decades, it appeared the world body was now close to realization.

**OUR VISION** is that of nurturing a caring, compassionate, observant, esteemed and prosperous community.

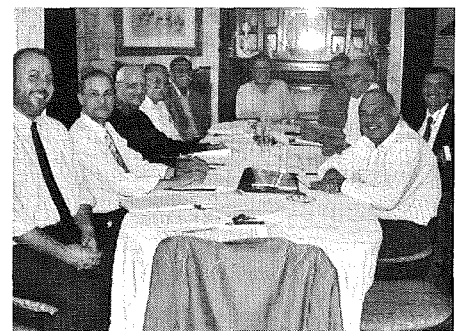
**OUR MISSION** is to Come Together in Hamazori and work together towards our vision for the community. We strive for harmony, not necessarily unification.

**THE WORLD BODY** will facilitate achieving our mission.

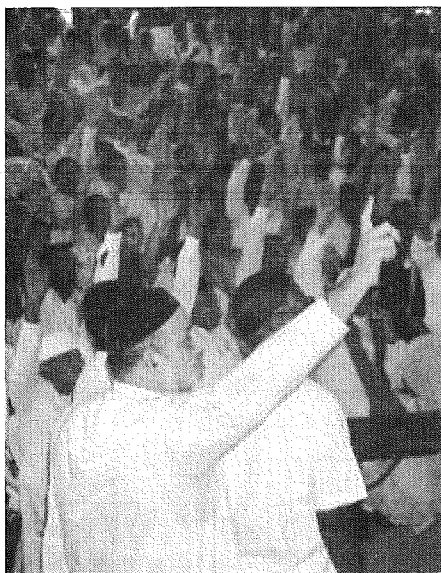
## WORLD BODY IMPERATIVES

**Internally**, the world body shall network, coordinate, facilitate, support, nurture and nourish the global Zarathushti community. It will strive to strengthen the bonds between the homelands and the diaspora communities.

**Externally** the world body shall represent the interests of Zarathushtis in international (governmental, UN, interfaith) forums, and make a positive influence on the course of world affairs.



Landmark meeting of the “G-10” (Group of ten) in London, July 2004: convergence is reached, in principle, from leadership of India, North America, UK/Europe and WZO.



*Khojeste Mistree [foreground] and the gathered assembly of over 1,100 Zarathushtis at a public meeting in Bardoli, Gujarat, passed a resolution with a show of hands, against the world body.*

### **FEARS AND GRIEVANCES**

The concerns of the traditional lobby are expressed in a 54-page power-point presentation. The foremost concern is the “cosmopolitan” nature of the world body:

“The hidden agenda of the world body is to legitimize conversion!”

“2.2 million converts ... will overwhelm us in the world body through a brute majority.”

“Non-Zoroastrians are being converted and accepted into associations affiliated with FEZANA.”

“Disproportionate voting marginalizes FPZAI/BPP.”

“Membership is not restricted to Parsi-Irani Zoroastrians only. Converts can even become office-bearers in the world body.”

“Danger of converts becoming beneficiary of community assets, fire-temples, housing ... trusts.”

Therefore: *The Parsi/Irani Zoroastrian identity MUST be the key unalterable criteria for membership and office-bearers, at all levels of all three arms of the world body.*

**2004 — Protests in India against the world body.** The traditional lobby in India, led by Khojeste Mistree, supported by the High Priests and 40+ anjumans of India, protest against the world body, on the grounds that “the hidden agenda of the world body is to legitimize conversion” and “converts will marginalize the Parsis” and become “beneficiary of Parsi community assets” [see “Fears and Grievances” this page].

● Letter signed by seven high priests of India, dated September 30, 2004, states [full report in FJ, Winter 2004, p. 15]:

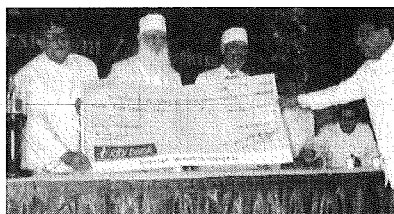
“... this World Body is a threat to our survival as a community and to our religious denomination. We reiterate that the formation of the World Body does not have our sanction and that it would be in the interest of the community to drop any move by FPZAI and/or BPP of joining such a WB, now or in the future.”

● Resolutions were passed against the Indian Federation (FPZAI) from joining the so-called “cosmopolitan world body” at public meetings in Mumbai on October 21 [FJ, Winter 2004, p. 15] and in Bardoli on February 26-27, 2005 [see photo left].

● Petition was made by a majority of anjumans (41 out of 69) at the Indian Federation meeting in Ahmedabad, on December 19, 2004 [FJ, Spring 2005, p. 18] against India joining the world body. Inter-alia, the primary demand is that “the Membership Criteria of all three arms of the world body [and their constituent member federations, anjumans and individuals] should be the same as that established in the constitution of FPZAI”:

“Parsi Zoroastrian shall include (i) a Parsi descended from the original Persian emigrants and born of both Zoroastrian parents, professing the Zoroastrian-Religion (ii) an Irani from Iran, professing the Zoroastrian religion, coming to India either temporarily or permanently and (iii) a child of Parsi father by alien mother, duly admitted to the Zoroastrian religion.”

**May 2005 — WAPIZ is formed.** On May 28th, the new World Alliance of Parsi-Irani Zarthoshtis was launched, at a gala function for 2,200 invited guests at the Turf Club in Mumbai.



*Areerz Khambatta [left] presents a check for Rs. 1 crore to WAPIZ. Zoroastrians and converts.”*

**May 2005 — At the FEZANA AGM, in Pittsburgh**, the World Body Ad Hoc Committee (WBAC) – Sarosh Collector, Homi Gandhi, Khorshed Jungalwala (chair), Farrokh Mistree and Purvez Rustomji, presented the results of a FEZANA Opinion Poll. Based on the Committee’s review of the charters, they recommended [see AGM notes, page 14]:

“... Hence the WBAC is unable to recommend that FEZANA be a founding member of the proposed World Body as delineated in the current documents ...”

At the FEZANA AGM, Rohinton Rivetna recommended that the leadership listen to all concerns and suggestions, and continue to strengthen and improve the IZO-WZOI-WZOF model to assuage these fears. He presented his vision of a *Global Zarathushti Alliance* where the IZO could network, and facilitate a continuing conference with many world-level Zarathushti organizations [see AGM notes, page 15]. ■



# The imperative for a world body

An appeal to the intelligentsia to stand by the Indian Federation (FPZAI) and the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) in their efforts to form the world body of Zarathushtis (WB).

*"You can clutch the past so tightly to your chest that it leaves your arms too full to embrace the present."* Jan Glidewell

by Homi Dhalla  
Mumbai, India

## Why is a world body of Zarathushtis imperative and what can it achieve?

In the last few decades, the face of the planet has changed drastically due to the march of science and technology. The revolution in travel and communications has resulted in transforming our world into a global village. At a dramatic rate, the world's religions and cultures are opening up their horizons to becoming multi-cultural and multi-religious. Zarathushtis too have been contributing to this changed landscape, both at the local and international levels by participating in this dialogue of religions and civilizations.

Today, when we are on the threshold of crossing paths with people of other faiths, it is unfortunate and strange that we, as an educated community, do not have a world body of Zarathushtis (WB).

The fresh challenges of the 21st century demand that we transcend national boundaries. Do we not need a common vision, a growing friendship and a strategic partnership, affecting Zarathushtis living in the far corners of the globe?

This will open a new window of opportunity to the worldwide community in so many different spheres, such as: representing Zarathushti interests at the UN; in times of political crises or natural disasters; fostering cultural links; encouraging historical and archeological research and publications; promoting an enlightened priesthood; conservation and preservation of religious sites;

youth programs; promoting education; forging business and industrial links and employment opportunities; alleviating poverty; organizing and followup on world congresses and conferences. The WB should be the hub or nerve center of the world community, disseminating information on matters of common concern.

## What is the position of the world leadership?

Preliminary discussions about the WB were initiated at the first world Zoroastrian Congress held in Tehran in 1960. The matter has been put on the agenda of subsequent congresses and has been discussed at different forums all over the world during the last four decades.

Presently, the "G-10" group comprising of *duly elected leadership* and their representatives from major regions of the world, are working on a constitution of the WB, and are close to agreement.

Recently all the seven BPP trustees made a public statement clarifying that all of them are of the unanimous view that a WB is a need of the times and are therefore working towards the creation of such an organization. [*Jam-e-Jamshed Weekly*, April 3, 2005].

## What is the viewpoint of the opposition?

Whilst these efforts of the G-10 leadership group were progressing positively, there was a dramatic turn of events. A swell of protests, spear-headed by Khojeste Mistree, was launched against the world body. The most concerted protests took place at the meeting of the Indian Federation in Ahmedabad in Decem-

ber 2004, when the FPZAI and the BPP were pressured against joining the WB.

Their main objections are:

They fear that the creation of the WB would lead to the dilution in India of the Parsi-Irani Zoroastrian identity and ethnicity. This would ultimately result in the basic tenets of our faith being compromised and converts to our faith claiming entry as a matter of right, into our fire temples, be consigned to the Towers of Silence, become beneficiaries of our charitable Trusts and lay claim to our housing colonies.

## What is the response from the Indian leadership?

Mr. Minoo Shroff, a member of G-10 and president of the Indian Federation (FPZAI) and chairman of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP), together with other BPP trustees have publicly [*Jam-e-Jamshed Weekly*, March 13, 2005] declared that:

"... Each region would be autonomous, respecting the views professed and systems followed by other regions, and would not seek to interfere in the affairs of other regions ..."

"... We have made it abundantly clear from day one that the proposed WB is not intended to be a religious body and will *not* interfere in the religious practices followed by Zoroastrians residing in various parts of the world. WB is envisaged to be a social, economic and political organization of Zoroastrians."

"... by creating and joining a WB, none of our community institutions would be threatened nor would their autonomous status be compromised in any manner ..."

"We firmly believe that the community in India will only isolate itself if it retracts from the ongoing efforts to form the WB. Can there be a really representative WB without India?"

It may also be appropriate to consider the opinion of an eminent solicitor, Mr. Eruch Desai, erstwhile chairman and trustee of the BPP. He

opines that [*Jam-e-Jamshed Weekly*, March 20, 2005]:

*"...fear is expressed that ... we will be placing into danger our community's traditions and institutions. In India itself, we are a miniscule minority in a vast sea of humanity comprised of different faiths. The other communities have always respected our traditions and customs. They have not insisted upon any right to share the facilities enjoyed by us. They have not demanded entry into our fire temples or other institutions. If there is no danger from near, how then can there be a danger from afar?"*

*"[There are fears] that by associating with the World Body of Zoroastrians, which may include non-Parsis, a demand can come from some quarter far away, that they have a right to make use of our institutions, like the doongerwadi or the baugs or the fire temples. One should know that once a property is settled upon trust for a particular objective and confined to a particular class of beneficiaries, no other can avail of such right, unless by due process of law, and that too if it is permissible, amendments are carried out in the Trust.*

*"Some say that the constitution of the BPP or the Federation of the Zoroastrian Anjumans is confined only to the Parsis and as such, it is not permissible to associate outside India with Zoroastrians who are non-Parsis. That is not a correct approach. By associating with such non-Parsi Zoroastrians, the constitution or character of a Parsi institution does not change or run any risk of the nature above. They remain the same. All such non-Parsi Zoroastrians can never be entitled to become members of such entities in India."*

Although the 'neo-Zoroastrians' have been around for a long time now, there has not been a single reported case of anyone approaching the FPZAI or BPP for assistance. In the WB, if every region is autonomous, there would be no scope for any interference in Parsi trusts. Moreover, Parsis only shall remain trustees even in the future and the trust deeds will also remain for the benefit of Parsis alone.

## **Living in a world of complex religious diversity**

Today, we live in a world of complex diversity, offering a kaleidoscope of religions. Every religion may be compared to a rainbow exhibiting numerous and valid expressions of that tradition. In 1982, David Barrett gathered statistics about the Christian community worldwide [*World Christian Encyclopedia*, "Oxford University Press, 1982"]. He refers to seven major Christian blocks and a staggering estimate of 20,870 distinct and independent Christian denominations.

His Highness the Aga Khan is quoted as stating [*Sunday Hindustan Times*, November 2004]: "The Muslim world is vigorously pluralistic, and it has been so, practically since the revelation of Islam. There is not 'one Muslim world,' there are enormous variations of interpretations, of history, of language or statehood."

Buddhism too, is an enormous tree with several valid branches. Some scholars refer to Los Angeles, as "the most complex Buddhist city in the entire world." The spectrum of Buddhists include Tibetans, Burmese and Thai, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Japanese, Korean and Sri Lankan communities; and the Euro-American Buddhists who are sometimes referred to as the "new Buddhists."

As for Hinduism we are aware that there are thousands of castes, worshipping numerous deities. They are all recognized and accepted as aspects of the Hindu tradition.

Today, there are pockets of Zarathushtis in Tajikistan, Kurdistan, Russia and elsewhere who claim to have Zarathushti roots and wish to follow the religion of Prophet Zarathushtra. Do we Parsis have the right to say that only we have the monopoly over Zoroastrianism and we are the sole interpreters of the faith? Surely, they do not require our permission to follow the religion of Prophet Zarathushtra?

We have to realize that the religious landscape of the Zarathushti religion

has been changing and shall continue to change. Instead of dismissing them as "*altoo faltoo*" (riff raff), which is most demeaning, parochial and hurtful [*Parsiana*, November 2004, p. 41], it would be in our best interests to engage in creative dialogue with them in a spirit of mutual trust.

## **An appeal to the intelligentsia to stand by FPZAI and BPP in their efforts to form the WB**

The BPP, which has a history of about 335 years, has been the epicentre of the community. Formation of the WB shall be an important landmark in our history. We as responsible and enlightened members of the community should stand by FPZAI/BPP and support them in their efforts to create the WB and become a founding member.

A certain onus accordingly devolves on the intelligentsia of the community, an onus that has not been discharged effectively. This august body cannot remain a silent spectator, but be very much a part of the decision-making process. Comprehending the fast changing ground realities it should play a pro-active role on the world Zarathushti stage. Let it not be pressured by the unbending rigidity of a few persons spearheading the opposition. Let not future generations say that we spoke much and did little in forming the WB. ■

**Dr. Homi Burjor Dhalla** has an MA in Near Eastern Languages and



Literature from Harvard and a PhD in Avesta-Pahlavi from Mumbai University. He is very active in the interfaith movement at local and international levels. He

founded the World Zarathushti Cultural Foundation in 1998 and has launched numerous projects for the cultural revival and preservation of the Zarathushti heritage.



Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor  
Kaikobad Dastoor, chairman, FDU

### Government grants for development of Udvada

In 2002, the Hon. Chief Minister of Gujarat, Narendra Modi, being of the view that Udvada showcases the glorious history of the Parsi community of over 1,300 years, made a suggestion to the Government of India, to project Udvada as a place of harmony, religious tolerance and progress through partnership with the miniscule Parsi community. The former Hon. Minister (Tourism & Culture) held that Udvada indeed symbolized one of the finest examples of the cultural tradition of our country.

The Government of India has released a grant-in-aid of Rs. 97.27 lakhs (\$216,156) to the Government of Gujarat, who has also allocated Rs. 24.32 lakhs (\$54,044) for a total of Rs. 121.59 lakhs (\$270,200).

The "Foundation for Development of Udvada" (FDU) was registered with trustees: Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor Kaikobad Dastoor (chair), Jehangir Cama (co-chair), Dinshaw K. Tamboly (managing trustee), P. K. Laheri, Minoo Shroff, Burjor Antia, Homai Modi and Homi Dhalla.

Projects currently being planned are: a museum, preserving the traditional sanctity of Iranshah, restraining demolition of heritage sites, combating soil erosion, and a tourist circuit from Sanjan to Udvada. WZO Trust

funds have extended support by raising and holding funds for FDU.

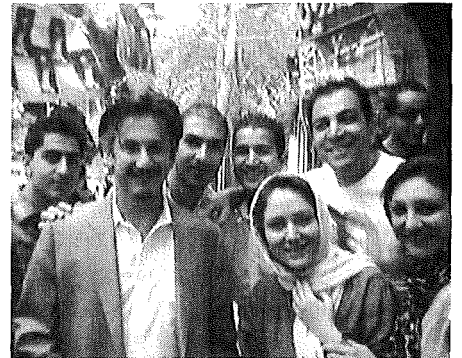
"It is indeed a matter of pride for Parsis that our community has been singled out for such extraordinary support," says Khurshed Kaikobad Dastoor [photo left] high priest of Udvada, and chair of the FDU: "It is hoped that these developments will bring prosperity to the Parsis of Udvada, and result in Udvada progressing into a vibrant Parsi stronghold, adding to the glory and eminence of our revered Iranshah."

### Sea fury ravages the coast of Udvada

Waves rose as high as 25 feet, and destroyed the ancestral home of 90-year-old Khorshed Patel of Udvada on the Arabian sea coast. At least seven ancestral cottages crumbled, as the sea lashed the beach embankment, and the government ordered evacuation of the coast. A proposal for a Rs. 55 crore sea wall has been submitted to the government. [Times news Network, June 25, 2005].

### NRI/PIO foreign exchange amendments

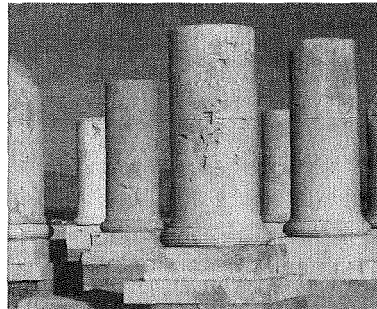
FEMA (Foreign Exchange Management Act) amendment No. 67, dated January 13, 2003, permits an NRI (non-resident Indian) or PIO (persons of Indian Origin) to "remit an amount not exceeding USD one million, per calendar year, out of balances held in NRO accounts or sale of assets or inheritance/legacy. [Reserve Bank of India Circular, July 2005, submitted by M. Damania]



Actor Sean Penn with Iranian fans on a recent visit to Tehran.

[COURTESY IRANPOUR@SHAW.CA]

**Dam is threat to Iran's heritage.** More than 100 of Iran's potentially most important but least examined archaeological sites, including fringes of Pasargadae, the city built by King Cyrus the Great, will be flooded in the next two years according to the UN, which appealed yesterday to international scientists to try to record what they can.



The flooding of the eight-mile Tang-e-Bolaghi gorge because of the construction of a dam will destroy ancient Persia's imperial road, which ran from Persepolis to Pasargadae. The Sivand dam has been planned for 10 years as part of a project to provide irrigation water for farmers in the parched south; but the speed of its construction and the scale of what will be lost have surprised scientists and the UN. Iranian archaeologists have pinpointed 129 sites of interest in the gorge, ranging from prehistoric finds to remains of the Qajar monarchy. Caves, ancient paths, burial mounds, canals and other sites which have never been excavated will be lost.

UNESCO was hopeful that the world heritage site of Pasargadae [photo above], Cyrus' capital city, renowned for its palaces, gardens and the tomb of the founder of the Achaemenid dynasty, would be only marginally affected. The city, which was included in UNESCO's world heritage site list last year, is less than three miles from the end of the gorge. The dam's opening was planned for March 2005 but the Iranian energy ministry has delayed it to 2006 to give archaeologists more time.

[From The Guardian, December 23, 2004, [www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk), posted on [creatingawareness@yahoo.com](mailto:creatingawareness@yahoo.com)].





Mikhail Chistiakov [left] under training with a Parsi mobed, performing afringan ceremony during Fasli fravardegan at Zoroastrian College, Sanjan, in March 2005.

### From Russia to Zoroastrian College

In January 2005, eight persons – two from Kazakstan, two from Tajikistan, and four from St. Petersburg, Russia, came to the 19th World Congress of Science and Spirituality, organized by Zoroastrian College, Sanjan. In this group were Herbad – Mikhail Chistiakov and three lady editors of a Russian magazine, *Mithra*.

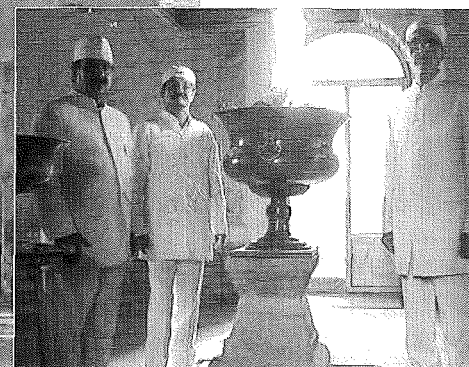
Chistiakov has mastery of Avesta, and has written the Khordeh Avesta in Cyrillic script. He had come to Zoroastrian College for further training, and worked with dedication, night and day to translate all 72 chapters of Yasna (including the Gathas) from Avestan into Cyrillic.

Earlier, Esphandiyar Aryameher (in 2001) and Prof. Rustom Fuzaylov, (in 2002) of Tajikistan, had spent some months studying and translating religious texts into Cyrillic.

These people are very sincere in their desire to revive the faith of their forefathers. In the 19th century, their ancestors had attempted to establish a fire temple in St. Petersburg, but the Russian Orthodox church and the Tzar would not allow it. During the Communist period in the 20th century, all religions were banned. The group of Zoroastrians started reviving their



Left, entrance to the new Anthropological Museum, located at Ker-man's atash kadeh [below] complex. Mobedyar Mehran Gheibi is at left in both pictures.



**Kerman Zarathushtis.** Two atash kadehs, one modern and the other historical, at the atash kadeh complex, are a sign of coexistence of two generations and two schools of thought, in Kerman! Despite some opposition and disagreement, the new temple was built and completed using a new design and will be the only contemporary Zarathushti temple where the fire is fueled with natural gas. The new structure is circular, not square in design! The idea of using natural gas as a source of fuel was suggested by the late Mobed-e-Mobedan Rostam Shahzadi, and was fully supported by the Council of Mobeds of Iran.

Kermani Zarathushtis have always distinguished themselves by their pioneering, courageous, forward looking attitude and their willingness to champion change, when needed. In the early 20th century, Kermani Zarathushtis were amongst the first to adopt the Fasli calendar. They were also the first to adopt burial in an aramgah, after the use of towers of silence became difficult due to constant break-ins by ruffians and zealots (who sold bodies to medical schools). Many Zarathushti national leaders in recent history arose from Kerman, including Arbab Keikhosrow Shahrokh, General Sioshansi and General Shahryari. The Zarathushtis of Kerman, today number a mere 2000, but have a significance far beyond.

[by Mehran Sepehri on creatingawareness@yahoo.com].

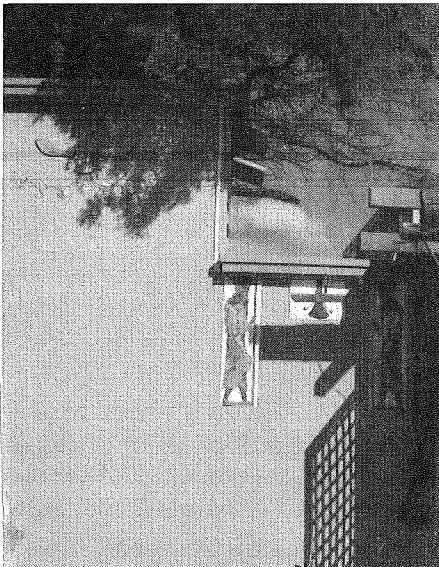
ancestral religion when religious worship was liberalized with Perestroika, in 1989. After 1991, the group availed of new liberal government policies and registered officially as the Zoroastrian Anjuman of St. Petersburg.

They are now looking for help – with books, mobed training and assistance in building an agiary.

[From a report by Dame Dr. Prof. Meher Master-Moos, president, Zoroastrian College, Sanjan]

**Zoroastrian College appeals for support of its multifarious activities and projects, from right thinking Zarathushtis around the world**

Contributions may be sent to Shah Behram Baug Society, Mustafa Bldg, 2nd fl., Sir Pherozechah Mehta Rd, Fort, Mumbai 400 001. For information, contact: mazocoltajik@yahoo.com



**Prayer Room in New Zealand.** *The new prayer room, on the grounds of Parsiana Lodge (82 Pakuranga Road, Auckland, NZ) is the dreamchild of Aspi and Daulat Shahlori (shahlori@xtra.co.nz) and a haven for new immigrants.*

### Pakistani women enjoy equal status with men

"The role being played by women in eradicating illiteracy and poverty in Pakistan is significant and they enjoy equal status on par with males in the country," says Baluchistan senator and Pakistan Muslim League leader Roshan Khursheed Bharucha.

"It is incorrect to say that women and minorities are persecuted. I belong to a minority community but still I have been elected to the Senate," said Bharucha, a Mumbai-born Zarathushti, who migrated to Pakistan with her mother during partition.

To buttress her argument, Roshan Bharucha explained that around 40,000 women were members of the local government in Pakistan, about 72 women were members of Pakistan's National Assembly (Lok Sabha) and another 18 in the Senate (Rajya Sabha). Compared to Pakistan's population, this is a very fair representation of women in Pakistan's legislatures.

*[Source: Aban Rustomji, aban@coatingengineers.com]*

## Evidence of Zarathushtis around the Amu Darya river (Russia-Afghanistan border) until 1896

Dr. D. A. Scott has made a significant discovery in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* [1984, No. 2, p. 217] by asserting that Zarathushtis survived until 1896 around Amu Darya, a river boundary between Russia and Afghanistan in what could be called Bactria (Balkh) of old.

Evidence indicating the existence of a tower of silence, fire rituals, Aryan affection for dogs (despite the Islamic dislike for dogs), Zoroastrian creation myths, etc., says Dr. Scott assertively, "make sense realistically only as Zoroastrian remnants surviving in an Islamic milieu."

An Indian surveyor with the British expedition team of Trotter, in 1870, referred to these people as "the Zardushtis or fire-worshippers." Olufson also called them Zoroastrians on the basis of his extensive trips in 1896, to this region, known as Wakhan. When Wakhan was handed over to the ruler of Kabul in 1896, the emir's army entered and crushed Kafiristan, and strict Muslim allegiance was enforced.

Scott cites Russian researchers who reveal that the modern inhabitants of this region held their forefathers to have been fire-worshippers, with "the name of Zoroaster still known to them." Scott concludes: "It would be of the greatest interest to have

field work conducted in Wakhan to see how much, if anything, of the Zoroastrian elements have survived."

Zarathushtis of India and Pakistan owe it to themselves to visit this region and prevail upon their Russian and Pakistani embassies to help find information about this lost culture.

Since some historians believe that the Aryans entered India and Iran through Bactria, Indian historians can dig up a wealth of information about the common Aryan heritage, beliefs, etc., by researching these people, even at this late date, as a joint Indo-Russian project.

I also wonder if the Parsis had any inkling then of what was happening to their co-religionists. If so, they certainly would not have kept quiet, considering the fact that long before 1896, they had sent Maneckji Limji Hataria to Iran, as their emissary for the amelioration of Iranian Zarathushtis, and Dadabhai Naoroji had even conferred with the then Shah of Iran for the same, during his visit to London.

However, if anyone can ferret out any information in this regard, he/she will be making a tremendous contribution to Zarathushti history.

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



*Ancient Zoroastrian fire temple in Panjikant, in western Tajikistan. Excavations show that the city was founded in the 5th century.*

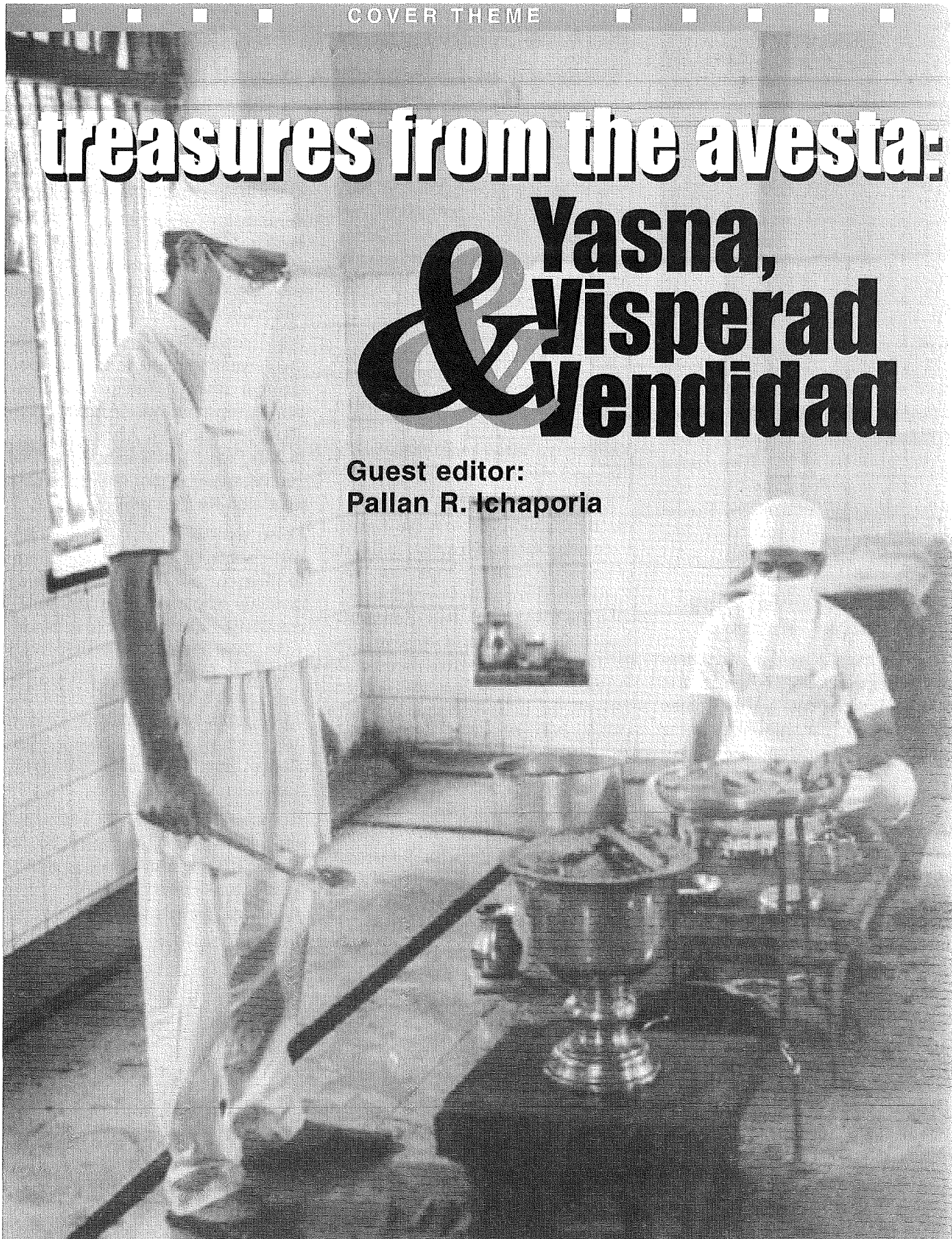
*[Source ESPHAN-DIAR AZADI, DUSHANBE]*

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# treasures from the avesta: **Yasna, & Visperad Vendidad**

Guest editor:  
Pallan R. Ichaporia



*Two young Ervad students performing the Yasna ceremony in the ritual area at the Dadar Athornan Madressa, Mumbai. [PHOTO COURTESY ER. SOLI DASTUR, BY CYRUS DASTOOR, FROHAR FILMS, MUMBAI]*





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# inner liturgies and texts: yasna, visperad and vendidad

by Pallan R. Ichaporia

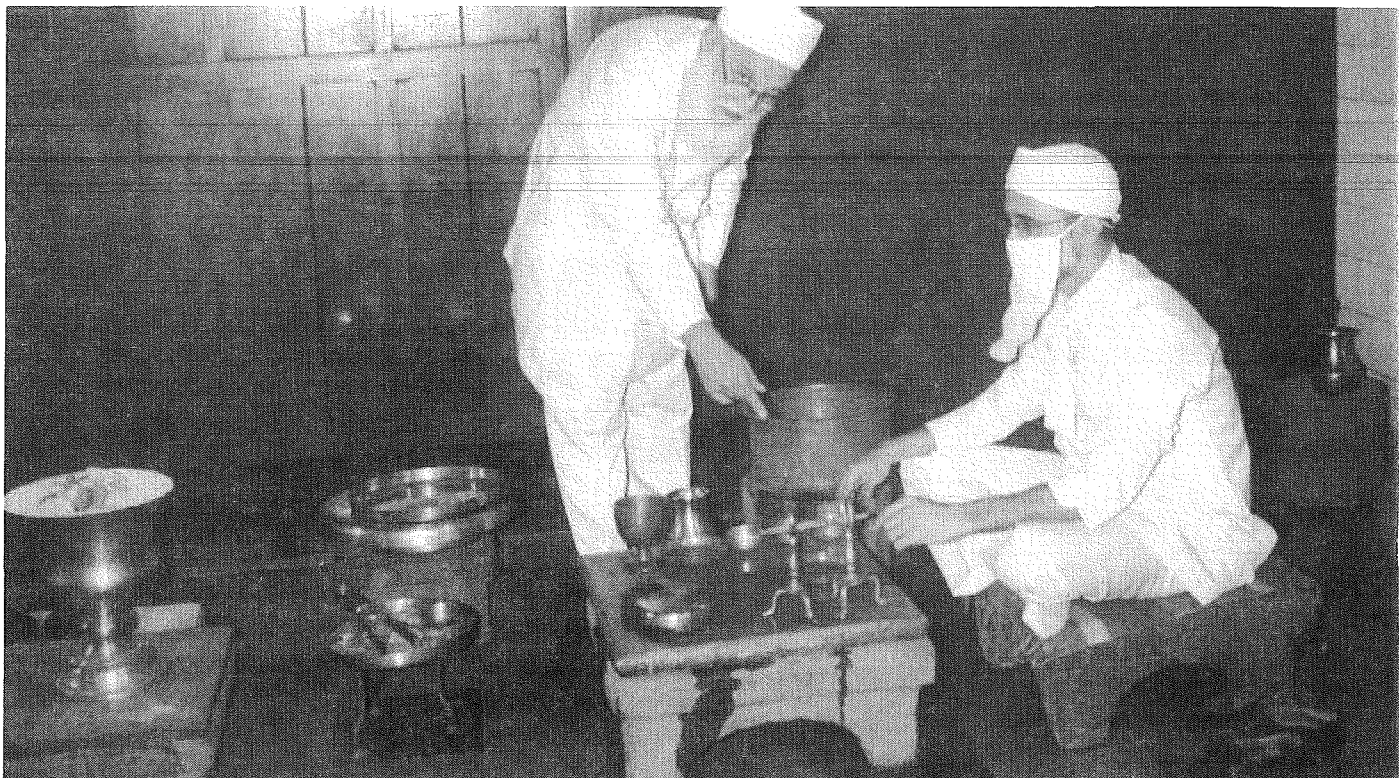
In this issue of FEZANA Journal, we present an introduction to the 'High' or 'Inner' or 'Pav Mahal' liturgical ceremonies': the *Yasna*, *Visperad*, *Vendidad* and *Baj*, and their associated texts. The significance and spiritual aspects of these rituals and the structure and contents of the texts are presented in the ensuing articles covering an overview and roadmap of the contents of the Avesta (by Pallan Ichaporia and Jamsheed Choksy), the *Yasna* (by Gernot Windfuhr and P. Octor Skjærvø), *Visperad* (by Pallan Ichaporia) and the *Vendidad* (by William Malandra). Helmut Humbach presents a scholarly commentary on Asha (Truth) and Sarosh Manekshaw on Cosmic Dualism. Commentary and photographs from the collections of Dastur Firoze M. Kotwal and Ervad Soli Dastur provide rare insights into these rituals and manuscripts.

## Companion FEZANA Journals

This issue of FEZANA Journal is companion to the following past issues:

- [1] Ichaporia, Pallan, Ed. *Journey of the Avesta*. FEZANA Journal, Winter 1998. A historical review of the entire corpus of Zarathushti religious literature.
- [2] Rustomji, Yezdi, Ed. *The Gathas of Zarathushtra, in History, Religion and Life*. FEZANA Journal, Spring 1998. Understanding the Gathas, spiritual and secular.
- [3] Antia, Kersey, H. and Rivetna, Roshan, Eds. *Prayer in the Zarathushti Religion*. FEZANA Journal, Fall 1999. A comprehensive prayer guide for all occasions.
- [4] Manekshaw, Sarosh J. H., Ed. *Treasures from the Avesta: Our Daily Prayers*, FEZANA Journal, Summer 2003. A guide to daily prayers and rituals.
- [5] Choksy, Jamsheed K., Ed. *Treasures from the Avesta: Niyayishns and Yashts*. FEZANA Journal, Summer 2004. Contents and devotional uses of Niyayishns and Yashts.

The views expressed herein are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of FEZANA or FEZANA Journal.



## Introduction

The Avestan corpus is rather small – less than 1,700,000 words if arranged as plain text. If we compare this with the Vedic tradition, we find that, possibly due to the circumstances of its transmission, the size of the Avesta is even less than the size of the RigVeda Samhita alone, which is only one tenth of the whole Veda. As for the Old Avestan parts which include the Gathas, they are just half of the extent of the only other Old Iranian corpus available to us, that of the Old Iranian inscriptions.

An important aspect to be noted is that the Yasna, Vendidad and Visperad, along with other Young Avestan texts, were transmitted orally for a long time before attempts were made to write them down; whereas for the Old Persian inscriptions, the written attestations are practically contemporary to their composition. Oral transmission obviously had several effects on the shape of Avestan texts, which can be seen in the redactions which have affected the texts several times during the oral period.

Although several changes did occur in the Younger Avestan texts, we find that the Old Avestan texts, particularly the Gathas, seem to be affected the least; being the words of the prophet, they were carefully preserved. For example the intervocalic 'dha' in the corpus of the Gathas, is not found to be changed to 'tha', as is done in the Yasna, Vendidad, Visperad and several other Younger Avestan texts.

It is now established that the Parthians and the Sasanians took Young Avestan as a sacral language and thus the words of the prophet (Gathas) are embedded in the ritual of Yasna. One must take note that if it were only a mat-

ter of transmission, then why did it not affect the entire Young Avestan corpus? The answer lies in the rituals which were faithfully performed by the Zarathushti priests using the vast corpus, thereby protecting the texts from massive effects on the shape of the Avestan texts.

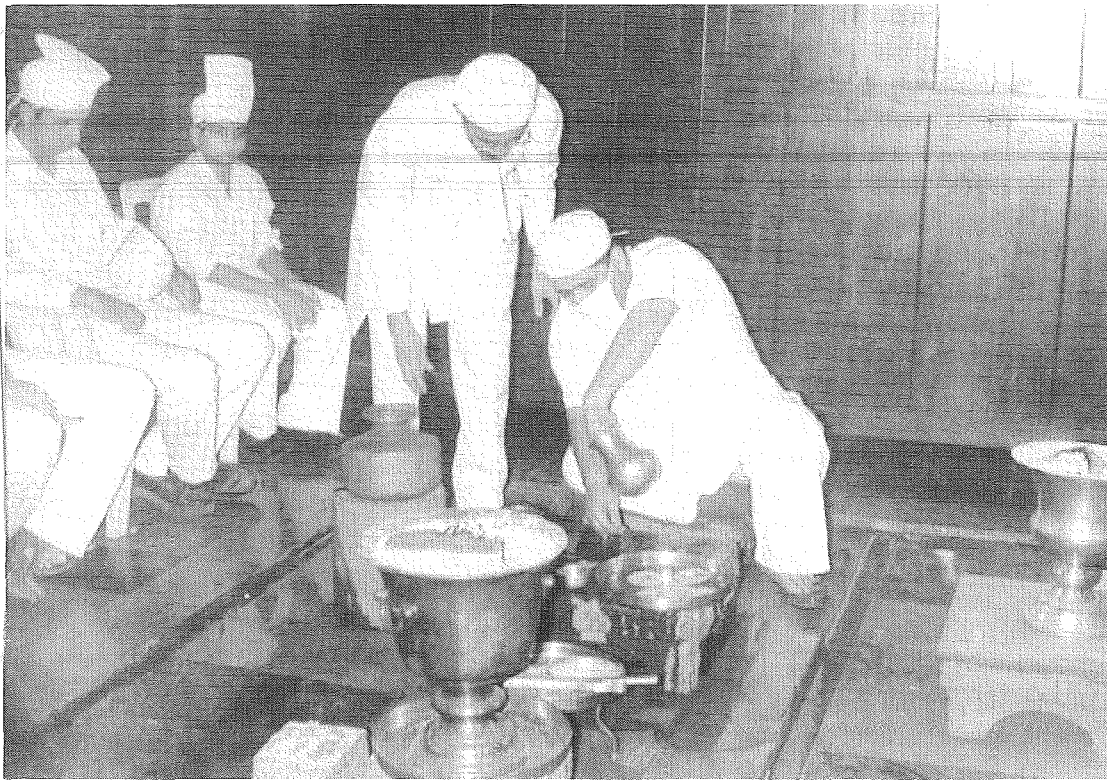
## The Manuscripts

Most of the manuscripts that have come down to us contain, not separate texts, but collections of texts due to their applicability for certain liturgical purposes. This is true for the Yasna collection, which represents the texts to be recited by Zarathushti priests in the course of the *Haoma* ceremony. It is for exclusively liturgical reasons that the Oldest Avestan texts available to us i.e. the Gathas and the Yasna Haptanghaiti are right in the middle of the Yasna. Also in the middle are found Young Avestan passages following the Hom Yasht.

The liturgy instructions in Pahlavi are preserved in the manuscripts of the Avestan Yasna texts. After the joint recitation by the *zot* (officiating priest) and *raspi* (assistant of the Zot) of the Hom Yasht (from Ys. 9.1 to Ys. 11.8) the text of the Yasna shows clear textual uniformity.

## Inner liturgical ceremonies

The High or Inner or *Pav Mahal* ceremonies (which include the Yasna, Visperad, Vendidad and Baj) can only be performed in a special ritual area known as the *ijeshne gah* or *urvish gah*, by *yaozdathregar* priests who have attained high ritual purity and observe the *bareshnum* purificatory rites. Recitation of the prayers is accompanied with actions using ritually purified implements known as the *alat*.



Facing page, Er. Aspandiar Dada-ghanji explaining the Yazeshne ceremony, with Er. Keki Panthaky officiating as the chief priest (Zot), at the M. F. Cama Athornan Institute, Mumbai.

Left, Er. Keki Panthaky (standing) explaining the Baj ceremony to young Ervad students at the M. F. Cama Athornan Institute.

PHOTOS BY ER. CYRUS DASTOOR, HUMATA HUKHTA HVARSHTA INDIAN TELE-SERIAL, FROHAR FILMS. COURTESY ER. SOLI DASTUR.

**Four liturgies in the Yasna.** Besides the Yasna proper liturgy, there are three more liturgies: the Visperad, the Videvdad (Vendidad) and the Vishtasp Yasht.

- The *Yasna* (MP and NP: *Yasn*, Guj: *Ijeshne* or *Yazeshne*) proper comes to us in the *Yasna Sade* manuscripts. The Yasna ceremony [photo previous page] is the central ritual of worship, celebrating rebirth and renewal. It is commissioned to be done for life cycle and auspicious events. The Yasna is performed by two priests (the zaotar and the raspi) and in order to gain the requisite power, must be performed in the early watches of the day - in the Havan or second Havan gah. It is performed in two parts: (1) the Paragna prefatory rite; and (2) the Yasna proper, which involves recital of the 72 chapters of the Yasna, with elaborate ritual actions, and takes 3 to 4 hours. [See articles on pages 64 ff].

The *Paragna* ceremony is the prefatory rite, preceding the performance of the Yasna ceremony. It includes rites to collect, purify and consecrate the ritual implements and organic materials, collectively called the '*alat*,' for the Yasna proper. The celebrant of Paragna becomes the raspi (assistant priest) for the high liturgies.

- The *Visperad* (Phl. *wisp/visp*=all; *rad*=spiritual master) liturgy is in the *Visperad Sade* manuscripts. The 24 chapters (*kerdeh*) of the Visperad text are interleaved into the Yasna text (e.g. Vr. 1.1-8 are placed between Ys. 1.9 and 1.10 and Vr. 12.1-5 between Ys. 27.5 and 27.6). The Visperad is intended for the celebration of special periods of time, such as the seasonal festivals (*gahanbars*), and as reverential prayer to 'chiefs' of both the spiritual and material worlds. [See articles on pages 82 ff].

- The *Vendidad* (Av: *vidaevo-data*, Phl. *jud-dew-dad* or *videvdad* 'Law against *daevas* or demons') liturgy is in the *Vendidad Sade* manuscripts. The mixed text of Yasna and Visperad given above, is further extended by insertion of the 22 chapters of the Vendidad proper, grouped into ten sections, e.g. chapters (*fargards*) 1 to 4 of the Vendidad are placed at the end of Ys. 27 after the insertion of Vr. 12.1-5. The intricate structure of the Vendidad Sade, interleaved with chapters of the Yasna and Visperad, is given by J. J. Modi [1].

The Vendidad ceremony is a purification ritual for cleansing and healing, to vanquish the forces of evil, and may be done outside the precincts of the *urvish gah* - in a private Zarathushti home or community hall. No *alat* is needed. It is performed at midnight by recital of the whole Vendidad Sade manuscript, and lasts for 5-6 hours. The Vendidad recital is always solemnized with the performance of a preceding Yasna ceremony in the early period of the day. [See articles on pages 84 ff].

- The *Vishtasp Yasht*, which is Yasht 24 of the Young Avesta, has 8 chapters and 65 paragraphs. The liturgy is in the *Vishtasp Yasht Sade* manuscript (K4) which is similar to the Vendidad Sade liturgy, except that the eight chapters of the Vishtasp Yasht are inserted in the position of eight of the ten sections of the Vendidad. The first chapter of the Vishtasp Yasht appears after Ys. 22 and Vr. 12.1-5 but before Ys. 28.

It describes benediction and blessings showered by Prophet Zarathushtra on his strongest supporter, Kavi Vishtaspa. The performance of this liturgy has fallen into disuse.



● **Baj ceremony** (Av: *vach* = 'to speak, to say' or 'to have a word' may be the basis for the New Persian *baj*, but it is derived from the Pahlavi *waz*, 'word, speech, grace before meals'). In the *Moti Baj* (Great Baj) ceremony the priest recites Ys 8.3-4, 38.1 and ends with Ys. 8.5-8. There are different kinds of Baj where almost the same chapters of the Yasna are recited, e.g. The Baj for gahanbars, or Baj in honor of one of the yazatas (spiritual beings) or Baj for certain auspicious occasions such as Tirgan or Mehrgan. The short *Jamvani Baj* [right] is a grace to be recited before meals by priests or laity. The Baj ceremony is also done in honor of a departed loved one, generally on the 4th, 10th and 30th day after death, then every month for a year, and subsequently on every death anniversary of the departed soul. It is performed in the urvish gah area of the fire temple, or in a cleansed and purified space in a private Zarathushti home. Requisite offerings include sacred flat bread (*dron/darun*) and fruits. ■

### Languages of Zoroastrian Scriptures

**Old Avesta.** A branch of the old Iranian languages. Others are the **Median** and **Old Persian** of the Achaemenians. The characteristic feature of Old Avesta is the lengthening of all final vowels.

**Young Avesta.** A language that developed later. Here the final vowels are short. It is akin to Old Persian in syntax and grammar.

**Pahlavi.** A Middle Persian language, classified as Parthian Pahlavi, Manichaen Pahlavi and Zarathushti (Sasanian) Pahlavi.

**New Persian.** The modern Persian language of Iran.

**Zand Avesta.** It is the Avestan exegesis (explanation) of Avestan texts. Sometimes the scriptures of the Zarathushtis are also known by this name.

#### ABBREVIATIONS

<b>Av</b> Avestan	<b>Guj</b> Gujarati	<b>MP</b> Middle Persian
<b>NP</b> New Persian	<b>OAv</b> Old Avesta	<b>OP</b> Old Persian
<b>Phl</b> Pahlavi	<b>Pz</b> Pazand	<b>RV</b> Rigveda
<b>Skt</b> Sanskrit	<b>Vd</b> Vendidad	<b>Vr</b> Visperad
<b>YAv</b> Young Avesta	<b>Ys</b> Yasna	<b>Yt</b> Yasht

### Photo Acknowledgments

FEZANA Journal is grateful to the authors for providing valuable photographs from their archives, as acknowledged alongside each photograph. Further, we would especially like to thank the following:

**Er. Soli P. Dastur** and **Er. Cyrus Dastoor**, Humata Hukhta, Hvarshta Indian Teleserial, Frohar Films, Mumbai, for their series of photographs of high liturgies.

**Dastur Firoze M. Kotwal**, High Priest, Mumbai, for photographs of rare manuscripts in his collection, and **Cyrus Rivetna** for taking the manuscript photographs. ■

## JAMVANI BAJ

(Prayer to be recited before meals)

**Ba name Yazad, bakhshayandeh  
bakhshayashgar meherban!**

**Hormazd Khodae itha at yazmaide.**

*In the name of God who is the bestower of all good things, the forgiver of sins, and ever-loving. Here we revere Hormazd.*

**Ahurem Mazdam, ye gamcha ashemcha  
dat apascha dat urvaraoscha  
vanguish, raochaoscha dat bumimcha,  
vispacha vohu.**

*We revere Ahura Mazda, who created the animals and grains, who created the waters and vegetation, who created light, and the earth and all good creations.*

**Ashem Vohu Vahishtem asti**

**Ushta asti, ushta ahmai**

**Hyat ashai vahishtai ashem.**

*Asha – truth and righteousness, is good, it is best. It is happiness. Happiness to one who is righteous for the sake of utmost righteousness.*

- by Kersey H. Antia

### Acknowledgments and Further Reading

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[5] [www.avesta.org](http://www.avesta.org) by Joseph Peterson, contains a wealth of information on the Avesta (text and translations) and on learning the Avestan language. Several books have been scanned and placed on the website by Soli Dastur, including: Desai, Bejan N. *Learning Avesta Compendium and Learning Avesta Manual*, 2 volumes, 2003.

Bharucha, Er. Sheriarji Dadabhai. *Lessons in Avesta Parts 1, 2 and 3*. Bombay Parsi Punchayet. [ppbombay@vsnl.net](mailto:ppbombay@vsnl.net).

Kanga's *Avesta grammar*, Kanga's *Avesta-Gujarati-English dictionary* and Kanga's *English-Avesta dictionary*. ■

# Terms used in the high liturgies *by Pallan R. Ichaporia*

- **Afarganyu** is the fire-urn.
- **Alat** refers collectively to all the implements used in high liturgies [see page 65].
- **Atash Behram** is the fire of the highest ritual purity, entailing highly elaborate consecration rites, unifying fires from 16 sources. **Atash Adaran** is the second grade of fire, unifying fires from 4 sources. **Atash Dadgah** is the third grade of fire, the house fire, consecrated in a simple, 4-day ceremony.
- **Atash gah/Kebla** is the chamber where the consecrated fire (**Atash Padshah**) is enthroned.
- **Bareshnum-i noh shab** (the purification of nine nights and days) is a ritual of purification and segregation. It is attended by two priests both of whom have maintained the bareshnum requirements and acquired *moti khub*. The candidate bathes, does the **padyab-kushti** (washing hands and face and reciting the kushti prayers) and enters the sacred enclosure called the **bareshnum-gah**. After further rituals, the candidate retreats to the Dar-i Mihr, remains isolated and prays in five gahs for nine days. On the fourth, seventh and tenth day he undergoes the **noh-shuy** (Guj: *nav-shu* =new bath) ritual bath.
- **Barsom** (Av: *baresman*) are sacred twigs of the **haoma** or **pomegranate** plant, required for the performance of all inner liturgical services. In modern times, brass or silver wires (called *tae*) each 9" long are used instead of twigs.
- **Hamazor** is the special handshake performed by two people, either priests or members of the congregation at the conclusion of a ceremony, with the recitation of "*Hamazor hama asho bed,*" or "May you be one with us and may you be asho (righteous)."
- **Khub**. The ritual power (*amal*) obtained by Yaozdathregar priests by performing darun service is called the **nani khub** (lesser ritual power). This ritual power is maintained only up to the morning of the next day. The ritual power obtained by Yaozdathregar priests by performing the whole **Mino Navar Yasna** (which is recited during the initiation of a Navar) is called the **moti khub** (greater ritual power or *amal*) which is retained for 3 days and 3 nights.
- **Martab** is the second grade of Zarathushti priesthood. The candidate goes through further elaborate rituals. He has to maintain the *moti khub* in order to perform the high rituals.
- **Mino Navar ceremony**. These are elaborate recitations of Yasna by two Yaozdathregar priests holding a bareshnum. It is performed during the initiation of a Navar. The Yasna recited is known as **Mino Navar Yasna**. In this ritual only seven twigs of barsom are required, instead of the 23 twigs required in celebration of the Yasna proper.
- **Mobed**. A Zarathushti priest (Navar or Martab).
- **Nahn** (Av: *sna*=to bathe) is a socio-ritual purification of the body and soul with a sacred bath accompanied by prayer. The priest offers a pomegranate leaf and a few drops of **nirang** (consecrated bull's urine) to the candidate who recites "*inkhuram pak-i tan, yaozda-i ruvan ra*" ("I drink this for the purification of my body and soul") and then proceeds with the bath. The nahn is given to a child on the occasion of his/her navjote, to the bride and groom before the wedding ceremony, to a person who has come in contact with a dead body (*nasu*) or a woman 42 days post partum.
- **Navar** ("a new carrier of offerings") is the first grade of Zarathushti priesthood. Only the son of a priest can become a priest by undergoing initiation with elaborate rituals lasting a month. A Navar can perform navjotes, weddings and other outer ceremonies like jashans; however, he is not qualified to perform high liturgies or officiate at nahn and bareshnum ceremonies.
- **Pavi** is a furrow made in the ground to preserve the sanctity of a sacred area and to prevent evil forces from entering. Such areas are the urvish gah and atash gah.
- **Urvish gah/Ijeshne gah/Yazeshne gah** (Phl: *gah* =throne, place. Av: *gatum* =throne) is the special area where the high liturgical ceremonies are performed. The urvish gah areas are located in a separate building called the **Dar-i Mihr** ('Court of the Lord of Rituals,' derived from old Iranian *\*mathryana*) adjacent to the fire-temple where the consecrated fire or Atash Padshah, is enthroned.
- **Setayesh gah** (Phl: *stayishn*=praise, benediction, thanksgiving, glorification. Av: *stuto, staumi*=praise) is a 'place of worship' or 'place of thanksgiving.'
- **Yaozdathregar** mobeds are those priests who have achieved the *martab* training, and attained high spiritual purity having undergone the 10-day **bareshnum-i no shab** ritual. The high liturgies can only be performed by such Yaozdathregar mobeds.
- **Zaotar/Zot**, the chief officiating priest, and **Raspi**, his assistant, are the two priests who officiate at inner or outer liturgical ceremonies.
- **Zohr**, a libation of consecrated water, hom twigs, pomegranate twigs and goat's milk, offered during the Yasna ritual.

# occasions to perform the high liturgies

by *Pallan R. Ichaporia*

“The first spiritual Yasna was performed by Ahura Mazda at the beginning of Creation and He will perform the last spiritual Yasna at the end of time.”

- *Bundahishn 34.23*

The high liturgies are performed in various combinations on a variety of personal and communal occasions. The more elaborate ceremonies can last for days or even months, as is the case when a new Atash Behram is consecrated. Some occasions are described briefly below.

## Daily Yasna in the fire-temples

Traditionally, the Yasna ceremony, preceded by the Paragna ceremony, is performed every morning in most fire-temples. Performance of the Yasna is also commissioned by the laity, to invoke blessings on auspicious occasions, such as navjotes, weddings or anniversaries.



*Family members watch from the hall, as a Yasna (Mino Navar) ceremony is conducted in one of the sacred urvish gah areas of the fire temple.*

[PHOTO COURTESY ER. SOLI DASTUR]

## Purificatory rite for new home, business premises or community hall

It is the practice among Parsis to get the Vendidad performed (Guj: *Vendidad besarwana*) in their new homes, apartments, community halls or new business premises, before moving in so as to vanquish any forces of evil and darkness.

The two Yaozdatregar priests first perform the Yasna ceremony in the Havan gah (first watch of the day, from dawn to noon) in the urvish gah of the fire-temple. The Vendidad ceremony is then performed on the premises, in the Ushahin gah (mid-night to dawn) by reciting the whole Vendidad Sade manuscript.

## Sarosh ceremonies for the departed

*Sarosh ceremonies* (Guj: *Sarosh-nu-patru*) are performed for the departed Zarathushti soul for the first three days after death. They are so-called because the prayers are recited in honor of the yazata Sroasha, the guardian angel who protects the soul of man during life and in the after-life. In these ceremonies one to three Vendidad may be recited, at mid-night.

## Navar and Martab ceremonies

In the *Navar ceremony* for initiation into the first grade of priesthood, the young initiate undergoes two 9-day bareshnums lasting 19 days, followed by a 6-day *Gewra ceremony* when two qualified priests perform the Yasna ceremony each day, while the initiate spends his time in prayer. The initiate is then invested with the priestly robes and insignia [see photo next page] and taken in procession (*shahjan*) to the Dar-i-Mihr for the four final days of the initiation, when he participates in liturgies as follows:

*Day 1:* Mino Navar Yasna, Baj and Afringan.

*Day 2:* Yasna, Baj and Afringan in honor of Sraosh.





Young Navar initiate into the priesthood, Er. Mehernosh Bhada of Karachi. He is wearing the **jama** (white robe), **pichori** (cummerband) and **shawl** as an insignia of his position, and carrying a **gurz** (bull-headed mace) signifying his intent to vanquish evil, in his right hand.

Day 3: Yasna, Baj and Afringan in honor of Siroza.

Day 4: Yasna (with Visperad), Baj and Afringan in honor of Ahura Mazda. [Also see page 64].

