



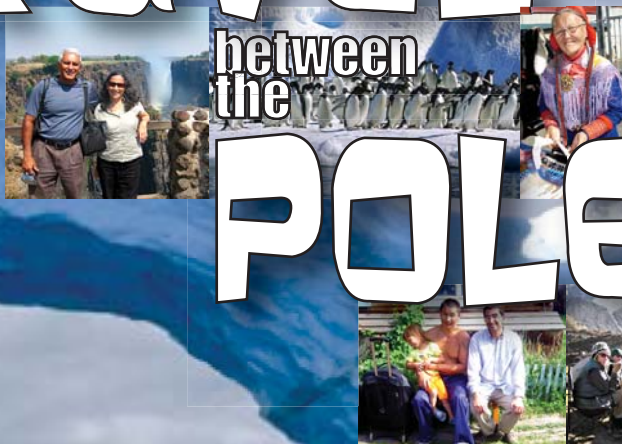
JOURNAL

Dae – Behman – Spendarmad 1377 AY (Fasli)

• Amordad – Shehrever- Meher 1378 AY (Shenshai)

• Shehrever – Meher – Avan 1378 AY (Kadimi)

TRAVEL between the POLES



HAPPY NEW YEAR 2009

Also Inside:



Adventure and Walk on
Perito Moreno Glacier



The Lure of
Jabal-e-Noor



Trip to Africa



St. Petersburg to
Lhasa by Train



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60 years of
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NIAZ KASRAVI

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Cover design

Feroza Fitch
of
Lexicongraphics

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Amordad – Shehrever- Meher 1378 AY (Shenshai)
Shehrever – Meher – Avan 1378 AY (Kadmi)



Opinions expressed in the FEZANA Journal do not necessarily reflect the views of FEZANA or members of this publication's editorial board.

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A word from the Editor

Dolly Dastoor



We are living in unprecedented times where we saw history being made all around the world from the election in US to the universal adult franchise in the Parsi/Zarathushti community in Mumbai. Both were elections of monumental historical importance. Elections when carried out through a democratic process are an expression of the will of the people. And that "will" is influenced by several factors, religion, economic crisis, financial strength of the candidates, bad management, fear, misinformation, and arrogance of the previous people in power, etc. And we have seen this phenomenon at play all over the world in the last few decades. But never so dramatically as in the months of October and November 2008.

The internet has rewritten the ways voters can be reached and persuaded, how public opinion can be molded, how supporters can be organized, how letters can be bombarded across cyberspace. I received an e.mail to vote for John McCain when I live in Canada!! I received e.mails almost daily from Toronto on how to vote for the elections in Mumbai!! Blogs were created and the internet was leveraged in ways never imagined. This is a challenge of a new hyperaccelerated media and who knows what other technology will be in place four or eight years from now when the new elections will be upon us.

However without the rhetoric and oratory of the candidates, who excite people, you can have the greatest strategy and machinery and it won't matter. The candidates spoke, the people listened and voted with their hearts. We congratulate the elected trustees of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet and wish them a very successful term.

And yet what is spun out in cyberspace is what is put in by human beings. Interpretations are added to suit one's premise. Two pages of interpretation in the editorial of USHTA, the Zoroastrian Studies Publications, March & June '08, on a sentence spoken by Mr Rohinton Rivetna in 2008 in Mumbai at the Round Table Conference that "interfaith marriages are destroying the community". And by analogy, the editorial paints the whole North American community as having "sanctioned, praised and encouraged all such marriages for over twenty-five years". Nothing can be further from the truth. No Zarathushti, including Mr Rohinton Rivetna has done so. What has been done is the acceptance of these marriages and the progenies from these marriages in the spirit of maintaining community and family harmony. If we look at the statistics published (FJ 2008 Vol 22 No 2 page 130)

there is a slightly higher incidence of intra marriages than intermarriages.

And again in the same editorial, it is alleged that the children of these marriages even after being accepted with open arms by the community "have drifted away and broken their links with the Parsi-Irani Community in North America". Then one can make an equally speculative statement that young couples whether inter or intra married have drifted away from the community as they do not feel the relevance of the Zarathushti community in their lives. There are no data to base these statements on, and they are not truly reflective of the reality in North America.

There can be no end to this rhetoric. It has got to stop, if a healing process has to start to accommodate all points of view. If not, we will be growing and going our independent ways, which will not be of any benefit to the community. The North American community had suggested a setting up of a "think-tank" over a decade ago, to look at ways and means of bridging this divide. And I am glad our friends in India are coming to the same conclusion in 2008.

By the time you read this editorial we will be on the threshold of 2009. A new year!! What will it have in store for us, collectively, as human beings who are tenants on this planet and as Zarathushtis who are the keepers of our faith on this planet? Let us hope that we will all seize the opportunity provided by the combination of events of the last few months to move forward together on the path of ASHA towards FRESHOKERETI to meet common challenges. Let this be a moment of unity and reconciliation because even though we may have ideological differences, and though passion may divide us, we are not enemies, we are friends, we are all on the same side.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of the Journal, which illustrates the amazing travel experiences of Zarathushtis past and present between the poles.

With my very best wishes for a very successful 2009

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dolly Dastoor". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

A Message from FEZANA President

FEZANA Infrastructure

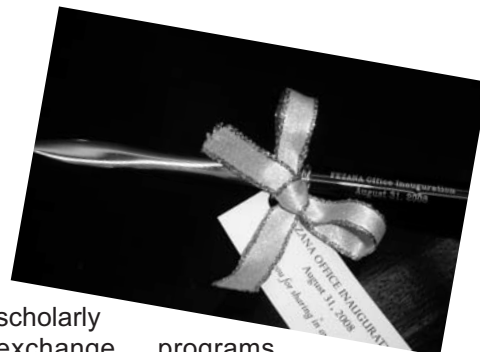
A quest for progress and laying a physical foundation for future generations:

I am very happy to inform you that the new FEZANA office opened its doors with a grand opening ceremony on August 31, 2008 in Chicago. Located adjacent to the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago Dare Meher the opening ceremony was attended by nearly 175 people.

The office will facilitate the day-to-day operations of FEZANA, coordinate communications to/from Member Associations and Corresponding Members, and support the FEZANA Executives and Committees. I thank, Dr. Rustom Kevala, for his dedicated efforts in setting up the office.

The FEZANA web site has been updated with a new look and feel. Visit www.fezana.org and check out our new features. In the near future we will also publish past issues of the FEZANA Journal and make it available online. I thank Brandon Chothia for being instrumental in redesigning and creating the web site. Brandon is a sophomore at Cal Poly University at San Luis Obispo and an active member of ZANC.

Our next project is establishing the first FEZANA Resource Center in collaboration with the Zoroastrian Association of Houston (ZAH). The proposed name for this new undertaking is FEZANA INFORMATION RESEARCH SYSTEM (FIRES). This project involves establishing an information center with a centralized library. FIRES will be an active and vibrant center for the promotion of educational, cultural, religious, and



scholarly exchange programs and other religious and cultural initiatives. It will provide the right environment for learning as well as an opportunity for research with up-to-date reference material, and facilitate exchange of ideas primarily related to the Zarathushti religion and discussions on the same. The library will house a collection of Zarathushti manuscripts, books, magazines, scholarly research material, films and other audio-visual material

related to Zoroastrian history and culture. Anyone with an Internet connection will be able to access the rich database of information and knowledge.

I thank Mrs. Aban Rustomji of ZAH for taking the lead in setting up the FIRES. I would also like to thank the Infrastructure Working Group - Shahrokh Mehta (Chair), Bella Tata and Neville Rustomjee for their guidance and reports on FEZANA infrastructure requirements.

Bomi Patel, FEZANA President

FEZANA JOURNAL

Sends its most sincere and heartfelt condolences to the families of those who have lost their lives in the brutal and indiscriminate attacks of terrorism on November 26, in Mumbai

May Ahura Mazda guide us to Peaceful Existence



COMMUNICATION IS PEACE

Behram Pastakia, Chair, Publications Committee

Growing up as children in Zarathushti homes, our parents teach us that tying our kushti before going out to face the world every morning is tantamount to girding our loins like soldiers who buckle their armor before going off to war, to fight the good fight on the side of the good as Hamkars of Ahura Mazda against the forces of evil. There are visual subtexts: a prominent display of swords unsheathed from their scabbards hanging on the walls of the sanctum sanctorum of Agiaries and Atash Behrams, where the holy fires burn; the bull headed mace held by the newly ordained priest as he is felicitated in all his regalia – symbols of ancient weapons, all on message: You are warriors!



Zoroastrians encouraged to violence in our scriptures and in our traditions? How then can we reconcile ourselves with the concept of **nidhiasnaitheshem** recited in the Jasme-Avenghe prayer after tying the kushti ?

A contradiction! What are we to believe?

Irach J.S. Taraporewalla and Mobed Firouz Azargoshasb, both ascribe the word **snaithishâ** to imply “spiritual” weapon rather than to take it in a literal sense. But then, what is meant by a spiritual weapon? Our Gathas are like a string of pearls in a necklace. Each adjoining verse adds luster to the one next to it. And the answer to our dilemma comes in the

subsequent verse, Yasna 31.19 – “The enlightened one, who O Ahura Mazda hears the truth for both of the worlds, (and) meditates, is the ruler over truthful utterances and the controller over his tongue.” â

The means are the ends. Violence begets greater violence. As hamkars of Ahura Mazda, as we fight the good fight, we should be using our non-violent weapons, our spiritual weapons, the discipline of silence when needed, proper speech which springs from the good mind when appropriate, with truth as its bedrock, to conquer the opponent. For indeed, if we believe that in each one of us there is a spark of the supreme, there are no enemies, only opponents. And we win them over, with our skills at communication. The seeming contradiction in our prayers is a mirage.

COMMUNICATION IS PEACE!

In our small world, Brandon Chothia under the tutelage of president, Bomi Patel, has revamped www.fezana.org to facilitate communication. Futuristic features include: RSS feeds, an interactive calendar of events, a digital archive of recorded interviews and lectures both in audio and video on our federation website. We keep an open mind, a willingness to adapt and change, to subscribe to additional innovations in communications as the techno-savvy dreamers send them down the pipeline. Whatever the future holds,

And, while yearning to learn what our scriptures mean, we come across:

**mâ-cish at vê dregvatô
māthrāscâ gûstâ sâsnâscâ,
âzî demânem vîsem vâ
shôithrem vâ dah'yûm vâ âdât
dushitâcâ marakaêcâ athâ
îsh sâzdûm snaithishâ.**

*Let no man listen
to the unholy incantations of the Worshipper of
Falsehood
for he will deliver
the home, the town, the province and the country
to strife and destruction.
So cut him down with your weapon.
? Yasna 31: 18*

The word, **snaithishâ** in our very first Gatha is translated as **weapon** by various luminaries. Are we as



FEZANA Update

basic principles that guide our discourse remain unchanged.

It is not only what you say, but how you say it, when you say it, how much you say, being mindful of to whom you say it, and where you say it, that leads to effective communication.

“Vigorous writing is concise. A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary lines and a machine no unnecessary parts. This requires not that the writer make all sentences short or avoid all detail and treat subjects only in outline, but that every word tell.” •

“Perception is reality; message received is always message sent, even if that was not the message you

intended”*. So, we shall seek to be mindful of our communications, whether verbal or unspoken, whether in cyberspace or with the printed word, to create the right perception, at the right time, for therein lies the key we seek to unlock the safe that hides the holy grail of communal harmony and peace on earth.

? The Gathas of Zarathustra: Hymns in Praise of Wisdom by Piloo Nanavutty 1999

ISBN 1-890206-09-1

á Ervad Kavasji Edalji Kanga's **GATHA-BA-MAANI** – First Edition in English (published by Bombay Parsi Panchayat) translated from the original in Gujarati, 1997)

* I am indebted to Rev Mark Hoelter for this insight.

• From W. Strunk and E. White's "little book" **The Elements of Style** © 1935

ISBN 0-205-30902-X



FINANCIAL PROGRESS REPORT

FEZANA Updates



At the present time the financial markets are in great turmoil. As I write this progress report in late September, the stock market is very volatile mainly due to the credit crisis and this has been a cause for great concern. The banking system is under great pressure as we await the government's plan to provide relief.

Fortunately, under the astute guidance of Kavasji Dadachanji and Zubin Bomanshaw of Integrity Investment Advisors, Inc., the severe deterioration of the general stock market has not affected our FEZANA accounts. With the guidance of the financial advisory committee of FEZANA (Rashid Mehin, Katayun Kapadia and myself), 80% of the accounts have been in fixed income/money market and 20% in mutual funds/high dividend yielding equities. And once again thanks to Kavasji and Zubin, the equities and mutual funds have been sold in time and deposited in money market funds.

We would like to acknowledge and thank Burgise and Khursheed Palkhiwala of NJ for the very generous donation of \$90,000 for the benefit of Parsee General Hospital and \$10,000 towards FEZANA 20th Anniversary Infrastructure Fund.

We would also like to thank Dhun and Bachu Panthaki sisters for their very kind and generous donation of \$30,000 towards a scholarship in memory of their sister Khorshed Panthaky who lived in NY for many years and passed away last year. The scholarship will be under the name of Khorshed Panthaky Scholarship to be given to two Zarathushti students for studies at an accredited university/college within the USA or Canada.

We would once again like to request you to support the FEZANA funds. Kindly make your check payable to FEZANA, indicate the fund you wish to support and mail to Katayun Kapadia, FEZANA Treasurer, 33 Preamble Drive, Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054. Thank you for your generosity and may Ahura Mazda bless you and your family.

Jerry Kheradi, MD, FACP, Chairperson, FEZANA Funds and Finance Committee:

Committee: Katayun Kapadia, Treasurer, Morvarid Behziz, M.Ed,

Sassan Nadjmi, DMD, FACP, Celeste Kheradi.



FINANCIAL

FEZANA Updates

List of Donations received July 1, 2008 through September 30, 2008

FEZANA General Fund

Percy Master, Mission City, TX	\$ 101.00
Boman Najmi, Potomac, MD	\$ 100.00
Jamshed Dastur, Newport Beach, CA	\$ 55.00
Manek Dustoor, Oceanside, CA	\$ 50.00
Khurshed Hintz, Vancouver, WA	\$ 30.00
Hoshi Deboo, Laguna Miguel, CA	\$ 25.00
Cowsie & Jerroo Malva, Redlands, CA	\$ 25.00
Dinshaw Mistry, Cincinnati, OH	\$ 25.00
TOTAL	\$ 411.00

FEZANA Welfare Fund

Rashna & Firdosh Mehta, Weatherford, TX	\$ 2,000.00
Behram Baxter, San Diego, CA	\$ 720.00
K. Polishvala, Willowdale, ON, Canada	\$ 200.00
Nazneen & Mehlie Warden, Sugar Land, TX	\$ 101.00
Russie & Jini Pestonji, North York, ON, Canada	\$ 100.00
Minnie Chesson, Richmond Hill, ON, Canada	\$ 50.00
Cowsie & Jerroo Malva, Redlands, CA	\$ 51.00
Anonymous	\$ 55.00
Burjis & Hovi Shroff, Boca Raton, FL	\$ 30.00
TOTAL	\$ 3,307.00

FEZANA Critical Assistance Fund

Behram Shroff, McLean, VA	\$ 200.00
Meherwan Boyce, Houston, TX	\$ 101.00
Homi Sarkary, Hopewell Jct., CA	\$ 101.00
Mehraban Khosraviani, Fairfield, CA	\$ 100.00
Noshir Lakdawalla, Valencia, CA	\$ 51.00
Jamshed Dudha, Houston, TX	\$ 45.00
Yasmin & Rohinton Madon, Bedminster, NJ	\$ 30.00
Cowsie & Jerroo Malva, Redlands, CA	\$ 25.00
TOTAL	\$ 653.00

FEZANA Academic Scholarship Fund

Dhun & Bachu Panthaki of Mumbai India endowed a scholarship in memory of their sister Khorshed Panthaky who passed away in NY	\$ 30,000.00
Dinyar Karai, Mumbai, India	\$ 3,000.00
Dr. Homi Shroff & Dr. Roshan & Perin Bhappu, Tucson, AZ	\$ 48.00
Darius Captain, Granite Bay, CA	\$ 30.00
TOTAL	\$ 33,078.00

FEZANA Journal Fund

Prochy Sethna, San Jose, CA	\$ 100.00
TOTAL	\$ 100.00

FEZANA Infrastructure Fund

Behram Baxter, San Diego, CA	\$ 1,000.00
TOTAL	\$ 1,000.00

FEZANA Religious Education Fund

Noshir Hansotia, Kansas City, MO	\$ 55.00
TOTAL	\$ 55.00

Kheradi Scholarship Fund

Sohrab & Teresa Kheradi, Riverdale, NY	\$ 300.00
Bijan Kheradi, Coventry, RI	\$ 50.00
TOTAL	\$ 350.00

Project Amordad

Alayar & Gitty Dabestani, Arlington, WA	\$ 1,000.00
Soli & Jo Ann Dastur, University Park, FL	\$ 501.00
Khashayar & Nirvana Anooosheh, Los Gatos, CA	\$ 500.00
North American Mobeds Council - NAMC (C\$500)	\$ 453.72
Bina & Farshid Behboodi	\$ 100.00
Farangis Izadian, Boston, MA	\$ 100.00
Daryoush & Mahin Jahanian, Kansas City, KS	\$ 100.00
Bijan Kheradi, Coventry, RI	\$ 100.00
Farokh & Sandra Lynn Kheradi, Wayne, PA	\$ 100.00
Jerry & Celeste Kheradi, North Providence, RI	\$ 100.00
Matthew Lungen, Cranston, RI	\$ 100.00
Kamran & S. Behroozi	\$ 50.00
Zoroastrian Association of Greater Boston (ZAGBA)	\$ 50.00
Zoroastrian Association of North Texas (ZANT)	\$ 50.00
TOTAL	\$ 3,304.72

GRAND TOTAL

\$ 42,258.72

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FEZANA Update

The Critical Assistance Committee (CAC) is a FEZANA committee designed to provide assistance to individuals, families and organizations facing temporary difficulties due to medical emergencies, natural disasters, violence or legal issues. However the CAC was originally formed to address the needs of men, women and children who were affected by domestic violence. Domestic violence is an issue that crosses countries, cultures and religions. Today, as the FEZANA Journal takes a look at perspectives from across the globe we share with you some myths and facts about domestic violence.

MYTH: Domestic violence occurs only in the poor, uneducated or minority families.

FACT: Battering occurs among all types of families, regardless of income, profession, region, ethnicity, educational level or race. However, the fact that lower income victims and abusers are over-represented in calls to police, battered women's shelters and social services may be due to a lack of other resources.

MYTH: Domestic violence is usually a one time, isolated occurrence.

FACT: Battering is a pattern of coercion and control that one person exerts over another. Battering is not just one physical attack. Although physical abuse is the most common form associated with domestic violence, it includes the repeated use of a number of tactics, including intimidation, threats, economic deprivation, isolation and psychological and sexual abuse.

MYTH: Men who batter are generally good fathers.

FACT: Studies have found that men who batter their wives also abuse their children in 70% of cases. Even when children are not directly abused, they suffer as a result of witnessing one parent assault another. Batterers often display an increased interest in their children at the time of separation, as a means of maintaining contact with, and thus control over, their partners.

MYTH: Battered women must like it or else they would leave.

FACT: Battered women often make repeated attempts to leave violent relationships, but are prevented from doing so by increased violence and control tactics on the part of the abuser. Other factors which inhibit a victim's ability to leave include economic dependence, few viable options for housing and support, unhelpful responses from the criminal justice system or other agencies, social isolation, cultural or religious constraints, a commitment to the abuser and the relationship and fear of further violence. It has been estimated that the danger to a victim increases by 70% when she attempts to leave, as the abuser escalates his use of violence when he begins to lose control.

Working together to understand issues such as domestic violence will help each of us more compassionately approach situations, allowing us to more effectively assist families in need. This is non-violence month and we look forward to the day when we can celebrate non-violence years.

Ushta-te (may happiness be unto you always),

Houtoxi Contractor: 412-367-2948; hfm31@aol.com
Hosi Mehta: 630-833-6923; hosimehta@aol.com
Freyaz Shroff: +91-98922-73973; freyaz@aol.com



Fezana AGM

Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America

THE TWENTY SECOND FEZANA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM).

ADVANCE NOTICE

FEZANA Annual General Meeting will be held in ORLANDO, FLORIDA on May 22nd, 23rd & 24th, 2009. A formal notice, agenda, and other details outlining the timeline in the FEZANA Constitution will follow in due course. This notice is to facilitate members to make early travel plans & hotel reservations, and for the host association, to plan the AGM event.

HOTEL ARRANGEMENTS/ALTERNATE STAYING ARRANGEMENT/HOTEL BOOKING DETAILS:

The **Zarathushti Small Group of Orlando** (CFG) in association with the **WZCC- Central Florida Chapter**, will host this 22nd Annual General Meeting, at:

WINGATE BY WYNDHAM HOTEL

5750 Hazeltine National Drive ORLANDO, FL 33822

Phone: 407-826-5258.

Fax: 407-826-5206

Website: www.wingateorlandoairport.com

Email: sales@wingateorlandoairport.com

Phone: 1-407-826-5258



For Booking:

Request "FEZANA AGM Rate" Code LKFA

Web direct booking:

<http://wingateorlandoairport.com/fezanaagm2009>

For problems on booking contact Dinyar Mehta

Tel: 407-826-5258 or Email: dinyarmehta@aol.com

US \$ 79.00 + tax per night for Single/Double occupancy,

US \$ 99.00 + tax per night for Triple/ Quadruple occupancy for all suites.

This rate is valid for the nights of

Friday, May 22nd to Monday, May 25th.

Hotel Registration Includes: free hot breakfast and free shuttle service to and from the Airport. Booking for this rate MUST be done on or before April 30th 2009.

If you wish you may stay with friends or relatives in Orlando or nearby and commute to the AGM venue. Please make your own arrangements for breakfast and for transport to and from the AGM venue.

Please inform **FEZANA Office Administrator Zenobia Damania** admin@fezana.org of your booking to enable a count of the number of delegates attending the AGM. Do indicate any dietary restrictions and whether you are a vegetarian/non-vegetarian. This will assist the host in planning the Saturday dinner event.

AGM PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS IN BRIEF:

Meeting Venue: Spring Hill Suites (adjacent to hotel)

FRIDAY MAY 22nd – SUNDAY MAY 24th, 2009

FRIDAY MAY 22, 2009

Open Forum (6:00 PM to 9:00 PM)

Light Dinner will be provided by WZCC - CFC

SATURDAY MAY 23, 2009 (DAY ONE)

AGM (8:30 AM to 5:00 PM)

LUNCH provided by ORLANDO GROUP

DINNER hosted by ORLANDO GROUP

\$ 20.00 cover charge PER PERSON.

SUNDAY MAY 24, 2009 (DAY TWO)

AGM (9:00 AM to 1:00 PM)

LUNCH provided by WZCC - CFC



SUNDAY MAY 24, 2009 – Afternoon Meeting

WZCC CENTRAL FLORIDA CHAPTER

(2:00 PM to 5:00 PM)

Agenda to follow



Why not make it a fun filled Holiday Vacation with your family?

Take a look at Orlando and its attractions:

<http://www.wingateorlandoairport.com/links/>

See you all at the AGM.



FEZANA Update

PRELIMINARY ANNOUNCEMENT

IN CELEBRATION OF ZARATHUSHTI NEW YEAR 1378 AY

SYMPOSIUM

**CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF
ZOROASTRIAN FAITH**

Co-sponsored by FEZANA, ZSO, WZO

MARCH 29, 2009

Parya Trillium Hall, 7171 Yonge St. Unit 1, Thornhill, Toronto, ON.

**FEATURING FEZANA KHORSHED JUNGALWALLA
MEMORIAL LECTURE**

BY

**Professor Oktor Skjaervo
Aga Khan Professor of Iranian Studies, Harvard University**

ALSO FEATURING

PROFESSOR JENNY ROSE

**Historian of Zoroastrian Religion, Visiting Professor
Stanford University**

PROFESSOR MARIA SUBTELNY

**Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations
University of Toronto**

PROFESSOR JAMSHEED CHOKSY

**Department of Central Eurasian studies
Indiana University, Bloomington**

Registration \$ 8.00 (Adult) \$5.00 (youth under 25) includes Lunch and Coffee

Space limited, register early by mailing check

made to ZSO -- *Symposium*, addressed to any one of the following

Jehan Bagli 703-16, Dallimore Circ., Toronto, ON M3C 4C4, Ph: 647 344 3531,

Pervaze Rabadi 48, Monte Vista Trail, Brampton, ON L6Z 2G5, Ph: 905 846 6177

Nozer Kotwal 4244, Taffey Cr. Mississauga ON L5L 2J2 Ph: 905 820 0461



FEZANA Update

DECEMBER 3rd - 9th 2009 PARLIAMENT OF THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

Embracing Difference, Transforming the world. will be an international inter religious gathering bringing together an estimated 8,000 to 12,000 persons.

Zarathushtis are encouraged to make program proposals for individual presentations (deadline December 31, 2008). In addition we hope to have several panel presentations on various topics rooted in the Zarathushti faith that can bring understanding among the faiths.

Early Bird Registration Rates (Before 31 December 2008)	\$520.00
Standard Rates (1 Jan 2009 - 31 August 2009),	\$572.00
Late Rates (After 1 September 2009)	\$624.00

These rates are for 7 days at the Parliament but without any catering service. There are discounted rates for students and seniors and also a possibility of getting a discounted Group Rate.

We may also consider renting a booth at the Parliament to display/sell materials

Previous Parliaments have been held in Chicago, 1893, 1993, Cape Town 1999 and Barcelona 2004. Each had a strong Zarathushti presence and participation.

Zarathushti participation at the Parliament will be coordinated by Rohinton Rivetna (Founding Trustee of CPWR). Local arrangements in Melbourne are being coordinated by Perviz Dubash of the Zoroastrian Association in Melbourne. Those interested in the possible Group discounts and Panel presentations, and more information, may contact Rohinton Rivetna at Rivetna@aol.com or Perviz Dubash at Perviz_Dubash@hotmail.com.

Also visit:
<http://www.cpwr.org/index.html>.



NRT

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WELCOME TO MELBOURNE

The 2009 Parliament of the World's Religions (PWR) in Melbourne, Australia

Date & Place: 3-9 December 2009, Melbourne, Australia

"In today's world, understanding between people of different traditions is not optional. It is essential. The 2009 Parliament will give people of faith, spirit and goodwill, new reason to say that peace is still possible."

PWR's Objectives: - Make a World of Difference. Hearing each other, Healing the Earth.
- Sharing Wisdom in the search for Inner Peace.

Program Details: There are over 450 activities encompassing daily morning observances, intrareligious and interreligious programs, symposia, open space dialogue & cultural performances.

Participants: Over 8000 participants from all over the world are expected.

Registration Fees: Please refer to the PWR website for more information

ZAV earnestly appeals to Zoroastrian Associations, educational institutions, Corporations and Philanthropists to support and encourage those most capable of revealing the splendour of our prophet and religion, to come and participate in PWR. Responses for participation must be made before 31st December 2008.

Accommodation: Many hotels have been allocated by PWR but ZAV will endeavour to accommodate Zoroastrian guests with Zoroastrian host families in Melbourne.

Detailed Information: Refer to websites www.zav.org.au
www.parliamentofreligions2009.org

ZAV's Open Invitation: We the Zoroastrians of Victoria open up our hearts and homes to all Zoroastrians of the world, to visit our beautiful country, enjoy our open hospitality and take pride in our glorious heritage.

Correspondence:

PWR Coordinating Committee,
Zoroastrian Association of Victoria Inc.
PO Box 807, Kew, 3101, Victoria, Australia
Email: pwr@zav.org.au



Frontcover Zarathushtra edited from Fram Petit photograph



ZOROASTRIAN

ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA INC.

***Oh ye, coming to seek knowledge,
now shall I proclaim to you the messages of the Wise Creator,***

***The hymns unto Ahura and the prayer offerings of
the Good Mind,***

***The enduring truth and the glorious vision of
the Heavenly Light attainable through Truth sublime.
[Ha 30.1]***

Fellow Zarathushtis,

A unique opportunity has presented itself to us to proclaim the messages, the teachings and Truth of Zarathushtra to a world that comes seeking knowledge.

From the 3rd to the 9th of December 2009, the Parliament of the World's Religions will be held in Melbourne, Australia. The Parliament represents the world's largest interreligious gathering, with religious leaders and thinkers from over 80 nations congregating in one place at one time to seek an understanding and knowledge of different faiths.

Given the Parliament's unique ambition to:
"Make a World of Difference, Hearing each other, Healing the earth"
the Zoroastrian Association of Victoria believes this to be an ideal forum in which to reveal to the world, the Spiritual Splendour of Zarathushtra.

It is our intention to share with the world the depth, the wisdom and the spiritual beauty of the Gathas. To reveal the thinking and foresight that shaped all religions to come.

***And grant, O Mazda, Sovereign Lord,
that reciting Thy holy words of revelation,
I may make Thy felicitous message heard.
[Ha 28.7]***

It is with great pleasure that we invite Zarathushtis all over the world to join as one in making His Message heard. Let's put aside the tiny differences that may divide us and show the world our united faith in our extraordinary religion.

We would be delighted if you could make the time to join us in Melbourne and participate in the Parliament in person. More so, we invite all scholars, thinkers, students and artists to send us their writings, their dissertations, their thoughts, their insights and their art on the vision of Zarathushtra as revealed in the Gathas.

Together, let us share with the world the splendour of a wisdom that precedes all others.

***As long as I have power and strength,
I shall teach all to seek for Truth and Right.
[Ha 28.4]***

Over the course of several programs, symposia, performance and exhibits let us help each other, source the wisdom that would grant us all Divine Peace. This should be our undertaking as much as it was Zarathushtra's mission.

Some of our ideas in the pipeline include:

- A rotating Jashan, starting in the Far East and round the world over a 24 hour period.
- An Ahunavar mantra day – consider the powerful impact on the Universe of the collective chanting of this our most potent mantra!
- A musical dream-dance presentation of a vision of Zarathushtra's ancient message to the modern world.

We, the few Zarathushtis of Victoria, Australia invite one and all to come join us in Melbourne, as one community one single minded people and reveal to the world, the Spiritual Splendour of Zarathushtra.



Calendar of Festivals

Calendar of Festivities September 2008 to March 2009

Fravardian Jashan <i>Mah Fravardin, Roz Fravardin</i>	Thurs, Aug 7 Sat, Sep 6	(K) (S)
Maidyozarem Gahambar <i>Mah Ardibehesht, Roz Khorshed-Daepmeher</i>	Friday, Aug 29 - Tues Sept 2 Sun, Sep 28 - Thur, Oct 02	(K) (S)
Paitishem Gahambar <i>Mah Sheherevar, Roz Ashtad Aneran</i>	Frid, Sep 12- Tues, Sep 16	(F)
Jashne-Mehergan <i>Mah Meher, Roz Meher</i>	Thur, Oct 02	(F)
Ayathrem Gahambar <i>Mah Meher, Roz Ashtad-Aneran</i>	Sun, Oct 12-Thur, Oct 16	(F)
Jashne-Avangan(Avan Ardivisur Parab) <i>Mah Avan, Roz Avan</i>	Sun, Oct 26	(F)
Maidyoshem Gahambar <i>Mah Tir, Roz Khorshed-Daepmeher</i>	Tues, Oct 28 - Sat, Nov. 01 Thurs, Nov 27- Mon, Dec 01	(K) (S)
Jashne-Adargan <i>Mah Adar, Roz Adar</i>	Mon, Nov 24	(F)
Death Anniversary of Zarathushtra <i>Mah Dae, Roz Khorshed</i>	Fri, Dec 26	(F)
Maidhyarem Gahambar <i>Mah Dae, Roz Meher-Bahram</i>	Wed, Dec 31-Sun, Jan 04	(F)
Jashne Daegan <i>Mah Dae, Roz Daepdin</i>	Wed, Jan 07	(F)
Jashne Bahmangan <i>Mah Bahman, Roz Bahman</i>	Fri, Jan 16	(F)
Paitishem Gahambar <i>Mah Sheherevar, Roz Ashtad-Aneran</i>	Sun, Jan 11 - Thur, Jan 15 Tue, Feb 10 - Sat, Feb 14	(K) (S)
Jashne Sadeh <i>Mah Bahman, Roz Meher</i>	Fri, Jan 30	(F)
Ayatherem Gahambar <i>Mah Meher, Roz Ashtad-Aneran</i>	Tue, Feb 10-Sat, Feb 14 Thu, Mar 12 - Mon, Mar 16	(K) (S)
Fravardegan/Panjeh/Hamaspathmedayem Gahambar <i>Five Gatha days</i>	Mon, Mar 16-Fri, Mar 20	(F)
Char-Shanbe-Soori (Heralding the New Year) <i>Tuesday Prior to NauRooz</i>	Tues, Mar 17	(F)
NauRooz or Jamshedi NauRooz (New Year) <i>Mah Fravardin, Roz Hormazd</i>	Sat, Mar 21	(F)

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

THE REAL NOU ROUZ

WILL BE IN CHICAGO IN 2009

At SUN RISE

Have you ever thought why we call our New Year **NEW DAY** (Nou = New and Rouz = Day).

DO YOU KNOW?

That Nou Rouz is the only scientific New Year celebrated in the world today.

That Nou Rouz automatically takes care of the leap year.

That all over the world Nou Rouz is ushered in at the same moment in time.

That the Nou Rouz table has seven items and the bas relief at Takht e Jamshid show groups of seven people carrying gifts for the king.

That Zarathushtra had coined the word Nou Rouz and Nim Rouz to record two scientific events in nature.

That in Afghanistan the location designated by Zarathushtra as Nim Rouz is still called by the same name.

That the real Nou Rouz occurs at the location where the Equinox coincides with the Sun Rise.

That in 487 BCE Equinox and Sun Rise coincided at Takht e Jamshid and was observed by placing a square stone in the Apadana palace where at the moment of the equinox the first rays of the rising sun fell on that stone.

THAT ON THE NOU ROUZ OF 2009 THIS PHENOMENON WILL OCCUR IN THE VICINITY OF CHICAGO, INDIANPOLIS, LOUISVILLE KENTUCKY, AND ALL ALONG 86 DEGREES LONGITUDE WHERE THE SUN WILL RISE AT THE TIME OF THE EQUINOX.

Let's get together in CHICAGO and observe the REAL NOU ROUZ (2009) at Sun Rise The way Zarathushtra saw it happen near Lake Hamoun and coined the word

NOU ROUZ Visit the NOU ROUZ page at www.ancientiran.com

Bomi Patel, FEZANA President announced the appointment of Mrs Aban Rustomji (ZAH) as the Chair of the FEZANA Resource Center Working Group. This Working Group is mandated to help FEZANA establish the first FEZANA Resource Center in Houston, Texas. If you wish to serve on this working group send your e-mail request to admin@fezana.org



COMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER 2008 SOCIETY OF SCHOLARS OF ZOROASTRIANISM

3rd annual conference of the Society of Scholars of Zoroastrianism, November 21-23 2008 in Chicago. Contact kerfegar@aol.com

NOVEMBER 2008 UNITED RELIGIONS INITIATIVE- GLOBAL ASSEMBLY

Pilgrims for Peace : Many paths, one purpose. November 30-December 5, 2008 at Mayapur, West Bengal, India visit www.globalassembly.org

NOVEMBER 2008. OPERATION EYESIGHT

Team flying to Colombia, South America, Thanksgiving week, November 2008.

Contact: Khushroo Bodhan kbodhan@gemsedi.com,
[See FEZANA Journal Vol 21 No. 1 Spring 2007]

DECEMBER 2008, WORLD ZARATHUSHTI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Annual WZCC Global meeting at Zarathushti Heritage and Cultural Centre, Houston, December 28-January 1, 2009. Contact Houston Chapter Chair behrozepersonal@yahoo.com

DECEMBER 2008, COMING TOGETHER ROUND TABLE

A Round Table scheduled at Zarathushti Heritage and Cultural Centre, Houston on December 31, 2008 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in conjunction with WZCC 2008 AGM. Contact rivetna@aol.com for roundtable program

JANUARY 2009. 7th PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIVAS

Engaging the Diaspora : The way forward, at Chennai Trade Centre, January 7-9, 2009 Register on-line www.pbdindia.org

MARCH 2009. 3rd Annual Khorshed Jungalwalla Memorial Lecture

Khorshed Jungalwalla Memorial Lecture, co-sponsored by FEZANA, ZSO, WZO, March 29, 2009 at Toronto. (See page 9)

MAY 2009 FEZANA AGM, ORLANDO

The Annual General Meeting will be held May 22-24, 2009 hosted by Central Florida Group. Co-ordinator Dinyar Mehta, dinyarmehta@aol.com

JUNE 2009 NAIN CONNECT 2009

North American Interfaith Network - June 25-28, 2009 in Kansas City (Unity Village), Missouri
Experiencing the Spirit in Education: NAIN Connect 2009
<http://www.nain.org/>



SEPTEMBER 2009, 62nd Annual DPI/NGO Conference

62nd Annual DPI/NGO Conference organized by the United Nations, Mexico City, September 9-11, 2009

SEPTEMBER 2009, UNITY WALK, WASHINGTON, DC

Unity walk on September 13, 2009 on Embassy Row (Massachusetts Av NW) 2.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. Tool kits available for congregations willing to organize unity walks in their own cities.
www.911unitywalk.org

DECEMBER 2009 WORLD CONGRESS, DUBAI.

9th World Zoroastrian Congress "Unity Through the Sands of Time" to be held in Dubai, December 28-31, 2009. Contact meher_bhesania@hotmail.com



DECEMBER 2009 PARLIAMENT OF THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

The 2009 Parliament Embracing Difference, Transforming the world. will be an international inter religious gathering spanning seven nights and six days – from December 3rd to 9th - bringing together an estimated 8,000 to 12,000 persons. Visit: <http://www.cpwr.org/index.html>



CORRECTION Page 54 VOL 22 No 3 Green Rule Poster
Website address should read www.faith-commongood.net



BPP ELECTIONS 2008: Pulse of the Parsis

A People's Punchayat -- the first in the Parsi community.

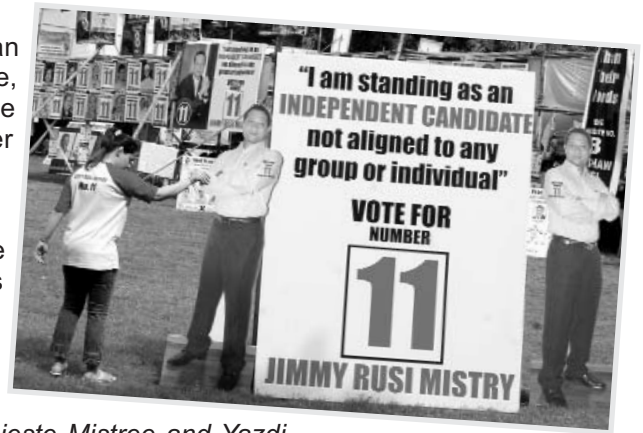
Shernaaz Engineer

If one had to liken the recent *BPP (Bombay Parsi Punchayet)* Elections to something it would be, paradoxically, to a fairy tale where, despite the trials and tribulations, the villains and their manipulations, eventually there was a happy ending, with the resurrection of many fallen heroes!

Well, the election jamboree was a rollercoaster of undulating emotions – tumult, excitement, anticipation, animosity and angst. The first-ever Universal Adult Franchise was set into motion, amidst quite some commotion.

The run-up to the election proved more combative than anybody expected. The electorate was hijacked into war zone, with rivals battering each other viciously, without decorum. The rampant manipulation of the Parsi press was actually rather revolting to most readers.

However, the results proved unequivocally that the community's mandate was mature. *Dinshaw Mehta*, who was unanimously appointed Chairman of the BPP, and was affiliated with the *WAPIZ (World Alliance of Parsi Irani Zarathushtis)* panel, as well as his close associate and former BPP Trustee, *Rustom Tirandaz (who contested as an Independent)*, were re-elected. There was victory for WAPIZ with two stalwarts, *Khojeste Mistree and Yazdi Desai*, making it to the Punchayet. *Arnavaz Mistry* (who polled the highest number of votes) and *Jimmy Mistry* (the youngest Trustee), were the other two Independents who won. *Noshir Dadrawala*, of the *AFP (Adult Franchise for Progress)*, became the seventh Trustee.



The 'traditional' faction of the community has scored a considerable lead in this election, leaving the 'reformists' trailing. In this respect, the Parsi community is much like the rest of India, which while restless for progress in every other area, is traditional when it comes to values, religion, and the preservation of our unique identity. Hence, it was not surprising that the traditionalists struck a chord when they cautioned against inter-marriage, conversion, cremation and such issues, and rallied the community around the fulcrum of unity, preservation and tradition, despite the unrelenting propaganda in the Parsi press against the traditionalists.



Not coincidentally, all the seven elected Trustees confess to traditionalist leanings and have a track record of community service, making it a remarkably cohesive and like-minded group. *Dinshaw Mehta*, the only sitting Trustee to be re-elected, has long been admired for his involvement with the rank and file of the community. *Arnavaz Mistry (photo left)* is a reputed social worker, held in high esteem for her selfless service to the ailing and aged. *Jimmy Mistry's Parsi Resource Group (PRG)* has several commendable initiatives to its credit. *Rustom Tirandaz* has been in public life for 41 years, several of which have been spent at the BPP in his earlier stint as a Trustee. *Noshir Dadarawala* is a charity expert, advisor to several Zoroastrian trusts, and a renowned writer with a deep understanding of the faith. And *Khojeste Mistree and Yazdi Desai* are both Founder-Trustees of WAPIZ, who have blazed a trail with their activism and advocacy in the service of upholding Zarathushti welfare projects, heritage and the religion.

In all, 32 candidates contested. There was the illustrious *AFP-7 panel*, comprising *Nadir Modi, Noshir Dadrawala, Dr. Ketayun Dinshaw, Keki Mistry, Manchi Cama, Byram Jeejeebhoy and Manek Engineer*. *Dinshaw Mehta* was in alliance with the four-member WAPIZ team, and the rest were independents.



BPP ELECTIONS 2008: Pulse of the Parsis

By the time dusk fell over the Dadar Parsi Colony on Sunday, October 19, some 13,500 Parsi/Irani Zarathushtis had cast their votes at six centres, where the BPP election was conducted over three weekends starting October 4 (all the way from South Mumbai to the suburbs – Khareghat Colony, Rustom Baug, Cusrow Baug, Bharucha Baug, the BPP Fort office and Dadar Gymkhana). From a total of approximately 27,000 registrations, making allowances for some duplications and migrations, a ball-park fifty per cent turn out ratio showed the involvement of the Parsi electorate in the polls.



The election was presided over by *Rustom Hormazdiyar*, and counting was done electronically, with the results being simultaneously relayed on large flat-screens. The Banaji Atash Behram Hall was buzzing for four days as the results were being toted up, and daily fluctuations in fortune were limited only to the last two places. 1 – 5 were static from day one, in the following order: Arnavaz Mistry, Dinshaw Mehta, Jimmy Mistry, Khojeste Mistree, Yazdi Desai. While Rustom Tirandaz and Noshir Dadrawala finally came through, one also saw the WAPIZ team's Bomi Kavina and Shirin Choksey, and the AFP's Dr. Ketayun Dinshaw making it to the 'top seven' on and off.



All the candidates were totally in the swing of campaigning until the last minute, including at the voting venue. Even as you stepped in to cast your vote, candidates came up and pleaded their case! The 'baugs' were strewn with banners and buntings, and the pre-election campaign meetings with food packets and glitzy presentations, costing a huge amount of money, raised several brows.

The question now arises: will these elections really give the community what it needs?



Chairman Dinshaw Mehta, (left bottom) upon assuming office said: "We have to look after our poor more effectively, we have to encourage marriages within the community and preserve our religion. And we need to increase the BPP corpus."

Jimmy Mistry stressed, "I desperately want to bring change into the community. We have to affect social uplift. However, I'm completely orthodox and do not support change

within the religion. We have no right to change anything that has been part of our religion/rituals for hundreds of years. I am totally opposed to a 'Cremate Ni Bunglee' at Doongerwadi."

Several such contentious issues are bound to arise. However, the first meeting of the new Board, on October 23, did bode well! The team was reassuringly cordial, with all seven members committing to work together. It is all the more incumbent on Chairman Dinshaw Mehta and his newly-elected Trustees to uphold the faith the electorate has placed

Shernaaz Engineer got her big break in journalism with the late Behram Contractor at 'The Afternoon Despatch & Courier'. Subsequently she won a prestigious US fellowship to various universities across North America, as part of an international study group on women's rights. She currently freelances for several premium publications like 'Verve', 'Beautiful People', 'Hi Blitz', 'Global Gujarati' (G2), 'The Taj Magazine', 'Reader's Digest', 'The Sindhian', London's 'Asian Woman', 'Upper Crust', 'The Khaleej Times' (Dubai) etc. She is Consulting Editor with the 'Free Press Journal' and 'The Afternoon Despatch & Courier'.

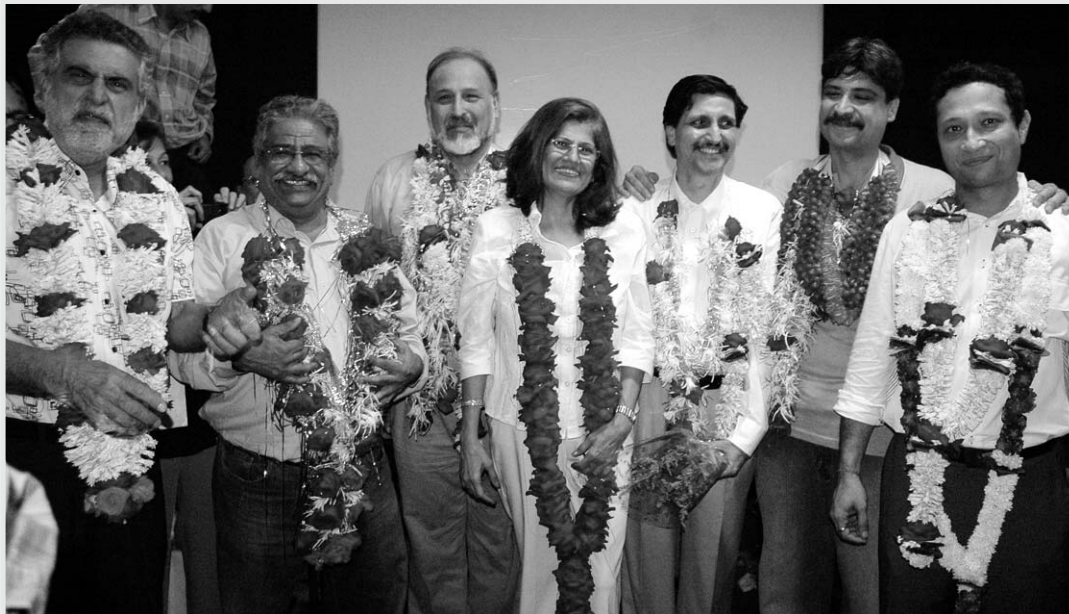




BPP ELECTIONS 2008: Pulse of the Parsis

in them, and ensure effective teamwork, as they now represent the people's mandate. For the first time in the Parsi community, this is a **People's PUNCHAYAT!**

THE JOURNAL CONGRATULATES ALL IN THE
PEOPLE'S PUNCHAYAT



From left Rustom Tirandaz, Dinshaw Mehta (Chairman) Khojeste Mistree, Arnavaz Mistry, Yezdi Desai, Noshir Dadrawala, Jimmy Mistry

Photographs courtesy The Afternoon Despatch & Courier, Mumbai

THE REAL NOU ROUZ TABLE

HAFT SEENE - THE SEVEN TRAYS THE ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY OF THE NOU ROUZ TABLE

Do you know that SHARAB (wine) is an Arabic word that the Persian words are MAI and BAADEH.

This by itself proves that the "Seen" and "Sheen" theory is a recent one. So what is the Real philosophy?

The form of the Nou Rouz table has evolved with time but what has remained constant is the figure Seven. We also see in the bas-relief at Takht e Jamshid - seven representatives of nations carrying Nou Rouz gifts for the king. Why Seven?

Seven represents the **"Seven Eternal Laws of Zarathushtra"** as enumerated in the Gathas.

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1-VOHU MANA - Good Mind - | Use your Good Mind to inquire and learn the |
| 2- ASHA VAHISTA | - The Ultimate Truth- the Laws of Nature- Use them to make |
| 3- KASH ATRA VAIRYA | - Good Rules - Good Laws- Good Guidance- Which will lead to |
| 4- SPENTA ARMAITY | - Lawful Desire - Righteousness - which will pave the way towards |
| 5- HURVATATA | - Perfection - Mental, Physical and Spiritual - which will lead to |
| 6- AMERETATA | - Immortality -a) Losing the fear of Death (b) being remembered for
your good work for generations-resulting in oneness with |
| 7- AHURA MAZDA | - The Creator of Wisdom - through Self Realization- KHOD=Self AH= to come. |

So the Seven items on the **Nou Rouz Table** are a reminder, our re-commitment to the Path shown by Zarathushtra. Students of Zarathushtra latter called it the **Amesha Spenta - the ETERNAL LAW** - much later under pagan influence they became *Angels, Bountiful Immortals, etc.* those trying to rescue it call it *"attributes of God"*. The 3 gifts that the Magi's gave to baby Jesus were the first three laws, which have to be achieved; the next 4 are the result of the first 3. It is the law followed by nature. A law to achieve perfection in what we do best and at the same time satisfies the spiritual urge through **Khod-Ah**.

For details visit the **NOU ROUZ** page at www.ancientiran.com



WHAT A SUCCESS!

Vahishta Canteenwalla

The Mama Parsi Girls' Secondary School, North American Reunion, to celebrate the 90th Anniversary of the School, was a huge, unqualified success. It was held in Houston, Texas the weekend of October 10-12, 2008, and was attended by more than 100 alumni from all over the USA, Canada, India, Pakistan, Europe and Australia. The fact that we had such a good representation of our non-parsi alumni also from all over North America, was another factor in making this event very memorable.

It all started last year when *Nancy Yazdani (Bharucha)* and *Vahishta Canteenwalla (Bharucha)* thought that it would be fun to meet up with our classmates (class of 1970) since so many of us are in the USA and Canada. And it just took off from there!! After a brief debate regarding the location, it was decided to hold the event in Houston on the Canadian Thanksgiving weekend.

A committee was formed comprising of *Nancy Yazdani (Bharucha)*, *Villi Bhappu (Nanavati)*, *Vahishta Canteenwalla (Bharucha)*, *Beena Irshad (Binaifer Pardivala)*, *Abida Rawra (Sattar)*, *Hufriz Mavalvala (Mehta)*, *Mehra Hansotia (Khambatta)*, *Niloufer Hathiram (Pardivala)*, *Shirin Irani* and *Zeenia Fernandez (Canteenwalla)*

The Marriott Courtyard by the Galleria was the designated hotel for the weekend and some people had booked their rooms there giving them a chance to bond even more. The other attendees were all staying with their various Houston friends and families. We would like to thank all of them and also for driving us to the various events. *Kersi Engineer* for getting the ZAH hall set up and transporting people to the various events, *Fareedoon Bhader* and *Dilshad Karanjia (Patel)* for also helping in transporting the guests from the two Airports to the Marriott Hotel. *Ken Bhappu* did a lot of running around, getting the plaques, programs, driving, etc.

Our weekend started on Friday evening with a dinner for the alumni at *Bijan Iranian Restaurant*. They had blocked off their whole patio for us and everyone just could not stop talking. All the attendees were given their name tags and a tote bag with a Mama School t-shirt and a special directory/cook book to celebrate this special event. All the gifts were donated by various generous sponsors. The Iranian meal was delicious and the noise level was very high. Pictures were being snapped all around as people met after 30-40-50 years.

After dinner, the more energetic ladies were caught dancing the night away at the Status nightclub. Thanks to *Phiroozhy* and *Aspi Jamshedji* and their son *Arish* for inviting us to celebrate at Arish's posh club. The drinks flowed all night and we really appreciated seeing that part of the Houston night life – even though the other people in the club were younger than our kids!!

The next day we had our gala dinner at the ZAH Center. Committee members and friends, along with some very helpful husbands were at the hall in to set up and help decorate it. *Khursheed Challa (Tamboli)* did a great job on the flowers and decorations, *Sheroy Haveliwalla* in setting up the projector and video equipment, *Roshan Sethna* for being such a great MC and for keeping all the events on track.

The people sat according to their graduation year – giving them an opportunity to catch up with their classmates. It started with *Nancy Yazdani (Bharucha)* welcoming everyone and introducing the committee. *Nergish Jamasji (Lohar)* gave a speech as the representative from the school. The school had sent a



Class of 1960 above, and class of 1970 below
what a difference 10 years make !!!!



DVD video which was a very emotional experience for most present. It brought tears to our eyes to see and hear all our old teachers read out their messages to us, and to see the old building. Sure brought on a lot of old wonderful memories.



WHAT A SUCCESS!



In true Mama School fashion “Stars” were then given out to the youngest and the oldest alumni and to *Rupina Mody Prabhaker* and *Soonamai Rustomji Dessai* for their guidance and leadership in the Girl Guides Program. There was also a plaque given to *Nergish Jamasji*, from the Mama School Alumni of North America, to take back with her and present it to the school on their 90th anniversary. A couple of teachers then came up and regaled the crowd with their memories and stories of being teachers at our school. *Bapsi Sidhwa* also shared some of her old memories. Some of the alumni also shared their memories and experiences growing up as Mamaians.

The main door prize (which was the surprise feature of the evening), a return ticket from London to any destination on the Gulf Air route, was graciously donated by *Gulf Air Houston* through the efforts of *Qamar Irshad*. It was won by *Ruby Anklesaria (Navrosji) of Houston*.

Dinner was a delicious Indian buffet, with a cake, donated by *Nowshad Mehta* decorated in the 4 House logos, and the picture of the school on it.

And then started the music and the dancing – and the cameras snapping away.... left, right and center. You could tell that every one was having a really good time – it was a true celebration!

The next day a busload of tired, sleepy women went on a picnic. But sleep soon faded as we sang loudly (and badly) all the way. We did pity the poor bus driver. Lunch was arranged for us by *Adil Bharucha of Blimpie*. But the real excitement of the day – 2 hours of shopping at an outlet mall. Everyone made good use of their credit cards.

All in all it was an amazing weekend - so well planned that all we got were praises from everyone! We are also most grateful to all our sponsors for their generous donations towards the hall rental, the cookbook, the t-shirts, the bus, the prizes, etc. etc. We are also thankful to everyone who made the effort to join us from so many places to make this event such a success and celebrate the 90th Anniversary of our Alma Mater!

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL

Our school was established in 1918, thanks to the foresight of 3 generous families. Between the three of them they donated a princely sum of Rs. 510,000. The present building was completed in 1925. Till 1943 it was open to Zarathushti girls only. In 1944 it started taking in non-parsi students and even more so after 1947, at a request from Mr. Jinnah.

In 1964 they built a second floor to the original building to house the growing student body. The school was so popular that in 1975 they started an afternoon shift and in 1985 they also added a Cambridge Section. In 1991 another L shaped wing was added. The school has always had extremely dedicated female teachers, most of whom have made it their life's work. Since the past 90 years, the school has gone through only 6 Principals – all very dedicated women.

Every year they have a 100% pass rate for both the Matriculation and the Cambridge sections. Along with the academics, the school is also very involved in extra curricular activities like Literary, Art and Dramatic Activities, Debating, Sports, Excursions and Outings, The Red Crescent, The Girl Guides and The Mama Cadets Groups

The extremely strict discipline in the school, along with its teaching staff made it one of the top schools in Karachi. We had a very strict uniform code and almost nothing was allowed! No makeup, no jewels, no nail polish (nails had to be very short), no open hair – it had to be short or tied up only with a black ribbon, no henna, only black school shoes, only navy blue school cardigan (knit in only 1 pattern)! No allowance was made for anything. Every infraction brought about minus marks, which affected your House standing and was dreaded by one and all.

May we all get a chance to celebrate the 100th anniversary of our school in even greater numbers and splendour.

Photos courtesy Vahishta Canteenwalla

Vahishta Bharucha Canteenwalla followed in her mother's footsteps and attended Mama Parsi Girls' Secondary School from

1960-1970. She has been living in Montreal, Canada with her husband Jambi since 1975. She regrets the fact that her daughters did not have a school like hers to go to in Montreal.





ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF METROPOLITAN CHICAGO

Celebrated their Silver Jubilee on August 30, 2008 (1983-2008). A Three Day Extravaganza.

DAY ONE AUGUST 30th "Twenty five years ago, on September 3, 1983, after years of dreaming, fundraising and hard work, a determined group of Zarathushtis accomplished what at times, seemed to be the impossible –our Darbe Mehr was inaugurated. " So said the opening sentence of the 25th Anniversary Brochure of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago

Now 25 years later the Zarathushtis of Chicago, all dressed in their gorgeous traditional outfits proudly stood with their children and grandchildren in the very same hall, albeit with extensions, to celebrate the vision, commitment and dedication that brought the Darbe Mehr to life. The hall was lavishly and tastefully decorated in silver and gold with fresh flowers, all setting the tone for the three days of celebrations.



The evening was ably emceed by the Next Generation of *Katie Weber, Cyrus Rivetna, Zenobia Tantra, Karl Grant and Shazad Mehta*, and it opened with a gala jashan performed by 16 mobeds, with three father-son pairs. The mobeds who had performed the inaugural jashan in 1983 were all invited of which 4 from Houston, Toronto, Florida and New York traveled to Chicago. All the priests were introduced by *past president Dilshad Antia*.

The sermon of *Dastur Dr Kersey Antia* was followed by *Payameh Zarthosht* (Zarathushtra' message) sung by *Pari Zanganeh*, and then *America the Beautiful* sung by *Tina Siganporia*. The welcome address by *ZAC President Hosi P. Mehta* was followed by a welcome from *Bahram Farhadieh*, the first President of ZAC . A Multimedia presentation "Our Darbe

Mehr: The First 25 years " was very ably developed and narrated by *Bomi Damkevala*, past President of ZAC, featuring the highlights.

The Audiovisual Extravaganza " *Persian and Parsi Dress through the centuries* " was tastefully choreographed by *Aban Grant and Farida Sharyari* , narrated by *Houshmand Sharyari, Aban Grant and Rushna Patel*. The beautiful traditional dresses which included the "jublu" (embroidered garment for small children), garas, with long Sudras were modeled by *Zenobia Damania*, and her young son *Ness Damania*, *Neville Rustomji, Tinaz Jamsetjee, Jennifer Kavina, Tinaz Sevak, Persis Damkevala, Zarine Damkevala, Persis Driver, Parvine Mobed, Parvin Abadi, Arzan Lali, Dinsoo Rivetna, Yasmin Bhajiwalla*, and *Zenobia Tantra*.



There was no dearth of musical and dance talent as demonstrated in the *Hip Hop and Bollywood dance* by *Carmen Press and Tina Siganporia* and *Bhangra and Bollywood Dance Medley* by *Bakhtavar Press, Freya Dhunjisha and Delnaz Lali*.





From Left: Rohinton Rivetna, Bomi Patel, Firdosh Mehta, Framroze Patel, Nahid Dashtaki, Front Row: Zenobia Damania (Sitting), Dolly Dastoor and Rustom Kevala



A three tiered The Silver Jubilee Cake made by Roshan Rivetna (photo page 21) was cut by the past and current Presidents of ZAC to the delightful music provided by *Dr Adi Tamboli* on the keyboard. Chaiye Hame Zarthosti was sung by four generations of Chicago Zarathushtis led by *Bakhtaver Press*. A sumptuous Persian and Indian dinner followed by dancing to the music of DJ Mac brought the festivities of the first day to a close at midnight.

DAY TWO AUGUST 31st emceed by *Tina and Deepak Sevak*, started with a *Tribute to Arbab Guiv*, a song specially composed by the Chicago high priest *Dastur Dr Kersey Antia*, and beautifully sung by *Mani Rao*, to the

accompaniment of *Dr Adi Tamboli* on the keyboard. It was indeed a very heart warming tribute followed by a prayer invoking Divine Blessings for the Progress, Prosperity and Perpetuation of the Chicago community by Dastur Antia

The highlight of the second day was the inauguration of the FEZANA Office and the introduction of the first administrator *Zenobia Damania (née Rivetna)*. This was preceded by the introduction of FEZANA presidents, past and current by *Jim Engineer*. Each President reflected on souvenirs during their terms of office. The ribbon cutting was done to the singing of *Mubarak, Mubarak* by the ZAC choir led by *Freya Dhunjisha*.

Of course no true Zarathushti event would be complete without a lavish buffet of dishes prepared by members of ZAC.

The afternoon started by a panel presentation led by *Rohinton Rivetna* and *Hoshi Vazifdar* on *Vision and Goals for Zarathushtis in Chicago and North America for 2025*. The panelists *Rustom Kevala*, *Hosi Mehta*, *Bomi Patel*, *Rita Balaporia*, *Afshan Barshan* and *Roxanna Dubash* each presented their thoughts.



To offset the serious discussions of the panel, a hilarious Skit and Song written by *Aban Daboo* followed. The cast consisting of *Bomi Damkevala*, *Neville Karanjia*, *Minoo Press*, *Aban Daboo*, *Bachi Damkevala*, *Freya Dhunjisha*, *Mani Rao*, *Zarin Press* and *Zarin Karanjia* had the audience roaring with laughter. (see photo above)



And not to be outdone, the Next Generation of *Tinaz Sevak*, *Hoshi* and *Neville Vazifdar*, *Rita Balaporia* and *Shazad Mehta*, had prepared "Zeopardy". They worked very hard to come up with the game format and a side advantage was they learned a lot about ZAC history in the process. This "Made in ZAC", game-show was impressive and innovative to say the least. (See page 109)

The evening ended with a musical hour, (which became several hours) provided by *Maestro Adi Tamboli*. He regaled the audience non-stop with a medley of old and new classics, Indian and Western. (see Personal Profile page 112)

DAY THREE SEPTEMBER 1st A celebration of Zarathushti Business and Enterprise was sponsored by WZCC (Chicago Chapter) and ZAC. (see detailed report by Dr Yezdi Godivala on page 129)

Throughout the three days of festivities well-deserved tributes flowed lavishly for the yeoman services provided by *Rohinton* and *Roshan Rivetna* to the Chicago community and indeed to the entire Diaspora with their vision and their tenacity to turn that vision into a reality. The members of the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago outdid themselves in the execution of the activities for all three days with clock work precision and co-ordination. They demonstrated that they were up to meeting all challenges. They showed in those few days how they dealt with the



celebration of the life of their oldest member *Mr Rustom Billimoria*, who passed away at 97 years on the Friday before the silver jubilee, and also how they can celebrate 25 years of Darbe Meher life. All the funeral prayers were performed and members of the community participated without disrupting the planned event.

Co-Chairs for this gala event, Roshan Rivetna and Hosi Mehta need to be complemented for this function which was planned to the minutest details.

25 years ago I had participated in the inauguration ceremonies with my children and I was fortunate enough to participate 25 years later. Ahura Mazda willing I will be there at the 50 year celebrations, maybe in a wheel chair!!

Decorated Hall with
exquisite centrepieces



*Report by Dolly Dastoor,
Photos, Ervad Soli Dastur, Yezdi
Engineer, Dolly Dastoor*



Photos

- 1-Decorated hall with exquisite centrepieces
- 2-VP Dinaz Weber
- 3 Aban Daboo nad Dinoo Rivetna
- 4- Zarine Press, Aban Daboo, Roshan and Yezdi Engineer from Houston, Minoo Press, Aspy Daboo,
- 5-Roshan Patel wiht grandson Neville Rustomji
- 6- The Gara Girls



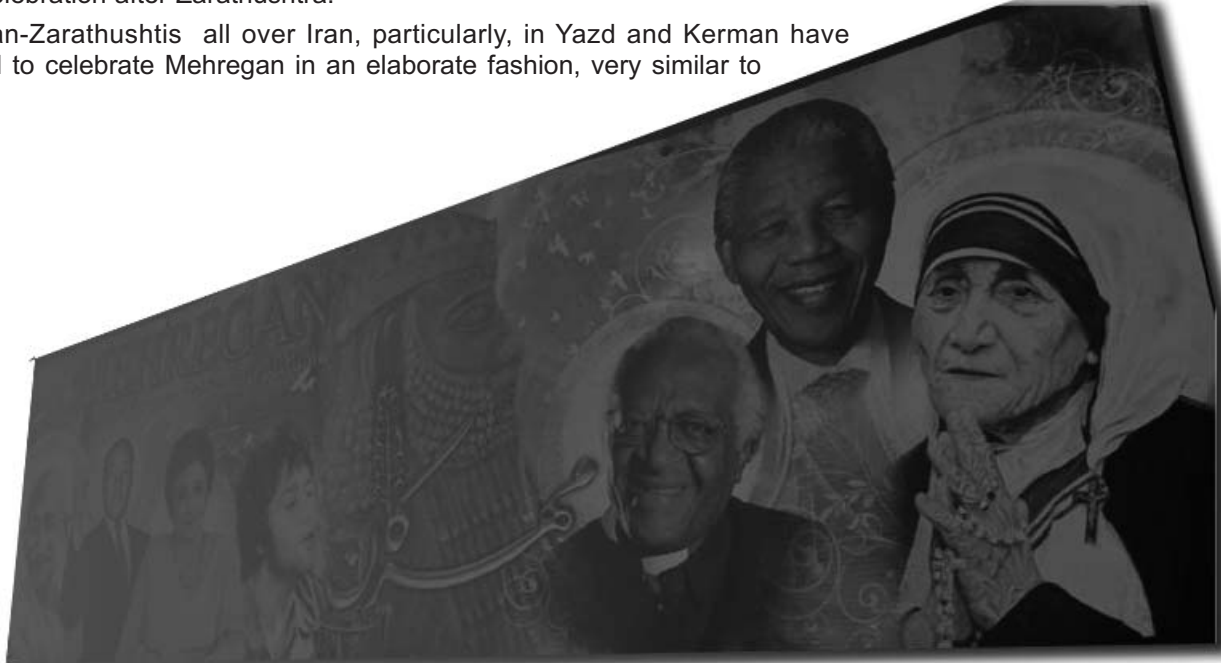


JOY OF MEHRGAN

Mehrgan - (also spelled Mehregan, Mihregan or Mehrigan) is the second most significant Persian (Iranian) festival after NoRooz dating back over 3000 years.

Although its origins are said to be pre-Zarathushtrian the festival became a major Zoroastrian-Iranian celebration after Zarathushtra.

Iranian-Zarathushtis all over Iran, particularly, in Yazd and Kerman have continued to celebrate Mehregan in an elaborate fashion, very similar to



Iranian Americans celebrated Mehrgan in S.. California by reaching out to civil society with a message of Peace and Harmony on Earth.

NoRooz, In recent years there has been a revival of this joyful and merry occasion, with more Iranians (non Zarathushtis) participating in this festival.

THE ORIGIN OF MEHRGAN

There are many accounts, legends & myths associated with the beginning of Mehrgan.



1. Broadly speaking, Avestan texts divide the Iranian year into two equal parts or seasons, *summer and winter*. The advent of each of the two seasons would be celebrated through, *NoRooz (spring equinox) and Mehrgan (autumn equinox)*. In the Zarathushti Religious Calendar, Mehrgan is celebrated on the *16th of the seventh month (Mehr)* at the time of the harvest festivals, and the beginning of winter. This feast would be celebrated for 6 days, starting on the *16th day called "Mehr Rooz" and ending on the 21st known as "Raam Rooz"*. The first day was called *"Mehregan'e Khord"* i.e. common or little Mehregan, and the last day *"Mehregan'e Bozorg"* i.e. great or greater Mehregan. In these days farmers take their harvest and they thank God for it and relax. Therefore, Mehrgan is also known as *Thanksgiving Festival*.
2. Some scholars believe Mehrgan should properly fall on the Autumn equinox (which is the 1st of the seventh Persian month i.e. Mehr), but it is usually celebrated on the name day of Mehr (16th day – Zarathushti religious calendar). One tends to agree with this logic of celebrating Mehrgan on the first day of Mehr, since it would ensure consistency with NoRooz, which is celebrated on the 1st of Farvardin (the first month in the Persian Solar or Fasli calendar) i.e. Spring equinox.
3. *Mehr day* is also mentioned as the day when the first male and female, *Mashi and Mashiani* were created from *Gayo-maretan* (a concept similar to Semitic Adam and Eve).
4. Legend has that *Fereydoon's victory over Azydahak ("Zahak" in Ferdowsi's Book of Kings)* happened on this day. Mehrgan is a day of victory when Angels helped Fereydoon and Kaveh become victorious over Zahak whom they imprisoned in the Damavand (Alborz) Mountains.
5. Some people believe that Mehrgan is the day God gave light to the world that had previously been dark. When the Indo-Europeans lived together (pre Zarathushti era), Mehr (or Mithra) was considered one of the great Gods of that time. After Zarathushtra, Mehr (Mithra) became an angel or what is called "ezad" (yazatas) i.e. similar to a



JOY OF MEHRGAN

"saint". The ancient Iranians thought Mehr was responsible for love and friendship, contracts and covenants, and a representation for light. Later, Mehr was considered as a symbol of the sun. And again, Mehr was considered to be a god of heroism and warfare. The Iranian soldiers were strong believers and had songs for Mehr.

It must be noted that, Zarathushtra advocated pure monotheism. The Gathas, which contain the very words of Zarathushtra composed in seventeen songs, refers only to Ahura Mazda i.e. the "Wise one". Ahura Mazda is the creator, sustainer and promoter of the universe. None of the gods of the old pantheon are mentioned in the Gathas (Songs.) Zarathushtis do not worship Mehr or Mithra.

Similar to NoRooz, it was customary for people to send or give their king, and each other gifts. Rich people usually gave gold and silver coins, heroes and warriors gave horses while others gave gifts according to their ability, even an apple. Those fortunate enough, would help the poor with gifts. After the Mongol invasion (circa 1219 CE), the feast celebration of Mehrgan lost its popularity. However, Zarathushtis of Yazd and Kerman continued to celebrate Mehregan in an extravagant way.

For this celebration, the participants wear new clothes and set a decorative, colorful table. The table is decorated with the Khordeh Avesta, and a mirror is placed on the table together with rose water, sweets, flowers, some times a scale for showing the equality of day and night. A burner is also part of the table setting for kondor (frankincense) and espond (wild rue) to be thrown on the flames.

Seven types of fruits are seen at the table, usually, pomegranate, apple, grape, pear, senjed (fruit of the lotus tree), quince and citron. There is also a mixture of special nuts at this table. There are some grains such as: peas, beans, lentils and chickling vetch to symbolize last year's harvest and next year's plan. During Mehrgan all families join together for observance and pray. Roast mutton and special cookies as well as other delicacies are special dishes of the day, which is distributed freely to all local people including the non-Zarathushtis.

At the sunlight of first day of festival people gather near the biggest spring of the village and pray for dearly departed. Then people go to village houses singing and dancing. The host of each house opens the house door for them and gives some nuts from the Mehrgan table. The collected nuts are taken to the temple in each village and given to the mobed or any other person who keeps the fire burning in the temple, requesting him to keep the fire burning until next year.

The greatest observance is the lighting of a huge bonfire outside of a temple just after the sunset. The rest of the days are spent feasting, praying, singing and dancing.

Source <http://www.oshihan.org>

VANCOUVER On 12th October 2008, *the Iranian Canadian Congress of BC* together with help of *O'Shihan Cultural Organization* celebrated *Mehrgan Music Festival* at Centennial Theatre in North Vancouver in the presence of an audience of more than 650 Persians and non-Persians

The traditional music of Baloochi, Kurdish, Lori (Bakhtiari) and Mazandarani was performed live by 4 groups.

A tribute to three distinguished cultural icons of Vancouver were made to *Professor Kaveh Farrokh*, the prominent historian of ancient Persian history and civilization, *Mr. Hooshang Sayhoon*, prominent architect and artist and *Dr.*

Mehraban Shahrvin, the editor/publisher of first Persian magazine in Vancouver.



WASHINGTON , DC On Sunday, Oct 5, 2008 Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington Inc (ZAMWI) celebrated Mehrgan in McLean, Virginia.. "The celebrations included a recital of Yatha Ahu Vayro, and Ashem Vohu prayers with every body holding hands, together with a Farsi and English explanation of Mehrgan festival". Said



JOY OF MEHRGAN

Ardeshir Bakhtiani, President ZAMWI. It was pot luck style event with most people contributing.

TORONTO, Zarathushtis in Toronto area gathered at the Arbab Rostam Guiv Dare Mehr and celebrated Mehrgan. The event was organized by Zoroastrian Society of Ontario (ZSO) with help from the Kanoun Council. (Photos right: Choir group headed by *Mr. Sharam Bastani* performed 4 songs including "Pire Sabze Chak Chaku". And girls from Avesta class reciting the Gathas in Farsi and English)

The Mehrgan program included prayers, choir group performance and various other entertaining programs. and a speech on the significance of Mehrgan given by *Mr. Bahram Bahrami*. After the programs everyone met each other and exchanged greeting before dancing away to the tune of the group "Faryad". *Mehrzaad Dehmiri*. **Source Rostom Shirmardin, WZNN**



Zor Society of Ontario



VIENNA , AUSTRIA

VIENNA , AUSTRIA On Oct. 4th, 2008,

a group of Zarathushtis, along with other Iranians, gathered at the *Iranian Youth School* in Vienna to celebrate Mehrgan. Iranian Youth School is where Persian language classes are held for Iranian students in Vienna. The Mehrgan program included traditional music, speeches on the origins of Mehrgan, dancing and various competitions.

Zarathushtis also celebrated Mehrgan on October 5th, 2008 by gathering outdoors at the mountainous area of Hellingstadt in Vienna. The program started with prayers and continued by talks on the history of Mehrgan, poetry, lunch and dessert and dancing to music.



STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN Zoroastrian Anjoman of Stockholms celebrated Mehrgan on October 18th 2008 from 5pm at: Jaktplan 4, Barkarby Centrum, Stockholm



The Joy of Mehrگان Festival



CALIFORNIA Network of *Iranian American Professionals of Orange County (NIPOC)* held a 2-day Mehragan Festival on October 11-12, 2008 at the Orange County Fair and Exposition Center in Costa Mesa, California.

NIPOC's Mehragan schedule included different cultural and entertainment programs performed on multiple stages simultaneously. Thousands of people from different ethnic groups and religions attend this 2-day event every year.

Source Rostam Shirmardian WZNN

www.wznn.org

Photos Shahram Moobed (Asha).

Celebrations in Iran



Celebrations in Shiraz



Tehran celebrations



Aahwaz celebrations



Kasnavieh celebrations



Isfahan celebrations



T ravel

THE ROLE OF TRAVEL IN ZARATHUSHTI HISTORY

Editorial Dinyar Patel



Travel has been something intimately bound up with the Zarathushti religion since its very origins. While the majority of articles covered in this edition of the FEZANA Journal deal with travel of a recreational nature, we must remember that travel has meant much more in Zarathushti history and has played a key role in the development of the modern Zarathushti community.



Dinyar Patel eating potato-stuffed bread at a railway station in Siberia

Most scholars now believe that our faith began in Central Asia: somewhere in these boundless steppes Zarathushtra sang his praises to Ahura Mazda and spread his new creed amongst the Iranians. Between the era of Zarathushtra (around 1000 B.C.) and the beginnings of the Achaemenian Empire (558-330 B.C.), the Zarathushti religion, as well as the Iranian people, somehow spread from the steppes onto the Iranian plateau. Here, we most likely have our first example of the great mobility of our religion. From Pars in southwest Iran, Cyrus the Great established the largest territorial empire that the world had seen to date. Zarathushtis carried their customs and practices to the fringes of this empire, as far afield as modern Bulgaria and Pakistan.

Travel for both empire and trade remained an essential feature of life for many ancient Persians. The Sasanians (226-651 A.D.) pushed the borders of Persian and Zarathushti influence further into regions such as Arabia, the Caucasus, and western India. Persian trading networks most likely extended even farther. Indeed, our earliest physical evidence of a Zarathushti community within the modern borders of India is not from Gujarat, but rather from Quilon in Kerala, where a copper plate dating from the ninth century lists several Zarathushti names.¹

The fall of the Sasanians and the advent of Islam in Iran resulted in a new dynamic: travel for religious preservation. Followers of the Zarathushti deen in Iran increasingly congregated around the isolated settlements of Yazd and Kerman, far from the new seats of Islamic authority. The most celebrated of these migrations was the Parsi flight to India. According to the Kisseh-e Sanjan ("Story of Sanjan"), written in Navsari in 1600, a band of Zarathushtis quit their homes in Khorasan, relocated to Hormuz at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, and finally decided to flee across the sea to Gujarat, where they were welcomed by a tolerant local king named Jadi Rana (two common dates for the arrival are 716 A.D. and 936 A.D.).