**The Martab ceremony** further qualifies a Navar into the second grade of priesthood. The candidate goes through one bareshnum of 10 days. On the 11th day he celebrates the Mino Navar Yasna ceremony. The next day he recites the Yasna in honor of Sraosh in the morning and the Vendidad at midnight. He is now qualified to perform the high rituals.



The rare and complex, **Moti Hamayasht** ceremony was performed at the Modi Atash Behram [above] in Surat, in 2003. The Atash Behram, consecrated in 1823, is a highly venerated place for Pav Mahal ceremonies.

## Rare Hamayasht ceremony in Surat

The rare “Moti Hamayasht” ceremony lasting 70 days, involving elaborate recitations of the high liturgies, was recently performed at the Surat Atash Behram.

A ‘moti’ (large) Hamayasht ceremony was recently commissioned by a devout Zarathushti of Mumbai, Hoshang Bengali, in memory of his dear departed wife Homai, at the Seth Dadabhai Naoshirwanji Modi Atash Behram in Surat. While a ‘nani’ (small) Hamayasht was performed about 40 years ago, mobed sahebs at the Surat Atash Behram, could not recall any performance of the ‘moti’ (large) Hamayasht in recent times.

This ceremony comprises of the Yazeshne, Vendidad, Baj and Afringan in reverence of the following 12 yazatas: Dadar Ahuramazda, Teshtar Tir Yazad, Khorshed Yazad, Meher Yazad, Avan Ardivisur Banu, Adar Yazad, Khordad Ameshaspand, Amardad Ameshaspand, Asfandamard Ameshaspand, Govad Yazad, Sarosh Yazad, and Farokh Farvardin (Arda Fravash).

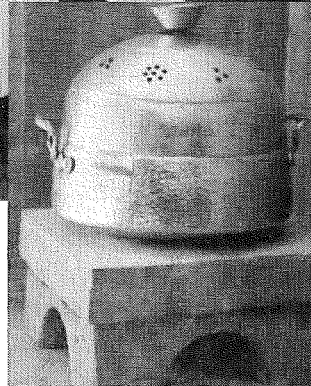
The monumental ceremony commenced on May 26, 2003 (Shenshai Roz Adar, Mah Daye). Five pairs of Yaozdathregar mobeds with proper bareshnum ritual requirements, performed 144 Yasna, 144 Vendidad, 144 Afringan and 144 Baj ceremonies, with the kshnuman of each of the 12 fareshtas (yazatas) listed above, continuously, over a period of 70 days.

“We hope and are confident that with the performance of this gigantic ceremony our Parsi Zarathushti brothers and sisters will once again live in happiness, peace, unity and unflinching faith towards our deen, and wish that the blessings of all the fareshtas descend on us in plenty, to eradicate ahrimanic influences now prevalent, with the help of the strong manthra-vani that emanate from this ceremony.” ■

[Excerpted by Roshan Rivetna from a posting by a devout Zarathushti on [CreatingAwareness@yahoo.com](mailto:CreatingAwareness@yahoo.com). PHOTO COURTESY “GLOBAL DIRECTORY OF ZOROASTRIAN FIRE TEMPLES,” BY MARZBAN J. GIARA].



*Entourage of priests carrying swords and shields in symbolic readiness to ward off evil, lead the procession of 5,000 devotees that accompanied the sacred fire [right] to its enthronement at the Jokhi agiary in Mumbai.*



## Holy fire is enthroned in new agiary

The fire, originally from the agiary in the small town of Tavri (pop. one Zoroastrian family) is enthroned at the new Jokhi Agiary at Godrej Baug, in Mumbai.

In 1964, with only one Zoroastrian family left in Tavri, about 260 Km from Mumbai, the sacred fire from the Tavri Atash Adaran (which had been installed in 1900) was moved to the J. J. Agiary, in nearby Navsari.

On December 19, 1999, at 1:30 am (consecrated fires are ritually moved during the dark hours to prevent other light rays or alien gaze contaminating it) after the Ushahin gah Bui ceremony, it started its journey to its new home in Mumbai. The fire was transported in a 16-vehicle convoy, with a police escort, reaching the Kookadar Dar-e Meher in Sanjan at 4:00 am. The sacred embers rested for the day in the agiary's urvish gah, and were tended with prayers and *maachi* offerings through the five gahs.

The next lap of its journey started at 1:30 am on December 20, reaching Mumbai's Vachagandhy Agiary in time for the Havan gah Bui. At 2:30 am on December 21st (Shenshai Roj Bahman, Mah Amardad) the Tavri fire began the last stretch of its journey.

Hughes Road had been cleared of traffic. A vanguard of water carriers and volunteers with new brooms cleansed the streets and laid out a pavi of sand to demarcate the path of the atash. Shielded by the priestly entourage, escorted by an 'armed guard' of athravans in symbolic readiness to fight evil, and an 'army' of devoted Zarathushtis, estimated to be between 4,000 to 5,000, the procession wended its way to the Agiary, well in time for the Havan gah maachi. A commemorative jashan at 10 am, led by six high priests and 14 mobeds, celebrated the illumined century of the Tavri fire. ■

[Excerpted by Roshan Rivetna from "The Consecrated Convoy" by Arnavaz Mama, Parsiana, March 2000. PHOTOS COURTESY PARSIANA].

## Nirangdin ceremony

The *Nirangdin* (Phl: *nirang*=incantation and Phl: *deen*=religion) ceremony is performed for the consecration of *gomez* (bull's urine) to form *nirang*. First, a part of the Paragna prefatory ceremony is performed in the afternoon in the Uzerin gah. Then after midnight in the Ushahin gah, the Vendidad ceremony is performed by reciting the Vendidad Sade.

## Fareshta ceremony

*Fareshta* (Av: *Yazata*) is the ceremony to invoke all the 33 *fareshta* (*yazatas*). It is performed by several mobeds who recite 33 *Afringans* and 33 *Bajs* with their proper *kshnuman* of the 33 *yazatas*. The *Fareshta* is done to invoke blessings for life cycle events (birthdays, navjote, wedding, new house or business) or as a thanksgiving upon the fulfilment of a long-desired goal.

## Consecration of Atash Dadgah

The consecration of an *Atash Dadgah* (which is the third grade of fire – a house fire) is not very elaborate. It involves performance of *Yasna* in the morning and *Vendidad* (by reciting the *Vendidad sade*) at midnight, for three days. On the fourth day, a *Yasna* with the *khushnuman* of *Ardafravash* is recited in the morning, followed by a *jashan*. The fire from the ceremonies is placed in the *Atash Dadgah*.

## Consecration of Atash Adaran

The consecration of an *Atash Adaran* (which is the second grade of fire) four types of fires – from the houses of (1) priests, (2) warriors/rulers (3) toilers of the earth, farmers and (4) tradesmen – are collected and united. Each is purified and consecrated separately and then a final consecration of the united fire takes place. Four pairs of priests perform the *Yasna* in the morning and *Vendidad* at midnight,

for two days. On the third day the four fires are united, and the priests who officiated at the consecration of the individual fires get together with a *payvand* and recite the *Nemashkar of Atash*. Then two priests perform the Yasna in the morning and Vendidad at midnight. A final Yasna with the kshnuman of Dadar Ahura Mazda is recited over the united fire on the fourth morning.

The united fire is then carried in procession and 'enthroned' in the main afarganyu. The gathered assembly then participates in a celebratory jashan ceremony.

## Consecration of an Atash Behram

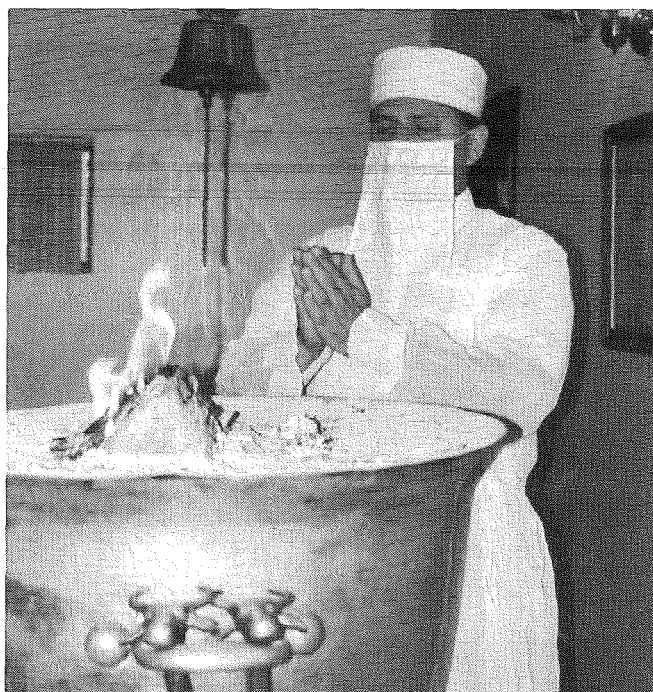
To consecrate an Atash Behram, the 'Fire of Behram, the Yazata of Victory' the highest grade of fire, elaborate ceremonies are performed over a period of many months or years, as detailed in chapter 8 of the Vendidad.

Each of sixteen fires (from a burning corpse, a dyer, a king, a potter, a brick-maker, an ascetic, a goldsmith, a mint, an ironsmith, an armorer, a baker, a brewer, a soldier, a shepherd, from lightning, and a household fire) are collected using highly elaborate rituals.

Each is purified and then consecrated with prayer and rituals as described in the Vendidad [Vd 8.73-78], with the recital of a number of Yasna (in the morning) and Vendidad (at midnight), varying from 33 recitals to 184 recitals, over as many days.

The final union of the 16 consecrated fires is further consecrated with the recital of Yasna and Vendidad for 33 days, ending with a Yasna in honor of Sraosh.

The fire, thus consecrated, is carried in procession, with proper pomp and ceremony, from the urvish gah and 'enthroned' in the sanctum sanctorum of the fire temple. A jashan ceremony is performed to celebrate the momentous occasion.



*Mobed offering the Atash Niyayesh prayer during a Bui ceremony. Note the bell that is rung upon the words "dushmata, duzukhta, duz-vareshhta" to drive out evil. [PHOTO BY ROSHAN RIVETNA]*

## Bui ceremony

Once consecrated and enthroned, the fire is scrupulously tended and kept ever-burning. The *Bui* (Phl: 'fragrance') ceremony [photo above] is performed by a priest in each of the five watches (*gah*) of the day, with recitals of the Atash Niyayesh prayer and ritual offerings of sandalwood and frankincense. At each of the words "*dushmata, duzukhta, duz-vareshhta*" (evil thoughts, evil words, evil deeds) the priest rings a bell three times, i.e. nine times in all, to drive out evil, from the minds of the worshippers and from this world.

## Maachi ceremony

The *Maachi* (Skr. *Manch*=throne) ceremony [photo page 51] is the highest form of offering made to the fire. Six (or 7 or 9) pieces of Sandalwood, arranged in the afarganyu in layers to form a 'throne,' are offered by a Yaoz-dathregar mobed, with the recitation of Atash Niyayesh.

A Maachi is offered on any joyous occasion such as the consecration of a new fire-temple, or to give thanks for a successful personal achievement.

## Hamayasht ceremony

The *Hamayasht* ("Praise or celebration of all the Yazatas") ceremony is performed in honor or in memory of women, either living or dead. The Greater Hamayast involves recital of 144 Yasna and 144 Vendidad, over a period of 144 days. The Smaller Hamayasts entails recital of 112 Yasna and 12 Vendidad. [See page 47 for an account of a recent Hamayasht ceremony in Surat]. ■

## The Gahs

Medieval (Modern) names of the five watches (*gah*) of each day:

### *Hawan (Havan) gah:*

Havani or dawn to noon, morning period.

### *Rapithwin (Rapithwan) gah:*

Rapithwina or noon to mid-afternoon, afternoon period. Observed only during the first seven months of the year. For the rest of the year, it is the 'Second Hawan'.

### *Uzerin (Uzirehn) gah:*

Uzayeirina or mid afternoon to sunset, evening period.

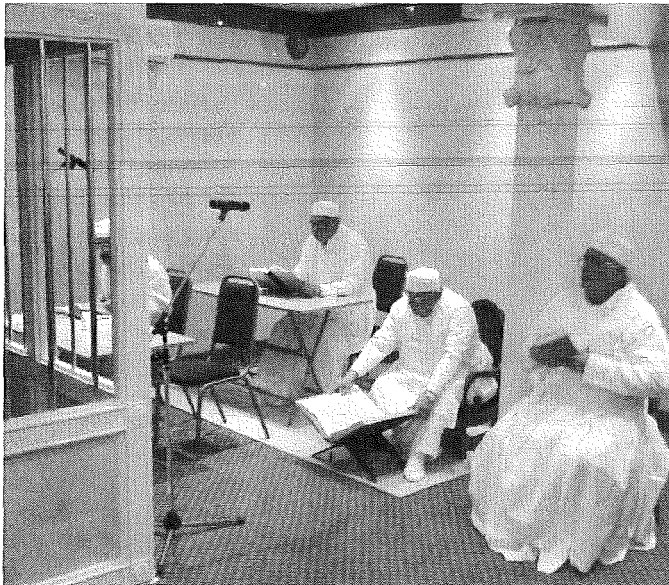
### *Ebsrusrim (Aiweisuthrem) gah:*

Aiwistuthrima or sunset to midnight, early night period.

### *Ushahin (Ushahin) gah:*

Ushahina or midnight to dawn, late night period.





# new london setayesh gah inaugurated

The setayesh gah in the new Zoroastrian Centre in London is dedicated with the recital of an all-night Vendidad Sade prayer and a celebratory jashan.



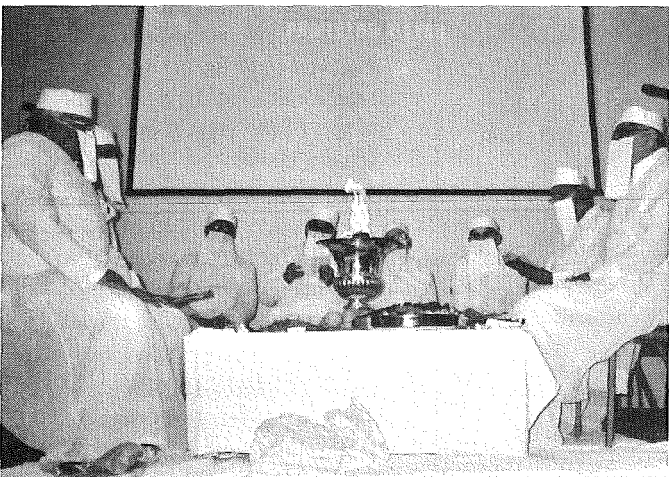
**A**t six in the morning on Saturday March 12, 2005 (Ashishvagh roz and Meher mah) our Ervad sahebs led over a hundred Zarathushtis in an emotional *hambandagi* in the newly furbished *setayesh gah* (prayer hall) at the Zoroastrian Centre in Harrow, London, to celebrate the conclusion of the all-night Vendidad Sade recital. Many more, who had maintained a vigil in the Zartoshty Brothers' Hall [photo left] viewing the ceremony through a video link, joined in the *hambandagi*.

The historic recital, possibly for the first time in the 'West,' was done in commemoration of the move of the *setayesh gah* from the old Zoroastrian House in West Hampstead (which was sold in January 2005) to the new Centre in Harrow.

Mobed sahebs Er. Rostam Bhedwar, Er. Jal Karkaria, Er. Marazban Dastoor and Er. Erach Daruwalla had commenced the 6-hour long recitation at midnight [photo left, top]. Leading the prayers was Er. Bhedwar who recited from an Avestan script, while others recited from the Gujarati script. The books were donated by Dr. Ramiyar Karanjia, principal of the Dadar Athornan Madressa, and transported to London by Khojeste Mistree. During the recitation, Er. Homi Desai and two young mobeds Er. Zubin Bhedwar and Er. Zubin Writer piously tended the fire within the inner sanctum of the *setayesh gah*.

The scene can only be described as sombre, with over a hundred devotees at a time, cramming the *setayesh gah* hall, participating in the ceremony with devotion and piety. The physical strength demonstrated by the mobeds through the all-night recital was matched by their spirituality, which they transmitted to all present.

**The evening before.** The Vendidad Sade function commenced at 10:30 pm the night before, with ZTFE president Dorab Mistry welcoming over 250 people gathered in the newly furbished Zartoshty Brothers' Hall. The



*Facing page, from top, mobed sahebs reciting the Vendidad Sade in the new setayesh gah on March 12; devotees viewing the all-night recital through a video link; jashan at the Zartoshty Brothers' Hall on Nouruz day.*

*Right, from top, Mobed sahebs carrying the fire from the jashan in the Hall to the inner sanctum of the setayesh gah; young Ervads Zubin Bhedwar and Zubin Writer, carrying the fire; the historic occasion culminates with the offering of a celebratory maachi.*



president commended architect Shahrokh Shahrokh for his professional assistance towards the renovation.

By telephone link, our munificent benefactor Mobed Mehraban Zartoshty addressed the gathering from his home in California. The congregation applauded to express their heart-felt gratitude to Mr. Zartoshty. Dr. Rashna Writer, scholar and writer, gave a talk on the history and significance of the Vendidad. Ervad Rostam Bhedwar followed with an explanation of the religious content of the Vendidad.

The historic function ended at 8 am, with morning tea and a stupendous breakfast of *akuri* and *pora*, along with *sev*, *ravo*, *dahi*, *bhakra* and other traditional foods.

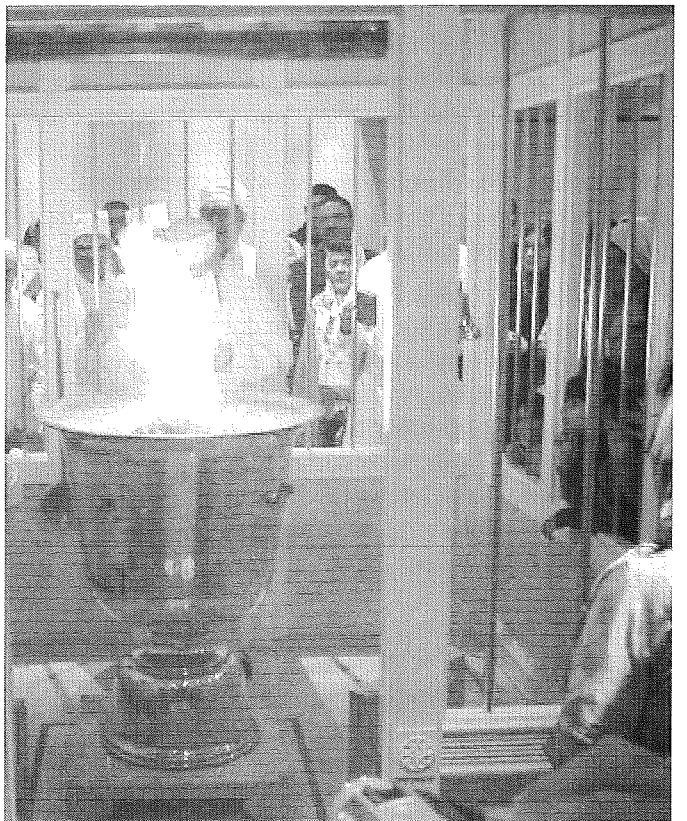
The congregation broke into spontaneous applause in appreciation of the dedication and stamina of all the priests and saluted them for performing this historic prayer for the dedication of the setayesh gah.

**Installation of the fire in the setayesh gah.** Dedication ceremonies continued with a jashan [*photo facing page bottom*] at the Zartoshty Brothers' Hall on Nouruz day.

After the jashan, the afarganyu was ceremoniously carried in a procession by the mobed sahebs from the stage of the Zartoshty Brothers' Hall to the newly established setayesh gah on the second floor [*photos top right*]. The fire was transferred to the large afarganyu in the inner sanctum of the setayesh gah. The dedication ceremonies culminated with the offering of a *maachi* performed by the Ervad sahebs [*photo right, bottom*].

A formal function then took place in the Hall, graced by the Mayor of Harrow and other invited dignitaries. The Rt. Hon. Gareth Thomas, Minister for International Development was Guest of Honor. A sumptuous traditional dinner was served enjoyed by some 400 Zarathushtis and guests. ■

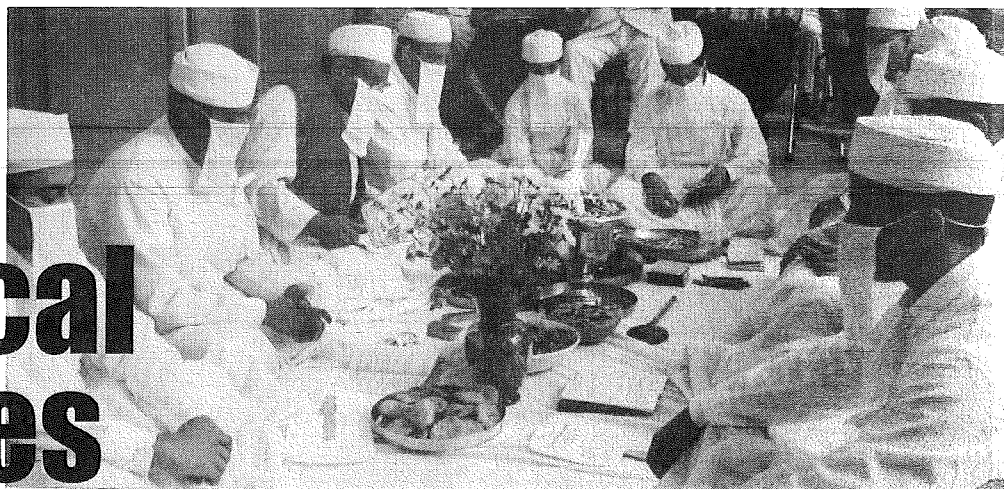
[From a ZTFE report from Jt. Secry. Kobad Avari. Photographs courtesy Er. Rostam Bhedwar, Kobad Avari, Paurush Jilla and Soli Dastur.]





*Celebratory Jashan at the darbe mehr in Chicago.*

# outer liturgical services



A brief introduction to the 'Outer' liturgical services – the Afringan (or Jashan, which is the most commonly practiced of all the outer ceremonies), the Farokshi and the Satum.

**T**he 'outer' liturgies are those religious services which are not necessarily performed in the sacred precinct of the Dar-i-Mihr, but can also be done elsewhere – in a private house or community hall. The officiating priest does not need to observe the bareshnum purification rites, and can be of the first order of priesthood – the Navar. The outer ceremonies are:

- **The Afringan** is a prayer expressing love or praise. It can be performed for the *kshnuman* (glorification) of Ahura Mazda or the yazatas; or in honor of a living or departed person or occasion such as a gahanbar. The Afringan is divided into three parts: (1) the *Dibache* (preface) in the Pazend language; (2) the *Afringan* proper in the Avestan language; and (3) the *Afrin* (benedictions) in the Pazend language. There are numerous variations of the Afringan prayers, appropriate to different occasions. The Afringan is an essential component of the popular *Jashan* ceremony.

The Afringan layout [photo at right] includes the *afarganyu* (fire urn); a tray of sandalwood and frankincense; and a tray containing the *myazd*, i.e. fruits, flowers, milk, wine, water and lime-water. Recital of the Afringan, which takes about an hour, is accompanied by ritual actions, including the flower-exchange ceremony. The ceremony ends with the *hamazor* handshake.

- **The Farokshi**, is a prayer to invoke the blessings of the *fravashis* of the departed. The *afarganyu* (fire urn) is central to the ceremony, along with offerings of fruits, flowers, milk, wine and water. Its recital includes the Satum prayers and the Avesta portion of the



*Mobed reciting the Afringan prayers during a Jashan ceremony. PHOTO COURTESY ROSHAN RIVETNA.*



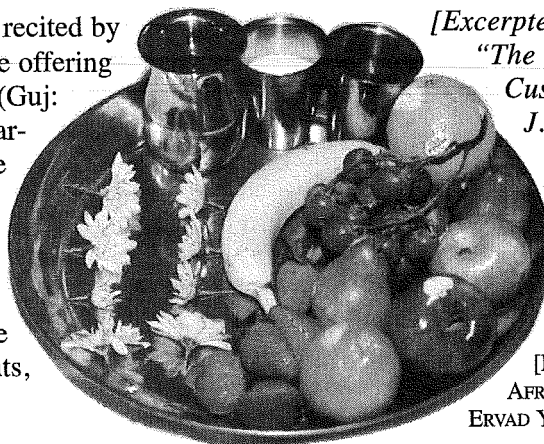
'arvardin Yasht. The Farokshi is commissioned to be recited in honor of the fravashis of departed loved ones on their death anniversary dates.

**The Satum** (Av: *stu*=praise), is a prayer recited by a priest, in honor of a departed soul, with the offering of a meal. A morsel is set aside for 'the dog' (Guj: *utra no book*), as an act of charity and sharing. The Satum is a hymn of praise for the fravashis of all souls "from Gayomard, the first mortal to Saoshyant, the Savior to come." The meal symbolizes the communion, mental or spiritual, between the living and the unseen higher intelligences of the dead, and is offered, along with good thoughts, good words and good deeds of the living:

"These satums are for thee,  
these meals are for thee,  
these words of truth are for thee."

[Ys. 10.18]

[Excerpted by Roshan Rivetna from  
"The Religious Ceremonies and  
Customs of the Parsees" by J.  
J. Modi.]



Tray of offerings (also called myazd) in a jashan ceremony.

[PHOTO COURTESY "JASHAN & AFRINGAN FOR BEGINNERS" BY ERVAD YEZDI ANTIA]

## The Jashan - an Outer Liturgy

The Jashan [photo previous page and at right] is the most commonly performed 'outer' ceremony of the Zarathushtis, to commemorate any important personal or communal event, solemn or joyous, such as a new home, temple or business, a marriage, an anniversary, to honor the departed, or any of the many holy days and seasonal festivals in the Zarathushti calendar.

It is performed by one, two or more mobeds, who recite Afrins and Afringans appropriate for the occasion. It may be held anywhere - at home, outdoors, at the temple or in an assembly hall where all may witness and participate in the ceremony.

Central to the jashan layout is the *afarganyu* (fire urn) which is tended by the mobeds with sandalwood and frankincense throughout the ceremony. Also laid out are elements of nature, representing the seven Amesha Spentas, the aspects of Ahura Mazda, who are invoked during the ceremony: milk (*Vohu Manah*, the good mind), fire urn and oil lamp (*Asha*, truth and righteousness), metal implements (*Kshathra Vairya*, the divine kingdom), the earth

(*Armaiti*, holy devotion), water (*Haurvatat*, perfection) and fruits and flowers (*amaretat*, immortality).

Jashan prayers are offered in the Avesta language, with some parts in Pazand (recited in an undertone), remembering departed

ancestors, heroes and holy men and invoking their blessings. The two officiating priests exchange flowers symbolically linking the physical and spiritual worlds. Man, who comes down to this material world should go back to the spiritual world with an abundance of good thoughts, good words and good deeds to his credit. The whole ritual, accompanied by the Avestan chanting is a truly spiritual experience for the gathered assembly. - Roshan Rivetna

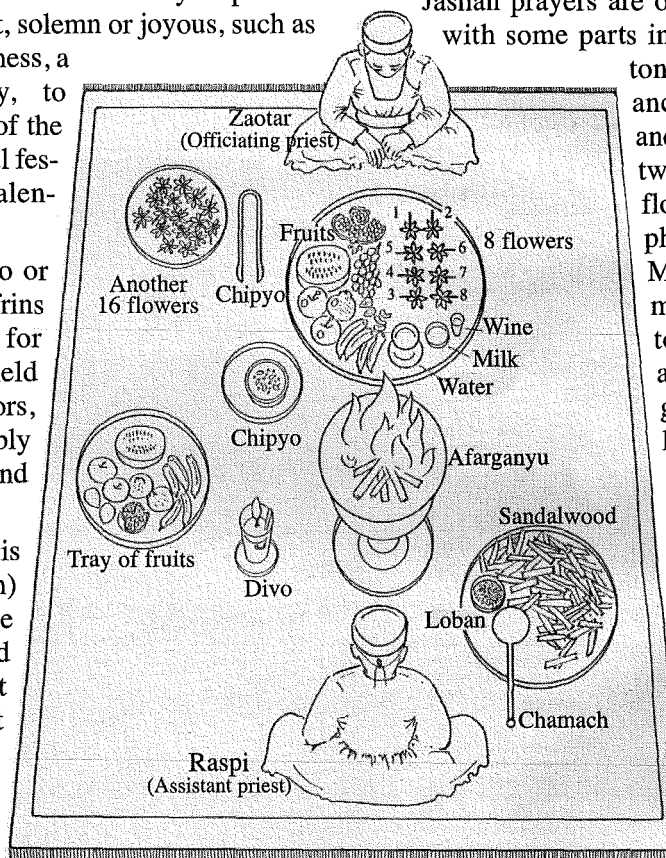


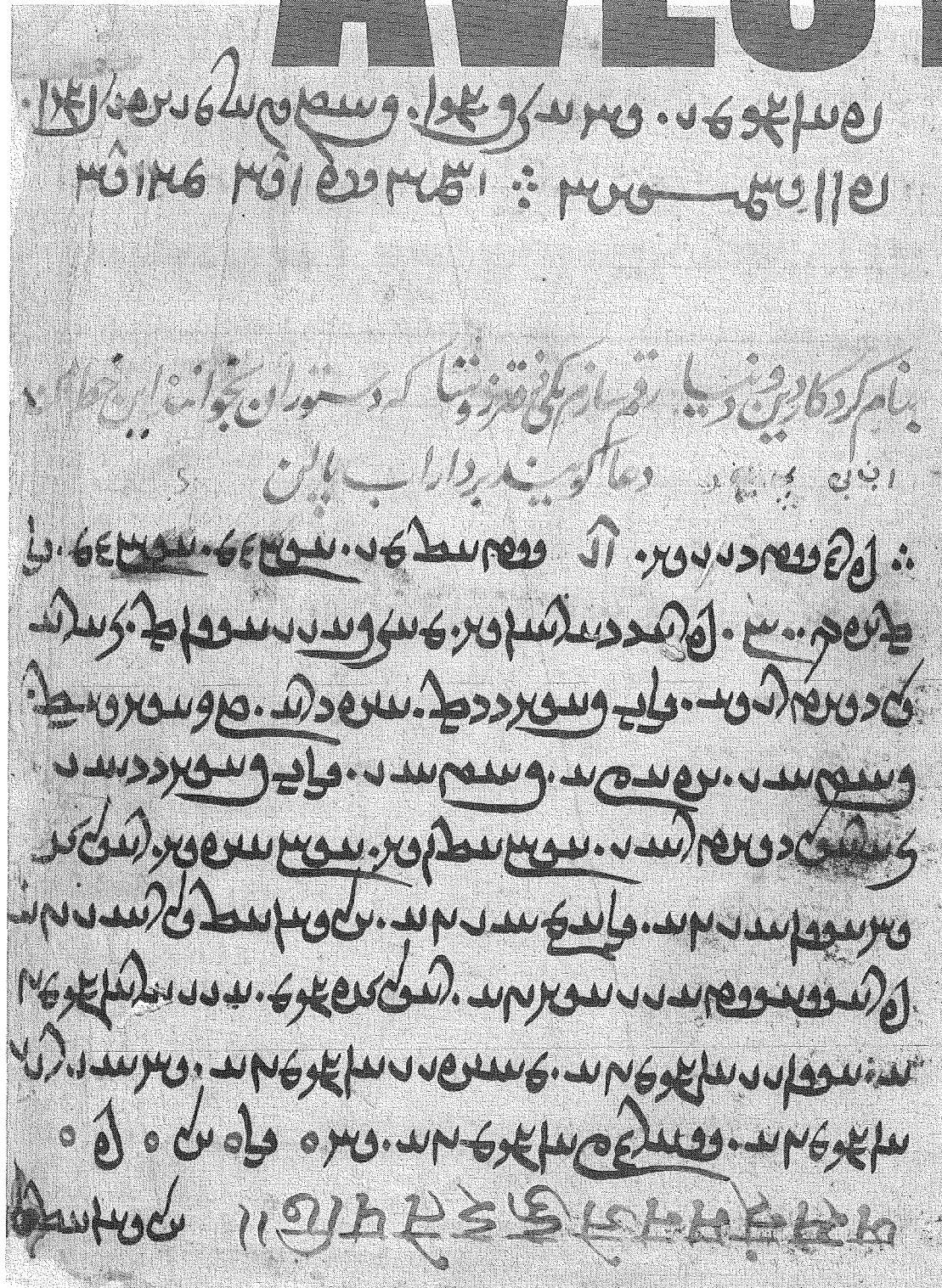
PHOTO COURTESY "ZOROASTRIANISM, AN ETHNIC PERSPECTIVE" BY KHOJESTE MISTREE

### REFERENCES:

[1] Ervad Yezdi Antia for North American Mobeds Council, "Jashan & Afringan for Beginners." Available from ZSO, Toronto (416) 733-4586.

[2] Dastoorji N. D. Minochehr-Homji, "My Prayer Guide No. 2." Text in English, with translation on facing page, compiled by Rohinton M. Rivetna. Xerox copies available from rivetna@aol.com.

# contents of the AVESTA



*Vendidad manuscript dated 1704 CE, with Avestan text in black ink; and Pahlavi liturgical sade (or directions), Farsi headings and Devanagari script ritual sade – all in red ink. PHOTOGRAPH ARCHIVE J. K. CHOKSY*

The Avestan materials were composed, transmitted and augmented for centuries and established as the oral scriptural canon. The written text of the Avesta originated under the royal patronage of Sasanian kings and only about one third has survived to the present day.

*by Jamsheed K. Choksy*

## History

Zarathushti scripture or *Avesta* (Middle Persian: *Abestag*, probably from Old Iranian: \**Upa-stavaka*, 'praise') is a collection of texts regarded as holy and central to beliefs and practices. The canon may be divided into two groups based on linguistic differences:

● *The Old or Gathic Avestan materials* – composed orally between the eighteenth and twelfth centuries BCE, transmitted and augmented for several centuries, then established as the main portion of the oral scriptural canon between the tenth and sixth centuries BCE.

● *The Young or Standard Avestan materials* – composed orally, in some cases from existing verses, between the ninth and fifth centuries BCE, transmitted and augmented, then established in the oral scriptural canon by the third century BCE.

The written text of the Avesta originated between the fourth and sixth centuries CE – probably from deliberations by magi under the royal patronage of Sasanian kings like Shapur II and Khusrow I.

All existing Avestan manuscripts derive from a base text dating to the ninth or tenth century CE.

Only about one third of the Sasanian-era Avesta has survived to the present day.

### OLD or GATHIC AVESTAN MATERIALS

Composed orally between  
1800 - 1100 BCE.

Established as oral scriptural canon  
between 1000 - 500 BCE

### YOUNG or STANDARD AVESTAN MATERIALS

Composed orally between  
900 - 400 BCE

Established as oral scriptural  
canon by 300 BCE

Text of Avesta written between 300 - 600  
CE, under patronage of Sasanian kings

Only one-third of the  
Sasanian Avesta survives today



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The chart on these pages gives an overview of the contents of the entire corpus of the Avesta. Not included are the post-Sasanian (7th to 9th century) Pahlavi and Pazand texts and recent (post ninth century) writings such as the Rivayets.

CORPUS OF AVESTAN TEXTS		
YOUNG AVESTAN		<p>The Yasna comprises seventy-two chapters:</p> <p>Ys. 1-8: Invite Ahura Mazda and other holy spiritual entities to the ritual that will be performed, and offer the libation, barsom (Av. <i>baresman</i>), dron and other offerings.</p> <p>Ys. 9-11: <b>The Hom Yasht.</b> A series of prayers and eulogies, it opens with a dialogue between Zarathushtra and Haoma, the yazata or spiritual entity of the Haoma plant.</p> <p>Ys. 12-13: The Profession of Faith.</p> <p>Ys. 14-18: Invocations which serve as an invocation to a section called <b>Staot Yasna</b> (which extends to Ys. 59).</p> <p>Ys. 19-21: <b>Bagan Yasht</b> discusses the <i>Yatha ahu Vairyo</i>, <i>Ashem Vohu</i> and <i>Yenghe Hatam</i> prayers.</p> <p>Ys. 22-26: Invocations.</p>
	<p><b>YASNA</b></p> <p>(MP and NP: <i>yasn</i>, Guj: <i>ijeshne</i> = 'sacrifice, worship')</p> <p>72 chapters</p>	<p>Ys. 27-41, 43-51 and 53-54 constitute the only collection of texts written in the more ancient 'Gathic or Old Avestan' dialect. The rest of the Avesta is written in the later 'Young Avestan' dialect.</p> <p>The seventeen chapters that constitute the five Gathas, below, are the only Avestan texts composed in verse.</p> <p>Ys. 27: Three 'manthras' or holy words, composed perhaps by Zarathushtra himself, are:</p> <p>Ys. 27.13 - <b>Yatha ahu Vairyo (Ahuna Vairyo, Ahunavar)</b> or 'As the Lord is chosen'</p> <p>Ys. 27.14 - <b>Ashem Vohu</b> or 'Order is Good.'</p> <p>Ys. 27.15 - <b>Yenghe Hatam</b> or 'Among the existing Entities.'</p> <p>Ys. 28-34: <b>Gatha Ahunavaiti.</b></p> <p>Ys. 35-41: <b>Yasna Haptanghaiti</b> ('Yasna of Seven Chapters') was composed in Old Avestan prose probably by devotional poets among the early Zarathushti community.</p> <p>Ys. 42: Invocation to the elements (in Young Avestan, subsequently inserted into the Gathas).</p> <p>Ys 43-46: <b>Gatha Ushtavaiti.</b></p> <p>Ys. 47-50: <b>Gatha Spenta Mainyu.</b></p> <p>Ys. 51: <b>Gatha Vohu Khshathra.</b></p> <p>Ys. 52: Invocation to Ashi (in Young Avestan, subsequently inserted into the Gathas).</p> <p>Ys. 53: <b>Gatha Vahishtoisti.</b></p> <p>Ys. 54: <b>Airyama-ishyo</b> or 'Let the power-granting Airyaman...', the fourth manthra, composed perhaps by Zarathushtra himself.</p>

# CORPUS OF AVESTAN TEXTS (Contd)

## YASNA

(Contd)

(MP and NP: *Yasn*, Guj: *Ijeshne* = worship)

72 chapters

- Ys. 55: Praises the Gathas and the Staot Yasna.  
 Ys. 56: **Srosh** (or **Sarosh**) **Yasht i Keh**, the lesser yasht to Sraosha, the yazata or spiritual entity of observance and prayer.  
 Ys. 57: **Srosh** (or **Sarosh**) **Yasht Wadi**, the greater yasht to Sraosha.  
 Ys. 58: Praises prayer.  
 Ys. 59: Invocations (repeats portions of Ys. 17 and 26).  
 Ys. 60: Blessings of the abode of the Just.  
 Ys. 61: Praises the *Ahuna Vairya*, *Ashem Vohu*, *Yenghe Hatam* and *Afrinagan Daham*.  
 Ys. 62: Praises fire.  
 Ys. 63-69: Invocations.  
 Ys. 70-72: Closing invocations bring the accompanying ritual to an end.  
 [Also see "Appreciating the Yasna," by Gernot Windfuhr, page 71; and "The Yasna," by P. Octor Skjærvø, page 79.]

## VISPERAD

(Av: *vispa ratavo* = [Prayers to] all the [spiritual] chiefs.)

24 chapters

**The Visperad** comprises twenty-four short sections. It is a collection of supplementary materials, compiled in the Young Avestan dialect, to the Yasna. It is dedicated to Ahura Mazda as the chief and master of all creation, and serves to extend the Yasna.

[Also see "Visperad" by Pallan R. Ichaporia, page 82.]

## KHORDEH AVESTA

(Phl: *Khwurdag Abestag* = Concise or shorter Avesta)

**Khordeh Avesta** is a collection of essential prayers to be recited by the laity on everyday occasions as appropriate. Included are the following:

[Also see Choksy, J. K., Ed. "Treasures from the Avesta: Niyayishns and Yashts," FEZANA Journal, Summer 2004]

● Five prayers:

1. **Ashem Vohu**
2. **Yatha ahu Vairyo**
3. **Nirang-e Kushti Bastan** or 'Incantation for tying the kushti' also known as **Ohrmazd Khwaday** or 'Ahura Mazda is the Lord.'
4. **Srosh Baj** or 'Recitation to Sraosha.' and
5. **Hoshbam** (MP: *oshbam* or dawn.)

● Five niyayishns (NP: and Guj: *niyayesh* or 'Invocations of Praise')

1. **Khwarshed** (or **Khorshed**) **Niyayishn** directed to the Sun.
2. **Mihr** (or **Meher**) **Niyayishn** directed to Mithra.
3. **Mah** (or **Mah Bakhtar**, **Mah Bokhtar**) **Niyayishn** to the Moon.
4. **Aban** (or **Awan**, **Avan**, **Ava**) **Niyayishn** directed to Water.
5. **Atakhsh** (or **Atash**, **Atash Behram**) **Niyayishn** directed to Fire.

● Then follow prayers for the five **gahs**, 'periods, watches [of each day].' [See page 49].

● **Two Sirozas** or 'Thirty Days' contain short invocations to thirty-three yazatas or divine spirits.

● Four **afringans**, 'blessings,' are also given in the Khordeh Avesta.



*Khordeh Avesta, 1879.*

COLLECTION: ROSHAN RIVETNA.  
 PHOTO: CYRUS RIVETNA

KHORDEH  
AVESTA

(Contd)

(Phl: *Khwardag Abestag* =  
Concise or shorter Avesta)

- There are twenty-one surviving yashts or devotional poems dedicated to various beneficent spirits.
- 1. **Ohrmazd** (NP and Guj: **Hormazd**) **Yasht** to the Wise Lord.
- 2. **Haft Amahraspand** (NP and Guj: **Haft Ameshaspand, Haftan**) **Yasht** to the Amesha Spentas or holy immortals.
- 3. **Ardwahišt** (NP and Guj: **Ardibehesht**) **Yasht** to the Amesha Spenta Asha Vahishta or best righteousness, prayer.
- 4. **Hordad** (NP: **Khordad**, Guj: **Awerdad**) **Yasht** to the Amesha Spenta Haurvatat or integrity, wholeness.
- 5. **Ardwisur** (NP: **Aban**, Guj: **Awan, Avan, Ava**) **Yasht** to the feminine water spiritual entity Aredvi Sura Anahita.
- 6. **Khwarshed** (NP and Guj: **Khorshed**) **Yasht** to the yazata Khwarshed, the Sun.
- 7. **Mah** (**Mah Bakhtar**, NP: **Mah Bokhtar**, Guj: **Mohor**) **Yasht** to the yazata Mah, the Moon.
- 8. **Tishtar** (NP and Guj: **Teshtar**) **Yasht** to the star Tishtrya (or Sirius), which has religiously been confused with Tir or beneficent stars.
- 9. **Druwasp** (NP and Guj: **Drvasp**) **Yasht** to the feminine yazata Drvaspa, associated with horses and cattle.
- 10. **Mihr** (NP and Guj: **Meher**) **Yasht** to Mithra, the covenant and solar yazata or spiritual entity.
- 11. **Srosh** (NP and Guj: **Sarosh**) **Yasht Hadokht**, an extract to Sraosha, the yazata or spiritual entity of observance and prayer.
- 11a. **Srosh** (NP and Guj: **Sarosh**) **Yasht Wadi** [*Yasna 57*], the longer (greater) yasht to Sraosha.
- 11b. **Srosh** (NP and Guj: **Sarosh**) **Yasht i Keh** [*Yasna 56*], the shorter (lesser) yasht to Sraosha (not in Khordeh Avesta but the term is found in Yasna manuscripts where Yasna 56 is so titled).
- 12. **Rashn** (Guj: **Rashna**) **Yasht** to Rashnu, the masculine yazata of justice and spiritual judgment.
- 13. **Frawardin** (NP and Guj: **Farvardin**) **Yasht** to the fravashis or immortal human spirits.
- 14. **Wahram** (NP and Guj: **Behram**) **Yasht** to Verethraghna, the masculine yazata or spiritual entity of victory.
- 15. **Ram Yasht** to Vayu (MP: *Way*, NP: *Bad*, Guj: *Govad*), the masculine yazata or spiritual entity of the good celestial wind.
- 16. **Den** (NP and Guj: **Din**) **Yasht** to the yazata or feminine spiritual entity of insight or religious knowledge known as Cista or Cisti.
- 17. **Ard** (**Ahrishwang**, NP and Guj: **Ashishwang**) **Yasht** to Ashi, the feminine yazata or spiritual entity of recompense.
- 18. **Ashtad Yasht** to Arshtat, the feminine yazata of rectitude/order.
- 19. **Zamyad** (**Zam**) **Yasht** to *Khvarenah*, fortune or glory.
- 20. **Hom Yasht** [*Yasna 8.9 - 10.21*] to Haoma, the yazata or spiritual entity of the haoma plant. Parsis call this yasht the **Moti** (larger) **Hom Yasht**. There is also the **Nani** (smaller) **Hom Yasht**, an extract from Yasna 9 to Haoma.
- 21. **Wanand Yasht** to Vega, the brightest star in the constellation Lyra.



## CORPUS OF AVESTAN TEXTS (Contd)

YOUNG AVESTAN	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>VENDIDAD</b></p> <p>(Av: <i>vidaevo.data</i>, Phl: <i>Videvdad</i> NP or Guj: <i>Vendidad</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(22 chapters)</p>	<p>The <b>Vendidad</b> consists of twenty-two prose chapters in Young Avestan. The text is largely socio-religious in content, focusing on ritual purity with rules and rites for protecting the earth, cleansing after pollution by corpses and carrion, rites for exorcizing spiritual pollution, and fines for absolution from sin. Most of the ritual stipulations in the Vendidad can be attributed to practices specific to magi of the Proto-Iranian, Median, Achaemenian, and Parthian periods. Like the Yasna, the Vendidad is scripture that functions as the basis of a high ritual. Therefore its manuscripts contain not only doctrine and exegesis but also performative directions for the magi to follow [see photo page 54 and page 62].</p> <p>[Also see “Vendidad” by William Malandra, page 84]</p>
VARIOUS LANGUAGES	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>KHORDEH AVESTA</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">pre-modern manuscripts and modern printed versions</p> <p>(Av: <i>Khwardag Abestag</i> = Concise or shorter Avesta)</p>	<p>Included in premodern manuscripts and modern printed versions of the Khordeh Avesta are additional texts for daily use. Those texts are not all in the Gathic or Old and Standard or Young forms of the Avestan language.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Nirangs</b> (Skt: <i>nirangani</i>, MP: <i>nirang</i> = incantations, spells) are present, often as extracts from Avestan or Middle Persian passages, that pious believers regard as highly efficacious in dispelling evil, producing good health, and fulfilling boons. [See “Nirangs” by F. M. Kotwal, p. 61].</li> <li>● Likewise, the <b>Dua Nam Setayeshne (Nam Stayishn)</b>, ‘Invocation of Praise to the Names (of Ahura Mazda),’ and a list of <b>One hundred and One Names of Ahura Mazda</b> were incorporated so that devotees could directly display respect for their creator.</li> <li>● The text of the <b>Tandorosti</b>, ‘Health of the Body,’ is given so that it can be recited for both maintenance and return to wellbeing.</li> <li>● The <b>Petit [or Patet] Pashemani</b>, ‘Penance and Repentance,’ also became part of many Khordeh Avestas because it is believed that spiritual ailments which led to physical manifestations of illness could be expunged through regular confessionals.</li> <li>● Eventually <b>monajats</b>, ‘litanies,’ in New Persian and Gujarati were incorporated so that devotees could understand the gist of the prayers which are in languages that most individuals have not learned.</li> </ul>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>FRAGMENTS</b></p>	<p>Several Avestan texts and textual fragments containing materials that probably were once part of scripture, have survived. A few should be mentioned. The Young Avestan <b>Herbedestan</b>, ‘Priestly Code or Book of Religious Education,’ and <b>Nirangestan</b> or ‘Ritual Code or Book of Ritual Directions,’ were redacted between the sixth and ninth centuries CE. The <b>Pursishniha</b>, ‘Questions [and Answers]’ on pious and sinful behaviors was redacted in the fifteenth century. The <b>Aogemadaeca</b>, ‘I Profess,’ is a dirge that was redacted by the twelfth century. It has a Pazand version as well. The <b>Hadokht Nask</b>, ‘Selection of Scripture,’ provides an important synopsis of Zoroastrian notions of the afterlife. <b>Afrin-e Zardust</b>, a blessing by Zarathushtra upon Kavi Vishtaspa.</p>

URTHER READING: Kellens, J. “Avesta,” *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, [www.iranica.com](http://www.iranica.com).

# legendary history of the avesta

by Pallan R. Ichaporia

## Legendary history of the Avesta.

Legendary history, as given in Shah Nameh states that Kai Vishtaspa, patron of the Prophet, kept the original written Avesta in the treasury of Shapigan [cf. *Dinkerd VIII*]. Hermippus wrote in the third century BCE that Zarathushtra composed two million lines of poetry. Pliny in his *Natural History* [first century CE], confirms Hermippus.

Masoudi, in *The Meadows of Gold*, alludes that Zarathushti scriptures were written on 12,000 cow-hides in golden ink. Tabari corroborates this statement. Shah Nameh reduces 12,000 cow-hides to 1,200 parchments and also states that they were written in golden ink.

These legendary statements are at best legendary.

**Arsacid (Parthian) Avesta.** A first restoration of the Avesta was made by the Arsacid (Parthian) king Vologeses I or Valakhsh (51 - 78 CE) who ordered the collection and careful preservation of all the Zarathushti scriptures scattered after the ravages of Alexander. The existence of a written Arsacid Avesta is in dispute.

**Sasanian Avesta.** Ardeshir Papakan, founder of the Sasanian dynasty, continued the collection and restoration of the scattered Avesta under his high priest Tansar. Shapur I's (241 - 270) high priest Kirdar continued the consolidation of the texts. The writing and canonization of the texts was under Shapur II (309 - 379) by his prime minister and high priest Aturpat Marespand. ■

REFERENCE: Kellens, J. *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Vol III, 1989.

## The 21 Nasks

### The Sasanian Canon of the Avesta

The Sasanian Avesta was written in the specially invented alphabets in order to render with extreme precision, the slightest nuance of the liturgical recitation. The Sasanian collection of the Avesta, and its commentary (*zand*) is described in Chapter 8 of the Pahlavi 9th century text, *Denkard*:

The 21 nasks were divided into three major books of seven chapters each:

#### I. The Gasanig (7 Gathic nasks)

1. Stot Yasn      Discovered just twenty years ago, it has survived completely as Ys. 14 - 16, 22 - 27, 28 - 54 (which includes the complete **Gathas**) and Ys. 56.
2. Sutkar          Few fragments have survived.
3. Varshmansar    Lost. Ch. 2 & 3 were commentaries on the Gathas.
4. Bag              Survived as Yasna 19 - 21. Originally there were 22 chapters.
5. Vastag          Lost.
6. Hadokht        Only Yasna 58, Yasht 11 (**Srosh Yasht Hadokht**), Afrin-e Zardust and Haptanghaiti 1.2 are left.
7. Spand           This was the biography of Zarathushtra. A few fragments are left.

#### II. The Hadag-mansarig (Av: *HadhaManthra*: 'sacred ritual prayers')

1. Damdad        On cosmogony. A few fragments are left.
2. Naxtar          Lost.
3. Pajag           Described in connection with liturgy of days and years. Parts have survived as the **Gah** and **Siroza**.
4. Rathvishtaiti   A few fragments are left.
5. Barish          On religious ethics. A few fragments are left.
6. Kashkaysraw   On how to annul an incorrectly performed ritual. A few fragments are left.
7. Vishtaspa Yasht   Survived as the later part of **Afrin-e Zardust** and **Vishtaspa Yasht**.

#### III. The Datig (books on law)

1. Nikatum        Law book. A few fragments are left.
2. Duz-sarnizad   Law book. A few fragments are left.
3. Husparam      Law book. Only **Nirangestan** and **Herbedestan** are left.
4. Sakatum        Law book. A few fragments are left.
5. Videvdad       This law book, also known as the **Vendidad**, has survived completely.
6. Chihrdad       Mythical history of Iran. A few fragments are left.
7. Bagan Yasht.   Survived as Ys. 9 (**Haom Yasht**), Ys. 10 - 11, Ys. 57 (**Sarosh Yasht Wadi**) and Yashts 5 - 19.

# a tale of two manuscripts

Dastur Firoze M. Kotwal explains two of the manuscripts in his valuable hereditary collection – a 268-year-old manuscript of nirangs and a 202-year old Vendidad.

## Manuscript of Nirangs

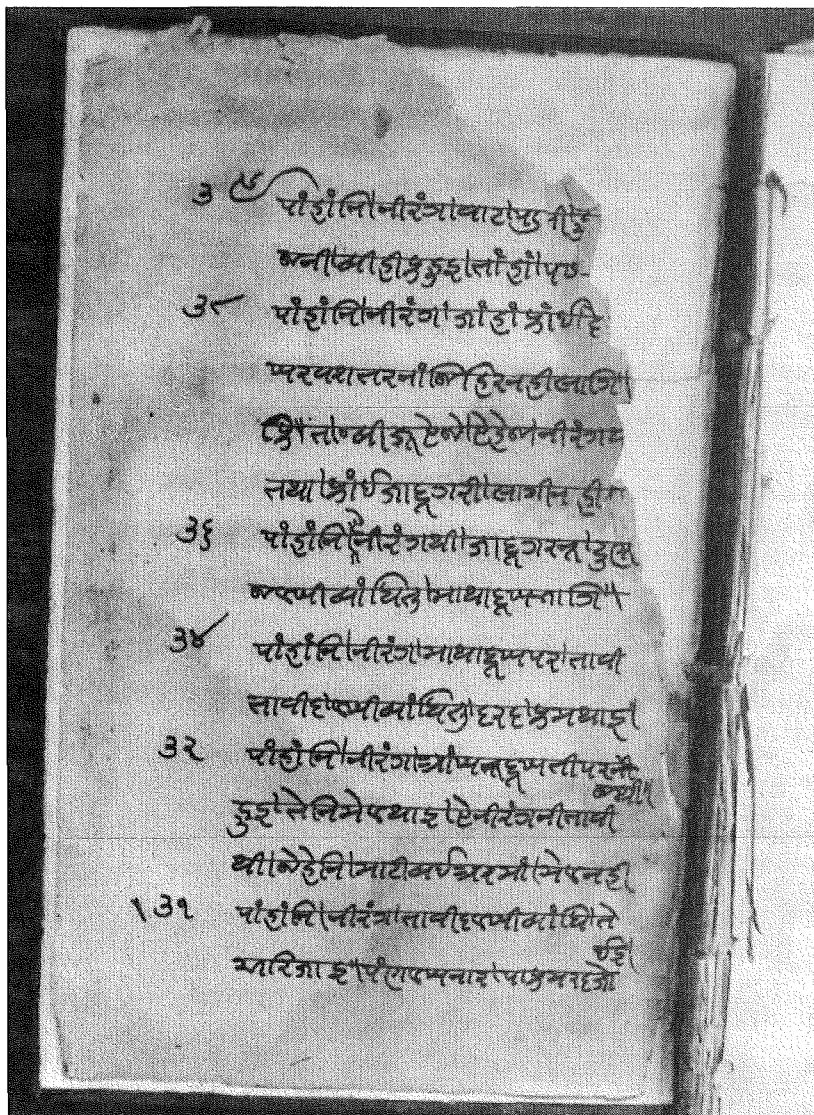
The manuscript of Nirangs inherited by Dasturji Kotwal from his forefathers, was written in Samvat 1783, i.e. 178 years ago ('Samvat' is the Hindu 'year,' based on the reign of Rajah Vikram. The current Samvat date is 2061) by "Ervad Hormaz Ervad Darab Ervad Hamjiar Ervad Kamdin Ervad Kuka Ervad Hamjiar Sanjana." It was written by Sanjana priests attached to the Iranshah Atash Behram, in Navsari, where the Iranshah was still burning splendidly at the time.

The nirangs may be pressed into service either by priests or lay persons. There is no other extra ceremony or ritual connected with the recitation of the nirangs. For

physical healing people go to physicians for medicine, but for spiritual healing they resort to nirangs which are generally dependent on the Ardibehesht Ameshaspand, and hence his dedication in most cases.

The beauty of nirangs lies in speedy removal of malady of the body and mind without pain or harm by means of the incantation of the holy spell (nirang).

There is almost a general pattern to the recitation of a nirang: recitation of the dedicatory formula, followed by the nirang proper, and finally the 'leaving of the Baj' with the unit of fourfold prayers, viz. *ahmai raeshcha, haz-anghrem, Jasa Me Avanghe Mazda and Kerfe Mozd.*



Second folio of the nirang manuscript, giving the table of contents in Old Gujarati script. Except for the first folio, which is missing, the entire manuscript is intact.

The nirangs are written in Avestan script, and ritual prescriptions in Old Gujarati or (Devnagri) script, which is to be read from below upwards, by holding the manuscript upside down. Hence the first entry here is for Folio Nos. 31 (at the bottom). Folios 31 to 39 are described below:

No. 31: A nirang (incantation) to be written and tied on the hands of both husband and wife to bring peace and amity between them.

No. 32: A nirang to be written and tied on the hand as a cure for eyeache.

No. 34: A nirang to be written and tied on the hand as a cure for headache.