Thus began the Parsi community. From Sanjan, where the Kisseh locates the Zarathushti landing on Indian shores, the Parsis spread up and down the coast of Gujarat and prospered. The sacred fire of Iranshah traveled with the Parsis, as well: after a period of time in Sanjan, Parsis carried it first to the Bahrot caves (for safekeeping after their defeat in Sanjan against Muslim invaders), and then to Bansdah, Navsari, and finally Udvada.

In spite of the vast distance between central Iran and Gujarat, the two Zarathushti communities remained in periodic touch with one another. In 1478, a Parsi emissary, Nariman Hoshang, traveled to Iran in search of religious knowledge: the Parsis, long separated from many of their holy texts, sought to consult the religious authority of their Iranian brethren. Nariman's success inspired further missions to Iran. Over the next three centuries, Zarathushti emissaries journeyed between Kerman, Yazd, and Gujarat, transmitting religious knowledge to the Parsis through letters known as the Rivayats. The Rivayats served a crucial additional purpose: as increasing Muslim persecution further impoverished and whittled away the Iranian Zarathushti community, priests handed sacred documents to the Parsis for safekeeping.

T ravel

voyages of Parsi merchants were complemented by the steady trickle of Parsis from rural Gujarat southward to a major new urban center: Bombay. From Bombay, Parsis sought out new commercial and professional opportunities across India and the rest of the world, establishing a string of settlements in cities such as London, Aden, Rangoon, Hong Kong, and Shanghai.

After the shah of Iran released them from the crushing burden of the jiziya: tax (a special tax imposed on non-Muslims) in 1882, the Iranian Zarathushtis similarly began transforming into a highly successful merchant and professional community, migrating in increasing numbers to Tehran and traveling to Bombay for education. By the early 1900s, Jamshid Bahman Jamshidian presided over what was reputedly the largest commercial enterprise in Iran, with international branches in Baghdad, Bombay, Calcutta, and Paris.

Wealthy, successful Zarathushtis found increasing time and resources for travel for leisure. By the twentieth century, the Parsi elite in Bombay were spending vacations in places such as London and Switzerland. Long-distance bicycle expeditions became very popular amongst the Parsi youth. Beginning in 1924, Adi Hakim, Jal Bapasola and Rustom Bhumgara began a bicycle journey around the world that was to last four years² Other Parsis, interested in exploring their Persian heritage, traveled to Iran, while Iranian Zarathushtis, interested in interacting with their Indian brethren, frequently visited Bombay.

Finally, we arrive at the migrations in the late twentieth century that have produced a worldwide Zarathushti diaspora, including our community in North America. This diaspora is, nevertheless, sustained by journeys back to Iran, India, and Pakistan which help us stay in contact with our traditions and culture. Travel has, therefore, been an integral feature of Zarathushtis throughout our history. Articles in this edition of *FEZANA Journal* clearly show that this tradition of travel is alive and vibrant today.

Dinyar Patel is a Ph.D. candidate in modern Indian history at Harvard University. His research on Zarathushtis has included Mahatma Gandhi's relations with the Parsis, Parsi efforts to ameliorate the conditions of Iranian Zarathushtis in the late 1800s, and interactions between the Iranian Zarathushtis and Parsis in the early 1900s.

¹ Carlo Cereti, "Some Primary Sources on the Early History of the Parsis in India," in Fereydon Vahman and Claus V. Pedersen, eds., *Religious Texts in Iranian Languages* (Copenhagen: Royal Danish Academy of Science and Letters, 2007), pp. 211-12.

² See their travelogue, recently republished: *With Cyclists Around the World* (New Delhi: Roli, 2008).

By the 1800s, the Parsis of India were fast developing into a preeminent merchant community. Great Parsi merchants, such as Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy (1783-1859), traveled far afield to places such as China and England in search of commerce and trade. The overseas



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ADVENTURE TRAVEL
Editorial Jehangir Mehta



Adventure travel brings back memories of my early childhood when I cycled on an antiquated, non-geared, and heavy-frame Hero bicycle with my friends from Mumbai to Lonavala. It took us twelve hours to cover the 75 miles and the steep *ghat* section was a journey filled with anguish, pain and suffering. These kinds of adventures remain stuck in one's memory for a whole lifetime.

Adventure travel can be described as intentionally going beyond one's normal zone of comfort to seek life-changing and significant personal rewards and experiences. Adventure travel also means spending time in nature and learning about the many species of flora and fauna that abound in the world. For example, my walks through the last great temperate rain forests in Tasmania and in New Zealand were wonderful learning experiences about old growth forests and the variety of trees in them.

Jehangir on M.T. ISIS



Adventure travel takes many shapes and forms. Active adventure, as the name suggests, includes some level of physical fitness and includes trekking, cycling, climbing, rafting and kayaking. On the other extreme, mountaineering in Nepal, Tibet, Pakistan and South America is challenging, technically difficult and requires sustained commitment.



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Some adventure travel companies support charitable organizations. The Fred Hollows Foundation, for example, treats avoidable blindness in Nepal, Vietnam and Cambodia. Free The Bears Fund is used to help prevent the insufferable cruelty to captive bears in parts of Southeast Asia and also helps rehabilitate bears. Some individuals also participate in community project travel, spending three to five days of their holidays participating in local health, educational or environmental projects.

Finally, if your style of travel is less active and you would prefer more creature comforts, there are many travel companies to cater to your needs. I would recommend an overnight cruise on the Doubtful Sound in New Zealand, where one can experience tranquility and nature in its most pristine and peaceful forms.

I hope that after reading through the travel section of *FEZANA Journal* you will be inspired to visit new regions of the world. I thank the editorial board of the *FEZANA Journal* for selecting me as their guest editor and I wish everyone happy and safe travels.



T ravel

WORLD TRAVEL



EVEREST BASE CAMP TAKES MY BREATH AWAY - A DREAM FULFILLED

Jehangir Mehta

Trekking in the Himalayas provided me with my ultimate challenge. My journey in 2002 the international year of the Mountains, to Everest Base Camp, in Nepal convinced me that faith and trust in one's self can help achieve any goal.

The trek to Everest Base camp is fraught with difficulties, mostly because of the high altitude. However, I only became fully aware of the dangers of altitude sickness while deep into fitness training at home in Perth. An average of three trekkers die each year of altitude sickness in Nepal despite the fact that we now thoroughly understand the condition. As a result, I carefully planned my trekking strategy before leaving.

Nevertheless, by the time I departed for *Kathmandu*, my beloved wife had spent several sleepless nights thinking about what lay ahead for me. Her worries stemmed from my rather hurried and haphazard fitness training regimen: too little, too late!



Nepal's trekking business has plunged approximately fifty percent since the beginning of the Maoist insurgency and the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. But this downturn guaranteed quieter trails and lodges for me. My guide, Phuri Sherpa, and my porter, Basant Rai, were my constant companions and we were like family almost from the very beginning.

Our 14-day trek began in *Lukla*, in eastern Nepal, and continued past fascinating mountain villages and Tibetan monasteries. In preparation for our hike to Everest Base Camp, we ascended to Kala Patthar at 5545 meters (18400 feet) for the most impressive views of Mount Everest. (see photo above).

The sky's the limit in Nepal, but the thin air makes it a specialist sport for experienced climbers. Everest expeditions are in a league of their own, necessitating quick acclimatization and technical expertise. Reaching Base Camp required trekking up to seven hours a day, resulting in total exhaustion at times. During especially steep segments, rest breaks every few feet became a necessity. At these altitudes, there is only half the amount of oxygen that there is at sea level. There were times when I wanted to give up and turn around but my determination kept pulling me forward.

The flight from Kathmandu to Lukla was an incredible experience. At times the pilots flew us through mountain passes with maybe 150 feet of clearance on each side of the plane. While straining to see the landing area through the cockpit, I noticed that there was a steep hillside at the other end. If the pilot blew this one, I knew there would be no second chance. When we finally landed and came to a stop, there was only twenty feet of runway to spare. It is no wonder that pilots here use STOL (short take-off and landing) aircraft.

Our route to *Namche Bazaar* took us around the sheer drops of the *Dudh Kosi River* valley, which are rather disquieting in a few places if one does not like heights. Namche Bazaar is the most prosperous and largest village in the Khumbu region, where traders from Tibet come to sell their salt, wood, dried meat and religious art. It is like a mini-Kathmandu. The Sherpa village of Khumjung boasts the first school started by Sir Edmund Hillary in 1961.

We traversed beautiful fir, juniper and rhododendron forests in *Sagarmatha National Park* on our way to *Tengboche*, the most important Tibetan monastery in Nepal. While gradually gaining altitude we arrived at Dingboche (14300 feet) where we rested for an extra day to acclimatize and took a side trip to Chukung and Island Peak.



T ravel

WORLD TRAVEL



Our next stop was at Thukla where I woke up struggling for breath a couple of times during the night. There is not much air here, especially when there is a smoky yak-dung fire smoldering in a hut with no chimney! After Thukla we climbed up to Lobuche (16175 feet) and Gorakshep. We traveled

along the lateral moraine of the Khumbu Glacier and hiked up to Kala Patthar (18400 feet) for breathtaking views of Everest, Nuptse, Lhotse, Pumori, and countless other beautiful peaks. Below us was the site of the Everest Base Camp, home to all expeditions climbing the traditional South Col route to the highest summit on Earth.

From this vantage point we had good views of the infamous Khumbu Icefall and the Western Cwm a glacial valley beneath Lhotse. The huge tottering ice blocks or seracs that form the Khumbu Icefall can break off at any moment and without warning. Therefore, traversing the Icefall is like playing Russian roulette and more climbers have died in here than on any other single part of Everest.

Our trek was not entirely without its fair share of experiences and triumphs. The daily roar of a passing helicopter would signal an evacuation of some trekker suffering from acute mountain sickness (AMS) somewhere on a higher trek. On another occasion we heard about a German trekker who had fallen fifty meters on Island Peak, sustaining severe head injuries. I contracted altitude sickness twice on the trek with debilitating headaches and loss of appetite. My porter developed high altitude pulmonary edema (HAPE) and had to be carried down on shoulder and then by yak with a supplementary oxygen cylinder. Yet, he recovered within two days and re-joined us.

In addition to headaches is the constant urge to go to the toilet. This is a sign that one's body is acclimatizing. Still, it is not an enjoyable experience when, at 3AM, one has to get out of one's sleeping bag, put on all one's clothes, and go outside in temperatures well below zero degrees to some of the most disgusting toilets on the planet. Sometimes I had to do this ritual three times in a night. Of course, if one stayed at higher altitudes for six weeks, as the climbers do, one's body would eventually acclimatize. Given a choice between suffering for a few days and staying here for six weeks, I would take the suffering. Everest Base Camp is not your typical vacation paradise.

My journey to Everest Base Camp started as a simple 14-day trek. But who knew that it would be so hard to get there, involving day after day of trekking with no end in sight, cold nights huddled around the yak-dung stove, mouthing down *dhal bhat* (rice with lentils) and drinking lemon tea. All told, I spent about two hours on top of Kala Patthar viewing Everest or Sagarmatha as the Nepalis affectionately call it. Yet it was worth every step. The satisfaction that came with making it there cannot be understated.

I felt rejuvenated both physically and mentally. But at the end of it all I simply could not wait to return to Kathmandu for a well-deserved rest, including enjoying the comforts we take for granted so often, such as a daily shower, a warm bed that isn't a sleeping bag and —the most coveted treasure—a non-smelly toilet that is more than a hole in the dirt. But none of this would deter me from doing it all over again in the Himalayas.

Now that I am home in Perth, having shared some teary moments with my guide, porter and friends at Kathmandu airport upon departure, my urge to return to Himalayas has increased. And that means more sleepless nights for my wife!



Jehangir Mehta was born in Sholapur, India, and grew up in Dadar Parsi colony Mumbai.

After serving as ships officer and Captain- he migrated with his wife Phyrooza to Perth, Western Australia (WA) in 1989. He is now semi-retired and does marine consulting and marine piloting for offshore oil tankers at the oil and gas fields in NW shelf and Timor Sea.

He was the president of the Zoroastrian Association of Western Australia (ZAWA). He has served with the Red Cross, Silver Chain Meals on Wheels and now volunteers with The Red Cross in WA in the area of emergency services providing personal support to people affected by a disaster. His special interests are trekking, adventure travel, social work and volunteering.



T ravel

"Go South "

The IAE 4 Expedition Story

Nauzer Batlivala



Go south to a place which belongs to no nation, that is frozen in time, where the wind howls at speeds of up to 300 kms/hour, where rain rarely falls and yet 70 percent of the earth's fresh water supply lies locked in shelves of ice. This is Antarctica, the loneliest, coldest, driest place on earth, once part of the same super-continent, Gondwana, which included India.

This is the Antarctica that the International Antarctic Expedition 4 visited in the first half of March 2006. The IAE 4 comprised of about 50 members from different countries and included corporate executives, businessmen, youth leaders and students. This diverse group of people set off on a voyage of discovery to the last great wilderness on earth.

After meeting in Buenos Aires, Argentina, we flew down to Ushuaia, the southernmost city in the world, located on the Beagle Channel. Here, we boarded the *M.V. Ushuaia*, which was to be our home during our journey to the frozen continent.

Our 633 nautical mile journey traversed the Drake Passage, one of the roughest straits of all the oceans in the world. Seasickness in some form or another affected at least 75 percent of our team. We plodded on gamely looking forward to the sight of our first iceberg, a sight that would most likely stay with us forever.

When we finally reached the relative safety of our first Antarctic destination, we learned that a blizzard with a wind speed of 70 knots had demolished the tents which had been erected for our stay at Bellingshausen Russian Antarctic Base on King George Island. We had been warned by the expedition leader, Professor Robert Swan, O.B.E. that the Antarctic was a beautiful but unforgiving place where weather conditions can change in the blink of an eye. How true this was.

Robert Swan has cemented his place in history being the first man to walk unassisted to both the South and North poles. These epic journeys made Robert Swan realize man's deleterious impact on the environment. After these journeys, he founded an international project, Mission Antarctica 2041, to educate and raise awareness about the



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continent amongst business leaders, environmental leaders, and the youth. In January 2002, Mission Antarctica conducted the cleanup and recycling of 1000 tons of metal and barrel waste from Bellingshausen Russian Antarctic Base. The cleanup was so successful that there is



now abundance of seals and penguins roaming freely on the beach.

Our next port of call was a natural harbor on the Antarctic mainland called Hope Bay: where there is an Argentinean research base called Esperanza. Here, we experienced firsthand the impact of global warming as our ship started getting closed in by icebergs that had broken off from the Larsen B Ice Shelf. To avoid a potentially dangerous situation, the captain turned back the ship.

Whalers Bay on Deception Island was where we headed to next. As its name suggests, this had been a whaling station where in the last century there had been indiscriminate and widespread hunting and killing of thousands of whales, seals and penguins for oil and meat. These species nearly became extinct. However, falling whale oil prices and the intervention of Mother Nature has led to the gradual recovery of whale and other wildlife populations on and around the island. Today, all that is left of the station are gigantic whale oil storage tanks and massive whale bones—symbols preserved as a testament to man's greed.

Pendulum Cove on Deception Island is a beach where only the bravest would dare venture for a lifelong memory—a swim in the Antarctic region. I was the first one in the water and I had told the expedition leader Robert Swan that I wanted to be the first one in. He had it announced on the tannoy of the boat. The water was cold and the wind even colder, but as they say—you have only one life; live it to the fullest. Magical and unexpected is what I would call a swim in the Antarctic.

We finally hit the Antarctic mainland at Neko Bay after crossing the Errera Channel where the first of many Gentoo penguin rookeries awaited us. These flightless birds are a treat to watch, their curiosity about us greater than their fear. They are clumsy on land—often causing us to laugh—but in the water they are in their element. The rules governing wildlife in Antarctica state that a penguin can interact with you but you cannot; these birds have to preserve their wild instincts and not lose their fear of man.

Paradise Bay near Almirante Brown Station came next, where we walked up to a vantage point on the island followed by a tour on a Zodiac, an inflatable vessel used for rapid transportation between shore and ship. We sighted our first Minke whales. These gentle giants love to interact with humans: a Minke passed right underneath our Zodiac. It could easily have flipped the inflatable boat over with a lazy flick of its tail.

The so-called iceberg graveyard was next on our list—a place where icebergs which have formed over millennia float into an alley of oblivion and slow death. Seeing these icebergs—of various shapes and sizes, textures and colors ranging from green to different shades of azure and blue—filled us with awe. They say beauty lies but in the eyes of the beholder but all who were present would agree that very little more can now cause us to gasp and stare with boundless wonder than these wonders of nature.

We next traveled to Cuverville Island penguin rookery. Here, the Gentoo penguins showed great interest in my orange Gore-Tex trousers since they are the same color as their favorite food, krill. Krill is fast disappearing due to global warming and the subsequent melting of the ice caps. This has a cascading effect on the chances of survival of the other species which depend directly or indirectly on it for survival.

Our last ports of call before heading back to Ushuaia were Danko and Petermann islands where changes in the environment have depleted penguin rookeries. Some penguin species, especially the Adeline, are being displaced by Chinstraps and Gentoos. Two vascular plant species, Antarctic grass (*Deschampsia Antarctica*) and pearlwort (*Colobanthus quitensis*), are now spreading on the island, which is perhaps a major indication of climate change.

Our team, which included people from different cultures and walks of life, returned to Ushuaia convinced of the need to preserve Antarctica and also to mobilize public opinion and awareness: the Antarctic Treaty, which sets aside the continent as a scientific preserve, is due for renewal in 2041.

For it is only in the preservation of Antarctica that we can save the one great wilderness left in the world for future generations. Let us all make a decision to contribute positive actions that can help all mankind now and in the years to come. Let us all resolve to leave only footprints in the sands of time that would indicate that we gave back to Mother Earth more than she gave us.

It is said that the journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step – let us all take that symbolic step and be part of a journey that ensures we make a difference to our future survival on this planet.



T ravel

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On his return from his Antarctic expedition, Nauzer has spread the information on Antarctica, global warming and ozone depletion at twenty schools in Kolkata and Jamshedpur, India. He has several letters of appreciation from the schools.

In March 2008 Nauzer had to cancel his planned ski trip to geographical North Pole due to lack of sponsorship and funding. He now has a CD for his proposed dream expedition for potential sponsors. Interested people could e mail Nauzer nauzerbat@yahoo.com or call his mobile +91 98310 86039

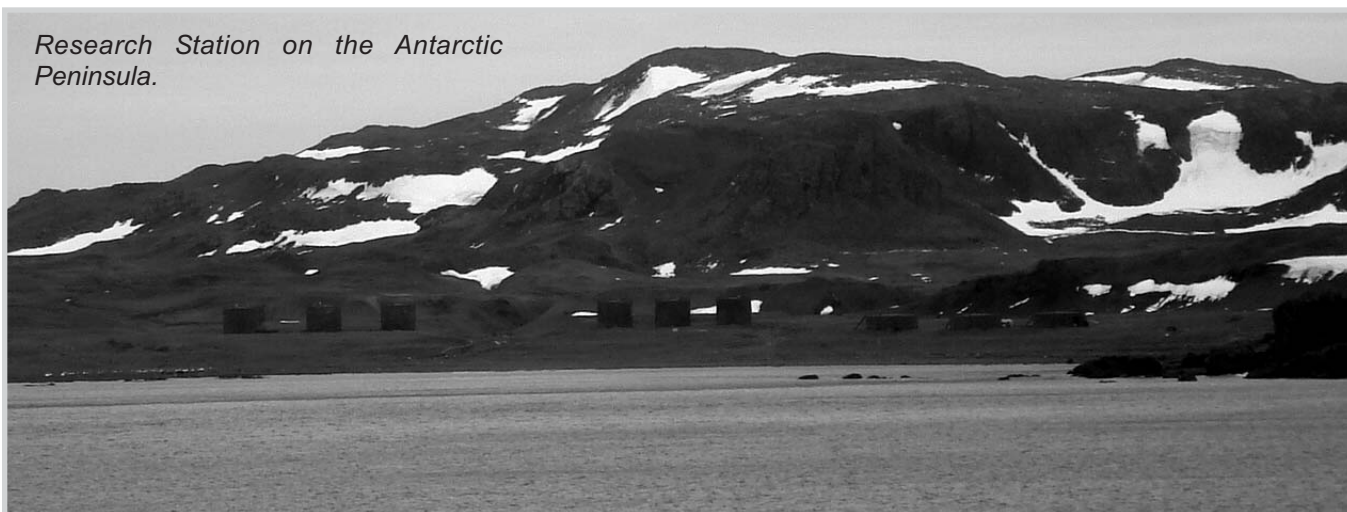
Nauzer

Batlivala resides with his wife Avi in Kolkata, India. As a youth organizer, Scout Master, and an adventurer, Nauzer has won the Surat Parsee Panchayat Award for Adventure (1997), the Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Award Standard (1994) and the Presidents' Scout Award from the Bharat Scouts & Guides (1987).

Having completed a basic mountaineering course at Darjeeling in 1991, Nauzer has achieved a lot in terms of medium and high altitude climbing including an exploratory expedition (6000m), mapping in the Kumaon Himalayas and an expedition to the Zaskar Valley in Ladakh.

Nauzer represented India with Mission Antarctica at the World Summit for Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa in September 2002. He was one of two Indians on the Raleigh International Expedition 95A in 1995, where a team of international volunteers engaged in various ecological- and environment-based activities in rural Chile.

Research Station on the Antarctic Peninsula.





T ravel

General



PHOTOS COURTESY DOLLY DASTOOR FROM
HER TRIP TO ANTARCTICA IN FEBRUARY 2007

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T ravel

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St. PETERSBURG TO LHASA BY TRAIN

Dinyar Patel



China's 2006 completion of a high-altitude rail link to Tibet has now made possible one of the world's most incredible journeys: train travel across Siberia, the Gobi Desert, and northern China, a voyage from the icy waters of the Baltic Sea that touch St. Petersburg to the tributaries of the Brahmaputra River that flow past Lhasa. In July of 2007 I began this journey at St. Petersburg's Moskovskaya Station, part of the grand streetscape of the French-inspired Nevsky Prospekt. Nineteen days later I caught my first glimpse of the Potala Palace as our train emerged out of a tunnel and descended into Lhasa Valley.

The journey from St. Petersburg, Russia's "window on the West," to Moscow is a simple overnight affair. Whereas St. Petersburg retains its lowrise, neoclassical skyline, Moscow is a riot of construction cranes and glass-and-steel highrises towering over the old monuments to communism. And capitalism has crept into communism's most sacred bastions. Red Square sports billboards for Rolex and Armani. At the USSR Economic Achievements Exhibition, designed by Stalin to showcase Soviet advances in agriculture, children eagerly flocked to take their photo with mannequins of Mickey and Minnie Mouse, Shrek, and the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, all crowded around the base of a Lenin statue.

Moscow is the traditional starting point of the Trans-Siberian Railway, and from here our train took us over the gentle incline of the Urals and into Asian Russia. From the Urals onward Russia is one stark, monotonous expanse

of swamps and forests, broken up only intermittently by small, semi-abandoned towns of decrepit wooden houses and massive rivers flowing north to the Arctic. Thousands of miles of the same scenery gets a tad repetitive. I filled my next two days by chatting with other passengers, surveying goods available at station platforms (potato bread, leather-like dried fish, vodka, and more vodka), and playing cards late into the night with cabin-mates.

Three days, five time zones, and 5182 kilometers from Moscow is Irkutsk, one of Siberia's biggest cities (population 600,000), often dubbed the "Paris of Siberia" due to its graceful architecture.

Shaman Rock on Olkhon Island, off the western shore of Lake Baikal.



At Irkutsk I momentarily interrupted my rail journey and caught a bus to what is perhaps the most beautiful place in Russia: Lake Baikal. Here, Siberia's monotonous flatlands abruptly give way to mountains and then a magnificent expanse of dark blue water stretching to the horizon. On Olkhon Island, just off Baikal's eastern shore, I stayed in the house of a local Buryat Mongol family and explored the island's cliffs and beaches. Baikal's stunning scenery is not its only asset: the deepest lake in the world, it holds roughly twenty percent of all freshwater on earth.

After skirting Baikal's shores, one branch of the Trans-Siberian turns sharply south. Again, the change in environment is dramatic: conifer forests give way to grasslands, towns and villages become even rarer, and the mercury soars. Exactly 5900 kilometers from Moscow the train snakes around an electric fence into

With Sergei, my Buryat Mongol host on Olkhon Island, and his daughter Katya.





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Tanggula, the world's highest railway pass

Mongolia, a country of empty spaces where a mere handful of urban centers stand apart in what is otherwise still a very nomadic society. The tension between ways of life is well apparent in Ulaan Baator, where entire neighborhoods are composed of transportable ger tents. Ulaan Baator is also distinguished by the massive visage of *Genghis Khan* etched onto a mountainside: cast as a ruthless villain in the histories of so many countries in Europe and Asia, Genghis Khan is celebrated in Mongolia as both a conqueror and a civilizer. His bronze statue stands in front of Mongolia's sleek new parliament and the Museum of National History devotes the bulk of its space to Genghis Khan's achievements. Perhaps my favorite item on display here was a letter sent to the Vatican by Guyukh Khan, one of Genghis' descendants, informing Pope Innocent IV that he was a Mongolian subject.

A few hours south of Ulaan Baator lies the Gobi Desert, an absolute moonscape where sand filters through train windows and barely a sign of human habitation is to be seen. But as night falls a mass of lights appear to the south: China. By the next morning, our train was deep into the Chinese countryside, brimming with people, and fast approaching Beijing, which sits under a cloud of pollution so thick that the sun appears as a pale disk. Beijing, 9651 kilometers from St. Petersburg, marks one end of the Trans-Siberian and the beginning of the new

Lhasa route, built in spite of vociferous condemnation from pro-Tibet activists. The Chinese government has, in response, fitted train carriages with televisions that blare propaganda on how Tibetans have greeted the rail link with "rejoicing and curiosity." One Tibetan pop star sings the praises of rail construction workers, "*wo de zui zui ke-ai de ren*" ("my most beloved people").

Sleek new Bombardier rail carriages—outfitted with oxygen tanks—whisk us past the teeming industrial landscape of northern China. After Xining, capital of Qinghai province, the rail line finally leaves behind urbanizing China—and the pollution that hangs over it—and ascends the Tibetan Plateau. By next morning, I feel strangely light-headed as I gaze out the window at dagger-like snowcapped peaks that jut out of the permafrost. Rail staff caution passengers to utilize oxygen tanks while announcing our ascent to Tanggula, the world's highest railway pass at 5072 meters. From Tanggula, Lhasa beckons from only a few more hours to the south.

Travel between the Hermitage and the Potala is a study in obvious contrasts but also one in surprising similarities. Both Russia and China are in the midst of an unprecedented economic boom: petrodollars have revitalized the great Russian cities west of the Urals and

Potala palace, Lhasa



foreign investment continues to turn the North China Plain into a futuristic conglomeration of megacities and industrial complexes. Even once-sleepy Ulaan Baator has a crop of new midrise apartment towers and office buildings.

Adjacent to these population centers, however, lie the vast unsettled spaces of Siberia, the Gobi, and the Tibetan Plateau. During my travels I had the chance to see how economic growth was transforming these hinterlands. Aside from a handful of urban centers, Siberia remains a wilderness: nevertheless, oil exploration, mining, and a nascent tourist industry in Baikal are slowly drawing more Russians eastward across the Urals. Chinese officials have hailed the new Tibet

On the platform with my friend Duc Huynh, with whom I traveled for three months in the Middle East and across Eurasia.



railway as an economic lifeline to some of the country's most distant territories. It remains to be seen who, exactly,



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benefits from this supposed lifeline. Our train was filled with Han Chinese passengers, including many who were intent on settling in Lhasa and its environs.



As evening crept over Tibet, our train skirted a glacier-covered range and descended into a river valley. Small farms began to dot the riverside and, after passing through a long tunnel where Chinese soldiers saluted our train, a sprawling city emerged below. With St. Petersburg 13,715 kilometers away, I had finally reached Lhasa. Yet my destination was hardly the Lhasa of monasteries and *lamas* described endlessly in romanticized travel accounts. While our train inched past modern apartment blocks and pulled into a cavernous new station, I realized that I had instead arrived in the newest of the many boomtowns I had seen along one of Eurasia's longest rail corridors.

Photos courtesy of Dinyar Patel

Trip to Africa

"The Deboos"

From Deerfield Beach, Florida

In 2005, after Jimmy retired from General Motors, we moved from Michigan to be close to our family in Florida and to spend the rest of our life in the beautiful Sunshine State. We enjoy travel, something we both love immensely.

We share with great love and passion our memories of the beautiful country of South Africa. It is one of the most diverse and captivating countries in the world with exotic combinations of landscapes, people, history, culture and wildlife! Our visit to this country was truly a unique and memorable one.

In the words of a famous South African poet, Wayne Visser, "I know a place in Africa where mountains touch the skies of blue and valleys shelter vines of green... This is the place of struggle, of desert plains and thorn trees ...where pathways end and journeys begin. My soul is at peace in Africa, for her streams bring lifeblood to my veins and her winds bring healing to my dreams..."

In September 2007, we traveled to the beautiful vineyards and arid deserts of South Africa, the wildlife reserves of Botswana, and the world famous Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe.

During a city tour of Cape Town we took a cable car ride up to the top of Table Mountain and took in a spectacular view of the city and the bay harbor. From north of the city, we could see Robin Island. Here is where Nelson Mandela spent 27 years in prison.



A penguin colony at Boulders Beach, Simon's Town, South Africa.

On our drive to the Cape of Good Hope, our tour guide took us to several exotic beaches including the famous Boulders Beach inhabited by a colony of penguins. The highway is extremely scenic and goes through beautiful fields covered with wildflowers and wildlife such as white antelopes, ostriches and zebras.



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Elephant family encounter in Chobe National Park, Botswana.



We then went from joy and happiness on the beach to excitement and adventure in the interior. We went on a safari in Botswana, tracking the “big five” animals of South southern Africa. We were sat in the back of a four-wheel drive safari vehicle while a game ranger took the steering wheel and an animal tracker sat on his special seat up front above the vehicle.

The vehicle moved on slowly while everybody was on the lookout for one of the “big five.” All of a sudden, the tracker up front pointed out something: the king of the animal kingdom was lying on his side and resting.

Our trip ended with a two-day stay in a river lodge from where we could walk to view the largest waterfall in the world, Victoria Falls. It was like heaven on earth: truly breathtaking and truly a wonder of the world! Words cannot describe the walks along the riverside, the colors of the evening sky, the smell of elephants, the sound of buffalo herds on the open green plains—all of these are beautiful memories from our trip. One really has to be there to experience it. “This world is a great book, of which they that never stir from home read only a page.”

Jimmy and Freny Deboo of the Zoroastrian Association of Florida



Victoria Falls cascading into a series of narrow gorges below.





T ravel

WORLD TRAVEL



MERA PEAK EXPEDITION

My last frontier in Nepal – October 2007

Jehangir Mehta



Mera Peak (6476 meters) is the highest trekking peak in Nepal. It is high enough to be seriously challenging as a first-time climb, but the ascent is not technically demanding according to alpine climb ratings.

My last serious foray in Nepal was my Everest Base Camp 14-day trek in 2002. And that little

conquest fuelled in me the desire to go higher onto some other modest peak; at the time, this seemed like an achievable feat. But I was already convinced that Mera would be the high end of my fitness and climbing potential. I was fearful about the limits of my lung capacity. The best climbers in the world are not particularly tall or have huge muscles. They are thin, but they have great lung capacity.

What drives some of us to extremes? Why do we risk our lives and then later do the same thing all over again? What was I achieving by testing the limits of my endurance? There are no textbook answers to these questions. The feeling of achievement and euphoria found in such accomplishments are what made me do it.

Our group of nine people (above) consisted of seven Australians and two Britons and was led by a New Zealander from the trekking company World Expeditions. Team support consisted of 22 porters including some six high-altitude porters, five Sherpas, and four kitchen staff. We were also required to buy or hire special equipment like carabiners, prussick ropes, axes, plastic mountaineering boots, and crampons. Mera Glacier has many crevasses in an area between Mera La Pass and the high camp but these can be walked around easily under the careful guidance of the team leader and with the full protection provided by being roped into teams.

The Mera Peak trek began in Lukla after a short flight from Kathmandu. From Lukla ten days of trekking took us through fascinating Sherpa villages and the Hinku Valley south of the Everest region. We stopped at Khare base camp (5000 meters) at the base of the Mera Glacier and stayed here for several days of acclimatization.

It was on the fifth day of our trek that the portable altitude chamber—affectionately called “PAC”—was put into use as some of us began suffering from mild symptoms of AMS (acute mountain sickness). We had climbed too high, too fast, steeply ascending 1000 meters from Chalem Kharka to Chunbu Kharka (4200 meters) The results were pounding headaches, dizziness, nausea and collapse.

A day was set aside at base camp for final preparations for the climb, including rehearsing the use of equipment and traveling while roped together into groups. At base camp we joined the Sherpas in a Buddhist *puja* ceremony with prayer flags to honor the mountain. We needed the blessings of the mountain which lay ahead.





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General



The climb from base camp to Mera La Pass at 5400 meters is initially steep but flattens out as one reaches the crest of the glacier. The high camp at 6000 meters is a short distance away but is harder and farther than it appears, a common phenomenon at high altitude. It is set near a

rock knob with wonderful and unequalled views of Everest, Lhotse, Makalu, Baruntse and Kanchenjunga.



Next day was an early morning (4AM) push for the summit of Mera. Having contracted high altitude bronchitis, I had no option but to stay put at high camp and return with the others back to base camp. Only two climbers made it to the summit, due to varying degree of AMS and other fatigue-related symptoms. Development of a persistent and sometimes violent cough at high altitude is well known to climbers. Scarce oxygen and the extremely cold and dry air cause irritation and spasms in the bronchi.

Our return to lower altitude in the following days made no improvement in my cough, which excluded the possibility of HAPE or high altitude pulmonary edema. A short helicopter rescue flight from Kote saw me back in Kathmandu much to my relief and joy.

The rest of the team returned in two days after celebrations with the porters and Sherpas in Lukla. The whole trek and climb took 21 days in total.

I do not have any more burning desire to climb higher mountains, as it does take a heavy toll on one's body. Being 55 years old myself, I'd like to think that experience matters. But on high mountains, youth and vigor top age and experience. There are exceptions to this rule the oldest people to climb Mount Everest were a 71-year old Japanese man in May 2007 and a 65-year old woman in May 2002. I still enjoy walking and trekking and perhaps a short climb on Mount Aspiring (3500 meters) in New Zealand next year will constitute a scaled-down version of an adventurous trek.

Global climate change is affecting the Himalayas much faster than previously thought and mountaineers have been the first to notice the changes: there are more frequent avalanches as well as more crevasses and exposed rocks where there used to be snowfields. The Imja Glacier below Lhotse is the fastest receding glacier in Nepal and is melting at rate of 70 meters a year. There is now a lake three kilometers long where there was a frozen glacier fifty years ago.

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), based in Kathmandu, estimates that the Khumbu Glacier is also retreating at an average rate of 20 meters per year. "It is still too early to say, but if present trends continue most valley glaciers will have disappeared by 2050" states ICIMOD glaciologist Pradeep Mool.¹ Scientists believe that Everest could be bare rock by 2050 due to glacial retreat. The late Sir Edmund Hillary, who conquered Everest, wanted the battle against the ravages of global warming and mass tourism on the world's highest peak to be his greatest legacy.

I am thankful that I went up there, but saddened by the real possibility that the Himalayas and its white snow-clad peaks will be lost to future generations.

¹Billi Bierling, "Himalayan Meltdown," **Nepali Times: October 19, 2007.**

Jehangir Mehta, migrated with his wife Phyrooza to Perth Western Australia in 1989.. He was the president of the Zoroastrian Association

of Western Australia (ZAWA) and served three years on the ZAWA committee and his currently interested in the area of emergency services providing personal support to people affected by a disaster with the Red Cross in WA His special interest is trekking, and adventure travel.





T ravel

A SCIENTIST AND A PILGRIM

An abridged tale of travels to near and far corners of the world

Ardeshir B. Damania

During my career as a businessman, botanist, crop plant conservationist, researcher, and finally as a scientific writer I have had the opportunity to travel to over fifty countries. Some of these were popular destinations, others not so common and a few places were downright dangerous. I would like to tell readers about a few places which I have had the pleasure to visit. Here I give my impressions of two neighboring countries of India, both visited during times of political instability.

SIKKIM

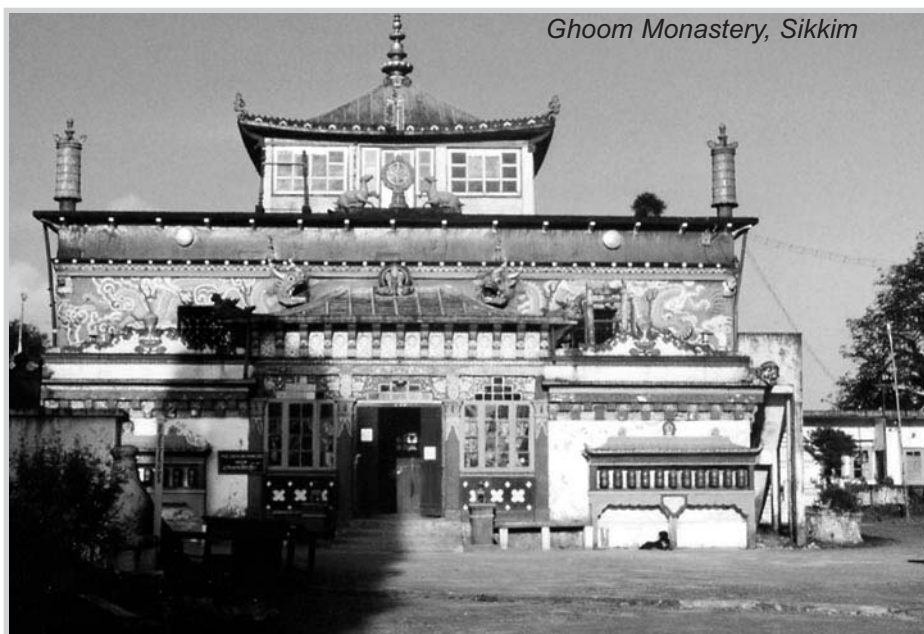
Yes, Sikkim was an independent country with its own ruler in 1968 when I traveled and trekked there with Earuch Sethna, a Bombay High Court advocate, and Professor Nariman Mistry. It was like paradise on earth. In Darjeeling, we hired two porters from the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute and then began our trek north. We were very fortunate to have Dawa Thondup and Dawa Pasang as our porters and guides. One night, sitting around a log fire in a *dak* bungalow at 12,000 feet, Thondup startled us by modestly revealing that he had been up to the South Col base camp with Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay during the successful climb of Mt. Everest in May 1953! After that, we developed great respect for our porters: they had, after all, carried loads up to 100 pounds through wind and snow.