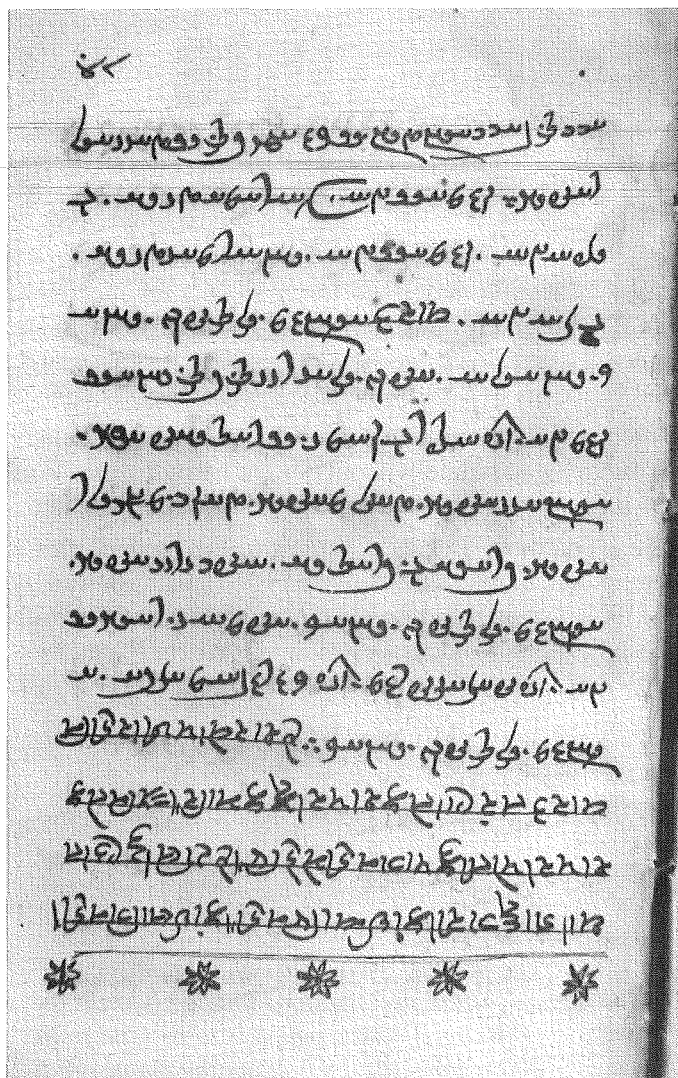
No. 36: A nirang as a shield against sorcery and the poison of noxious creatures.

No. 38: A nirang to be recited when there is fear of evil spirit or a vicious person.

No. 39: A nirang to be recited when there is fear of thieves and bandits.

COLLECTION OF MANUSCRIPTS: DASTUR FIROZE M. KOTWAL. PHOTOGRAPHS BY CYRUS RIVETNA.





Folio 48. A nirang in Avestan script and ritual prescriptions in Old Gujarati, written upside down, below. This nirang is for warding off any calamity, affliction or evil. It is dedicated to Thraetaona (Fredun) who is considered the first spiritual healer of the world. After the dedication, the Pazand nirang is recited, followed by the Avestan formula which strengthens the whole act (which is termed the "leaving of the Baj").

Nirangs may be recited in any clean place during any of the five watches of the day.

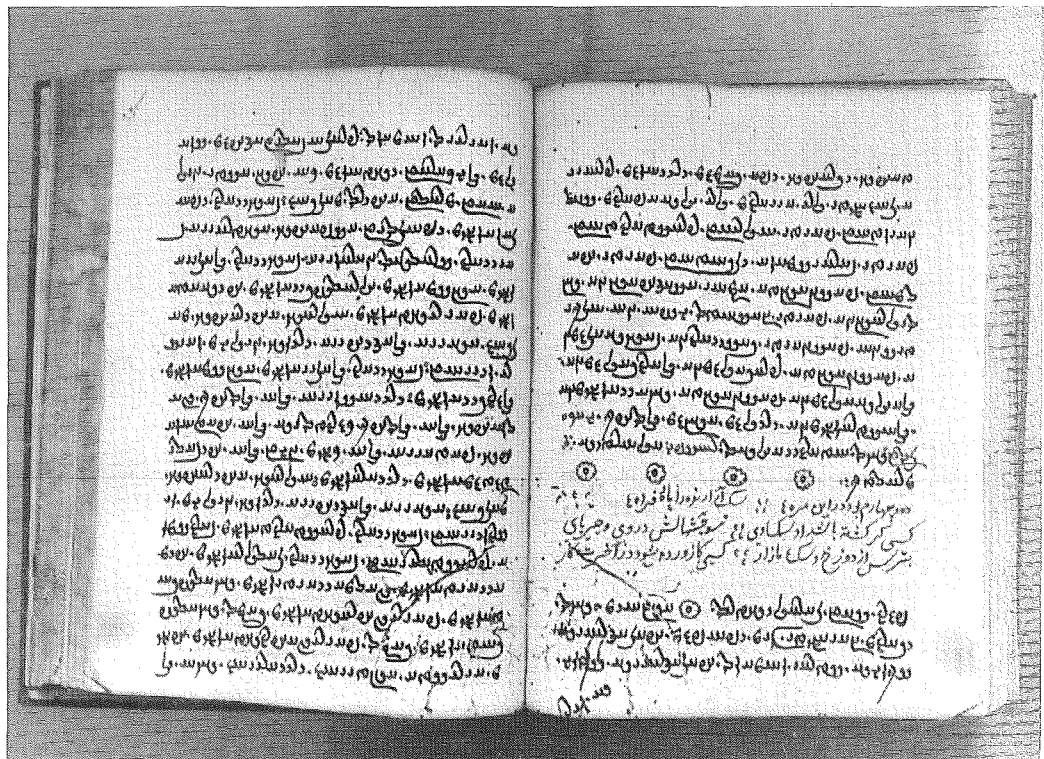
### The Vendidad Sade manuscript

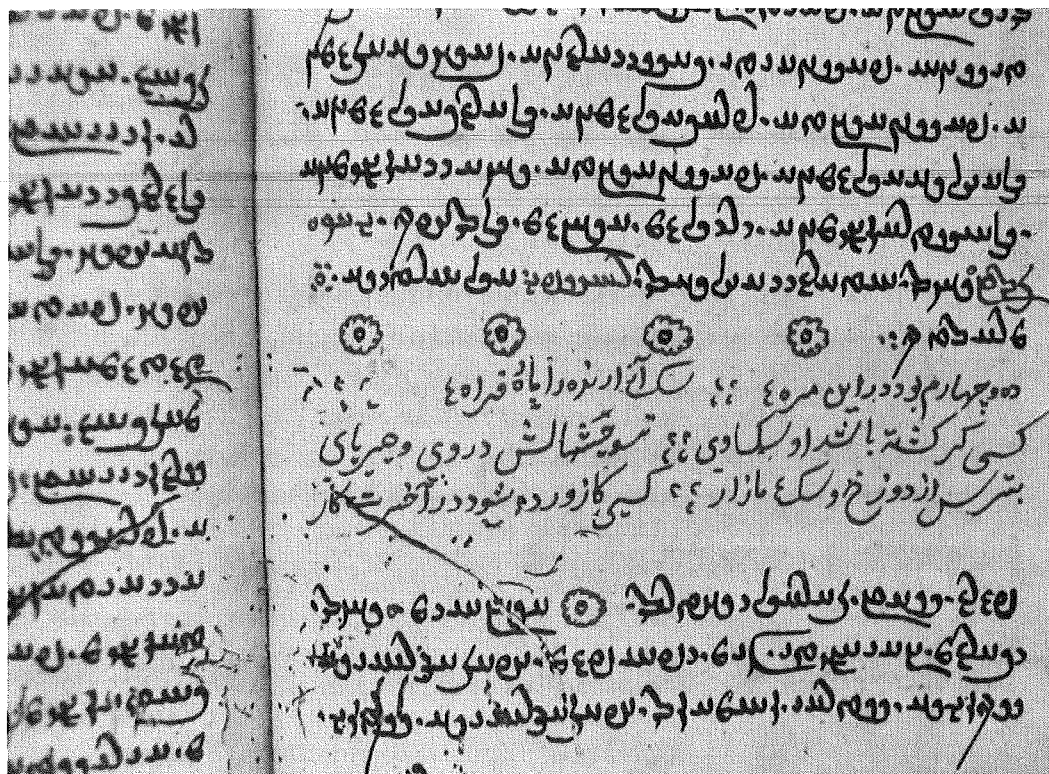
The Vendidad Sade manuscript [shown below, on facing page and on the cover] has come down as a hereditary possession. It was written by Sanjana priests attached to the Iranshah Atash Behram, within the jurisdiction of Sanjana priests, most probably in Valsad or Daman or Udvada. In earlier days, before the invention of printing this hand-scribed manuscript was used during performance of the Vendidad ceremony.

The ceremony is performed for the living or the departed soul on any day of the year except Aneran roz (because the night service will be Hormazd roz of a different month) and Avan roz of Avan mah (because it is forbidden to pour much water at midnight out of respect for the divine being Avan, who is linked to Water.)

Performance of the Vendidad is for the most part commissioned by the family. It is performed on death

Vendidad Sade manuscript of 248 folios. The colophon in Avestan on the last page states that the manuscript was written in 1172 Yz (i.e. 1803 CE, or 202 years ago) by "Mobed Rustam Dastur Khurshed Dastur Mehernosh Dastur Behram Dastur Khurshed, surnamed Sanjana, the servitor (parastar) of the Atash Behram." The manuscript was written at the behest of Behdin Meherwanji Behdin Rustamji for the use of his herbad, i.e. the son of a priest whom he had made navar.





Manuscript of the *Vendidad Sade*, in Avestan, with ritual directions in Gujarati and also embedded in red characters within the text. The manuscript starts with a few Persian couplets eulogising Ahura Mazda, the Mazdayasni religion and sacred fires. The red rosettes indicate the end of a chapter or passage.

Unlike English, Avestan is to be read from right to left, and from the back of the book to the front, i.e. the first page of the manuscript is in the back.

anniversaries, and even on auspicious occasions like a wedding. The priests perform the ceremonies in Dar-i Mihrs. The Dar-i Mihr at Albless Baug is indicative of the ceremony performed some hundred years ago when the midnight Ashirwad wedding ceremony was in vogue. When Avestan Vendidad is accompanied by its Pahlavi translation, the manuscript is called *Vendidad Ba Zand*, i.e. the Vendidad with Pahlavi exposition. When the manuscript contains only the Avestan text with the ritual direction, it is called the *Vendidad Sade*.

A Vendidad ceremony involving only recitation and not rituals is also done by one priest in a house or on a verandah of the house inhabited by Parsi/Irani Zarathushtis all around in the street. The ceremony is done at midnight and finished in the same Ushahin gah. The purpose is to

drive away evil, and purify the house and its surroundings. In this ceremony, only the twenty-two chapters of the Vendidad and the accompanying texts of the Yasna and Visperad interspersed therein are recited. The vast beginning and ending portions before and after the twenty-two chapters are omitted.

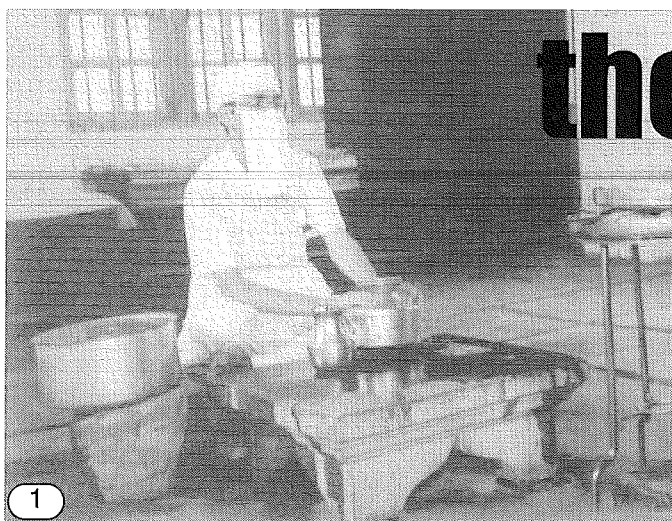
This Vendidad ceremony without rituals is termed in priestly parlance as *apaw Vendidad* 'unconsecrated Vendidad' as opposed to *paw Vendidad*, the 'consecrated Vendidad' which involves rituals. The Vendidad performed at the ZTFE setayesh gah [page 50] belongs to this unconsecrated category.

[By Roshan Rivetna, based on email communication with Dasturji Kotwal]



**Dastur Dr. Firoze M. Kotwal**, High Priest, Mumbai, was trained as priest in the M. F. Cama Athornan institute in Bombay and was principal of the same institute from 1970 to 1977. He was appointed High Priest of the H. B. Wadia Atash Bahram, Bombay from 1977 to 1998. A noted lecturer and speaker, Dr. Kotwal is author of a number of books and articles. His major books include: "Shayest Ne-Shayest;" "A Guide to the Zoroastrian Religion," co-authored with Prof. James Boyd; "The Yasna, a Zoroastrian High Liturgy," co-authored with Prof. James Boyd; "The Herbedestan and Nerangestan, vols. I and II," co-authored with Prof. Philip G. Kreyenbroek. Volume III of the Herbedestan and Nerangestan, co-authored with Prof. Philip G. Kreyenbroek, was published in April 2004 in Paris. The "Khordeh Avesta manuscript E1," a facsimile edition, co-authored with Dr. Almut Hintze, is forthcoming.





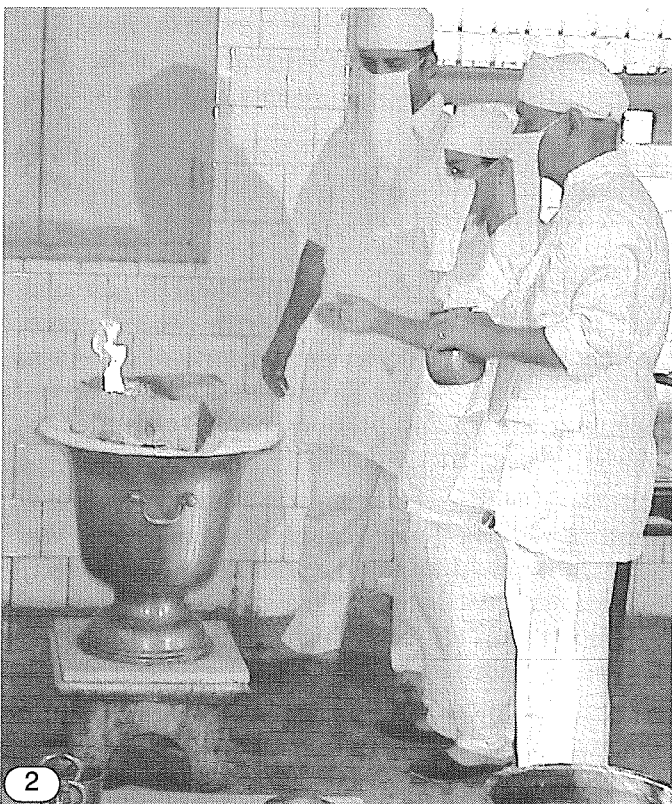
1

# the yasna ritual

## a photo journal

This series of photos shows a young navar initiate, Er. Rehan Darbari, led by the chief priest (zaotar or zot), Er. Palanji Dastoor, and assisted by the *raspi* Er. Cyrus Darbari, in performing a *Mino Navar Yasna* ceremony, at the Jeejeebhoy Dadabhoy Agiary in Colaba, Mumbai.

We are deeply grateful to Er. Soli Dastur for sharing these rare photos of a Yasna ceremony with *Fezana Journal*. Text is compiled by Roshan Rivetna from photo captions by Er. Soli Dastur, and ritual descriptions excerpted from Kotwal and Boyd's "A Persian Offering, the Yasna, a Zoroastrian High Liturgy."



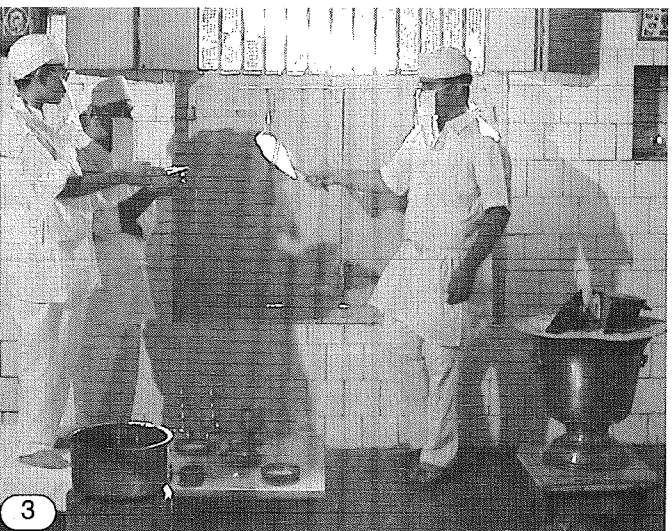
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The Yasna ceremony is not only richly conceived theologically and liturgically, it is also a ritual drama of spiritual insight for the devout celebrant.

**Paragna.** The prefatory *Paragna ceremony* [photo 1] is performed to cleanse and consecrate (with appropriate Avestan recitations and actions) the ritual area (*urvish gah*), the ritual instruments (*alat*) and all the requisites for the Yasna proper to follow. The priest (a) cleanses and consecrates the area and the alat with water drawn from the well in the fire temple, (b) gathers and consecrates fresh milk (*jiwam*) from the fire temple goat or cow, (c) Cuts and consecrates a date-palm leaf and pomegranate twig from the fire temple garden, (d) prepares and consecrates the 'libation,' (e) performs the rite of 'tying the barsom,' (f) consecrates hom twigs, and culminates in the (g) preparation of the *parahom* mixture by pounding the hom and pomegranate twigs, with appropriate recitations and ritual actions. The priest serves as *raspi* for the Yasna to follow.

Except for this Mino Navar Yasna, which is celebrated by the initiate and two priests, all other Yasna ceremonies are celebrated by only two priests, the zot or zaotar (chief priest) and the *raspi* (assistant priest).

**Preliminaries to the Yasna.** After cleansing the fire-stand with consecrated water, the zot offers sandalwood and frankincense, while reciting a dedication to the fire [photo 2]. The initiate then stands on the stone seat, hands clasped in prayer, with the zot [photo 3] while the *raspi* tends to the fire. They recite the Profession of Faith, *frastuyé*, praising the practice of good thoughts, words and deeds and denouncing bad thoughts, words and deeds. Then holding the barsom tied with the date



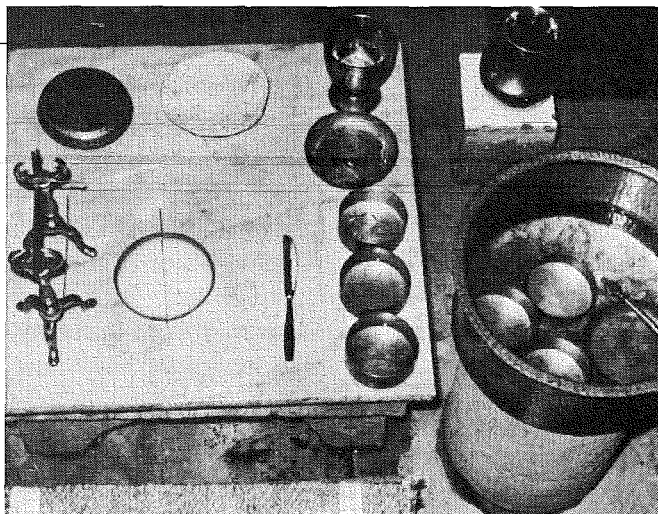
3



## Ritual implements – the alat.

'Alat' collectively refers to all the ritual implements used in high liturgies. These include: (a) Stone seats (*hindora*) and tables (*khwan*), (b) Metallic (generally silver or brass) items, (c) Organic materials and (d) the **Zot** or **Zaotar**, as a representative of Ahura Mazda.

The photo shows the ritual table set with alat at the conclusion of the prefatory paragna ceremony, in preparation for the commencement of the Yasna proper. Starting with the *knife*, going anti-clockwise are: a cup (*fuliyan*) containing hom mixture (*parahom*), cup containing libation water (*zohr*), cup containing bull's hair (*waras*) tied to a ring, saucer containing hom and pomegranate (*urwaram*) twigs, mortar (*hawan*), saucer containing sacred bread (*dron*) with *ghee* on it,



inverted saucer covering a cup with reserve parahom mixture, a cup for parahom mixture (not present at the start of the Yasna), two crescent-shaped stands (*mahruiy*) a bundle of metal wires (*barsom taes*), one metal wire across the base of the *mahruiy*, and a saucer of goat's milk (*jiwam*), with one metal wire across it.

In the water vessel (*kundi*) at right, immersed in water, are [clockwise from right] a nine-holed saucer (*surakhdar tashta*) with a pestle (*abar-hawan/labo*) laying across it, and three extra cups. On the stand at top right is a water-vase (*karasyo*).

[Photo: Kotwal, Dastur Firoze M. and Boyd, James W. "A Persian Offering. The Yasna: A Zoroastrian High Liturgy." Association pour L'Avancement des Études Iraniennes, Paris 1991.]

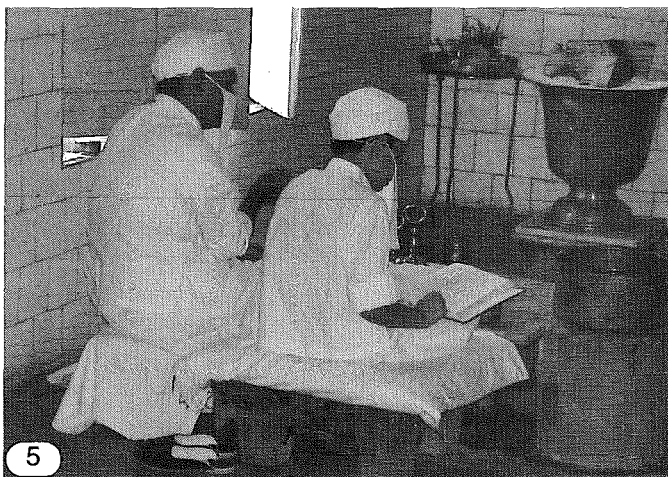
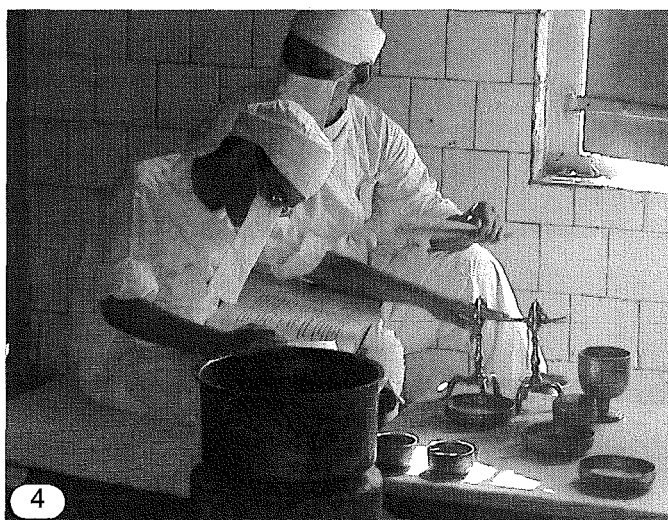
palm cord in his hand, they recite another article of faith, the *fravarane*, affirming faith in one God, Ahura Mazda. The priests declare their firm desire to please Ahura Mazda with truthful actions which repudiate Ahriman.

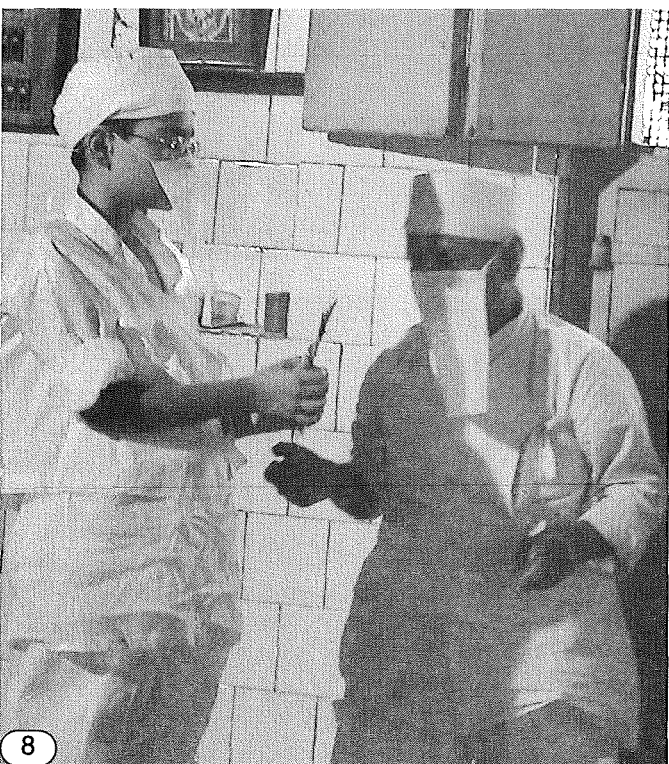
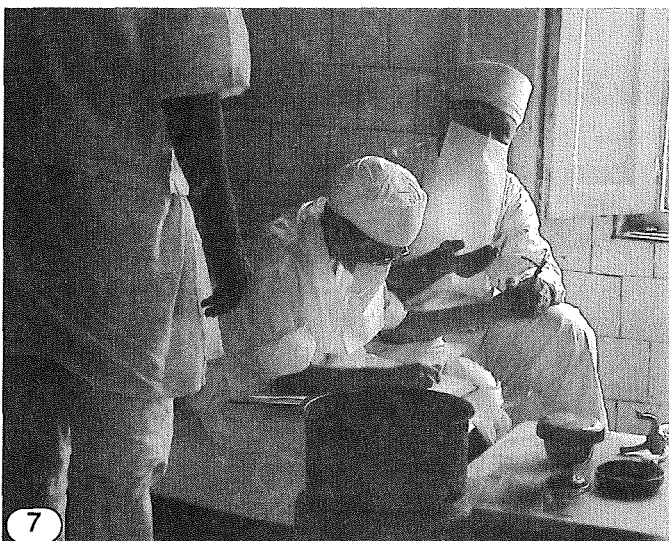
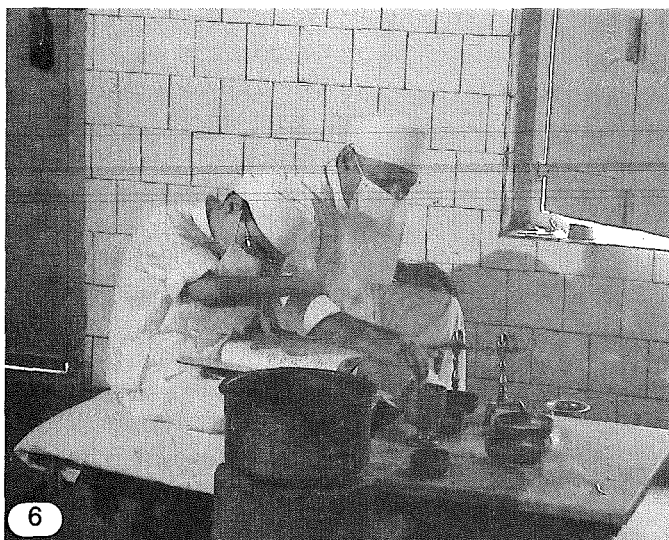
**The opening chapters** of the Yasna invite Ahura Mazda, Bounteous Immortals (Amesha Spentas) and other holy spiritual beings, to the liturgy. The beginning of each chapter is marked by the ritual act of moistening the date palm cord around the barsom sticks with water scooped from the water vessel.

The initiate sits down on the stone seat accompanied by the *zot* [photo 4], makes connection with the barsom with his two fingers and starts recital of the 72 chapters of the Yasna from the Avesta book. In earlier days, this used to be recited from memory. Yasna 2 is the Litany to barsom. Barsom is central to the Yasna, for with it the chief priest establishes a connecting link (*payvand*) between this material (*getig*) world and the spiritual (*menog*) realm.

Yasna 3 begins the sacred bread ceremony in honor of Srosh. In Yasna 4, the *zot* rededicates all the ritual items, and extols the religious virtues of righteousness, truth, prayer, recitation of the Gathas and the manthras. He recites a dedication to Srosh, to the guardian spirit of Zarathushtra and to fire. In Yasna 5, the *zot* recites the grace before meals, *Jamvani baj* [page 44] in praise of all of God's good creations. In Yasna 7, the priests ardently desire that the offerings may reach Ahura Mazda.

The next major ritual acts are tasting the sacred *dron* bread in Yasna 8 [photo 5] and drinking the consecrated





*parahom* while reciting the litany to Hom in Yasna 9-11, invoking the invigorating power of hom and the protective presence of Srosh. All this time the zot continues to maintain connection with the barsom.

In reciting the profession of faith [Ys. 12-13], the priests commit their lives to Ahura Mazda and to battle against the forces of evil. Yasna 14 -18 is the offering of the libation (*zohr*) of consecrated water (health) and milk (the Good Mind). It conveys these sustaining powers to the date-palm cord that girds the barsom, just as the sacred kushti around the waist protects the Zarathushti and forms a shield against evil.

Yasna 19-21 praises the three holy manthras – the protective power of the *Ahunavar* (“one who learns it with industry, saves himself from death”), *Ashem vohu* (“righteousness is the highest good”) and *Yenghe Hatam* (“recognizing the Law of Ahura Mazda”) – thus affirming in deliberate sequence the power of both the ritual deed and the spoken word.

**Pounding of the Hom.** In Yasna 22 - 27, the zot begins pounding of the hom twigs in the mortar with the pestle [photo 6] with milk, to prepare the sacred hom mixture. While reciting the *Ahunavar*, he joins the cosmic battle, smiting Angra Mainyu with each blow of the pestle. The initiate maintains connection with the chief priest by holding on to his arm; and with the barsom, with his left hand. The mixture is strained through the nine-holed sieve into the hom cup.

**Recitation of Gathas and other prayers.** The priests recite the *Ahunavaiti Gatha* [Ys. 28-34] seeking divine assistance through the Good Mind and Righteousness, and the *Haptanghaiti*, Hymn of Seven Chapters [Ys. 35 - 41] urging all who know good to declare, practice and teach it to others. The *Ushtavaiti Gatha* [Ys. 43 - 46] proclaims that happiness comes to him who makes others happy. In *Spenta Mainyu Gatha* [Ys. 47 - 50], the priests declare that Ahura Mazda grants prosperity and immortality to the pious through the Bountiful Spirit and the Good Mind; and in *Vohu Khshathra Gatha* [Ys. 51] they appeal that the right governing power be brought about and sustained in the world. *Vahishtoishiti Gatha* [Ys. 53] is a wedding sermon, invoking blessings of joy and happiness on the whole good creation.

Following a recitation of the fourth manthra, *Airyama-ishyo* [Ys. 54.1] extolling the greatest gifts of Ahura Mazda – righteousness and truth, the priests recite the shorter [Ys. 56] and larger [Ys. 57] *Srosh Yashts*. Srosh “strikes the Lie, and is the promoter of Truth and the guardian of the earth.”

Yasna 58 and 59 include the *Fshusho Manthra*, the prayer to be uttered before the Last Judgment. The prayer declares that a righteous man, through piety, industry, charity, wisdom, humility and through the fire of Ahura Mazda, protects the prosperity of the world.



## *In this house, may ...*

Obedience vanquish disobedience  
Peace triumph over discord  
Charity triumph over miserliness  
Humility triumph over arrogance  
Truthful speech over falsehood  
and Moral Order over chaos.

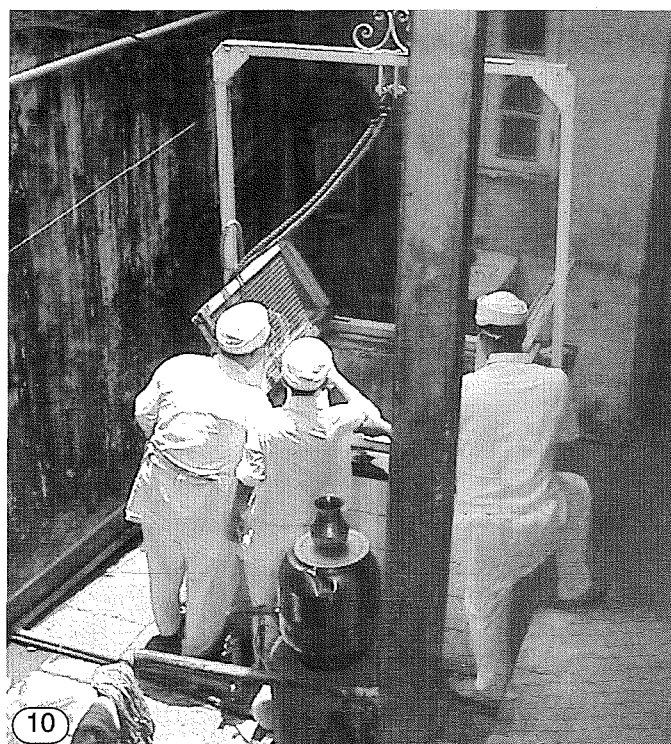
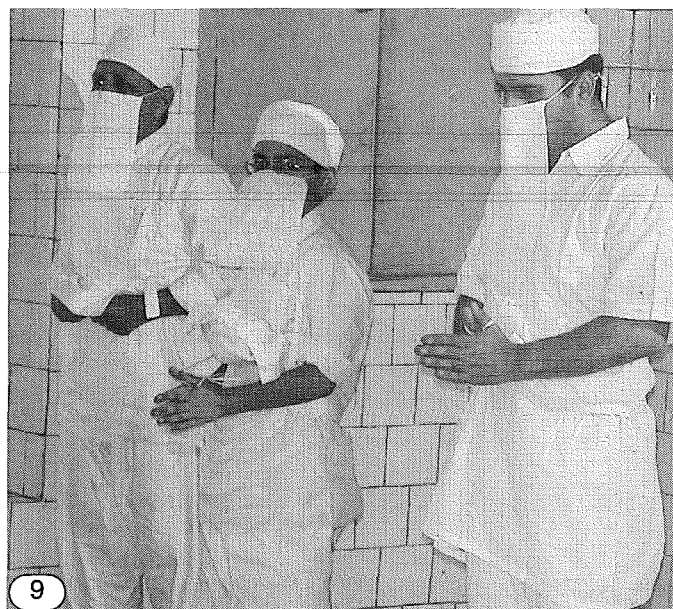
*[Ys. 60.2-7, also known as Afringan of Dahman  
(Tao ahmi namané) or the Avestan Tandarostil]*

**Concluding chapters.** Yasna 60 [see the quote above] is a prayer of benediction. The powerful and pervading presence of the manthras is acknowledged [Ys. 61]. The hom mixture is now stored away in the mortar covered with a saucer with proper ritual actions [photo 7]. The two barsom-holders are turned over, and the initiate is holding the barsom in his hand while reciting the final chapters.

Standing on the stone seat, holding the barsom bundle, the initiate [photo 8] and priests now recite the litany to fire [Ys. 62], followed by a litany to the waters [Ys. 62.11 - Ys. 70], the primordial source of health. The earnest desire is expressed that the waters accept the consecrated libation about to be offered. This is followed by a litany to the whole creation. Ys. 67 extols the guardian spirits, the *fravashis*, who maintain the creations of Ahura Mazda.

The Yasna recital concludes with an exchange of the ritual hamazor handshake, "*Hamazor, hama asho bed*" ("May you be united in strength with all righteous ones."). The priests offer the kushti prayers, while facing the afarganyu [photo 9], and then proceed along the pathway, demarcated by a pavi, to the temple well.

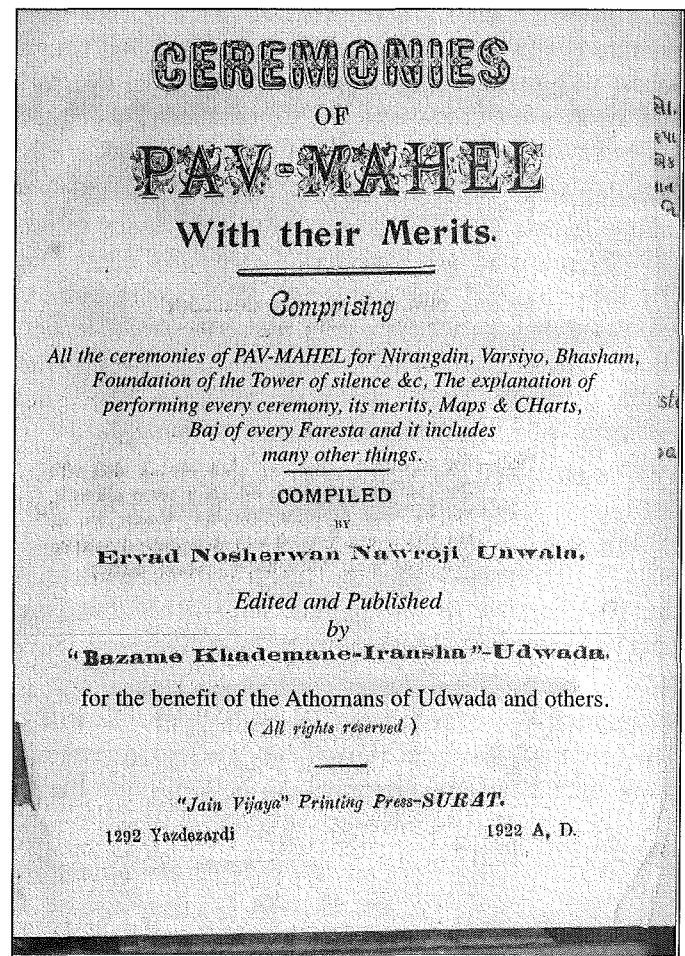
Here in the final and climactic act of this high liturgy, is the pouring of the libation into the well-water [photo 10]. The blessings, it is hoped reach the entire good creation, promoting life and giving strength to the whole universe. ■



*Born the last of 11 children in the small village of Tarapur, India, to a priestly family from Udvada, **Er. Dr. Soli P. Dastur** was schooled at the M. F. Cama Athornan Institute boarding school. He was initiated as navar and martab in the Iranshah Atash Behram in Udvada, and also passed the Samel examination. Soli, a Ph.D. in Chemical Engineering, with 30 years at Procter & Gamble, is now retired, and lives with his wife Jo Ann of 39 years, in Florida. He performs religious ceremonies when requested, all over Florida and the USA, and spends time placing valuable Zarathushti materials on the internet. He recollects:*

"In the 1950s, in Udvada, all 7-9 yazeshne/baj areas were occupied daily and one had to wait in line to get a place ('hindhoro') to perform a yazeshne or baj. Last year, when I was there during Adar mah, maybe one of those places was used for a baj ceremony. No yazeshne ceremony was performed except for the navar initiation of my brother's grandson [described here]. Almost all the agiaries in India are facing the same situation. In my village of Tarapur, there was a yazeshne performed almost every day by my two uncles. Now, no one uses this area. These once important inner liturgies are becoming extinct in many places. They are no longer performed regularly everywhere in India, and of course, outside of India, they may never be performed in their original format." ■





Top, young navar initiate, Er. Rehan Darbari, invested in priestly robes, and carrying the 'gurz' (mace) to fight against evil, arriving in procession, for the Yasna ceremony [see preceding pages] with his family and Udvada's Dastoor Dr. Peshotan Mirza [to Rehan's left]. After the ceremony, Rehan [above] led by the chief priest, offers sandalwood to the Atash Dadgah in the inner sanctum of the Colaba agiary. The assistant priest offers ashes (rakhya) from the sacred afarganyu to Rehan, who will take a pinch and apply it to his forehead as a blessing. Family and friends are then treated to a sumptuous Parsi lunch, served on banana leaves [top right], as the initiate goes back for three more days of prayer and rituals before he is initiated as a Navar.

Above, right, Pav Mahal ceremonies book, written in Gujarati, for the Udvada mobeds by Ervad Noshervan Nawroji Unwala in 1922. This has served as the 'bible' for all Udvada mobeds for years, including Er. Soli Dastur's father and brothers.

[PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY ER. SOLI DASTUR].

The great offering of the Yasna has a long history from the days when the Prophet brought forth the Ahurian religion at the grey dawn of civilization.

The Yasna like other Zarathushti rituals, served to preserve all our extant scriptures, including the Gathas, which are in themselves, ritual texts.

# the great yasna offering

by Pallan R. Ichaporia

**T**he Yasna is a cyclical ritual having cosmic proportions. Like all other Zarathushti ritual areas, the Yasnic area represent the cosmos and its layers, and the passage of the ritual from its beginning to its end, stands for cosmic cycles and epicycles.

Moreover, this ritual which has passed through ages when the cosmos of the fixed stars was numbered, (namely 21 northern, 12 zodiacal constellations) shows traces of this interpretative overlay. Compare also the 21 words of the Ahunaver manthra, 21 nasks of the Sasanian canon, and 21 barsom twigs in the Yasna liturgy. The number 12 is that of the months of the Zarathushti calendar.

## Cosmic significance

It has been recognized that the grand architecture of the Yasna ritual encodes cosmic patterns. The ritual area [see diagram on pages 72 and 75] and all in it, represents the cosmos. The material creations are the phenomenal representatives of the divine Ahura Mazda and the six Ameshas Spentas [Humbach and Ichaporia, Dr. Firoze Kotwal's *Festschrift*, forthcoming]. Individually Vohu Manah, the guardian of beneficent animals is represented in the animal products, such as milk and Amere-tat, the guardian of plants, is represented by various plant materials like pomegranate twigs and the date-palm leaf. Of special interest is the role of *Fire*, which represents the sun. The moon is represented in the crescent-shaped stands (*mahrui*) for the barsom.

Duchesne-Guillemin has aptly pointed out [Duchesne-Guillemin, 1966, p. 85-87]:

"The figuration of the sun, moon and earth are easily recognizable. Fire is a substitute of the sun, that is probably why it is placed on a circular vase. The moon is present in the form of two metal crescents on which the barsom is repeatedly placed – a fecundity rite. As for the earth it is the table, necessarily square, in front of which the chief

priest sits. This cosmic symbolism is also attested in some details: the *darun* (consecrated bread) according to the Pahlavi Rivayet 56.1, is arranged like the world; it is round like the world. The position of the two priests is significant. This completes the cosmic definition of the ceremony in which all the elements take part; fire, water, vegetable ... and animal nature, and in which the sun, moon and earth are symbolically present. The entire universe, as one may infer, is brought into play to avert the demons and death."

## Verbal architecture of the Yasna

One must note that the verbal architecture of the Yasna is highly complex, clearly seen in the ancient texts of the combined Gathic and Haptanghaiti sections, which reveal the intricate pervasive symmetrical hierarchy that unites the central texts, and the liturgical text as a whole.

There are certain indicative passages in the Gathas, which are replete with ritual terminology and noted for their multiple ordered cross-referentiality and characterized as sustained *double entendre*, sacred puns.

**Urwaes, urwish.** A case in point is the Gathic term '*urwaes*.' When seen in the context of the ritual, its *double entendre* becomes evident. The term occurs exactly three times in the Gathas, twice at the beginning of Ushtavaiti Gatha [Ys. 43.4 and 6] immediately following the interstitial seven chapters of the Haptanghaiti and once in the Vohukhshathra Gatha [Ys. 51.6]

More telling in the present context appears to be Yasna 43.6 [Humbach and Ichaporia, 1994]:

At the turning point (*urwaes*) to which you come with your holy spirit, being Mazda through (your) power (*khshathra*), there through good thought (*vohu manah*) by the actions of which the possessions (*gaetha*) are furthered through truth (*asha*), right-mindedness (*armaiti*) pronounces judgments on

these here, (the judgments) of your intellect,  
which nobody can deceive.

It is recognized [Darmesteter] that the term *urwaes* implies the metaphor of a hippodrome and specifically it refers to the far-end of a circular race course. This is also recently pointed out by Almut Hintze [Hintze, p. 235].

It appears that the term *urwaes* in the above passage, while being recited by the priest, refers not only to the cosmic racecourse, but also to the ritual table at which he stands and which is still known as 'urwes/urwis.'

**Attack of evil.** Cosmic history is more evident in the grand cosmogonic section of Yasna 44 [1-7]. But more relevant for the present discussion is a prominent passage that appears in Yasna 30.5, the Ahunavaiti Gatha [Humbach and Ichaporia, 1994, p. 30-31]:

*ayao mainiyao varata ye dreguao achishta verezyo  
ashem mainyush spenishto ye khraozdishteng aseno vaste  
yaecha khshnaoshen ahurem haithyaish shyaothanaish  
fraoret mazdam*

Of the two spirits the deceitful one chooses to do the worst things, but the most holy spirit, clothed in the hardest stones, (chooses) truth, (as do those) who, with true actions, devotedly gratify Mazda Ahura.

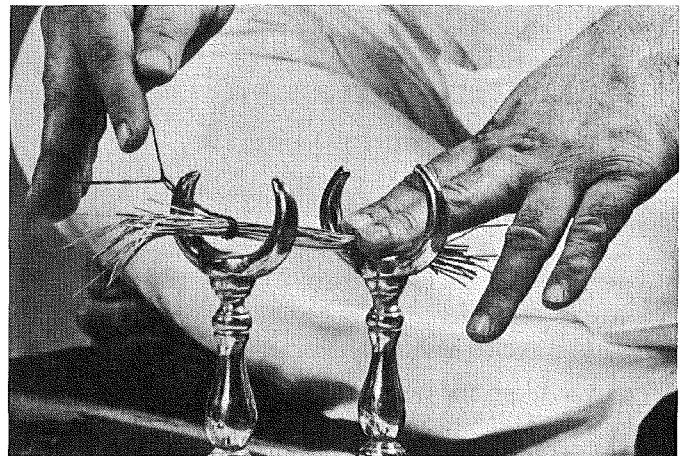
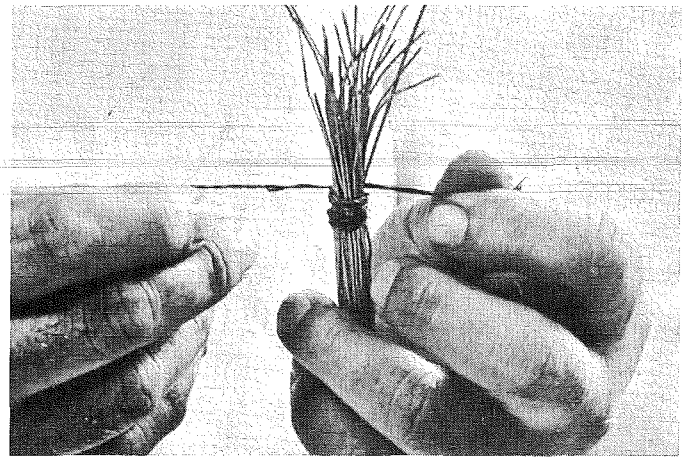
This is the passage that alludes to a crucial event in the elaborated eschatological history, specifically the reinforcement of the sky after the attack of the forces of Evil in the middle of time in the year 6,000 as recounted in the Bundahishn [Anklesaria, 1956].

It implies not only the protective, but also the soteriological function of the sky, its luminaries and constellations and their orderly revolutions, while retaining the notion of the protective Sky and the 'stony' nature of the luminaries and constellations. It is also a reminder that the knowledge of the physical sky and its hard 'stony protective clothing' plays an essential role in the perception of cosmic order.

“ The grand architecture of the  
Yasna ritual encodes cosmic patterns.  
The ritual area represents the cosmos,  
and the passage of the ritual  
stands for cosmic cycles. ”

**Central role of Fire.** The 72 chapters of the Yasna are organized in an orderly fashion so much so that Yasna 36 is addressed to 'Atar' Fire which came to stand in the very center of the liturgy, reflecting the central role that Fire, the Son of Ahura Mazda, plays in all Zarathushti rituals as well as in the life of every Zarathushti.

Some interesting deliberation of the ritual instruments, spiritual ties across the calendar and the ritual table, mil-



From top, The chief priest tying the barsom with a date-palm cord (aiwayahan) representing the spiritual kushti.

The priest ties the second reef knot while reciting Ys. 13.7 and makes spiritual connection with the bundle of barsom, resting on the crescent-shaped stand. PHOTOS: KOTWAL AND BOYD, A PERSIAN OFFERING, THE YASNA: A ZOROASTRIAN HIGH LITURGY, 1991.

lennial schemes and several other important aspects are discussed in the articles to follow. ■

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# appreciating the yasna

by Gernot Windfuhr

The Yasna is an inspiring ritual. Performed every morning in its basic form, it represents the priestly pendant of the daily Padyab Kushti ritual of a Zoroastrian. Both are performed for spiritual empowerment, the latter for the individual, and the former for the community. To the observer the Yasna is unusually complex. For a good number of years now, this writer has been studying it, in particular the networks of spatial and temporal patterns that appear to underlie it.

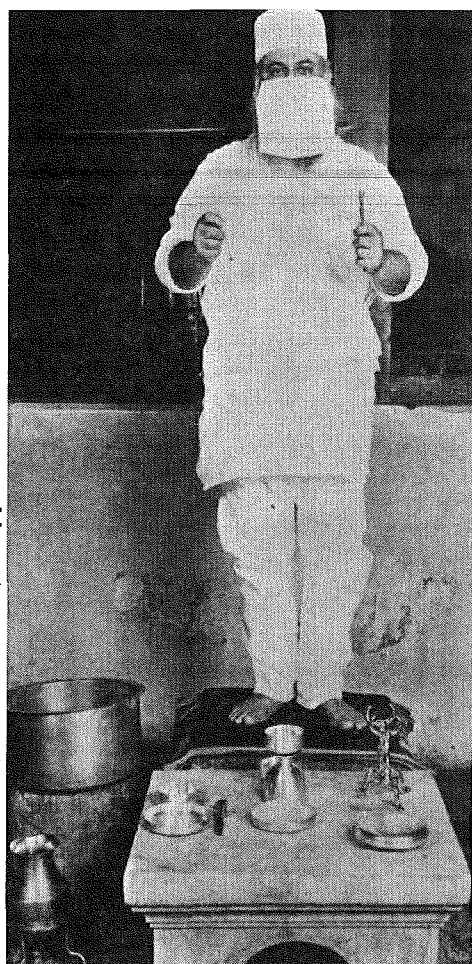


PHOTO: KOTWAL AND BOYD, A PERSIAN OFFERING, 1991 [1]

*Chief priest (zaotar) reciting the litany to fire, in Yasna 62.*

The spatial and temporal patterns found in the Yasna, reveal a succession of historical layers that reflect the theological thoughts of generations of Mazdayasnan scholars and priests through the millennia since the Gathas were first envisioned and recited, most likely about the middle of the second millennium BCE. By faithfully retaining much of the inherited complexity, each enactment of the Yasna is therefore also a social act of communal memory, and of re-establishing the living bond with the generations of ancient forebears. The entitlement to such enactment requires monumental feats of verbal and performative memorization, and ritual purity, with a life-long devotion which many have shown, even under dire circumstances, and continue to do so today.

## Community ritual and its power of bonding

There is no better demonstration of the emotional and spiritual need for community ritual in our world today, and of its power of bonding, than the complex inner and outer ritual complexes that were initiated by the recent death of Pope John Paul II. They extended over many days, and continued with the rituals of electing and enthroning the new pope. The media spent many hours in

letting experts try to explain some of the ancient cosmic symbolism and functions of those enigmatic elaborate rituals which, to many moderns, seem to be quaint at best. Only some recent changes appear to be less imbued with meaning, which only careful and sympathetic study will enable one to appreciate.

Such rituals are rites of passage in the life cycle of a community, asserting the proper initiation of a new cycle. They are necessary complements to the celebration of the regular natural cycles, such as Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost in Christianity, which at the same time are symbolically correlated with the life of Christ. In function, these magnificent Christian rites and rituals are reminiscent of the rituals of the Zoroastrian Church during the Sasanian Empire. Those likewise celebrated splendidly the life cycles of religious and political leaders which, in turn, were embedded in the regular celebration of the natural cycles at the six seasonal gahanbars. Most splendid were the ritual celebrations at the two anchors of the year, Nouruz at the spring equinox and Mehrgan at the fall equinox.

For all of these rituals, the inner center was the Yasna as it had developed then. Not many details are known about

the Sasanian Yasna; but it can be shown that the arrangement of the ritual area and of the ritual instruments as well as the actions of the Yasna as it is performed today faithfully, did not erase the symbolism and world view of the knowledge and science of Sasanian and most likely also of Achaemenid times.

### The Yasna Liturgy

The center of the liturgy is the location of the Gathas. They are inspired visionary, personal poems that narrate dramatic events. They formulate thoughts and calls for action in that highest form of language, poetry, in communication with Mazda Ahura who is attended by the Amesha Spentas, while Zarathushtra himself is accompanied by a small group of friends, in a ritual setting. These Gathas, even though they are not in form of plain didactic maxims or of advice stories as some seem to expect of religious teaching, tell of the past and a disaster of cosmic proportions. It apparently just happened, due to human failure, and should be a warning.

They narrate the dream-vision [Yasna 29] in which the souls of Zarathushtra and the bovine jointly appear before the divine council whose dialog is rendered in vivid direct speech and concludes with the appointment of Zarathushtra as human guardian, upon the counsel of Vohu Manah. The Gathas look at the present and plead for change, warning of a fiery cosmic cataclysm. They spell the revolutionary thought of an End of Time; of the dignity of humanity; their central role in the ultimate defeat of antagonists and evil; of their dutiful care for their fellow man and nature; their need to know the truth of the order of the material, social, and spiritual cosmos, to guide their right choices in thoughts, words, and deeds.

Overall, the 72 chapters of the Yasna liturgy reflect a long process of ritual and symbolic thought by which the Gathas, which themselves enclose the Yasna Haptanghaiti, became embedded in a framework of other liturgical texts. The main ritual action of this frame, overarching the Gathic center, is the preparation of the revitalizing elixir, the *parahom*. The frame action thus provides the symbolic strengthening and healing tonic.

Whoever is now engaging in the research on the symbolism of the Yasna is deeply indebted to the fundamental research by Dastur Dr. Firoze Kotwal and his colleague Prof. James Boyd, not only on the Yasna itself, but also on the preparatory ritual, the Paragna [1].

### The ritual area and implements

At the outset it has to be recognized that the liturgical texts themselves do only partially reflect the ritual action.

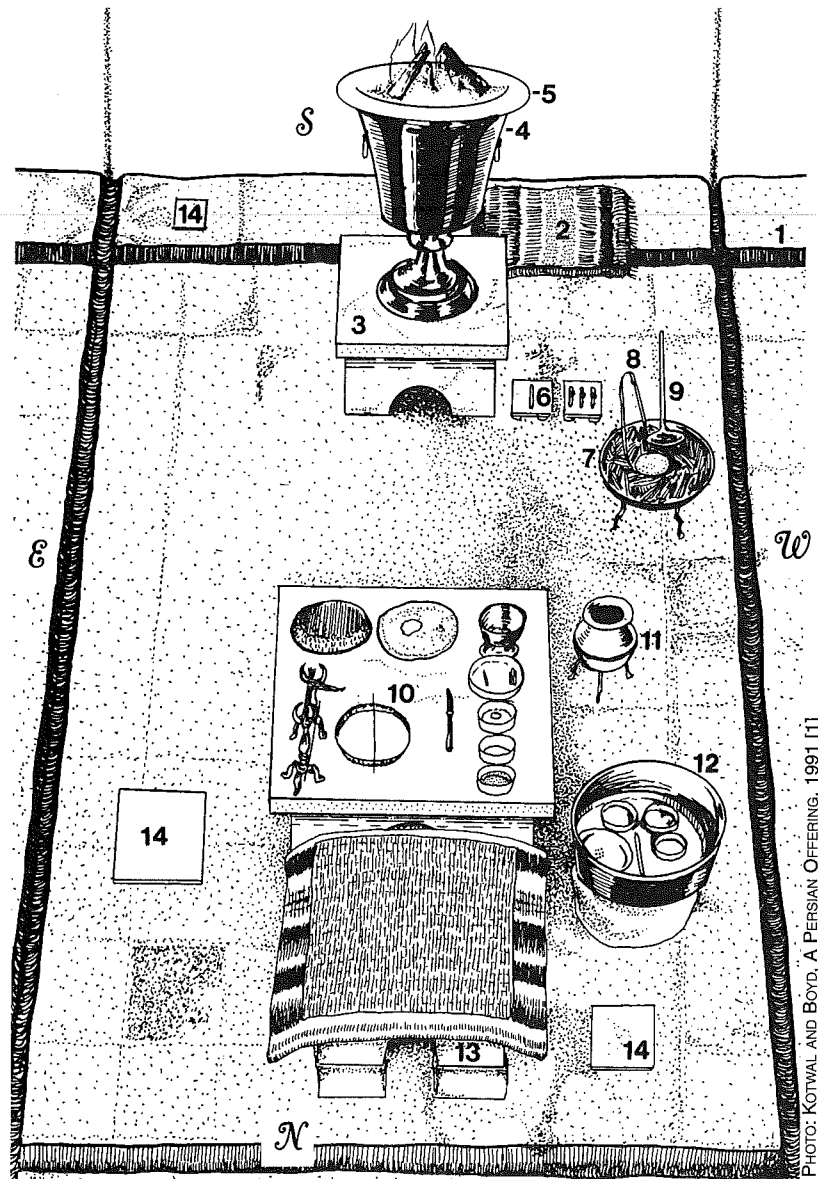


Fig. 1. Representation of the ritual area (urvish-gah): (1) furrows (pavi), (2) carpeted seat for assistant priest, raspi, (3) fire-table (atash-khwan), (4) fire urn (afringanyu), (5) lid of the fire urn (sarposh), (6) two small stone stands on which sandalwood and frankincense are placed (eshm-boy khwan), (7) metal tray (khumchi), (8) tongs (chipyo), (9) ladle (chamach), (10) ritual table (alat khwan), (11) water vase (karasyo), (12) water vessel (kundi), (13) stone seat for chief priest, zaotar (zodgah), (14) stone blocks on which vessels are placed.

Therefore the clues for finding the significance and symbolism in the various aspects of the Yasna must be sought in the visual: the ritual area and the instruments; the arrangement of both; the ritual action and the sequence of dramatic scenes. So, what can be seen?

In its basic form, the Yasna is performed by two priests: the main priest, *zot*, and the assistant priest, *raspi*. Action is accompanied by the recitation of the 72 chapters of the liturgy, mostly recited by the main priest, but often antiphonic with the raspi. This is done every morning and takes about two and a half hours.