In Darjeeling, we had received permission to stay at government-owned *dak* bungalows along our trek route. Each *dak* bungalow was built by the British over a hundred years ago at a distance of exactly one day's trek. *Dak* bungalows never varied in plan. They had wide verandahs with breathtaking views of the mountains and living rooms with a fireplace. Two large bedrooms were on either side with their own fireplaces and attached toilets. Kitchens were at the rear.

The bungalows had no electricity and often no running water. After a hard day's trek, we arrived at our first *dak* bungalow at Manebhanjang. We gave a few rupees to our two porters to buy firewood and cook dinner. Fortified by a peg or two of Old Monk rum, we ate dinner by lantern light. It was lights out by 8PM.

The next morning I woke up at the break of dawn to the chirping of several types of birds and a brilliant sunrise over the snow-covered Himalayan peaks, the nearest being Kanchenjunga. If ever I felt close to Ahura Mazda, it was at this place! I now understood why those who seek enlightenment always retreated to the mountains. Professor Mistry had brought along *The Birds of Sikkim* by Salim Ali and with the help of binoculars we were able to identify several of them. Sikkim is famous the world over for its extremely rich bird life.

Treking the next day through rhododendron and fir tree forests over the Singhalila Ridge, on paths strewn with blood-sucking leeches, was another exciting and fun experience. Our sherpas instructed me how to remove leeches





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on my legs: they lit a cigarette and held it up to the insect. The leech let go of its suckers buried deep in my flesh and fell dead on the ground. This exercise became our daily chore before evening bath.

During our trek we were constantly serenaded by the bells of the several Buddhist monasteries that are to be found in the hills of Sikkim. Sound carries long distances in the deep valleys; therefore, the bells appeared to come from nearby but in reality were miles away.

The highest *dak* bungalows were at Sandakphu and Phalut. They were usually mist-covered. But one day we got a break for a few minutes at sunrise and saw Mt. Everest before the clouds again rose from the valley and obscured our view.

We stayed at a nice and historic hotel at Gangtok, the capital of Sikkim, and visited the widow of the Everest hero and mountaineer Sonam Gyatso who had died only a month earlier. We paid our sherpa porters and they happily left to catch a bus back to Darjeeling. We also visited the palace of the King of Sikkim. The King or Chogyal, Palden Thondup Namgyal, had only been recently crowned in 1965. We were thankful to the King's wife, Hope Cooke, for keeping all the *dak* bungalows on the Sikkim side impeccably clean in contrast to those on the Indian side. Namgyal, a widow, had met Cooke at the famous Windermere Hotel in Darjeeling and immediately fell in love. In defiance of the wishes of his people and the monks he married her in 1963. It was to prove his downfall. But that is in itself another story that involves the late Homi Talyarkhan.



CEYLON (now SRI LANKA)

I was married at Albless Baugh in Bombay in June 1971 and my wife, Parvin, and I decided to go for a honeymoon to an exotic place. We contacted H.K. Lala of the famous Lala Tours who suggested Ceylon, now called Sri Lanka. But Ceylon was then experiencing an insurgency led by the People's Liberation Front (JVP) and there had been several arson attacks in and around Colombo, the capital. Nevertheless, we were referred to Pesi Khandalawala, who lived opposite Brabourne Stadium. Pesi not only arranged proper Indian passports for us but also helped us with foreign exchange matters. We are thankful to him for making our trip a success.

Due to the insurgency, tourism in Ceylon had dropped to an all-time low and everything was at relatively rock-bottom prices. We were the only passengers on our Air Ceylon flight! In Colombo, we stayed at a guesthouse on Galle Face Road run by a charming British couple, Mr. and Mrs. Smith. They were amongst the last of the English who had stayed back after Ceylon won independence in 1948 from Great Britain. Apparently, we were the only guests. They provided us with English breakfasts and we ate lunch and dinner at a nearby restaurant on the seafront. Over a cup of tea, Mr. and Mrs. Smith would chat about their lives and plans to retire to Spain.

We hired a car with a driver who drove us to Kandy. Along the way were young Ceylonese girls selling cashew and coconuts; we called them the "*kajju girls*". There were so many stalls and so few tourists that when we stopped the car we did not know whom to buy from. It was so pathetic to please one and disappoint the rest. In any case, we



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had most delicious coconut water from one of the girls who so expertly chopped open a king coconut for us. The king coconut is a specialty of Ceylon. The nut is orange in color and has a huge water cavity so that it is difficult for one person to finish all of the water. I could barely finish my coconut but



Parvin could only drink half of hers. The freshly-roasted cashew nuts were also excellent!

Kandy, a hill resort, has a lovely botanical garden. The curator gave me some seeds after I introduced myself as a botanist from Bombay. We also visited the Temple of the Tooth, which is said to house one of the Buddha's teeth. According to legend, north Indian rulers fought over the sacred relic until one king sent it to Ceylon, believed to be a stronghold of Buddhism, in the 4th century CE. The tooth is kept on the top floor of the temple and thousands of people come here to worship it. While in Kandy, we also saw the bathing of elephants: the beasts would lie down in the water while their individual mahouts scrubbed them with coconut coir rope until they glistened in the sun. From Kandy we drove to Nuwara Eliya, a hill resort so high that the weather was actually cold!

We stayed at the best and largest hotels in both Kandy and Nuwara Eliya. Kandy had few tourists but Nuwara Eliya had none due to the insurgency. We drove by burned-out police stations that were attacked by the insurgents. Our 700-room colonial-era hotel had only two guests: us. Eating dinner was difficult as we were the only customers in a grand dining/ball room with about two dozen bearers in full white uniforms staring at us! Our hotel refused to switch on the central heating for just two guests and we were merely provided with a noisy fan-heater which made sleep almost impossible.

The next day we visited the famous Hakgala botanical gardens, nearby to Nuwara Eliya, and saw some of the loveliest rose bushes. We also saw the cave where it is said that Ravana, the infamous demon-king of Ceylon, had imprisoned the princess Sita after he had abducted her from India. We then hurried back to Colombo and caught a Swissair flight back to Bombay.

Although both Sikkim and Ceylon were in a state of political turmoil when I visited them, I found the people to be extremely nice and hospitable. Travel is really a form of education. By traveling to Sikkim and Ceylon, I learned a great deal about local society and culture and the factors fueling political problems. In 1975, the people of Sikkim delivered a mandate against their unpopular King by voting overwhelmingly to join India. India abolished the monarchy and incorporated Sikkim as a state. Since then, Sikkim has largely been out of the headlines. Ceylon, now Sri Lanka, has suffered a different fate. The JVP insurgency soon faded but was followed by increasing violence between the majority Sinhalese and minority Tamils, which has since wracked the island nation. Given the decades of violence, I wonder what has now happened to those "kajju girls" we once saw on the highway to Kandy.

Dr. Ardeshir B. Damania, is Associate Research Geneticist with the Plant Sciences Department at the University of California. He was born in



India and received a Bachelors Degree in Botany and Zoology and a Masters Degree in Plant Ecology from the University of Bombay, and a Masters and Ph.D. in Plant Genetic Resources from the University of Birmingham, England.

While working for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Rome, Italy Dr. Damania traveled extensively in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas collecting germplasm. Later with the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) as Cereal Curator and based in Aleppo, Syria for 10 years, he traveled extensively in China, Turkey, Jordan, Morocco and Iran.

His current research interests include biodiversity conservation issues, early agriculture, crop domestication and plants of economic and medicinal values. Dr. Damania is the author of over 120 articles and editor of over 15 books on wheat improvement and conservation of genetic resources.

Dr Damania takes a keen interest in Indo-Persian history, communal and religious matters..He has written several articles in the FEZANA Journal and PARSIANA and his book reviews on Zoroastrianism can be read at <http://www.vohuman.org/> under "Book Review".



T ravel

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PATAGONIAN TREKKING ADVENTURE AND WALK ON THE PERITO MORENO GLACIER



Jehangiir Mehta



Prior to setting out on our December 2003 trip to Patagonia, my wife and I imagined the tip of South America to be a magic and fascinating place, similar to the highlands of Scotland with its rolling hills and green pastures.

Now I know that this vast and breathtaking region is entirely different. Patagonia is made of desert and rock, of lakes and mountains, of granite peaks, of vast steppes and farms or estancias, and of glaciers and turbulent rivers. It has very high and very low temperatures and the ever-present winds called the Roaring Forties (westerly winds between the latitudes 40°S and 50°S). All this suggests a land of violent beauty. The Spanish explorer Ramon Lista was fascinated by Patagonia. He said, "Everything here stirs our deepest emotions: sometimes it is the sad barrenness of the plains; or the magnificent chaos of its mountains."



The name Patagonia most likely originates from the era when the Portuguese-Spanish explorer Ferdinand Magellan sailed through the region while circumnavigating the globe. Magellan and his crew supposedly encountered a race of giants which they named *patagones*, or "big feet." Subsequent explorers never found the giants but the name stuck: hence the name, Patagonia.

Our destinations in Patagonia were Torres Del Paine and Los Glaciers national parks in southern Patagonia, which are only accessible by walking or on

horseback. Why were we so attracted to these remote places? My answer is because it's there and I can feel nature breathing in such places. Patagonia has an aura of its own.

My wife, Phyrooza and I, both prepared for this moderate adventure for six months prior to departure, necessitating an hour of exercise three to four times per week. I also knew that altitude was not an issue for this trek: the maximum altitude





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climbed was 900 meters. Little did my wife realize that some of the valley floor-to-ridgeline ascents would be like giving up one's last breath whilst drowning. Much to her own surprise, she not only completed the full trek but, like me, came to the conclusion that walking in peaceful contemplation



alongside nature is spiritually uplifting.

A two hour flight from Buenos Aires took us to Calafate, a town in the province of Santa Cruz which is the gateway to various national parks and mountain climbing regions. We drove five hours from Calafate to El Chalten in Los Glaciers National Park. El Chalten is the youngest town in Argentina, established by the government as a frontier town in 1985 partly due to a border dispute with Chile. It currently has 300 inhabitants and is fast developing due to the increase in tourists each year.

Los Glaciers National Park was created in 1937 and it has 356 glaciers. In 1981, UNESCO declared it a World Heritage site. For the next four days, our day treks in Los Glaciers took us to the base camps of Mount Fitzroy (3405 meters) and Mount Torre (3102 meters). The conquest of these two mountains in 1952 and 1959 by Lionel Terray, Guido Magnone and Cesare Maestri resulted in no material rewards except the tiny stones that they brought from the summits. Their efforts, nevertheless, have inspired mountaineers and trekkers throughout the world.

Our exhausting climb up a ridge to Mount Tumbado (1000 meters) was not without its moments of extreme exhilaration. Views of Lake Viedma and Mount Fitzroy from this high point were so beautiful that we could have taken an endless amount of photographs. That evening called for special celebrations at dinner with a few bottles of wine. It ended our first part of the trek before heading back to Calafate.

Eating out in Calafate was great fun and the high quality of Argentinean beef and lamb never disappointed us. Succulent grilled lamb was always on our list. I also tried tongue in vinaigrette. *Empanadas* (meat-filled pastries), or what we call curry puffs, are an extremely common food in Argentina. I would recommend Mi Viejo restaurant in Calafate for its delicious food and friendly service.

We spent an unforgettable day mini-trekking and walking on the *Perito Moreno Glacier*, eighty kilometers from Calafate, which is truly one of the natural wonders of the world. The glacier is named after Perito Moreno who was an explorer and scientist. In 1903, as a reward for his service, the government gave him some land in central Patagonia. He accepted the land but returned it to the government under the condition that it be preserved for future generations. His action resulted in the creation of the first Argentinian national park in 1934, Nahuel Huapi.

Bilingual guides organize tourists going to the glacier into groups of twenty people. Once we reached the side of the Moreno Glacier they attached crampons (clasps and hooks) to our trekking boots so we could walk on the ice without any major problems.

A glacier is not made out of snow; rather it is a river of compacted ice. Glaciers such as *Perito Moreno* originate from the Patagonian ice field which is the third largest ice field in the world after Antarctica and Greenland. From a distance a glacier looks entirely white, but when walking over it one finds that it changes color from dark blue to light blue and forms crevices and seracs (blocks of ice). There is the unique experience of hearing the ice crack and the thunderous noise of huge blocks falling into the water. At one point our guides set up a table where we had Scotch whisky with ice, Scotch on the rocks in the truest sense.

The breaking or the collapse of the Perito Moreno glacier is a phenomenon that repeats itself cyclically every three to five years. Previous collapses occurred in 2004 and 2006. Prior to these years, however, the last breaking happened in 1988, when television crews from all over the world patiently waited to film an event that only lasted 24 hours.

The memory of this trip will stay with us forever. Although we are now back in Perth and very far away, we want to return to Patagonia in the future.



Phyrooza Mehta



T ravel

WORLD TRAVEL



**“WALK TOGETHER, TALK TOGETHER ALL
YE PEOPLES OF THE EARTH. THEN, AND ONLY
THEN, SHALL YE HAVE PEACE.”**

Nazneen Spliedt

When I was in high school in Pakistan, I was selected by the AFS Exchange Program to spend one year as an exchange student in the United States. During that year, I studied and lived with an American family in Glendale, California. AFS' motto, printed above, inspired me then and continues to inspire me now. My early love of travel grew during my AFS experience. Meeting and interacting with students from fifty different countries was the most forceful affirmation that people across the world were essentially the same, with the same hopes and aspirations.

Since participating in the AFS program, I have continued to explore new places by living and working in various countries across the world. My best travel experiences took place during the fourteen years when my husband and I worked in Hong Kong, a stepping-stone to countries across Asia. But one of the most interesting destinations was right across the border. In the early 1980s China was slowly opening up and travel there was most exciting and adventurous. China's infrastructure was very basic yet they still had wonderful roads. The Chinese people were always friendly and very curious to learn about us since they only had limited contacts with foreigners at that time.

Our most memorable trip in China was to the cities along the ancient Silk Road. We started from the ancient city of Xi'an, formerly the imperial Chinese capital, which is home to the famous terracotta warriors. From Xi'an our road lead to Turfan, Yarkand and Jiayuguan, the western end of the Great Wall of China. From Jiayuguan we



Xi'an Terracotta Warriors

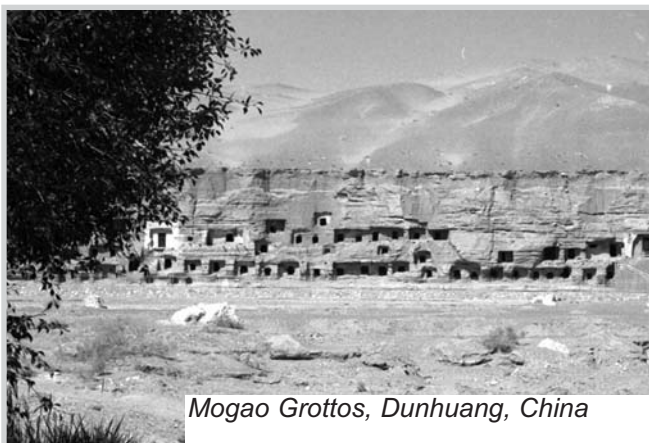
proceeded to Dunhuang, where the famous Buddhist caves are located. These caves, set amidst the desert and dry mountains, were commissioned by Buddhist pilgrims and merchants to give thanks for their safe journey across the desert. They are the world's richest treasure trove of Buddhist paintings and statuary. Over 500 caves still exist in good condition.

We traveled by plane, train and bus, visiting ancient cities and staying at inns and hotels of dubious quality. In Kashgar we stayed at Chini Bagh, the home of an influential nineteenth century British consul, Sir George Macartney. Kashgar, an important center for the Uighur ethnic minority, boasts a thriving Sunday market (photo left) where traders from Persia used to come in the old days to exchange goods and share ideas. From animals to artifacts, everything is traded here amidst

various smells and sounds. Here, people of many races and religions came and visibly left their mark.

Another personally satisfying trip was to the ancient cities along the Oxus River in Central Asia: Samarkand, Bukhara, Merv, and Panjikent, where the late Boris Marshak conducted extensive archaeological work on Sogdian ruins, including what he believed to be the remnants of a Zoroastrian temple. I closed my eyes and thought that perhaps it was here that the hero Rustom fought his battles and Zathushtra lived.

Another very adventurous journey took us to Bhutan during the Paro festival. (photo right). Entire villages come walking from many miles away to see monks unfurl a very large



Mogao Grottoes, Dunhuang, China



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(100 by 150 feet) Buddhist *thangka* (painting on cloth) depicting Guru Rinpoche the bringer of Buddhism to Bhutan, upon the wall of the monastery. The *thangka* is unrolled at 3AM amidst the blaring of horns. Thousands of people congregate for this event yet remain eerily quiet. After worshippers file by and touch the *thangka* reverently, monks begin rolling up the painting: the *thangka* has to be taken down before the rays of the sun can touch it. In spite of the freezing cold weather, watching the ceremony was a most stimulating and spiritual experience. Bhutan is a country of magnificent mountains, valleys, *dzongs* (fortresses that have both a military and religious purpose), and monasteries, thoroughly unspoiled by "civilization." Instead of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the country relies on Gross National Happiness as an indicator of progress.

Travel has both broadened my mind and opened my eyes. My travels have also been a living legacy of my grandmother's early encouragement to us to explore the world and experience life.

Nazneen with husband Ehler in Isfahn, Iran

Nazneen & Ehler Spliedt have lived and worked in the Caribbean, South America, Europe and Hong Kong during the last 35 years.

Photos courtesy Ehler Spliedt



Sunday Market in Kashgar, China



Paro Festival, Bhutan



VISIT THE USA --- \$99 FOR 99 DAYS

Homi Gandhi

I am sure many of you had come across this ad in your hippie days and that many of you wanted to experience that trip. And some of you eventually did! This is my story of how I enjoyed my first trip to North America.

While studying in England, it was my wish to visit the USA before I returned to India. And as my brother, Firoze, was studying in the USA I thought that it would be a great idea to explore the country together. After checking the details of the above ad, like a good accountant, I started putting our budget together. I had just graduated from the "student budget."

Even with help from Frommer's USA on Five Dollars A Day: our budget moved into four figures, well beyond our means at the time. But as the old mother's saying goes, "*Jivya karta joylu saroo*" ("To see the world is better than just living life"), I nevertheless ventured out and booked two Greyhound tickets. The conditions for travel were that these tickets were to be bought outside the USA, that the meter would start from the day it was first used, and that travel had to be in only one direction, prohibiting a return trip on the same route.



T ravel

TRAVELING BETWEEN N. AMERICA AND OLD HOMELANDS OF INDIA/PAKISTAN/IRAN



And so my trip started in July of 1967 from London via a student union-chartered flight on a BOAC Britannia turbo prop-jet (£59 for London-New York return. In those days, £1 equaled \$4.20). Our first stop was Gander, Newfoundland, for refueling. I was amazed by the airport's expansive airport lounge, with not many people around and located in the middle of nowhere. I was informed that it was a newly constructed airport built just for refueling purposes.

After a couple of hours at the airport, it was onward to JFK Airport in New York. That afternoon, I went to the Alfred Sloan YMCA on 34th Street and rented a single room with shared showers for \$3 a day. With sixty percent of the \$5 budget going toward accommodation, I had to conserve resources for food, transport, and entertainment. So I quickly went through all the sights with no or minimum admission costs and over the next six days explored New York like a New Yorker. I went to museums, took a Circle Line trip, visited the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, enjoyed the Nickel Ferry to Staten Island, enjoyed a Broadway show (*Oh Calcutta!*), and throughout this process made many good friends with other visitors to New York. With all these enjoyments and one good meal of \$1.89 at Tad's Steak, my budget of \$5 a day, needless to say, was far exceeded each day, and I was drawing up "Plan B" for future days.

While my first Greyhound bus trip began one Thursday evening, I mentally activated my "Plan B." A fellow passenger started conversation and he, an Armenian, was delighted to meet a real life Zarathushti. We had many discussions throughout that evening. My next destination was Chicago, where my brother was doing his summer job, but we also stopped at a few places in Pennsylvania, including a long halt in Pittsburgh, and in Ohio and Indiana. Besides sightseeing in Chicago, I had the opportunity to meet Rustom Kevala, his family and other Zarathushtis at Rustom's apartment for a Sunday afternoon *dhansak* event!

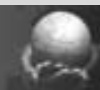
We brothers took off on a route that included St. Louis (where we saw the new Arch), Oklahoma City, Albuquerque, Flagstaff for a side trip to the Grand Canyon, Las Vegas for a side trip to the Hoover Dam, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland and Seattle. Then we entered Canada and visited Victoria Island, Banff National Park, Calgary, Regina, Winnipeg, Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Toronto, and Montreal. Montreal was the highlight of this trip as Expo '67 had brought a new awakening to the world. Had it not been for the hospitality of a friend of mine who had just moved there from England we would have had our over-a-week's stay cut to two or three days. And we were lucky to share a Pateti dinner with Freny and Jehan Bagli and a welcoming lunch with Homi Daruwala and his family in Montreal.

The journey continued to the Eastern seaboard, where we visited Vermont, Boston, Philadelphia, and Washington, DC. Then we returned to New York as our savings were fast depleting and there was no deficit financing by plastic money in those days. And so after almost 58 days and nights in youth hostels, YMCAs, host families, and on the Greyhound bus, I left for London on the same Britannia turbo prop-jet in the early part of September. My brother returned to Chicago on his last Greyhound trip back home.

During this trip we met some old friends, made new friends, and some new friends insisted that we stay with them when we visited their hometowns. As a result, we had hosts waiting to receive us at San Francisco and Vancouver bus stations. Some of these new friends were fascinated by Zarathushti history, culture and faith. For a few of them it was a new window to the world but most of them had heard something about our religion. And, in this process, our own horizons were widened.

Homi Gandhi is the past President of the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York (ZAGNY) and co-chair of the FEZANA UN-NGO Committee and Main Representative at the UN





T ravel

The Lure of Jabal-e-Noor



On a barren, sun-baked ridge high above the city sits a remarkable monument. Inside a mountain, in a series of



caves painstakingly gouged out by hand from the hard scrabble of stone, men have placed bundles of worn out, torn, water stained or generally unreadable copies of the Koran. There are thirty of these

caves with tunnels that extend over a mile. Surrounded by spectacular mountains, this area is now known as Jabal-e-Noor.

The mountains are comforting, despite the rocky fields, its bitter cold and dry winters, and the endless up-down climbs. The air is cleaner, people say the winds are cooler, the apples are sweeter, the sheep are fatter, and the children are healthier than those who live in the stifling heat of the lowlands. People are more hospitable here. Even the flies, it seems, are less of a nuisance. By and large, most of the people like to be where they are. And that adds to the charm of the place.

The Korans are laid to rest, in sack after sack, with verses salvaged from newspapers and magazines. The source of inspiration for this task is Wali Mohammed. "Muslims are enjoined not to burn or dispose of old Korans, so we collect the books, bundle them up and leave them in our caves. There are 65,000 of them now," he says.

At the entrance of the cave, I saw a bookbinder, an old man, sifting through the piles of books and binding

and restoring the few copies that can be recycled and sent to *masjids*, schools and *madrasas*. I was amazed at the quality of his work. With a simple pair of 14-inch scissors and a pot of lye, he restored and salvaged what was possible. I wondered how my colleagues in the library world would regard this activity in today's high tech world.

Continuing on our tour, to the left and right we saw several small rooms with cushions and lights for people to pray and ask for blessings. There was a separate room for women. On my visit no one was there.

After these rooms, the tunnels began. Wali Mohammed told us that it had taken him thirty years to dig thirty caves. Korans initially came from the city but now they are coming from all over the world. It was his idea to store them in the mountain when he ran out of space in his house. The caves are neatly stacked with bundles of Korans wrapped in different material.

Wealthy donors provided funds for the excavation of these caves, using labor employed at the rate of Rs. 200 (\$3.50) per foot. It takes a whole day to excavate a foot with shovels and a year to complete each cave. The entire project is supported by private donations.

This dusty site scattered with broken rocks didn't look like a tourist attraction, but it draws visitors from all over. Wali Mohammed said that even though he has funds and overwhelming support, there are always a few visitors that comment that the money could be spent on better projects like Islamic education. But he added, "I think in all the world there is nothing like this! It's a great place for Muslims to visit." Wali Muhammad has also been collecting Bibles since they, too, are religious books.

As we were leaving we saw a few cemented pits. These were graves for the chosen few have dedicated themselves to this project. "This is a most important place," said Wali Mohammed. "If we take care of the Korans, we will go to heaven."

So where is this place located, you may ask? It is located a few miles outside of Quetta, Pakistan. And why has this struck such a chord for me? Because, in spite of the many years that I have spent in this mountain range—as a child growing up in Quetta and as an adult sharing its beauty with my children—it was only in 2002 that I learned of its existence when I read an article in the Houston Chronicle. I have since then watched this endeavor grow each year on my annual visits to Quetta. And while adventure and excitement in faraway places also awaits the traveler, there is always the jewel that one discovers in one's own backyard.



Aban Rustomji is a library media specialist who resides in Houston, TX



T ravel

Traveling Between N. America And Old Homelands
OF INDIA / PAKISTAN / IRAN



FIVE DAYS IN SURAT

Architect Cyrus Rivetna
reminisces on his visit to Surat to
learn more about Parsi Fire
Temples and the Parsis who tend
them.

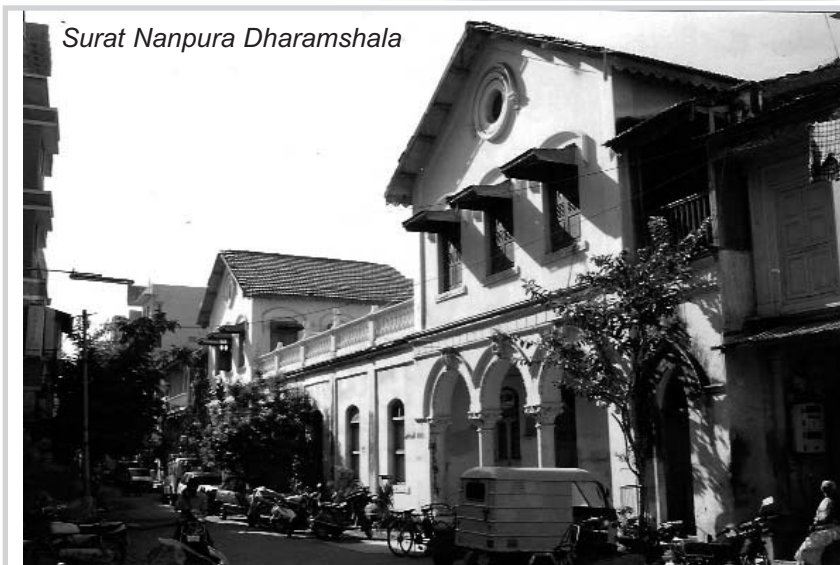
Cyrus Rivetna

In 2003 I spent two months touring southern Gujarat to study the architecture of Parsi fire temples. When I began, my knowledge was minimal and I knew nobody, but I was confident that I could rely on the vast Zarathushti network to be my guide. It's a global network of people, places and culture that the Zarathushti community is built upon. At present we can only see what has been built in the past 200 years, but below the surface is a foundation that took centuries to build. Five brief days in Surat eloquently summed up for me the strengths and weaknesses of this Zarathushti network.



My trip to Surat began with a day's train ride from Mumbai to Surat. My aunt, Rati, who for several decades was headmaster of Raj Kumar College in Rajkot, introduced me to one of her "old boys," Dinyar Pundole. In Surat, Dinyar took me to the Nanpura *Dharamshala* and made sure that the caretakers gave me a good room. The *dharamshala* building has grown organically. It started as a small two-story structure, and for the past century has been enlarged, carved, chopped, poked, and stretched to evolve into the quirky complex of seemingly disjointed structures that it is today. The structures are completely different, but match in style and color, and altogether create a pleasing and efficient place to stay. My room was on the second floor of the new section and overlooked a quiet street behind the building.

In the morning Dinyar drove me to the Modi Atash Behram and introduced me to the high priest, who gave me a few quick lessons and permission to photograph the exteriors of the buildings. On one of the verandahs I saw and talked to, but could not shake hands with, Raiomand Sethna, who was preparing for the very rare 70-day Moti Hamayasht ceremony which began with a nine-day purificatory bareshnum. I felt privileged to be present at the Atash Behram during this monumental ceremony which had been commissioned by a devout gentleman from Mumbai. From there I went to the newly built Batliwalla Agiary, and met Dasturji Rabadi. An elegant old structure was torn down and replaced by the uninteresting new concrete building. Dasturji Rabadi suggested I visit the Rao Daremeher, which I did. The Rao Daremeher has an unusual plan that allows southern light to fall directly onto the fire. That evening while eating dinner at the *dharamshala*, I met Pinky who asked my name, where I was from, and then who I knew that could give her money. I was immediately made aware that her house had fallen down,



Surat Nanpura Dharamshala



Surat Parsi Orphanage



T ravel

Traveling Between N. America And Old Homelands
OF INDIA / PAKISTAN / IRAN



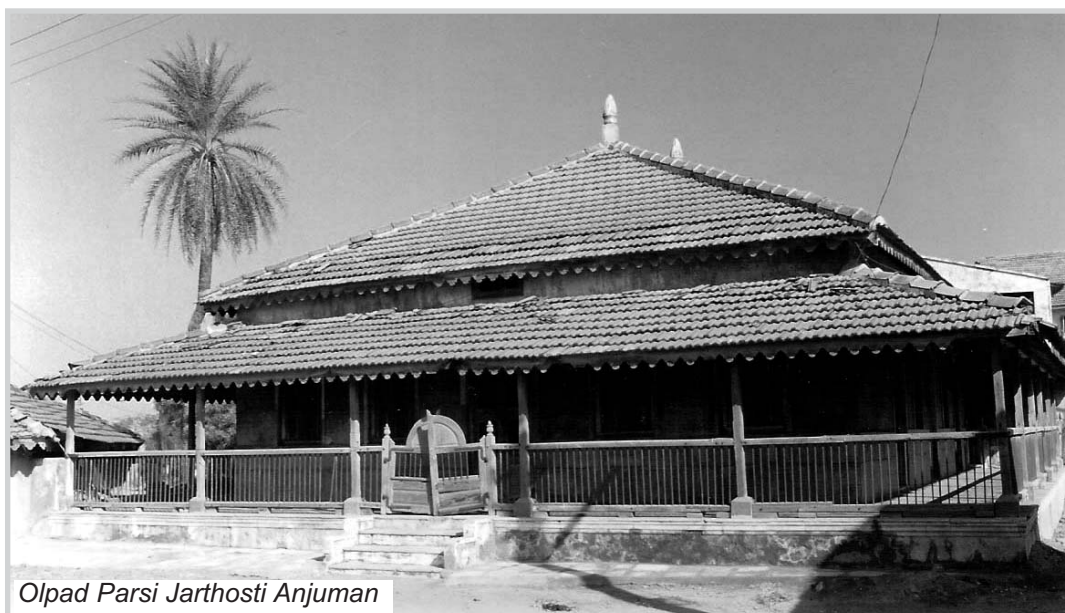
she had an operation, she had no job, and that her family was very poor.

I spent most of the next day at the Kadmi Atash Behram, where Adil Dastur the *boiwalla* was on duty and answered my questions. While sketching the front verandah of the fire temple, a group of thirty young boys all wearing the same violet velvet *topi* washed their hands, untied and retied their *kushtis*, prayed and left together. Mr. Karanjia who was praying on the verandah informed me that they were boys living at the orphanage across the courtyard.

That evening at dinner I met a retired engineer and his wife who were visiting all eight *atash behrams* in three days. They invited me back to their room for a whiskey and an intriguing conversation about what makes a person a Zarathushti and the differences between North American and Indian Parsis. He scolded American Zarathushtis for not practicing the religion correctly and asked why the associations go around converting people.

The next morning I visited the Surat Parsi Panchayat office where I met the revered 92 year old Ratan Marshal, former president of the Panchayat. My conversation with him revealed that the politics of our religion are prevalent everywhere, regardless of time or place. I was introduced to Firdosh Dotia, the headmaster at the orphanage, who gave me a tour. I felt very sad for the family-less orphans until I learned that they weren't orphans after all. Their families live in small nearby villages, so the children are sent to Surat to attend the good schools.

I then went across town to Rustampura to meet Dasturji Homi Panthaki who told me about the history of the Parsis in Surat. He happened to mention that he lived in what was originally built as the Anjuman Agiari. The Parsi population in that area had gradually passed away, so the Agiari was no longer needed; rather than let the building crumble, it was converted into a residence. He has carefully maintained the original prayer hall. While measuring and photographing the building Dasturji Panthaki shared with me secret compartments that hid precious religious objects, books written by Barjor Rivetna (possibly my ancestor), the miracles of *nirang*, and the metaphysics of Zarathushti fire temples. While returning to the *dharamshala* I met Mr. Aspy Borjorji Dastur Kumana, a weathered old man who also lived in a former *agiari*. the Lal Agiari.





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Traveling Between N. America And Old Homelands OF INDIA / PAKISTAN / IRAN



Next day I walked to the quaint Zaiya-Wadia Daremeher. The gate was locked. The non-Parsi neighbors pointed to the house across the street and said, "Dasturji." I disturbed the sleeping dasturji who happily gave me the key. Stored in the dusty main hall were bikes, piles of *kathi*, and



dozens of wooden chairs.

While walking back to the *dharamshala* an old Parsi man on his verandah recognized me as a Parsi and greeted me. Within a few minutes I was inside Mr. Chiniwalla's 200 year old house to see his house fire. For over 150 years it burned continuously and ruled the house from its throne. The room, *pavis*, metal bars, and *afargahn* are still there, but the fire is not. The room is still considered sacred and only Parsis are allowed to enter.

That evening I went to visit Sarosh and Azmi Wadia; both young local architects. Sarosh gave me a copy of his architecture thesis entitled ***A Study of Zoroastrian Fire Temples***, a great resource.

I also visited the Goti Adaran, which stands like an island in the middle of open fields. The *dasturji* posed proudly in front of images of his father, grandfather and great grandfather, who had all served all their lives at the same *adaran*.

The next day Malcolm, one of the "orphans," took me on a motorcycle road trip to visit fire temples in the surrounding small villages. Our first stop was in Olpad where his family lived. The fire temple in Olpad is actually a four-room *dharamshala* with one room converted to a prayer room that was the home of a continuously burning, but not consecrated fire. The building was crumbling, but the fire was still tenderly tended by Malcolm's father and uncle. We then went to the Seth Manekji Cooverji Bhathena and Hormasji Manekji Pochkhanawalla Daremeher in Kudiana.

When I met the three remaining elderly Parsi residents of Kudiana, the fate of Kudiana, Olpad and dozens of other fire temples in small villages became very clear. The residents will die, the fires will be relocated or will die, the buildings will be abandoned, then disappear, and after a generation it is very likely that no Parsi will ever visit Kudiana again.

The next day I boarded a train to Bharuch where I met more people, visited fire temples, and once again relied on the vast Zarathushti network to be my guide. Here in North America we are slowly adding to and expanding that network. Our challenge will be to build and grow in responsible ways that adapt to our new environment, yet not change so much that we create something entirely different.

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Cyrus Rivetna
founded his own
firm Rivetna
Architects, Inc.
(www.rivetna.com,
312-341-9006) in
Chicago, in 2005,
and has, in a short



space of time, built up an impressive project portfolio which includes residential and institutional buildings, restaurants, hotels, public libraries, and historic restoration. Cyrus is most enthusiastic about his current project, to design a new Zoroastrian Center in the Dallas area, where he hopes to integrate traditional fire temple concepts from his study trips to Iran and India. Cyrus also enjoys photography. His photographs have been exhibited in Chicago art galleries, and published in periodicals including the Chicago Tribune. He has also built up a noteworthy collection of old Parsi photographs, books, and other memorabilia.

Cyrus is an active member of the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago, and a board member of the Center for Religious Architecture, and Faith-in-Place, which strives to bring "green" concepts to places of worship.



T ravel

Traveling Between N. America And Old Homelands
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TRAVELING LIFE'S ROAD!

Freyaz Shroff



I have always been a woman of faith, an intelligent woman, one who is kind, compassionate, respectful and, above all, filled with love for everyone. However, on January 3, 2006 I began a journey in my life that would start to define exactly what it meant to be loving, responsible and, above all, full of faith.

Relationships I had counted on betrayed me. A career I had moved towards eluded me. It didn't matter in which direction I turned: my life as I knew it seemed to be crumbling. I remember sitting with my prayer book open and just crying right into it. Every part of me—physical, mental, and emotional—had just dissolved.

In December 2006, life led me to Mumbai, India for ten days. Those ten days have now turned into two years. Living in India brought its own set of challenges, but destiny had its own plans and I was provided all I needed to embrace each one of them, ultimately leading to work I could call my own.

This work pushed me beyond all boundaries of my comfort zone. A beautiful two-story home in America had been replaced with a comfortable three-bedroom apartment, but in a building where poor people can be found sleeping in the entrance corridor. Smells from an overflowing public restroom can accompany you all four floors up in the elevator and the age of the building is starting to show in the very evident cracks and slanting balconies. Hot water on demand had been replaced with remembering to turn on the geyser to warm the water at least 15-20 minutes before hopping in the shower. Everything from the way I dressed and spoke to the way I thought and worked changed. However, nothing changed more noticeably than the way I started to move around the city. You see, my luxury car had been replaced by walking, taxis and—as my work took me further out—trains!

It was in the trains, however, that I learned the true definition of the words determination, grit and passion! Please keep in mind that there are pluses and minuses to everything in life and I am choosing here to showcase the positive spirit of the average female Mumbai local train traveler.