The ritual area [Fig. 1] is a rectangle surrounded by protective furrows, with a square table inside. What is unusual, if not perplexing for the outsider, and must have been so in antiquity, is the large number of ritual instruments that the zot manipulates during this period. Equally enigmatic are most, if not all, of the actions performed.

Like the fire temple, the ritual area is oriented towards the south. There are three main platforms along the central north-south axis: (1) the seat of the zot, (2) the ritual table and (3) the stand with the fire urn. There is a water basin to the right of the zot (NW). Along the four sides of the ritual table are ritual instruments [Fig. 1].

### The ritual actions

For the main action, the preparation of a revitalizing drink, twigs of hom (ephedra) are repeatedly pounded together with a pomegranate twig, mixed with water in the preparatory ritual, and with a water-milk mixture in the main ritual. The mixture is then further filtered in an extended process of pouring from the mortar into cups.

Central to the ritual is the *barsom*, a bundle of twigs of the *haoma* or *hom* plant (or wires), around which is wound a band of a date palm leaf. Prior to the pounding, the main priest consecrates the barsom, ties the band around it as a girdle, and places it on the horned tripods. He constantly keeps contact with the barsom, intermittently moistening it. In the later part of the ritual he uses it as an instrument in the mixing and filtering process.

“ It is through the barsom that the zot becomes the receiver and transmitter of blessings and power during the ritual link between the finite world of human endeavor and the universal realm...” ”

Throughout their actions, the two priests maintain eye contact, and at certain points the raspi moves to specific positions around the table; at others he joins the zot, and jointly or separately they face one or more directions of the compass. The instrument that establishes the link, *payvand*, between the consecrated ritual area and the spiritual sphere is the barsom bundle, which is required for all inner rituals. As noted by Dastur Firoze Kotwal and James Boyd [1], it is the ancient Indo-Iranian emblem of seeking the holy which, held upright, in earlier times signified a Mazdayasnian. It is through the barsom that the zot becomes the receiver and transmitter of blessings and power during the ritual link “between the finite world of human endeavor and the universal realm which is temporally and ontologically prior to and the very source of our existence.” Indeed, it has long been recognized that the Yasna involves not only the invocation of the divine for assistance, but also their coming

and being hosted, which again is an ancient function of such rituals.

Altogether, the main phases of actions consist of an initial invocation and consecration of the barsom. Then the raspi serves food and drink to the zot: consecrated round bread, *dron*, and the *parahom* drink. Thus strengthened, the zot hangs the date palm leaf band around the barsom on the horn of the eastern tripod, and begins his own seven-fold pounding and preparation of the main parahom drink mixed with milk. The last phase of pounding is accompanied by the recitation of the seven chapters of the first Gatha. Then the manipulation of instruments stops, and the ritual action consists solely of the recitation of the Yasna Haptanghaiti, and the remaining four Gathas, and some other chapters.

Thereafter, recitation and manipulation resume with Ys. 60 and the removal of the band from the horn of the tripod. The zot, barsom in hand, then walks from his seat along the east side of the ritual table to the NE corner, addresses the fire, and returns. The final phases in the ritual area consist of the complex manipulations mentioned earlier, after which the zot takes the mortar with the revitalizing drink to the well, led by the raspi.

### Cosmic symbolism

The cosmic symbolism of the ritual area and of the instruments has been long recognized. Thus, the sun is represented by the fire, the moon by the two horned tripods, and the earth by the square ritual table, and, according to Pahlavi Rivayat 56.1, the *dron* is round like the world. The elements of nature on earth, and the six Mazdaean Amesha Spentas, the spiritual principles and powers who guard each part of nature, are variously represented as well:

- Asha ‘order, truth’ guards the fire in the fire urn.
- Vohu Manah ‘good thought’ guards the products of the animal kingdom used: the ghee on the *dron*, the milk, and the bull’s hair, all three representing the beneficial cattle symbolically sacrificed.
- Khshathra ‘power’ guards the stone and metal instruments, including: the fire stand, the ritual table and the seat of the zot, the mortar and pestle, the two horned tripods, the ring in the ring cup and the knife.
- Armaiti ‘proper thinking, devotion’ guards the ground of the earth.
- Haurvatat ‘completeness, health’ guards the water.
- Ameretat ‘immortality’ guards the plants of the vegetable kingdom used: the *dron* bread, the hom twigs, the pomegranate twig, the date palm leaf and the barsom.

As put by Jacques Duchesne-Guillemin, “(the) entire universe, as one may infer, is brought into play to avert the demons and death” [*Symbols and Values in Zoroas-*



trianism, *New York, 1966, pp. 85-87*]. Specific symbolic functions are suggested in the following notes.

## Physical and temporal patterns

Cosmic orientation is a major distinctive feature in worship and in houses of worship. Thus, Christian churches tend to be oriented towards the rising sun in the east, and the qibla in mosques is oriented towards the cosmic cube of the Ka'ba. The fire temple is oriented to the south. This reflects the Zoroastrian understanding of what the south signifies: it is the direction of the abode of the divine.

However, the orientation toward the south also links the ritual directly to cyclical time, and thus to the Zoroastrian Great World Year of 12,000 years. South is the direction where the sun is said to have stood in the original unperturbed and unmoving ideal state of creation and ordering, before the attack of the forces of evil in the middle of time. The recognition of this correlation provides two further clues. First, the orientation of the fire temple, and thus of the ritual area, reflects the ideal, original state. Second, the course of the ritual performance is in part a process to re-establish and re-connect with that state of purity and order through ritual healing.

## Dedication of the Yasna and Time

Each individual performance is dedicated through ritual call by name, not only to the tutelary deities of the year and of the six seasonal feasts, but also to the tutelary deities of the specific month, of the specific day of the month, and even of the specific watch of the day.

Such act is not simply one of piety. More important, it implies that the specific ritual performance is exactly aligned and bonded with the present point in the natural and cosmic cycles, just as the individual believer does, implicitly, during the Padyab Kushti. Such alignment is significant because Yasnas may be performed during other watches of the day. In fact, at the most elaborate performance of the ritual at seasonal feasts, at which the liturgical text includes the Videvdad, the ritual begins at midnight. Also at midnight begins the ritual when a novice priest is initiated, which represents a turning point in a person's life cycle (just as the Yasna is performed during the ceremonies accompanying such points as a person's death). At that occasion, the novice is given the mace of Ahura Mithra.

This action provides further clues regarding the ritual area: Mithra is the divine power who guards the natural cycles, and the allotments of time, and violently defends cyclical order against their disruption and transgression of allotted time spans. It is therefore that the ritual area is called Dar-e Mihr, i.e. the Court of Mithra. An unexpected clue concerns the role of the zot: in the cognitive system that is emerging, he is correlated with Mithra as

guardian of the proper and uninterrupted daily performance and cycle of the Yasna, and thus of its ritual power.

## Instruments on the table and the Zarathushti calendars

The symbolic function of the ritual instruments suggested in the following would offer clues as to the era when their specific arrangement was initiated: as a group, they form a circle which represents the Zoroastrian calendar. The latter was introduced by the Achaemenids sometime after 500 BCE.

Each of the ritual instruments has a proper place along the sides of the ritual table, even though some of them are removed or covered during certain phases of the ritual. This has posed problems in the identification of their number. In fact, there are exactly twelve, three to each side. Beginning with the location to the right of the zot and going clockwise, there are [see Fig. 1 and Fig. 2]:

- On the northern side, a cup with water (1), a knife (2), and a bowl with water, to which milk is added during the ritual (3);
- On the eastern side, a pair of horned tripods (4, 5), and a cup (6);
- On the southern side, a cup (7), a bowl with consecrated bread (8), and a mortar with pestle (9);
- On the western side, a bowl with twigs (10), a small vessel or cup with a ring with bull's hair wound around it (formerly a strainer) (11), and cup with water (12).

By their specific features, each of the twelve ritual instruments can be correlated with a specific month of the year. For example, the spring month guarded by the fravashis (Persian: Farvardin) is correlated with the horned tripod in the middle of the eastern side of the table. Across the circular calendar, the month of the fall equinox guarded by Mithra (Persian: Mehr) is correlated with the cup and ring. The ring and the band on the horn of the tripod thus represent the two equinoxes that mark the turning points between the summer and winter halves of the year. The central table, then, is an image of measured and allotted Time, for which Mithra is surveyor and judge.

A calendar is a crucial distinguishing feature in the cycles of worship. The Christian calendar reflects the luni-solar cycles for its religious feasts, including Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost. The Muslim calendar is strictly lunar. The Mazdaean Zoroastrian calendar is strictly solar. It follows the natural seasonal cycle, and begins with the spring equinox. The Zoroastrian months, therefore, naturally correspond to the twelve constellations along the path of the sun as seen from earth, which is better known as the zodiac. Thus, as could be expected for a ritual that is based on the recognition of the centrality of time and

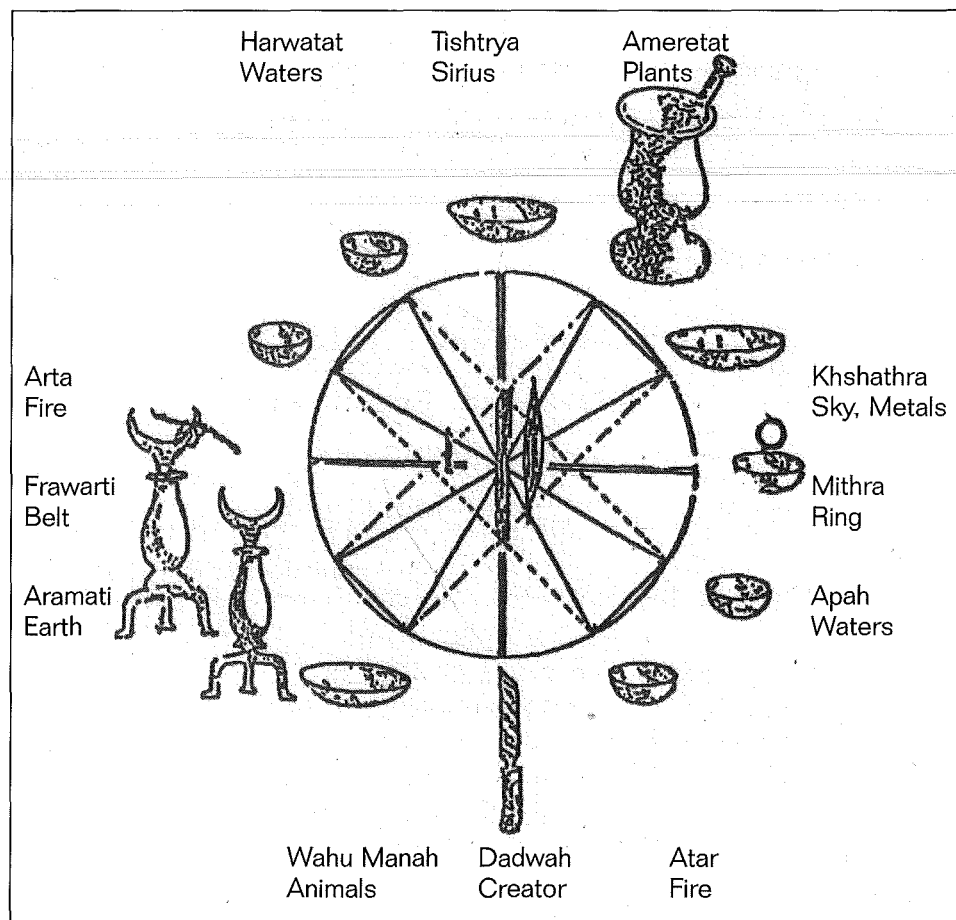


Fig. 2. Idealized arrangement of instruments.

temporal cycles, the Yasna does materially encode the cycle of the year, and of the World Year by implication.

Specifically, the horned tripod can easily be recognized as a representation of the constellation Taurus. The other horned tripod before it then should represent Aries. If there were only one horned tripod, its correlation with Taurus could easily be coincidence; but the pair of horned tripods makes the correlation with the zodiacal constellations more likely.

Now, in traditional astronomy, the constellation that rises at the spring equinox is considered the 'ruler' of its cosmic age as long as it rises at the spring equinox. Therefore, if the calendar of the instruments on the ritual table does indeed indicate Taurus, there should be doctrinal justification. Here it may be permitted to present some speculative correlations with the Gathic text, specifically Yasna 29. As mentioned earlier, it talks about the soul of the bovine and of Zarathushtra in front of the divine council.

“...the instruments on the ritual table would faithfully encode the cosmic point in time of the coming of the religion told in that Gathic chapter. Knowing that Taurus was the astronomical ruler of the spring equinox between roughly 4000 and 1800 BCE, this would imply the doctrinal date for Zarathushtra.”

late, and even tell, the action, the larger number does not do so.

Since the texts intertwine multiple layers of myths and theological re-compositions and allow for more than one line of interpretation, the opposite approach needs to be taken. That is to search for two sets of clues: those that

help to identify major sections in the action, and those that mark major breaks, or transitions, in the action. Dramatically, these criteria would define the acts of a play.

For a long time, a major component of the Yasna had not been taken into account. That is the so-called preparatory ritual of the paragna, which is performed by the later assistant priest alone. Once recognized as an integrated first

half of the ritual, the paragna should enact the time before the attack of the forces of evil, while the Yasna proper should enact the time thereafter, each representing 6,000 years.

This may be simply a mythological tale; but it could also be a clue for locating the Zarathushtra of the Gathas in time: the “soul” of the bovine may be a metaphor for the end of the age of Taurus. In turn, the fact that the soul of Zarathushtra is incarnated as the new pastor may be a metaphor for the beginning of Zarathushtra’s mission, about the beginning of the age of Aries. In that case, the instruments on the ritual table would faithfully encode the cosmic point in time of the coming of the religion told in that Gathic chapter. Knowing that Taurus was the astronomical ruler of the spring equinox between roughly 4000 and 1800 BCE, this would imply the doctrinal date for Zarathushtra.

### The twelve sections of the ritual

The traditional approach to identifying the sections of the Yasna was to look at the liturgical text. To these then were correlated the ritual actions. While it is true that a good number of passages directly corre-

Table I. Correlation between yasna actions, text, instruments and mythical history

	ACTION/TEXT	INSTRUMENT	RELIGION & MYTHICAL HISTORY
YEARS 1 - 3,000	<b>PARAGNA - PREPARATORY RITUAL</b>		
	I. NW Corner of table 1. Getting water 2. Cutting plants hom/pomegranate/ palm leaf/barsom 3. Get milk	water cup 1 knife  milk bowl	<b>YEARS 1-3,000</b> <b>SPIRITUAL CREATION</b> Ahura Mazda, Spenta Mainyu  Ideas of creations, fravashis Zarathushtra's fravashi <b>CONTRACT</b> with Angra Mainyu for 9000 years.
YEARS 3,000-6000	II. NE Corner of table 4. Piling 5. Tying barsom 6. Pounding	horned stand 1 horned stand 2 palm leaf girdle parahom cup 1	<b>YEARS 3,000 - 6,000</b> <b>MATERIAL CREATION</b> Cosmos/prototypes, unmoving  Gayo.maretan, Gaw aevodata Zarathushtra's body
YEARS 6,000 - 9,000	<b>YASNA PROPER</b>		
	III. SE Corner of table 7. Preparation, invocation TEXT Ys. 0, 1-2 8. Meal (with parahom drink) 9. Pounding  End: TEXT Ys. 28 - 34 = Gatha 1	parahom cup 2  bread, bowl, ghee (meat)  mortar & pestle	<b>ATTACK OF ANGRA MAINYU</b> <b>MIXTURE, SKY STRENGTHENED</b> <b>YEARS 6,000 - 9,000</b> Vivahvant, sacrificer 1 Son Yima, Golden age Azhi Dahaka (Zohak) Athwya, sacrificer 2 Son Thraetaona (Fereydun) fetters Zohak Thrita, sacrificer 3 Son Keresaspa; Kayanians, Haosravah, etc. Pourushaspa, sacrificer 4 End: Birth of Son Zarathushtra
YEARS 9,000 - 12,000	IV. SW Corner of table 10 The Word TEXT: YH, Gathas 2-5, Ys. 55-59 Text only 11. Untying Action resumes TEXT Ys. 60 ff. 12. Mixing End: Ys. 72	twig bowl/hom & pomegranate twigs  ring cup with bull hair sieve  water cup 2	<b>REVELATION</b> <b>YEARS 9,000 - 12,000</b> Zarathushtra's mission, Vishtaspa Peshotanu, Wahram warzawand End: Son 1 Ukhshyat.ereta (Ushedar)  Winter of Mahrkusha, people die, repopulation from Yima's enclosure End: Son 2 (Ukhshyat.namah (Ushedarmah) Keresaspa kills freed Zohak, Haosravah returns End: Son 3 Astvat.ereta, the final Saoshyant
YEAR 12,000	NW Corner of table, full circle (spiral) Hom elixir poured in well/stream		<b>FINAL DRAMA</b> <b>YEAR 12,000</b> <b>FRASHO.KERETI (FRASHOGERD)</b>



**Preparatory ritual.** Based on this recognition, the individual sections of the preparatory ritual can fairly easily be identified by the criteria of instrument used, and action taken. There are six: (1) getting water, (2) getting plants, (3) getting milk, (4) piling cups and bowl, (5) tying barsom, and (6) pounding.

There is a further unexpected pattern of correlation: each of these six sections can be shown to correlate with six sequential instruments on the ritual table. Thus, the first action is the getting water from the well of the fire temple; it correlates with the cup in the NNW (which is in fact frequently used during the ritual). The second action is cutting the various twigs and date palm leaf from the garden of the fire temple; it correlates with the knife, at the position of the zot. Moreover, it corresponds to the month guarded by Dadwah, the creator and establisher of order. The next section is getting milk from a goat in an open enclosure; it correlates with the water bowl, into which the milk is later poured. Then follows piling, which involves an action by which the water bowl is placed on the first cup, and the second cup on top of both. Here the symbolism is quite iconic, as the action suggests the creation of the upper and lower halves of the (new) cosmos, with the flat earth in between. The fifth action involves the tying of the barsom, which as mentioned, functions as the conduit between the material and spiritual realm. The final and sixth preparatory action is the first pounding; it correlates with the so-called reserve cup in the ENE direction.

**Yasna proper ritual.** In the Yasna proper, the main actions are considerably more complex, and it must suffice here to list them by cover terms: (1) Preparation/invocation, (2) meal, (3) pounding, (4) the word (recitation of Gathas, etc.), (5) untying, and (6) mixing. They similarly correlate sequentially with the second set of instruments.

In a further step of analysis and correlation, the combined instruments/actions can be correlated, tentatively, with personages and events in Zarathushti mythology said to appear in the various millennia of the Great World Year. In particular, according to this pattern the pounding in the Yasna proper corresponds to the coming of Zarathushtra in the year 9,000.

This particular conclusion matches the one suggested by Marian Molé a number of years ago, who argued that the pounding re-enacts the compounding of the constituent parts of Zarathushtra and his birth in the year 9,000. Table I provides an overview of these complex mythological correlations.

## The eight priests

In earlier times, a total of eight priests performed the Yasna during the high feasts. Each had a specific role and location [Fig. 3] which are specified in the Nirangestan.

		SOUTH			
		Sraoshavarza			
	Aberet	7	8	4 Atravakhsha	
EAST	Raethwishkara	6		3 Asnatar	WEST
	Fraberetar	5	1	2 Havanan	
		Zaotar			
		NORTH			

Fig. 3. The proper positions of the eight priests.

There is a telling passage found in Denkard 43.3-8, summarizing chapters of the lost Sasanian *Varsht.mansar* Nask. The passage clearly implies that the ritual area was once perceived as representing vertical space as well. Specifically, it is a zand on the ritual action that is accompanied by the recitation of Ys 64.3-4. Looking at the present Parsi practice, the action at that point involves the laying down of the two horned tripods, their horns facing east, and the laying across them the barsom bundle.

In the older Iranian practice, this action is correlated with three significant steps taken by the zot: he moves to his left to the position of the fraberetar, and then walks along the east side of the ritual area, to the position of the raithwishkara in the east, then to the position of the aberet in the SE. There, he glances at the fire, and then returns to his seat. According to the Nask, this action symbolizes the following: after their consultations with Zarathushtra, the six Amesha Spentas return, via the three levels of the preliminary stations of the departed souls, i.e., *hu-mata*, *hu-ukhta*, *hu-varshata* 'well-thought, well-spoken, well-done,' to the highest heaven of Ahura Mazda, presumably after having crossed the spiritual bridge between the material and spiritual worlds, the *cinwatah peretu*.

The implications of this zand include the following:

- North and South represent also the direction from below to above;
- the divine guests attending the Yasna are the six Amesha Spentas;
- the zaotar in the north/below represents the priest Zarathushtra;
- the sraoshavarza in the south above represents Ahura Mazda;
- the stretch between the position of the zot and the fraberetar in the NE must be the lower material anchor of the bridge.

## Conclusions

A further unexpected conclusion can be drawn: the souls of the deceased are judged by Mithra at that bridge. Its material anchor is located at the position of the zot. The zot leads the Yasna ritual in the Dar-i Mihr. Therefore,

ABOVE		Ahura Mazda	
Sraoshavarza		Abode of Amesha Spentas	
FIRE			
Ab	hu-varshta	At	Good deeds
EAST R	hu-ukhta	As	Good words
Fr	hu-mata	H	Good thoughts
Bridge			
BARSMAN		Abode of humans	
Zaotar		Zarathushtra	
BELOW			

Fig. 4. The passage between the material and spiritual world.

the zot correlates with Mithra the Judge. This concludes the circle between the mace of Mithra given to the novice priest and the function of the zot in the Yasna.

The correlations in this passage from the Varsht Mansar Yasht also entail a doctrinal Mazdaean proof regarding the narrator of the Gathas: it is the zaotar Zarathushtra who originally envisioned, chanted and acted the Gathas.

As a text, then, the Gathas represent both inspired poetry and self-reflexive narration of that poetry, one overlaying the other, with the effect of an aura of suspension. The effect corresponds to the suspended harmonious layers of overtones sometimes heard when two or more priests are chanting. It may well be this dramatic characteristic which has made the Gathas difficult to classify with expected poetic models within the Indo-Iranian tradition.

The cue to this characteristic is Yasna 29, when it is recognized that it is the narration of a dream-vision, interspersed with direct speech, with the presentation of the 'souls' of the bovine and Zarathushtra. In fact, the setting of the hearing before the Divine Council is to be understood already in the very first stanza of the first chapter, Yasna 28.1. There the first person zaotar pleads for listening to the the convincing argument of Vohu

Manah (*wahaush khr̥atum manahah*) and to encourage the bovine's soul (*gaush ru'anam*).

A further clue is the layering of the Old Avestan text. The prophetic warning, the call for change, and the clear outlook to the End of Time of the Gathas, overlaid and thus framed the ritual and text of the Yasna Haptanghaiti. In doing so it has imbued that ancient text with the Mazdaean new vision.

Even the later layers of the ritual should be understood as contributions to understanding the Gathas. They provide later explicit action, and texts, before and after the events in the center. They thereby make explicit what is presupposed and implicit in the center. That is, they can be understood as 'explanatory' ritual

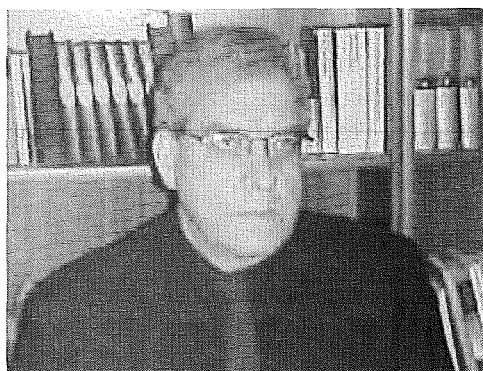
sections enacting the twelve millennia of the Zoroastrian Great World Year in the temporal space of the Yasna.

A final note is in place. It is very likely that the Yasna, even when combined with the Videvdad and the Visperad, is but a remnant of what appears to have once been a year-long ritual.

The preceding notes tentatively describe the complex, yet well ordered multiple networks in space and time encoded in the Yasna; they all reveal correlative thought. The objective was not to superimpose interpretation from the outside, but to find the components of the system whose true meaning can only be defined within the networks themselves, that is, the cognitive system and world view that is uniquely Mazdaean. ■

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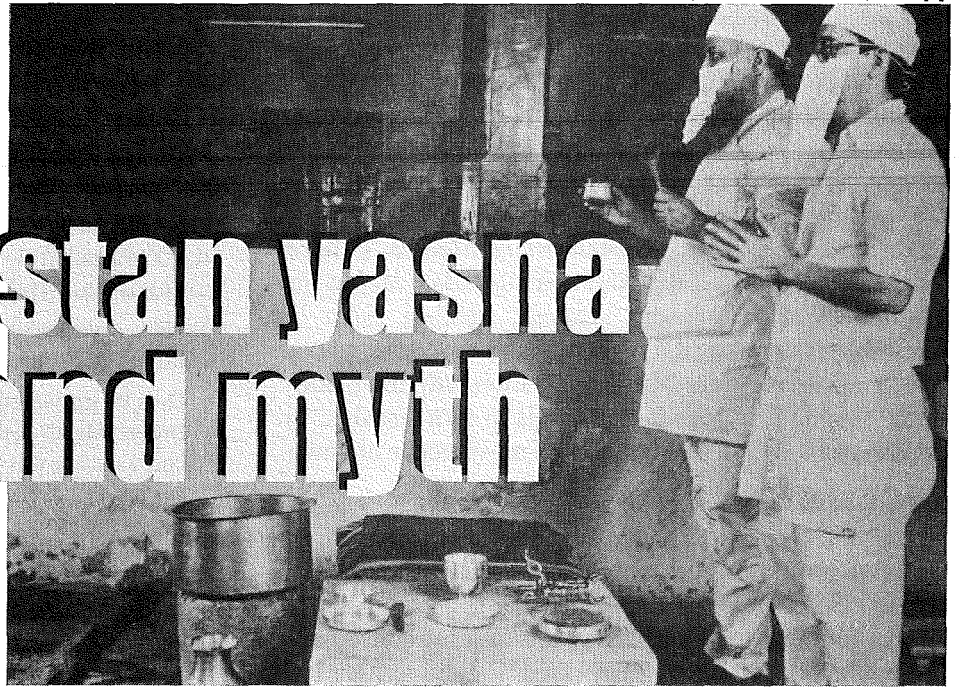


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*The chief priest (zot)  
and assistant (raspi)  
reciting the litany to  
water in Yasna 65.*

# the avestan yasna ritual and myth

by P. Oktor Skjærvø



The Yasna depicts in ritual terms the reconstruction of Ahura Mazda's ordered cosmos, which has been temporarily superseded by the chaos of the forces of darkness and evil. When the text is recited and the actions performed correctly, the purpose of the Yasna will come about, which is to place Ahura Mazda back in command and provide Him with the elements needed to reorder the world.

**T**he *Yasna* (Persian *jashn*), literally 'consecration, sacrifice' is recited during the morning ritual. Its purpose is the rebirth of the sun and return of the new day after a period of darkness. The Yasna is a long text, which takes several hours to recite in full, and it is impossible here to talk about other than a few aspects of it.

The word 'yasna' is also in 'mazdayasna,' which means literally 'he who sacrifices to Ahura Mazda.' The corresponding verb is 'yaza-' from which is derived the term 'yazata,' which literally means 'someone worthy of sacrifice' and refers to the most important divine beings beside Ahura Mazda – Mithra, Anahita and others.

## Creation myth

The structure of the Yasna ritual is based on the old Iranian creation myth, according to which Ahura Mazda performed a Yasna to create the world (note that before the creation there was only noon) and to finalize the defeat of evil at the end of the world:

At Midday, Ohrmazd together with the Life-giving Immortals [Amesha Spentas] prepared the sacrifice (*yazishn*) in the World of Thought. During the performance of the sacrifice, the entire creation was established. The fravashis of men were with him. [Bundahishn 3.20-21]

Ohrmazd goes down into the world, himself as officiating priest (zot) and Srosh-ahli as auxiliary priest (raspi), bring-

ing the sacred girdle (the kushti) in his hands. The Foul Spirit (*Ganag Menoy*) and (the arch-demon) Az will be greatly and exceedingly smashed by the magic power (*nirang*) of the Gathas. [Bundahishn 34.29-30]

*The Life-giving Immortals* were born from Ahura Mazda, who is said to be their father. They were probably also brought forth by Ahura Mazda's first sacrifice. In fact, from the Avestan and Pahlavi texts, it appears that they were the elements both of the first sacrifice and the first creation, as well as its original prototypes. Thus,

*Vohu Manah*, 'Good Thought' was the first sun-lit sky;  
*Asha Vahishta*, 'Best Order,' was the first Sun;

*Khshathra Vairyo*, the 'Well-deserved (royal) command,' was the result of the first sacrifice, by which Ahura Mazda became ruler of his world;

*Spenta Armaiti*, 'Life-giving Humility,' Ahura Mazda's daughter and spouse, was the Earth; and

*Haurvatat* and *Ameretat*, 'Water' and 'Plants,' were the first benefits for the world produced by the first sacrifice.

The common description of the Life-giving Immortals as 'archangels' is a Christian reinterpretation and completely misleading.



The yasna sacrifice depicts in ritual terms the reconstruction of Ahura Mazda's ordered cosmos, which has been temporarily superseded by the chaos of the forces of darkness and evil. The principal antagonist in the camp of evil is the *druj*, the 'Lie,' (the cosmic principle of deception, which deceives gods and men about the true nature of Ahura Mazda's creation). Its principal agent is the evil spirit, Avestan *Angra Mainyu*, Pahlavi *Ahriman*, also called the foul spirit (*Ganag Menoy*) in Pahlavi. Wrath (Avestan *aeshma*, Pahlavi *eshm* or *khesm*) is demon of the night sky and darkness, who at sunset smashes Ahura Mazda's creation with his bloody club, bathing it in blood, but who is in turn smashed by Sraosha's (Srosh) fearless club and must recede at dawn.

## Early chapters

In the first chapters of the Yasna, all the elements of the ordered cosmos, represented by their divine models (*ratus*) are named by name in a long list and as the objects of certain actions. They are first introduced and assembled, then they are 'harnessed' to the sacrifice.

“ Ahura Mazda performed a Yasna to  
create the world and to finalize the defeat  
of evil at the end of the world. ”

The first elements are the divisions of the days, months, seasons, and years. This is the way the sacrificer re-creates the 'limited time,' which Ahura Mazda established for the battle against evil. The daily time periods are accompanied by the principal divine beings associated with them. For instance:

- The time from sunrise to noon (*Hawani* and *Sawanghi*) is associated with Mithra (who travels in front of the sun, clearing its path of evil) and Peace with good pastures (which is the result when Ahura Mazda is re-established as ruler of the universe and Mithra makes sure that human interactions are peaceful).
- Noon-time (*Rapithvina*) is associated with 'Best Order and the Fire, (son) of Ahura Mazda,' that is, the sun and daylight.
- The time before dawn (*Ushahina*) is associated with Sraosha (who fights and overcomes Wrath, the night sky).

Of special importance are the three holy prayers, the *Yatha Ahu Vairyo*, the *Ashem Vohu*, and the *Yenghe Hatam*. According to the Bundahishn, Ohrmazd recited the *Yatha Ahu Vairyo* to incapacitate Ahriman for 3,000 years, which gave Ohrmazd the time to start creating the world.

According to the Young Avesta, Zarathushtra recited the *Ashem Vohu* to drive underground the old gods, who were on Ahriman's side (the daevas), and to banish the Evil One from the earth.

In the yasna ritual, the sacrificers repeat Ahura Mazda and Zarathushtra's actions, and when the text is recited and the actions performed correctly, the purpose of the sacrifice will come about, which is to place Ahura Mazda back in command and provide him with the elements needed to re-order the world.

The sacrificer, in order to be successful, has to become like Zarathushtra, who performed the first Yasna in the world of the living. In fact, according to the Young Avesta, Zarathushtra was originally born from the haoma ritual, as Haoma tells Zarathushtra:

Thus he answered me,  
Orderly death-averting Haoma:  
Pourushaspa was the fourth man  
to press me for the bony world of the living.  
That reward was sent to him,  
that prize came to him  
that you were born to him,  
you, O upright Zarathushtra,  
of the house of Pourushaspa,  
who said no to the old gods (daevas)  
and took Ahura Mazda as your guide. [Yasna 9.13]

One of the functions of the haoma in the yasna ritual is therefore presumably to re-engender Zarathushtra in the persona of the sacrificer.

The structure of the Yasna is in broad strokes as follows. The ritual, or microcosmic, rebuilding of the cosmos is expressed in the litanies in *Yasna 1-6* and later in the text.

The principal purpose of the sacrifice is spelled out in *Yasna 8*, to make Ahura Mazda ruler of the cosmos and make the earth comfortable and free from oppression by the forces of evil:

May you, O Ahura Mazda, have command  
at will and wish over your own creations!  
Place at will, O waters, at will, O plants,  
at will, O all good things  
that have the appearance of Order,  
the upholder of Order in command!  
Place the one possessed by the Lie  
out of command!  
May the upholder of Order  
have command at will!  
May the one possessed by the Lie  
not have command at will!  
May he be gone, discomfited, removed  
from the creations of the Life-giving Spirit,  
restrained, with no power at will ...

I invite free space and good breathing space  
for the entire temporal existence  
of the upholder of Order.

I invite narrowness and bad breathing space  
for the entire existence possessed by the Lie.

[Yasna 8.5-6, 8]

We should note that 'narrowness and bad breathing space' implies anxiety and chest constriction, as it were,

which makes it difficult to breathe. In fact, the Avestan word *angzah* 'narrowness' is related to (Latin-)English 'anxiety' and German 'angst' (cf. Germ. eng 'narrow').

In the Fravarané, which is recited several times during the ritual, the sacrificer states his side in the cosmic duality and his function as praiser and sacrificer in the tradition of Zarathushtra

In *Yasna 15.3*, the formula *Sraosha idha astu* – 'Let Sraosha be here!' is used for the first time, that is, Sraosha is called upon as the greatest fighter of evil and darkness. His hymn [*Yasna 57*] expresses this in greater detail.

*Yasna 27* introduces the Old Avesta. It begins with a text recited to eliminate the forces of evil and to make prosper the life-giving divine beings, among them *Tishtriya*, who is the yazata responsible for the rains:

This we do for Him to be established  
as the greatest ahū of all and (its) ratu: Ahura Mazda,  
for the striking of the Evil Spirit possessed by the Lie,  
for the striking of Wrath with the bloody club,  
for the furthering of Ahura Mazda,  
wealthy and munificent,  
for the furthering of the Life-giving Immortals,  
for the furthering of the star Tishtriya,  
wealthy and munificent,  
for the furthering of the Man upholding Order,  
for the furthering of all of the Life-giving Spirit's  
Orderly creations. [Yasna 27.1-2]

Then, the haoma plants are strained and the *parahom* mixture of haoma, milk, and water is prepared. Also, the role of the haoma is stated explicitly: the haomas place Ahura Mazda back in command and provide the basic pattern for the ordered cosmos:

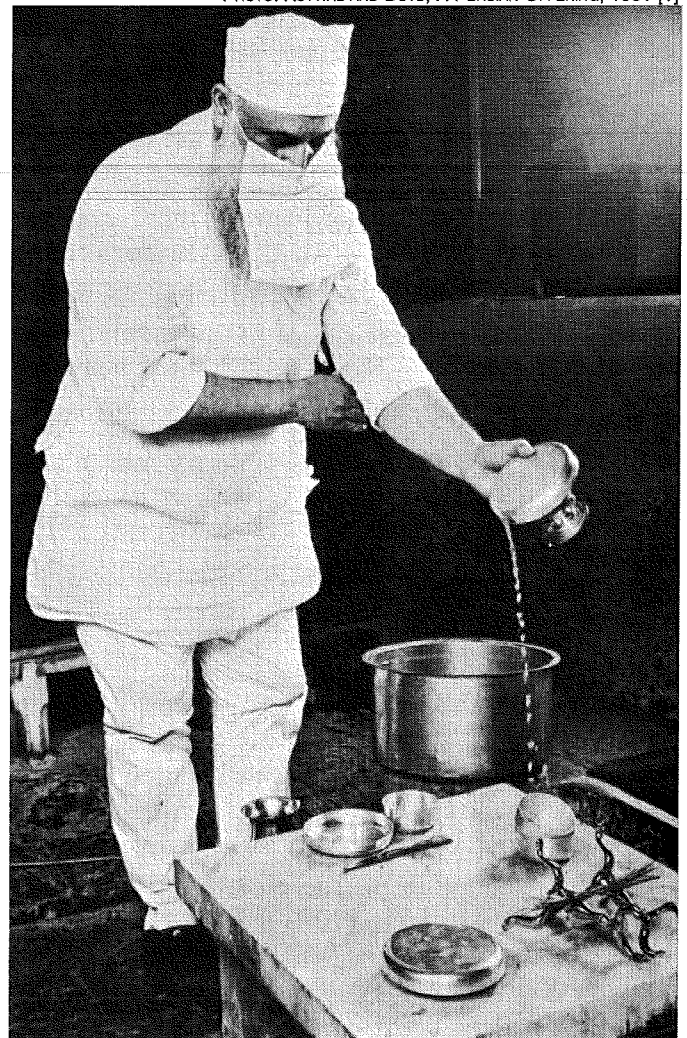
The haomas are about to be filtered,  
containing Ahura Mazda's royal command,  
containing the models of Order.  
Good Sraosha, followed by Ashi (Reward)  
who bestows riches,  
let him too take up his position here! [Yasna 27.6]

*Yasna 27* also contains the three principal and most powerful Zoroastrian prayers, by means of which, Ahura Mazda and Zarathushtra overcame the Evil Spirit.

With the recitation of *Yasna 27*, all the ingredients – the haoma, the plant, the milk, the water and the barsom – have been assembled for the rebirth of Zarathushtra, as told in the Denkard:

When that hom and milk were mixed and it had been  
announced (*niweyid*) to Ohrmazd, (then) Porushasp (and)  
Dugdow drank it. And here the complete assembly (*hang-  
erdigih*) of the divine fortune (*khwarrah*), fravashi, and  
body substance of Zarathushtra (was) in his two parents.  
[Denkard 7.2.47]

Thus, both the fravashi and the haoma were crucial elements in the making of Zarathushtra. Given the central functions of the haoma and the fravashis in the yasna,



*The chief priest (zaotar) pouring the libation into the cups in the concluding phase of the Yasna.*

one of the effects of this sacrifice is therefore, apparently, to re-engender Zarathushtra in the current sacrificer. Note that the terms *niwey-* and *hangerd-* in the Denkard are the Pahlavi renderings of Avestan *niwaedhayemi* and *hankarayemi*, which are the ritual terms used in *Yasna 1*.

One should note that the rendering of 'fravashi' as 'guardian spirit' or 'guardian angel' is an old, Christian-inspired, reinterpretation that has no basis in the texts. Their interpretation as the 'spirits of dead heroes' is also not supported by the texts and contradicted by the fact that the divine beings, including Ahura Mazda and the Life-giving Immortals, also have their own fravashis.

## Recitation of Gathas

Once "reborn," Zarathushtra presumably recites the Old Avestan texts, which now follow, in the persona of the sacrificer. As the most powerful and potent of all texts, the Gathas will combat the forces of darkness and provide strengthening for Ahura Mazda and his helpers.

The Gathas when recited, and so sent up to Ahura Mazda, carry with them all the elements of the new living world

about to be born and provide protection along the way. What carries the songs are the naked and intangible 'breath-souls,' the *urvans* of the singers, while the *daenas* can see in the other world, and so guide them after the wrenching apart of bones and consciousness!

## Closing chapters

There follows an invocation of Sraosha and a long hymn to him. The implication is clear: for the holy texts and the sacrifice to pass through the intermediate

space, currently occupied by the forces of darkness, Sraosha is needed. This deity, who is said not to have slept since the creation, protects the world of the living against the forces of evil.

Thus, the intention of the sacrifice becomes increasingly clear: it is the rebirth of the sun, Ahura Mazda's son, out of the heavenly waters surrounding the earth.

The Ahuna Vairya and the other holy prayers are then set in motion between earth and heaven for a last time to remove whatever evil and darkness still remains [*Yasna* 72.1 = *Yasna* 61.1].

Power and strength for Ahura Mazda are once more invited. Again, all the divine aids of the sun are invoked, as

well as the sun itself, the Fire of Ahura Mazda, and the fravashis of the upholders of Order; the victorious powers, peace with good pastures, the good *Vayu*, and, finally, the firmament and boundless and limited time, crucial elements of Ahura Mazda's creation.

And so, with the help of His human creation, Ahura Mazda has gained fame and strength [*cf. Yasna* 34.15,

“ The purpose of the Yasna ritual is thus primarily rebirth and renewal. It differs from the Videvdad, whose principal purpose is cleansing and healing. ”

*cited above*], is again in command of the two worlds, and can now distribute His rewards to those who have deserved them and so make

them famous.

The purpose of the Yasna ritual is thus primarily rebirth and renewal. It differs from the Videvdad Sade ritual, whose principal purpose is cleansing and healing. This difference of emphasis is reflected in the texts that accompany the two rituals. The text recited in the Videvdad sade ritual is also the Yasna, but it has been modified in three ways: the entire Videvdad is included; many passages have been modified by substituting the texts that were collected in the Visperad; and the principal invocation of the *ratus* of *Hawani* and *Sawanghi* [*Yasna* 0.7] has been replaced by an invocation of the *ratu* of the law discarding the old gods, the Videvdad. ■

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The Visperad is one of the four liturgies in the Yasna: (1) the *Yasna* proper; (2) the *Visperad* liturgy found in the Visperad Sade manuscripts; (3) the *Videvdad* (*Vendidad*) liturgy found in the Vendidad Sade manuscripts; and (4) the *Vishtasp Yasht* liturgy found in the Vishtasp Yasht Sade manuscripts.

## Visperad and the gahanbars

The Visperad is a compound Pahlavi word, *wisp/visp* = all and *rad* = spiritual chief/master (Av. *vispa* and *ratavao*). Thus the text is a prayer for the celebration of all spiritual chiefs, on the other-hand *ratavao* is also 'time' or 'period of time' [*Vd.* 4.1]. Thus Visperad is intended for the celebration of special periods of time meaning the seasonal festivals (*gahanbars*) as well as for reverential prayer to the *ratvao*, 'chiefs' of both the spiritual and material worlds:

*ratavo mainyavanam  
ratavo gaithyanam.*

It must be noted that it is also a part of the *navar* and *geti-kharid* services.

The Visperad is divided into 23 *Kardehs* 'chapters' and as noted above is never recited alone but as Visperad Sade together with the Yasna. It must be noted that the Visperad is recited when the Vendidad is recited. It is recited as the liturgy conducted for special periods of the year, the *gahanbar* (the *rads* of time) which are the six divisions of the year, with the five-day festivals celebrated at the ends of these. In Parsi Gujarati it is called '*Gahambar ni Visperad*.'

The custom of celebrating *gahanbars* with the Visperad liturgy is to achieve spiritual progress in every aspect of nature, in order to better the world. This progress depends upon time and ushering in seasons in proper succession. It is the *payman* ('measured' time) that makes man/woman do his/her best in different walks of life, whether it be manual labor, agriculture or in any higher professional endeavor. Such being the case, it is incumbent on Zarathushtis



# Visperad

by Pallan R. Ichaporia

The Visperad is a prayer for the celebration of the seasonal festivals – the gahanbars as well as an offering of reverential prayer to the ‘chiefs’ of both the spiritual and material worlds.

[Continued from previous page] to celebrate gahanbars as the best ideal for his/her work, to be accomplished at the proper time and to prevent procrastination, thereby making the world ‘the existence brilliant in value’ (*frashogird*).

## The Visperad liturgy

Unlike the present liturgy of the Yasna where two priests are required (zaotar and raspi), the Visperad text [3.1] indicates more than two priests for the Yasna liturgy which is confirmed by the Gah 3.5 and the Videvdad [Vd. 57]. The following eight different designated priests are given in the text [also see page 77]:

(1) Zaotar, the leading priest, (2) Havanan, the priest who pounds the Haoma, (3) Atrakhsha, the priest who tends the fire, (4) Fraberatar, the priest who carries out all the requisites of the liturgy, (5) Abretar, the priest who tends the water and keeps it pure, (6) Asnatar, the priest who sees that all the ritual implements remain in pure state, (7) Ratwishkar, the priest who carries out in orderly fashion all the ritual mixing of Haoma juice with milk and dividing it; and (8) Srashsavareza, the priest who enforces the rules and regulations of the great offering, the Yasna Sade.

## Contents of the Visperad [1]

Some important contents are briefly mentioned here.

**Vr. 1.4:** This chapter has the devotional veneration of the holiest Zarathushti prayers, yatha ahu vairyo, ashem vohu and yenghe hatam.

**Vr 1.5-9:** has praise for Staot Yasna, the five Gathas, Yasna Haptanghaiti, Daham Afriti, Airyama-ishyo, Fshusho manthra and Hadokht Nask.

**Vr. 2.1-5:** With *zohr* (the libation) and *barsom* rituals the leaders of the spiritual and material worlds are invited in the precinct which include the leaders of animals living in water, on land and those who fly. The ‘leaders of time’ (gahanbars), Ahura Mazda, His prophet Zarathushtra, Ashem Vohu and the manthras of Saoshyants are remembered and venerated.

**Vr. 2.6-9:** With *zohr* (libation) and *barsom* rituals the five Gathas, Yenghe Hatam, Ardvi Sur Anahita, Vanant Star, Hadokht, together with truthful people showing the religious path, are remembered and revered.

**Vr. 3:** The zaotar, the officiating priest calls the different priests (noted above) to take their positions in the holy ritual precinct (Urvish/Ijeshne gah).

**Vr. 4:** Good thoughts, good knowledge, good intellect and wisdom together with good health are celebrated. Accolades are offered for the Mazdayasni religion. Good creations are praised.

**Vr. 5-8:** Praise for the Amesha Spentas, truthful families, peace and prosperity, with a clarion call for the followers of the Prophet to remain true to the traditions, teachings, laws and truthful sayings of Zarathushtra.

**Vr. 9.3:** This is an enlargement of Yasna 24 which is found in the Yasna Sade liturgy, which accompanies the second preparation of haoma, and praise for it.

**Vr. 10-12:** The Amesha Spentas, the prayer of Ahunavar together with ‘alats’ are celebrated. The holy fravashis and the life giving waters are revered with the offering of *hom*. Sarosh, Ashi, Fire of Ahura Mazda and Nairiosangh are revered by singing the Ahunavar.

**Vr. 13.1-2:** This chapter alludes to *tishra paoriya*, ‘the first three.’ which may refer to “the first prayer of the three” as yatha ahu vairyo [as K. E. Kanga has explained in his gujarati translation of Visperad].

**Vr. 14-15:** Praise for Ahunavar, Ahunavaiti Gatha by invocation, singing, reciting and chanting each word, each paragraph and the arrangement of the words.

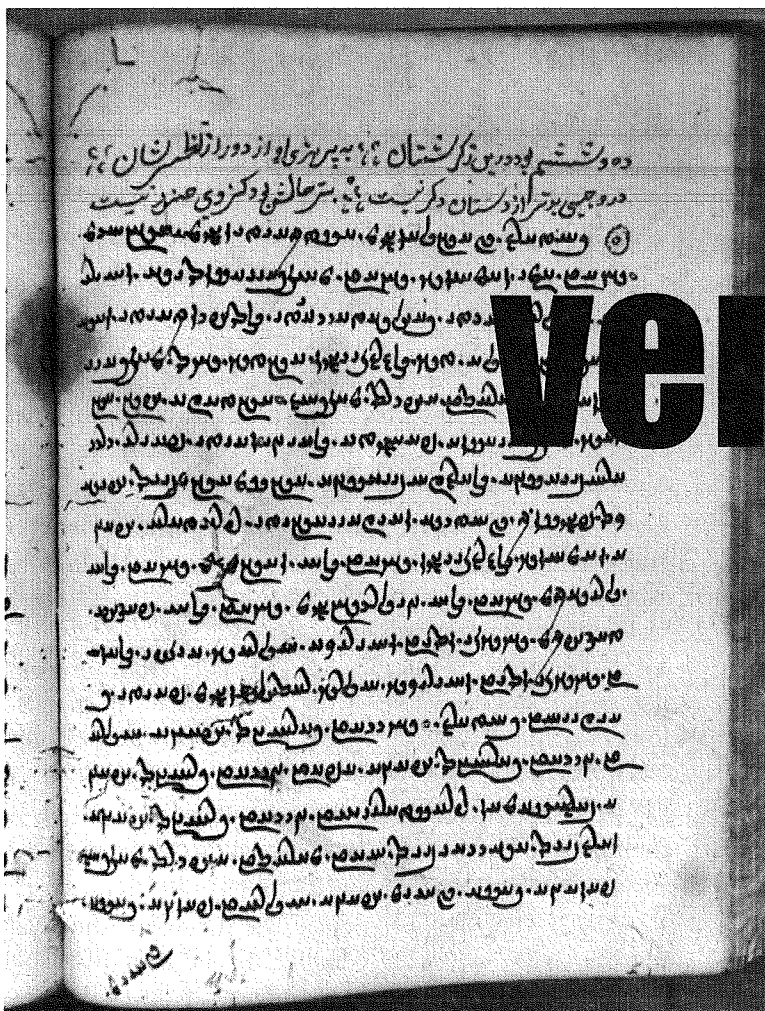
**Vr. 16-19, 29:** Praise for Ahura Mazda, Yasna Haptanghaiti. Amesha Spentas, the Sun and its shining light.

**Vr. 21:** Alludes to *apara yasna*, ‘later yasna.’ This may be Yasna Haptanghaiti [Haug, 1878] which was composed after the Gathas, but this is debatable as it may be other passages from Yasna.

**Vr. 22-23:** Invocation of Amesha Spentas, saoshyants, righteous men, Ahura Mazda, Vahishtoishiti gatha, Ahura Mazda, ‘shining house of songs’ (Paradise); and invoking blessings for good health, good life and prosperity.

**Vr 24.1:** Mentions *antare ahuna airyamana*, ‘between the Ahuna and the Aiyema,’ which clearly means the Gathas which are embedded between the Ahuna Vairya (yatha ahu vairyo) and the Airyama ishyo, which is prayed at the end of the five Gathas. ■

[1] Kotwal, F. M. Some notes on the Pahlavi Visperad, in Monumentum, H. S. Nyberg, *Acta Iranica*, 1975, Leiden.



A folio from *Vendidad Sade* manuscript, 1172 Yz (1803 CE)  
[see page 62]. COLLECTION: DASTUR  
FIROZE M. KOTWAL.  
PHOTOGRAPH BY CYRUS RIVETNA.

# Vendidad

by William W. Malandra

The Vendidad liturgy is an important window on the past, concerned with religious laws dealing primarily with combating pollution and disease, viewed as the work of demonic forces, and bringing about the ultimate triumph of Good over Evil.

**V**endidad is the name generally used for the Avestan text *widaewa-data-* (Phl: *jud-dew-dad* and *widew-dad*). The literal meaning is 'The Law (*data*) repudiating the Demons (*wi-daewa*).’ The great Avesta of Sasanid Iran was composed of twenty-one major divisions called *nasks* [see page 60]; the Vendidad was part of the subdivision of texts called *Dadig* ‘dealing with law, legal,’ and nineteenth overall.

As the text now stands there are twenty-two chapters of various style and content. However, Chapter 12 is an 18th century composition, created to restore this chapter which was already missing in the 9th century, when the contents of the Vendidad were summarized in the *Denkard*. There, as in the manuscripts, it is noted as missing. This lacuna in the textual tradition is important for our understanding, not only of the history of the text itself, but also of the development of Zarathushti ritual.

## Manuscript traditions

As I mentioned in my article on the Yashts [*FEZANA Journal, Summer 2004*], one of the monumental accomplishments of the Zarathushti communities after the fall of the Sasanid empire was the preservation of the tradition by priests who memorized the sacred compositions

and especially by the priest-scribes who copied manuscripts in both Avestan and Pahlavi.

**Pahlavi Vendidad (PV) and Vendidad Sade (VS).** For the Vendidad there are several manuscript traditions. First, one must distinguish between the tradition of manuscripts in which Avestan text is accompanied by the Pahlavi ‘translation,’ and that in which only the Avestan text along with the Visperad is interpolated into the Yasna [see Modi: 1922, pp. 351-354]. The former is known as the *Pahlavi Vendidad (PV)*, the latter as the *Vendidad Sade (VS)*.

To complicate matters further, one must make a distinction between the VS of the Iranian and Indian communities respectively. In the Iranian traditions the VS follows closely the PV, while the Indian tradition diverges on many points from both the PV and the Iranian VS. The oldest extant manuscripts of the PV, now incomplete, were made by Mihraban Kay Khusrow at Navsari in 1323 (Manuscript No. L4) and again at Cambay in 1324 (Manuscript No. K1), though a 1594 manuscript made at Broach by Ardashir Ziwa appears to be a direct copy of K1.

The reason that the Vendidad was preserved in the post-Sasanid communities, while so much else of the Avesta was lost, is that it was used in ritual, specifically in the

nocturnal Widewdad ceremony [see Modi: 1922, pp. 350-351] which was developed to protect from demonic forces. For this ceremony the VS is the text used. Since the VS is lacking Chapter 12, one may conclude that the Widewdad-ceremony only came into existence after the loss of this chapter and before the 9th century Denkard summary of the nasks, that is, in early post-Sasanid times.

## Origins and authorship

While the VS must, therefore, be a late creation, it is impossible to assign a date to the PV. Obviously the Pahlavi text is dependent upon the Avestan. When we examine the Pahlavi we see that it has at least two layers. The first is a word-by-word gloss of the Avestan text that is somewhere between a translation and a vocabulary list. Throughout the Pahlavi, though, there are further notes of explanation, some just adding a few words of clarification, others being very lengthy digressions. Such digressions mention the names of authorities who were active in legal scholarship in the late Sasanid period writing 'castags' or commentaries. The Shayast-ne-Shayast, for example, mentions a 'Vendidad of Medyomah.' We may suppose that such insertions in the Pahlavi text were the work of editors who may have lived as late as the 9th century.

As for the Avestan text itself, it is a composite work in which we can discover the hand of an editor or editors. The content of the various chapters and the style in which they are composed point to texts of different origins, rather than to the original creation of an author. For example, the geography of Chapter 1 and the myth of Yima's *vara* bear slight resemblance to each other or to the various laws of purity.

Scholars, in noting the often degenerate use of grammar, have generally thought that the Avestan of the Vendidad is quite late, composed at a time when the author(s) little understood the fine points of syntax. This may be partially true, yet a better explanation of the language is that an editor, who did not control Avestan, has pieced together continuous text from scattered materials at his disposal. When this occurred is difficult to say. My guess is that, since it was after Avestan was a living language, one might assign it to Sasanid scholarship. This is not to imply that the material upon which the editor drew was not old.

Scholars have thought that the Vendidad is the work of the magi.

This may be the case.

However, the eastern geography of Chapter 1 cannot have been the product of the western Iranian priesthood;

and, there is nothing in the content of the entire text which would lead to magian authorship. The usual argument – that because the Vendidad is overly concerned with matters of purity and pollution, and according to classical authors the magi had such concerns, ergo the magi authored the text – is based on the unfounded assumption that nowhere else on the Iranian plateau could priests have had such interests. There is also a widely accepted view that because the Vendidad shows a vocabulary of measurements of length that correspond closely to the Hellenistic Greek/Roman system, the text must have been composed after Alexander. This is not altogether persuasive since fingers, hands, and cubits were not peculiar in the ancient world to Greeks alone.

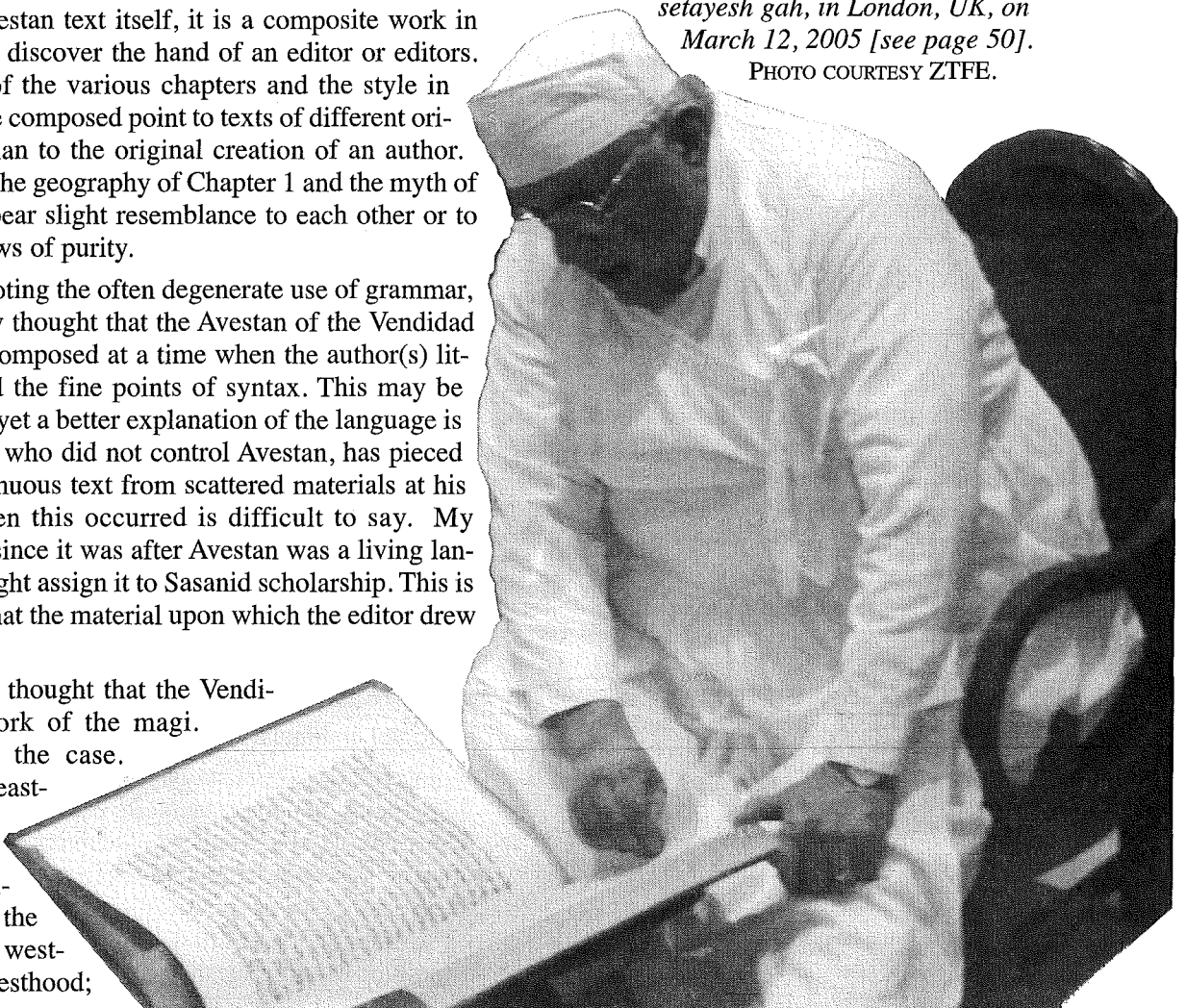
## Contents of the Vendidad

The Vendidad is a unique form of composition. Since, from the Zoroastrian theological point of view, all revelation came to Zarathushtra directly from Ahura Mazda, the entire work is framed as a dialogue between God and prophet.

*Below, Er. Rustam Bhedwar reciting the Vendidad Sade in the new ZTFE*

*setayesh gah, in London, UK, on March 12, 2005 [see page 50].*

PHOTO COURTESY ZTFE.





The author of the Vendidad carefully placed his 'laws' within an opening narrative context of geography and creation of the world, and a closing [Vd. 19-21] of loosely arranged themes foreshadowing the eventual defeat of Angra Mainyu. If there is a common strand binding all the disparate material, it is maintenance of righteous living in pursuit of happiness in a world constantly threatened by pollution and chaos from the demonic powers.

In using the word 'law' to translate 'data,' one should not think of legislative statutes. Rather, it has been long recognized that ancient Near Eastern law codes are literary collections of judgments. Such was the case of Sasanid law as well.

The 'laws' contained in the Vendidad are of various sorts. Some appear to have a basis in civil jurisprudence, for example, those dealing with assault, contracts, oaths. Many others dealing with pollution fall under what one might call religious law. However, the distinction between civil and religious law is not a concept to be found in the tradition. For a community which believed the world to be overrun with demonic forces whose most powerful weapons were pollution and disease, infringement of rules of conduct designed to combat and negate these evils, would have been tantamount to exposing the righteous believers to grave danger.

A brief overview of the contents is given below.

*Chap. 1* presents a geography of ancient eastern Iran. The chapter opens with Ahura Mazda telling Zarathushtra:

"I established a place of habitation that affords peace, not one devoid of joy. For if I had not established a place ..., the entire material world would have gone to Airyana Vaeja"

*Chap. 2* presents the ordering of the Earth after the initial creation; and the myth of Yima and the building of the *vara* (similar to Noah's ark) in which to store food and shelter, male and female of the various species, so that creation might survive the terrible winter that would engulf the world.

*Chap. 3* praises the earth and its cultivation; its protection from pollution.

"The happiest places are ones where proper religious practices are maintained and where house and agricultural economy flourish..." [Vd. 3.1-6].

*Chap. 4* describes obligations and punishments for non-payment of debts, not honoring contracts, violent crimes, oaths and perjury. It includes a digression on the virtue of worldliness as opposed to asceticism.

*Chap. 5* describes various hypothetical cases of defilement from a corpse (*nasu*).

“ These laws [of purity and pollution] were essential not only for the ongoing well-being of the community, but also for the eventual defeat of evil. ”

*Chap. 6* prescribes rules regarding further defilements from a corpse. Before sowing any field, all bones and other remains must be removed.

*Chap. 7* speaks of possession of a corpse by the *Nasu Druj* (demoness of putrefaction); rules for burials, interment and dakhma; and purification of kindling wood, grain and grass, and things in contact with carrion; the practice of medicine.

*Chap. 8* describes funeral rites for men and dogs; the *sagdid* ritual, the *baresnum* purification ritual; punishment for sodomy.

*Chap. 9* elaborates on the *baresnum* purification ritual, and prescribes capital punishment for the unqualified priest who attempts to administer the *baresnum*.

*Chap. 10* prescribes Gathic verses to be recited in order to repel the *Nasu Druj* from the living.

*Chap. 11* prescribes more Gathic verses to be recited to purify house, fire, water, the earth, cattle and plants.

*Chap. 12* (which is a later addition) gives instructions on how to mourn various kin.

*Chap. 13-14* describes the proper treatment of dogs and other animals, and punishments for mistreatment.

*Chap. 15* describes deeds which render a person *pesho. tanu* (subject to capital punishment).

*Chap. 16* prescribes isolation of a woman during menstruation.

*Chap. 17* gives instructions for proper disposal of cut hair and nail clippings.

*Chap. 18* gives rules for improper priests; obscene gestures toward a non-believer; the rooster and its care; dialogue between Sraosha and the *Druj*; the whore; expiation for intercourse with a menstruating woman.

*Chap. 19* describes the temptation of Zarathushtra, where Angra Mainyu is repulsed by the recitation of the Ahunavar and other manthras; passage over the Cinwat bridge; various invocations.

*Chap. 20* describes medicines and cures.

*Chap. 21* presents invocations of the cow, waters, sun, moon and stars.

*Chap. 22* describes Angra Mainyu as the creator of disease; and antidotes.

In general, the Vendidad has not enjoyed a warm reception among modern readers. Its obsession with corpses, menstrual blood and other pollutants, not to mention its often tedious style of repetitious formulae, does not tend to resonate with people of our scientific age, as do the lofty thoughts of Zarathushtra. Nevertheless, it is an important window on the past. In it we see an ancient

geography, an archaic myth about Jamshed, inspiring statements about the worth of agriculture and the value of dogs as man's next-of-kin, laws pertaining to civil and criminal jurisprudence. In no other part of the Avesta do we find so many details of everyday life.

In order to more sympathetically appreciate the religious laws regarding purity and pollution, one must understand that because of the way the world came into being as the creation of Ahura Mazda for the purpose of ensnaring and combating Angra Mainyu, these laws were essential not only for the ongoing well-being of the community, but also for the eventual defeat of evil. ■

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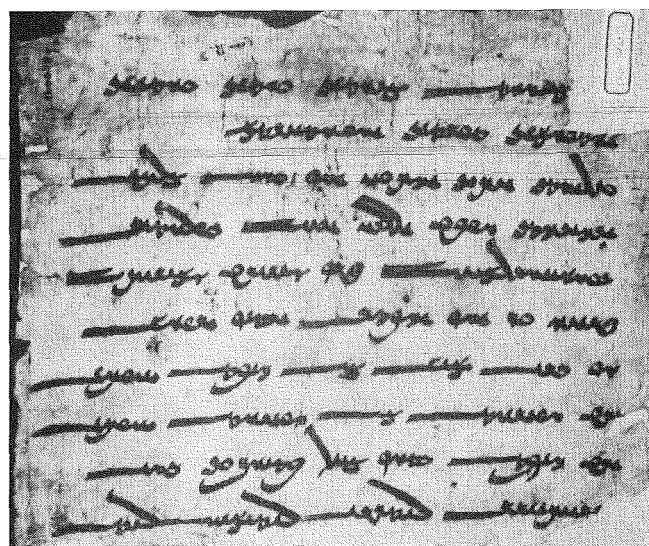
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Old Sogdian text, c. 8th century CE. Discovered by Sir Aurel Stein in Dunhuang, Western China. The Ashem Vohu prayer in the fragment was recognized by Ilya Gershevitch and published in the *Indo-Iranian Journal* 1976 in a paper by Nicholas Sims Williams. PHOTO: COURTESY NICHOLAS SIMS WILLIAMS.

### Oldest text of Ashem Vohu

In 1976, Ilya Gershevitch discovered, in the British Library, a real Avesta text of the Ashem Vohu in old Sogdian characters. This fragment is the oldest extant text of the Ashem Vohu.

There is no doubt that local versions of Avesta texts were spread throughout Iran, and adapted by the Bactrians, Parthians, Medians and Achaemenids. Achaemenids gave the commentary and exegesis of Avesta in some of their Old Persian language inscriptions which were more or less political and secular.

Ashem Vohu is generally considered a prayer, but it is also a meditational blueprint:

*Ashem vohu vahishtem asti –  
ushta asti ushta ahmai hyat ashai vahistai ashem.*

The verb is 'asti' = 'it is,' which means that it does not express wishes ('may it be') but makes statements ('it is') thereby explaining that it is for meditation.

Ashem Vohu was composed by the prophet Zarathushtra and, like his Gathas, it is a song full of high poetic technique. It owes its efficacy to the elaborate arrangement and artistic repetitions of its four blessed words: *ashem, vohu/vahishtem, asti* and *ushta*. These few words combine with each other to produce stunning syntactical variation, inviting the devotee not to be content with simply reciting the words, but also contemplating and meditating on them.

*by Pallan R. Ichaporia [also see Humbach and Ichaporia, The Heritage of Zarathushtra – a New Translation of His Gathas, Heidelberg, 1994]*

The position of *asha*, 'truth,' in its semantic field and environment has undergone some notable changes in the Gathas, and some more in the Younger Avesta. Gathic *asha* is a divine entity which can manifest itself as a cosmical power or divine quantity (non-personified) and as a divine person (personified).

# notes on avestic asha 'truth' in yasna

[1]

by Helmut Humbach

As is well known, numerous phrases found in the Avesta have parallels in the Rigveda, both the Iranian and the Indian branch of the Aryan languages and literatures, having inherited them from the Proto-Aryan period. Thus OAv. Ys. 33.5 *erezush patha* corresponds with RV1, 41, 5 *rajuna patha* 'straight path,' and YAv. Ys.10.4 *zam perethwim* corresponds with RV1, 67, 5 *ksam prithvim* 'broad or spacious earth.'

A few of these phrases, Gathic as well as Young Avestic, show the term *asha/rta* 'truth' as one of their two members:

- Ys. 31.22 *ashem hapti* =  
RV5, 68, 4 *ratam sapanta* 'observe /hold truth'
- Ys. 49.9 *asha.yukhta* (stem *yukhti-*) =  
RV10, 61, 10 *rtayukti*, 'yoking together with truth'
- Ys. 10.4 *asha e khao* =  
RV2, 28, 5 *kham.rtaysya* 'source of truth'
- Yt. 10.86 *asha e ... pantam* =  
RV5, 45, 8 *rtaysya partha* 'path of truth.'

In the unspoken view of most scholars of Indo-Iranian, such correspondences justify the assumption that the meaning of Av. *asha-* exactly agrees with that of Vedic *rta-*, both of them continuing the meaning of their joint Proto-Aryan predecessor without any change. Yet this view seems to me too superficial, at least as far as the

Avesta is concerned. The phrases just quoted are nothing but a sort of petrefacts from which only limited information can be drawn regarding the meaning of *asha-* in the entirety of its Avestic occurrences. As a matter of fact, there can be no doubt that the position of *asha-* in its semantic field and environment has undergone some notable changes in the Gathas of Zarathushtra, and some more in the Younger Avesta.

## Asha in the Gathas

Whereas Vedic *rta-* always is non-personified, Gathic *asha-* is a divine entity which can manifest itself as a cosmical power or divine quantity (non-personified), and as a divine person (personified). In a phrase such as *ashat hacha* 'in accordance with truth' personification is clearly ruled out, whereas it is evident in the vocative case, e.g., in Ys. 28.5 *asha kat thwa daresani* 'O truth, shall I see you.'

A typical Gathic problem is just that due to the indistinctness of some transmitted forms of endings (*asha* = voc. or instr. sg. or nom. acc. pl.) and even more due to the mystical ambiguity of the Gathas it is difficult, if not impossible, to decide for non-personified or personified in the majority of the occurrences of *asha-*.

In the case of non-personification there is also ambiguity regarding non-materiality and materiality. In the passages in which Ahura Mazda is said to be offered *asha-* by humans and in those in which humans are said to be granted *asha-* by Ahura Mazda, materiality of *asha-* is as possible as immateriality. Most typical of this ambiguity are the passages in which *asha-* is the grammatical object

[1] Makaranda: (Madhukar Anant Mehendale Festschrift), Sharadaben Chimanbhai Educational Research Centre, Ahmedabad, pp. 227 - 231.



of the root *da* 'to place, offer, grant' in the meaning 'to acquire, accept, obtain' of its medial forms:

Ys. 34.1 *ashem ... taibyo daonha*, 'you (Ahura Mazda) obtain truth,' i.e., 'you obtain the truth offered to you at the actual ceremony,' in which not only the piety of the worshippers but also their ritual offering (*myazd*) are referred to.

Ys. 46.15 *ashem khsmaibya daduye* 'you (human persons) will obtain truth,' i.e., 'you will be granted bliss in this and/or the afterworld' or 'you will obtain material welfare.'

The reference to material welfare is unequivocal in the phrase *astuuat ashem* 'corporeal truth' found in Ys. 43.16 in which Zarathushtra alludes to the *Frashokereti*, the renovation of the world at the end of time, and, at the same time, to the sacrificial fee to be paid in pieces of cattle etc. he is entitled to expect (cf. particularly Ys. 44.18-19 and 46.19).

## Divine entities, Ahuras/Amesha Spenta

In the Gathas, the inherited concept of *asha*- 'truth' has proliferated the concept of a group of divine entities, led by Ahura Mazda and called *Ahuras* as attested in the phrase *mazdaoscha ahuraonho* 'the Ahuras and (Ahura) Mazda' [Ys. 30.9 and 31.4].

Whereas the number of these Ahuras is as open in the Gathas as is the number of the Younger Avestic Yazatas, that of the Young Avestic Amesha Spenta is limited. Their canonical number is one-plus-six (= Ahura Mazda plus six), and it is just Yt. 13.83 (=19.16) in which we find the number one-plus-seven = Ahura Mazda plus seven:

*yoi hapta hamo mananho yoi hapta hamo vachanho yoi  
hapta hamo shyaothnaongho ... yaesham asti hamo ptacha  
frasastacha yo dadhthao Ahuro Mazda*

'the seven (Amesha Spentas) who are of the same manner of thinking ... speaking ... acting ... whose father and master is the same, Ahura Mazda, the creator.'

The picture reflected in the mystic poetry of the Gathas does not necessarily agree with what Zarathushtra taught in prose since the major part of the Gatha text was unintelligible to his adherents. The only Gathic passage that could have some chance of being close to the prophet's actual teachings regarding the Ahuras (Amesha Spentas) is Ys. 47.1. In this stanza, the series:

*mainyu-, manah-, vachah-, shyaothana-*  
'spirit, thought, word, action'

cf. Ys. 30.3:

*mainyu ... manahicha vachahicha shyaothana*  
'both spirits, both thoughts, both words, both actions'

is artistically intercrossed with the series:

*Ahura-mazda, spenta-mainyu, asha-, vohu-manah-,  
khshathra-, armaiti-, haurvatat-, ameretat-*

'Ahura Mazda, holy spirit, truth, good thought, power/rule, right-mindedness, integrity/nectar (=liquid offering), immortality/ambrosia (=solid offering)'

thus describing Ahura Mazda, as being accompanied by seven divine entities (one-plus-seven):

*spenta mainyo vahishtacha manangha*  
with holy spirit and best thought  
*hacha ashat shyaothnaecha vachanghacha*  
with action and word in accordance with truth  
*ahmai dan haurvata ameretata*  
they shall offer Him nectar and ambrosia  
*mazda khshathra armaiti ahuro*

The Lord is wise through power and right-mindedness.

[Ys. 47.1]

There is an evident similarity between this Old Avestic Ys. 47.1 which suggests the number one-plus-seven, and the Young Avestic Yt. 13.83 which expressly mentions this number. On the basis of this similarity one could hypothesize that Ys. 47.1 reflects the real teaching of Zarathushtra but it is equally possible that the number one-plus-seven of Yt. 13.83 is derived by priestly speculation from the Gatha stanza.

“ In the Gathas, the inherited concept of *asha*- 'truth' has proliferated the concept of a group of divine entities, led by Ahura Mazda and called Ahuras. ”

The original precedence of *asha*- 'truth' over the other Ahuras is not perspicuous in Ys. 47.1 for metrical reasons but it is ascertained by historical plausibility, by the overwhelming number of its occurrences in the Gathas, and by Ys. 37.1-5 [*Haptanghaiti*], which has the one-plus-six series *ahura mazda, asha vahishta, vohu manah, vohu khshathra, vanghi daena, vanghi fseratu, vanghi armaiti*.

Yet a notable rearrangement must have happened in the canonical series of the Younger Avesta in which *ahsa*-, having ceded his precedence to *Vohu Manah*, was shifted to the second place. This rearrangement is also mirrored in the report of Plutarch de Iside et Osiride 47 according to whom Oromazes created six divinities, namely first Good Will (*eunoia*), second Truthfulness (*aletheia*), third Good Order (*eunomia*), fourth Sound Judgment (*sophia*), fifth Wealth (*pluitos*), sixth Producer of the pleasantness rewarding for good works (*ton epi tois kalois hedeon demiurgos*).

The rearrangement is based on a speculative theological interpretation of Ys. 43.7, 9, 11, 13:

*spentem at thwa mazda menghi ahura  
hyat ma vohu pairi jasat manangha*

as a recountal by Zarathushtra on his legendary meeting with Vohu Manah, who came to guide him to the first audience granted him by Ahura Mazda. (Actually, the prophet describes himself as meditating in front of the holy fire).

The canonical number one-plus-six of the Young Avestic Amesha Spentas with the inversion of the precedence is found in Ys. 57.24:

*ahura mazda ashawa ... vohu mano ... ashem vahistem  
vairim ... spenta armaitish ... haurwatas ... ameretatas.*

The same can be detected in the Haft Ameshaspand Yasht [Yt. 2.1-3] and the two Sirozas [SI.1-7, 2.1-7]. The Siroza occurrences particularly suggest that the development of the one-plus-six pattern is closely connected with the introduction of the Mazdayasnan calendar, which is customarily attributed to the period of the Younger Avesta.

The Pahlavi translation of the Gathas tries to make a difference between the non-personified Ahurian concept *ahlayih* 'truthfulness' (often glossed by *fraronih* 'honesty') and the personified Ahura *ashwahist*, a differentiation which is appropriate in principle but which suffers very much from the translator's incompetence in matters of Avesta grammar. In his Sanskrit version of the Pahlavi, Neriosangh simply renders *ashwahist* by *ashawahishat*-. More notable is his rendering of *ahlayih* 'truthfulness' by the expected *dharma*- or, alternatively, by the unexpected *punya*- 'religious merit.'

Also surprising is Neriosangh's rendering of Phl. *ahlaw* 'truthful' by *punyatman*- 'whose soul has religious merit, of meritorious soul' or *muktatman*- 'of emancipated soul,' and of Phl. *druwand* 'deceitful' by *durgatimant*-

'unfortunate, distressful.' On this occasion he breaks the stereotype of the Pahlavi translation, obviously describing *asha*- as a condition that is enjoyed by pious people in both this world and the afterworld.

Av. *ashawan*- 'truthful' describes the condition of a pious person in this world in Vd. 5.61:

*jwascit noit bwat ashaona, meshashcit noit bakhshait  
vahishtahe anheush*

= PhlT. *ziwandag ne bawed ahlaw [ku be ne wizared] a-sh  
murd ne bakhshend an i pahlom akhwan*

'when living he cannot become truthful [i.e. he cannot expiate his soul], when he has died they will not allot to him the best existence.'

In contrast, Old Persian *rtawan*- is said of a person in the afterworld in Xerxes Ph 47-48:

*siyata ahaniy jiva utamrta rtava ahaniy*

'happy may I be when living, and when dead  
may I be truthful (= blessed),'

and *ibidem* 54-56:

*hauv uta jiva siyata bavatiy uta mrtava bavatiy*

'he becomes happy while living, and becomes  
truthful (= blessed) when dead.'

A parallel of the Old Persian interpretation of the term is obvious in Menoy i Khrad 44.34, which says of the inhabitants of Eran Wez:

*ka mirend ahlaw hend*

when they die they are truthful (= blessed)'

which in Neriosangh's Sanskrit reads:

*yadi (\*yada) mriyante mukta bhavanti*

'when they die they become emancipated.'



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'Cosmic (spiritual) dualism' is the belief that there exists both a benevolent spirit (Ahura Mazda) as well as a maleficent or evil spirit (Phl: Ahriman). The religious texts, including Zarathushtra's own words in the Gathas, unambiguously outline a cosmic (spiritual) dualism in Zarathushtrian theology.

# cosmic (spiritual) dualism in the gathas

by Sarosh J. H. Manekshaw

## Introduction

The Gathas, the devotional hymns of Zarathushtra, are filled with references to dualism: Good (*Asha*) vs. Evil (*Druj*); the Benevolent Spirit (*Spenta Mainyu*) vs. the Evil Spirit (*Angra Mainyu* or *Ahriman*); the spiritual (*menog*) creations vs. material (*getig*) creations; heaven or House of Song (*garo demano*) vs. hell or House of the Lie (*drujo demano*); Good Mind (*Vohu Manah*) vs. Evil Mind (*Aka Manah*); and many more. The Gathas constantly mention such pairings of opposites and show that Zarathushtra had a very unique way of developing his theology. Somewhat in the Newtonian sense, he perceived the universe as consisting of sets of opposites, though each set was not necessarily equal or balanced.

Given the predominance of such pairings of opposites in the Gathas, it should not be unreasonable to expect that this same pairing also extended to Zarathushtra's concept of the spiritual beings. We shall attempt to show through Zarathushtra's own words in the Gathas that indeed he did envision there to be a cosmic (or spiritual) dualism of Ahura Mazda vs. Ahriman.

The prime Gathic verse which epitomizes this dualism is Yasna 30.3 [*Humbach and Ichaporia*]:

These are the two spirits (existing) in the beginning, twins who have been heard of as the two dreams, the two thoughts, the two words, and the two actions, the better and the evil. Between these two, the munificent discriminate rightly but not those who give bad gifts.

Cosmic dualism, in the sense used in this article, is this belief that there exists both a benevolent spirit (in our

case – Ahura Mazda) as well as a maleficent or evil spirit (often called by its Pahlavi name – Ahriman). Future references to dualism in this article will always refer to just such a cosmic dualism. While recognizing the existence of the two spirits (good and evil), it should be emphasized that Zarathushtra urged his followers to totally reject the evil spirit. Thus, Zarathushtra in the Gathas ascribed all that is good to Ahura Mazda, and all that is evil to Ahriman.

The monotheistic theory, on the other hand, argues that only one being (Ahura Mazda) exists in the spiritual world and that there is no evil spirit.

Zarathushtrian theology and the religious texts (especially the Young Avestan and Pahlavi texts), are very heavily oriented towards dualism. When, why and how, then, did the concept of a strict monotheism creep into Zarathushtrian theology, to the extent that the religion is now labeled by some as the 'first' monotheistic faith?

We shall attempt to answer some of these questions. But before we review some history, we must state one of the basic Zarathushtrian tenets: *that Ahura Mazda is All Good, that His creations are All Good, and that He can in no way be associated with any form of evil.*

## History

With the exception of one aberration, Zurvanism [*discussed below*] Zarathushtrianism has, throughout its history, been a strongly dualistic religion. The Young Avestan texts, especially the Vendidad, and the Pahlavi texts, particularly the Bundahishn and the Shkand-



gumanig Vizar, champion dualism. Throughout Zarathushtrian history, the battle between good and evil was always rooted in the opposition between Ahura Mazda and Ahriman.

In the early nineteenth century, the Reverend John Wilson arrived in India, with the zeal of all missionaries, to convert Indians to Christianity. To win over the Parsis, he got into a dialogue with them – through the vernacular newspapers – and pointed out the many mistakes and weaknesses of their religion. In order to ensure converts, he demonized and maligned Zarathushtrianism by classifying it as a religion where the Parsis worshiped two gods – not only Ahura Mazda, but the evil spirit, Ahriman, as well. Although this was a gross distortion of Zarathushtrian belief, John Wilson had put a stigma on the concept of Zarathushtrian dualism. From then on this stigma has stuck and the concept of dualism became anathema to many Parsis.

The more Westernized, elitist Parsis who hoped to integrate into British society saw this as a stumbling block, and were looking for a solution to this predicament. They found it in a German scholar, Martin Haug.

Haug, a brilliant scholar, who had studied the Avesta, was the first to isolate the Gathas, from the rest of the Yasna, as the original words of Zarathushtra. He went on to explain [Haug, p. 300]:

“The leading idea of his (Zarathushtra’s) theology was Monotheism, i.e., that there are not many gods, but only one; and the principle of his speculative philosophy was Dualism, i.e., the supposition of two primal causes of the real world and of the intellectual; while his moral philosophy was moving in the Triad of thought, word and deed.”

Martin Haug goes on to state [Haug, p. 300]:

“All that is created, good or evil, fortune or misfortune, is his (Ahura Mazda’s) work.”

This directly contradicts the most basic tenet of Zarathushtrianism: that Ahura Mazda is the creator of All Good and that no evil may be attributed to Him.

Despite this egregious theological error, the Parsi elite were cheered by Haug’s remark that Zarathushtrianism could be classified as a monotheism; for that now put it in the same standing as the other monotheistic, Abrahamic religions. From that time on, the reformist movement has vigorously championed monotheism.

## Zurvanism

Long before Haug’s attempt to define Zarathushtrianism as a monotheism there had been other attempts to try to reinterpret Zarathushtrianism to be a strict monotheism. The Zurvan heresy was one such example.

Classical Zarathushtrianism has always been a dualism of two spirits – Ahura Mazda and Ahriman; where all that is created is good and is the work of Ahura Mazda, while evil comes solely from Ahriman. But, as Zaehner states [Zaehner, 1955, p. 5]:

“It can be readily understood that so fundamental a dualism might well produce a reaction, since the history of religion proves that the nature of man seems to demand a unified godhead. This reaction duly appeared in what we call Zurvanism.”

“ Classical Zarathushtrianism has always been a dualism of two spirits, where all that is created is good and is the work of Ahura Mazda, while evil comes solely from Ahriman. ”

‘Zurvan’ is the Avestan word for ‘time,’ and was also the name of a divinity, said by the Zurvanists to be the only ‘uncreated’ being. Since ‘twin spirits’ are mentioned in Ys. 30.3, it was reasoned they must have had a father, and the father came to be Zurvan. The myth

relates that Zurvan developed doubts about his ability to produce a son, and from that doubt the seed of Ahriman was born. Soon Zurvan had ‘twin’ sons: Ahura Mazda, all good; and Ahriman, all evil. In this lay the heresy that Ahura Mazda is the ‘created’ son of Zurvan. [Boyce, p. 68]. Zurvanism was popular during Sasanian times but was later recognized as a heresy.

## Monotheism

Martin Haug was the first Western scholar to promote a strict monotheism in Zarathushtrianism. He also claimed that both good and evil were created by Ahura Mazda, although he did not give any reasons for this. This attribution of the creation of evil to Ahura Mazda was anathema to most Zarathushtris and while some still wanted to believe in the monotheism that Haug proposed, they had to find a way to relegate evil to a source other than Ahura Mazda.

So a new theory was developed that evil was not a creation of Ahura Mazda, but rather that evil existed only in the human mind. To justify this, they interpreted the ‘twin mainyus’ of Ys. 30.3 as being the twin human mentalities – good and evil.

This theory has all the subtlety of trying to force a square peg in a round hole. What remains unanswered is that if Ahura Mazda is not responsible for creation of evil, then how did humans create the evil mentality? For everything is the creation of Ahura Mazda. The theory, thus, implies that humans have the ability to create that which even Ahura Mazda is incapable of.

Further there is conclusive evidence, as we shall shortly see, that the mainyus referred to in Ys. 30. 3 are spiritual beings and not human mentalities.

## Gathic evidence

Ahura Mazda is mentioned several times in the Gathas as ‘Ahura Mazda,’ ‘Mazda Ahura,’ ‘Ahura’ alone, or

‘Mazda’ alone. But what is the evidence for Zarathushtra acknowledging the existence of other spiritual beings – both ‘good’ and ‘evil’?

We have seen that in Yasna 30.3, Zarathushtra mentions the ‘twin spirits’ – Spenta (Good) Mainyu and Angra (Evil) Mainyu. These two spirits are mentioned again together, as opposites, in Yasna 45.2 [*Humbach and Ichaporia*]:

Now I shall proclaim the two spirits in the first (stage) of existence, of whom the holy one shall address the harmful one as follows: “Neither our thoughts nor pronouncements, neither intellects nor choices, neither utterances nor actions nor religious views, nor our souls are in agreement.”

As distinct from the two spirits, ‘mainyus,’ Zarathushtra also talks about the two ‘minds:’ the Good Mind – *Vohu Manah* and the Evil Mind – *Aka Manah*. *Vohu Manah* is mentioned several times, while *Aka Manah* is mentioned three times (Ys. 32.3, 33.4 & 47.5) in the Gathas.

In addition to the Evil Spirit and Evil Mind the ‘*daevas*’ are also frequently mentioned. The *daevas* are the false gods (demons) who promote the Lie.

In Yasna 30.6, Zarathushtra attributes the spread of evil among mankind to these *daevas* [*Humbach and Ichaporia*]:

The *daevas* do not at all rightly discriminate between these two spirits, for as they take counsel with each other delusion comes over them, so that they choose the worst thought. In that way they all run to meet wrath, by which the mortals sicken existence.

So we see that while there are numerous mentions to Ahura Mazda, Spenta Mainyu (The Good Spirit) and *Vohu Manah* (Good Mind), there are also ample references to the Evil Spirit, Evil Mind and *daevas* – demons in the Gathas. This shows that Zarathushtra’s sets of opposites extended to the spiritual world as well.

But what of the monotheists argument that the two mainyus are not spiritual beings but rather that they are human mentalities (good and evil)? In Yasna 51.7 Zarathushtra states that Ahura Mazda created all good things through Spenta Mainyu [*Humbach and Ichaporia*]:

You, O Mazda, who fashioned the cow, the waters, and the plants, grant me immortality and integrity through the most holy spirit, strength and stability through good thought at the pronouncement (of your judgment).

Further in Ys. 47.3, Zarathushtra calls Ahura Mazda the “father” of Spenta Mainyu [*Humbach and Ichaporia*]:

You are the holy father of this spirit who fashioned for it the joy-giving cow, and in order to establish peace for her

pasture (fashioned) right-mindedness when He took counsel with good thought.

Thus, it was through Spenta Mainyu that Ahura Mazda created everything. This shows that Spenta Mainyu is a spiritual being, for creation would have been undertaken by a spiritual being rather than a human mentality. Clearly then, if Zarathushtra acknowledges Spenta Mainyu as a spiritual being, he would have also recognized Angra Mainyu as a spiritual being too.

As Dasturji Dhalla states [*Dhalla, p. 36*]:

“Ahura Mazda is the greatest spiritual personality. Spenta Mainyu is his image, his replica. He represents the creative attribute of Ahura Mazda in his relation to the created world.”

These references, and many more, in the Gathas unambiguously show that the two mainyus are the two spirits – the beneficent (Spenta) and the maleficent (Angra). Zarathushtra was thus definitely outlining a spiritual dualism in his theology.

## Conclusion

The “traditional” doctrine that the religion of Zarathushtra is a dualism, not only can be discerned from the Gathas, but it is very strongly supported by the Avestan and Pahlavi texts. Thus, we have a historical record, stretching over two millennia, which indicates that dualism is the recognized Zarathushtrian doctrine. The issue with its being unacceptable to the “monotheists” lies not in the fact that they can show it to be heretical to Zarathushtra’s doctrine

“ The Gathas unambiguously show that the two mainyus are the two spirits – the beneficent (Spenta) and the maleficent (Angra). Zarathushtra was thus definitely outlining a spiritual dualism in his theology. ”

(for this has never been proved), but rather with their concern over Zoroastrianism being perceived as an inferior religion compared to the present-day monotheistic religions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Zarathushtra saw good and beauty in the world, and he saw evil and distress. He knew that evil was not just of man’s making, but that it existed in the material and in the spiritual world as well, an evil which neither man nor Ahura Mazda could control. Just as Ahura Mazda was all Goodness, so Angra Mainyu was all evil. Good and evil were the inherent properties of Ahura Mazda and Angra Mainyu respectively, and existed primordially because they are the very essence of each of the two Beings. The only way to fight evil is by doing more good, and by so doing, to promote the final destruction of evil.

**The problem of evil.** Zarathushtra must have spent a major part of his long period of meditation on thinking about this problem of evil. There is little doubt that he must have faced the dilemma of trying to reconcile the goodness of Ahura Mazda with the evil that existed in the

world. Foremost in Zarathushtra's mind would have been the absolute benevolence of Ahura Mazda – not even the most indirect form of evil could be attributed to Him. Good and evil were, in Zarathushtra's doctrine, mutually independent and totally incompatible with one another; or as he states in his Gathas [Ys. 45.2]:

“Neither thought nor teachings nor wills nor beliefs nor words nor deeds nor selves nor souls of us twain agree.”

Zarathushtra solved this problem by facing evil head on; he did not try to rationalize it away as a “function of the depraved (human) mind,” rather, he recognized it as very real, and attributed it to an independent, primeval power, which co-existed alongside Ahura Mazda. By moving away from the concept of a strict monotheism, he avoided the trap that so many of the theologians and philosophers, who followed him, have fallen into. Perhaps, this understanding of duality is best explained by Zaehner [Zaehner, 1956, p. 55]:

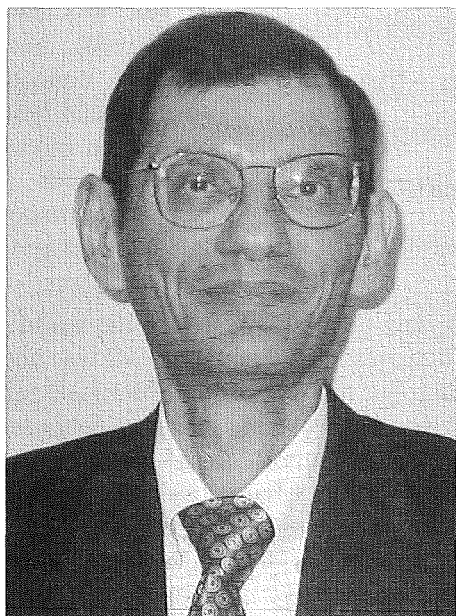
“Once you admit the reality of evil, then God is responsible for it unless Evil is an eternal principle co-existent with God and irreconcilably opposed to Him. Evil is not a privation as the Christians would have it, but a substance, and it does not need, therefore, to be explained away. It is not the world, nor even of the world, as the Manichaens hold; *IT IS RATHER A PURE SPIRIT*, the negation of life, and naked aggression; it is wrong-mindedness, stupidity, blind self-assertiveness, error. There is no unity in the Cosmos as it is, nor is there unity in eternity. How could there be,

since *EVIL IS A FACT, NOT A PROBLEM*? The Zoroastrians claim to face the fact rationally, and they have not survived as a world religion, for ‘religions are based on certain fundamental assumptions which, of their nature, do not admit of logical proof,’ and one of these is the unity of the creative principle. This Zoroastrianism flatly denies. (Emphasis added.)

“If, then, one accepts a fundamental duality in Being itself, the classic problems of religion disappear. Evil exists from all eternity: it is aggressive by nature and the good principle who is omniscient must, therefore, defend himself against it. There is no mystery about creation either.” ■

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Sarosh has served as guest editor of *FEZANA Journal* (“Date and Place of Zarathushtra,” and “Treasures of the Avesta: Our Daily Prayers”) and contributed numerous articles. He is also an active participant in interfaith activities in Houston and has spoken to numerous church groups.

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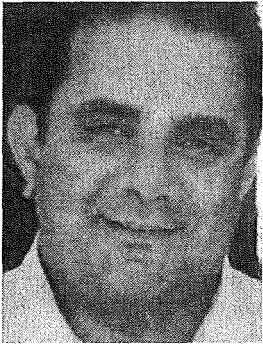


EXCERPTED FROM "THE BRANDON NEWS," MAY 12, 2004

# Cardiologist Has A Lot of Heart

BY DEREK MAUL, COLUMNIST

Hoshedar P. Tamboli, M. D., is convinced that



the profound symbiosis of his life has been no accident. He believes providence labors inexorably in collusion with the intentions

and preparations of those willing to work to see the realization of their dreams.

Growing up in Poona ... he attended a Jesuit school ... he was a young person with a deep passion to learn, and to be his very best. He saw opportunities as a kind of trust, and

was determined to make the best of such a gift ... the young doctor was seriously thinking of coming to America ...

The complexity of the hoop-jumping required was daunting. The quest involved academic pre-testing, a myriad letters of recommendation and certification, a complex amalgam of grants, and the labyrinth of roadblocks known as a visa from the US consulate ...

Eventually, Tamboli found himself in New York. He had \$500 in his pocket, a new pair of shoes on his feet, and burning ambition in his heart.

Over the next weeks, the young man literally wore holes in those new shoes, looking at residency programs in scores of hospitals. "It

was very distressing and disappointing," he said ... With residency slots filled, the prospects for an unheralded foreigner with a suitcase full of dreams were slim or non-existent.

He never let go of his dream ... in May 1985, a series of serendipitous encounters let him to a contract with Weiss Memorial in Chicago ... His ensuing journey from Chicago to his arrival in Brandon, Florida, is another story ...

"The great thing about America is the intellectual freedom here," he said passionately ...

Tamboli's [Tampa] Bay Area Cardiology Associates practice recently established a foundation that will award scholarships to a senior from each of seven high schools in the Brandon area.

BY JOYCE DUNN  
Special to the Times

Maneck Bhujwala, Child Advocate:

## Small Steps, Big Rewards

At a time in life when many people enjoy their golden years playing golf, traveling or simply relaxing, Maneck Bhujwala chose to stay vitally involved by becoming a Child Advocate. The rewards exceed his expectations; the investment of time seems insignificant within the context of helping a child.

Bhujwala's journey towards child advocacy seems to have been written in the stars. A Silicon Valley software professional, he was laid off in 2001 ... he did a considerable amount of soul-searching and reflecting. Why not give "something back to

society?" Why not become an integral part of a child's life?

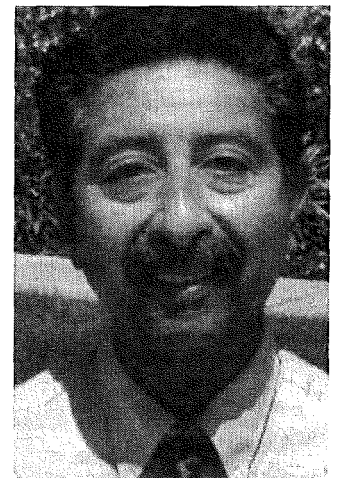
Through the Child Advocate program, Bhujwala became a friend to a shy, reflective, but spirited seven-year-old boy ... after a seven-week indoctrination program in Santa Clara [California] County Child Advocacy program.

The painful facts of this young child's life had a profound effect on Bhujwala. No one should have to live like that, especially a child. His home reflected discord, alcoholism and parental dispute.

As a Child Advocate, Bhujwala could provide the one-on-one relationship and the love that was absent in the home.

The child would come alive when Bhujwala paid his weekly visits ... With Bhujwala as his advocate, the young boy has received

direction, love and hope for the future.



Child Advocates is recruiting individuals for abused and neglected children. Call (408) 416-0400.

[EVERGREEN TIMES, CALIFORNIA, JULY 2003.]



# Lest We Forget

by Dinaz Kutar Rogers

## Do you remember any stories or sayings?

"Lest We Forget" is hosted by Dinaz Kutar Rogers, a high-school biology teacher and published writer. Readers are invited to contribute their stories, lores, legends and memories related to our faith, community, Iran, India, that we grew up with as young children. Jot down those sayings your mother used to say, and send them in, with your version of the meanings, to Dinaz at 1240 Takena SW, Albany, Oregon 97321, tel: (541) 967-1911, email: drogersor@msn.com.

## Tale of a town and the two suns

As a child I heard stories that Akbar the Great (1542-1605), the Mogul ruler of India, had granted land in the town of Navsari to the Parsis. The following version of the tale was told to my cousins and me, by one of my aunts, Mehroomasi (my mother's sister, Mehroo Manekshaw Nanadaru), who was trying to emphasize the power of our Zarathushti prayers more than the generosity of a Mogul emperor.

*These are the stories  
that never, never die,  
that are carried like seed  
into a new country,  
are told to you and me  
and make in us  
new and lasting strengths.*

from Nancy Hanks of Wilderness Road  
A Story of Lincoln's Mother  
by Meridel de Sueur

In the court of Akbar the Great, priests, scholars, and mystics of all religions were welcomed, so that Akbar could engage them in an intellectual and spiritual discourse. This Muslim *padshah* (emperor) not only was interested in all the faiths, but showed a universal tolerance and fairness toward them. Inspired by such debates Akbar came up with his own brand of religion called *Deen-i Ilahi*. Of course by this time in our youth, we all knew what *deen* meant – religion.

This new religion involved common truths to be found in Islam, Hinduism, Jainism, Christianity and of course *apro* (our) Zarathushti *deen*! For a brief time it was believed that Akbar *padshah* was quite taken in by the message that the Jesuit priests had brought to him. It's been said that only religious wrath from his co-religionists and political expediency cautioned Akbar to maintain the status quo.

Later on in my readings and studies, I found out that my *masi* was close enough. It was the Jesuits who wanted Akbar to convert. They were hostile to the creation of a universal religion, which would have been heavily based on the precepts of Islam. Borrowed from the Zarathushti *deen* were reverence for the sun as the epitome of light, the celestial force of our faith, and the idea of divine kingship – the royal '*farr*.'

One day a magician, possibly an illusionist, came to the palace to entertain the emperor and his eclectic court. The magician raised a gold *thali* (tray) into the sky, and it shone just as bright and true as the sun next to it. Now there were two suns, side by side, blazing in the clear blue skies over Delhi.

Everyone in the court was amazed at the sorcerer's feat. No one was able to pick out the true sun from the dazzling tray in the sky. Akbar asked the magician to bring the metal sun down. The magician refused, which in itself was a dangerous thing – to defy the most powerful man in the whole of Asia, but the man came to no harm. Maybe Akbar was relieved



Above, painting of the First Dastur Maherjirana (1510-1591) at the Navsari Atash Behram.

Right, present-day Dastur Maherjirana of the Navsari Atash Behram. At far right, is the author's father, Sorab Faramroze Kutar.



at this refusal, as it gave him an opening to challenge representatives of all the faiths assembled at the court to bring down the false sun.

Each took his turn – chanting, praying and commanding the false sun to come down in the name of his God. One after another they tried, but failed.

My Mehroomasi wondered aloud why our Zarathushti priests were the last at this attempt and I, in my child-like innocence, surmised, “Maybe because ‘zed’ is the last letter in the alphabet.” Of course I was not thinking of the languages of the ancient court, in whose alphabets ‘zuh’ sound is certainly not the last letter, as it is in English.

Not easily distracted by any interruptions, my aunt continued with the narrative.

Back at the court Zarathushti priests perhaps performed a *jashan*, a celebratory ceremony. My aunt too had that idiosyncratic *chavat* Parsi sense of humor.

“Mind you I was not there, so I am guessing – a jashan ceremony.”

She quipped. “I am not *THAT* old.”

We all giggled, not understanding the humor of that statement. To us little ones, thirty was old!

Our priests prayed, offered *sukhad* (sandalwood) and *loban* (frankincense) into the fire burning in the metal *afarganyu* (braziers) and prayed some more.

Lo and behold, that thali came crashing down! All in the court of Akbar the Great were impressed, and more so Akbar!

In recognition of the power of the Zarathushti deen, Akbar the Great gave Parsis tracts of land near Navsari, some 250 miles north of Bombay.

This region would centuries later become the home of my paternal grandfather, Dastur Faramroze Naorji Kutar, and the rest of the Kutar clan. ■

*Note:* I was unable to recall the name of that great priest. Only upon reading the story about Navsari [FEZANA Journal, Spring 2003, pp. 28-29] did the name of the celebrated Dastur Maherjirana come into focus.

The following sums up my ‘philosophy’ as to why I write, especially for FEZANA Journal, and the reason why FEZANA Journal exists ... - Dinaz Kutar Rogers

***“Put it before them  
briefly so they will  
read it, clearly so  
they will appreciate  
it, and above all,  
accurately so they  
will be guided by its  
light”***

- Joseph Pulitzer





# Memories of jashans past

by Dinaz Kutar Rogers

*My Kaikhshrow foowaji would explain: "A jashan is a thanksgiving service dedicated to Ahura Mazda for his continued blessings. It also serves to strengthen both community and spiritual bonds."*

**T**his vignette from our collective past about Meherjirana's prowess in Akbar's court [*previous page*] takes me to the ubiquitous 'jashan,' a catch-all Zarathushti ceremony for any occasion.

As a young child, I remember vividly going to quite a few jashans, officiated over by several priests, among whom would be one or two from my Kutar family. At times, the jashan ceremony was presided over by priests from my maternal grandmother's family at a different agiari.

"Why must we have a jashan?" I inquired, as usual, curious about everything.

The answer came from my uncle Dastur Kaikhshrow Kutar, whom I called Kaikhshrow foowaji (*foowaji* = father's sister's husband).

"We have been performing jashans since ancient times and there are many reasons, ranging from joyous occasions such as anniversaries of Atash Behrams and agiaris, gahanbars to somber occasions like praying to Ahura Mazda for someone's recovery from an illness, or to mark a loved one's death anniversary, or to end or avoid natural disasters or wars."

Now that was more information than my young but very curious mind had bargained for – our Zarathushti prayers were to avert wars and other such catastrophes and also to celebrate, rejoice and have a good time!

No matter how many times I attended such a celebration, the shining, flickering but constant brightness of lights of the oil-wick divas, the brilliant and dazzling fire burning in the afarganyu, and the unbelievable aroma of *sukhad-loban* (sandalwood and frankincense) that perfumed the air, never failed to impress me and created in me wonderment about the beauty of our ancient faith and rituals.

On one occasion, when one of my cousins asked why so many people had gathered for the jashan at the Dadar agiary, Kaikhshrow foowaji went on to explain:

"These jashans marking joyous occasions have a dual purpose. It is a thanksgiving service dedicated to Ahura Mazda for his continued blessings upon our Parsi community and the individual personage. The other purpose is to strengthen both community and spiritual bonds."

I am glad foowaji went on to explain the meaning of the prayers as I, like all others, did not understand the foreign-sounding but ear-pleasing prayers of the ancients.

"While reciting these Avestan prayers, our priests implore Ahura Mazda for the protection of, and good of all fellow humans and of course all other living things. These jashan prayers will ring out for Ahura Mazda's seven creations – sky, water, earth, fire, plant, animal, man – and

the seven angels in charge of each, the 'Bounteous Immortals,' familiar to us Zarathushtis as the Amesha Spentas."

Soon after he said this, the jashan began. With great interest I observed one of the priests offering sandalwood and frankincense to the fire in the afarganyu, with long, shining metal tongs and a flat ladle.

I took note of the many metal trays arranged with fresh fruits like pomegranates, dried fruits like *bad-dam*, *darakh*, *khajoor* (almonds, raisins and dates) and specially prepared Parsi foods like *papri-malido* (fried flat bread and sweet halva). With appreciation that only a child could possess, I took in the colors of the fragrant flowers, the lush greens of special foliage and herbs.

The overhead lights bounced off the *karaseeya* (metal vases) filled with water, wine and milk, adding to the festive nature of the occasion.

This veritable thanksgiving feast was laid on a pristine white cloth on a clean floor.

After the jashan ceremony, we were allowed to eat the prayed-over food. Papri-malido was my absolute favorite.

Nothing was as awe-inspiring as the jashan ceremonies I attended as a young girl. ■

# My mother used to say...

"The old forget. The young don't know." - Japanese proverb

## Eyney to mahru(n) lohi nu paani kidhu(n)

*That person converted my blood into water. I was brought to despair by his persistence/harassment.*

## Eyney to aapraa paisaa nu paani kidhu(n)

*That person converted our wealth into water. He has brought us to financial ruin.*

## Aayey to oothaa(n) bhanaavey chhey

*He is making us guess riddles. He is being deceitful.*

## Eney to potaani oommar vechi.

*He has sold his own age. He has put the maturity of his age in doubt; he is being childish.*

## Evvan to chhelley paatley beytheylaa chhey.

*He is seated on the last stool. He has become very desperate.*

## Aayey to maathaa(n) dookhan chhey

*This is a headache. This is a difficult/confusing situation.*

## Walkeshvar naa pathraa chhey.

*As worthless as the rocks at Walkeshvar beach (in Mumbai). A remark made when the expectations are high and there is very little to offer.*

## Evvan to garam sabhaav naa chhey

*He possesses a hot temperament. Remark made when a person flies into a rage easily.*

## Kon naa baap ni Diwali?

*Whose father's Diwali festival is it? Remark made when a person in charge of funds has spent extravagantly.*

## Ey to thundoo maatlu(n) chhey.

*He is a cool pot. He is calm and collected/slow and unruffled.*

## Evvan to bilkool bhejaa(n) phaatel chhey.

*He clearly possesses a split brain. A remark made when a person exhibits an obstructive nature and difficulties in communication.*

## Potaanaa peyt ni pujaa kidhi.

*Reverence paid to his own stomach. A remark made about a person who shows gluttonous behavior with little consideration for others in a group.*

## Vagar phokatno pijan paatlo karey chhey

*The literal meaning of 'pijan paatlo' remains obscure to my mind. Without reason entering into a meaningless rhetoric.*

## Utaavaley aambaa nahi paakey.

*In a hurry, mangoes do not ripen. Mangoes don't ripen in a hurry. Haste makes waste.*

## Khaadhu(n) dhaan ne giyu(n) maan

*Eat meal and lose dignity. Partake of someone's meal (uninvited) at the risk of losing one's dignity.*

## Tu(n) em karse to paatlo kem faavse?

*The literal meaning of 'paatlo kem faavse' remains obscure to my mind. If you insist on doing this, how will we ever get along?*

- Submitted by Sam Kerr

## READERS' FORUM

Readers may submit letters (under 250 words) to the editor on topics of general interest. The Journal reserves the right to edit materials for suitability, clarity and space.

### On past issues

I have just gone through the Spring 2005 issue ["Vegetation on Earth: an Avestan Revelation"] and am delighted not only with its exquisite cover design by Zenobia Damania, but also the *TREASURE TROVE* of information put together by your guest editor Sam Kerr.

It is indeed a labor of love. Please convey my thanks to Ms. Damania, Dr. Kerr and all the authors for their enlightening articles. The beautiful photographs enhanced their value.

I have often sought healing in the greenery around me and this issue will help me appreciate each flower, plant and tree in a different light.

Mani Bhathena, Springvale,  
Victoria, Australia

When I read the Spring FEZANA Journal, I just had to say ... you are to be applauded for the enormous amount of time and energy in selfless service, in the interest of the Zarathushtis. The community certainly owes you a great debt. This fine Journal has certainly come a very long way since its start. Congratulations.

Ester Bamji  
Chevy Chase, Maryland

The articles in the Spring issue about plants and vegetation were *par excellence*. I would especially like to thank guest editor Sam Kerr.

Farida Bamji  
Chesterfield, United Kingdom

It is said that *LOVE* is an act of *FAITH*; when *FAITH* matures, it becomes *LOVE*. The Spring issue is

filled with gems of wisdom, which touched the essence of my heart and spirit. I would like to thank guest editor Dr. Sam Kerr and the entire Journal team for producing this masterpiece work of journalism.

*Meher Dadabhoy Amalsad*  
*Westminster, California*  
*http://www.bread4thehead.com*

I just completed reading the issue on Judaism and Christianity [FJ Fall 2004]. This issue, together with many of your others should be preserved in the annals of Zarathushti libraries all over the world.

*Scylla Vatcha*  
*Mumbai, India*

In issue after issue, you present us the pulse and history of our community in a grand kaleidoscopic manner. Our heartiest congratulations for this type of presentation.

One thing everybody likes is the encouragement you provide for both young and old achievers by presenting their achievements in your columns. It is worth a million accolades.

Thank you for the unique services you are rendering. We pray that God Almighty bestow unity, peace and prosperity on our miniscule community, under the enlightened guidance of leaders like you.

*Adi B. Gandhi*  
*Los Angeles, California*

Under Sam Kerr's capable guest editorship the Spring issue of our beloved FEZANA Journal made Vegetation on Earth: an Avestan Revelation, a most interesting and relevant topic. Enjoyed all the photos – my only regret is that we cannot afford to print the Journal in color.

And I did go out and buy myself a bottle of pomegranate juice from the health food store!

*Dinaz Kutar Rogers*  
*Albany, Oregon*

Thank you to the Journal team for your devoted contributions to the community. I knew Sam Kerr as a good surgeon, but after reading the



## Laugh and be Merry

*By Jamshed Udvadia*



State Police Officer sees a car puttering along the expressway at 22 mph. So he turns on his lights and pulls the driver over. Approaching the car, he notices five old ladies inside – two in front and three in the back – eyes wide and white as ghosts. The driver says to him,

“Officer, I don’t understand, I was doing exactly the speed limit! What seems to be the problem?”

“Ma’am,” the officer replies, “You weren’t speeding, but you should know that driving slower than the speed limit can also be a danger to other drivers.”

“Slower than the speed limit? No sir, I was doing the speed limit exactly ...Twenty-Two miles an hour!” she says.

The police officer, trying to repress a smile explains to her that ‘22’ was the route number, not the speed limit. A bit embarrassed, the woman snickered and thanked the officer for pointing out her error.

“But before I let you go, Ma’am, I have to ask ...Is everyone in this car ok? These women seem awfully shaken and they haven’t muttered a single peep this whole time.”

“Oh, they’ll be alright in a minute officer. We just got off Route 119.”

*[Submitted by Rustom Engineer, Houston, TX]*

An elderly Muslim lady was well-known for her faith and for her confidence in talking about it. She would stand in front of her house and say “Allah be praised” to all those who passed by.

Next door to her lived an atheist, who would get so angry at her proclamations he would shout, “There ain’t no Lord!!”

Hard times came upon the elderly lady, and she prayed out loud: “Oh Allah! I need food!! I am having a hard time, please send me some groceries.”

The atheist happened to hear her praying, and decided to play a prank on her. The next morning the lady went out on her porch and found a large bag of groceries. She raised her hands and shouted, “Allah be praised!”

The neighbor jumped out from behind a bush and said, “Aha! I told you there was no Lord. I bought those groceries, Allah didn’t.”

The old lady laughed and clapped her hands and said, “ALLAH BE PRAISED. He not only sent me groceries, but he made the non-believer pay for them!”

*[anon]*



Spring issue, I believe he could pursue a new career in retirement.

*Filli Madon*

*NSW, Australia*

The Zarathushti communities of North America are truly blessed in having a journal of the calibre of Fezana Journal. Its comprehensive and outstanding coverage fulfills a crying need of our community – an understanding of our history and religion.

I welcome yet another outstanding issue covering Vegetation – one of the creations we revere in our religion – as also the fine work of your guest editor Sam Kerr.

*Yezdi Antia*

*Toronto, Ontario*

### **Fruit for the heart**

After reading Ardeshtir Damania's article [*"The Efficacious Qualities of the Pomegranate, FJ, Spring 2005*], I had to send you this article from *Chemistry World [Royal Chemical Society, UK, May 2005]* which states:

"Pomegranate juice reverses the development of atherosclerosis at the level of gene activation ... The discovery suggests that treating at-risk patients with antioxidant polyphenols in the juice could halt disease progression.

"Pomegranate juice offers potent protection against cardiovascular disease... It is possible that those anti-atherosclerotic characteristics are mediated by the antioxidant effect of pomegranate juice due to an increase in nitric oxide, the molecule that is mostly responsible for vasodilation and cardiovascular protection..."

Growing up, as a child, in my grand uncle's (late Er. Dastur Darabsha Coyaji) household, we ate pomegranates often. It was a common fruit, always included in jashans and 'chasni.'

*Phiroz Dastoor*

*Weston, Ontario*

### **Calliope magazine**

FEZANA's *Legacy of Zarathushtra* is on the suggested reading list in the January issue of CALLIOPE, a magazine for students grade 4 and up, with consulting editors Jamsheed Choksy and P. Octor Skaervo. A monthly magazine, it focuses one issue a year on a major world religion. This year they chose Zoroastrianism.

It made me proud to see several contributions from *Legacy* and FEZANA Journal.

The Journal is a valuable resource for our community that has kept us connected and well informed.

I hope for you, the exhilaration at the end of the day triumphs over the exhaustion, with all the tasks you undertake.

*Aban Rustomji*

*Houston, Texas*

### **Seeking Gujarati translator**

My great great grandfather, Bejanji Jhansiwalla was an eyewitness to the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857. He described his experiences in vivid Gujarati couplets. They were published 40 years ago in book form, by my grand-aunt, Nergis Byramji.

In an effort to discover this long lost ancestor, and glean from this personal perspective, a sense of what our compatriots endured during those tumultuous years, I would like to have the Gujarati stanzas translated from Gujarati into English.

I am looking for a suitable translator for this short book. A sample page of the manuscript can be requested.

*Nawaz Merchant*

*23 Patrick Henry Place*

*Ringoes, NJ 08551*

*nawazmerchant@yahoo.com*

### **'Au Pair' program**

Young Iranian Zarathushti women are under great pressure, as many young men have left Iran in search of greener pastures in the West. If they are to venture out of Iran, they need a responsible family to receive them.