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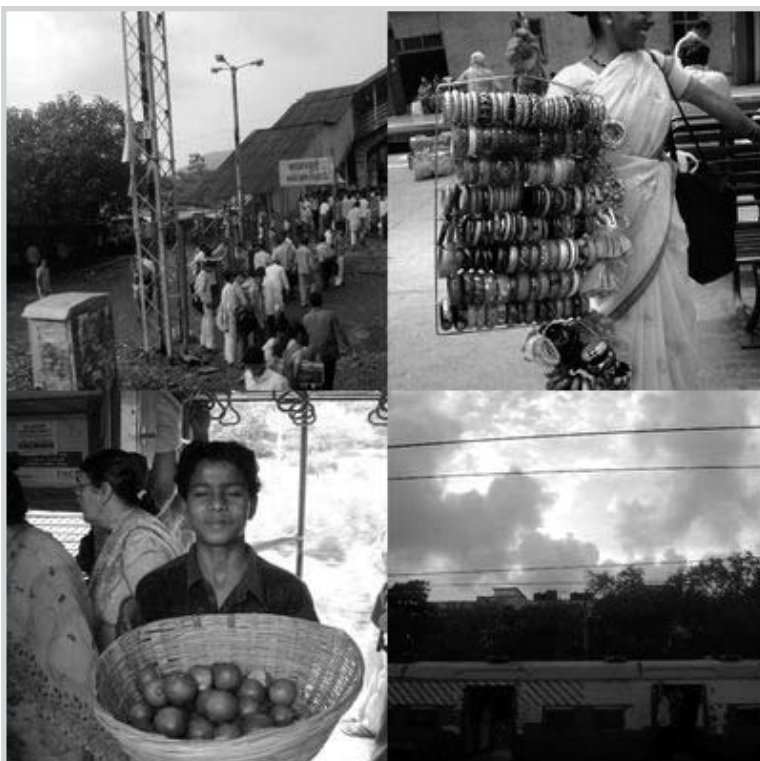


Every day, eight million people travel in the local trains of Mumbai. Each train compartment is configured for 200 people, but inevitably during peak times we end up with 500 passengers.



I am fortunate enough to be able to travel in the "ladies only" compartment; there are usually two per train. Every morning I see women who get on the train with disheveled hair, an old *chunni* (shawl), and a couple of bags. In the forty minutes we travel together I see them completely transform themselves. The *chunni* is replaced with a clean one that matches their outfit; make-up, hair and the perfect *bindi* complete the transformation. All this is done amidst the hawkers on the train and the other passengers trying to get on and off at each station. Some who have mastered the art can do this while they are standing. Girls going to college study the last little bit before appearing for their exam, older women pray, and some stand by the door to enjoy the breeze (this is the only time they have for any meditation or contemplation). Conversation flows easily amongst those who know one another. Hawkers in the morning sell book bags, pencil boxes and make-up items to meet the shopping needs of the hour.

Evenings on the train see a different atmosphere. The crowds remain, but this time the empty bags from the morning are filled with vegetables bought outside the train station. Students are now doing homework for the next day and hawkers are selling food stuffs, earrings and toys. Since there are no doors on the compartments, women gather at the back of the compartment entrance to peel and cut their vegetables. Each helps the other so that the work is done by the time they reach their destination.



The name of the game is to get it all done: the shopping, the cooking, the cleaning, the childrens' homework, mealtime, bedtime and anything else that needs their attention. And if you didn't know any better each woman on that train would have you convinced that everything was perfect in their lives, because there is never a shortage of smiles to go around.

If you really take the time to observe and get to know these amazing women, you will find, as I did, yourself in them. You will learn that you, too, have within you the amazing spirit so many of them carry within their souls. You see, when all is said and done, you have to do what you have to do and there is no way

around it, so one might as well step into the game called life and embrace each day.



Freyaz Shroff has lived in the USA for twenty years and is currently residing in India. She has dedicated much of that time as a volunteer serving primarily children and women, both in the United States and in India. She has overseen successful community building projects and supported "stay in school" programs by working with children "at risk." To reach Freyaz please write to her at

freyaz@aol.com or call +91-98922-73973

I wish each of them continued happiness and I wish for all readers travels which take you far enough so that you are able to put life into a different perspective!



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Traveling In History



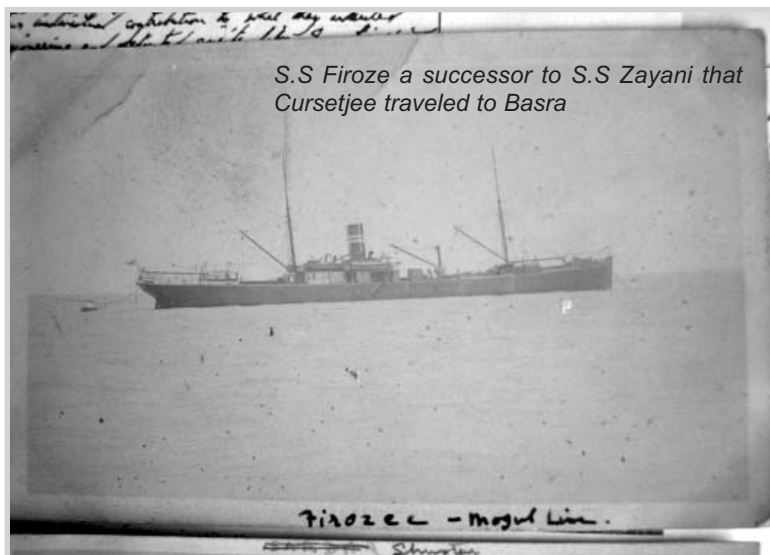
AN IDEAL HOLIDAY, JUST WATCH OUT FOR SHRAPNEL

Johan Mathew



What would possess a man—a retired, prominent, partially-disabled Parsi man—to take a vacation in a war zone? This is the question that obsessed me while reading *The Land of the Date*, a travelogue of a journey to Iraq during World War I written by Cursetjee Manockjee Cursetjee. The author was the son of Manockjee Cursetjee, the prominent Parsi philanthropist who founded the first Parsi girls' school. He was educated at Christchurch College, Oxford, served a long career as an advocate and then a judge in the Small Claims Court of Bombay, and was one of the early members of the Indian National Congress: thus, C.M. Cursetjee was a proud member of the Parsi and the Indian elite. So it seemed fairly odd to me and fairly demanding of an explanation why this accomplished and respectable man, upon his retirement, decided to hop on a ship to heart of the Mesopotamian front of WWI.

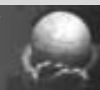
Cursetjee's account begins in 1916, only six months after the debacle at Kut al-Amara, where the Indian Army and its British officers had retreated, were besieged and were slowly and completely decimated through disease, starvation and desertion. In the Foreword, Cursetjee claims that he was prompted by "mainly the need for thorough rest and change" to undertake this journey. However, this sentiment appears implausible as Cursetjee details his and others' hesitations about making a trip to a war zone. Yet he ultimately avoids actually explaining his decision by presenting it to the reader as a *fait accompli* and describing it as an "ideal holiday." Cursetjee undoubtedly had to call up some



S.S Firoze a successor to S.S Zayani that Cursetjee traveled to Basra

favours and twist some arms to enter a war zone and the stops he makes are merely those of a cargo ship unloading and loading merchandise. With much less effort he probably could have seen the historical sites of Persia or Egypt, but he does not choose to. While he describes it with some eloquence and flourish, calling it *The Land of the Date*, the British military encampment in Basra, operational headquarters for the conquest of Iraq, was hardly a holiday destination.

So, denied any explanations from the author himself I poured over the text, trying to ascertain from between the lines what C.M. Cursetjee seemed so determined to conceal. *The Land of the Date* is hardly a work of great literary merit or intellectual depth: it is an overly florid account of a trip through one of the more barren and boring land/seascapes in the world. Every time the ship



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calls at a port Cursetjee has the same itinerary: he scans the horizon for the Union Jack, he makes a call upon the local British consul or agent, and finally he tours around the local *souq* — an exercise from which he himself claims boredom as each *souq* seems no different from the last. But it



is in these repetitive excursions that we get the first hint of why Cursetjee makes his trip.

There are two types of people that Cursetjee describes in his travelogue: natives and imperialists.

The natives are nameless, agglomerated Arabs and Persians; the imperialists are educated, modern individuals, for whom Cursetjee devotes much time and extensive descriptions. Moreover, the imperialists that Cursetjee describes were not merely Anglo-Saxon Britons: they were also Indians.

In the penultimate and the longest chapter, entitled "Views and Conclusions," Cursetjee makes this explicit. It is an extended discourse on why British India should possess and maintain its newly conquered colony in Iraq and why Indians should be central to this project. Just as India had provided the soldiers for the conquest of Iraq, it could provide administrators, traders and skilled workers for the colonization and civilization of Iraq. He encourages Indians to come and prosper in Iraq and the Gulf, chastises the British for hesitating in their civilizing mission, and even suggests that Urdu rather than Arabic should be the language of Iraq. After lulling, indeed boring, the readers with his avowals of loyalty to the Union Jack and the civilizing mission of the British Empire, Cursetjee upturns the traditional formula of Empire. It is no longer merely the White Man's Burden and Britons as an imperial race: now educated and civilized Indians would share that imperial burden.

So a disabled, retired Parsi takes a trip to a war zone because he wants colonization to follow conquest, and he wants Indians to get the spoils of both. *The Land of the Date* is consequently an imperialist tract hidden in a travelogue. We could then dismiss Cursetjee as a sub-imperialist and sideline his views as a somewhat unsavory outlier in Parsi history and the history of Indian nationalism. Yet we shouldn't forget that Cursetjee's imperialism was strangely inclusive: it held forth the possibility that even the colonized of the colonized (the Arabs in this case) might one day join the imperial fraternity. Cursetjee's imperialism is not really viable politics now, yet given the chauvinism that seems so prevalent in nationalism today, it might be interesting to pose the counterfactual: what if Cursetjee's vision had succeeded?



Johan

Mathew is a graduate student in the Department of History at Harvard University. He studies the history of globalization and the history of the Indian Ocean in the 19th and 20th centuries, focusing particularly on trade and cultural exchange between Bombay and the Persian Gulf. His interest in Parsis stems from a childhood in Bombay eating bowl after bowl of Dhansak.



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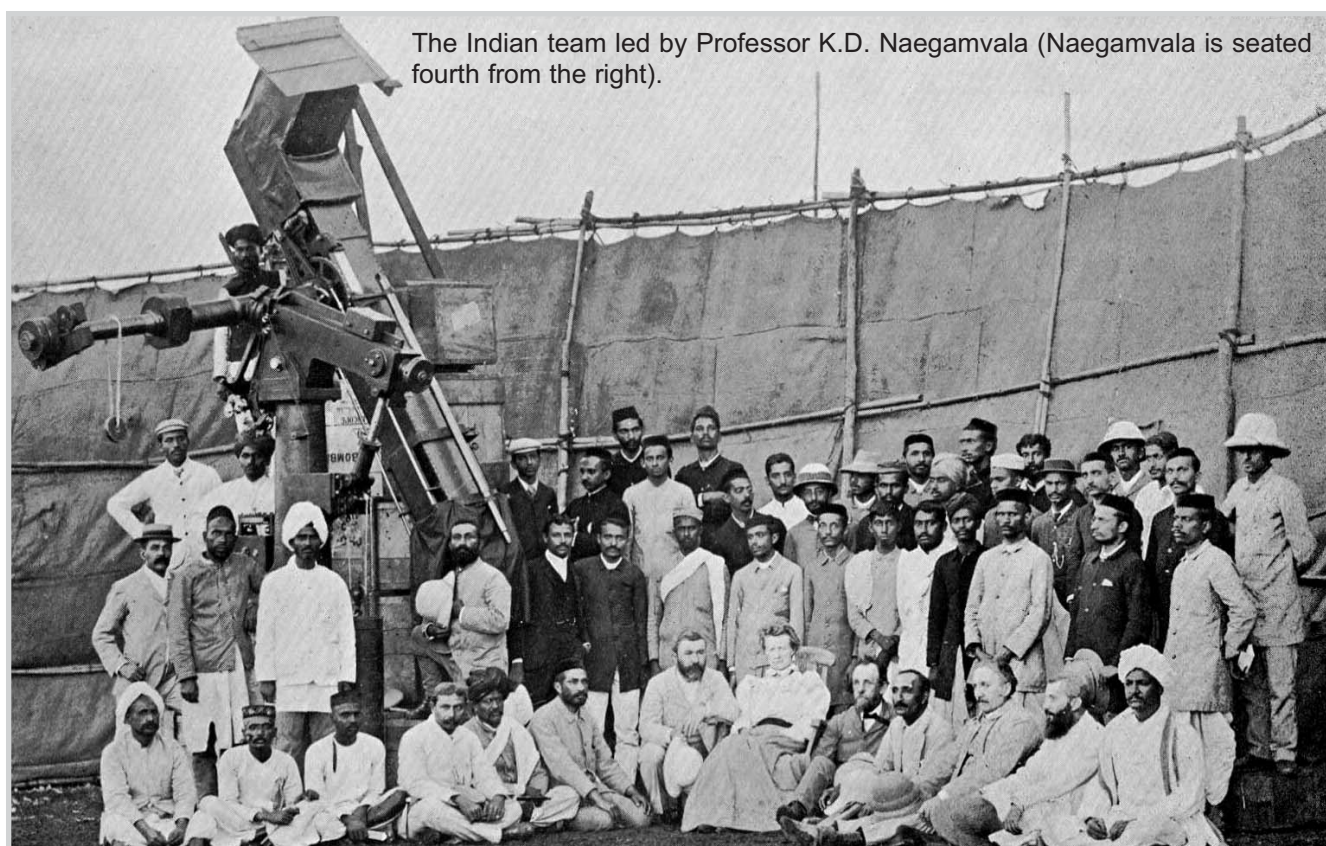
Traveling In History



**Professor Kavasji Dadabhai
Naegamvala (1857-1938)
Pioneering Parsi Astronomer**



Ardeshir B. Damania



The Indian team led by Professor K.D. Naegamvala (Naegamvala is seated fourth from the right).

Takhtasinghji's Observatory at Pune (1888-1912) was the first modern astrophysical observatory in the country and the result of efforts of Naegamvala, its first and last director. Armed with a Rs. 5,000 grant from Maharaja Takhtasinghji of Bhavnagar (in Gujarat) and a matching amount from the Bombay government, he established an observatory at Government College of Science (now College of Engineering) in Pune where he had shifted after several years at Elphinstone College. The chief instrument of the observatory was a 16½-inch aperture silver-on-parabolic glass Newtonian with a four-inch finder attached. This telescope, manufactured by the well-known firm Grubb's of Dublin, Ireland, along with its £250 observatory dome was inspected at the British government's Lambeth Observatory in 1887 or 1888 before being sent to Pune, where it was installed in 1890. The Observatory was closed down in 1912 on Naegamvala's retirement and the instruments were transferred to the observatory at Kodaikanal.

Ironically, Naegamvala's first use of the large telescope was to prove the theory of his mentor, Sir Joseph Norman Lockyer of the South Kensington Observatory, wrong. Naegamvala showed in 1891 that the chief nebular line in Orion was sharp under all circumstances and therefore could not be the remnant of a magnesium band as Lockyer had suggested.

Modern astronomy took root in India only in the later half of the eighteenth century, when it was pressed into service as a geographical aid. The most significant impact of a growing interest in stargazing in India was the setting up of modern observatories. Some of these scientific facilities, which compiled star charts using telescopes, were founded by Indian rajas, while the rest were founded by the East India Company (EIC). This was not because the EIC was particularly keen on enlightening Indians about astronomy. Its aim was to gain knowledge of the Indian subcontinent and its natural resources. Since the available data were not accurate enough and not based on systematic astronomical observations, the EIC promoted cartography with the aid of its own surveyors. This



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geographical surveying indirectly supported modern astronomical activities in India.

Many Company officers started making, for their own amusement, astronomical observations for the determination of latitudes and longitudes.

Surveying instruments were thus in great demand.



They could be purchased from England or from the captains and crew of the European ships.

When an officer died or left India, his surveying instruments would find ready takers. In the early days, it was not the policy of the Company to supply surveying instruments to its officers. But a small stock of surveying instruments—sextants, quadrants, theodolites, clocks, telescopes, etc.—were assembled and used.

On February 23, 1896 Professor Kavasji Naegamvala, in his capacity as the director of Takhtasinghji's Observatory, wrote a letter to the Governor of Bombay on the need to prepare for the total solar eclipse which was to take place on January 21-22, 1898. The instruments available at Pune were not up to the mark and Kavasji estimated that he would need Rs. 10,000 in total to purchase the latest equipment to observe and photograph, for the first time in India, this rare eclipse. He, however, offered to raise half of that sum by himself through private sources. He also, at the same time, proposed that he be allowed to proceed to Norway to participate in observing the total eclipse of the sun there on August 9, 1896 in order to familiarize himself with the latest methods and instruments employed.

The British government sanctioned Rs. 5,000 for Kavasji and agreed to bear his expenses for a trip to Scandinavia as a member of the joint venture of the Royal Society and the Royal Astronomical Society to Vadsö, Finland. But as luck would have it, clouds on that day prevented the team from making any observation at all. For Kavasji all was not lost for he had the opportunity to examine closely the numerous instruments that were brought together there by five different observatories in Europe. Kavasji was strongly urged by Sir Norman Lockyer, of the South Kensington Observatory, London, to add, if possible, one more prism to the Cooke prismatic camera in order to obtain twice the dispersion ever attempted until then.

On Kavasji's return to India arrangements were made for him to purchase the necessary instruments, principally the six-inch Cooke triplet equatorial refractor with a 45 degree prism and a coelostat of a twelve-inch diameter. The latter instrument was made available to Kavasji by the Rajah of Miraj, who was a great champion of science in the Deccan. In November 1896, Kavasji once again approached the government for permission to raise an additional sum of Rs. 3000 if the government would raise its grant to a total of Rs. 7000 which would include the second prism as suggested by Lockyer. In the end, all the instruments that Kavasji desired to obtain were sent to him, but some reached him only ten to fifteen days before the eclipse.

The path of the solar eclipse passed between Pune and Sholapur. The site selected for observing the eclipse was to be four miles from Jeur station (Sholapur district) on the Greater Indian Peninsula Railway (GIPR), which was extremely close to the center of the "path of totality" of the eclipse. This site was the best as it was hilly, affording many points for observations, well supplied with water, and less affected by clouds that would drift by from the northeast monsoon.

Kavasji assigned campsites to other scientists including two American teams, one led by Professor W. Wallace Campbell of the Lick Observatory near San Jose (operated by the University of California, Berkeley at that time) and the other by Professor Charles Burckhalter of the Chabot Observatory located in Oakland. A Japanese team led by a Professor Tirao and a Professor Hiramaya were given a site further west.

Days were spent setting up the instruments and rehearsing the parts to be played by various persons in the Indian team. Kavasji had thirteen instruments to calibrate and set up and had to make sure that everything went according to clockwork: the total eclipse would last for only two minutes and another chance may not come his way during his lifetime. A partition of Hessian cloth and bamboos was erected all around the campsite to protect the expensive instruments and prevent any disturbance from wind or animals during the eclipse. A number of students from the Engineering College, Pune and Elphinstone College were on hand to render assistance, and among them there were twenty Parsis! In all nearly fifty persons were working under direct supervision of Kavasji on January 21-22, 1898.

The sky was clear on January 22. On that fateful day, the various operators demonstrated a remarkable degree of precision while observing the eclipse, even though small mistakes were made by some of them. I will not bore the reader with the very detailed scientific observations written by Professor Kavasji in his book. However, the most interesting observations were of animals, birds and plants as observed by Mr. P.T. Pavri and Mr. R.D. Naegamvala (Kavasji's brother). Several cattle from the nearby villages were specially brought close to Kavasji's observation post and allowed to graze in the pastures north of the camp. Soon after the eclipse began and six minutes before totality, it was reported that the crows started to caw loudly and the village dogs began barking and baying. The chickens, too, began to cackle and the pigeons began to coo incessantly. But the cattle continued to graze normally. No other birds



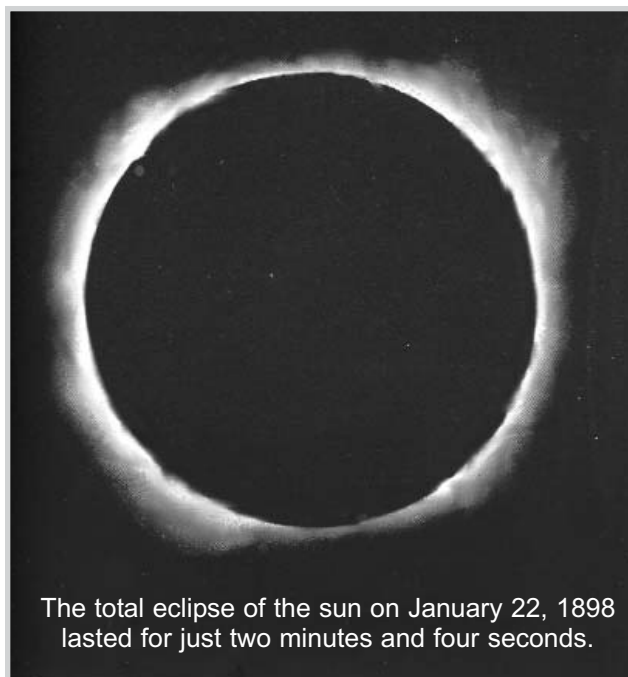
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were visible in the sky. The few kites that were circling above had descended to earth. During the two minutes of total eclipse there was a purple darkness and total silence from all birds and animals, including the cattle which had stopped grazing. However, after totality the birds began chirping as if it was morning and the kites began to soar once again. Professor G.M. Woodrow observed that the Leguminosae plants had closed their leaves before totality, mistaking it for sunset. The tarwad tree (*Cassia auriculata*) had already closed its leaves 40 minutes before totality and the *Crotolaria juncea* plants also did the same. In addition, there was a drop in temperature of 4 degree Fahrenheit. However, thirty minutes after the total eclipse things began to revert to normal.

As it was 90o+ Fahrenheit during daytime, the photographic plates could only be developed between 1AM to sunrise when the temperature came down to 43 degree Fahrenheit. Kavasji's team's photographs had come out exceptionally well; so were those taken by the team from Lick Observatory under Campbell. This was the first total solar eclipse witnessed by Campbell. However, his arrival at Jeur did not augur well at first. Worn down by long travel—two months by boat from San Francisco to Hawaii, Japan, China, Singapore, Ceylon, and finally Bombay—the heat at Jeur, tension, un-agreeable food, and strange customs, he could not determine the exact latitude and longitude of the site to



The total eclipse of the sun on January 22, 1898 lasted for just two minutes and four seconds.



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the last decimal point. This upset him so much that he had a temporary nervous breakdown and began ranting that he would not succeed after having come so far. Alarmed at this turn of events and Campbell's wild-eyed look, his wife, Elizabeth, gave him a massive dose of whiskey and soda and put him to bed at the camp. In the morning Campbell felt much better and he was able to determine his exact position, which was only two miles off the center of the approximately fifty-mile wide path of totality. Luckily, Naegamvala does not report any medical problems to himself or to any members of his team.

Thus ended the report of the total eclipse of the sun by a Parsi physicist of extraordinary talent. Kavasji D. Naegamvala was so highly respected for his knowledge of astronomy that after he retired in 1912 officials could not find anyone to fill his shoes and the observatory that he directed for all of 24 years was shut down..Kavasji lived for 26 more years during which he continued to pursue his own interest in astronomy and publish more papers. He died in 1938 at the ripe old age of 81.

Kavasji Dadabhai Naegamvala : Report on the total solar eclipse of January 21-22 1898 as observed at Jesur in Western India, Bombay, Government Central Press 1902

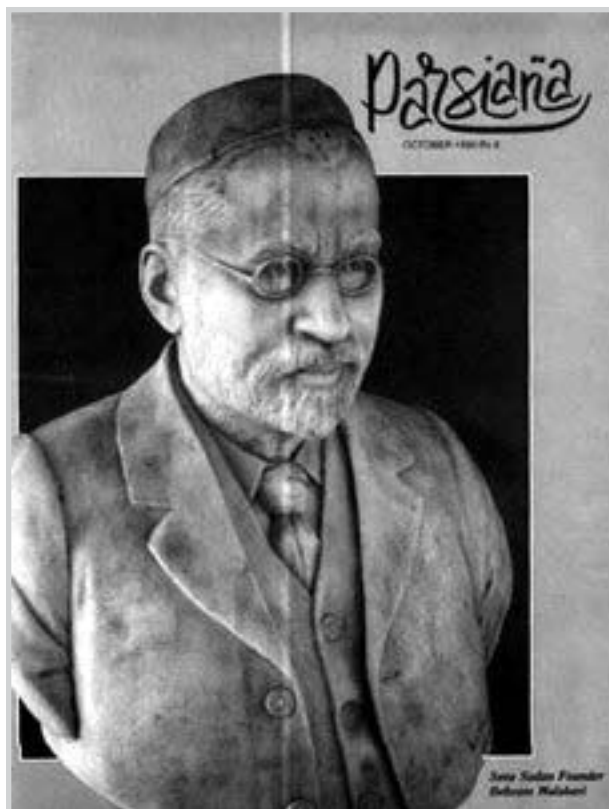


Travel

THE INDIAN SPECTATOR IN THE 'METROPOLIS OF THE WORLD':

Behramji Malabari in Victorian London

Simin Patel



"The fact is, I have my own ideas of travel, as more or less everything else."

Behramji Malabari,
Gujarat and Gujaratis (1882)

Social reformer and journalist Behramji Malabari's ideas of travel were of the slow and steady kind. Not the rush of the globetrotter who consumes one foreign country after another without having first savored his own. Rather, his initial rambles were made on native territory. "The first tour I remember having made was, of course, round grandmother's kitchen parlour. Thence I transferred my attention to the front yard of the house, thence to the street, the neighbouring street, the whole suburb of Nanpura and the surrounding suburbs; next the camp and the villages beyond."¹ By 1889 Malabari's tours, in what the scholar Inderpal Grewal calls concentric movements², had widened so substantially that he had "rambled over nearly the whole of the Indian Continent."³ "Knowing" India, Malabari proceeded to London to study "the metropolis of the world"⁴ by the comparative method. This method, he informs us, prevents an indiscriminate eulogizing of the host country and a sense of being ashamed of one's own, for the traveler comes armed with the awareness of his own "national systems"⁵ and can compare and contrast more judiciously. *The Indian Eye on English Life: or, Rambles*

of a Pilgrim Reformer, first published in 1891, is the result of Malabari's careful assessment of British culture during his five month sojourn in London in 1890.⁶

Malabari conducted his ethnography on foot, rambling through the city's safe and seamy, private and public spaces. The hustle and bustle of the London crowd, the ways of the policeman and postman, the English weather, food and habit of drinking (and drunkenness), the poor, the consumptive laborer, are all scrutinized by his "Indian eye." The historian Antoinette Burton suggests that Malabari fashioned himself as a *flâneur*—"a new kind of public person with the leisure to wander, watch and browse"⁷—in the imperial metropole. The *flâneur*, as the scholar Tom McDonough elaborates, was a connoisseur of human nature, confident in his capacity to rank and judge the strangers he passed by while being reassured that they, in turn, bore him no ill will.⁸ Malabari's role as *flâneur* was not uncontested. On one occasion a "London rough" ridicules him for wearing flannel on a rainy day by sneeringly asking "Yaw, gov'nor, foine day for creekit?"⁹ Malabari's Parsi headgear was also not spared the "rough's" scrutiny. Burton indicates that these instances of being thrown off balance (where an anxiety of authority is evident) stemmed from Malabari's status as a colonial subject aspiring to a predominantly white male tradition of *flâneurs*: "*The Indian Eye on English Life* does not display the sense of possession or the confident familiarity that was generally characteristic of English men ("bourgeois tourists") observing the English scene. Malabari's quest to be *flâneur* resonates more with the experience of Victorian bourgeois women who walked the streets as social investigators, insofar as it was impossible to see without also being seen, for both of them."¹⁰

This discussion will examine the "hiccups" that unsettled Malabari's solitary strolls in the imperial metropolis. Taking recourse to another of Malabari's ethnographic texts, *Gujarat and Gujaratis*, as well as some of his miscellaneous writing, I suggest that these symbolic "falls" in his rambles are common literary imagery rather than simply the result of presumptuous walking in the metropolis. Admitting an incorrect professional choice or the failure



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of a literary endeavor or the difficulties he faced printing and distributing his pamphlet, "Appeal from the Daughters of India," to the British public, Malabari's narratives do not shy away from the difficult, awkward or unflattering. The means (no matter how trying and even embarrassing) to an

end are as carefully attested as the end itself. In the preface to Malabari's collection of English poetry, *The Indian Muse in English Garb* : (1876), he mentions how the Prince of Wales rejected his request of having the verses presented to him on the grounds "of never giving any special permission for the dedication to him, of works with the authors of which he was not personally acquainted¹¹." A fellow social reformer, Mary Carpenter, a Briton, was then approached and readily conceded to honoring his verse. In *Gujarat and Gujaratis* Malabari stoically notes: "Starting on life's pilgrimage in the too early twilight of youth, I have often stumbled into dry nullahs (water courses)... And in groping my way to reach the other side, I have scratched and cut myself badly. But it is a matter of thankfulness to be able to say that in none of my stumbles have I broken any bones. However bad the fall, I have always managed to pick myself up... These roughs and tumbles of life have become a part of my nature¹²..."

Why Malabari chose to include in his narratives the "roughs and tumbles" is debatable. Perhaps it lent to his role as social reformer—the chivalrous, unthreatening (stumbling, bumbling, half comic) Parsi protector of India's Hindu female population. One of the chief reasons for Malabari's visit to England was to convince the British government of his crusade against the practice of child marriage prevalent in India. "...It would be idle to expect the English, as a people, to concern themselves with our affairs, when they have so many of their own to occupy them... There is hardly any excuse, however, for the ignorance of responsible men who have the governing of India... Where is the need for running away from Indian questions?"¹³ Malabari, then, serves as self-appointed messenger, carrying the Indian question to English territory. He explains that he carries this welcome burden since the orthodox Hindu "will effect no reform, however imperative. He has always refused to move with the times¹⁴..."

The *Indian Eye* attests to the various receptions Malabari and his cause received in England. A prelate ends their interview, which lasts a few minutes, by shaking his hand and mentioning "Let me hear from time to time." A nobleman, with whom Malabari spent an hour, "jumps up suddenly with the words:—'Now I must fly...'¹⁵" just when Malabari thought he was pressing his point. Perhaps it was the "unsuccess"¹⁶ of the experiences with Englishmen (be it the Prince of Wales, the prelate or the nobleman) that made Malabari such an ardent admirer of Englishwomen, rather than some sort of consensus between him and the women (fortunate and unfortunate) of the world, as has been suggested by recent scholarship¹⁷. *The Indian Eye* (tangibly and textually) is often turned to Englishwomen confidently walking down the city streets, or keeping Malabari company on the omnibus or in the privacy of their homes. His gaze however remains respectable and sexually nonthreatening. It is usually the company he keeps—English "wives, widows, and old maids",¹⁸ all effectively desexualized by age or marital circumstance—that ensures that relations remain socially safe. On occasions that might turn sexually tense Malabari salvages the situation by channeling his thoughts: "As the bus hobbles along, I feel my fair neighbours knocking against me every moment. They do not seem to mind it at all; it is a matter of course. Why, then, should I cry out against the inevitable? Evil to him who evil thinks."¹⁹ Malabari's desire towards lady nurses, wearing "some dark material with snow-white linen tucked under the chin and running round the neck", is sublimated by calling them "good sister(s)".²⁰ In fact it is The Lady Nurse, the Lady with the Lamp, as Florence Nightingale was often called,²¹ who wrote the introduction to Dayaram Gidumal's biography of Malabari.

Malabari performed his masculinity in the metropolis in various ways—a *flâneur* who occasionally fell, a self-styled "pilgrim reformer", a parent to the Hindu women he spoke on behalf of, an Indian Spectator²² with an eye for Englishwomen, and the master of the Parsi male servant he calls Crocodile. Why Malabari reduces Crocodile to his namesake is debatable (In *Gujarat and Gujaratis*, for example, his servant remains "Rasul"). Crocodile's animalism is everywhere—he extends "his



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The following is an excerpt from Simin Patel's Masters thesis titled "Passages and Perspectives: Parsi Travel Writing in English." The chapter examines social reformer and journalist Behramji Malabari's travelogue on London.



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paw”²³ to greet a maid, he lies flat on the floor of a carriage, and, “When the inspector came in and shook him gently, he rubbed his eyes and sprawled in such a fearful attitude that the inspector turned away from him with a shriek ‘Hoo, Arab!’”²⁴ An answer may lie in Malabari’s perception of

Crocodile as a wastrel. Born to a gentleman at large and used to a shabby-genteel existence, Crocodile’s background seems to be more privileged than Malabari’s portrayal of his own. Yet Crocodile amounts to nothing more than a “bulking baby”. His life remains “a failure, because he cannot see the purpose that underlies it.”²⁵ Malabari’s devaluation of Crocodile suggests that class or community solidarity do not guarantee subjectivity. “Manhood” must be striven for, stumbles and falls overcome. Till then Crocodile must remain half baby, half beast.

FOOTNOTES: 1 Behramji M. Malabari, *Gujarat and Gujaratis* (Bombay: Fort Printing Press, 1889), p. xi. Nanpura is a locality in the Gujarati city of Surat.

2 Inderpal Grewal, *Home and Harem. Nation, Gender, Empire, and the Cultures of Travel* (London: Leicester University Press, 1996), p. 151.

3 Behramji M. Malabari, *The Indian Eye on English Life, or, Rambles of a Pilgrim Reformer* (Bombay: 1895), p. 1.

4 Malabari 1895: p. 2.

5 Malabari 1889: p. xiv.

6 A second and third edition of *The Indian Eye* followed in 1893 and 1895. In the third edition, which has been used in the dissertation, Malabari included a few anecdotes from a second visit he made to England.

7 Burton quotes Elizabeth Wilson’s definition of a flâneur. Antoinette Burton, *At the Heart of the Empire: Indians and the Colonial Encounter in Late-Victorian Britain* (California: University of California Press, 1998), p.174.

8 Tom McDonough, “The Crimes of the Flaneur” in *October*, Vol. 102, Autumn 2002: pp. 101-122.

9 Malabari explains that flannel was commonly worn in India on rainy days. In Britain it used was reserved largely for cricket or lawn tennis. “I make up my mind to discard flannel,” avows Malabari after the “rough’s” snide remark. Malabari 1895: p. 238.

10 Burton 1998: p. 174.

11 Quoted in Eunice de Souza (ed.), *Early Indian Poetry in English: An Anthology, 1829-1947* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 329.

12 Malabari 1889: p. i.

13 Malabari 1895: p. 68.

14 Malabari: 1889: p. 298. The Hindu orthodoxy retorted that Malabari, being a Parsi, was not equipped with an intimate knowledge of Hindu scripture and custom and suggested he reform his own community instead. “Well, as a matter of fact, we Parsis have got rid of infant marriage, bigamy, polygamy and several other evils borrowed from Hindus. And it is after having reformed ourselves that we are appealing to the educated sense of the mother community to do likewise,” Malabari replied. *The Indian Spectator* (March 7, 1885) quoted in Eckehard Kulke, *The Parsees in India: A Minority as Agent of Social Change* (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1974), p.114.

15 Malabari 1885: pp. 130-1.

16 To borrow a word from British poet W. H. Auden in his poem “In the Memory of W.B. Yeats” (1940).

17 The chapters on Malabari in Burton’s *At the Heart of the Empire: Indians and the Colonial Encounter in Late-Victorian Britain* and Grewal’s *Home and Harem. Nation, Gender, Empire, and the Cultures of Travel*, would be examples.

18 Malabari 1895: p. 169.

19 Malabari 1895: p. 32.

20 Malabari 1895: p. 47.

21 The Victorian public pictured her carrying a lamp through miles of sick soldiers in the middle of the night. See Derek Gregory, “Between the Book and the Lamp: Imaginative Geographies of Egypt, 1849-50” in *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, New Series, Vol. 20, No. 1. 1995: pp. 29-57.

22 To borrow the title of the newspaper Malabari ran in Bombay.

23 Malabari 1895: p. 171.

24 Malabari 1895: p. 22. Malabari explains the origins of the soubriquet-“He cannot be charged honestly with eating or drinking like a whale; but he can weep like a Crocodile, unproved when he had to clear his character. Hence his name, which I hope he may try to deserve.” Malabari 1895: p. 6.

25 Malabari 1895: pp. 4-5.



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Traveling In History



Exploring Ancient Persian Heritage Along The Eastern Rim Of The Mediterranean

Dinyar Patel

In late May of 2007 I shared a table with an elderly math teacher named Mehmet at a crowded outdoor café in Istanbul's Sultanahmet district. Between plates of kebabs, I told Mehmet that I was Zarathushti and our conversation turned toward the shared cultural heritage of Turkey, Iran, and Central Asia. Mehmet mentioned the large number of Persian words that remained in the Turkish vocabulary, celebration of *naurooz* amongst the Kurds in the east and, interestingly, the custom of dancing around a fire after weddings, still common in regions surrounding his hometown of Erzurum in eastern Anatolia.



The site of Darius the Great's bridge of boats across the Bosphorus, north of Istanbul. This location was also strategically important during the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople: the Ottomans built two forts here (the fort of Rumeli Hisari is visible in the picture) to cut off Byzantine access to the Black Sea.

It was my last night in Istanbul before I began a month-long overland journey through Turkey, Syria and Jordan to Egypt. In the fertile eastern Mediterranean rim, a region bitterly contested amongst empires due to its strategic position between the sea and the desert, reminders of ancient history are everywhere. Today's visitors to the region primarily explore the great monuments of two empires, the Roman and Byzantine. Yet, amidst a landscape of Roman *cardo maximi* (columned main streets) and Byzantine basilicas are reminders of the ancient Persians, a people who also vied for control of the region and regularly wrested that control away from their western rivals. The eastern Mediterranean boasts relatively few physical reminders of its Persian past, and cultural legacies, such as those Mehmet described to me, appear to be even rarer. Nevertheless, considering the contributions of the Achaemenians, Sasanians, and other Persian empires helps us develop a more complete history of this ancient meeting ground between East and West.

Asia Minor, encompassing most of what is modern Turkey, was an especially crucial

arena for ancient Persian and Greek interaction. After Cyrus the Great's (reigned from 558-529 B.C.) conquest Asia Minor remained under Achaemenian control until the time of Alexander the Great (330 B.C.). Asia Minor was also the launching pad for Darius the Great's campaigns in Europe. In 513 B.C., most likely, Darius' army crossed over the Bosphorus on a specially-engineered bridge of boats and then swooped down on Byzantium, conquering the Greek city. Herodotus records seeing a temple painting in Samos depicting Darius watching his troops cross over from Asia into Europe.¹ The site of Darius' crossing—the narrowest point of the Bosphorus—lies only a few miles north of the modern center of Istanbul. And the bridge of boats has a modern form: the Fetih Sultan Mehmet Bridge, completed by Turkish engineers in 1988, now carries a superhighway linking Europe and Asia.