One idea to facilitate this is a program called 'Au Pair.' Au Pair women get a visa to come to the USA and help families that have young children. While my son Dr. Bahram Varjavand had no problem getting an Au Pair girl from Finland, he could not get the agencies to agree to sponsor an Iranian Zarathushti girl to come for the same job.

We need to form an Au Pair agency that specializes in helping young Zarathushti women from Iran, Pakistan and India, to come to the west. I hope that persons knowledgeable in immigration law could help establish such an agency.

*Parviz Varjavand*

*San Carlos, California*

### **Surat, Australia**

I refer to a FEZANA issue in which there was a write up of geographical places in USA, with Zarathushti or Parsi connections. Your readers with connections in Surat, India, would be interested to know that there is in the Queensland state of Australia, a town named 'Surat.'

In 1849 Thomas Mitchell the Surveyor General, directed Burrowes a surveyor, to select a township site on the Balonne River. Burrowes did so and named it Surat, after his former place of residence in India. The town is 500 km west of the State capital Brisbane. The 1891 survey showed its population at 221; it had risen to 468 in 1991.

My dad was born in Surat.

*Kersi Rustomji*

*Lavington, NSW, Australia*

### **Murders of elderly**

Sadly, many elderly Parsis now live alone and lead a lonely life. The murders of two elderly Parsi widowers in Mumbai within a week of each other sends a chill down one's spine.

On May 21, 2005, 75-year old Parvez Jamshed Patel was found lying in a pool of blood inside his Marine Drive flat worth at least Rs. 2 crores. It is suspected that he was done in by his





At the "Women in Business" program, from left, Sharmeen Irani, program organizer Meher Rustomji, Khursheed Challa and Sandy Poffinbarger.

**WZCC-Houston programs.** *Sandy R. Poffinbarger* of Women's Business Enterprise Alliance (WBEA) was the opening speaker at the "Women in Business" program on March 17 at The Madras Pavillion, in Sugarland, TX. WBEA, established in 1995, is a pace setter in helping women business enterprises grow and develop.

*Sharmeen Irani* spoke about the challenges she faced as she established her Welbread Bakery in 2003, in the affluent Galleria area. Sharmeen runs the bakery using strong business principles and has sales and growth targets. Sharmeen's family has been in the bakery business in India for 4 generations. Along with Artisan breads, sandwiches, gourmet cakes and pastries, Wellbread Bakery also bake shrewsbury cookies, nutsingers and nankhatai's.

*Khurshid Challa*, owner and director of Sugar Mill Montessori School in Sugarland, started as an assistant teacher and went on to acquire her AMS Montessori certification. Opportunity came knocking in the form of an abandoned building. After acquiring and refurbishing it, Sugar Mill Montessori School opened its doors in 1994. The school has grown in size from one small classroom to six and has won the prestigious Kathleen Rowland Award for Leadership and Innovation in Education. To those who would like to open a business, Khurshid says, "Discover your passion and pursue it, there is never a good time, so seize the moment and just do it!"

About 70 persons attended the WZCC-Houston program on "Health is Wealth" at the Madras Pavilion in Sugarland on May 18. *Dr. Yasmin Engineer*, a Board certified OB-GYN on staff at the Sugarland Methodist Hospital, spoke about cancer screening and early detection signs of cancer for men and women. *Dr. Darius Wania*, an internist in private practice, who served as chair, Department of Medicine at West Houston Medical Center, spoke on the prevention and treatment of cardiovascular diseases, with emphasis on diet and exercise. *Bob Bateman* of Physician Select Vitamins, spoke about vitamins that are physician backed and formulated for specific purposes.

[WZCC-Houston chapter chair Zarir Sethna, [zarirs@sbcglobal.net](mailto:zarirs@sbcglobal.net)]

## Australia chapter hosts talk on Sasanian coins

WZCC-Australia [chair *Filli Madon*, [pars09@yahoo.com](mailto:pars09@yahoo.com)] had a meeting on April 24th, 2005 with Dr. Sam Kerr as guest speaker. He presented an interesting and informative talk on his vast collection of Sasanian coins.

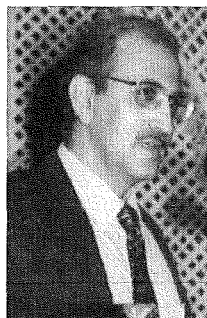
## Middle East function draws members from UAE and Oman

WZCC-ME (chair *Meher Bhesani-abhesania@emirates.net.ae*) held the first event of the year 2005 in Muscat, Oman. The function was held on 10th February, at the Passage to India Restaurant at Ruwi. Many of the WZCC-ME members from UAE and Oman attended the function!

WZCC-ME held their 2nd AGM on March 10th, at Hotel Intercontinental in Dubai. Firdose A. Vandrevalla, chairman of Tata Teleservices and Managing Director of Tata Power presided at the function.

## WZCC-India hosts informative programs

WZCC India - Mumbai chapter (chair *Kersi Limathwalla*, [limath@vsnl.com](mailto:limath@vsnl.com)) and members of the managing committee heard a presentation on "Union Budget 2005," by eminent Sr. Counsel Mr. Firoze Andhyarujina. The event was held at M.C. Ghia Hall on March 5th.



At the program on March 18, keynote speaker Kersi Limathwalla [left] spoke on "Changes in Income Tax Law in the Union Budget 2005." Mr. Limathwalla who runs the consulting firm M/s Kersi Jamshedji & Co, Chartered Accountants, publishes the annual eagerly awaited 'Budget Circulars.'

The April program was held at the Bombay Parsi Punchayet Board

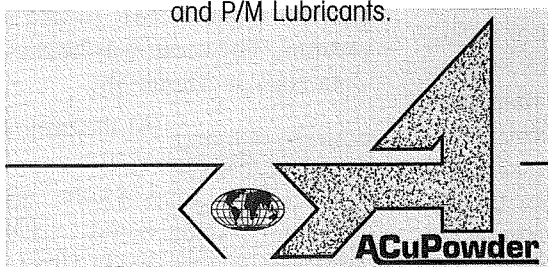




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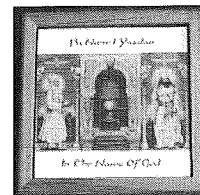
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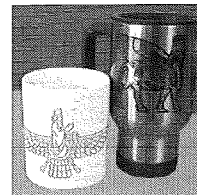
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Room on April 18. It was an interactive session to guide members on the new VAT provision.

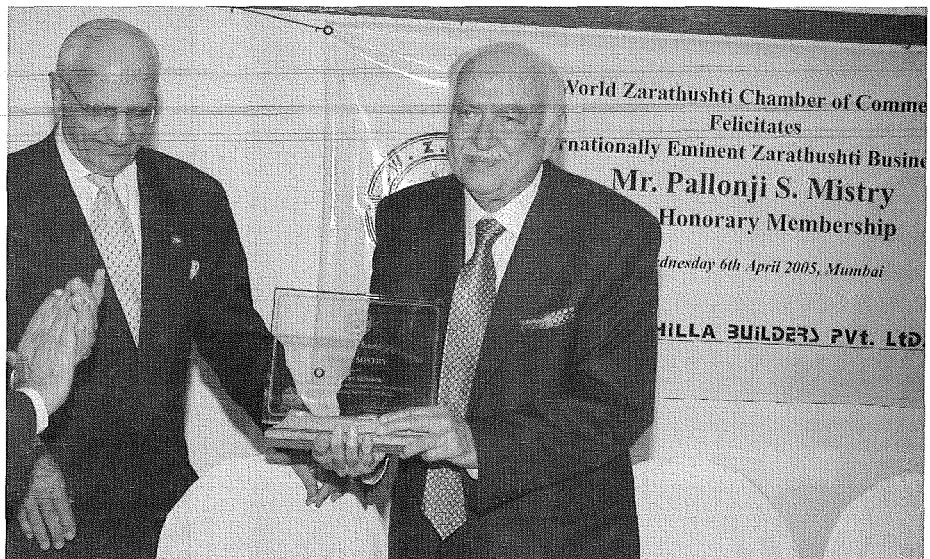
On May 7, at the AOTS Alumni Association of Western India, WZCCI had arranged an orientation session on *Successful Japanese Concepts* that are internationally recognized and adopted. M. Ramamurthy, spoke on AOTS and *International Training Opportunities*. ■

### WZCC-UK hosts talk on P&O Ports

**Jimmy Sarbh**, chairman and managing director of P&O Ports, Mumbai addressed the WZCC-UK (chair **Karan Bilimoria**, [kbilimoria@cobrabeer.com](mailto:kbilimoria@cobrabeer.com)) at The Burton Room in London, on May 18. He presented an audio-visual on how in only 5 years he set up the P&O terminal from scratch at Nava Shiva, Mumbai and within 5 years thereafter, made it one of the most successful ventures of P&O worldwide, processing 1.3 million shipping containers per year. This was a remarkable story, showing enthusiasm, dynamism and the tremendous potential in India. ■

### Tatas forge steel alliance with Iran

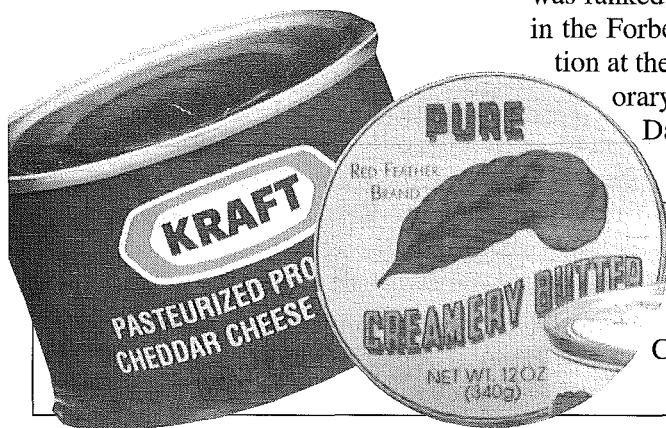
On June 12, Tata Steel signed a joint venture agreement with an Iranian company to set up manufacturing projects of up to 6 million tons and develop unexplored iron ore mines in that country. Iran, with its rich reserves of inputs and quality infrastructure is a favorable location for the steel industry. ■



Top, WZCC-I president Minoo Shroff awarding honorary membership to Pallonji Mistry. Below, the head table, from left, program chair, Zarin Commissariat [not in picture], Dr. Jimmy Sidhva, Minoo Shroff, Pallonji Mistry, Mumbai chapter chair Kersi Limathwalla, chair of Godrej & Boyce Ltd. Jamshyd Godrej, function sponsor Zarir Bhathena of Hilla Builders and WZCC technical director and website manager Yazdi Tantra of ON-LYNE Systems.

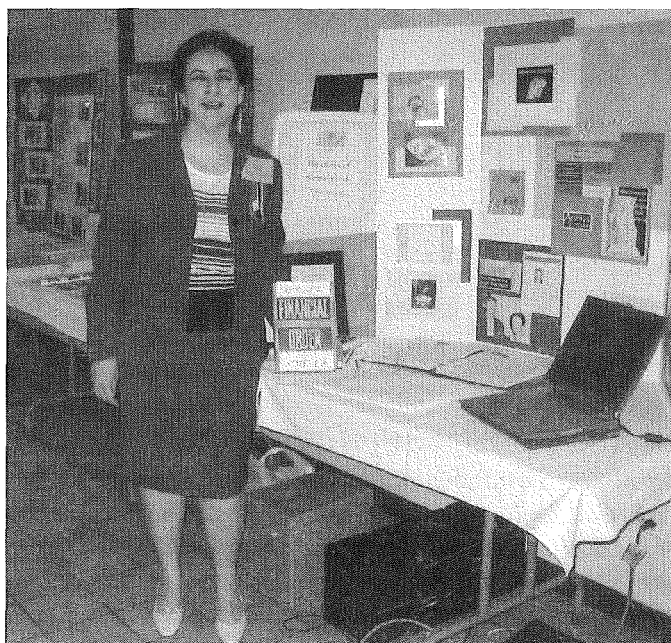
## WZCC honors Pallonji Mistry

Every year since its inception in 2000, WZCC recognizes the contribution of Eminent Zarathushti business persons in promoting the vision of WZCC by awarding honorary membership. This year's unanimous decision of the Board of Directors was for **Pallonji S. Mistry**, patriarch of the construction empire of the Shapoorji Pallonji Group. With a net worth of \$3.2 billion, Pallonji, 75, was ranked 170 among the 691 world's billionaires and fifth richest in India, in the Forbes magazine. The honorary membership was conferred at a function at the West End hotel in Mumbai on April 6. Previous awardees of honorary membership to the Chamber include Nadir Godrej (2000), Alayar Dabestani (2001) and Minoo Shroff (2003).



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Clockwise, Dr. Natalie Vania at the Arshiya Ventures display table; Viraf and Viloo Darukhanawalla serve tandoori chicken wraps to Diana Damkevala at the wraps test market lunch; Yasmin and Hormaz Vania displayed their Vania Engineering and new GBO Alliance startup, aka YasJazz Enterprise.

## Entrepreneurship Conference

WZCC-Chicago (chair Phiroze Nagarwalla, [nagarwalla@hotmail.com](mailto:nagarwalla@hotmail.com)) organized the second in the series of conferences to "Encourage New Business," at the Zoroastrian Center in Chicago on April 30. It was most heartening to see the large number of presenters from the next generation, including the opening speaker **Diana Damkevala** who gave an inspired talk on weaving Zarathushti values into business; and the moderators **Yazad Lala** (a commodities broker) and **Mehrab Deboo**.

**Cyrus Rivetna**, an architect in private practice and **Jim Engineer**, a public relations consultant (see [www.e-rainmaker.com](http://www.e-rainmaker.com)) spoke about their experiences in Crossing Over from a Corporate Career. **Saleem Shaik**, a franchise consultant from FRANNET presented several businesses and franchises available for sale.

Lunch, a variety of 'wraps' (chicken, kabab, vegetable stew and potato croquettes) with an assortment of toppings, along with mango and rose icecream, was a 'test market' for the '**Parsi wraps fast-food franchise**,' planned by some WZCC-Chicago members. The food was evaluated on quality, presentation, taste, etc.

**Varghese Chacko**, **Robert Foy** and **Michael Kidney** explained that they were in the process of starting a bank (All American Bank), distributed the prospectus and offered shares of \$10,000. **Steve Konkle** (from the US Small Business Administration) spoke about SBA loans and minority preferences.

**Dr. Natalie Vania** (founder of Arshiya Ventures that connects entrepreneurs with investors) conducted an innovative Angel Finance Workshop with panelists **Menucher Menuchery** (Mahi Networks), **Dr. Sarosh Fatakia** (high energy physicist), **Yasmin Vania** (GBO Alliance and Vania Engineering) and **Diana Damkevala** (who manages an \$18 million budget and 20 people at RR Donnelly).

The support of Silver Sponsors Hormuz and Yasmin Vania (Vania Engineering) and Ness Lakdawalla (Dec-tron, Inc.) was gratefully acknowledged. ■



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## SynergyZ is launched with flair

Firdose A. Vandrevala chairman Tata Teleservices and managing director, Tata Power, Mumbai, presided as chief guest at the launch of the new WZCC Journal, *SynergyZ*, at a glittering gala [photo above] at the Hotel Intercontinental, in Dubai on March 10. Dadi Mistry, WZCC, VP International and Byram Avari, owner of the Avari Group of Hotels flew in for the occasion.

Balloons filled the air, as the premiere issue of *SynergyZ* was unveiled by Mr. Vandrevala [photo at left with WZCC-ME director Meher Bhesania]. The glossy new publication was produced by WZCC-ME under the inspired leadership of Meher Bhesania. Meher thanked WZCC president Rohinton Rivetna for the idea and inspiration, Pallonji Shapoorji Mistry for laying the foundation with his contribution, and the production team including Burjor Patel (Khaleej Times), Karl Mehta (Blitz Media and Communications LLC), Kersey Bhathena (Climate Control LLC) and Hoshi Siganporia (The Big Idea Co.) for being "pillars of strength" in bringing the project to fruition. ■



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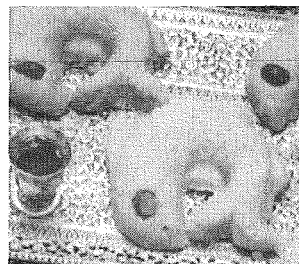
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## OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE

If you know of any opportunities available, please post them in:

- This column, or
- The WZCC e-group  
zchamber@yahoo.com,
- The wzcc website  
www.wzcc.org

### International Teachers Training opportunity

In Mumbai, there is an International Teachers Training Course in Early Childhood education. On successful completion, the individual can obtain a job not only in Mumbai, but also in USA as it is held under the auspices of an international body, Association Montessori Internationale, The Netherlands. Contact, Sir Ratan Tata Institute, 30 Patkar Marg, Mumbai 400 007. Tel: 23679161, or Zarin Malva at zarinmalva41@yahoo.com.

### Industrial laundromat

Seeking a *laundry manager*, with experience of running an industrial laundromat, willing to work in Kabul, Afghanistan. Attractive expat package. Contact Goolcher Navdar, Dubai, tel: +9714 4037100, email: gnavdar@scimitarventures.com.

### Deloitte seeking CAs in Mumbai office

Deloitte, one of the "Big 4" accounting firms, is looking for smart *chartered accountants*, both fresh and experienced CAs, in their audit and assurance functions, in Mumbai. Send CVs by email to kpastakia@deloitte.com, or courier to Khurshed Pastakia, partner, Deloitte Haskins & Sells, 12 Dr. Annie Besant Rd, Worli, Mumbai 400 018.

## OPPORTUNITIES WANTED

Please assist these Zarathushtis in their job search.

- Recent graduate, 24, MBA from US, specialized in *Marketing and Information Systems*. Contact zal@wayne.edu or havewala1@yahoo.com.

[Continued on page 126]

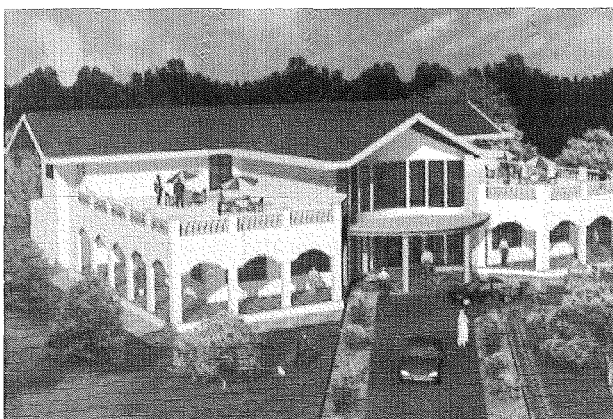
## NEW BUSINESSES



Aban Daboo [left] and Dinsoo Rivetna display saree creations by their new business, "**Designs by D&A**" and Parsi foods – bhakhra, kavabs, meatloaf, baked chicken and penda, made by aban's company, **ParsiChef, Inc.**, at the Entrepreneurship Conference in Chicago, April 30th.

"**Designs by D&A**" create sarees embroidered with sequins, beads, crystals; finish saris with borders/falls; restore and give new life to 'asli' kora and saris; and sell Indian saris with blouse-pieces and petticoats. Contact Dinsoo Rivetna at (630) 852-8515, drivetna@sbcglobal.com or Aban Daboo at (630) 692-1449, ParsiChef@yahoo.com.

"**ParsiChef, Inc.**" is a catering service specializing in Parsi cuisine. Will also make delicious homemade American, Chinese, Mexican and Indian dishes. Mail orders accepted. Made especially to your taste and dietary requirements. Visit [www.ParsiChef.com](http://www.ParsiChef.com) for full menu details. Contact Aban Daboo at (630) 692-1449, ParsiChef@yahoo.com

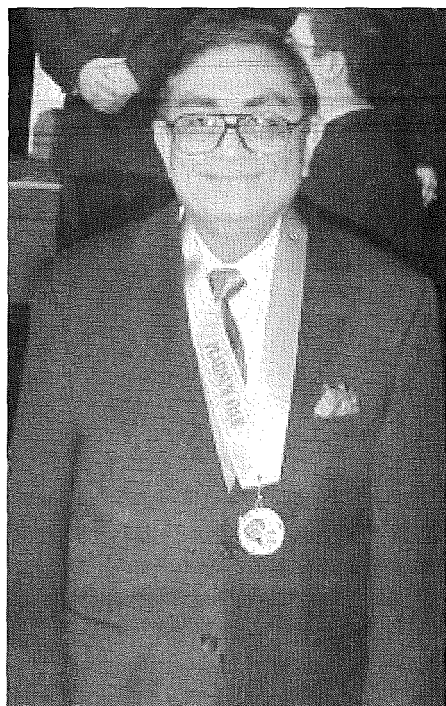


Recreation center at the new "**Healing Touch**" senior citizen's project. Located on a beautiful 10 acre plot in a verdant valley 25 km from Pune City (3 hours by road from Mumbai) the project offers studio flats, cottages and twin bungalows for seniors.

"**Healing Touch**" - a senior citizen's paradise. Having witnessed the sorrowful plight of many seniors, living in isolation, uncared for, void of love and attention, inspired Capt. Adi K. Mistry to venture into this project "to provide them with respect, love, dignity, unparalleled comfort," and all the basic amenities needed in day-to-day life.

"Healing Touch" offers assisted services – dressing, bathing, medication, toileting, with dignity and privacy, and meals in a common dining room; a variety of activities - yoga, nature cure, massage, mud therapy, indoor and outdoor games, gym, sauna, library and a common hall for meditation and prayer; and health care with trained nurses, a resident doctor, and a 12-bed hospital.

With "Quality Service with Love, Care and Total Commitment" Capt. Mistry hopes to provide the residents with "total care - for the body, mind and spirit." For information contact him at adikmistry@aol.com.



## Bhesania climbs corporate ladder at Microsoft

In the short span of five years that Firdosh Bhesania has been with Microsoft Corporation in Seattle, he has been voted twice as "Outstanding Manager" on the Windows team.

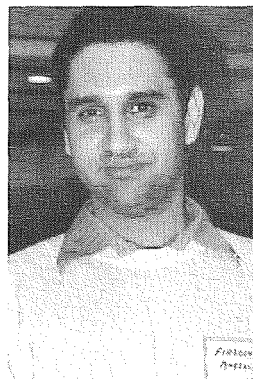
At the young age of 28, Firdosh is a lead program manager, with two published patents and four pending, and winner of several awards.

An accomplished computer scientist and gifted speaker, Firdosh has climbed the corporate ladder quickly. Well respected amongst peers and seniors, he loves to travel on business and pleasure. He lectures to com-

puter companies around the world about how new technological advancements made by his team at Microsoft could benefit their companies.

Firdosh also gives freely of his time and talent to community matters, and donates for charitable causes especially in India.

Son of Meher and Kersey Bhesania of Dubai, Firdosh was born in Bombay and received his early education in Dubai. He has a masters in Computer Architecture and a double major in Computer Science from the University of Wisconsin.



## Rusi Gandhi named to Platinum Club

Rusi Gandhi of RE/MAX Properties Unlimited in Montville, NJ was awarded membership in RE/MAX New Jersey's prestigious Platinum Club. The award was presented at the 20th Annual RE/MAX Dinner Dance and Awards Ceremony at the Borgata Hotel Casino in Atlantic City. Mr. Gandhi also received the New Jersey Association of Realtors Circle of Excellence Award – Silver Level for his sales performance in 2004.

Among his many affiliations, Rusi Gandhi is also WZCC-New York chapter chair and serves as business manager of FEZANA Journal.

**Rusi Gandhi donates to the local Zarathushti Association or FEZANA, 10% of fees he receives when members of any Zarathushti organization or their families and friends purchase, sell or rent a commercial or residential property in the US, Canada and 52 countries listed by RE/MAX and International Real Estate Federation based in Paris. Contact Rusi Gandhi at 973-575-6005, rusigandhi@remax.net or visit www.rusigandhi.com.**



*Khodi Irani's [photo left] Texas-based environmental consulting firm MKM Engineers demolished (by wiring with explosives) and decontaminated the Indiana Army ammunition plant in Charleston, IN, last year.*

## Khodi Irani's firm gets government contracts to clean up dirty sites.

In the midst of the war in Iraq last year, the US Army called on a Texas company to collect equipment tainted with depleted uranium. **MKM Engineers** of Stafford, Texas, managed the collection site that gathered and hauled off damaged tanks and tainted equipment for secure storage. Such government contracts have helped the environmental consulting and remediation firm go from depending on owner and president **Khodi Irani's** credit cards in 1991 to \$42 million in revenue last year. The company expects to top \$48 million in revenue this year and has its eyes on being a \$100 million company by 2008.

MKM began with a focus on environmental engineering, but ventured into multimillion-dollar jobs at sites contaminated with radiological waste or unexploded weapons, such as ammunition plants. The company's growth (to 17 offices now and 150 employees) is also partly because of its designation as a small disadvantaged business by the SBA. Now Irani is banking on his track record to keep landing large jobs. [EXERPTED FROM "WHERE OTHERS FEAR TO TREAD" BY PURVA PATEL, HOUSTON CHRONICLE, AUGUST 17, 2004].

# nothing but non- fiction

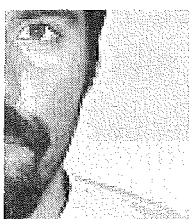
Xerxes Irani's graphics design studio – nonfiction studios, inc. – sees phenomenal growth.

by Roshan Rivetna

**O**n April 22, Canada Post and Irish Post released two sets of stamps on Earth Day, a joint issue honoring a special eco-system in each country. Both stamps [photo right] were designed by Calgary-based *nonfiction studios, inc.*

Among notable clients such as The Calgary Stampede [photo right], American Express and Warner Music Canada, *non-fiction* has recently added the Royal Canadian Mint that has commissioned *nonfiction* to design a series of coins.

President and creative director **Xerxes Irani** [photo below] explains: "The name of the company was chosen based on one thing – Truth. Non-fiction. Or sometimes 'No bullsh!t'"

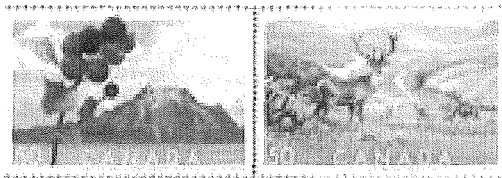
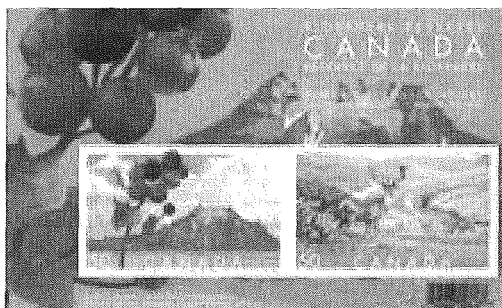


Believing that the days of large bloated design studios were a thing of the past, Irani, with two other partners, left the company they were

working for, and decided to "make a go of it."

The beginning was rough. Completely self-funded, they started by bringing in their personal home computers. They did splurge, though, on leasing a "nice, big, fast, color printer."

Relying solely on referrals or word of mouth ("We have never advertised and are not in the Yellow Pages"), their growth has been exponential.



Above, website for the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede ("Greatest Show on Earth") has new features like Virtual Seating, the Virtual Visit and MyDay.

Left, the first day cover and stamps issued by Canada Post, jointly with Ireland's An Post, honoring important eco-systems – Waterton Lakes national Park in Alberta and Killarney National Park in Ireland.

Though only 3.5 years old, *nonfiction* now has 11 staff, and has just moved into the top floor of the Ribtor Building in a prime Calgary location.

*nonfiction* develops print, web and marketing strategies for their clients. Their work has received awards and recognitions from the design industry – and were even selected to design the invitation for the Awards Gala. Their mission statement says it all:

"Delivering the impossible, one creative solution at a time."

**Early years.** Xerxes was born in Vancouver in 1969, studied at MICA in Baltimore, and graduated valedictorian of the class of 1997 at the Alberta College of Art and Design. He lives in Calgary with his wife Ninalee, and four-year old daughter Kashmira.

Son of Pervin and Sam Irani, who came to Canada in the 1960s, Xerxes grew up with the arts. "It's really in my blood," he says, "My grand-

mother was a painter, my grandfather was an award-winning film director/photographer; and my father is an architect and a painter who owned his own gallery."

Most of all, though, he attributes his success to encouragement and inspiration from his mother, "She is truly the reason I am where I am."

What advice does he have to offer budding entrepreneurs?

"Make decisions based on what your gut tells you. A good entrepreneur is good at reading this gut instinct. Try and fund on your own. If you cannot self-fund, make sure you get as silent a partner as possible. Above all, love your work, for without that, you are no better off than before."

*nonfiction studios inc.* is at 450 – 11th Ave SE, Calgary, AB T2G 0Y2, tel: (403) 686-8887, [xerxes@nonfiction.ca](mailto:xerxes@nonfiction.ca), website: <http://nonfiction.ca>.



## Letter from a proud mother ...

**W**hen we gave up everything and came to Canada in 1967 for the future of our children, we did not expect to see our children achieve what all three of our daughters have achieved – on their own.

With Ahura Mazda's grace my husband Behram and I did well for ourselves, considering we landed in Edmonton, Alberta, with \$1.57 to our names, but what our girls have achieved has surpassed all our dreams. I knew that we may never get Parsi son-in-laws, but hoped that it might happen. But today, with my three Canadian sons-in-law, who are more than sons to me, I could not ask for anything more.

In 2003, Behram suffered a stroke. Fortunately, God gave our family the strength to pull through. He has regained his strength and mobility, but lost his sense of balance.

**Miracles.** Then all kinds of miracles began to happen. I believe it is through our powerful prayers and the prayers of all our family and friends.

In 2003, my Delna and Barry made their very own animation program called "The Christmas Orange" for which they were nominated for four Leo Awards (the Canadian equivalent of the American Academy Awards). We were not told anything until the night they came all dressed up to visit dad in hospital and tell him where they were going. Of course, our prayers went with them.

Next morning Delna and Barry came bouncing into the hospital, elated, with four crystal trophies, and left one by dad's bedside.

Nothing could have made Behram and me more proud than to see them reach this pinnacle of success. We

had watched them since 1987, when they founded *Bardel Animation*. Their good-natured bickering seems to have propelled the colorful marriage and business partnership from a meagre \$2,000 investment of their own, to an 11,000 sq. foot company employing 190 animators, and work-



*Delna Bhesania and husband Barry Ward's Bardel Animation, won four 2003 LEO Awards for their animation film "The Christmas Orange" – for best animation, best direction/story, best musical score and best youth or children's program.*

ing on feature films like "Prince of Egypt" and "Joseph." They have rolled with the punches and always been able to bounce back, thanks to their capabilities and our prayers.

I thought I could not be prouder of our three daughters who kept a constant vigil over their dad in the ensuing weeks. But how wrong I was.

My middle daughter Tanya had been planning her upcoming wedding in

August on the Island at Powell River. Carl and Tanya camp a lot and have come to love this spot. We were all excited to pack all our kit-n-kaboodle – *ses, sopara, saris and torans* across to the Island which was 2 ferries and an 80-mile drive away. We were a little nervous, with Behram's condition of dizziness and imbalance, but I was determined that he would be there that day, to walk his daughter down the beach.

At our Father's Day family gathering, however, Behram got sick after the long car ride, and threw up. Next morning I got a call from Tanya saying that she and Carl had talked all night and had decided to not have the wedding at the Island. With the date less than a month away, they booked Brock House on the Beach in Vancouver, and redid all the arrangements.

I could not believe what my daughter had done, to be sure that her dad would not be sick on her wedding day, after riding the ferry or a small airplane. Miracles never stop happening!

Having three daughters and two grand-daughters, I feared I would never see a son in our family. Well, my youngest daughter Anita and son-in-law Michael have made us proud grand-parents of a baby boy. Twenty years ago, our Anita had made us proud by becoming Student of the Year and Athlete of the Year.

So you see, all of us who came for better futures for ourselves and our children in the late 1960s to Canada, even though everyone told us otherwise – including the headlines in the Sunday Times: "Going to Canada, Think Twice. Doctor in Toronto commits suicide after polishing shoes for two years!" – we have managed to somehow make it.

*Sheraz Bhesania  
Vancouver, British Columbia.*





*Rumy Mohta [right] with Gov. Warner*

I was one of the lucky ones invited to join Virginia Governor Hon. Mark Warner on a trade delegation to India April 21-30. With 65 participants, this was the largest trade mission ever, to go to India and the first delegation led by a governor. My goal for joining this mission was to support the governor on his trip, aug-

## Trade delegation to India

Rumy Mohta joins trade delegation to India, led by the governor of Virginia.

ment my businesses, meet different business owners, and make new contacts.

The state of Virginia has the second largest growing economy in the US, and India is the largest democracy in the world. The governor pointed out during his trip that trade between the two has grown in the double digits, in the last two years alone. The purpose of this trade mission was to increase it even further and, in that, the mission succeeded.

The trade mission visited Delhi, Bangalore and Bombay. In each city, there was genuine enthusiasm from Indian companies to do business with Virginia and the US. We were hosted by FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce) in each city.

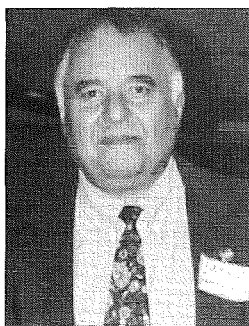
In Mumbai, we attended a reception at the JW Marriott in conjunction with Bollywood, hosted by USIBA (US-India Business Alliance). The Governor urged Indian film companies to produce their films in Virginia and at least four producers showed interest. We were invited to the Consul General's house for dinner in Mumbai and it gave us an opportunity to meet the consul and staff.

Most of the people on our trade mission were going to India for the first time and were awed by its beauty and rich culture. All in all, this trip was very successful - showing that in spite of modern telecommunications a simple trip or meeting in person bears more fruit.

*Rumy Mohta, president*  
[www.RichmondTravels.com](http://www.RichmondTravels.com)  
[www.Rittscorp.com](http://www.Rittscorp.com)

## A Zoroastrian university in Yazd?

Parviz Varjavand shares his dream of remodeling the valuable Marker School complex in Yazd into a 'state of the art' Zoroastrian university.



*Parviz Varjavand*

Despite large emigration out of Yazd, it still retains the position of being the hub of the Zarathushti religion in Iran.

**Marker properties.** It was in Yazd that the Parsi philanthropist, Peshotanji Marker brought funds and set up a school system. Yazd is the only city in Iran in which a very central square is named after a Zarathushti - Marker Square.

The Marker School complex is vast - 40,000 square meters - and the outstanding architecture qualifies it as a national monument and registers it as an architectural national heritage of Iran. Over the years, some of the properties were sold, some given to Yazd municipality and some to Yazd University; however even the portion that remains today is worth a fortune.

**University.** A 'state of the art' Zoroastrian university, with advanced curriculums in new fields, could be estab-

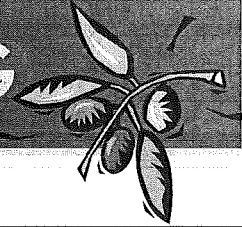
lished in Yazd, by remodeling the existing school complex and paying for much of the expenses from the sale of reserve properties Marker still owns in Yazd.

Following the population explosion, Iran is in desperate need of educational facilities and educators. The rich oil and gas reserves, as well as natural and manmade riches give Iran the potential to become a very advanced and prosperous nation. Education is the key.

If the idea is properly presented, it will receive the green light and governmental financial support. There is also a rich population of Iranians living outside Iran, who wish to donate funds to help Iran advance. And 'Zoroastrian' is a trusted minority. Let us be the tools of service that will help pass the torch of knowledge to the youth of a nation we all love so dearly.

**Parviz Varjavand**, an architect, was director of the office in charge of reviewing University master plans affiliated with the Ministry of Science and Higher Education in Iran, for thirteen years.

# YOUTHFULLY SPEAKING



## The Declining Youth Involvement In The Zarathushti Religion: Do We Have An Answer?

By Nikan H. Khatibi, MBA

Take a careful look at the following numbers. Right now, nearly two-thirds of Americans (67%) call religion very important. Fully nine-in-ten pray at least once a week and the overwhelming majority of individuals who pray describe God in very personal terms. However, only about half (54%) of college graduates consider religion very important, compared to two-thirds (67%) of high school graduates and three-quarters (75%) of those who have not finished high school. Why such the gloomy numbers for youth as they get more educated?

I read a study that stated that 50% of youth indicated that they just needed a good reason to get involved. Young people's individual religious choices are a product of their upbringing and the availability of religious options. The most important factor, however, is the youths' own spiritual preferences and agency. Youths' style of attachment to parents determines how likely they are to follow in their parents' religious footsteps. Securely attached youth are likely to adopt the faith (or lack of faith) of their parents. On the other hand, those youth that are not as close to their parents are likely to distance themselves from their parents either by curtailing religious attendance or by joining a different religious organization and seeking attachment and family. Youth also change their pattern of religious involvement because of peer invitation or to avoid cliques, but peers do not have a strong influence on youths' deeply held spiritual beliefs. When motivated to change religious affiliation, youth generally switch to similar organizations they can find that have the desired characteristics that were missing in the ones they leave behind.

This characterization of youths' religious involvement as mainly a matter of their own choice and agency is at considerable variance with that of

"RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUCCESSFULLY FOSTER YOUTH INVOLVEMENT OFFER YOUTH-ORIENTED CONTEXTS OF SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT, BUT ALSO PROVIDE YOUTH WITH A ROLE IN THE LARGER RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY THAT IS CONSISTENT WITH THEIR ALMOST-ADULT STATUS."

—NIKAN H. KHATIBI, MBA

traditional social and psychological theory. Traditional perspectives assume that young people's religiosity is mainly a function of the strength of societal pressures around them and youths' own pliability to them. Empirical evidence has proven this false. Rather than being dull and compliant to the wishes of adults, young people seriously seeking spiritual growth and commitment tend to avoid religious contexts that are adult-oriented and paternalistic. Ask any youth and they will tell you that a youth-oriented event such as a church camp or local trip was more important in their spiritual development rather than a more adult oriented event such as a Shah Nameh reading or historical discussion. Many who have been through these rituals perceive them as adult-oriented and unassociated with any real change in status. Religious organizations that successfully foster youth involvement offer youth-oriented contexts of spiritual development, but also provide youth with a role in the larger religious community that is consistent with their almost-adult status. Interesting thus far...don't you think?

On a personal basis, I have found that younger people – 18 to 35 year olds – are looking for more spiritual meaning in their lives. They're faced with the ultimate questions, such as what they're supposed to be living for or questions in regards to their social patterns. These are questions that the Zarathushti religion can be applied to in its own contexts. It seems that we focus so heavily on discussing the past history of our religion (which is great), but we all tend to forget the importance of discussing current and future situations that our religion faces. We need to step into today's world and apply the theories and beliefs of the past, today.

Please see *Declining Youth* on page 2

Declining Youth [continued]...What Parents Can Do?

Poor parents – it always seems to come back on their shoulders. With this, I continue to feel strongly that the appropriate role of concerned adults is to serve as a resource and facilitate a process over which youth themselves have ultimate control. If parents compel religious attendance strongly enough to damage the youth–parent relationship, it will likely have the opposite effect to the one intended. The strength and stability of youths' relationships to religious parents, other involved adults, and peers motivates them to invest in those relationships via religious participation. This helps them to begin or strengthen an existing personal relationship to God and higher powers to which they are introduced through religious attendance. Should they develop such a relationship, it usually becomes their main motivation for religious participation.

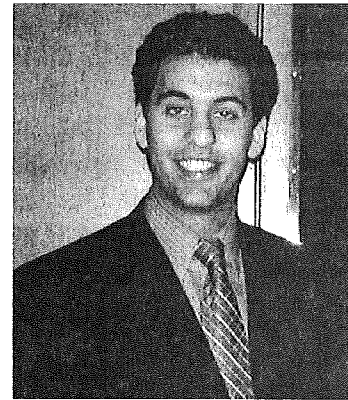
I feel especially compelled with this relationship because if the goal is to ensure that the youth of tomorrow will remain involved in religion and continue to receive its benefits across major life transitions, such as going to college, they must find their connection themselves. I made that point earlier when I stated the decline in percentage of youth who think religion is important between the time they enter college and leave – probably because college is where pre-existing personal ties can no longer hold them to a religious affiliation on their own.

So Finally....What's The Answer?

As wishful as I am, there is no simple answer. Just like there is no simple answer on how to raise your child successfully there is no set of plans that can tell you how to make your child involved in the Zarathushti religion. But what both youth and parents can do is work together to make it work. Right off the bat, parents can encourage, not force, their children to get involved in the community, dar-e-mehr activities, online discussions and so forth. In addition, in order for the youth to overcome the initial barrier of involvement, it would be incumbent upon the association leaders to create exceptional programs that deal directly with issues and activities that youth are interested in. Sunday school is a great activity, but that may not be the only way to attract youth involvement.

Other activities must be organized that pertain to youth interests, such as discussions on friendships, dating, politics, and so forth. From there, youth will develop their connection with Ahura Mazda and the need for self-religious education.

I truly feel that once we are able to really grasp the interest of a generation of youth, they will continue to use our template of exceptional programs and youthful activities to continue and expand with the youth programs.



**Nikan H. Khatibi, MBA**

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Trusted experience, proven leadership, and a dedication to improve the quality of life...that is what Nikan H. Khatibi is all about.

Graduating from the University of California, Irvine with a Bachelor in Science (B.S) in 2004 and then spending a year earning his Masters in Business Administration (MBA), Nikan will be pursuing a career as physician by starting medical school in the fall of 2005. Glancing at the future, Nikan envisions himself practicing medicine for some years before sustaining a position as a member of the United States Congress.

At the age of 23, he is the youngest director in history for the California Chamber of Commerce and Holiday Parade Commission, and is the founding director of Students for Success. Moreover, Nikan is an editor for the Youthfully Speaking section of the Fezana Journal and is past president of the Youth of the California Zoroastrian Center.

He has spoken at many congresses around the world and takes great pleasure in seeing this community prosper.

## The Basics

By Ushtavaity Davar

This past year, I was fortunate enough to encounter some phenomenal individuals through a fellowship I had in neurodevelopmental disabilities. Among the fellows were parents of children with special needs. My most memorable and valuable experience from the fellowship is what I learned from these parents.

Equality and kindness come to mind when I think about the basic teachings of our religion which I learned when I was a child. After a particular talk from a parent who shared her experiences of raising a child with autism and several medical needs, my mind reverted to thoughts about equality and kindness in relation to how our society interacts with individuals who have a disability. The following are few of the salient points that have stuck with me many months after the talk:

- Assume competence with each person you meet.
- Just because someone can't express themselves or talk like you or I do, doesn't mean that they don't have something to say (imagine having thoughts but no means to express or communicate any of them).
- It's important to know your limits, and your child's limits, but to never stop trying to exceed them.
- It is okay to occasionally break down, be sad, scream and not be perfect or always in control.
- When God closes one door, He opens another – we just go through a lot more doors and that if opportunity doesn't knock, a door needs to be built.

Some of you may be wondering why I decided to share this experience in this particular journal. Although we may have good intentions, sometimes it's easy to forget the basics and instead we may feel

*"Equality and kindness come to mind when I think about the basic teachings of our religion which I learned when I was a child."*

–Ushtavaity Davar

afraid to interact with those who don't present themselves in the typical way. When I think back to the teachings of the Zarathushti Deen, I am reminded that regardless of how a person talks, looks, or where they are from; they deserve respect and equality. In writing this, I also wanted to create more awareness not only about individuals who have disabilities, but also their families who work hard to ensure that their child is treated with kindness and equality.



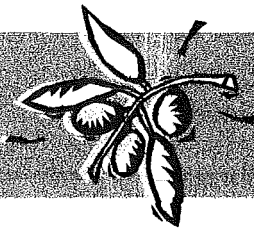
Ushtavaity Davar

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Ushta was born in Karachi, Pakistan and moved to NJ with her family when she was 2. A member of ZAGNY, Ushta attended religious classes for a number of years, and then proceeded to teach the youngest class for 3 years. She has obtained her Masters in Human Genetics and is working at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital as a genetic counselor.

Ushta was also selected for a Fellowship in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities for the 2004–2005 year. For the future, Ushta hopes to use her educational background and experience to understand more about the health needs and concerns of the Zarathushti community.





زمانیکه مردان خسته به خانه بر میگردند بطور سنتی خانه را محل مرخصی و استراحت میدانند. اما زنان با داشتن شغل و مقام در خارج از منزل زمانیکه به خانه برمیگردند شغل دوم آنها شروع میشود.

فرشته یزدانی خطیبی

در روزگار مدرن ما زنان بیشتر از مردان زیر فشار واسترس زندگی قرار دارند زیرا داشتن شغل خارج از منزل ومسئولیت داشتن خانواده بار آنها را دو برابر کرده است.

زنان برای موفق بودن در شغلشان مجبور به ایثار و از خود گذشتگی فراوان هستند. زیرا باید به کار فرمای خود نشان دهند که اگر از مردان قویتر نیستند اقلاً در سطح آنها قرار دارند. زمانیکه زنان به خانه برمیگردند نمیتوانند بیکار نشسته و بگویند چون در خارج از منزل کار کرده ام پس در مقابل فرزندان و همسر مسئولیتی ندارم. زنان با وجود داشتن شغل خارج از منزل احساس مسئولیت شدیدی نسبت به خانه و خانواده خود دارند و در اینجاست که کار دوم آنها شروع میشود. در نتیجه دیگر وقت اضافی برای زن باقی نماند که به زیباسازی و آرامش بخشیدن به همسر و خانواده کمک نماید و این کار فراوان کم کم و بتدریج زن را بسیار خسته و ناتوان میسازد. اکنون زمانیکه مردان باید بیاموزند که چگونه همسران خود را پشتیبانی و همیاری نمایند. در اینجا باید متذکر شد که فرق بزرگی ما بین زنان و مردان وجود دارد. زمانیکه مرد خسته به منزل برمیگردد خانه را بصورت سنتی یک محل برای مرخصی میداند و اغلب تمایل دارند که مسایل خارج از منزل و شغلی خود را فراموش کرده و به استراحت بپردازند در حقیقت به مرد اینگونه آموخته اند زمانی که بمنزل میروی تمام کارها و گرفتاریها به اتمام رسیده و حال زمان استراحت و لذت است.

## دیروز... امروز... فردا

By Fereshteh Yazdani-Khatibi



در تمام مدت تاریخ مردان کوشش بر آن داشته اند که با مشکلات زندگی دست و پنجه نرم نموده و رفاه زن و فرزندان خود را تهیه نمایند. زیرا تشکر و محبت زن از همسرش جبران تمام این زحمات را مینماید و این محبت ارزش آن را دارد که مرد فعالیت نماید. امروز بانوان نیز با کار زیاد احساس خستگی مینمایند و در انتهای روز زن و شوهر بعد از کار فراوان و خسته کننده در جستجوی عشق و تشکر از یکدیگر هستند. زن میگوید من هم به اندازه یک مرد کار کرده ام و چه دلیلی دارد که در انتهای روز من از همسر تشکر نمایم در نتیجه به دلیل خستگی زیاد نمیتواند پشتیبانی احساسی به همسرش بدهد. زمانی که از مرد قدردانی نشود او احساس پوچی شدیدی مینماید. در دنیای مدرن امروزی زمانیکه مرد بخانه برمیگردد و شادی همسر و فرزندان را احساس نمی نماید بجای پیروزی احساس شکست مینماید و این حالت علامت یک عدم موفقیت برای او میباشد.

در زمانهای گذشته زنان بیشتر در خانه بوده و ا پشتیبانی سایر بانوان برخوردار بودند. در نتیجه از بانوان انتظار نمیرفت که سرپرستی خانواده و بار سنگین مخارج زندگی رابعهده داشته باشند. در آن زمان بانوان فرصت داشتند در طی روز دور هم جمع شوند با هم صحبت و درد دل نمایند. هم دیگر بیاموزند و خانواده و خانه را آرایش و آماده بازگشت همسر به منزل نمایند. مردان هم بسیار خوشحال بودند که میتوانند خرج زندگی را تأمین و به تنهایی تهیه کننده خانواده باشند. مردان شریک زندگی خود را آزاد می گذاشتند تا او بتواند با عشق و علاقه و محبت روابط زناشویی را حفظ نمایند.

Please see Talks of Life on page 2

زنانه خودحالتها و احساسهای زنانه خود را از دست میدهد در اینجاست که او احتیاج بوجود یک مرد فهمیده و دانا دارد که روابط سالم را به زندگی برگرداند با نشان دادن عشق و علاقه و بیان کلمات زیبا و با صبر و حوصله و شنونده خوب بودن و بدرد دل همسر خود گوش دادن میتواند این خلع را از بین برده و احساس و زنانگی را به همسر خود بازگرداند مردان باید شنونده خوبی برای همسران خود باشند و به گرفتاریهای کاری و درد دل و مشگلات زنان گوش بدهند و اگر راه حلی برای آن مشگلات دارند ارائه داده و در غیر اینصورت اقلا شنونده باشند چون زنان پس از بازگویی گرفتاریها خود بیشتر آرام گرفته و آن استرس و نگرانی خود را از دست میدهند پس گوش دادن برای مردان یک مهارت است و مردان باید این مهارت گوش دادن را بیاموزند به امید روزهای بهتر.

**شاد باشید. فرشته یزدانی خطیبی.**

At no time in history have relationships been as difficult for men as now. Men do not understand the needs of women while at the same time, women do not understand what men really want or how to give it to them. Why has this occurred?

Well, this is in part due to the fact that contemporary women work 'two jobs' – outside the home they are focusing on their career and when they return home, they have the responsibility of caretaking. Contrary to women who see home as a major hub of activity, for men the home has traditionally been a vacation spot.

Women in general, need more nurturing in their relationships with men. The difference between female burnout and fulfillment is determined not by how much a woman does at work but by the quality of the support she receives. When a woman's female side is nurtured, her body begins to function naturally, and her exhaustion magically lifts. A man can skillfully respond when a woman feels overwhelmed by addressing the female side of her being, which cries out for nurturing.

A woman can forget the problems of the day by remembering them and talking about them. Any man can learn to listen if he is approached in an appreciative, welcoming manner. What a woman needs most from a man is to be listened to, a hunter's skill which actually comes naturally to him.

در صورتی که برای زن کاملاً متفاوت میباشد. زنی که در خارج از منزل شغل و مقامی دارد آگاه است زمانیکه به منزل میرسد شغل دوم او شروع میشود و بهیچ عنوان حق ندارد که شانه از زیر بار مسئولیت خارج نماید. برای زنان بسیار مشکل است که کارهای منزل و خانه و خانواده را کنار گذاشته و به استراحت بپردازد زنان بار سنگینی را بدوش حمل مینمایند لذا بعلت نداشتن انرژی و زمان کافی نمیتوانند به تتهائی مشگلات زندگی را حل نمایند بانگیزه زن در این زمان برای او استراحت کردن و آرامش داشتن بسیار طاقت فرسا میگردد. در دوران پیشین زنان در خانه بودند و سرپرستی منزل را بعهده داشتند توقع نداشتند زمانی که مرد بخانه میاید درکارهای منزل به آنها کمک نمایند در انزمان بانوان میدانستند مردان کارهای طاقت فرسا و مشگل انجام میدهند تا بتوانند خرج زندگی خانواده را تحمل نمایند در نتیجه با آمدن مرد به منزل زن وظیفه خود میدانست که وسائل رفاه و اسایش و آرامش مرد خود را فراهم نماید بطوریکه خستگی او کاملاً برطرف و آماده برگشت به کار روزانه خود باشد. برآستی زنان دوست داشتند که بدینطریق پشتیبانی خود را به شوهران نشان دهند اما زنان امروزه این وقت را ندارند که مانند مادر و مادر بزرگان همسران خود را پشتیبانی نمایند. امروزه زمانیکه مردان در سر کار هستند زنان هم دوش بدوش آنها بکار خارج از منزل مشغولند و دیگر آن وقت و فرصت و انرژی را ندارند تا همسران خود را پشتیبانی نمایند بلکه احتیاج شدید به پشتیبانی شوهران خویش دارند در زمانهای گذشته محیط آزاد و آرامش بخش روزانه طبیعت زنانه آنها را پرورش میداد لیکن زنان امروز با فشار و کار فراوان این احساس سوختگی را مینمایند و طبیعت زنانه آنها به اندازه کافی پرورش داده نمیشود یک بانویی که کار میکند با نداشتن وقت کافی و نداشتن فرصت برای پرورش احساسهای



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

## Financial Progress Report

***“FEZANA has reached another milestone by achieving the goal of a second \$100,000, in one year’s time, in the second Thousand Points of Light campaign.”***

FEZANA has reached another milestone by achieving the goal of a second \$100,000, in one year’s time, in the second Thousand Points of Light campaign. We, the Funds and Finance Committee would like to extend a big **THANK YOU** for your continued support of FEZANA funds. We have now started the **Thousand Points of Light Campaign No. 3**. As you know, all the money received goes immediately towards good deeds within the Zarathushti community, helping those in need.

Our efforts this year are being devoted to the Academic Scholarship Fund. People tend to give to causes that pull on their heart strings, but our young scholars and future professionals do not get the attention needed to help with the high cost of obtaining a college education. This is where we need the help of the community; to give generously towards the Academic Scholarship Fund, the Performing-Creative Arts Scholarship Fund and the Kheradi Endowment Scholarship Fund.

**Charitable giving.** There are many ways to give to a charitable organization like FEZANA: by **donating cash, appreciated stocks or securities, making FEZANA the beneficiary of a life insurance policy, creating a charitable remainder trust (CRT) or charitable lead trust (CLT) and mini-family foundations**. Have you noticed that wealthy families like the Fords and the Carnegies all have foundations? What benefits do they get from these foundations and can you get the same benefits?

**Foundations.** These foundations are established to save a lot of taxes (both income and estate), give jobs to future generations of the family (as trustees of the foundation) and make a contribution to the community. Unlike giving directly to charity and having the charity decide how to use their funds, with a foundation, you can control the investments into your community and direct the money where you want it to go. Legal and accounting costs to maintain a foundation does not have to be significant and there is an affordable way for anyone to have their own ‘mini-foundation.’

The correct name for these mini-foundations is a ‘donor-advised account.’ These accounts work as follows:

- (1) You place funds into the account and get a charitable income tax deduction.
- (2) You can have the funds invested in any prudent manner you choose.
- (3) Each year, you must distribute 5% of the balance to a charity like FEZANA and let the total amount keep growing.
- (4) This account can exist indefinitely, with your children and grandchildren succeeding you.
- (5) You become the co-trustees, directing the foundation assets for the good of our community.
- (6) The co-trustees may take a reasonable fee for their labor and time spent.

If you like the idea of getting a significant tax deduction while having the control to invest and distribute money to your favorite charity please call us or your financial advisor.

**Your contribution.** Kindly make your tax deductible checks payable to FEZANA, indicating either Academic Scholarship Fund, Performing-Creative Arts Scholarship Fund or Kheradi Endowment Fund or any of the FEZANA Funds you wish to support (Religious Education, Welfare, Critical Assistance, Journal or General) and mail to: Rashid Mehini, FEZANA Treasurer, 583 Beverly Place, San Marcos, CA 92069.

Thank you for all your support and may you continue to be blessed by Ahura Mazda.