Achaemenian influence was much more entrenched further to the east in the volcanic moonscape of Cappadocia, to where I next traveled. According to Herodotus, Cappadocia was home to many Zarathushti temples and priests—centuries later, the historian Strabo regarded this region to be almost a living part of Persia.² While Cappadocia today boasts extensive monuments dating from when the area was a stronghold of monastic Christendom, hardly anything remains from this Persian era. Two knowledgeable guides told me that they knew of no specifically Zarathushti sites in the region, though they did claim that the two volcanoes that tower over Cappadocia, Mount Hasan and Mount Erciyes, were held sacred by the Persians.



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From Cappadocia I traveled southeast through utterly stunning countryside: first, the grasslands of southern Cappadocia abruptly end at the Taurus Range, high peaks of granite that then drop into the hazy Mediterranean plain, filled with groves of olive trees. After rounding the northeast corner of



the Mediterranean, the arid flatlands turn into thickly forested mountains which catch banks of fog that roll in from the sea. Over one range of peaks is Antakya (Antioch), a cradle of early Christianity, and over another range are the dry plains of Syria. Under the Achaemenians, Syria was a satrapy called Abar Nahara—"beyond the river."³



- Pendants to ward off the evil eye hanging from a tree in Cappadocia, Turkey.

Aleppo, dating from at least the third millennium BCE., is the greatest urban center of northern Syria. Like many ancient cities in the region, it was built at the foot of a bluff upon which was constructed a citadel. But Aleppo's Citadel is particularly unique: it rises out of the city much like a volcano out of the ocean, towering over the twisted networks of *souks* and alleys. As such, the Citadel was a formidable obstacle to any invading army. In 540 CE., Khosro I of the Sasanian Empire, better known as Anushirvan the Just, laid siege to the fortress but was unable to wrest it away from its Byzantine defenders.

South of Aleppo is rolling farmland that forms the breadbasket of Syria, nourished by the Orontes River. On a high bluff looking over the Orontes Valley lie the fantastic ruins of Apamea, an important Roman and Byzantine city. Approached from the west, Apamea appears as two rows of gleaming white columns, forming the *cardo maximus*, marching over grasslands for nearly two kilometers.

In spite of the city's links to Rome and Constantinople, Apamea's creation has an interesting link to the Persians. The city rose to prominence under Seleucus I Nicator, an officer of Alexander the Great and founder of the Seleucid Dynasty. He renamed the city Apamea after his Bactrian wife, Apama, who was the daughter of the Achaemenian commander Spitamenes. In 540 CE., during the same campaign that involved the unsuccessful assault on Aleppo, Anushirvan the Just destroyed the city. Sasanians held onto the city for another brief period in the 600s before its re-conquest by the Byzantines and their subsequent defeat by the Arabs. After this period of warfare, Apamea slid into unimportance. Thus, as the archaeologist Warwick Ball states, ancient Persia were intimately connected with both the rise and fall of this majestic city.⁴

From the fertile Orontes Valley I struck out west into the barren desert where



The cardo maximus at Apamea, Syria.



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highway signs pointed out the way to the Iraqi border. Rising from the bare rock and sand, however, are the ruins of the caravan city of Palmyra, which enjoyed close relations with the Parthian Empire. Palmyrene funerary customs bear, on the surface, an interesting similarity to Zarathushti ones. Wealthy families erected massive funerary towers which still today dominate the landscape. These funerary towers were, however, meant for entombment, and up to 300 people could be buried in one such structure.



Tomb of Elahbel in Palmyra, Syria. Elaborate tomb towers dot the landscape around the ancient city



From dusty Palmyra I traveled onward to the modern sprawl of Damascus which, during one phase of its extremely lengthy history, was the seat of the Achaemenian satrap of Syria. An important Shia pilgrimage site, Damascus is awash with tourists and visitors from Iran. I explored a neighboring archaeological site with one Iranian Muslim youth who, after learning that I was Parsi, began reciting the *ashem vohu* prayer to me. Damascus is also home to many Kurds who have migrated from Syria's northeast. After I told a Kurdish taxi driver that I was Zarathushti, his eyes lit up and he exclaimed, "Zardeshti!" Unable to speak much English, he put his two index fingers together, indicating that we were the same although he was Muslim.

The terrain between Damascus and Amman is largely sand and rock. However, in the northwest corner of Jordan is a pocket of fertile mountains and even forests that tourist brochures optimistically compare to Tuscany. This region is home to Jerash, one of the best preserved Roman cities in the Middle East.(photo above) Along with nine other cities including Damascus and Philadelphia (modern Amman), Jerash was a part of the Decapolis, a flourishing region on the eastern frontiers of the Roman Empire. The Sasanians briefly conquered and held Jerash in the 600s, turning the city's hippodrome into a polo field. One can still visit the dirt field of the hippodrome—indeed, an international group of entrepreneurs has restarted chariot races here!—and imagine how the Persians executed its change in function.

My time in Jordan coincided with a record heat wave, forcing me to race through Petra and Aqaba to Cairo, where I finally arrived after a tortuous ferry trip and a seven-hour drive across the bleak Sinai Peninsula. In spite of Cairo's status as the premier metropolis of the Arab world, the city's modern monuments are still utterly dwarfed by the pyramids of Giza. These same pyramids must have left the Achaemenian monarch Cambyses awestruck when he conquered Egypt in 525 B.C. Cambyses sought to legitimize his rule over the Egyptians by portraying himself as pharaoh, even claiming direct pharaonic lineage.

His successor, Darius the Great continued this legacy by codifying the Egyptian legal system and by both building and restoring Egyptian temples and infrastructure. I was reminded of one such infrastructure project while in Coptic Cairo, an old district of the city



Ruins at Jerash in northern Jordan.



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built along the edges of a harbor dedicated to the Roman emperor Trajan. It was here that Trajan allegedly began a project to link the Nile River with the Red Sea, a veritable ancient Suez Canal. Trajan's project, if it ever happened, had a precedent; during his reign Darius built upon



earlier Egyptian canal work and completed a navigable waterway between the sea and the river.⁵ He recorded his achievement on large stelae erected along the canal banks, one of which was found by Ferdinand de Lesseps, father of the modern Suez Canal:

Says Darius the King: I am a Persian. From Persia I conquered Egypt. I ordered that this canal be dug from the river which is called Nile, which flows in Egypt, to the sea which goes from Persia. Then the canal was dug as I commanded, and ships sailed from Egypt through this canal to Persia, according to my will.⁶

One month after sailing across the site of Darius the Great's bridge of boats near Istanbul, I was now close at hand to another major engineering project executed by the Achaemenian monarch. While the boats have long since disappeared and the canal now lies buried under silt and sand, it is impossible to deny that ancient Persia has left an indelible and lasting mark on the eastern rim of the Mediterranean. If one scratches the surface of any monument in the region labeled as Roman or Byzantine—and even, occasionally, Egyptian—one is bound to discover the legacy those who fought, built, and governed on behalf of Iran.

Dinyar Patel is a Ph.D. candidate in modern Indian history at Harvard University. His research on Zarathushtis has included Mahatma Gandhi's relations with the Parsis, Parsi efforts to ameliorate the conditions of Iranian Zarathushtis in the late 1800s, and interactions between the Iranian Zarathushtis and Parsis in the early 1900s.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 A.R. Burn, "Persia and the Greeks," in Ilya Gershevitch, ed., *The Cambridge History of Iran*, Vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 301.
- 2 Cited in Leo Raditsa, "Iranians in Asia Minor," in Ehsan Yarshater, ed., *The Cambridge History of Iran*, Vol. 3(1) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 107.
- 3 Ross Burns, *Monuments of Syria: An Historical Guide* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1992), p. 4.
- 4 Warwick Ball, *Syria: A Historical and Architectural Guide* (New York: Interlink, 1998), p. 102.
- 5 E. Bresciani, "The Persian Occupation of Egypt," in Gershevitch, ed., *The Cambridge History of Iran*, Vol. 2, pp. 503-09.
- 6 A.R. Burn, *Persia and the Greeks* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984), p. 115.

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Travel General Information



PREPARING TO TRAVEL?

Homi Davier

The world has changed a lot in the past century. Thanks to the invention of airplanes and high-speed trains, today's world is wide open to travel. In a day's time, we can travel to the other side of the world without using our entire life's savings. We also have a number of options open to us to help us wisely plan our travels.

1. TRAVEL AGENTS

Many people have the misconception that using a travel agent entails paying a fee. Nonsense. In actuality, most travel agents receive commissions from the vendors (airlines, hotels, tour agencies). They are the ones paying the fee, not you. A travel agent has access to deals that often are not available anywhere else. He or she can help take the headache out of planning, allowing you to sit back and relax while the logistics are plotted out. Another bonus is that travel agents often include travel insurance in their packages, to ensure that you are getting what you paid for.

2. INTERNET

With the widespread use of the world wide web, travel prices have gone down considerably. Using travel sites like Orbitz, Expedia, and Travelocity, buyers can find lower rates than ever before for airfares, hotels, and package deals. The downside? Truly finding the best travel deals often requires a lot of time and patience as you compare rates with other sites and with direct booking. Another downside is that you can't always find availability at these lower rates. Finally, buying off these sites does not give you an easy option for a refund. Although a travel agent charges a penalty you will still get some money back.

3. GUIDEBOOKS

Tried and true, travel guidebooks are a traveler's best friend. Seasoned travel writers research and compile guidebooks based on their own experiences, and who better to give advice than someone who's been there, done that? Depending on your preferred level of luxury, you are sure to find a guidebook to meet your needs. Best of all, travel guidebooks are often available at your local library—for free! One of the best guides we can recommend is <http://www.frommers.com/>: very extensive, factual, and it has been around for years. Even we, at the agency, use this guide for our clients!

To CRUISE OR NOT TO CRUISE?

There is a saying: you haven't lived until you've cruised. Cruises today have become the hottest way to spend holidays. Researchers have found that one in four Americans dreams of cruising around the world. In recent years, discount cruises have made cruising available to people of all ages and all levels of income.



What makes a great cruise vacation? Important elements include first-rate accommodations, exotic locations, sumptuous meals, world-class entertainment, and top-notch facilities. All these features are included in a cruise package,

even in a discount one. You can relax, get pampered, and discover new countries without the stress and jet lag most people experience during vacations abroad.

Research shows that today when picking a way to spend a vacation, people search for something that is drastically different from their everyday life. They seek to completely change the way of living—at least for a short period of time. Psychologists find that a greater “difference” results in better rest and relaxation. That's why people go



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on African safaris, hike in a Guatemalan jungle, rent boats in Normandy, or stay on small islands in the Caribbean.

A cruise ship is extremely different from the way most people live. You can stick to a scheduled routine or you can sunbathe all day long. It does not matter if you buy a full-price or a discount cruise. Even a discount cruise offers all the same features of cruise vacation. Cruise ships today offer the tourists the best of the traveling industry: spas, gyms, restaurants with lots of diet choices, facilities for kids with professional personnel, lots of sports activities from skating to tennis, casinos and even theatres.

When planning a cruise or buying a cruise package, even a discount cruise, you should always make sure to check what is included and what is not. A discount cruise package normally includes the cruise ship transportation, meals and snacks, accommodation, access to the gym and other sport facilities plus nightly entertainment. However, gambling and spa visits are not usually standard. Most often, the cruise package includes a trip or tour to some of the exciting places on the cruise itinerary.

If not specifically mentioned, you will have to pay for your flight to the port from where the cruise leaves, as well as for medical services if these are not covered by your medical plan. On board, you will have to pay for bar beverages except for those that come with meals. Be prepared to pay extra money for any visas that you need, and don't forget about travel insurance.

Have you read enough to start searching for the next available discount cruise package for your family? Make sure you remember these most popular cruise destinations: Bahamas, Bermuda, Caribbean, Hawaii, and Mexico. These are great cruising destinations all year round!

Today more than ever newly married couples of all ages are opting for cruise honeymoons. What could be better after months and months of high-stress and preparation of the wedding than for the honeymoon where you can be alone or with others. Dine in or dine with others and get the best value for your money!!!!

Although there is no handbook written describing basic cruising etiquette, there are some simple common sense rules you should follow while you are cruising. A cruise ship is like a large floating hotel and so just do what you would do in a hotel, dress down at the pool, dress up for dinner.

Homi Davier is the CEO of The Capricorn Group Inc (TCGI) since 1984, where he gained a reputation for taking his company public on the Nasdaq Stock Exchange and for being able to execute the successful start-up of air carriers in the Middle East and in emerging markets; including the start-up of Baltic International Airlines, based in Riga, Latvia, in June of 1992.

TCGI has also started up a series of aviation related companies since 1983 including a full service "Travel Network" servicing the retail customer base in North America.





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Traveling Between N. America And The Old
Homelands



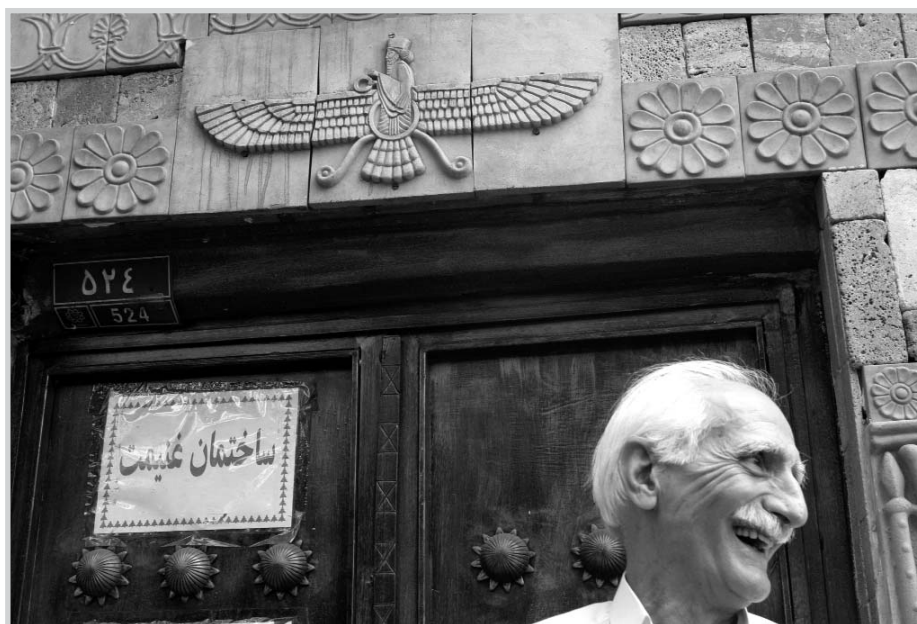
IN SEARCH OF COMMON GROUND

Deena Guzder

When I mentioned to friends and colleagues that I was going to the Islamic Republic of Iran, they looked shell shocked and incredulous. Their first question was predictable: are you scared? I gave them my stock answer: it's safe, the people are friendly and the U.S. media is hysterical. I was much more scared by the prospect of spending the rest of my summer sitting in a Columbia University newsroom editing reams of video than I was about exploring a deeply misunderstood country and gaining insight into its diverse faiths.

I began my summer reporting for News 21 in New York City, Chicago and Los Angeles, exploring how Persian identities are changed by America, navigating the seemingly indelible divide between an adopted home and a native land, two countries that are often seen as opposite extremes of a religiosity continuum. I learned how Persian immigrants' views on religion become more or less malleable and witnessed how these changes are manifest in their everyday lives. Iran offered the opposite; rather than witnessing renegotiated identities, I had an opportunity to understand how members of minority religions preserve their faiths under an Islamic theocracy.

In Iran, the Zarathushti community affectionately embraced me and invited me to participate in their ceremonies



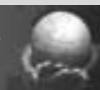
and classes. In the palm of Tehran's cloistered Zarathushti compound, Mobed Mehraban Firouzgary's lilting voice laced the air with ancient Persian prayers that rival Hafez's poetry in untainted sweetness. Inside the alabaster temple adorned with the familiar *farohar*, I closed my eyes as the ebbing and flowing words bathed me like holy water during a newborn's baptism.

I went to Iran as a young Zarathushti wanting to explore a civilization whose blood runs deep in my ancestors' veins. But I also went to Iran as a fledgling journalist trying to permeate a shroud of deception that engulfs this most misunderstood of nations. As the hawkish debate on the "Iran Question" continues to

possess Washington, most Americans' exposure to the country is limited to photos of a bespectacled, bearded "Supreme Leader" and an unshaven, uncouth firebrand of a president. It's little wonder that playing word-association games with Iran is child's fodder in the West: hijackings, terrorists, oppression, misogynists, extremists, veils, theocracy, ayatollahs, anti-Zionists and reactionaries.

In America, the vast majority of mainstream media reports about Iran depict religious revolutionaries who promote warfare abroad and violate human rights at home. But Iran is a vibrant society of millions of people. It is a country where women outnumber men in universities; where the second largest Jewish community in the Middle East resides; where politics is vigorously and openly debated in the streets; where domestic films wow international audiences; where transsexuals are permitted





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to have sex-change operations by the decree of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini himself; where the official dress code is very strict but often only followed in its loosest interpretation; where illegal satellites are ubiquitous and openly displayed on rooftops; where the government actively



encourages contraception as a means of family planning and operates one of the only condom factories in the Middle East; where downhill skiing is a popular winter recreation in the Zagros Mountains; and, where family picnics form a favorite summer pastime.

After four months of badgering the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to grant me a visa, I spent 15 days exploring my Zarathushti identity and explaining my American nationality in one of the most complex and paradoxical countries in the world.

The former U.S. Embassy in Tehran is today called the "Den of Spies" and is plastered with cryptic messages left by the religious revolutionaries of the late 1970s: "We Will Make America Face a Severe Defeat." I am told there are logical reasons for Iranians' deep distrust of America. Persians have not forgotten the 1953 CIA-orchestrated coup against their democratically elected prime minister, Mohammed Mossadegh, who nationalized Iran's oil reserves much to the chagrin of the British and Americans with economic interest in the region. And they say they resent the fact that the U.S. supported the Shah who is seen as a puppet of the West responsible for growing economic disparity and human rights violations. Of course, the recent inflammatory "Axis of Evil" rhetoric used by the Bush Administration and the equally bombastic language of Ahmadinejad has done little to salvage diplomatic relations.



Yet Iran is not a country where people seem to particularly care about one another's nationalities or, from my experience, religion to the extent that these subjects don't become the focus of discussions. It is a country where a lone American traveler, such as myself, is warmly embraced by complete strangers who are eager to serve an endless flow of steamy *chai* and Persian snacks. It is a country

where a religious police officer stopped me not for a dress-code violation but to take a photo. It is a country where a Jewish woman told me she hates President Ahmadinejad but loves her homeland. It is a country where a *mullah* granted me an interview and answered all my questions, but respectfully declined to shake my hand because I am a woman. It is a country where people eagerly challenge the stereotypes associated with their name and genuinely desire to learn about the world beyond their borders.



Walking through a bazaar on my last day in Iran, a man called out, "Where are you from?" When I replied that I'm an American, he gave me the expected surprised look and asked me if it was difficult to enter Iran, if I was scared to visit, and if I regretted coming. Then he asked with a broad smile, "Did you have any idea that Iranians are this friendly?" I shook my head in the negative. I did not know Iranians were so overwhelmingly friendly, but I did know that people everywhere are similar so I certainly was not scared to find out. I think fear is the antithesis of God because it is a force that divides people who have a world in common regardless of their different nationalities and religious affiliations.



Deena Guzder is a free lance journalist in New York City. She may be contacted at dg2190@columbia.edu (for bio see page 97)



T ravel

THE HOLY WALLS OF BOMBAY

Dinaz Kutar Rogers

Have the Bombayites gone religious? The once-bare stone walls enclosing some public buildings and private

residences in certain neighborhoods of South Bombay were covered in paintings of Shiva with a white serpent around his neck, Krishna in his customary special blue-hue skin playing the flute, elephant-headed Ganesha, and other much revered and beloved deities of the pantheon of gods and goddesses from the sacred Mount Meru. Hindu gods and goddesses were not the only deities that graced these walls. Other religious figures were represented in vivid colors, like Zarathushtra in bright-white turban looking heavenward, Jesus in a purple robe with a crown of thorns, Sai Baba with his customary white headscarf and neatly trimmed white beard and moustache, and a meditating Gautama Buddha clad



in ochre yellow, his jet-black hair tied up in a bun on the top of his head. Given that Islam and Judaism recognize no human representations of deity, a white star nestled in the hollow of a crescent moon on a lime-green background was Islam's contribution. A bright blue six-pointed Star of David represented Judaism.

As I traveled through the various parts of Bombay, I felt as if I was looking at a street-art exhibition on various world religions. Instead, what I was viewing was religious street graffiti—artists unknown. I distinctly remember the wall at Chowpatty Beach (which was the first icon-painted-wall I came upon), and the long one at Grant Road with a good number of deities, across from where my Girton High School once stood. The school has long since relocated, but the wall that separates Grant Road Railway Station and the adjoining Goods Yard was still there. Once upon a time it was a simple, unadorned, grungy gray wall that my school friends and I used to see from the little balcony on the first floor of the old school building. Now it had become The Holy Wall!

At Grant Road, I had trouble getting close enough to appreciate the artwork; the place was so crowded with people. The footpaths were taken over by the *bhonawallas* and their *dabbas* (the ubiquitous lunch-tiffin carriers of Bombay with their tin containers, usually stacked on top of each other in rows of three—hot lunches for the working men, women and schoolchildren of the city and suburbs). Some of the *bhonawallas* were busy sorting and loading the *dabbas* into wooden crates and mounting them on the turbaned heads of the emaciated "runners". I was unable to wade through that crowd to take pictures of the Holy Walls of Grant Road, but was successful on a later visit.





T ravel

I was impressed at this surge of religious sentiments on the walls. It delighted me that my birthplace was once again living up to its reputation as a tolerant, multi-religious city, especially after the religiously motivated, communal riots that



devastated Bombay in January 1993. But, as I bragged about these "Holy Walls" to a cousin, he set me straight.

"Not really," he said. "This is to prevent men from urinating against the walls." And then I understood. This unhygienic and unsightly practice was common in the city. I remember walking as a child, past a neatly lined-up row of men standing facing a wall, intent on their task—heads hanging down as if in shame for fouling up the air and defiling the city that we were fond of calling "Bombay the Beautiful".

My cousin continued, "You know how we Indians are...very religious. We wouldn't think of defiling a holy symbol, be it ours or anyone else's." I was immediately reminded of the overtly religious nature of the Indian people; none would even consider desecrating those "Holy Walls". Then we both smiled, the irony of his statement about such tolerance in the light of the Ayodhya-Babri Masjid incident, was not lost on either of us. On December 6, 1992, claiming that the Babri Masjid (mosque) in Ayodhya, some 555 km east of New Delhi, was built on a razed Hindu temple—the place where their god Rama was born—fundamentalist Hindus stormed the roof of the mosque and planted a saffron-colored flag on its dome. This sparked religious and communal riots that spread all over India, even some 1490 km southwest in cosmopolitan, easygoing Mumbai.

I shut my eyes and pictured all those life-like religious paintings, the artistry of which had impressed me daily in my travels throughout the city. Besides the walls, some of these sacred images adorned a few footpaths—chalk-powder drawings in dazzling yellows, bright fuchsias, bold golden oranges, garish peridot-greens, and blazing red were sprinkled with offerings of coins, marigolds and fragrant flowers, placed with reverence by passersby. With the eyes of Zarathushtra, Jesus, Hanuman, or Laxmi Devi gazing down at him, no man would risk their total disapproval by doing something that should be done in the relative privacy of the public urinals rather than at their hallowed feet. Even a religious symbol such as the Zarathushti incandescent fires, the Hindu om, or the Islamic star and crescent, would have a condemnatory power equal to censure by the deities themselves.

With my new knowledge of their true purpose, I walked past these "Holy Walls of Bombay" with a smile of approval, appreciation and gratitude. In contrast to those unpleasant images and odors of my childhood, now the offerings of bright-orange marigolds, scattered petals from red and pink roses splashed color on the good earth, and the heady scent of lilies and gardenias sweetened the air at the feet of the Gods.

Note: *Since my first sighting of The Holy Walls in 1993 and subsequent visits thereafter, a few walls have disappeared (whitewashed) and new ones have appeared elsewhere.

**Originally published in KALA and submitted to FEZANA JOURNAL with revisions.

Dinaz Kutar Rogers is a teacher and a published writer. She thinks of herself as a modern day Johnny Appleseed not sowing apple seeds but hope, knowledge, inspiration, pride and joy about the magnificence of Ariana Vaego and the ancient Zarathushti deen.





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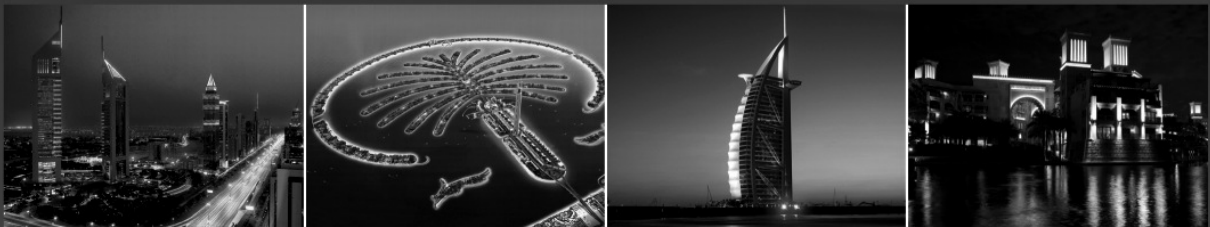
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For details and bookings, please visit us on www.wzcongress.org

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The Zoroastrians of Dubai are pleased to host the 9th World Zoroastrian Congress from 28th December to 31st December 2009. The Theme of the Congress is "Unity through the sands of time". The objective is to promote solidarity, welfare and progress. The who's who from the corporate world will participate in the program. The four days Congress will focus on different topics. The evenings will be filled with excitement and entertainment.



Event Highlights (28th – 31st Dec 2009)

- Trade Show focusing on entrepreneurial opportunities for small, medium and large businesses.
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- World renowned guest speakers from leading regional and global organizations will participate.
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- Grand cultural events showcasing the rich Zoroastrian tapestry.
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For details and bookings, please visit us on www.wzcongress.org

Mr. Terrorist, What A Coward You Are!!!

Noshir H. Dadrawala

I had flown in from Hong Kong around 4:00 a.m. on Wednesday 26th November and had planned to leave for Sri Lanka the same night. I had broken journey in Mumbai only so that I could attend the new Parsi Punchayet Board's meeting with Mr. Nusli and Mr. Ness Wadia. I left Neville House around 9 p.m. and went home for a quick bite before continuing for the airport. As I was about to leave, news about the terror attacks began to filter in. Initially it looked like only two of Mumbai's best hotels in South Mumbai were under siege. But, soon enough there were reports of two blasts in my own neighborhood in Mazagaon. The taxi that blew up in Andheri was reportedly headed for the International Airport. My travel program reluctantly had to be aborted.

Most of Thursday was spent glued to the television. It was heart wrenching watching the Taj hotel billowing thick black smoke and the leaping flames menacing around the grand dome. Even more heart wrenching was the sight of blood and destruction at Café Leopold owned by family friends – the Dehmeries. Images of many a memorable party that I had enjoyed here with good friends began flashing through my mind. I have always described Café Leopold as a Happy and Happening place. But what happened on 11/26 was far from happy.

Material destruction can be compensated for and even rebuilt. But, alas, what about the loss of innocent lives? Can that be compensated for? Can the dead be brought back to life? Whose war are we fighting? What has Mumbai done to deserve this?

And where, pray where, were the defenders of the 'sons of the soil' when Mumbai's sacred soil was splattered with the blood of its innocent sons and daughters?

Yes, I know I am asking too many questions - some rhetorical and some just too uncomfortable. But do we really have answers? I don't know.

Today on Friday, 28th November I am at my office since morning. Most offices are working but with thinner attendance. Most people are still in a state of shock and disbelief.

I was not born in Mumbai but its the city I grew up in. It's given me good education, a wonderful career and lots to feel proud about. I love my city very much and therefore I consider all this loss and destruction too personal.

The Taj Hotel and Colaba is situated less than a kilometer away from my office. As I write this, the terrorists are still holed up there and my coming to work today is a symbol of this city's resilience. Yes, Mr. Terrorist, you have tried to scare me and the rest of the citizens of this great city. But NO, we are not scared.

Yes, Mr. Terrorist, you have succeeded in getting me and everyone else very angry but scared - NO! It's business as usual and while we mourn for our dead and despise the destruction you have wrecked, we resolve to rise like the proverbial phoenix from the ashes to live another day and face the challenge.

And, Mr. Terrorist, you and your group have been cowards, attacking innocent and defenseless people. You have won no great battle. No medals await you in this life or the next, though you may have been brainwashed and assured about the latter. Of course, you will personally come to know more about this fact when you get there and it's going to be sooner in your case than most of us, Mr. Terrorist. Those who live by the sword also die by the sword.

In conclusion, Mr. Terrorist, I dare say, the average Mumbaikar is a braver and greater soldier than any one of you. You may be trained as Commandos for Carnage but we have been trained to be Commanders of our own lives. We command care and respect for our fellow human beings. A pity no one ever cared nor will ever care for you, Mr. Terrorist!

Yes, indeed this great city shall bloom again. But you, Mr. Terrorist, are doomed!

Rest in Peace Mr. Terrorist and let us live in Peace!

In The News

SIXTH ANNUAL ZAH LIBRARY GALA

On October 18th the ZAH Library celebrated its *Sixth Annual Gala*. It was the first collaborative event between the ZAH Library and the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce (Houston Chapter).

The evening's proceedings opened with an exciting announcement by *Aban Rutomji, Chair of the ZAH Library Committee*.

Following the proposal of FEZANA to establish an Information Center in North America, the Infrastructure Working Group (IWG) recommended that the ZAH Library be the host for the Center. The IWG recommendation has now been ratified by the FEZANA Board.

The evening continued with the screening of ***Merchant Princes of India***, an excellent documentary directed by filmmaker *Zafar Hai*. It features the spectacular business careers of four 19th century Bombay icons: *Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy, David Sassoon, Premchand Roychand and Jamsetji Tata*.



The highlight of the evening was a powerful presentation entitled ***The Journey of an American Zoroastrian in Modern Iran*** by our very own Deena Guzder. In June 2007, Ms. Guzder, who has a dual-degree from Columbia University's School of Journalism and School of International and Public Affairs, received funding from the Carnegie and Knight Foundations to journey across Iran to report on minority religious communities. Her talk recreated her experience reporting on the Persian Zarathushti community in modern Iran. Ms. Guzder showed us how Persian Zarathushtis continue to preserve their cultural and religious identity in the motherland in the face of many obstacles.

The ZAH Library's mission has always been to foster and promote the awareness and study of the Zarathushti religion, history and culture. In perfect alignment with this ethos, Ms. Guzder challenged the audience to explore their own complex religious roots – she encouraged people to think even as she spoke to the heart. Ms. Guzder's astute first-hand observations energized all who attended the evening and she has generously promised to make her presentation available to the Sunday School youth to encourage further lively debate.

ZAH library committee would like to take this opportunity to thank WZCC for making this event a resounding success. Friends of the ZAH Library are also thanked for their unfailing support of Library initiatives. It is their generosity and loyalty that helps the organization sustain itself and allowing it to aspire to bigger and better goals each year.

Photo above: *Deena Guzdar momento in hand recognized by the Zarathushti Community in Houston*

Reported by Zubeen Mehta, corresponding secretary of the ZAH library Committee

Photo: *Meheryar Rivetna and Yezdi Engineer*

In The News

Zoroastrian Association of Houston Library Committee hosts seminar on the Parsi Panchayat Case of 1908

The mission of the ZAH Library Committee is to serve as a leading repository of knowledge that fosters the awareness and study of the Zarathushti religion, history, traditions and culture. On November 8, 2008 the Committee presented an exciting opportunity for ZAH members to listen to Mitra Sharafi, speaking on *"The Judging of Conversion to Zoroastrianism: Behind the Scenes of the Parsi Panchayat Case (1908)"*. Ms. Sharafi is an Assistant Professor of Law and History at the Institute of Legal Studies, University of Wisconsin, and has two law degrees and a doctorate in history from McGill, Cambridge, Oxford and Princeton. (photo top), Magdalena Rustomji, member of ZAH library committee with Mitra Sharafi.

Ms. Sharafi brought to life the fascinating characters, political drama, and religious sentiments surrounding the case of Petit vs. Jeejeebhoy of 1908. This was the first Parsi Panchayat case that defined the legal backdrop for conversion into Zarathushti religion exactly 100 years back and still remains as controversial now as it was then. Precipitated by the Navjote ceremony and subsequent marriage of R. D. Tata to a French woman, the case addressed conversion issues that had caused an uproar in the community.

In colonial India, rich Parsis, through Trusts, dictated a lot of the religious doctrine of those times. This case did not have to directly address the question of whether the Zarathushti religion permits conversion, but whether these converts were entitled to the benefit of the Trust Funds and other religious institutions. However, in the months of trial that followed, the two presiding judges of the Bombay High Court, Sir Dinshaw Daver (the first Parsi judge of

BHC) and the blind British judge Frank Beaman, heard testimony from several witnesses and addressed several issues. Mitra Sharafi studied thousands of pages of notebooks kept by the judges to weave together a fascinating story of: (1) how the judges examined the origin of the distinction between Parsis and Zarathushtis, (2) how Sir Daver changed his mind halfway through the trial, being for conversion at first, and later against, (3) how Justice Beaman went along reluctantly with the court's ruling due to his junior status on the bench, (4) how J. J. Vimadlal, with his belief that "superior but separate races" should not be mixed, was chiefly responsible for turning Sir Daver's opinion around, (5) how the star expert witness J. J. Modi, a respected priestly scholar and Bombay Parsi Panchayat secretary, had waffled and wavered in his confused testimony, and (6) how even the so-called "conversion" of emperor Akbar to the Zarathushti religion was debated during the trial.

Transporting the audience back to the atmosphere of those times, Mitra Sharafi brought the characters to life and held the audience spellbound throughout her

presentation. A stimulating question-and-answer session followed that had to be cut short, much to the disappointment of the attendees.

The book: *"Judgements: Petit vs. Jeejeebhoy 1908"* has published the arguments and rulings of the two judges, and is in the ZAH Library collection. It makes for fascinating reading.

Reported by Jangoo Mistry

Photos Meheryar Rivetna and Yezdi Engineer



Mitra Sharafi (centre) with the ZAH Library Committee

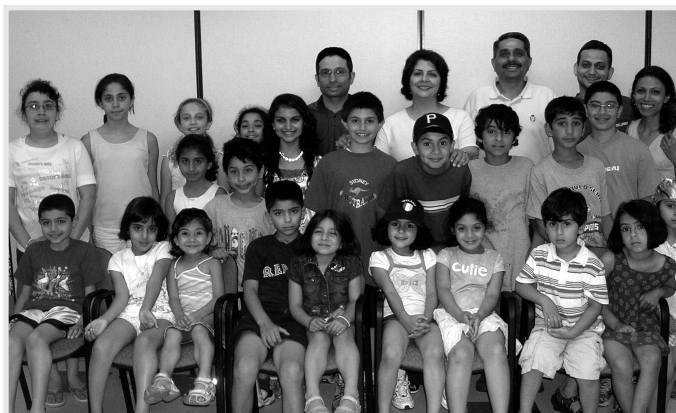
Jangoo Mistry is Director of Operations at Equicap Group of Companies in Houston. Before that he worked at Ford Motor Company in Engineering, Corporate Strategy, IT, Quality and Cost Control. Mr. Mistry holds two Bachelor of Engineering degrees in Mechanical and Electrical Engineering from the University of Bombay India, and a Master of Science degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.).

In The News

ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF GREATER BOSTON AREA (ZAGBA) CELEBRATES ITS SILVER ANNIVERSARY IN 2009

In 2009, ZAGBA will be celebrating its 25th Anniversary with a series of cultural, educational, religious, and social activities/projects highlighted by a Gala Weekend Celebration during the summer. The ZAGBA board is coordinating the year-long activities while a core dedicated leadership team is meeting regularly to plan and execute a tremendous Gala weekend filled with events to honor our history and traditions, commemorate the occasion, and inspire the community for decades to come!

Zarathushtis from all over North America and around the world are invited to come to Boston to celebrate with ZAGBA. Friends who have lived in the Boston/New England area anytime in the past are requested to come back "home" to visit during the Gala weekend with their families. The weekend will also involve reaching out to non-Zarathushti neighbors, co-workers, and friends in the New England region to share with them the Zarathushti religious and cultural heritage. Stay tuned for more information.



GLOBAL PROGRAM MAKES A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

IBM employees spread out across the world to help solve business problems and return with a better knowledge of emerging markets

Phee Vania, a 20-year veteran of Canada IBM was one of the 100 employees from 5,500 applicants, handpicked for IBM's Corporate Service Corps Program, a program which aims to develop leadership skills while addressing economic challenges in emerging markets. It also aims to train a new generation of truly global leaders by exposing them to diverse cultures, policy, environments and different societal expectations, as this is the new context for business in the 21st century.

The IBM staff were selected based on their capacity to contribute valuable and much-needed skills, talent and capabilities in emerging market countries and help make an impact in that country. Twelve teams totalling 100 people were sent to Romania, Turkey, Ghana, Tanzania, Vietnam and Philippines.

Phee was sent to Davao City in the Philippines. Her team comprised of IBM employees from Brazil, Canada, China, India, Singapore and United States. She worked mainly with two clients 1) The City Tourism Operations Office, where she instilled a culture of excellence and 2) The University of Mindanao where she mentored the

University's Human Resources Director and led the IBM team to develop a Career Awareness Day.

Phee Vania's experience made her the most suitable candidate for this program. She is currently working in the IBM Center for Learning and Development with a specific focus on New Employee Orientation worldwide, and is part of a newly formed team to positively shape the entire new employee experience worldwide.

Phee is a member of the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario, and was the Chair of the very successful 14th North American Zoroastrian Congress in 2007. She is the daughter of Bomy Boyce, president of the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce (WZCC).



Abstracted with permission – "Torstar Syndication Services" Global Program makes a World of Difference, by Carmen Chai, Toronto Star, October 4, 2008.



In The News

TATA MOVING OUT OF WEST BENGAL .

WILL THE FIRST NANO ROLL OUT OF THE HOUSE OF JAMSHEDJI TATA IN NAVSARI?