**Jerry Kheradi**, MD, FACG, chairperson, Funds and Finance Committee.

**Committee:** *Rashid Mehini* (treasurer), *Rustom Kevala*, PhD, *Kia Kaviani*, DMD, *Celeste Kheradi*.

# FINANCIAL CORNER

Thousand Points of Light	2001-4	2005	Total		2001-4	2005	Total
Anonymous, FL	5		5	Coating Engineers, TX	S(n) 2		2
Anonymous, IL	J 5		5	Cyra & Lyla Contractor, PA	W 4		4
Anonymous, NY	G 1		1	Dr Farhad & Hutoxi Contractor(g)(h)	W 41		41
Anonymous	R 1		1	Dr. & Mrs. Farokh Contractor,LA C,R,W12			12
A Wellwisher, MI	1		1	Farobag Cooper, IL	W 1		1
Ansheel, Inc.	W 1		1	<b>Cowas A. Cooper and Ruby, PA</b>	G 1	(f) 1	2
Dr Babak Abadi, PA	W 2		2	Darcy B. Cooper, IN		S 1	1
Jamshed Antia, IL	W 1		1	Katy & Farrokh Cooper, CA	W 3		3
Noshir & Kashmiria Antia	C 1		1	<b>Phil F. Cooper, CA</b>	G,W2	S 10	12
Shiraz Antia, CT	C 2		2	Tommy and Nairika Cornett, GA	1		1
Parviz & Simin Ardeshirpour, NC	S 2		2	Shiavax Cowasji, ND		W 1	1
Jim Arjani, CA	C 1		1	Porus and Zerin Dadabhoy, IL	W 1		1
<b>Oufreez Argenta, MN</b>		S 1	1	<b>Alayar &amp; Giti Dabestani, WA</b>		W 10	10
Dr. Cyrus F Austin, AZ	G,W 19		19	Tammy & Behram Dalal, NC	G 3		3
Porus Austin and Khar, CA	W 4	W 5	9	Keki Dalal	C 1		1
Gulnar Balsara, PA	C 1		1	Phiroze H. Dalal, CA	C 5		5
Zubin & Silvia Balsara, AR	G 1		1	<b>Sam Dalal, MN</b>		G 1	1
Edul & Tehnaz Bamji, NJ	W 1		1	Dr Ardeshir & Parvin Damania, CA	2		2
Beaudette family, RI	(l) 5		5	R. F. Damania, CA		G 1	1
Dolly & Pesi Bavadam	C,W 2		2	Boman & Bachi Damkevala, IL	W 1		1
Behram Baxter, CA		G 1	1	Diana Damkevala, CA	1		1
Thritee, Soozan & Trista Baxter, NY	(e) 1		1	Maneck Daroowalla, NY	G 2		2
<b>Beach Cigar Group, FL</b>	C,W 90	C,G,W 114	204	Niloufer & Phiroze Darukhanavala	W 2		2
Best Western Crystal Palace Inn, CA	W 5		5	Adil Daruwala, CA	G 2		2
Yasmin Bhajiwalla, IL	W 1		1	Khushroo Daruwalla	G 1		1
Gopal Bhalala, IL	W 1		1	Ron & Farida Daruwala, IN	W 1		1
Zazu & Tinaaz Bhandara, CA	G 2		2	Noshir & Katy Daruwalla, IL	W 2		2
Cyrus Bharucha, IL	W 1		1	Dolly Dastoor, QE	S 1		1
<b>Aspy J. Bharucha, OH</b>		G 1	1	Maneck Dastoor	G 1		1
Firdaus & Jasmin Bhathena, MA	1		1	<b>Shirin Nariman Dastoor's family</b>		O 50	50
Katy & Noshir Bhathena, IL	W 2		2	Aspy & Lily Dastur, PA	W 2		2
Rustom & Sheroo Bhathena, OH	1		1	Farrokh N Dastur, CA	1		1
Bachi Bilimoria, IL	W 1		1	Meher N. Dastur, CA	2		2
Farrokh Billimoria, IL	W 1		1	<b>Khurshed Jehangir Dastur, PA</b>	(g) 1	W 1	2
Yaz & Firoza Billimoria, IL	W 2		2	<b>Nari &amp; Dinoo Dastur, CT</b>	1	S,W 6	7
Meena S. Birdie, FL	G 1		1	Er. Soli & JoAnn Dastur, FL	J,R 6		6
Mezdie R. Birdie, FL	G 2		2	Adi & Parvin Davar, VA	S,W 2		2
Jal Birdy, CA	C 1		1	Usheen Davar, NJ	W 2		2
Elizabeth F. Boardman, CA		G 1	1	Edul & Nilufer Daver, NJ	G,W 5	G 2	7
Kobad & Nancy Bugwadia, CA	C 1		1	Homi & Nargish Davier, TX	W 2		2
Cyrus Bulsara, TX	W 2		2	Farrokh & Goolestan Deboo, CT	R,W 7		7
Homi & Ellen Byramji, NJ	1		1	Jimmy & Freny Deboo family, MI	1		1
Kershaw & Bakhtawar Byramji	C 3		3	Dectron	G 3		3
Farhad Cama, PA	W 2		2	<b>Rohinton K. Deputy, PA</b>		G 5	5
Dr. Lovji D. Cama, NJ	7		7	Afsaneh Dehghanian	W 1		1
Shahrookh Cambata, IL	W 50		50	Suresh Desai, IL	W 1		1
Kamal E. Campbell, GA	C,W 1		1	Jimmy & Shahdokht Dholoo, MD	(f) 5	J 3	8
Dr. & Mrs. Nadir Camay, CA	G 2		2	Faroukh & Freya Dhunjisha, IL	W 2		2
Sohrab D. Charna	C 1		1	Ross Dinyari	G 1		1
Homiyar Choksi, VA	1		1	Geeta Dhutia, IL	W 3		3
Niranjan Choksi, IL	W 2		2	Yezdi N Dordi, CA	5		5
Vijay Choksi, IL	W 2		2	Dr. K. Dua, WI	W 4		4
				Jimmy and Mary Dubash, VA	G,W 4		4
				Jamshid & Parastu Dubash, MA	C 2		2
				Mina Dubash, IN	G 1		1
				J. H. Dudha, TX	C 1		1
				<b>Noshir &amp; Kashmiria Dutia, NJ</b>	C 1	S 1	2

**"1000 points of Light"** donors are shown above. Each \$100 counts as 1 Point of Light. Help us reach our goal of 5000 points. Donations received from February 22, 2005 through May 7, 2005 are shown in bold.



# FINANCIAL CORNER

## Thousand Points of Light [Contd] 2001-4 2005 Total

Manek R. Dustoor, MI	2		2
A.D. & G.A. Dutia, AL	G 4		4
Dara & Arnava Elavia	W 2		2
Tony & Swati Elavia, MA	1		1
Daulat P. Engineer, IL		W 1	1
Freddy Engineer, CA	1		1
Rumi Engineer, CO	C,S,W 3		3
<b>Shirin Engineer, MD</b>		<b>W 5</b>	<b>5</b>
Beverly Engineer, IL	W 10		10
Rustom & Yasmin Engineer, TX	W 1		1
Adil Feroz, GA	1		1
Four Diamonds Enterprises, NV	W 5		5
Sami R. Framjee	W 10		10
Rusi D Gandhi, NJ	1		1
Golmeher B. Gandhi	(j) 2		2
Cecilia & Sorab Gandhi, CA	5		5
Hanoz & Shahzdeen Gandhi, NJ	C,W 9		9
Navroz Gandhi, MD	C,W 10	C,G,R,W 10	20
<b>Rusi Gandhi, NJ</b>	W 2	<b>W 1</b>	<b>3</b>
Eugene Gauger, MI	1		1
Jamshed & Yasmin Ghadiali, NJ	W 3		3
Rashna Ghadiali, IL	1		1
Burjor & Behroze Ghandhi, MI	W 2		2
Mr. & Mrs. Sorab K. Ghadiali	3		3
<b>Rustam Guiv Foundation, KS</b>		<b>S 20</b>	<b>20</b>
Soonu & Jal Godiwalla, TX	1		1
Behli H. Hansotia, VA	C 1		1
Noshir L Hansotia, MO	C, (f) 2		2
<b>IHOP Bonitat, FL</b>		<b>S 1</b>	<b>1</b>
Piloo E. Ilavia, TX	C 1		1
International Access, WA	G 77		77
Behram K & Farieda Irani, TX	C,R,W 22		22
Hormuz & Shahdookht Irani, GA	G 14		14
Mervan and Katayoun Irani, MD	1		1
<b>Shapur K. Irani, IN</b>	C 1	<b>G 1</b>	<b>2</b>
Minoo S. Italia	G 1		1
Rohinton Boman Irani, NY	G 1		1
Rustam H. Irani, MA	1		1
Rustom and Sarvar Irani, FL	G 1		1
Irani Family Foundation	C,G,R,S,W 10		10
<b>Minoo &amp; Ruby Italia, TX</b>	G 1	<b>G 1</b>	<b>2</b>
Jim & Homai Jagus, PA	5		5
Daryoush & Mahin Jahanian, KS	G 3		3
Iraj Jahanian, MO	G 5		5
Khurshid & J.J. Jamadar, TX	2		2
Rumi & Kashmira Jamsetjee, IL	1		1
Cyrus D. Jilla, VA	G 1		1
Dinshaw & Goolcher Joshi, MD	C 4		4
<b>Joshi and Verahrami families</b>		<b>O 50</b>	<b>50</b>
Khorshed & Dr Firoze Jungalwala, MA	(d)1		1
K and K Pharmacy, IL	W 1		1
Afried Farokh Kamdin, NY	W 2		2
Jamshed & Rita Kapadia, MA	R,W 7		7
Homi & Shireen Kapadia, PA	5		5
Hoshang & Bonnie Karani, IL	W 4		4
Erach & Lily Karanjawala, CA	W 1		1
<b>Banoo Karanjia</b>		<b>S,W 2</b>	<b>2</b>

Dr Natasha Karanjia, PA	C,R 3		3
Minoo & Behroze Karanjia, PA	W 1		1
Aspandiar G. Katki	C 2		2
<b>Kia Kaviani, FL</b>		<b>(f) 1</b>	<b>1</b>
Roya Kaviani, NJ	C 1		1
Dolly Kerawalla, CA	1		1
Mr & Mrs Khodamorad.S. Kermani, NY(a)	5	(a) 2	7
Dr Rustom & Yasmin Kevala, MD(f)(k)J,W	5		5
Dilshad P. Khambatta, MA		S 10	10
Purvez & Aban Khambatta, OH	G 1		1
Sunita Khambatta, WI	W 2		2
Nazneen Kharas	S 10		10
Delara Kheradi, NY	(f) 6		6
Celeste Kheradi, RI	(f) (k) 28		28
<b>Dr Jerry Kheradi, RI</b>	(f) W 83	<b>(f) W 185</b>	<b>268</b>
Sohrab & Teresa Kheradi, NY	(f) 5	(f) 5	10
Kershaw & Nazneen Khumbatta, TX	1		1
Todd & Jennifer Kilsey, RI		(f) 3	3
Jasmin & Maneck Kotwal, NJ	2		2
Kaizad Kotwal, OH	G 1		1
Zenobia & Shahrookh Lala, MI	C 2		2
Mathew & Delara Lungen, NY	(f) 1	(f) 1	2
Jyoti Madhavan, IL	W 2		2
<b>Kaizad &amp; Jinobya Machhi, WI</b>	<b>C 3</b>	<b>C 2</b>	<b>5</b>
Borzoo Kushesh & Mahindokht	(b) 1		1
Malhotra, Inc. IL	W 1		1
Dolly Malva, CA	G 2	G 1	3
<b>Pervin Marawala, CA</b>		<b>S 1</b>	<b>1</b>
Firdous Marfatia, IL	W 1		1
P. Master		G 1	1
Dr. Firdausi & Sherenaz Mazda, IL	W 2		2
Mehran & Dr. Mitra Mazdyasni, CA	1		1
Noshir & Yasmin Medhora, TX	2		2
Farahnaz Mehdiabadi, TX	C 2		2
Rashid & Afsaneh Mehin, CA		(f) 1	1
<b>Dhun Mehta, PA</b>		<b>S 1</b>	<b>1</b>
Hosi & Kim Mehta, IL	W 17		17
Firdosh & Rashna Mehta, AB	W 1		1
Kayomarsh & Nergish Mehta, IL	W 1		1
Kersi & Kamal Mehta, OH	J 1		1
Merwan and Rukshana Mehta, MO	1		1
Shahrokh & Gool Mehta, NY	G 3	G 1	4
Hoshi & Nawaz Merchant, NJ	2		2
Mehraban & Mahbanoo Mehr	G 1		1
Sherazade Mehta, MA	(m) 1		1
Ardaviraf & Houtoxi Minocherhomjee	7		7
Pesi Mistry, NY	1		1
Tehmtan & Aloo Mistry, MO	1		1
Jehangir and Olive Mobed, IL	1		1
<b>Manou Mobedshahi, CA</b>	J(i) 25	<b>J 2</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Sorab K. Modi, DC</b>		<b>(m) 1</b>	<b>1</b>
Rumy Mohta, VA	1		1
Mahrukh & Firoze Motafram, WI	W 2		2
Edul D. Nakra, MA	S 1		1
Nesh Inc.	1		1
Pheroze & Renate Nagarwalla, IL	W 2		2
Minoo Netervala, CA	2		2

# FINANCIAL CORNER

## Thousand Points of Light [Contd] 2001-4 2005 Total

Percy K Nikorawalla, NJ	1	1
Jamshed & Farzana Palsetia, MA	1	1
Farhad & Firoza Panthaki, MA	11	11
Nekzad Parabia, WI	W 1	1
Sam & Perin Parabia, CA	W 10	10
Patel Builders, Inc. IL	W 1	1
Baji & Perviz Patel, IL	W 1	1
Framroze Patel, NJ		(f) 1 1
Jyoti & Navin Patel, IL	W 1	1
Drs. Khushru & Roda Patel, IL	W 3	3
Homi Patel, IL	G 2	2
Vimesh Patel, IL	G 3	3
Mr & Mrs Randolph Paulling, GA	(d) 1	1
Yasmin & Shapur Pavri, TX	S,W 18	18
Dr Parvez Pohowalla, OR	1	1
Rostam Pooladi-Darvish, AB		W 8 8
Minoo & Zarin Press, IL	W 2	2
Godrej & Piloo Randeria, TX	G,R 2	2
Dr. Murli & Mani Rao, IL	W 5	5
Mitra & Rashnavad Rashidi, ONT		(f) 2 2
Dr. Minocher Reporter, OR	R 2	2
Dara & Dinsoo Rivetna, IL	W 5	5
Jamshed & Tamara Rivetna, TX	1	1
Rohinton & Roshan Rivetna, IL	J,W 7	7
<b>Dinaz &amp; Dan Rogers, OR</b>	J 6	<b>J 2 8</b>
Villoo & Solee Rudina, TX	1	1
Eric & Delnaz Rustomji, IL	W 3	3
Purvez & Aban Rustomji, TX	(d) 2	S (n) 4 6
Neville Sarkari, WY	1	1
Nargesh & Aspi Sethna, TX	1	1
Prochy Sethna, CA	W 20	20
Sonal Shah, IL	W 2	2
Houshmand Sharyari, IL	W 1	1
Behram Shroff, VA	C,W 4	4
Dr Burjis & Hovi Shroff, FL	C,G 7	7
Dr Nariman & Parrin Shroff, FL	2	2
Neeve & Kurush Shroff, SC	W 5	5
Zubeen Shroff, NY	1	1
Fali Sidhva, OR	C 1	1
Bapsi Sidhwa, TX	W 1	1
Feroze & Anahita Sidhwa, TX	C,S,W 20	S 10 30
Timothy Robert Smith	G 1	1
Erach & Vahbeez Songadwala, TX	G 1	1
Yezdi N. Soonavala, MI	G 1	1
Farah & Matthew Speer, IL	(f) 1	1
Nazneen & Ehler Spliedt, CA	1	1
Arnavaz Sukhia, NJ	G 1	1
Cyrus Subawalla, IL	C 2	2
Dr. Hoshedar & Anahita Tamboli, FL	W 5	W 150 155
Sanober & Aderbad Tamboli, TX		C,R,W 25 25
Karrus Tarapore	G 1	1
Bella Tata, BC	1	1
Khurshed M Tengra, ID	G 2	2
<b>Mahnaz K. Tengra, ID</b>	C,G 2	<b>S 1 3</b>
<b>Mahrukh Neville Tikkoo, CT</b>		<b>W 1 1</b>
<b>Jamshed R. Udvadia, MI</b>	5	<b>S 5 10</b>
Perry Unwalla, FL	C,G,R,S 7	7

2001-4 2005 Total

Rayomand J Unwalla, PA	G 2	2
Minoo & Shirin Vaghaiwalla, FL	(m) 1	1
Taera M. Vakil, FL	G 1	1
Cainaz Vakharia, VA	C,W 3	3
Dick & Sheroo Vazir, FL	2	2
Jer Vijan, AZ	1	1
Dr. M. Darius Vohman, GA	G 1	1
Gool & Dinyar Wadia, CT	W 4	4
Ken & Dinaz Weber, IL	W 5	5
<b>Richard &amp; Zarine Weil, IL</b>		<b>S 1 1</b>
Gene Winderlich		S 1 1
Homey & Bachi Writer, CA	G 1	1
Parviz & Parvin Yeganegi, BC	4	4
ZAPANJ, DE, PA & NJ	2	2
Farangis Zardoshty & family, AZ	G,R,(c) 336	336
Mehraban Zartoshty, B.C	25	25
North American Mobeds Council	R 10	10
Z Assoc of Alberta, Canada	3	3
Z Assoc of Greater Boston Area, MA	W 1	1
Z. Society of British Columbia, BC	W 2	2
Atlanta Z Anjuman, GA	1	1
Z Assoc of N Calif, CA	C,G,W 7	7
Z Assoc of Chicago, IL	W 2	2
Z Association of Florida, FL	G 2	2
Z Association of Pennsylvania, PA	W 2	2
Z Association of North Texas	2	2
Zoroastrian Community	G 1	1
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>1517</b>	<b>737 2254</b>

### Key to "1000 Points of Light":

*Funds: C=Critical Assistance, G=General, J=Journal, R=Religious Ed.; S=Scholarship, W=Welfare*

- (a) In memory of Dr. Keikhosrow and Morvarid Harvesf
- (b) In memory of Irandokht Ezzati
- (c) In memory of Mobed Faridoon Zartoshty
- (d) In memory of Nargesh Mistree
- (e) In honor of the 70th birthday of Dr Jehangir Kotwal
- (f) For Mehraban & Morvorid Kheradi Scholarships
- (g) In memory of Mrs. Mitha Morris
- (h) For Mr. & Mrs. Dinshaw Nariman
- (i) For reprint of "Legacy of Zarathushtra"
- (j) In memory of Behram J. Gandhi
- (k) Damkevala Endowment Fund
- (l) In memory of Morvorid Kheradi
- (m) ZYNA Performing and Creative Arts Scholarship
- (n) In memory of Dinshaw Joshi
- (o) North American Awards Committee Activity Fund ■



*What I had, I spent*

*What I saved, I lost*

*What I gave, I have. [Anon]*

# Lock, stock, barrel and of course, do not forget taxes

In the recent past we have become a migrant community going to lands near and afar. As a tax professional, what I see often is that, given the throes that any such endeavors bring generally, the financial and tax aspects, are either not considered or not well planned. Of course, this happens to have a greater bearing on the affluent who may derive income from several assets located in different countries.

**Tax implications of assets in different countries.** Consideration should always be given to steps to be undertaken prior to immigration rather than after the move, because sometimes history, in this case, leaves little room for retroactive changes. I always suggest that income and estate tax issues be looked at simultaneously in the country of origin and the country of adoption, and it is only after the tax laws of both are considered that decisions be made.

I am currently working with a client with worldwide assets, from several sources and countries, who is planning to move to our shores on a permanent basis. Here in the US we have some onerous and, in my opinion, punitive tax laws which tax income on a worldwide basis for its citizenry and tax residents. Once the individual establishes tax residency, and I hasten to add that this is different than immigration residency, all income is subject to the US tax net.

What becomes critical is perhaps considering transferring assets by gift, or selling them prior to the move if necessary. This could prove very beneficial.

**Estate tax implications.** For estate tax purposes the US looks to domicile established in the US and once that is the case, all worldwide assets are subject to our estate taxes. Once again transfers of assets to other members of the family, or gifts prior to that happening should always be considered.

Usually countries have double tax mitigating treaties, which may come to the rescue and they need to be reviewed, again prior to the move. We have several treaties with other countries which are always taken into account in worldwide tax planning. Tax credits may also provide benefit where the tax in one jurisdiction is credited with taxes paid in the other.

Immigration toll comes in many forms and sizes but there is one toll that can be avoided perhaps ... the taxman's toll.

**Jamshed B. Gandhi** CPA, CVA, CFP®, MS (Tax), is a tax partner with the San Francisco accounting and tax firm of Bertorelli, Gandhi, Won and Behti.



**Grateful thanks!** FEZANA gratefully acknowledges donations received from February 22 through May 7, 2005. This does *not* include donations acknowledged under the "1000 Points of Light" program [see previous pages], nor any donations under \$50.

**Academic Scholarship Fund:** Minocher Reporter, OR (\$50); Adi Unwalla, NJ (\$50).

**Tsunami:** A total of \$6,098 was received for the Tsunami relief effort, from individuals and Member Associations: Zarthoshti Anjuman of Northern California (\$1,251), Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York (\$1,000) and Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago (\$888).

PLEASE GIVE  
FROM YOUR HEART

## DONATIONS & APPEALS

**Donations.** Unless specified otherwise, please send all donations to: **Rashid Mehin, FEZANA Treasurer, 583 Beverly Place, San Marcos, California 92069, tel: (760) 891-0699, Email: rmehin@yahoo.com.** Make checks payable to "FEZANA," specifying the fund (General, Welfare, Critical Assistance, Religious Education, Academic Scholarship, Creative/Performing Arts Scholarship and Fezana Journal). All charitable donations to FEZANA are tax deductible in USA. Donors of \$250 or more will receive a confirmation letter for tax records. For donations under \$250, use your canceled check as a receipt.

**Appeals.** All appeals for community welfare, medical, social and critical assistance should be sent to the FEZANA Welfare Committee: chair – **Houtoxi F. Contractor, 2301 Colony Court, Pittsburgh, PA 15237, tel: (412) 367-2948; HFMC31@aol.com.** For information, visit: [www.fezana.org](http://www.fezana.org).

## APPEALS FOR AID

A tsunami or earthquake stirs up our internal strings of caring and compassion. We want to reach out and help our fellow humans in their times of distress because we feel a connection to them.

We have people in our community who experience distress every day of their lives. We have students who need help with tuition fees, couples who need help, older people who need support.

Please keep your caring and compassion sensors open throughout the year and help the FEZANA Welfare Com-

mittee help these people better themselves and better our community.

Below are some examples of the large number of appeals for aid received by FEZANA in the last quarter. Please give generously; send donations to FEZANA as indicated [see page 122].

*Houtoxi Contractor*

*Hosi Mehta*

*Co-chairs, FEZANA Welfare*

● Brilliant young man, undergoing radiation for **brain tumor**. Parents of very meagre means cannot afford the escalating cost of chemotherapy.

● **Farmer from Umalla village** appeals for financial help to purchase seeds, fertilizer, water supply, and labor. Crops are not good due to lack of rain, and he has mounting bank loans to repay.

## Gujarat farmers ravaged by floods

During July, areas of Gujarat were ravaged by floods of unprecedented scale. Zarathushti farmers have lost their crops, while some have had their cottages and cattle washed away. Any critical assistance funds to provide relief to poor **Zarathushti farmers** in these areas, will be deeply appreciated.

*Dinshaw Tamboly*

*WZO Trust, India*

## Parsee General Hospital

Please support the 19th Annual Fundraiser for the B. D. Petit Parsee General Hospital. Donations will be used for distributing free medicine for poor and needy Zarathushtis at the hospital. Every cent collected is sent to the hospital. Last year, we collected and sent \$22,172. In 2004, we also sent \$700 to the Parsi Ambulance Division.

Please make checks payable to ZAGNY - Critical Assistance Fund and mail to: Yasmin Ghadiali, 2686 Belcher Street, Baldwin, NY 11510, email: ghad@aol.com. ■



*This column is brought to you by **Freyaz Shroff**. Freyaz is from Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. She has a BA in sociology and a minor in psychology, and has also completed her MBA.*

*Left, FEZANA Welfare Committee, l. to r., Freyaz Shroff and co-chairs Hosi Mehta and Houtoxi Contractor.*

## “Believe in the strength that comes from one hand holding another through times of trouble...” - anonymous

I suppose I have always known that making a relationship work takes time, energy, understanding and patience. Essentially, you get out of it truly what all those concerned invest into it. How do you know when you’ve invested enough? Where do you draw the line between being understanding and being used? When is it okay to say that your patience has worn thin and you have no more left to give? Ideally, the answers would be: there is always a little more you can invest, the people you love won’t use you and that patience comes in abundance.

I have heard and do believe that when you leave a space or person, and every time you leave you feel good about who you are and where you are, then you know that this relationship is good for you, but if every time you step away from the situation, your self esteem is a little lower, you feel a little less sure about yourself or you second guess yourself about what is happening, then it is time to reevaluate that relationship. You are worth it! Surround yourself with those that recognize your awesomeness!

Houtoxi Contractor and Hosi Mehta are chairs of the Welfare committee; they move with understanding and compassion for everyone. One never seems to leave their presence feeling any less than completely loved. In the recent past they have been overwhelmed with cases of domestic crisis in our community and have created a **confidential toll free line (877-265-7273)** where members of our community can seek out information in relation to domestic violence counselors, shelters, and safe houses. Partnerships with advocacy groups and counselors will hopefully allow them to point you in the right direction to grow the relationships that surround you!

**Houtoxi Contractor** (412-367-2948 or HFMC31@aol.com)

**Hosi Mehta** (630-833-6923 or hosi mehta@aol.com)

**Freyaz Shroff** (843-281-8010) or Freyaz@aol.com.

## A father's plea ...

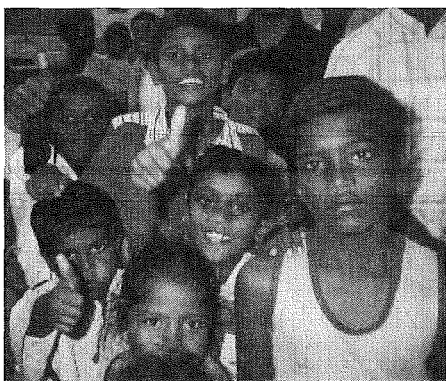
FEZANA has received an appeal to search for a kidney donor, from Prof. Dhanjoo Ghista of Singapore. He writes:

“My daughter Kitayun, 35, was very suddenly diagnosed with end-stage kidney failure last August. She urgently needs a kidney transplant.

Kitayun’s blood group is B -ve. The kidney donor could have blood group B -ve or B +ve or even O; and should be below 45 years of age.

“I know this requires a tremendous sacrifice; it is with great gratitude that I am making this appeal. Kindly contact me at mdnghista@ntu.edu.sg, Tel (Singapore) 65-6792-5521 or Kitayun at kitayun@yahoo.com.” ■





## Journey to the Tsunami affected area

**N**iloufer was among volunteers from India and abroad, who worked for tsunami relief and rehabilitation in south India.

"My colleagues and I were determined to help in a meaningful manner. We contacted several NGOs and organizations, and decided to volunteer our services with South Indian Federation of Fishermen Societies (SIFFS), the nodal organization, coordinating relief efforts in Nagapattinam and Kanyakumari, the areas most affected in Tamil Nadu.

"Thank you, FEZANA, for the faith you placed in me and for giving me US \$2,000.

"I was touched by all the support I received from the Zarathushti community – in India, US and UK. What truly moved me was when Behram Pastakia came to Ahmedabad Railway Station at 5 am to see us off. We started our trip with his blessings.

Funds were used in relief efforts in providing urgent needs such as food, clothing, kerosene stoves, and later transitioned into rehabilitation and reconstruction of temporary and permanent shelters.

"Each shelter costs Rs. 8,000 to build, and with the monies we raised (Rs. 360,000) about 45 shelters have been built.

"Our experience here certainly has been life altering. We realize that our efforts are just a drop in the ocean, but we hope and pray that the drop did make a minute but significant difference."

## Scholarships available

A list of miscellaneous scholarships is given below:

- **FEZANA Scholarships** and **Mehraban & Morvord Kheradi Endowment Scholarship – FEZANA Scholar** for students at institutions of higher learning in USA/Canada. Dr. Dolly Dastoor, dollydastoor@sympatico.ca, tel: 450-656-2036, [www.fezana.org](http://www.fezana.org).
- **Moobed Faridoon Zardoshty Religion Education Scholarships** for higher studies/research in Zarathushti religion at an institution of higher education anywhere in the world. Kayomars P. Mehta, kayomehta@aol.com, tel: 708-974-1238, [www.fezana.org](http://www.fezana.org).
- **Fali Chothia Charitable Trust** scholarships for students in NA universities. ferozafitch@lexicongraphics.net, tel: 301-564-3726, [www.zamwi.org/about/2001FCCT.pdf](http://www.zamwi.org/about/2001FCCT.pdf)
- **ZAC (Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago) loans/scholarships** for study in USA & Canada. ZACscholarships@yahoo.com, [www.zac-chicago.org](http://www.zac-chicago.org).
- **ZSBC (Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia)** awards scholarships to its members seeking admission to a university. Homi Italia, (604) 438-2076, [www.zsbc.org](http://www.zsbc.org).
- **Performing & Creative Arts Scholarship** offered by FEZANA/ZYNA. Application form is on [www.fezana.org](http://www.fezana.org). Anahita Sidhwa, afsidhwa@dcccd.edu.
- **Paul and Daisy Soros Fellowships** support graduate education for immigrants and children of immigrants. [www.pdsoros.org](http://www.pdsoros.org).
- **Houtan Scholarship Foundation** offers a scholarship of \$2,500 per semester for studies in Iranian language and culture. Visit [www.houtan.org](http://www.houtan.org).
- **Indo American Community Foundation** offers scholarships of \$2,000 per year to Indian Americans. Visit [www.upakar.org](http://www.upakar.org).
- **Individual Advanced Research Opportunities (IARO)** scholarships, for research in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (Tajikistan). [www.irex.org/programs/iaro](http://www.irex.org/programs/iaro). Also visit [www.irex.org/programs/roberts](http://www.irex.org/programs/roberts) for study grants in Iran.
- **Institute of International Education's** Scholar Rescue Fund offers fellowships to scholars from any country and in any discipline, whose life, security or work is threatened in their home regions. Visit [www.iie.org/SRF](http://www.iie.org/SRF). Email: SRF@iie.org.
- **Harvard's Pluralism Project** offers research grants. [staff@pluralism.org](mailto:staff@pluralism.org), or [www.pluralism.org/research/student\\_grant.php](http://www.pluralism.org/research/student_grant.php). For summer internships, visit [www.pluralism.org/resources/calendar/summer\\_internships.php](http://www.pluralism.org/resources/calendar/summer_internships.php)
- **National Science Foundation** offers grants for documenting endangered languages. Visit [www.fedgrants.gov/Applicants/NSF/OIRM/HQ/04-605/Grant.html](http://www.fedgrants.gov/Applicants/NSF/OIRM/HQ/04-605/Grant.html).
- **Gates Millenium Scholars Program** offers awards for science studies. [www.gatesfoundation.org/Education/Scholarships/Announcements/Announce-040607.htm](http://www.gatesfoundation.org/Education/Scholarships/Announcements/Announce-040607.htm).
- Global Environment Facility of the **World Bank** and **YES**, offers fellowships for entrepreneurs in field of renewable energy. Visit <http://www.projects.takingitglobal.org/>
- Scholarships for **Commonwealth citizens**. [www.csfp-online.org/hostcountries/uk/](http://www.csfp-online.org/hostcountries/uk/)
- **Royal Society scholarships** in science. [www.royalsoc.ac.uk/funding/](http://www.royalsoc.ac.uk/funding/)
- **Marshall scholarships** for Americans in UK. [www.marshallscholarship.org](http://www.marshallscholarship.org).
- **Fulbright exchange programs**. Visit [www.fulbrightexchanges.org/base/grant.asp](http://www.fulbrightexchanges.org/base/grant.asp).
- **UNESCO 'Information for All'**, an international information society initiative offers funding for information literacy projects. [www.portal.unesco.org/ci/en/](http://www.portal.unesco.org/ci/en/)
- **Indicorps fellowships** for a one-year public service program in India. [www.indicorps.org](http://www.indicorps.org). Email: [info@indicorps.org](mailto:info@indicorps.org), or contact 2004 Indicorps scholar roshnikasad@yahoo.com.
- **Canadian Subsidy Directory** contains 3100 listings of government grants and loans, including foundations and associations. \$69.95. Call 450-224-9275.
- **Boren Scholarships** and **Graduate Fellowships**. <http://nsep.aed.org>.
- **Jacob E. Javits Fellowships**. Undergrads or first year of graduate study. Includes social sciences, arts, humanities. [www.ed.gov/programs/jacobjavits/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/programs/jacobjavits/index.html).

### Scholarships (Contd)

- **Gates Cambridge Scholarship.** All countries (except UK) eligible. [www.gates.scholarships.cam.ac.uk](http://www.gates.scholarships.cam.ac.uk).
- **Harry S. Truman Scholarship** Foundation. Graduate funding for career in government or public service. [www.truman.gov](http://www.truman.gov).
- **Rotary Scholarships**, to citizens of all countries where there are Rotary Clubs. [www.rotary.org/foundation/educational/amb\\_scho/prospect/index.html](http://www.rotary.org/foundation/educational/amb_scho/prospect/index.html).
- **Goldwater Scholarships** for sophomores and juniors, for mathematics, natural science, engineering. [www.act.org/goldwater](http://www.act.org/goldwater).

### Patuck Trust provides opportunities for Parsi students in Mumbai

The Patuck Polytechnic Trust endowed by Rustomji Patuck, provides educational opportunities for Parsi students at Patuk Complex at

Vakola, near Mumbai Airport. As a minority community, 50% of the seats are reserved for Parsis. It includes a play school, primary schools, technical high school and junior college, College of Commerce and Management, Open University Study Center, Infotech Center, and Industrial Training Center. A Law College will start in 2005.

[Submitted by Marzban Giara, [giara@vsnl.com](mailto:giara@vsnl.com)]

### Thank You FEZANA

"We heartily acknowledge your contribution of \$501 to the *All Parsees Sports Foundation*, Mumbai. Over 570 athletes participated in 96 events at the 25th Jal Pardivala All Parsees Athletic Meet in February 2005.

"We salute you for coming forward to encourage us to channelise the positive energies of our youth towards sports, discipline and fraternity."

Ruzbeh Sutaria, Jt. Hon. Secry.

### More opportunities to Give

Besides the opportunities for giving listed in this section of the Journal, please also consider contributing to other worthy projects, described elsewhere:

- **Zoroastrian College, Sanjan**, president Prof. Dr. Meher Master Moos [p. 38].
- FEZANA's **1000 Points of Light** campaign [p. 119].
- **Baimai Surti Foundation** for needy Zarathushtis [p. 102].
- **'Fravashi of Light'** greeting cards [p. 143].
- **Zarathushti Culture - a Revival**. DVD by World Zarathushti Cultural Foundation, Dr. Homi Dhalla president [p. 144].
- **Zoroastrian Society of Ontario** for larger darbe mehr on the existing premises [back cover].

## FEZANA ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS (2005-2006)

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

### Applications are invited for the FEZANA ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS and the MEHRABAN & MORVORID KHERADI ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP THE FEZANA SCHOLAR.

The scholarships are open to Zarathushti applicants who are currently enrolled or have applied as full-time students in institutions of higher learning (accredited degree-granting colleges or universities) in USA or Canada.

**Scholarships:** Scholarships for the academic year 2005-2006 will be awarded in September 2005. The Mehraban and Morvorid Kheradi Endowment Scholarship will be for \$5000.

**Eligibility:** (1) Applicants must be of the Zarathushti faith. (2) Applicants must be currently enrolled or have applied as full-time students in institutions of higher learning (accredited degree-granting colleges or universities) in USA or Canada. (3) Applicants must be legal residents or citizens of USA or Canada. (4) Foreign students holding legal status in USA or Canada are eligible, provided they have spent one year or 2 semesters at a college or university in North America. (5) Applicants will be eligible to receive a maximum of two awards, which may or may not be in consecutive years.

**Award Criteria:** Applicants will be evaluated and judged on academic accomplishments, program of study, answers to essay questions, letters of reference, financial need, extra-curricular activities, community service and general impression from the application form.

**The Mehraban and Morvorid Kheradi Endowment Scholarship of \$5000 will be awarded for scholastic achievement and academic excellence. It will be for post-graduate studies (masters degree and above).**

**Application:** Application forms are available from the FEZANA website at [www.fezana.org](http://www.fezana.org) or from Dr Dolly Dastoor ([dollydastoor@sympatico.ca](mailto:dollydastoor@sympatico.ca)). Completed forms should be sent, post-marked no later than August 1, 2005, to:

DOLLY DASTOOR Ph.D, Chair, FEZANA Academic Scholarship Program,  
3765, Malo, Brossard, Quebec Canada J4Y 1B4

## Keyannejad-Kapadia Zoroastrian Scholarship Fund

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

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

- Enrolled at Michigan State University.
- Not citizens or Permanent Residents (Green Card) of the USA. However, applications from US citizens will also be entertained.
- Of the Zoroastrian religion.

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

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

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

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

**Tel: (317) 837-9641 ● fax: (317) 837-9642 ● [www.Triangle.org/TEF](http://www.Triangle.org/TEF)**

### OPPORTUNITIES WANTED

*[Continued from page 108]*

● Seeking position in **medical device industry** (related to electrical engineering), biomedical instrumentation and imaging. Any contacts in companies like Boston Scientific, GE medical systems, Medtronic, Guidant, Abbot Laboratories, Seimens Medical and Phillips Medical will be deeply appreciated. Contact Natasha, [hosimehta@aol.com](mailto:hosimehta@aol.com).

● **BBA in finance**, recently graduated from California State, would appreciate contact with an employer that could help with his H1 visa. He will retain his own lawyer to proceed with the formalities. Contact shiroy\_patel@hotmail.com.

● Graduate of Indiana University with concentration in **Recreation Therapy**, seeks contacts and assistance (possibly from a social worker) in finding a job. In Chicago now, but willing to relocate. Contact [dadachan@sas.upenn.edu](mailto:dadachan@sas.upenn.edu). ■

### Setting up a worldwide Donor Registry for Zoroastrians

While my immediate objective is to find Zoroastrian donors to assist my brother (Pheroze Kabraji, 61, who has Acute Lympho Blastic Leukaemia and Jaundice, and requires a bone marrow / stem cell transplant) my broader objective is to set up a Donor Registry for Zoroastrians, as the Jews have done (visit [http://www.ezer-mizion.org.il/bone\\_marrow.htm](http://www.ezer-mizion.org.il/bone_marrow.htm)).

The Anthony Nolan Trust ([www.anthonynolan.org.uk](http://www.anthonynolan.org.uk)) is willing to assist and fund a campaign to find Zoroastrian donors if Zoroastrians are amenable to be donors to anyone.

Since we are a seclusive race, that has married within ourselves for over 12 centuries, there is much higher probability for finding matching donors from our own ethnic community. Currently there are Donor Registries for Caucasians, Asians, Japanese, Chinese, Jews, etc, across some 40 countries. Creation of a bone marrow registry is an insurance policy for all Zoroastrians.

If anyone has any information or can help in any way with regards to donor recruitment and setting up the Zoroastrian registry, please contact me.

*Eddie Kabraji, UK tel: 0207 289 7644. Mobile: 61417 246 542.*

*Email: [kabraji@attglobal.net](mailto:kabraji@attglobal.net).*

### Toll free, confidential, phone line

**877-265-7273**

Available to our Zarathushti community in their time of need, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year [see *Critically Speaking*, page 123].



This column on living a healthy and balanced Zarathushti life, is brought to you by **Mehroo M. Patel, MD, FRCS(Ed.), FAAFP**. Dr. Patel has a family practice in Chicago since 1978 and practiced as a cardiothoracic surgeon in Mumbai and UK. A fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians, she was nominated twice as Illinois Family Physician of the Year.

## Carbohydrate Confusion

*High carbs, low carbs,  
Good carbs, bad carbs,  
More carbs, no carbs !*

**D**r. Atkins died and Dr. Ornish declared a truce. The two diet-gurus had feuded for a lifetime on a diet of carbohydrates versus no carbs or low carbs. But it did not end there. Soon, low carb diets were touted in the media and the processed food industry mounted the bandwagon: low carb breads, cereal, chocolates, ice-cream, pastries, and pies appeared on the shelves, all priced a little more than their not-so-low carb counterparts and sporting a few less grams/calories of carbohydrates.

**Confused? Yes, we all are!** Reading the labels and comparing nutritional values, we recognize that consuming fewer grams of the less pricy, so-called 'high carb' products would give us the same benefit at a more economical price. Since a spoonful less of sugar can make as good a bread or ice-cream, why is it added in greater quantities anyway? Whole grain flour can make bread healthier and tastier; is there a need, then, for refined white slices of Wonderbread? Let us get unconfused and stick to the basics.

**Basic building blocks.** Life cannot exist without either carbohydrates or proteins. Both are essential energy and building blocks. Fats are the cement that holds them together while carrying essential nutrients – lipoproteins, vitamins A, D & E, and adding taste and aroma to our food. We need them all in proportions of about 5:3:2, i.e., 50% carbohydrates,

30% protein, 20% fats, though in certain situations these can be adjusted slightly higher or lower. All meals that we cook as well as prepared foods contain all three in slightly varying proportions, as well as other nutrients like vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. These make the human-engine work; and work well it does.

### Reducing the 'empty calories.'

Holding or reducing unnecessary 'empty calories' and salt will do us much good. Most primary and secondary carbohydrates (refined sugars) can be minimized. Complex sugars, such as flour, pasta, and rice can be consumed sparingly unless needed for some quick energy bursts before heavy exercise like training for and running a marathon. Power-bars and power-drinks of dense carbohydrates are acceptable for similar

(occasional) use, but not as substitutes during driving to and from work nor as a substitute for a ten minute balanced breakfast at the table.

**Parsi treats.** How about our favorite Parsi treats? *Malido*, *dar-ni-pori*, and *vasanu* are the Parsi equivalent of power-bars: a teaspoonful once a day or twice a week can be enjoyable and nutritious, but consuming a *chamach*-full three times a day will damage our system. The same applies to our desserts: *penda*, *burfi*, *sutarfeni* and *jalebi*.

What about *dhansakh*? One serving consisting of a cup of rice, half-cup of dal (meatless), a one-ounce kavab with a generous helping of *kachooobar* is nutritious, delicious and healthy. Just go easy on salt and oil (for the *vaghar*). But load up a large platter three to four times the desired quantity and/or go for seconds is sure to compromise our health. Top this off with an hour or two of siesta, and you have a ready-made recipe for obesity, (dys)metabolic syndrome(x), diabetes, hypertension, coronary heart disease and a few other pernicious diseases.

**The glycemic index.** The new kid on the block is the glycemic-index. Foods of low glycemic index (good carbs) have made a debut in Europe, and are vying for our grocery shelves. Complex carbs that digest slowly and



## The final word on nutrition and health

The Japanese eat very little fat and suffer fewer heart attacks than the British or Americans.

The French eat a lot of fat and also suffer fewer heart attacks than the British or Americans.

The Japanese drink very little red wine and suffer fewer heart attacks than the British or Americans.

The Italians drink excessive amounts of red wine and also suffer fewer heart attacks than the British or Americans.

The Germans drink a lot of beer and eat lots of sausages and fats and suffer fewer heart attacks than the British or Americans.

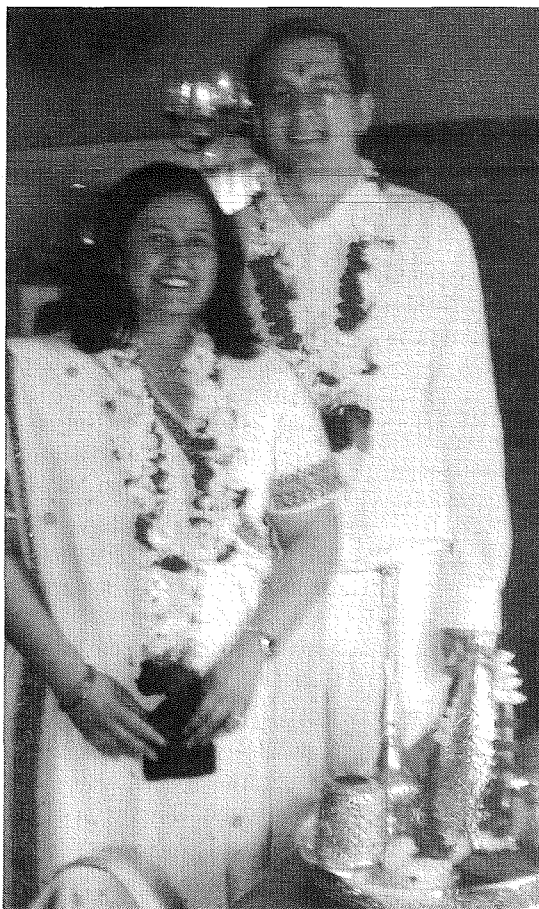
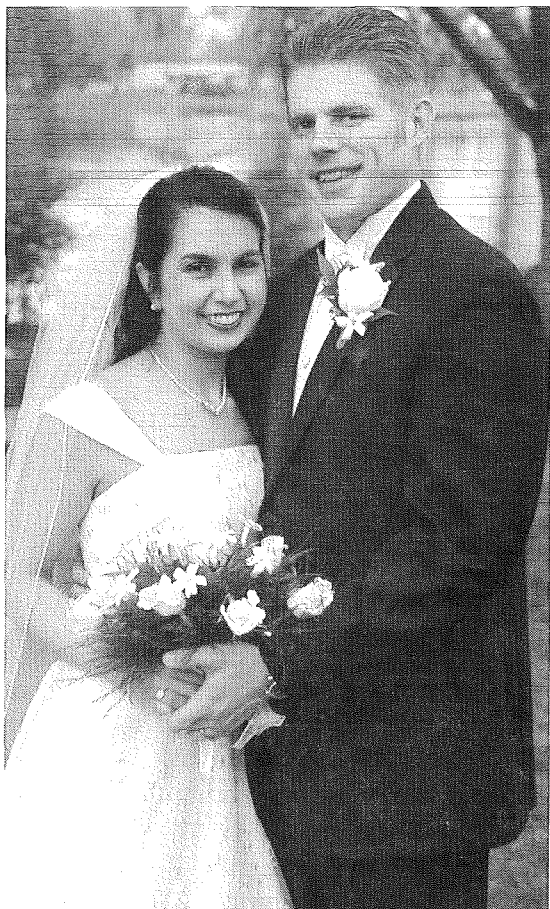
**Conclusion:** Eat and drink what you like.

Speaking English is apparently what kills you.

[Author unknown. Submitted by Dr. Mehroo Patel]

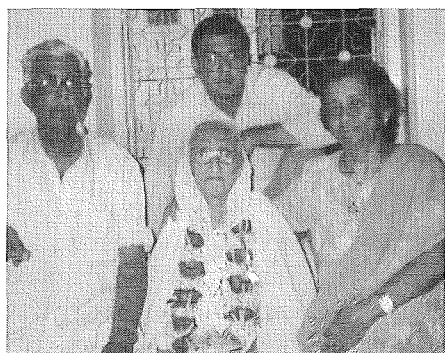






*Far left, **Dina Damania**, daughter of Shireen and Rustom Damania of Clovis, CA was married to **Matthew Todd Olson**, in California, on April 3.*

*Left, **Roxane Darukhanavala**, daughter of Vangie and Jehangir Darukhanavala of Peoria and Lake Zurich, IL, was married to **Mark Gorecki**, on May 14.*



**100th birthday.** *Motibai Shapurji Patel, celebrated her 100th birthday in Mumbai, with the blessings of her three children, 4 adopted children, 13 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren. Photo shows Motibai with son Dinshaw, his wife Gool and grandson Porus, relatives of Baji and Perviz Patel of Chicago,*

**Behrod Mehrfar**, a boy, to Farahnaz Reyhani and Mehrdad Mehrfar; brother to Hirad; in Vancouver, on January 4.

**Vista Pooladi-Darvish**, a girl, to Behrokh and Mehran Pooladi-Darvish, sister to Arshya, granddaughter to Golchehr and (late) Ardeshir Pooladi-Darvish and E. & M. T. Azarian, in Calgary, Alberta on February 25.

#### NAVJOTES, SEDREH-PUSHI

**Eric Bhada**, son of Kersi and Roxanne Bhada in Antioch, CA on May 21.

**Kyrus Buchia**, son of Nozer and Persis Buchia in Houston on April 2.

**Shayan Irani**, son of Dilshad and Firdaus Irani, in Toronto on February 26.

**Zal Presswalla**, son of Shaila and Percy Presswalla, in Toronto on May 21.

**Rachel Stoneback**, daughter of Phiroza and Bruce Stoneback of Penndel, PA, granddaughter of Coomie and Pesi Hathiram of Mumbai, on October 23.

#### NAVAR-MARTAB

**Cherag Mobedji** of Mumbai was initiated, with the help of magnanimous donations from WZO.

#### WEDDINGS

**Cyrus Buhari**, son of Behroze and Dr. Fram Buhari of Stockton, CA to **Carrie Manny**, in Napa, CA on March 19.

**Farhad Daruwala**, son of Dr. and Mrs. Aspi Daruwala, to **Tanaz**, in Martinsville, NJ, on July 31.

**Kaizad Doctor**, son of Mani and Rustom Doctor to **Martha Estrela**, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Mariano Estrela, in Mississauga on May 14.

**Sharoukh Elavia**, son of Filly and Vira Elavia to **Jennifer Konkrawala**, daughter of Pervin and Aspi Konkrawala in Toronto on April 16.

**Hanoz Kapadia**, son of Pouruchisti and Viraf Kapadia to **Ferzin Bulsara**, daughter of Dilnavaz and Sarosh Bulsara of Nasik, India, in Nasik on December 25.

**Naznin Challa**, daughter of Soonu Challa and Late Bomi Challa to **Sunney Singh Kattuara**, son of Harminder and Amrik Singh Kattuara in San Jose, CA on May 29.

**Roshan Patel**, daughter of Farokh and Gool Patel of New Jersey, to **Brandon David Kelly**, in New Jersey, on July 30.

**Zubine Khambatta**, daughter of Nergish and Kersi Khambatta to **Vijay Sivasankaran**, son of Pushpa and A. P. Sivasankaran, in Chennai, India, on May 22 [ZSO].

**Yezad Khansaheb**, son of Homai and Pheroze Khansaheb of Ahmedabad, to **Monaz Baria**, daughter of Yasmin and Vispi Baria, in Huntsville, AL, on May 29.

**Sheena Dastur**, daughter of Soli and Khorshed Dastur of Surrey, to **Darren Schoepp**, in Vancouver, on May 21.

**Khushroo Todiwala**, son of Rustom and Roshan Todiwala to **Pervin Elavia**, daughter of Eruch and Kety Elavia in Mumbai on February 22 [ZANC].

## ANNIVERSARY

**Dhun and Sam Gazder** of Mississauga, ONT, celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary on May 7.

## DEATHS

**Bahman Bakhtiani**, 78, husband of Golrokh Bakhtiani, father of Ardeshtir, Anooshiravan, Shida, Shahram and Dariush, grandfather of Arshya, Saghayegh, Shanaya, Mazyar, Monica, Peyvand, and Javid, in Chantilly, VA on June 1.

**Kersas Batliwala**, 49, son of Late Jamshedji Batliwalla and Aban Batliwala, husband of Zenobia, father of Burzin, all of Mumbai; brother of Farokh Batliwala of Australia and brother-in-law of Viloo Tavadia of Novi, MI, and Dinshaw Adenwalla of Mumbai; after a battle with cancer, in Mumbai on June 5.

**Behram Rustom Dehmoobed-Chami**, 80, husband of Morwarid, brother of Sohrab and Paridokht, father of Rostam, Darius, Farhang, Jehangir and Mahnaz; father-in-law of Kharmen, Paula, Havovi and Behnaz; grandfather of Aspandiar, Mehershah, Justin, Delshean and Cyrus; in Mountain View, CA, on May 29.

**Katayoun Shahrokh Farin**, 79, daughter of Manijeh and Aflatoon Shahrokh, wife of Dr. Dinyar Farin, sister of Shahrokh and Pari Shahrokh, mother of Yasaman, Siamak and Susan Farin, grandmother of Ariyan and Romteen, in Los Angeles, CA, on April 14.

Mrs. Farin followed the legacy of her grandfather Arbab Keikhosrow Shahrokh, devoting her life to her family and the Zarathushti community. She was instrumental in obtaining the right for Zarathushti women to vote in their community elections in Iran. She continued her humanitarian works through the Zoroastrian Women's Organization in Tehran which was recognized as an NGO with the UN, through her efforts.

**Fali Framji**, 65, husband of Roshan Framji, father of Homai Framji (Mumbai) and Havovi (Erich) Tavadia (W. Bloomfield, MI), brother of Jimmy Framji (Poonaa) and Jerroo Chinoy (Flint, MI), in-law of Rusi and Viloo Tavadia (Novi, MI), and grandfather of Karl and Darin Tavadia, in Mumbai, on March 27.

**Imroze M. Gandhi**, sister of Tanaz Bamboat of Indiana, in Mumbai.

**Phiroz Ghista**, husband of Freny, father of Arooz Ardeshtir Irani (Perth, Australia), Phiroza Homi Bulsara (New Jersey) and Jimmy (England), in Burlington, Ontario on March 31.

**Djamshid Guiv**, husband of Pari Mehraban Guiv, father of Dr. Bahman Guiv and Dr. Niloufar Guiv and three grandchildren, Tessa, Arienne and Negheen; nephew of Late Arbab Rustam Guiv; in College Park, MD, on June 1.

**Piroja Homiar**, mother of Gool Kotwal and Jamshed Homiar, grandmother of Ava, Shirin, Spenta, Ashtad and Dean, in Scarborough, Ontario on March 14.

**Freny Irani**, mother of Pesi, Naju (late), Purv Batliwalla, late Jal, Villi, Noshir, Shehnaz and Gordafrid, in California, on April 22.

**Katy Jal Jamshedji**, wife of late Jal Jamshedji, mother of Villie, Mehroo (Toronto), Dinyar, Dinoo (Mumbai), Roshan (Australia), and sister of Keroo, Jini, Minnie (Toronto) of late Hoshang, late Nergish, Furdoon, and Perin (Mumbai) in Mumbai on April 29.

**Sarvar Kaboli** (Morshed), mother of Khodaram (Shirin Bonshahi), grandmother of Siamak, Mitra, Manijeh and Niloufer, in Tehran [ZAC-Chicago].

**Ardeshtir Khorrami**, husband of Parvin Shahmoradi-Khorrami, father of Farzad and Farshad Khorrami and Farnaz Aidun, son-in-law of Sarvar Izedian, father-in-law to Minhnguyet Khorrami, Roya Izedian, and Farzad Aidun, grandfather of Minhdezuy Khorrami, Amitis and Pedrum Aidun, and Armayel, in Nice, France on April 12.

**Er. Jal Kootar**, 73, husband of Viloo Kootar, father of Aspi Kootar (Toronto) and Arnaz Kootar (Mumbai), in Mumbai on February 21.

**Aloo Rusi Lakdawala**, 74, mother of Roshni Kanga, in Mumbai [ZAPANJ].

**Bapai Behram Malao**, 86, mother of Ruby Cooper, in Vadodra, India.

[Continued on page 132]

## Dr. Kasra Vafadari

A LIFE OF SERVICE TO THE ZARATHUSHTI COMMUNITY



**Dr. Kasra Vafadari**, professor of history and religions at the University of Paris, and a pillar of the Iranian Zarathushti community, was found stabbed to death in his apartment in Paris, France, on May 16.

A Zarathushti cultural and political figure, and past head of the Zoroastrian Association in Iran, Dr. Vafadari had dedicated his life to Zarathushti causes. Though a resident of Paris, he traveled to Iran often. He had just purchased an old house in Yazd, and was starting renovations to make it into a community center.

Memorial services to celebrate the life of Dr. Vafadari were held around the world, including in Paris, Los Angeles, Tehran, Washington, DC and London.

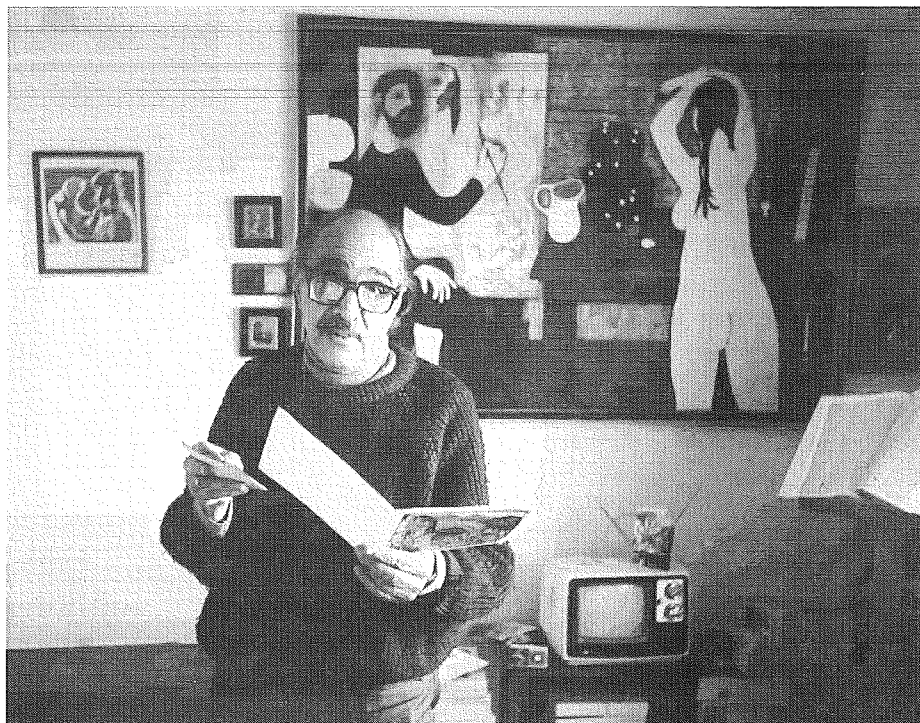
The French Ambassador to Iran, who attended Dr. Vafadari's memorial service at the Tehran Atashkadeh, promised prompt investigation and followup of the tragic circumstances of his death.

Son of Ardeshtir Vafadari and Mehrangiz Firoozgar, Dr. Vafadari is survived by his French wife and two daughters Afsaneh and Ariana Vafadari in Paris, brothers Kaveh and Karan in Iran and Goshtasb in the USA, and sister Kateh Vafadari-Zahraie in the USA.

[From postings on creatingawareness@yahoo.com]

## Sam Tata (1911 - 2005)

PHOTOGRAPHER, ARTIST, RACONTEUR AND FRIEND



*Portrait of Sam Tata by Sam Kanga, early 1980s. The painting behind Mr. Tata was one of many pieces of art that he collected.*

Sam Tata, a Parsi born in Shanghai, became a highly respected photographer and much adored artist, raconteur and friend to many in his adopted country, Canada. He was witness to the last years of British rule in India as well as the Communist revolution in Shanghai. Among his greatest contributions is a marvellous collection of portraits of Canadian and international artists.

A fine body of work also came from his three trips to India. The first trip was from 1946 to 1948 where he not only witnessed the end of British rule and the subsequent upheaval, but also met the great French photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson. The influence of Cartier-Bresson was absolute. His method of photographing – quickly, decisively, and with sensitivity toward his subject, appealed immediately to Sam, and he soon dispensed with his lights, large cameras, and academic studio techniques. He had found his style.

In 1949 he was back in Shanghai photographing the fall of the Kuom-

intang and the take over of the city by Chairman Mao's communist revolutionaries. The photographs, published in the book *"Shanghai 1949: The End of an Era,"* are an invaluable portrayal of that historic event.