A MOU (memorandum of understanding) was signed between the Gujarat Government and Tata Motors which brought great joy to the Parsis of Ahmedabad, and Navsari. The Ahmedabad Parsi Panchayat called an extra-ordinary meeting to pass a resolution to honor Ratan Tata and to felicitate him for his decision to set up Nano plant in Gujarat. Trustee Navroz Sanga and Advocate K.J.Shethna said *"Nano will contribute to the development of Gujarat. Gujarat would be greatly benefited by having more employment opportunities. Tatas and Gujarat have old relations."*

Meanwhile Parsis in Navsari which is the home town of the Tata family were jubilant over Ratan Tata's Gujarat decision and distributed sweets and burst crackers to celebrate. Navsari based prominent Parsi historian



Kersi Debu said *"Jamshedji Tata was born in Navsari. Gujarat was his birthplace. We, the Parsis in Navsari, wish that the first Nano car should roll out from the old house of Jamshedji Tata which is still standing strong in Navsari town."*

CORNELL UNIVERSITY RECEIVED \$50 MILLION AS ENDOWMENT FROM TATA TRUST RATAN TATA, CLASS OF 1962, IS ONE OF CORNELL'S MOST EMINENT ALUMNI

Robert Barker/University Photography



Cornell University has received an endowment of \$50 million from the Tata Education and Development Trust, a philanthropic entity of India's Tata Group. The endowment consists of \$25 million to establish the Tata-Cornell Initiative in Agriculture and Nutrition, which will contribute to advances in nutrition and agriculture for India; and \$25 million for the Tata Scholarship Fund for Students from India, to help attract more of the best and brightest students to Cornell from India.

Alumnus Ratan Tata and President David Skorton after signing their historic agreement that will provide an endowment of \$50 million to Cornell for agriculture and nutrition programs in India and for the education of Indian students at Cornell.

Ratan Tata, chairman of Tata Sons, the holding company of the Tata Group was named one of the 30 most respected CEOs in the world by Barron's magazine in 2007 and the Tata Group was awarded the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy in 2007. Cornell President David Skorton announced the gift during his State of the University address Oct. 17, calling it "one of the most generous endowments ever received from an international benefactor by an American university."

The establishment of the \$25 million scholarship fund will help meet the Tata Group's pledge to bring more Indian students to Cornell. The scholarships will be offered to between six and ten students annually, depending on level of need, and could ultimately support up to 25 Tata scholars at Cornell at any one time.

Source: <http://www.news.cornell.edu/stories/Oct08/tataGift.html>

In The News

Ratan Tata

MADE HONORARY CITIZEN OF SINGAPORE.

On Friday 29th August 2008, Mr. Ratan N. Tata Chairman of Tata Sons, was made an *HONORARY CITIZEN OF SINGAPORE*, by *MR S R NATHAN, THE PRESIDENT OF REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE*. This was in recognition of his investments in Singapore. It is the highest form of National Recognition for non -citizens who have contributed to Singapore's development.

Source Russi M. Ghadiali, President, Parsi Zoroastrian Association S. E. Asia –Singapore. Inter Religious Organization, Singapore

The World Zoroastrian Council (WZC) holds its fourth global meeting at WZC headquarters in Paris, France, from Oct. 17 to 21, 2008.

reports Moobed Kamran Jamshidi.

Representatives from Zarathushti organizations of Europe, US, Australia, and India, as well as a number of private individuals attended the assembly. The closing statement gives some details on its agenda and the decisions made:

The assembly started with the report of past year's activities and the announcement of completion of WZC headquarters' building in Paris, France. It then outlined the work plan of WZC for the next



attendees pledged one hundred and fifty thousand dollars on the condition that only its interest be spent and not the principal. The attendees also emphasized that WZC shall not be involved in politics and should follow the principle of separation between church and state."

According to the closing statement the place and date for the next WZC assembly would be decided by the participating organizations and will be announced to the public.

Among the participants in the assembly were Dr. Abtin Sasanfar, Ms. Merafzoon Firoozgar, Dr. Farhang Mehr, Dr. Ardeshir Anoshiravani, Dr. Khosro Mehrfar, Dr. Daryush Jahanian, Ms. Shahin Bekhradnia and Moobed Kamran Jamshidi.



three years, and the organization necessary for achieving it were approved.

It was also suggested that a fund in the amount of one million dollars be raised until Oct. 2009 to guarantee the financial self-sufficiency of WZC. The



From left Dr Abtin Sasanfar, Dr Ardeshir Anoshiravani, Moobed Kamran Jamshidi, standing.

In The News

World Leaders Visit Fire Temple in Yazd

On 14 October 2008: former world leaders who were guests of the former President of Iran, Mohammad Khatami and who were attending conference of "Religion in the Modern World" in Tehran-Yazd visited the main Zarathushti fire temple in Yazd.

Among the dignitaries who visited the fire temple were Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary General, and Federico Mayor, former UNESCO Director-General as well as guests from several countries.



ZSBC distributes scholarships

1. The Mehraban and Paridokht Zartoshty Scholarships:
2. The Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia Scholarships

(From left *Bella Tata, Kayras Irani, Mahdokht Arghavani, Pouya Bastani, Shabnam Rostamirad and Fariborz Rahnamoon*)

The Mehraban and Paridokht Zartoshty Scholarship awards are given annually by the Mehraban &

Paridokht Zartoshty Education Fund Association under the

trusteeship of Homa Zartoshty, Kourosh Mehin, Khodadad Lohrasb, Fariborz Rahnamoon and Bella Tata. The 2008 awards were presented at the Arbab Rostam Guiv Darbe Mehr, Burnaby, British Columbia, during the death anniversary ceremony of Arbab Rostam Guiv on October 5, 2008. This year's recipients were Armin Buzorg, Shabnam Rostamirad Kayras Irani and Nima Bastani (cheque presented to his brother Pouya). On October 12, 2008, at the death anniversary gathering for the late Jamshed K. Pavri, major founder of ZSBC in 1968, the ZSBC scholarship awards were presented to Arzan Bomanbehram and Aurash Yazdgerdian.



Congratulations
to all these young
students.

In The News

Zarathushtis of North Texas (ZANT) participate in the daily Humbandagi for the ten-day Muktaḍ celebration in their newly purchased property

For ten days, (Aug 9-18, 2008), ZANT venerated the Fravashis of the dear departed, every evening with communal prayers at the existing structure on the property of the newly purchased ZANT Center.

The center piece was the table set with vases of flowers surrounding the small fire urn. Each day about 15 to 20 people participated in the traditional "Humbandagi" by chanting few verses from the Gathas and other relevant prayers followed by reading of its translation. As is the tradition, offerings of food were also laid out on the table, and every day there were plenty of fruits and sweets and goodies to be shared with love amongst the participants. On August 17th muktaḍ jashan was attended by over 70 people. The jashan was presided over by *Ervad Poras T. Balsara*, our "Ervad in training" *Burzin P. Balsara* both from ZANT and the guest *Ervad Kersi Bhadha* from London. Everyone then feasted on the fruits, nuts, maledo and ravo from

the chasni that was generously donated by the attendees. Lunch and happy conversation followed.

Source ZANT



WZNN - WORLD ZOROASTRIAN NEWS NETWORK

WZNN is the "World Zoroastrian News Network" for all Zarathushtis around the world and does not belong to any specific group, organization, country or geographic area. The purpose of WZNN is to report unbiased Zarathushti news from all over the world and provide a platform where people can read the news, post the news, post their comments, and discuss the news and events.

Due to the massive ongoing migration of Zarathushtis to all corners of the world, an interactive Zoroastrian news network was much needed. Our mission is to report news and provide a platform to enable Zarathushtis to stay connected and aware of each other. To accomplish this, WZNN has reporters all over the world, who attend the Zarathushti events and write reports for WZNN. We are looking forward to expanding our worldwide network. If you know English or Persian and are interested in helping write, edit or translate the news, send an email to info@WZNN.org

In The News



Zarathushtis of North Texas (ZANT) participate in Indian Independence Day celebration at the Anand Bazar

Young and Adult fundraisers of ZANT participating in one of their key annual fundraising events:

Selling their famous Shahi Falooda at the Anand Bazar, the celebration of India's Independence Day by the India Association of North Texas where the attendance is over 20,000.



DINA MCINTYRE VISITS AUSTRALIA

Dina McIntyre a well-known speaker and student of the teachings of Zarathushtra visited Australia in September at the invitation of the Zoroastrian Associations of WA, NSW and Victoria. She was in Australia from September 4th to 24th, 2008.

In Sydney she spoke to enthusiastic sectors of the community. Two sessions were held at the Darbe Meher on Friday evening and on Sunday School day. Over a 100 people attended and there was much enthusiasm and participation from the audience. She also spoke at the University of Sydney on Monday, September 8th

In Perth, (photo page 88 top)) Dina had a very busy schedule from September 10th to 16th, a week of

inspiring and enlightening talks. On September 10th she was invited to talk to the Krishna Somers Foundation, at Murdoch University which was attended by *Mr Krishna Somers* himself. Here she spoke on '*Zarathushtra's Puzzles*'. and presented slides to clarify her step-by-step presentation to unravel Zarathushtra's puzzles emphasising '*TRUTH for TRUTH'S SAKE!*' The next day at the Jason Braunstein Alternative Philosophies group in Kardinya, Dina spoke on '*THE NOTION OF LOVE IN THE GATHAS*'. to ZAWA members, students and tutors from the School of Philosophy in Perth.

On September 13th she spoke on '*THE PARADOX OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE COMMUNITY*' and the '*RELEVANCE OF THE GATHAS TO LIFE TODAY*' to ZAWA members. The next day ZAWA had a full day

In The News

session where 14 Topics including 'SEVEN GEMS FROM THE LATER TEXTS', 'PRAYERS IN THE GATHAS', 'BURIED TREASURES IN ZOROASTRIAN STORIES', were presented.

understanding and patience and at all times quoted where her information came from. The Youth who participated intrigued her with their interest.

Her lectures all pertained to Zarathushtra's teachings in the Gathas, and some later texts. Dina's



In Melbourne (photo below) from September 17th to 23rd Dina spoke of her understanding of Zarathushtra's teachings in the Gathas and his philosophy. She spoke at homes of members and at a two-day seminar, which was arranged by the Association. Her talk "FOR LOVE OF WISDOM" at an interfaith seminar in Melbourne was received with great interest and applause. They were all well attended by the members of our association. The question/answer segments after each talk were very interesting and some very challenging too. Dina took all this in her stride and answered every query with great

comments on Australian Zarathushtis is "The Australian Zoroastrians are a great bunch of people - intelligent, inquisitive, interested in asking many questions about Zarathushtra's teachings and how the teachings relate to our lives. They are very, very hospitable, fun-loving, and fabulous cooks. I particularly enjoyed the question and answer interaction with them. I loved making these new friends, and re-discovering some old ones."

The Australian Zoroastrian Associations are very grateful and lucky to have Dina visit us, a lady who has devoted so much of her time and energy to the study of the religion. Dina financed the trip to Australia herself because of her love for the religion and to impart some of her knowledge and expertise on the teachings of prophet Zarathushtra.

Reported by Zenobia Pavri, Perth;

Mithi Daver, Sydney; Sarosh Kariwala, Melbourne

Photos courtesy: Behram Cooper, Perth; Sarosh Kariwala, Melbourne



Dina McIntyre has generously given a CD of all her talks for all ZAWA members who may be interested in listening to them.

In The News

Montreal Artist Parvin Farzaneh Displays her Recent Works at Snapdragon Gallery on September 4, 2008



Nature and its beauty have always been the main source of inspiration for Parvin Farzaneh throughout her long career as an artist. In her paintings, she uses her imagination and her impression of familiar vistas or elements in nature to create her landscapes.

In some of her sculptures, her figures also seem part of elements found in nature, such as trees, from whose branches and roots they extend. In others, she explores the beauty and grace of human form in movement.

Her laughing figures portray the delight she experiences in creating as well as her desire to transmit joy to viewers. Laughter and fluidity of movement animate her sculptures and breathe life into solid form.

Parvin enjoys experimenting with different techniques and mediums and the possibilities they present in the creative process. It is important for her to choose those subjects to which she as well as her audience can relate. Harmony of colors, form, and expression engender an aesthetic and meaningful whole in all of her artwork.



NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE TEHRAN ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION (TZA) ELECTED ON NOVEMBER 10, 2008 IN TEHRAN, IRAN

PRESIDENT	Rostam Khosraviani, MD
VICE PRESIDENT	Mehran Sepehri, Ph.D
TREASURER	Farshid Namiranian
SECRETARY	Farokh Ardeshtirian

Dr Rostam Khosraviani had been the vice president of the TZA Board of Directors and the president of *Parsa Hospital* in Tehran, Iran. He was also one of the candidates in the recent Parliamentary elections to become the MP representing Zarathushtis in Iran.

Source Berasad and Amordad News websites, Iran

In The News

Kaikhsorov Shahrokh

The name of the street next to the Zarathushti complex in Tehran has been given back its original name **"Kaikhsorov Shahrokh"**. The name had been changed to Shahid Ahmad Baig during the Iran-Iraq war.

Kaikhsorov Shahrokh, was a prominent Zarathushti activist during the time of Reza Shah and an MP of Zarathushtis in the Majlis (Iran's parliament).

It is interesting to note that even after the changes have been made, one entry of the street maintains the old name and other entry has the re-instated original name. (photos below: the two names on one street.)

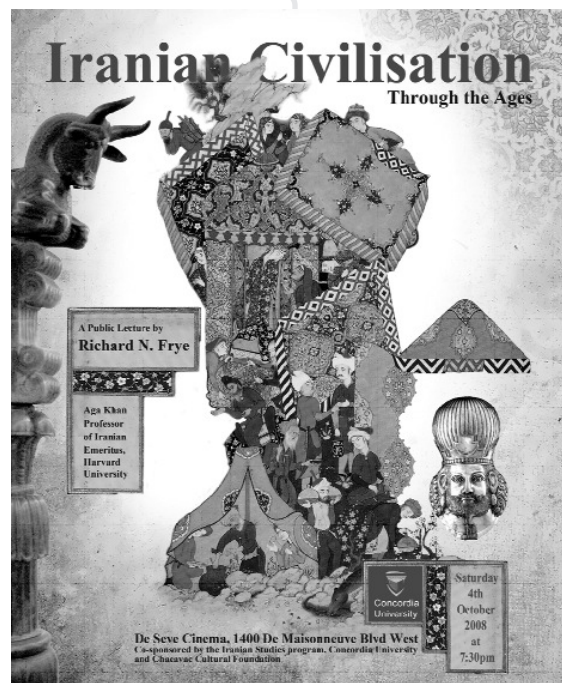
<http://www.berasad.com/content/view/744/12/> Source ZNA



RICHARD N FRYE SPEAKS AT CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY, MONTREAL, OCTOBER 4, 2008

The well known *Iranologist* *Aga Khan Emeritus Harvard University Professor Richard N. Frye* was invited by the Concordia University Iranian Studies Program and the *Chacavac Cultural Foundation*. Concordia University is the first university in Canada to develop an interdisciplinary program in Iranian Studies for all academic levels.

Professor Frye spoke to a full house of Iranians and non-Iranians about the contribution of Iran to world culture, about the glory of Iran in arts, and to the concept of secular law based on a sense of justice, which was different from religious law. He wanted the audience to remember that Iranians are not Arabs and they should be treated differently by the governments of the world



In The News

AVVAN SANJANA OF MICHIGAN HAS THE HONOUR OF BEING A PART OF THE WREATH CEREMONY TO THE TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER, IN ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

"The Tomb of the Unknowns has never been officially named since its inception in 1921. If you were able to give the memorial a name, what would you name it and why?", was the question posed to eighth-grade social studies students by teacher James Common at Dunckel Middle School, Farmington Hills, Michigan.

Based on their winning essays, four students in a group of 75 students presented a wreath at 3:15 p.m. November 4 at the tomb in Arlington National Cemetery.

Eighth-grade students Avvan Sanjana, Chris Pichler, Zachary Johnson, and Katy Branigan have the special honor of being part of the wreath ceremony.

"The Memorial of Patriots" was Sanjana's choice. **"Patriotism means that you love your**



country and you are loyal to it at all times," she said. Pichler renamed the tomb "The Ultimate Sacrifice Gravesite." Johnson named it the "Spirit of Heroic American Angels" Branigan chose the "H.E.R.O.S. Monument" which stands for Helps Everyone Remember Our Soldiers. *"It reminds us of the brave people who fight for our freedom and safety every day," she said.*

Dunckel students will visit the Tomb of the Unknowns in Washington, D.C. as well as Gettysburg and the White House for which they each raised \$675 for the trip.

14 years old Avvan, is on the eighth grade basketball team and has participated with the Girl Scout program for 4 years. Her other interests include reading and playing the violin.



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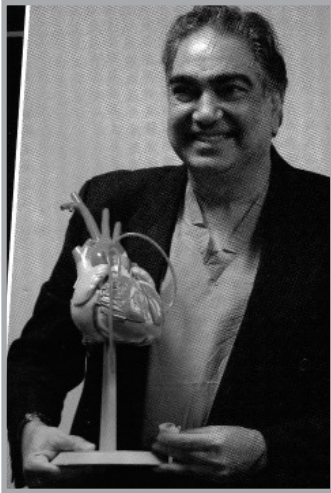
Court of the Table
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In The News

Dr Shahroukh Bakhshay, a senior surgeon of the Heart and Lung Institute at Lake Cumberland Regional Hospital in Southern Kentucky is on the cutting edge of cardiovascular and thoracic surgery not only in Kentucky but in all of United States.



The valve Dr Bakhshay uses is a novel biologic Mitroflow Valve that not only renders the stent obsolete but is engineered to last much longer than conventional valves, reports the Health and Fitness Journal (Feb 2008). It is specially processed from the aortic valve of a pig and undergoes high-tech treatment so that when implanted into a human it does not require life-long anti-rejection drug therapy. This minimally invasive technique reduces trauma and blood loss and has a quick post-surgery recovery time of three to four days. Dr Bakhshay has the enviable record of never having lost a valve replacement patient during his long practice, in spite of a 5% mortality rate nationwide.

Born in Bombay and educated at St Xavier's school and college, as well as Grant Medical College, Dr Bakhshay came to the United States in 1969 as a young internist and worked with Dr Denton A. Cooley, the pioneer heart surgeon at the Texas Heart Institute in Houston. He then practiced in California for 25 years where he was a member of the Zarhosti Anjuman of Northern California and was a member of the board for two years. He then moved to Cumberland Regional Hospital in Kentucky to energize their heart program.

He holds *Fellowships in the American College of Surgeons, Society of Cardio-thoracic Surgeons, College of Cardiology, International College of Vascular Surgeons. He is an Honorary Fellow of the Society of Japanese Cardiac Surgical Association and Society of Mexican Cardiac Surgical Association.*

Dr Shahroukh Bakhshay is married with two daughters. Daughter Perrine holds a Masters degree from NYU in Broadcast Journalism and Documentary Film Making, and is currently reporting on air in Southern California, and daughter Shirin, graduated from Yale Law School in 2007, passed her California Bar Exam, and currently works for a law firm in San Francisco.



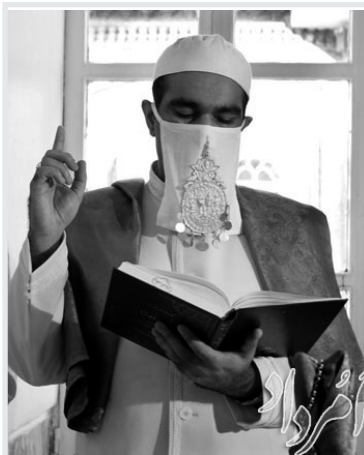
ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF PENNSYLVANIA (ZAPA) PARTICIPATES IN INTERFAITH ACTIVITIES

On April 8, 2008, ZAPA members participated in an interfaith Council Annual Seminar. The subject was Food, Fast & Festivals, where the celebration of Naurooz was discussed by the participants. Members organized an exquisite display of the Haft Sheen Table and printed materials were distributed.

From left : Macky Siganporia, Shahnaz Cama, Zarin Balaporia, Veera Siganporia, Farhad Cama, Cyrus Cama, Houtoxi Contractor

In The News

Dr Mehrab Vahidi initiated as a Mobed in Tehran, October 24, 2008



Dr. Mehrab Vahidi was officially initiated into community of Mobeds by performing the Nozoodi celebration at Tehran main Dar-e Mehr on Friday 24th October 2008. Lots of Zarathushtis and Mobeds were present in this religious ceremony.

A Nozod is a mobed who has earned his initiation (title) after he has learned the Avesta, the Gathas and Yashts. He also has to learn the performance of all the religious ceremonies.

Mehrab Vahidi was born in Teheran(1970). He graduated as a doctor of medicine. and has worked with the anjoman e mobedan since 2005. In his speech he mentioned that his most important goals will be cultural issues and his social role as mobed would be to look at our culture and heritage on a scientific basis and then practice them.

The practice of Mobedi is alive in Iran.

From left Mobeds Sohrab Hengami, Keykhosro Mazdeyasna, Ardeshir Khorshidian, Ardeshir Mankchian, Tooraj Bolandi, Farhang Ziatabari, Farzad Lohrasb, Ardeshir Mankchian and Beman Mehrabani with Mehrab Vahidi.



The practice of Mobedi is alive in Iran.

INTERFAITH INTERALIA



ZAGBA
Zoroastrian Association of The Greater Boston Area

LIVING THE MEANING OF THE YATHA AHU VAIRYO PRAYER ZAGBA'S COMMUNITY SERVICE INITIATIVES



Report Parastu Dubash

ZAGBA (Zoroastrian Association of Greater Boston Area) has made Community Service one of its core initiatives. We applaud and recognize those involved in community service locally and globally.

On March 8th, a group of ZAGBA volunteers (Aspiyan Gazder, Rashna Lam, Mehernosh Mody, Anaheeta Mody, Armeen Nanavaty, Yezad Nalladaru) met at Rosie's Place (a sanctuary for poor and homeless women - www.rosies.org) for the lunch shift. They put on aprons and nametags to set up the lunch for 80-100 guests, sorted toiletry items to make small tote bags to give to each guest, and assisted with the preparation of the meal. In addition to providing nutritious meals, the dining room is a place of community and companionship for the women and where women receive health and legal support services.

On April 27th, Team ZAGBA participated in the *March for Babies* (the March of Dimes annual event formerly known as WalkAmerica). *Mahbi Chikliwala* along with her mother *Sheroo Golimar*, *Ferzin Engineer* and *Rashna Karani* (see photo above), represented ZAGBA and contributed over \$1100.00 to the cause. The money raised supports crucial research and programs to help moms have healthy pregnancies and babies be born healthy. Due to March of Dimes advocacy for critical newborn screening to check for potentially dangerous but treatable conditions, the *Newborn Screening Saves Lives Act* was signed into law by President Bush on April 24, 2008. The bill lays the groundwork for national guidelines and authorizes funding for several federal

initiatives designed to increase educational resources for parents and health professionals, improve follow-up and treatment for infants, and provide assistance to states to strengthen their existing newborn screening programs.

On May 10th, Team ZAGBA volunteered for the second year in a row at the *Greater Boston Food Bank* (GBFB). Our team members: *Rashna & Farokh Karani*, *Perinaaz Wadia*, *Sanober Langrana*, *Kitayun Ghista*, *Grace & Alfred Dantas*, *Anaheeta & Meherenosh Mody*, *Armeen Nanavaty*, and *Yezad Nalladaru* (see photo below) helped GBFB operations at their central warehouse facility in Boston. Volunteers inspected, sorted and repacked donated grocery products which are then distributed to hunger relief agencies. We worked together as a team on an assembly line, and alongside other groups.

On September 21st TEAM ZAGBA - children and adults from the ZAGBA community - walked in the *Boston Marathon Jimmy Fund Walk* and raised money to support the fight against cancer in children and adults at *Boston's Dana-Farber Cancer Institute*, helping to raise the chances of survival for cancer patients around the world.

OnGoing Activities: At all major ZAGBA events, members and friends bring some gently-used clothing for donation to kids and adults in India, Pakistan, and Iran and canned/packaged foods for local food shelters. This helps make service to others a regular part of all our events. And recently, ZAGBA has registered with a Car Donation Program "*Donate Car USA*". Members and friends across the U.S. can donate their used vehicle to ZAGBA and receive a tax deduction while ZAGBA receives 50% of the proceeds on the sale of the car. The company takes care of everything from picking up the car from your home, to the paperwork, to the sale. They will send you a notice of the sale for your tax deduction, and then send the proceeds to ZAGBA. For more information, visit ZAGBA's website www.zagba.org or send an email to zagba@hotmail.com with questions.

Yezad Nalladaru is the coordinator of Team ZAGBA service and volunteering activities..yezad@hotmail.com

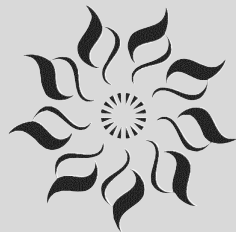
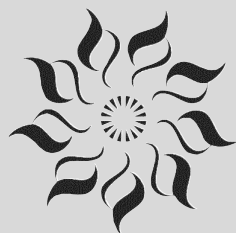
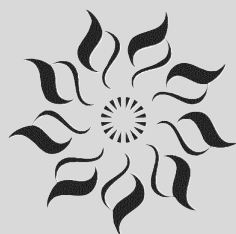


INTERFAITH INTERALLIA

"Living in Harmony with Nature" Community Celebrations of CPWR - Visit to Chicago Darbe Mehr

Religions Working for Peace and Justice

LIVING IN HARMONY WITH NATURE- AT CHICAGO DARBE MEHR VISIT BY CPWR COMMUNITY CELEBRANTS ROSHAN RIVETNA



Over 30 persons from the interfaith community (from the Parliament of World's Religions - CPWR, Faith in Place - FIP, Archdiocese of Chicago, Sikhs, Jains, Muslims), and neighbors along Rte 83, which may well be called "Interfaith Alley" -- from the Buddhist Temple, Bohra Masjid, Hindu Temple and Chinmaya Mission) all joined over 50 community members for an Interfaith program on "*Living in Harmony with Nature*" at the Darbe Mehr in Chicago on October 12, 2008. The program was part of the CPWR series of Community Celebrations and Forums and one more program to commemorate the Darbe Mehr's Silver Jubilee this year.

The program opened and closed with a beautiful monajat sung by *Mani Rao*. *Dinaz Weber*, Vice-President, ZAC welcomed the attendees. *Rohinton Rivetna* gave a presentation on *Introduction to Zoroastrians*, and *Jim Modi* presented a picture of how far respect for Diversity has come since his early days in Chicago around 1947. *Shazad Mehta* gave a well-researched presentation on "*Living in Harmony with Nature - a Zarathushti Perspective*." *Rashna Ghadialy*, who is committed to ZAC going 'green', gave an impassioned presentation on "*Sustainable Living - Do's and Don'ts*" and put her words into action by bringing cartons of bio-degradable disposable plates, bowls, glasses and flatware for ZAC use. *Dr. Hansra and Emily Chou* of CPWR gave an *Overview of the Next Parliament of World's Religions*, to be held in Melbourne, Australia, in December 2009. In closing, representatives of the various interfaith groups gave inspiring messages about spreading the message of interfaith harmony to a wider circle.

Thanks to *Rohinton Rivetna* for organizing the event, to ZAC for hosting it, to *Adil and Rashna Pooniwala* for the delicious lunch catered by *Jamshed Kavina*, and to *Roshan Rivetna* for the tea snacks.

Green Tree Planting

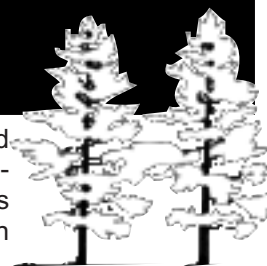
Caring for creation is part of the legacy of our Zarathushti tradition. In Iran it was called *Rooze Derekhtkari*, something that Parsees forgot after their migration in the Indian sub-continent from villages of Gujarat to cities. It is time to revive an ancient tradition! Trees make a difference to cities by providing a tree canopy in urban areas, and off-set carbon emissions

In a partnership between NGO's, businesses and governments, a well tried and successful formula, eight cities in the USA: *Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Miami, San Francisco and Washington DC* will get \$100,000 each for tree plantations. One of them will be given \$ 300,000/-

The corresponding agency and the web-site responsible for the tree plantations in these eight cities are mentioned in the press release

<http://www.caseytrees.org/pdfs/CT%20Web%20Nat'l%20Press%20Release.pdf>

Motivated individual Zarathushtis could partner with like minded groups at their local level to replace storm-damaged, old and aging trees or plant trees in lower income housing campuses.



INTERFAITH INTERALLA

Zarathushtis in Washington DC and New York Attend Interfaith Iftar

Breaking bread together in communal harmony is an age old Zarathushti faith tradition. Since time immemorial, king and pauper and everyone in-between came together in an egalitarian spirit at seasonal gahambhars to symbolize that in the eyes of the supreme, we are all one, irrespective of our social status in life. It is a time to set aside differences, to come together to build community and promote peace. The powerful democratic idea behind this tradition, with its universal appeal has become institutionalized in many world religions, the *langar* celebrated by the Sikhs and the *Iftar* by the Muslims are examples.

Zarathushtis, together with representatives of many diverse faiths were invited to Interfaith Iftars in Washington DC and New York in September 2008. *Zal Damkevala, Dariush Jamasb and Behram Pastakia* attended the Iftar at the Cathedral College on the grounds of the Washington National Cathedral on 14th September 2008 (photo below), on Embassy Row. *Ervad Rohinton Dadina, Homi Gandhi, Lovji Cama, Shanaya Deboo and Deena Guzder* were at the Interfaith Iftar in New York..

INTERFAITH IFTAR IN NEW YORK

Held at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in New York City on September 25, 2008



Zarathushtis attending were Ervad. Rohinton Dadina, Homi Gandhi, (seated in photo above) Lovji Cama, Shanaya Deboo and Deena Guzder

INTERFAITH IFTAR IN WASHINGTON, DC

Zarathushtis at Interfaith Iftar on the grounds of the Washington National Cathedral in Washington DC on 14th September 2008. At the head of the table, right, the

speaker's podium Behram Pastakia with Zal Damkevala on his right. (photo credit Dariush Jamasb)



Following the Iftar in New York the Iranian President met with Representatives of Religious Minorities in Tehran.

On Oct 2nd 2008, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad met with representatives of religious minorities in Iranian Parliament, including Zarathushti representative *Esfandiar Ekhtairi*. He mentioned that Iran is a big family and religious minorities are inseparable parts of this big and unified family. "Religious minorities enjoy full legal rights in Iran. Religious minorities have lived in peace with us and even they have dedicated martyrs to the Islamic Revolution." The report from this meeting mentions that the Majlis (Parliament) deputies representing religious minorities at the meeting praised the approach of Ahmadinejad's government in dealing with problems and demands of religious minorities.

TRADITIONAL PARSI SNACKS

Dar-ni-pori, Khajoor-ni-ghari,
Bhakhra

Batasa, Khatai, Agharni Ladoo,
Vasanu

Contact, Dilnavaz Meer (281)
491-8436

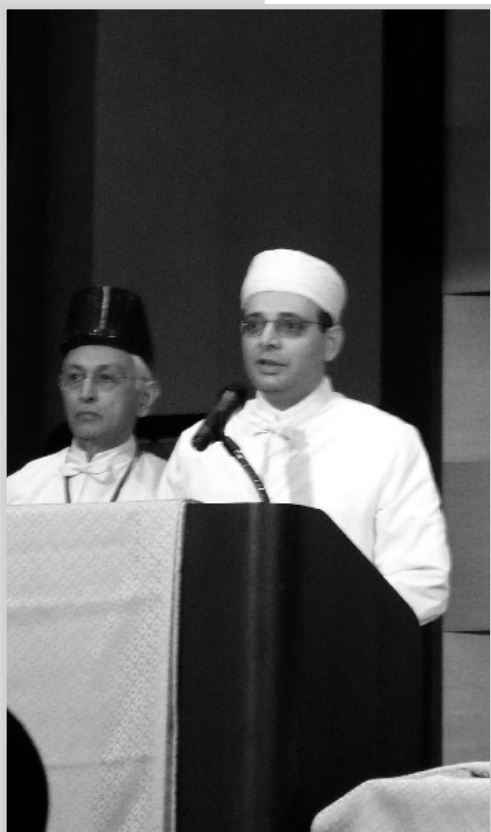
dilnavazmeer@comcast.net

INTERFAITH INTERALLA BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS

Religions Working for Peace and Justice

: Deena Guzder

In the midst of the fiery standoff between Washington and Tehran, religious peace activists recently met with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to discuss the role of religions in tackling global challenges and building peaceful societies. The *Iftar*, a dinner to break the Ramadan fast, was held at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in New York City on September 25, 2008 by American peace activists eager to fill the vacuum created by their own government's opposition to diplomacy with Iran.



The dinner was co-sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee, Mennonite Central Committee, Quaker United Nations Office, and Religions for Peace, and World Council of Churches – United Nations Liaison Office in cooperation with the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations. *"It is our hope that as religious and political leaders, this communal meal and exchange of views will enable us to explore faith perspectives for dealing with global issues such as poverty, war and prejudice while deepening mutual understanding,"* said a statement released by the Sponsoring Committee.

The evening started with prayers delivered by religious leaders. *Zarathushtis Homi Gandhi and Ervad Rohinton Dadina recited prayers in Avestan and English.* Also attending were *Lovji Cama and Shanaya Deboo.* The prayers were followed by a panel discussion moderated by *John Brademas*, a former US Democratic congressman from Indiana and president emeritus of New York University. The panelists were asked to address the question *"What does my faith tradition bring to the struggle to eliminate poverty, injustice, global warming and war?"*

One of the most moving comments of the evening came from *Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, the President of the United Nations*, who received a resounding applause for his remarks. *"Our world is very, very sick . . . that sickness is called selfishness and selfishness is the absence of love,"* said Brockmann. *"We must recognize each other as brothers and sisters because all of our religions have the law of love as a very important guiding principle."* Mennonite and Quaker speakers evoked Matthews 5.3-12 in their speeches, *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called*

sons of God."

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad addressed the audience and said that *"the way to save man is to turn to God by upholding kindness, justice and caring on with dignity."* Ahmadinejad's remarks were highly theoretical and left much to be desired; however, the interfaith dinner succeeded in providing a forum for airing grievances and acknowledging differences as a step towards peaceful reconciliation.

While pundits speak of the "Religious Right," the faith-based peace activists who met with Ahmadinejad are part of an underreported group of Americans who are progressive because they are religious. Throughout time and across geography, adherents of pacifist religious traditions have sacrificed their own welfare to help others in the name of a higher being, a higher purpose. The interfaith dinner honored religious adherents who are concerned for this world, not just the next. Peace activists who broke bread with America's alleged "enemy" chose to honor religion's rich history of advocating for peace even when the war drums have already started beating.

Deena Guzder is a freelance journalist in New York City and dual-degree graduate of Columbia University's School of Journalism and School of International and Public Affairs. She is working on a book, *A Higher Calling*, about religious activism for progressive causes. Please feel free to email her at dg2190@columbia.edu

INTERFAITH INTERALIA

Oct 18 - Oct 19, 2008
Washington, DC

Religions Working for Peace and Justice

THE 16th ANNUAL PRAYER VIGIL FOR THE EARTH

The annual Prayer Vigil for the Earth is now in its 16th year. It is an icon of spirituality in Washington, DC where people of diverse faiths, cultures, ethnic backgrounds and all ages gather together to pray for harmony with the Earth and each other -- and to share knowledge, celebrate, and participate respectfully in multi-faith ceremonies.

For two days, a circle of tepees and structures sacred to other religions and faiths surround a sacred fire in the heart of Washington, between the Washington Monument and the White House. Native American Elders, who host the event, invite spiritual leaders from all major faiths to join them. *The Prayer Vigil* exemplifies the joy and benefits of community, creativity, cooperation, and spirituality.

"And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

---Genesis 1:3

"So powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole earth."

—Baha'u'llah (1817-1892); Iranian philosopher

In this photo (below) the fire is flanked by the two tepees set up by the Native American Indians. Capturing this glow from the fire within the shrouded darkness with humans cuddling together in the warmth of unity (photo credit the website of Prayer Vigil for the Earth).

"...I am the sacrifice and the offering, the sacred gift and the sacred plant. I am the holy words, the holy food, the holy fire, and the offering that is made in the fire. I am the father of this Universe, and even the source of the father. I am the mother of this Universe, and the creator of all... I am the Way and the master who watches in silence; thy friend and thy shelter and thy abode of peace. I am the

beginning and the middle and the end of all things... The heat of the sun comes from me, and I send and withhold the rain. I am life immortal and death; I am what is and I am what is not. "

---Bhagvad Gita 9:16-19

All three quotations, deal with light as a metaphor for a way to live our lives; to lift up the picture of the fire with the community around it as a centerpiece of light within the surrounding darkness as night gives way to the day at dawn (Ushahin Gah see page 104)

Zarathushtis Irandokht Shahryary, Shirin Abadian, Shahnaz Gheibi (in photo) and Dariush Jamasb join the Prayer Vigil for the Earth, (Photo credit Dariush Jamasb)



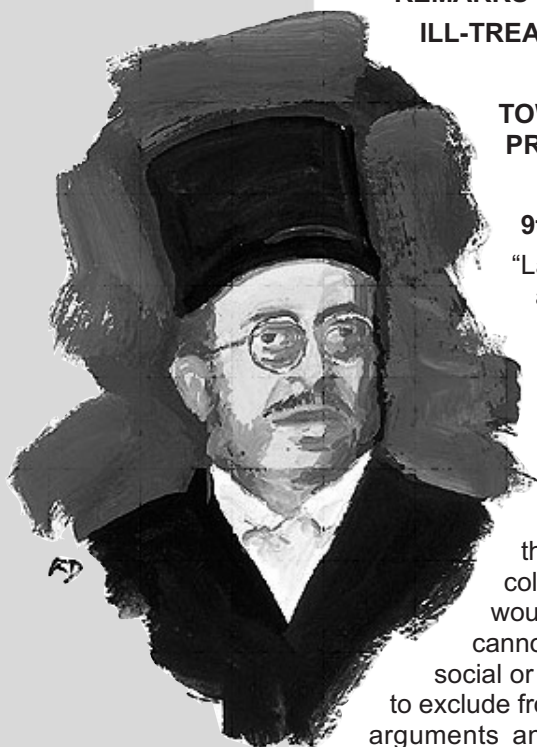
IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

INTERFAITH INTERALIA

Religions Working for Peace and Justice

Vignettes of Inter-religious Dialogue

REMARKS BY SIR PHEROZESHAH MEHTA: PROTEST AGAINST THE
ILL-TREATMENT OF INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL, SOUTH AFRICA.