Montreal became the new home to Sam Tata and his family in 1956. After the initial culture shock, (even the "Paris of North America" could not match the chaotic energy of Bombay and Shanghai), he began connecting with Montreal's artistic community. Many artists became good friends, and his sensitive portraits of them are an important part of his legacy. Fifty portraits were published in the 1983 book *"A Certain Identity."*

Being a Parsi, he was also involved with the Zoroastrian Association of Quebec, and often initiated discussions about the future of the Parsi community worldwide. It is because of Sam Tata, that a photograph of a Navjote ceremony is in the permanent collection of the Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography.

It is my opinion that Sam Tata did not receive the recognition he fully deserved. He was a gentle man not inclined to self promotion, who demonstrated a rare subtlety as a photojournalist and portrait photographer.

Notable honors include: a Lifetime Achievement Award from CAPIC (Canadian Association of Photographers and Illustrators in Communications), an Honorary Doctorate from Concordia University in Montreal, and an important retrospective in 1990 called "The Tata Era," mounted by The Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography, which toured Canada.

Sam Tata was a family friend and one of my greatest influences. He often obliged me by critiquing my photographs, although we would always end up talking about anything but photography. His greatest advice to me was, "If you want to be a good photographer, not only must you know what's going on in the world, but you should know about painting, music, poetry and literature."

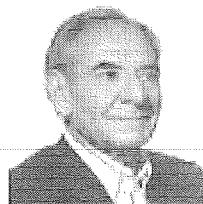
Sage advice indeed.

*Sam Kanga  
Toronto, Canada*

**Sam Kanga** is a Senior Account Director in advertising/communications and also a photographer living in Toronto.

## Rostam Zerehpoush FATHER OF DARI SONGS

**Rostam Zerehpoush** passed away on 19th Fravardin this year in Tehran. He was born in Khairabad, Yazd in 1930. Known as the Father of Dari Songs, he had written over 200 poems in Persian and 100 in Dari. His first poem in Persian was written at the age of 20, and his first Dari poem at the age of 23.



*[Submitted by Feraydun Demehri]*



## Tehmina Mehli Mehta (1908 - 2005)

Matriarch of the illustrious Mehta family



**Tehmina Mehli Mehta** passed away on April 22, in Los Angeles at the age of 96. She spent a lifetime encouraging and supporting the musical careers of her famous husband, the Late Maestro Mehli Mehta [FJ Winter 2002], and sons Maestro Zubin Mehta and Zarin Mehta [FJ Summer 1999].

She was born in Pune, India and lived her first 47 years in Bombay. Most of Tehmina's adult life after her marriage in 1935 to India's then famous violinist Mehli Mehta was dedicated to encouraging her husband's musical careers in India, UK and USA. After arriving in Los Angeles in 1965, where Mehli became the conductor of the American Youth Symphony (AYS), Tehmina was active in supporting the orchestra and in coordinating social and fundraising events for more than three decades. Those who came to know Tehmina were attracted to her warmth, sincerity, and affection.

At the funeral ceremony, ten members of the string section of the AYS played music

from Samuel Barber's "Adagio" – a fitting tribute to a noble lady with an abundance of grace and love for all.

Tehmina Mehta will be remembered by her illustrious sons, four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren as a woman of strength and grace, who was the wind beneath their wings (See FJ, Fall 2003 for a profile on Tehmina Mehta).

by Shahrokh Mehta (nephew of Tehmina Mehta), Syracuse, New York

## Milestones

[Continued from page 130]

**Shirin F. Mazda**, mother of Firdausi (Sherenaz) Mazda of Oakbrook, IL, in Mumbai, on July 23.

**Ferdoon 'Fadli' Nawroji Cooverji Mehta**, husband of Khorshed, father of Meher Mehta of Mumbai and Firoza (Adel) Engineer of Chicago, grandfather of Jamshed and Sohrab Engineer, in Mumbai, on April 7.

**Aloo Minoo Rajkotwalla**, mother of Kaizad and Faroakh Rajkotwala, mother-in-law of Freany and late Nilima, and grandmother of Sean and Nikita, in Mumbai on April 11.

**Lt. Col. (Rtd.) Maneck P. Sopariwala**, husband of Dhun and father of Kaizad (Karachi) and Mahrukh (Toronto), brother of Najoo Nanavati, Dinoo Mistri, Bachi Patel and Avan Dubash, in Karachi on March 29.

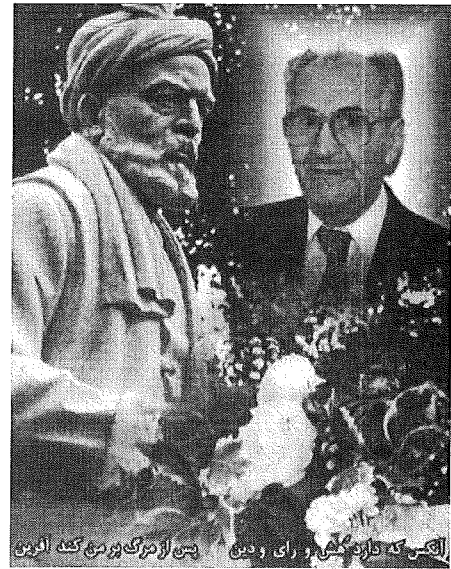
**Sam Tata**, 94, renowned photographer, in Victoria, BC, on July 3 [see obituary].

**Jalanmai Tavadia**, 93, wife of late Jal N. Tavadia, mother of Rusi (Villoo) Tavadia (Novi, MI), Najoo Adajania (Mumbai) and Godej Tavadia (Mozambique, East Africa), grandmother of Kayezad Adajania (Mumbai), Erich Tavadia (W. Bloomfield, MI) and Bepsi Sanjana (Farmington Hills, MI); great grandmother of Avvan and Darius Sanjana and Karl and Darin Tavadia; in Mumbai, on April 30.

**Gool Rustomji Thanawala**, aunt of Gulshan Khushro Tarapore and grand aunt of Karina and Zenia Tarapore, in Toronto on April 9.

**Nauzer (Nolly) Unvala**, 55, father of Cydney and Malcolm, brother of Yezdi (San Francisco), nephew of Adi and Nergis Unwalla (NJ) and Homi Unwalla (CA), cousin of Khorshed (Rashmi) Mehta (Toronto), Homai (Alex) McPherson (Montreal), Shirine (Gev) Karkaria

## ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT



### Rostam Zartoshti

The Late Arbab Rostam Zartoshti [above, at right] with the statue of his beloved poet Firdowsi. The poem by Firdowsi on the picture reads: "Wise men shall appreciate my works after my death."

Arbab Zartoshti was one of the pioneers in establishing *Shahnameh* study classes outside Iran; he helped many organizations and scholars in this regard. A lover of Firdowsi, he used to say, "In every Persian household, besides their holy book, there should be a *Shahnameh*."

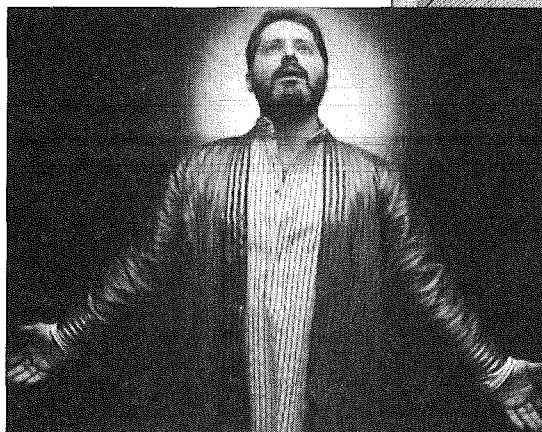
- by Feraydun Demehri

(Montreal), Erna (Rohinton) Fatakia (CA), Adi (Sherry) Unwalla (Atlanta), Feroze (Mahrukh) Motafram (WI), Khushur (Zavareh) Dadabhoy (CO), Ernaz (Mahyar) Irani (CA), Daraius (Kristin) Unwalla (VA), Shehnaz (Lloyd) Spencer (VA), and Khurshed (Pervin) Unwalla (Toronto), in New York on May 24.

**Rati Vakil**, mother of Rohinton Vakil, Niloufer Lalkaka of Langley, BC and Meher Jayakar of Langley, BC, in Mumbai, on May 19.

**Rostam Zartoshti**, 84, husband of Parvin, father of Mehrbanoo Behroozi, Manouchehr, Parviz and Bahram, in West Vancouver, on May 5.

**Firdous Bamji**, son of Roshan and Ester Bamji, was cast in the lead role in *Othello*. This classic Shakespeare tragedy played at the Hartford Stage Company in Connecticut, during April and May.

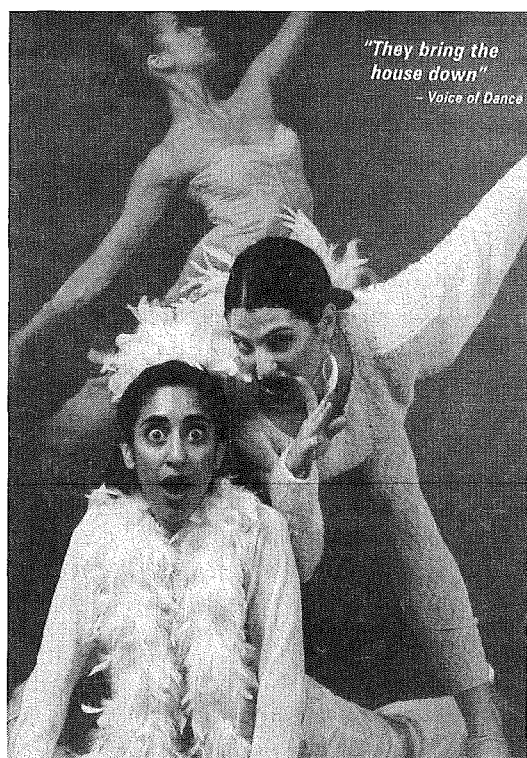
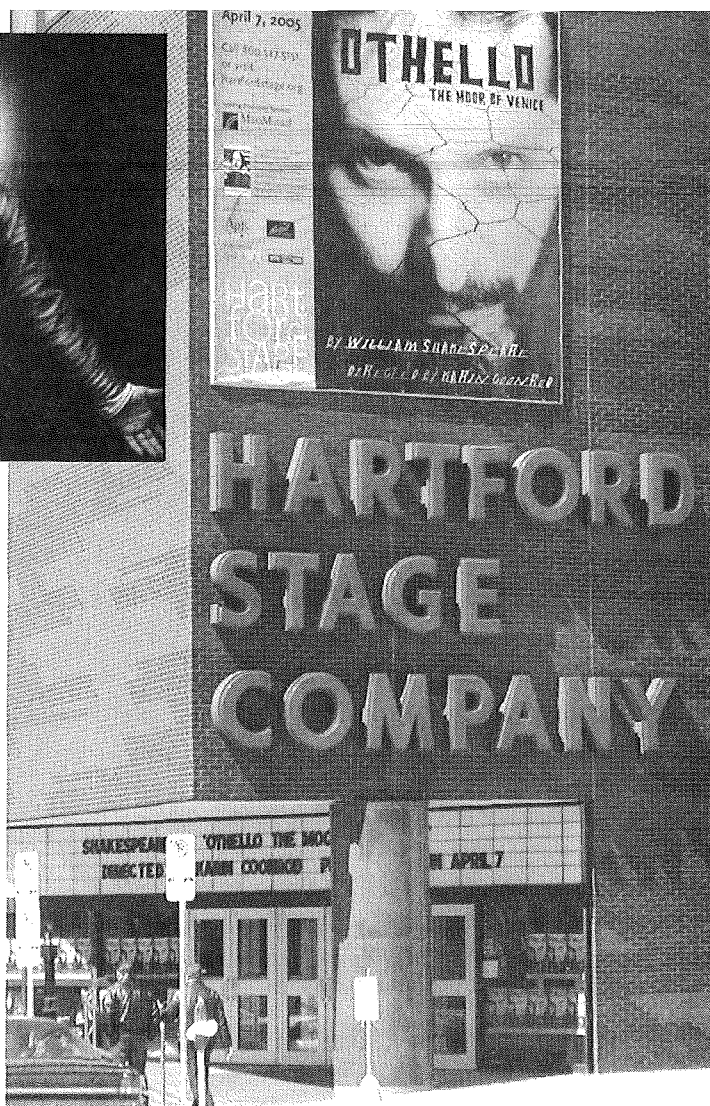


**Firdous Bamji as Othello.** Think Othello and one imagines a quintessential Shakespearean role for a black actor ... but in the Hartford Stage's production, Othello is cast non-traditionally, as a Muslim, a powerful military figure from the Middle East.

The lead role is played by Firdous Bamji, whose New York credits include off-Broadway's *Homebody/Kabul* and Eric Bogosian's *SubUrbia*, and *In the Heart of America*; and films *The Sixth Sense* and *Unbreakable*.

"Making Othello an Arab makes sense," says Bamji, "Now it feels as if there's no other way to do it, given the culture." Bamji, who is in his mid-30s, feels that roles – and not just ethnic roles – have increasingly opened up to him. After Othello in Hartford, he will be in Rebecca Gilman's adaptation of Henrik Ibsen's Norwegian classic *A Doll's House* at Chicago's Goodman Theatre.

[Source: *Hartford Courant*, [www.hartfordstage.org](http://www.hartfordstage.org)]



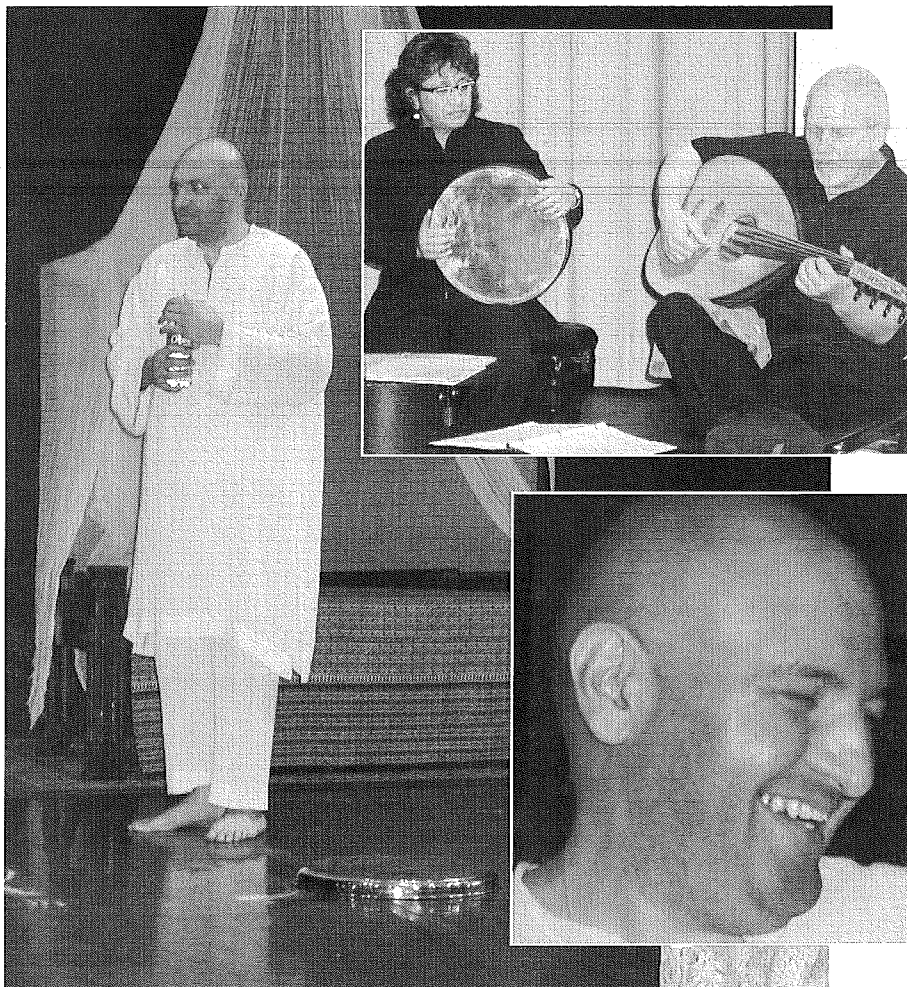
### **Yasmen Mehta's dance company**

Professional dancer **Yasmen Sorab Mehta** and her all-female *California Contemporary Dancers* continue to attract audiences. Bombay-born Mehta went abroad to study hotel management, but opted out to pursue her passion for dancing. She has been in San Francisco since 1989.

Far left, Mehta in a 2002 performance of "From the Sublime to the Ridiculous," at the Cowell Theater in San Francisco.

Left, from "Wadi," a suite of 3 dances inspired by the Rajasthan desert.





**Zaraawar Mistry's Sohrab and Rustum** was a gift to Houston audiences, both Zarathushti and non-Zarathushti. The success of the play could be measured by the thunderous applause and the dynamic discussion afterwards. Yet, it could also be measured by the thrill of Thrity Kharas of Houston who was so moved that she spontaneously invited Zaraawar and thirty Zarathushtis in attendance to a curry and rice lunch the next day at the Center!

The play was introduced by Khurshid Rudina who discussed Parsi religious traditions; and accompanied by percussionist Tim O'Keefe and Persian vocalist Maryam Yusefzadeh [photo above]. It was a nostalgic remembrance of a familiar story. Interspersed with the Shahnameh tale was another story of a Bombay Parsi named Rustomji. The trials of Rustomji the father who was embittered by being abandoned by his immigrant son Sohrab was brilliantly interwoven with the tragic story of the warrior Rustum and his son Sohrab. At the end of the play, it is the son who survives and mourns, and not the father.

The tremendous piece tied the past and the present and left the audience with the reality of facing the truth with a dose of down home humor. With incredible energy and versatility Zaraawar Mistry electrified audiences and beautifully portrayed the multiple characters in his solo performance. The staging of Sohrab's battle with Rustum was brilliant – a simple German silver thali and a spear and a voice that spoke volumes.

Don't miss this show if it comes to your town. Better yet, work with Zaraawar and fine arts institutions like the Asia Society in your city to sponsor his production so you too can experience this masterful performance. Help create awareness about Zarathushtis – because that is exactly what Zaraawar has single handedly succeeded in achieving.

*By Aban Rustomji, Houston*

## Busy year for tenor Dinyar Vania

**Dinyar Vania** [photo below] returned to his hometown of Syracuse to perform a number of concerts this Spring.

On April 26th, he performed as tenor soloist in Verdi's *Requiem* with the Hamilton College Oratorio Society; and then performed the role of Turiddu in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, with the Catskill Symphony Orchestra, on May 7.

Both of these performances followed a professional debut recital he sang for his hometown on April 16th. This concert was also used to raise funds for Vania's young professional career, including a European audition tour.

Son of Jehangir and Dolly Vania, Dinyar attended Mannes School of Music in New York City.

His achievements in the last year, at the young age of 25, saw him as a member of both the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis Young Artist Program and the Sarasota (FL) Opera as a studio artist.



Vania has been engaged to appear in the role of Alfredo in *La Traviata*, his debut with the Hungarian State Opera in Budapest, Hungary, followed by his

debut with the Nevada Opera in the role of Cavaradossi in *Tosca*, this fall.

He made his professional oratorio debut this past year, as the tenor soloist in both Verdi's *Requiem* and Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*.

He was a winner of the Liederkranz Foundation Vocal Competition, and sang in their gala concert at Weill Recital Hall in New York City.

[Source: Jim Harwood at [jim@harwood-management.com](mailto:jim@harwood-management.com).]



## New CD, *Salut d'Amour (Love's Greetings)*

Chicago Philharmonia, Farobag Homi Cooper, conductor, available through Amazon.com, \$11.98.

Review by Parizad Irani

Youth and community ensembles frequently make recordings of their concerts available to friends and family for fundraising and morale. Only the best professional orchestras, however, would release 'live' unedited CDs. Add the fact that the recording includes some of the most popular works of the Classic and Romantic repertoire, the venture becomes even riskier.

Such is the case with the *Chicago Philharmonia's* recent release of *Salut d'Amour (Love's Greetings)*. Maestro Cooper is one huge risk taker with inspired (or temperamental – depending how you look at it) interpretations; but given that the Philharmonia has some of the top musicians in Chicago, he can take liberties

in performance that would be the despair of lesser orchestras. What is really striking is the sweep and swing of these performances. Just close your eyes and imagine a soprano with a seamless legato, an imaginative interpretation that goes beyond the printed score and you will begin to sense the magic of these songs without words.

Rachmaninoff's *Vocalise*, was originally scored for exactly such a soprano soloist, and Cooper's transcription creatively features a solo viola in the *concertino* setting while using the violins during the *ripieno* (reminiscent of the Baroque era) adding color, contrast and vibrancy.

In Albinoni's *Adagio* the orchestral winds substitute for the organ continuo. In contrast to the *Vocalise*, here is a Baroque composition given a full blown romantic, sensuous reading. With the winds capturing the hue and tone of an organ, one would be hard pressed to claim to hear

the difference. But then, isn't that the ultimate tribute paid to a transcriber?

Other cuts include works by Beethoven, Brahms, Dvorak, Elgar, and Rachmaninoff for a total of some sixty minutes of music. These performances are not without their imperfections (there's always a price to pay) and sounds from the audience are jarring, but they remind me of the critiques of Horowitz and Schnabel in concert: hardly note-perfect but, oh ... what color and mystique!

**Parizad Irani** is a composer based in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Her symphonic poem, "Zarathushtra," received its world premiere by the Zoroastrian Symphony Orchestra at the North American Zoroastrian Congress held in Chicago in 2002.

## Jamshid Khadiwala, aka D. J. Jumps of 'The Cat Empire'

**Jamshid Khadiwala** of Melbourne, Australia, [far right] aka DJ Jumps, is a member of *The Cat Empire* band, playing turntables and percussion. The six-piece band started three years ago and today cleverly fuses together Hip Hop, Jazz, Cuban, Funk, Reggae and Latin.

The band has traveled extensively, performing over 150 shows in Australia, UK, USA (at the Napa Valley Wine Festival in California) and Asia. In March 2004, their tour of Australia saw them play to almost 100,000 people over 35 days. In June 2004, they played to over 40,000 at Darling Harbour, Sydney. In July 2004, they toured Europe with a sellout season at the prestigious Edinburgh Festival. The Cat Empire once again played at Federation Square for the 2004 New Year's Eve celebrations.

In October 2003, the 'Young Cats' released their debut album through Virgin Records, which turned Gold in



Australia in December 2003, and Platinum in February 2004.

They released their first single, *Hello*, in October 2003, which has since become their welcoming calling card, making them a household name everywhere.

Currently they are recording their second album for release later in 2005.

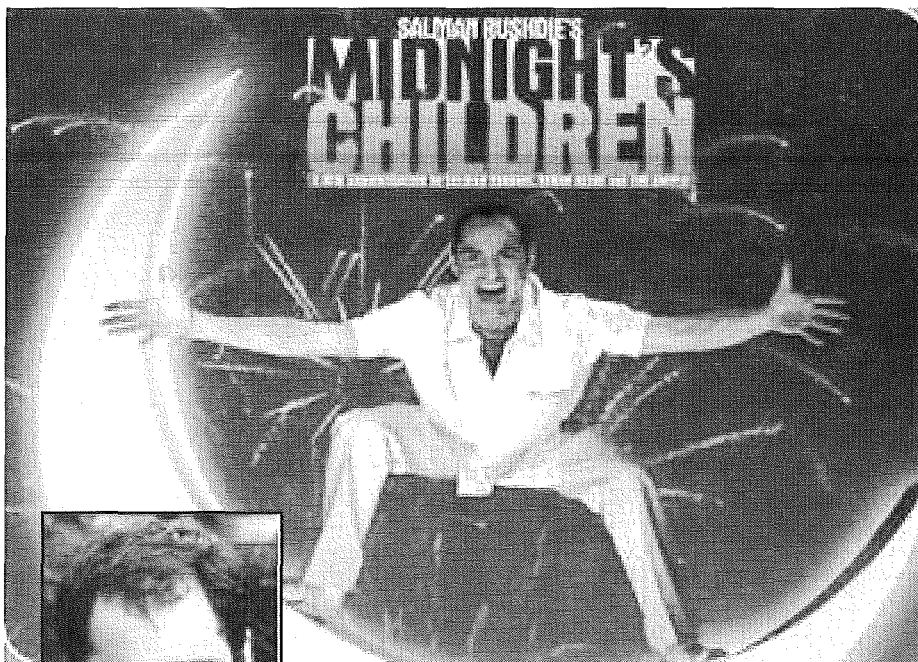
At the 2004 ARIA Awards, *The Cat Empire* was nominated in six categories, including Best Breakthrough

Artists – Best Album and Best Urban Release; and their manager was awarded Australian Music Manager 2004.

Jamshid Khadiwala is becoming a celebrity, much to the delight of his family and friends.

[Source: Zoroastrian Association of Victoria newsletter *Rathaestar*, January 2005. Photo courtesy Kurush Zaiwala, email@kurushz.com]





British actor **Zubin Varla**, playing the lead role in the Royal Shakespeare Company's production of Salman Rushdie's book "Midnight's Children," presented in London and the US.

## British Actors Zubin Varla and Nina Wadia

An unprecedented collaboration between London's Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), Columbia University and the University of Michigan brought Salman Rushdie's award-winning tale about modern India to the world stage in 2003.

The Booker prize winning novel *Midnight's Children* has been called the greatest novel by a Commonwealth writer in the last forty years. The fantastical saga of Saleem, a child born at the moment of India's independence on August 15, 1947, and mirroring the history of that country, was presented at the Barbican in London, at Harlem's legendary Apollo Theatre, and at Ann Arbor, Michigan.

The leading role of Saleem is played by British actor **Zubin Varla**, a London-based Parsi, whose previous roles for the RSC include Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet*, the title role in *Roberto Zucco*, Euphorion in *Faust*, and Caliban in *The Tempest*. He also played the leading role of Judas in a revival of the Andrew Lloyd Webber musical, *Jesus Christ Superstar* in

London's West End. Varla has also appeared on film (*Twelfth Night* for Channel 4) and BBC television (*Crocodile Shoes* and *Antonio*).



Nina Wadia [fourth from left] in the British comedy hit "Goodness Gracious Me." [WWW.HINDUONNET.COM]

The role of Padma in *Midnight's Children* was played by British actress **Nina Wadia**, best known for her television appearances on the hit British sitcoms *Goodness Gracious Me* and *Perfect World*, and who has also starred in the film, *Bend it like Beckham*. [Sources: [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk), [www.midnightchildren.com](http://www.midnightchildren.com) and [www.hinduonnet.com](http://www.hinduonnet.com)] ■



## Rahnuma Panthaky in CTV's 'Plague City'

**Rahnuma Panthaky** played the part of Laura Neston, head of Toronto Public Health, in the medical thriller *Plague City-SARS in Toronto*, which aired on CTV, May 29th.

She is also in the remake of *Kojak*, playing Detective Sharon Tucker. Other selected credits include *The Eleventh Hour*, *Blue Murder*, *DaVinci's Inquest*, *Street Time* and the Disney movie *Blended*.

Panthaky's professional acting career began in 1991 (her last year in high school) when she landed the role of Shrinky on the popular CBC Canadian teen drama, *Degrassi High*.

Since then she has been a regular on television, radio and stage. She performed on stage in a five-month run of *The Vagina Monologues* at Toronto's New Yorker Theatre. Her face may be familiar to music fans from country sensation Paul Brandt's new video *That's the Truth*, or as the Spanish senorita featured in the Players Island Casino commercials in the US.



Co-founder of Maya Theatre ([www.mayatheatre.com](http://www.mayatheatre.com)), which aims to broaden opportunities for women and South Asian

actors, Panthaky volunteers for social equality offstage as well.

Daughter of Meher and Jal Panthaky, Rahnuma has a Theater and Drama degree from the University of Toronto, and is also an accomplished dancer – tackling flamenco, modern and jazz. [Sources: *ZSO newsletter*, [www.magazine.utoronto.ca/](http://www.magazine.utoronto.ca/)]

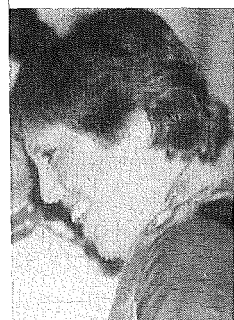
## EVENTS AND HONORS

**Dr. Aban Daruwalla**, combat systems specialist at the Naval Surface Warfare Center in Corona, CA, was invited to be panel leader for Women's History Month, in March 2005. Her message, on the national theme of *Women Changing America*, was to encourage science and technology careers for women.



Dr. Daruwalla [aban.n.daruwalla@navy.mil] is very willing to help Zarathushti girls with career choices in science and technology.

**Diana Edulji**, who has made her mark on the cricket field in India, was honored with the *Lifetime Achievement Award* from Castrol. Diana was India's leading all-rounder for 20 years from 1975 - 1995.



She played three World Cups, and won 16 out of 24 Nationals. In 2002, she received the Padma Shri Award, from the President of India.

**Khushchehr Italia**, budding tennis star, won her *first Pro title*, in tournaments in Nigeria this Spring. She writes: "I was not expecting this. I had an unfortunate draw by playing the No. 5 seed in singles, and lost. I put my singles loss to the side and decided to put all I had into doubles. Well, it paid off! We won the doubles title – my first Pro title!"

**Samanaz Kapadia**, daughter of Aban and Hosi Kapadia of Downey, CA, was honored with the resident's Associates University

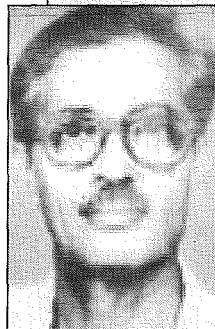


Photo of Chhapgar is third from left at the Smithsonian gallery

## Chhapgar at the Smithsonian.

Mumbai's renowned marine savant and former curator of Mumbai's Taraporewala Aquarium (named after his father Vicaji Taraporewala) **Boman Framji Chhapgar**, was happily surprised to learn that his photograph figured among the world's top 100 carcinologists (one who studies Crustacea – lobsters, crabs, shrimp – also called malacostracology and crustaceology) at the prestigious Smithsonian Museum of Natural History.

"I can't get over the fact that my picture is with scientists like A. Alcock, my guru and the biggest name in my field, said Chhapgar, 76, a resident of Cusrow Baug, Colaba.

Chhapgar is world renowned for discovering three different fish species. Specializing in Crustacea, Chhapgar has given the world new varieties like the *Pinnotheres Vicaji* (named after his father), *Pseudograpsus Intermedus* and *Leptodius Euglyptus Quadrspinus*. Some of these, Chhapgar discovered in Mumbai, along Girgaum, Chowpatty and Cuffe Parade. Besides having penned a couple of books on Crustacea, Chhapgar also has done his PhD on two shrimp species. [Source: "Mumbai man at Smithsonian" by Lajwanti Dsouza, MidDay, 2003, submitted by Ardesir Damania].



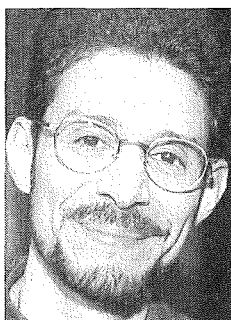
Percy Engineer [seated far right], staff sergeant with the Texas Army National Guard, at Bagram Base, in Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

**Staff Sergeant Percy Engineer** was mobilized to Afghanistan in March [FJ, Spring 2005]. His mother Roshan Engineer of Houston writes:

"Fourth of July is very meaningful to us this year, with one of our own thousands of miles away, giving his all, as do all our armed forces servicemen and women. As we enjoy our celebrations here, let us remember them, toiling, on another mission, under the blazing sun. This we submit to you ever so proudly, and yet, a little tearfully and heavy-heartedly, as we miss our 'sonshine' deeply. We hope all our troops come back home safely, for good! Percy would love to hear from you at percy.engineer@us.army.mil."

Service award for scholastic excellence, and dedication to the university and community. At Cal State Fullerton, Samanaz served on the student board, the Honors student advisory committee and the National Leadership Honors Society and wrote "Tomorrows Leaders: A Guide to being a Student Leader." Samanaz will pursue an MBA at Northwestern University in Chicago.

**Rohinton Mistry** was among five Indian Americans to receive the

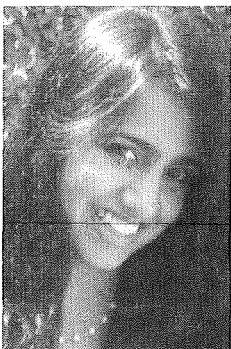


prestigious John Simon *Guggenheim Foundation* fellowship for 2005. Mistry is author of *A Fine Balance*, which won him the Giller Prize and was short-

listed for the Booker Prize. The other Indian winners are Meenakshi Wadhwa (curator, Field Museum, Chicago), Santosh Vempala (professor of mathematics, MIT), Madhu Sudan (Fujitsu professor of computer science, MIT) and acclaimed author Pico Iyer of California.

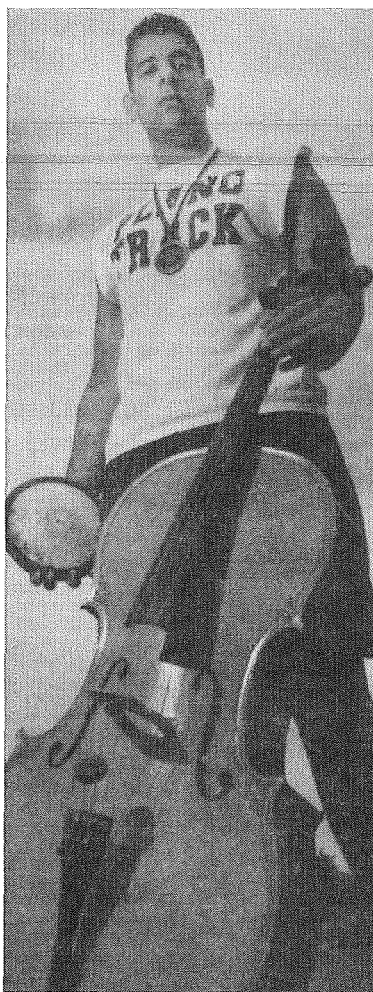
**Sam Mody**, son of Farsheed and Dilzi Mody of Houston, graduated as Valedictorian from Westbury High School, Class of 2005, and received the State of Texas Scholarship.

**Shirelle Noble**, 18, daughter of Rohinton and Roxana Noble, formerly of Texas,



graduated from the Jakarta International School in Indonesia with a GPA of over 4.3. As president of the National Honor Society, Shirelle won three service awards. She raised Rupiah 7,000,000 through NHS for the Tsunami in Indonesia. She was recipient of the Best All-around Stu-

dent award and gave the benediction for the Class of 2005. Shirelle was also awarded the Unocal Scholarship, and has been accepted to the McCombs School of Business at the University of Texas, Austin.



## 'King Neville'

Last fall, Plano (Dallas, TX) high school senior **Neville Irani** was voted Homecoming King, and also "class clown" and the "most likely to succeed."

A member of the National Honor Society and Plano's student congress, Irani is ranked in the top 4% of his class. Besides academics, he also excels in athletics and music.

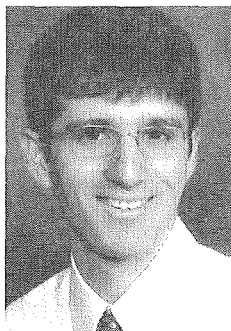
Neville has shattered the school record in discus throwing, last set in 1981. With a personal best discus throw of 182 feet 8 inches, he is ranked second in the state of Texas, and in the top 20 in the nation.

An accomplished cellist as well, Neville was president of the student orchestra, and led the school to 'Best in Class' and the 'Gold Award' for best orchestra at Festival Disney in Orlando, FL.

Neville follows in the footsteps of his elder brother Cyrus, also an accomplished cellist who is now a competitive swimmer at Emory University.

Son of ZANT (Zoroastrian Association of North Texas) president Behram Irani and Farieda, Neville will attend Harvard University this fall. [*Dallas Morning News*, March 7; *Plano Star Courier*, April 22]

**Darius Weil**, son of Zarine and Richard Weil of Oak Park, IL, graduated from Oak Park High School in



the top 5% of his class and will attend Harvard University this fall. Darius was a National Merit Finalist, winner of several awards and scholarships, and

was selected "Outstanding Student in History" each year.

Darius is also an accomplished pianist and has performed with the Oak Park and River Forest Symphony. He was winner of the High School Concerto Competition. The MacDowell Artists Association has offered him a generous scholarship to pursue musical studies in college. Darius will perform a joint recital with his sister Delna Weil, in Oak Park in August.

**Zubin Surkari**, son of Katy and Eruch Surkari of Toronto, an avid cricket player on the Canadian Cricket Association, participated at the ICC Intercontinental Cup 2004, in Sharjah, UAE. Zubin hit an impressive 139 runs, and Canada went on to win the match against UAE. [*ZSO newsletter*].

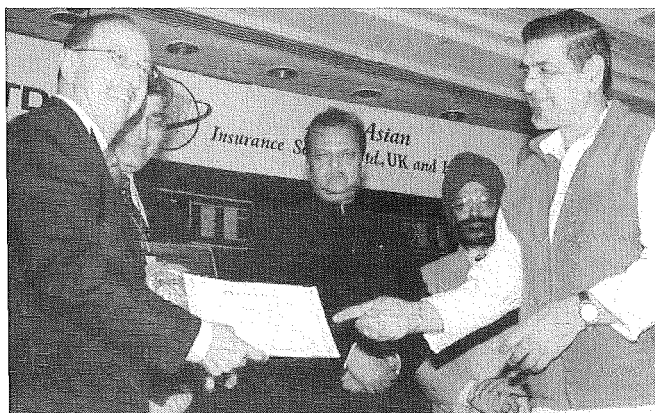
**Mehrzaad Torki**, son of Bahram and Shirin Torki of Dallas, a high school tenth grader, won first place in Second Language Academy Cup Competitions at the Dallas regional level and then went on to win first place at the State level. Mehrzaad speaks German as a second language.





*Tahmoures Hormozdaryan, His Excellency Jehangir Karamat, ambassador from Pakistan to the US, Behram Pastakia and Jenny Presswalla, at the Jamshed Marker Hall in the new premises of the Embassy of Pakistan, Washington DC, for the exhibit of Jimmy Engineer's paintings on March 2005 [see pages 20, 21].*

**Jenny Presswalla** [above] from Tampa, FL, who graduates this year from the American University in Washington, DC, represented FEZANA as a UN/NGO youth delegate at the World Summit on the Information Society, in Geneva, Switzerland [FJ, Spring 2004]. Jenny has been named Boren Scholar for 2005-2006 [page 124] and will spend a year in Mumbai on a research project investigating difficulties, real or perceived, faced by foreign students seeking higher education in obtaining visas to enter the US, due to security concerns.  
- Behram Pastakia



*Russi Patel [left] receiving the award from Shri Jagdish Tytler, in New Delhi on January 10.*

**Russi J. Patel** was awarded the Pravasi Excellence Award 2004 "for excellence in his chosen field and commitment to the Motherland" by Shri Jagdish Tytler, Union Minister of State for Overseas Indians Affairs, at the Pravasi Indians Conference in New Delhi, January 9-11. Mr. Patel, who is the father of Roshan Sethna, AH (Houston)'s FEZANA representative, is a partner in an international accountancy firm, based in Dubai.

**Cyrus Press** was on ABC, Channel 7's "Someone you should Know" segment which aired with the 5:00 pm news on January 6th. Cyrus, son of Minoo and Zarin Press of Chicago, a third year medical student at the University of Illinois, was shown taking patient history, and then interviewed by Harry Porterfield.

**Armaity Vaghaiwalla Austin, MD**, chair of the Department of Family Medicine at St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center in Phoenix, Arizona, was honored by the YWCA in its 12th Annual Tribute of Women. Dr. Austin was among 11 women so honored, "whose achievements reflect the YWCA's mission of empowering women and eliminating racism ..."



As a young Parsi girl raised in Kenya, Dr. Austin observed missionaries and decided to pursue a medical career. In Arizona, she practiced family medicine for indigent patients and established the Health Academy to monitor minority students. Dr. Austin joined the St. Joseph's faculty in 1999. She was medical director for the Wellness on Wheels mobile clinic, traveling throughout the community to treat uninsured, multicultural patients. A founding board member of the Joy of Reading Legacy, Dr. Austin distributes books to children and organizes reading parties to encourage adults to read to children. [Excerpted by Jal N. Birdy from *The Arizona Republic*, March 2, 2005.]

## BOOKS AND SUCH

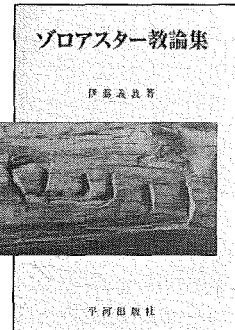
### *Collection of Treatises on Zoroastrianism*

by Dr. Gikyo Ito

Hirakawa Publishers,  
Japan, ISBN 4-89203-315-4

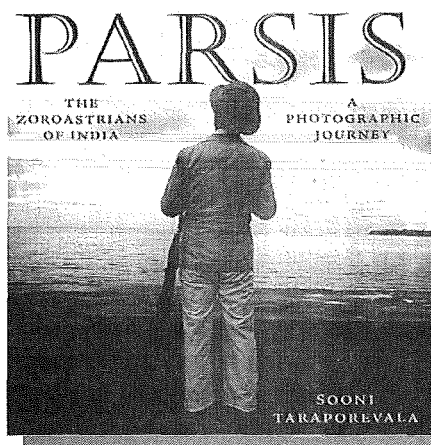


This book covers an interpretation of the Avestan language, and ancient Japanese collected poems *Manyoshu*, that contain the name of a Zoroastrian poetess. Noteworthy are the Pahlavi inscriptions [photo above] on fragrant woods at the 7th century Horyu-ji Temple in Nara, the oldest wooden building existing in the world. Dr. Ito, Late Professor Emeritus at Kyoto University also wrote "Influence of Zoroastrian Culture on Ancient Japan."  
- Noriko Katsuki



*Noriko Katsuki, at the London Congress, 2005.*





## ***Parsis, the Zoroastrians of India, a Photographic Journey***

by Sooni Taraporevala

USD\$40 + shipping (USA \$5, Canada \$16).

Order by phone (MC or Visa) or

mail check payable to FEZANA, to Roshan Rivetna, 5750 South Jackson Street, Hinsdale, IL 60521, Tel: (630) 325-5383, Email: rrrivetna@aol.com.

### **Review by Boman Desai**

**A**s a writer I don't like hearing that a picture is worth a thousand words. It makes a difference who is writing the words and who is taking the pictures. Fortunately, Sooni Taraporevala's photographic pilgrimage *Parsis* provides the best of both worlds.

The cover of *Parsis* is breathtaking, at once humble and grand, delicate as a watercolor bathed in the pale blue of cloud and sea and sky. A man stands in the foreground, his back to the camera, sockless in khaki jacket and sola topi, frayed white pants, and black shoes, a furled umbrella hooked over his elbow. Before him a parapet stretches from east to west, blue pools caught in the rocky crevices of its surface reflecting the sky. Beyond the parapet lies the sea, the impression of a ship dotting the horizon, a finger of the mainland creeping from the east. The sea is met by a sky of clouds and two birds distinguishable only by their wingspans. The horizontal lines of sea, sky, and parapet are beautifully contrasted with the solitary vertical line of the standing man.

It is a gorgeous photograph, worth the price of entry alone. It could also be symbolic: a Bombay Zarathushti gazing at his Irani homeland across the sea. The photographs between the covers are no less enthralling, exhibiting different strands of the Zarathushti fabric in no less splendid detail, incorporating the Parsi panorama from Udvada villagers to Bombay socialites.

The photographs are interwoven with text (ranging from Parsi origins to current debates about conversions) and interviews with contemporary and less contemporary Parsis, including a priest born in 1917, a Municipal Commissioner of Bombay, the owner of an Irani restaurant, and an MTV director, allowing for a fine diversity of opinion.

This is *THE* book for emigrant Zarathushtis wishing to acquaint their foreign-born children with their heritage, not to mention Americans interested in the subject. Tara-

porevala never lectures, but uses her experience to enlarge the dialogue from the personal to the universal. The experience of being teased for a *bawaji* in school provides a springboard into the history of *bawajis*, and when her son learns about *Dadaji* she discourses briefly on the prophet. I could say more, but in the few words I have left let me just suggest that you get the book.

**Boman Desai**, author of *The Memory of Elephants*, *Asylum USA*, *A Woman Madly in Love*, and *Trio*, was born and raised in Bombay, but has spent most of his life in Chicago.

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"I am grateful to Sooni Taraporevala for launching us on this photographic journey of contemporary Parsi life ... Her book has a place of pride in my home."

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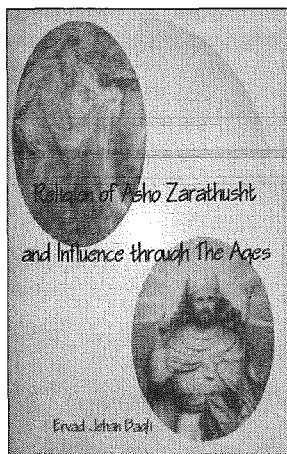


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## **Religion of Asho Zarathusht and Influence through the Ages**

**by Er. Jehan Bagli**

*Foreword by Farhang Mehr. Published by Informal Religious Trust Meetings Trust Fund, Karachi, 2003. To order, send check payable to NAMC (J. Bagli) to Jehan Bagli, 1569 Wembury Road, Mississauga, ONT L5J 2L8, Canada, tel:*

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### **Review by Jamshed R. Udvadia**

**T**he author Ervad Jehan Bagli, President of the North American Mobed Council, is a scientist and a forward thinker. He has covered simply and rationally many of the topics which raise questions amongst our youngsters as well as adults. The book is presented as a compilation of written papers and oral presentations made by him over a number of years. The author's observations and conclusions are accompanied by a rationale and not just stated with a take-it-from-me attitude.

In his preface he informs us that he knew very little of the religion of Asho Zarathusht in 1967, when he was elected president of the newly formed Zoroastrian Association of Quebec. This event made him commit to undertake a serious study. The difficulty of such study can be appreciated when one notes that much of our scriptures were destroyed during two foreign invasions and that the fragments remaining are written in Avesta and Pahlavi, both defunct languages.

The first chapter covers the likely place and date of Zarathushtra's birth; the gradual changing of the original Zathic religion into a syncretic religion with the influence of the Magoi (Magi) and the accompanying evolution of rituals and assimilation of non-Avestan divinities such as Anahita. He has traced this gradual change through the Achaemenian, Parthian and Sasanian dynasties.

One entire chapter has been devoted to the ancient religious and civil calendars and the evolution of the Shenhai and Kadmi calendars. He makes a case for the adoption of the Fasli calendar which is synchronous with the sun and the seasons. It maintains the Nouruz at the vernal equinox and avoids the slippage experienced by the other two calendars. He addresses the two main objections raised to the adoption of the Fasli calendar.

The most powerful chapter is the one on Prayers and spirituality. True prayer is defined as a pious mental state in harmony with Holy Mentality that brings a per-

son closer to Ahura Mazda with a consequent healing in mind and body. A discussion of the controversial Haoma cult is also included. In the next chapter on Theology and Doctrine he addresses various topics such as Vohu Manah, Spenta Armaiti, the Twin Mainyus and methods of Last Disposal.

The last chapter addresses the training of priests as at present and how it could and should be improved in future. He mentions other organizations that vigorously pursue conversion and advocates peaceful co-existence rather than wasting energy in denouncing them in a rage of intolerance. After all, the message of Zarathushtra was meant for all mankind and not for a chosen few.

Throughout the book, wherever applicable, he has drawn attention to similarities of doctrine and practice to the religions of the Jews, Christians and Muslims, and the possibility of Zarathushti influence on them.

While the contents make very good reading for laity and Ervads alike, they could have been considerably improved by efficient proof-reading to eliminate numerous errors of spelling, grammar and syntax. For the next edition of this book I would suggest the addition of an index and a glossary of special and technical terms used, to help the serious student use it as a reference book. ■

**Jamshed R. Udvadia** has been an editor of *FEZANA Journal* for the past seven years and pioneered religion classes for adults and children in the Detroit area.

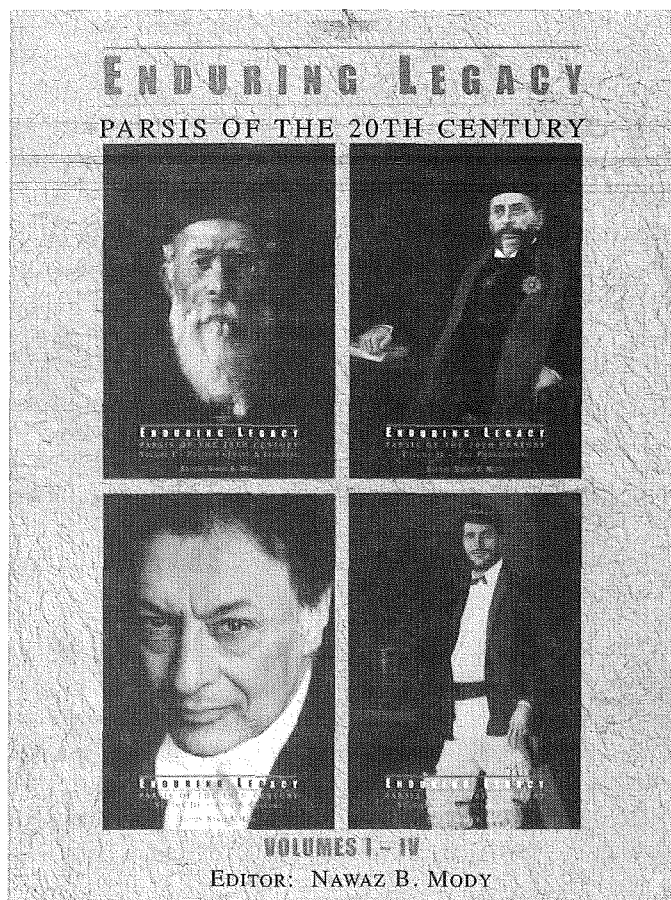
## **BPP reprints old books**

**T**he following rare and 'out-of-print' books, documenting Parsi Zarathushti history and achievements, have been reprinted by Bombay Parsi Punchayet.

- (1) **Famous Parsis** – Biographical and critical sketches of patriots, philanthropists, politicians, reformers, scholars and captains of industry.
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- (3) **History of Holy Iranshah** by S. K. Hodiwalla translated from Gujarati by Dastur N. D. Minocherhomji.
- (4) **The Influence of Iran on Other Countries** by Dr. Jivanji Jamshedji Modi. K. R. Cama Oriental Inst.
- (5) **The Bombay Dockyard and the Wadia Master Builders** by R. A. Wadia
- (6) **Homage Unto Ahura Mazda** by Dastur M. N. Dhalla.

This set of six books is available for a nominal Rs. 225 (about \$5) plus S&H from Bombay Parsi Punchayet, tel: 91 22 2261 7421, or ppbombay@vsnl.net.

BPP's publisher Norshirwan Mistry, informs us that the "BPP Review" is available online on the new BPP website at – [www.bpp.in](http://www.bpp.in).



## ENDURING LEGACY: PARSIS OF THE 20TH CENTURY

Editor Nawaz B. Mody

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A seminal publication focusing on the manifold contributions made by the Parsi community, the four volume set is meant to serve as a significant international tool of reference and record. Essays by eminent writers and specialists highlight the achievements of the community, illustrated with a wealth of visual material from archives, family albums and private collections.

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**Volume II** discusses the community's pivotal role in professions including medicine, the sciences, administration, law, education, economics, journalism, philanthropy, and distinguished service in the police and the armed forces.

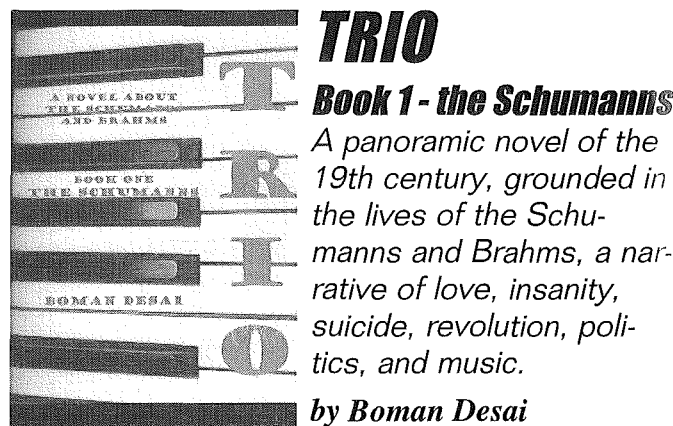
**Volume III** profiles the community's distinctive cultural identity and predilection for the visual and performing

arts and their many noteworthy contributions to literature, drama, theatre, leisure and culture.

**Volume IV** discusses the pioneering contribution of the Parsis in sports, especially cricket. This extensively researched section documents the achievements of Parsi sports figures in pre- and post-independent India. From athletics to tennis, table tennis, badminton and squash from swimming to cycling; from motor sports to martial arts, Parsis have won kudos.

An exhaustive bibliography and a comprehensive index to all four volumes complete this monumental publication, a valuable addition to every home and library.

The editor **Dr. Nawaz B. Mody** is the Sir Pheroza Shah Mehta Professor of Civics and Politics, and was former Head of the Department of Civics and Politics, at the University of Mumbai, and the Joint Honorary Secretary of the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute. A Fulbright Scholar at Cornell University, she has a PhD from the University of Mumbai, and has authored numerous books.



Paperback, 2005. ISBN: 1-4140-4659-6, 432 p. \$25.45 at Amazon and all major bookstores; or \$17.50 from the publisher AuthorHouse (formerly 1stBooks), tel: 1-888-280-7715 or visit [www.authorhouse.com](http://www.authorhouse.com).

Review by Farobag Homi Cooper

After being immersed in Boman Desai's unusually insightful romantic novel, *A Woman Madly in Love* [FJ Winter 2004] I was hesitant (figuratively and literally) to pick up *Trio*. The sheer weight of the volume intimidated me to commence on a journey of some 432 pages while debating whether this new artistic inquiry into the lives of Robert Schumann, his wife Clara, and Johannes Brahms would come close to my admiration for his previous novel. My apprehension soon gave way to embracing the novel with heart and soul. In short, an epiphany for which I shall ever be grateful. Once again Boman Desai has succeeded in expanding my universe philosophically, sociologically and humanistically: all skillfully interwoven within the setting of a novel with a historiographical bent.

Schumann, an aspiring concert pianist, lost the use of one of his fingers via a contraption designed to strengthen it

but this seeming catastrophe propelled him to realize his true calling as a composer. His difficulties were enormously compounded by Clara's father's vehement objections to their marriage. Clara was the most brilliant woman pianist of the 19th century; she could no more give up performing than her husband could part with composing. She could also make more money in three months of performing than he in a year of composing.

In theory, the union of performer and composer is symbiotic. In practice, Clara's role as breadwinner cast a prodigious strain on the relationship. As Robert said: "My situation is unmanly, and your conduct not womanly." In fact, overwhelmed by the economics of the family, Robert attempted suicide and finally died in an insane asylum while Clara proves herself courageous throughout his illness, continuing her tortuous schedule while raising seven children.

From a marketing standpoint, I would have preferred the volume to be subdivided into two novelettes: the Romance of Robert and Clara and *Ménage à Trois*. Simply stated, sex sells. But no fine intelligence can fail to see this work's beauty with its heavenly length and breadth. After all, passion with insight is a desideratum in any creative enterprise while sheer intellectual stimulation is only incidental and largely ineffective without the former.

Brook no delay and take the plunge. Be prepared to be moved, touched and inspired by *Trio*. ■

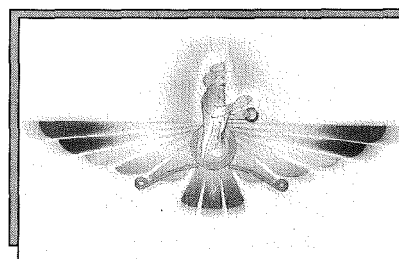
**Farobag Homi Cooper**, multifaceted scholar and music director of the Chicago Philharmonia, is undertaking the Indian-American Symphony project to help stimulate further interest in the performing arts on the subcontinent.



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Perviz Dubash, president of the Zoroastrian Association of Victoria, Australia, writes: "In a modest way we in ZAV have committed ourselves to helping some Zoroastrian charitable institutions in India. The sale of these cards is one of several fundraising ventures planned by our Melbourne community." ■

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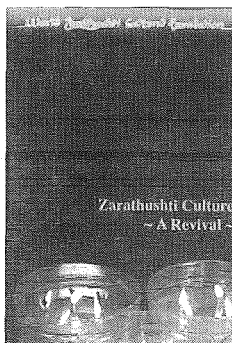
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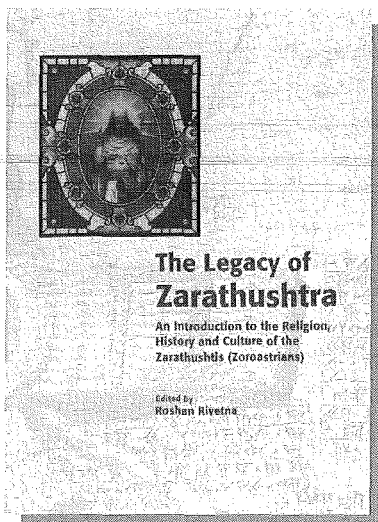
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## The Legacy of Zarathushtra

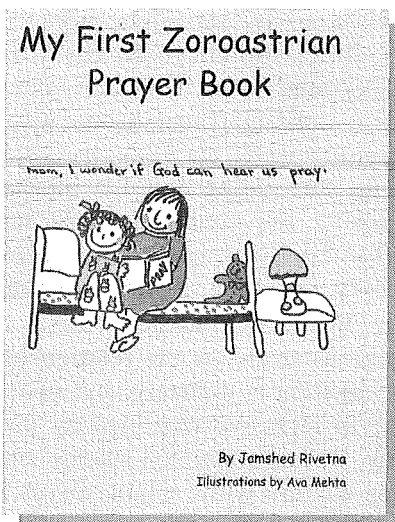
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