TOWN HALL MEETING OF THE CITIZENS OF BOMBAY UNDER THE
PRESIDENTSHIP OF H.H. AGA SIR SULTAN MOHAMED SHAH

9th JANUARY, 1908

"Ladies and Gentlemen, in regard to the question upon which we have assembled to express our opinion today, I will venture to say that on this occasion we were really fighting the battle of the East against the West.

We are fighting for the cause of peace and harmony, and the progress, which in the future, let us hope, may exist between the East and the West. It has been said that sober politics or practical politics, required that the white races should be allowed to keep out of their preserve any of the colored races. But I think ladies and gentlemen, that the white races should reflect that it is one of the most curious positions which they assume because after insisting on getting into the countries of the colored races of the world, is it right and proper for them to say that they would not allow colored races to come into their preserve? The moral law cannot be defiled or violated with impunity any more in the political than in the social or private world. If they take up this position and say that they have a right to exclude from their preserves the colored people, a time may come when the same arguments and reasons might be urged against them by the colored races for preventing them from entering their countries and homes"

Source: Sir Pherozeshah Mehta Memorial Volume, Edited and Compiled by Godrej N. Dotivala, 1990, Page 381

ZAC ZARATHUSHTIS MEET ARCHBISHOP TUTU

On October 24, an Interfaith Breakfast was organized at the InterContinental Chicago by *Chicago Center for Cultural Connections (formerly NCCJ)*, honoring Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa, a Human Rights activist and recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize. The Archbishop gave a stirring presentation on *The Dawn of a New Moral Awakening*

Several members of the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago participated in the event..Rohinton Rivetna (FEZANA) was listed among the sponsors of the event.

Rohinton Rivetna and Keikhosrow Mobed with Archbishop Tutu at the reception.





**ZOROASTRIAN SOCIETY
IN SASANIAN ERA (226-651 CE)
ERVAD BRIGADIER BEHRAM M. PANTHAKI**

**Excerpt of a paper presented at the NAMC SEMINAR
MAY 19, 2007**

AVESTA IN SASANIAN TIMES

The first two Sasanian kings, *Ardeshir I* (224-240 CE) and *Shapur I* (240-272 CE) are traditionally considered to be the founders of Mazdayasnian orthodoxy. (Denkard 3-4) who continued the work of collecting the dispersed writings of the Zarathushti scriptures begun by *Valakhsh* (Denkard 4.25).

By this time, the Avestan, the sacred language of the Zarathushti Din, has ceased to be a living tongue. The daily prayers continued to be recited in the dead language. The need was evidently felt to supplement the Avestan prayers by some additional prayers in the vernacular. It was *Dastur Adarbad Mahraspand*, the high-priest and prime minister of *Shapur II*, who composed supplementary prayers in Pazand viz the *Afrins*, *Patets*, *Nirangs*, the introductory and closing parts of the Avestan *Nyaishes* and *Yashts*. The original Avestan wedding hymn is extinct. What we now recite is a Pazand hymn, composed during the Sasanian period, embodying three Avestan passages

PRIESTHOOD

The clergy also acted as judges, had their own courts and had a hierarchy. At the lowest rung were *Magi*. Above them were the *Herbeds* (*Chief of fire*) and *Mobeds* (*Chiefs of the Magi*) among who were the *Zaotar* (*priests reciting prayers*) and the *Rathvishkar* (*assisting priests who tended the fire*). At the top there were two dignitaries the *Herbedan* – *Herbed*, who was the *Chief Justice* and *Mobedan Mobed*, the *High priest*.

The hierarchy is confirmed from the inscriptions of *Kirdar* where he says that he first came to power under - *Shapur I* when he was a *herbad*. Under *Hormazd I* he was given the title of *mobed*, probably the first to hold this title. In the reign of *Baharam II* he received the rank of *Herbadan Herbad*, and was made chief judge of the empire, and *Mobedan Mobed*, chief of the royal fire at *Istakhr*.

The priests tended the fire, prepared the sacred *Haoma* juice, recited prayers with offerings, heard confessions, granted forgiveness, and performed ceremonies relating to birth, investiture, marriage and death. So, in the Sasanian times, there must have been the practice of confession as we see in Christianity.

This is borne out by the introductory passage of "*Patet Pashemani*". We recite

"*Yatha Ahu Vairyo – 5. Yatha Ahu Vairyo panj az hama gunah patet pashemanum, az harvastin dushmat, duzuktta, duzuvarashta mem pa geti mani PISHE SHUMA VEHAN manashni, gavashni, kunashni tani ravani*".

"Oh good (religious high priest), I, in your presence having recited 5 *Yatha Ahu Vairyo* repent of all sins by means of *Patet*."

Translation Ervad Kavasji Edulji Kanga in his Khordeh Avesta,

His footnote states

"From this it appears that the sinner confesses his own sins and makes suitable atonement in the presence of high priest fully versed in the Zoroastrian religion. After composition of this *Patet* even from the Persian *Rivayets* written in later times similar writing is found, that a sinful person should confess his sins and atone in presence of the just, learned and well versed person in religion, in *Dastur* of that period."



SASANIAN SOCIETY, FAMILY LIFE AND POSITION OF WOMEN

Society was divided into four classes: the priests, warriors, farmers, and artisans. There is a distinct reference to this in the latter part of the *Dibache of afringan*:

We recite "*Hama athornan, hama rathaestaran, hama vastrayoshan, hama hutokhshan.*"

The social system was very rigidly followed and membership in a class was based on birth.

The general principles of the Sasanian family life were similar to those of a joint family system. Sasanian society was patriarchal, tracing lineage from father to son. A family was under the guardianship of a male elder and family affairs were conducted by him. However even under male guardianship, a woman could hold and manage property, lead a prayer, and act as a senior member of the family. **In history, there are two instances where in the absence of a male successor, daughters of Khosro II, Purandokht ruled for a year in 630 CE followed by her sister Azarmidokht in 631 CE.**

Different forms of marriage were prevalent during the Sasanian times:

- (a) a girl marrying by her choice, with the consent of her parents;
- (b) a girl, the only daughter of her parents, marrying by her choice with consent of her parents, with a stipulation that the first male child shall be the adopted son of her father after the father's death;
- (c) widow remarriage or second marriage – There is a provision in Ashirwad prayers for such marriages – In the introductory paragraph where we recite the names of the bride and the groom, **if the girl is marrying for the first time then her name is recited as "In kanig in shah-zan 'falana' namvar" if the girl is a widow or getting married for the second time her name is recited as "In zanig 'falana' namvar".**
- (d) a girl marrying by her own choice but without consent of her parents.

This illustrates that Zarathushti women even in ancient times enjoyed equal status and had their say in the male dominated society in all aspects of life including marriage. A question therefore arises – was there a custom of arranged marriage or was it adopted at a later stage!!!!!!

CONCLUSION

The Sasanian regime was afflicted by political and religious tensions throughout four centuries of its rule under 39 rulers. Of these there were just six regents who substantially contributed to the revival of the faith.

Ardeshir I laid the foundation for restoration of the Zarathushti faith. He was followed by his son *Shapur I*, who not only added additional scriptures to enlarge the Avesta but also undertook a vigorous movement to proselytize local populace in the Zarathushti fold. He was ably helped by his head priest Kirdar. *Bahram I* can be remembered for elimination of Manichaeism.

Four decades later came *Shapur II*, the longest ruling monarch of the dynasty, who with the help of his head priest and prime minister *Adarabad Mahraspand* completed the task of compiling the Avesta. *Yazdegard II* followed after six decades, with strong determination, proselytized the population of neighboring countries, helped by his prime minister and commander-in-chief *Meher-Narse*. And 70 years later *Khosrow Noshirwan I*, decimated Mazdakism.

In the last 70 years of the Sasanian rule no effort was diverted towards the welfare of the religion. There can be two reasons – the positive reason could be that the Zarathushti faith was strongly rooted and did not foresee any danger. The negative reason could be that the kings did not rule for any considerable length of time and were more concerned with palace intrigues and holding on to their thrones than in the religion.



Manichaeism and Mazdakism were two well-known Zarathushtrian heresies during the Sasanian Dynasty. Mani came early in the Sasanian rule in Iran and Mazdak came later, a century before the empire was overrun by the Arabs. However, both these heresies were ruthlessly suppressed with violent ends.

Can it be said that in order to establish a centralized political structure, the Sasanian rulers used religious persecution as a tool for political convenience and necessity?

During the last century of the Dynasty, the Sasanians were weakened through economic decline, heavy taxation, religious unrest, rigid social stratification, intrigues, fratricidal killings, palace intrigues, coups and counter coups, weak and frequent changes in regency: factors that facilitated the Arab invasion. The victorious progress of the Arab conquests was evidently so catastrophic that we, to this day, speak of "the ruin and devastation that came from the Arabs."

There have been a number of instances where monarchs had contracted interfaith marriages. And it is some of these rulers and their progeny who took measures, at times severe, to revive the Mazdayesnian Faith.

Can it be assumed that the practice of interfaith marriage was followed by the populace, as well?. If the answer is in the affirmative then it can be safely said that interfaith marriages were prevalent and were approved by clergy and accepted by the society. As per Firdousi, *Behram V (Gor)* went to the extent of taking his would be Indian bride, *Sepinoud*, to the Fire of Adar Gushasp for the Nahn ceremony before his wedding.

The Zarathushti calendar, which is still in use today, uses the regnal year of *Yazdegard III* as its base year. Its calendar era (year numbering system), which is accompanied by a Y.Z. suffix, indicates the number of years since the emperor's coronation in 632 CE.

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Shahnameh Firdousi

Brigadier Behram Panthaki was born in India in 1942 and graduated from Poona University, in Physics and Mathematics. He received his religious education and became a navar and later a martab from M. F. Cama Athornan Institute, Bombay, under the guidance of High Priest Dastur Firoze Meherji Kotwal. In the army he served with the 2nd battalion of the 8th Gorkha Regiment and was the ADC (Aide-de-Camp) to Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw. He served on the Indo-China and Indo-Pakistan borders, had three posting in Jammu & Kashmir and was on the faculty of the College of Combat, Mhow and the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington. He holds 12 military honors and retired in 1994 after 30 years of outstanding service to join his family in USA.

Behram is one of the very few practicing priests from Bel Air, Maryland in the north to Richmond, Virginia in the south. He participates in the children's religious education class once a month, and also holds adult religious discussion groups simultaneously with the children's classes. He is often invited to speak at the University of Maryland, George Washington and George Mason Universities, and at churches, area schools and support groups. He is the Zoroastrian Faith leader of the Washington chapter of the Inter Faith Conference. At present he is the Director for Human Resources at The Kingsbury Center, a non-profit organization based in Washington, DC





	Name	From – To	No of Years	# Years Firdowsi	Relationship
1	Ardeshir I	224-241	17		Son of Sasan, grandson of Babakan – Parthian wife
2	Shapur I	241-271	31		Son of Ardeshir I
3	Hormoz I	271-272	1		Son of Shapur I
4	Bahram I	272-275	3		Son of Shapur I
5	Bahram II	275-292	17	19	Son of Bahram I
6	Bahram III	292-293		4 months	Son of Bahram II
7	Narseh	293-300	9		Son of Shapur I – Abdicated his throne
8	Hormoz II	300-309	7	9	Son of Narseh – Wife was Jewish Consort
9	Shapur II	309-379	70		Son of Queen consort of Hormoz II - Jewish
10	Ardashir II	379-383	4		Brother of Shapur II (since Shapur II's son was a minor)
11	Shapur III	383-388	5		Son of Shapur II
12	Bahram IV	388-399	11	14	Son of Shapur II– Had no sons, only 1 daughter
13	Yazdegerd I	399-420	21	30	Son of Shapur III – Wife was Jew
14	Bahram V – Gore- Hunter	420-439	18	70	Son of YZ I – Mother was Jew Had seven wives
15	Yazdegerd II	439-457	19		Son of Bahram V – Mother was an Indian - Sepinoud
16	Hormoz III	457-459	2	1	Younger son of YZ II
17	Piroj I	459-483	25	11	Elder son of YZ II, brother of Hormuz III
18	Palash	483-487	4	5	Son of YZ II, Brother of Firoze I
19	Kobad I	487-496	8		Son of Firoze I, Nephew of Balash
20	Jamasp	496-498	2		Son of Firoze I, Younger brother of Kobad I
	Kobad I	498-531	33		
21	Khosrow I Anoshirwan	531-579	48		Son of Kobad I – Had Christian wife – One of his sons became Christian
22	Hormoz IV	579-590	11		Son of Khushrow I
23	Bahram Chobin	590-590			General in Hormoz IV's army
24	Khosrow II Parviz	590-628	38		Son of Hormuz IV, grandson of Khushrow I. Had two wives – Christian who bore him Kobad II (Other name Sheroy). Persian wife – Shereen – Killed by his son Sheroy
25	Kobad II	628-628			Son of Khushrow II, Killed his father
26	Ardashir III	628-629	1		Son of Kobad II, Killed by his general
	Shahrbaraz General	629-630			
27	Porandokht	630-631	16 months		Daughter of Khushrow II
28	Azarmidokht		6 months		Daughter of Khushrow II, slained
29	Hormoz V	630-632	2		
30	Yazdegerd III	632-651	19		Grandson of Khushrow II, Nephew of Purandokht, his father Shehriyar was son of Khushrow II



EXPLANATION OF GAHS AND USHAHIN GAH

Ervad Jehan Bagli and Ervad Gev Karkaria

The discussion of Gah represents the Contemplation session, of the NAMC, AGM agenda, held at Zoroastrian Religious and Cultural Center at 1187 Burnhamthorpe Rd., Oakville, Ontario, Canada on May 24/25 2008.



The five Gahs are the dividers of time of the day. They physically divide the day in five sections, marking the progression of the day from daylight to darkness. However, many zarathushti scholars have interpreted a day as an analogy of a lifetime. When a soul begins its journey in this corporeal world, it is believed to evolve to the highest spiritual level towards the end of its journey. In the words of Dastur Minochehr-Homji, "reading of the five Gahs is expounding the five stages of the perfecting Soul".

These five periods of the day can thus be compared with physical and spiritual unfolding of a human being from birth, childhood, adolescent, adulthood, and maturity or perfection, to reach the ultimate blessedness of Divine. In the process a person learns the quest to the path of Asha and experiences the aspects of Mazda, we recognize as Amesha Spentas. Mankind thus learns to acknowledge the Divine within, and harmonize with it to spiritually attain Perfection and tend to be one with God, as defined by Haurvatut /Amrutut..

Dasturji Daboo, mentions the word Gah is not limited to five watches of the day. According to him, it is a much broader term, encompassing time, seasons, place, etc. For example, during the ghambar prayers we recite *Geh Gahambar Madyozarem Gah* or *Geh Gahambar Ayathrem Gah* etc. Similarly, when we recite the Gathas during the last five days of the year, we say *Geh Gathabio*,





Geh Ahunavad, etc. During the *Paidast* (funeral) ceremony when we perform the last rites, we recite the *Ahunavad Gatha* near the body of the deceased, and we call it the *Geh Sarna* ceremony. The word *Gah* is used also to denote a place. *Aramgah*, *Barasnum Gah* etc.

In *Yasna* 44.5 the reverence for morning, noon and night is first mentioned suggesting that the day may have been divided into three sections during the time of Zarathushtra. It is at some later time in our history, that daytime watch of *Havan* was divided into *Havan* and *Rapithwan* –Spirit of Noon. Similarly the night-time watch was split into *Aiwisruthrem* and midnight watch of *Ushahin* –the Dawn. Although some scholars attribute these changes to Zarathushtra we have no clear evidence of when

these changes took place.

The ancient Iranian empire extended far in the North, and there were seven months of summer and five months of winter. It is believed that during the five winter months (*Mah Aban to Mah Spendarmad*), *Rapithwan*-the spirit of heat - went underground to give warmth to the roots and subterranean life. This permits the cycle of regeneration to begin on the first day of Spring, marked by *Naurooz*. For this reason *gah Rapithwan* is not observed during the winter months.

The book of 'Daily Prayers' by Framroze Rustomjee starts the description of the *Gah* with *Ushahin* rather than with *Havan*. *Ushahin* is the time, when spiritual unfolding of the soul starts. Philologically the word *Ushahin* means 'Pertaining to Dawn'. Theoretically this is the period of the day that marks the emergence of Dawn. In an esoteric sense it is also the period that marks the 'dawn of life'.

Ushahin is the beginning of the soul's journey in which the soul lives with the least degree of spiritual consciousness. The period of that awareness, is the birth of consciousness. *Dastur Minochehr-Homji* defines *Usha-* as *Hosh* or consciousness -*hina* meaning 'devoid of'. In esoteric sense this period also marks the 'beginning of life'.

There is some discrepancy in the Zarathushtrian tradition, as to when does the religious day begin. Theoretically a day starts from 12 am and ends at 11:59 pm. *Ushahin* is the day-watch that starts at mid-night and ends at sunrise. However, from religious viewpoint, of Zarathushtrian tradition the day is believed to begin at sunrise. This may have to do with the historical changes that have taken place in the ancient Iranian empires. In that vast empire the northern-most regions may have had much longer days due to early sunrise.

Traditionally, one recites the change of the name of the day in *roz nek nam* only after sunrise, in the *Havan gah*. In the *Uthamna* of *Ushahin* that is performed at late night around 3-4 am, mobeds are encouraged to recite the *Roz* of the previous day in the *roz nek nam* prayer despite the fact that in principle, the new day has already initiated. We need to ponder over that.

COMPOSITION OF THE GAH LITURGIES

A Starting Khshnuman

In the mid-Sasanian era, the *gah* recitals were composed in a very systematic manner, All of them start with a specific *khshnuman* and end with an appropriate *khshnuman*. The starting *khshnuman* recites the name of the *gah*, the Lord or *Ratu* that is believed to survey the domain, and the Divine Guardian spirit that guides the period.

1) Name of the gah, - *Ushahin*, *Havan*, *Rapithwan*, *Uziran*, *Aiwisruthrem*



2) **The Lord or Ratu (Rathave):** For *Ushahin berezyai namayaaicha* (Master of the House), *Savanghe Visyaecha* (Lord of the Village) for *Havan*, *Fradat Fashave Zantumaicha* (Lord of the Province) for *Rapithwin*, *Fradat Virai Dakhyumaicha* (Lord of the Country) For *Uziran*, *Fradat Vispam Hu-Jyaiti Zarathushtrotremaicha* (Divine teacher like Zarathushtra) for *Aiwisruthrem*. We see a progressive evolution from home in *Ushahin* to the Lord of the World in *Aiwisruthrem*.

3) **Divine Guardian Spirit for respective gahs are:**

Ushahin:	Sarosh, Rashnu, Ashtad Yazatas
Havan :	Mithra
Rapithwan :	Asha Vahishta or Ardibehesht
Uziran:	Apam napat
Aiwisruthrem.	Righteous Ashuan Fravashi

B Common Paragraph:

All the gahs have a common paragraph that starts with *Ahurem Mazdam ashavanem.....ratufritim yazamaide*. This is a liturgy of reverence to Mazda Ahura, to Prophet Asho Zarathushtra and his Fravashi, as well as to Amesha Spentas. Later section pays homage to the fravashis of the Righteous, and most helpful yazatas for their sublime service.

C Main Body:

The main section of the gahs consists of homage first to the specific (Gah), followed by a section that reveres the Lord that is believed to survey the period, and final section venerates the Divine Guiding spirits in the order as they are described in the starting khshnuman.

D Common Section:

The concluding paragraph is common to all the gahs. This section starts with words, *Thvam atrem...and concludes with Yenghe hatam...prayer*. Here we revere the purifying Fire (life force) of Ahura Mazda, the Barsam ceremoniously laid out, the Celestial waters, and the fire of Nairyo Sangha that is believed to reside in the heart of man. We also extend our homage to power of Manthra, the souls of the departed, and the fravashis of the righteous.

E Closing Khshnuman:

The concluding khshnuman starts with 2 Yatha Ahu Vairya followed by reverence and adoration of the respective Divine Guardian Spirit. The liturgies are finally terminated with the prayers of *Ahmai raescha* to *Kerfeh mozd*.

USHAHIN GAH

What is outlined below is a combination of translations by *Sethna and Kanga*.

As in most *Khordeh-Avesta* prayers we start with the homage to Ahura Mazda. (*khshnaothra Ahurahe Mazdao*) To the glory of Ahura Mazda, followed by three Ashem Vohu. (*Fravarane.....ahura takeosho*) I profess myself to be the Mazda worshipping follower of Zarathushtra opposed to evil (*vidaevo*) acting in accord with the law of Ahura (**ahura takaesho**). Then follows the reverence to the Gah of the day. (*Ushahinai ashone.....Frasastayecha*) I offer and dedicate this prayer for the reverence, praise, propitiation and glorification of Dawn (*Ushahin*) and for the adoration of one's desire for guarding the house, the righteous lord of righteousness. The words "*the righteous lord of righteousness or the righteous master of righteousness*" refer to the Lord or Ratu associated with the gah as explained earlier and to Divinity depending on the context.

(*Saraoshahe ashyehe.... Frasastayecha*) for the praise, propitiation and glorification of Pious Saraosha of pure strength of gaining victory, making the world prosperous with the most righteous justice (*Rashnu Rajistah*)



and truthful justice (*Arshtat* or *Astad Yazata*) and causing the settlement to flourish. (*yatha ahu vairyo.....mroutu*) May the Zaoatar proclaim before me the sacred verses of Yatha Ahu Vairyo and declare that "just as god is to be admired so also the prophet on account of his righteousness and who has declared the righteous wisdom (*Vidhvao maroutu*).

(*Aahurem mazdam..... Ratufritim Yazmaide*) For explanation of this section, see Introduction common paragraph B under Composition.

(*Ushahinem.....Armaitim yazmaide*) Here we pay reverence to Dawn (*Ushahin*). It describes dawn as beautiful, brilliant and brilliantly spread, full of luster in the house, pleasing to men, nimbly spread upon the seven regions of the earth. We worship Ahura Mazda and the Amesha Spentas Vohu Mano, Ashavahishta, Kshathravairya and Spenta Armaity.

(*Berejimashvanehm ashahe ratun yazmaide*) This paragraph is a reverence to Berejya the righteous Lord, with the blessing of the good Mazda worshipping religion, reverence is paid to the principal master of the house Ratu Namano Paiti the holy lord of holiness.

(*Saraoshem ashim.....varedat gaethem yazmaide*) The verse recites homage to Sarosha Yazata who is beautiful, victorious and makes the world we live in prosperous and righteous. We also worship Rashnu Yazata the just and Astad Yazata also as the promoter of the world bringing prosperity to the household and causing it to flourish.

(*Thwam Atarem.....vrastacha vareshyamancha*) We praise those men and women amongst us who have performed good deeds and whose goodness is judged by righteous Ahura Mazda. (see Introduction common section D under Composition. (*Yenghe hatam.....*)

(*Yasnemcha ...Varedat gaethao*) I admire and praise the power, strength and glory of righteous and victorious Sarosh Yazata, of the just Rashna Yazata and of Astad Yazata .

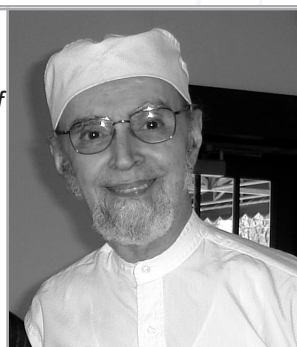
The quote by *Naigamwalla* sums up the true significance of the five gahs.

"This is the "Worship" and the "Praise", the "Propitiation" and the "Glorification" of the "GAH" (Five daily periods of prayer). The right employment of each "Gah" bears within itself the power of leading to righteousness. Each "Gah" – addressed as "The Master of Time" and "Master of Righteousness" for that particular division of the day, implies that the good "Mastery", "Ruler ship" or "Governance" of that "Time of Day" IN THINKING, SPEAKING AND DOING GOOD- leads to "Righteousness"

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Ervad Dr Jehan Bagli of Toronto is the past president of the North American Mobeds' Council (NAMC)



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To the Editor FEZANA JOURNAL

8 Sept 2008

To: The Editor FEZANA Journal

Dear Dolly

I read with great interest and tremendous pride your FEZANA JOURNAL summer issue No2, June 2008.

The journal is quite extensive and I would perhaps put that down to a vast number of associations that FEZANA represents in USA and Canada, including some coverage and News from other parts of the world.

Thank you for inclusion of ZAWA in the Naurooz Around the World Section.

The section "Living with Challenges" touched my heart and soul. The positive stories that came out means a lot to many people in this world. I liked the article by Navzer Sachinvala and the Jai Vakeel school for children with special needs. People with disability are the real heroes and their courage and bravery in turning things around in life is an example of what a human mind can set out to achieve despite all the odds.

This note that I am writing to you is a tribute to all of them for sharing their stories in the face of adversity and hardship.

Thank you and kind regards

Jehangir Mehta, Perth- WA

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شماره: ۲۲۵
پیراسته

بنام وانی بزرگ هستی عشق

سرکار خانم دالی دستور
Dolly Dastoor
سردبیر محترم مجله فزانا
FEZANA

با درود فراوان

تشریه گرانبها و پر بار فزانا سبب دلگرمی همکیشان گرامی در سرتاسر جهان گردیده است و به همراه خودهمازوری را به ارمغان آورده است.
اینجانب از همت والای شما و همکاران بزرگوارتان سیاسی و قهرمانی می نمایم و آرزوی تشاوم موفقیت در راه پیش رویتان را دارم.

اسفندیار اختیاری

مجله فزانا

نماینده ایرانیان زرتشتی
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جلس شورای اسلامی، ایران
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HOUSTON PUTS THE "Z" BACK INTO ZARATHUSHTI By Dr. HOMEE F. SHROFF, Esq. Arizona

Dear Editor

I have been accused by those who allegedly claim to know me to be a cynic and a critic. I think it is because I regard integrity and honesty with high regard in a world that sometimes appears to go in quite the other direction. What is more, my strive for perfectionism has also been interpreted by those that allegedly claim to know me as OCD (obsessive compulsive disorder). Having said that, high regard and praise do not purport to come easily from me, and when it does, it is indeed made, in all sincerity and with all my heart.

I was in Houston as my parent's chaperon (mother, Perin Punthakey-Shroff-Bhappu) to attend an award ceremony for my dad, Dr. Roshan Bhappu by the WZCC (World Zoroastrian Chamber of Commerce) to honor him as "Outstanding Zarathushti Professional of the Year," since he was medically unfit at the time to attend the Annual WZCC ceremony earlier this year in Pune, India. Houston kindly made an allowance for him to catch up on his moment of well deserved recognition. (FZ Vol 22 No 3 pg138-139)

Having now given enough background information about my character traits and the purpose of visiting Houston, the point of this letter, I take my hat off to the Houston Zarathushtis and the event they planned for the recognition of the 10th anniversary celebration of their fabulous community center. The event lasted two days starting with a Jashan and ending with a play. The program excelled in all aspects. It ran right on schedule for both days!!! Move over German efficiency, someone just beat you in punctuality. The two rooms at the center used on both days changed ambiances like a chameleon to fit the mood and the program so magnificently, it was uncanny. All accomplished with minimal yet tasteful décor. From the gala night splendor to an afternoon business luncheon to a theater showing in the evening. Move over Bauhaus minimalists and Martha Stewart wannabe's, someone just beat you at good taste with minimum decor. For me the high point was the homage to Nancy Sinatra and Abba. Boots and Summer Wine performances were spectacular. As was all the other performances, guest speeches, master of ceremonies and the play itself. Move over Broadway and the West End, here come the Houston Zarathushtis.

But, this immense dedication to effort and volunteer time, energy and imagination does not end there. The remarkable giving of goods and services along with the financial contributions which ranged from pennies to hundreds of thousands of dollars was staggering to make the center what it is today. And, accompanied with it all, was the harmony noted and the recognition observed by Houston Zarathushtis between our fellow persons of India, Iran, Pakistan and around the globe. It was exhilarating.

So, Houston Zarathushti's, thank you for a great two days. Of course, after leaving the center in Houston, I have had to re-evaluate my cynicism, a trait I mentioned earlier, because Houston showed to me that Zarathushtis continue to be honest, hard working and charitable people. And, since my praise come at a very high cost, another trait I mentioned earlier, I can only say to Houston, you deserve a pat on the back. You have indeed put the "Z" back into Zarathushti. May Ahura Mazda shower you with His blessings and much longevity to your center, and the foundation upon which it is built and continues to rely upon.

YOUTHFULLY SPEAKING.....

ZEOPARDY

**developed by the ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF METROPOLITAN CHICAGO (ZAC)
for their 25th Anniversary Gala Function**

Shazad Mehta

The popular game show where the questions are the answers. THIS IS ZEOPARDY! A group of Chicago youth put together a version of Jeopardy with questions all about the Zarathushti religion, Z-references in pop culture and history of their Darbe Meher.

"We wanted to make the question just about our Darbe Meher since we were doing the show during our center's 25 anniversary function." said Hoshi Vazifdar, one of the youth who put together the show. He went on to say, "But as we started planning the ideas just started flowing out and before we knew it we had a great program."

Hoshi along with his brother and sister, Neville and Delnaz put the show together with Tinaz Sevak, Rita Balaporia and Shazad Mehta. Rita has only recently moved to Chicago, but the other 5 are life long ZAC members and drew upon past experiences to come up with most of the questions. The categories ranged from the 'Persian Kings' to 'Bhelpouri' (their take on potpourri). ZAC past presidents, 1983, and pop culture references, were some of the categories

One of the favorite questions was a fill in the blank as shown on the popular TV game show 'Don't Forget the Lyrics.'

Fill in the blank:

Jasa me avanghe mazda,
Jasa me avanghe mazda,

Needless to say this was one of the easier questions designed to get a laugh. Other questions were a little harder.

Created during the era of Cyrus the Great more than a millennium before the Magna Carta, this is considered the world's first human rights charter.

Question - What is the Cyrus Cylinder?

Some questions shed a little unknown knowledge on some past presidents of the Chicago association such as;

This President was kicked out of St. Xavier's High School.

Question – Who is Hosi Mehta?

Although Alex Trebek couldn't be there, his non-union parsi equivalent, Adil Gameshowalla, ably led the audience through an unforgettable experience.

We were pretty happy with the outcome.

For the responses we received, it appeared everyone had a pretty good time. And people said we should do this again. The six of us who put the show together, probably got together about 4 times to plan for this. Our questions came from what we knew ourselves and we also asked others for "inside information" about other topics. You'd be surprised how willing some of our past Presidents' families were to give up embarrassing details.

This was a great way to engage the audience. If religion classes are getting a little boring this could change the pace a little. If others are interested in creating a Zeopardy for their association we would be willing to help give you some direction. There are many ways to adapt learning about Zoroastrianism to a different way than just lecturing. Making it fun and including questions about the community can always make it more engaging to the youth. While the youth may not know a lot of the ancient history of the Zarathushti religion, they certainly should know a lot about their local community of Zarathushtis.

Whether it's the youth creating this opportunity for others or the adults putting this together for the youth, serious questions of history or fun facts about the community is a fun way of learning. Zeopardy, Don't forget the...prayers and So You Think You Can Pray are just a few of games/reality shows that can be parodied.

It'll take a little work and time, but the benefits are immense.

Shazad lives in the Chicago area of Illinois. He currently works for an auto repair shop in the Chicago suburbs. In his spare time Shazad enjoys volunteering and acting. Shazad grew up and is still active in the Chicago Zarathushti community.



YOUTHFULLY SPEAKING.....

LIFE OF OUR PROPHET ZARATHUSTRA.

ANSWER KEY on page 114

Created by Ardeshir Irani, Michigan

Fill in the blanks using the correct words from the list and enter the numbered letters in the blanks to get the mystery word.

1 2 3 4 5 6

1 Zarathushtra's fathers name was _____.
[Pourushaspa, Paeteraspa]

2 Zarathushtra's mothers name was _____.
1
[Gogdo, Dogdo]

3 Before he was born, Zarathushtra's mother was surrounded by a mysterious _____. [light , scent]

4 When Zarathushtra was born he was _____.
2
[laughing , playing]

5 Evil people tried to kill by putting him in front of running _____ but a bull stood over him and saved him. [dogs , cows]

6 The evil folk left him in a den of _____ and threw him in a _____ which cooled down. [wolves , lions] [well, fire]

7 For many years his only disciple was his cousin _____.
[Maidhyomanha, Mister Rogers]

8 He finally reached the court of King _____ and his queen
3
[Vishtaspa, Valentino]

_____ where he was accepted.
4
[Hutoxi, Havovi]

9 He had to cure the kings _____ to make them believe in his religion
6
[Horse, Folks]

10 He was killed while _____ by _____.
5
[sleeping , praying] [Turbaratur, Hurmarbagh]

YOUTHFULLY SPEAKING.....

MATCH THE ANSWERS OF left columns TO THE WORDS ON right ONCE YOU HAVE UNSCRAMBLLED THE WORDS ON right column.

1. Good Words
2. Ameshaspenta Protecting the Waters.
3. Ameshaspenta Protecting the Plants.
4. First Creation of GOD.
5. Righteousness.
6. A Zoroastrian Religious Ceremony.
7. A Zoroastrian Priest.
8. The Highest Place of worship [highest Firetemple].
9. Ameshaspenta Protecting Animals.
10. On this Roj we do not eat meat.
11. A Guardian spirit.
12. Holy songs composed by Zarathustra.
13. Zarathustra's mother.
14. She was surrounded by a mysterious .
15. A symbol of the Almighty.
16. A vessel in which we put our Holy Fire.
17. Sandlewood.
18. Incense we put on the Fire.
19. A ceremony by which a person joins the Zoroastrian Faith.
20. A king who first celebrated Navroze.
21. The king who overcame Zohak.
22. The poet who wrote The Shahname.
23. The king who discovered Fire.
24. The evil Serpent King.
25. Good Thoughts.
26. The five Holy days before Navroz when we offer special prayers for the dear departed.
27. The first day of the month.
28. The king who founded the Persian Empire.
29. A Persian name for this same king.
30. The ceremony done in a firetemple when the 'GEH' changes.

UNSCRAMBLE THESE WORDS TO MATCH THEM TO THE QUESTIONS.

- | | |
|----|--------------|
| A. | IBO. |
| B. | AKHUTH. |
| C. | HASA. |
| D. | NASHAJ. |
| E. | YKS. |
| F. | TATAVRAHU. |
| G. | BODEM. |
| H. | MERATATE. |
| I. | MARSHATABEH. |
| J. | NAAMHUVO. |
| K. | SHATGA. |
| L. | GOODD. |
| M. | NAMBAH. |
| N. | ASHIVRAF. |
| O. | RIFE. |
| P. | GAINAFAR. |
| Q. | KUSHAD. |
| R. | MASHJED. |
| S. | BOLAN. |
| T. | FROONDIA. |
| U. | VOTEJAN. |
| V. | SAUDRIIF. |
| W. | HUNGSHE. |
| X. | HOZAK. |
| Y. | DAKTUM. |
| Z. | CUSRY. |
| AA | RUSHKU. |
| BB | TAMAHU. |
| CC | RAMHOZD. |
| DD | HGLIT. |

**Prepared by Sanaya [11] and Sarosh[9] Irani.
Michigan**

Personal Profiles

Adi Tamboli - Music Man, Medicine Man, Military Man

WITH ROXANA DUBASH

When Adi Tamboli was a young boy, he attended a Navjote in Albless Baug where he heard Nelly's Band. Mesmerized by the sounds, particularly the accordion, he was inspired to play music. "I can be just like her," he thought – "or better." This may have seemed a lofty vision for a young boy, but Adi fondly recalls that moment as a life-changing one.

So at the young age of six years old, Adi began developing what would be a life-long passion for music. His years of experience have spanned multiple instruments including the electronic keyboard, accordion, harmonica, guitar and flute, with the keyboard being his primary instrument. He spent his youth participating in musical programs, winning various prizes and gaining recognition for his talents. While in medical school, Adi played in 5-star hotels to earn money to supplement his meager educational stipends.

Born in Navsari to Tehmurus and Freny Tamboli, Adi was raised in India along with brothers Hoshi and Cyrus. After graduating in 1964, Adi completed his pre-med studies at the University of Poona and then attended Behram Jijibhoy Medical College in Poona. After completing medical school, Adi moved first to Germany and then in 1974 settled in the United States.

Adi completed his residency and post-graduate training in pediatrics and allergy/ immunology and, after several years of training, started his own practice in 1978. Adi has grown his practice to fourteen locations across Northeast Ohio, focusing on allergy and immunology in small and medium size towns. Adi's patients hail from a range of socio-economic status and his doors are open for those who need him, regardless of insurance or ability to pay. In many small towns, he provides the only specialized care available for his patients. As a doctor and Zarathushti, Adi believes that providing the same service for all ensures a positive karmic balance in life.

Early in his medical career, Adi spent time in the US Air Force Reserves as a Captain at Willow Grove Air Force Base where he worked in Transportation Operations. A passion of flying fueled his service years, but after years of service, Adi made the difficult decision to resign from the Air Force to focus his time towards his patients.

Through the many years of Adi's medical and military service, music has been his constant source of relaxation and passion. Adi had no formal training in music, nor can he read or write music. All it takes is listening to a song



and Adi is able to play it back. He plays a variety of music (movie themes, ballads, jazz, hip hop, R&B, Indian songs) and has entertained at weddings, parties, for the Toronto community to support fundraising for their Darbe Mehr, in Houston at the World Zoroastrian Congress, and most recently in Chicago for the 25th Anniversary celebration of the Darbe Mehr. Adi entertains crowds playing up to eight keyboards at once and mixing a variety of musical genres. Adi plays not for money but for the joy he gets from performing. Any funds generated through his work are given to charity.

Adi has made two recordings – the first titled "Musician and Physician" was done on a Wurlitzer organ and his second recording "Thought and Expression" was done on the electronic keyboard. He plans to make more recordings and has recently completed a state of the art recording studio in his home. Adi's goal is to find an engineer who will work with him to understand how best to leverage the technology he has available. He is willing to pay someone to learn how best to take advantage of the complicated software and encourages any community members with experience in audio engineering to reach out to him regarding this opportunity.

Adi's devotion to medicine and music has afforded him his greatest pleasures of interacting with a diverse group of people. He keeps busy with his practice and after 30 years he continues his medical work because he loves what he does. Adi plans to continue both his medical and musical endeavors as long as possible. No doubt that is music to the ears of his patients and fans!

Adi lives in West Virginia with his wife Jasmine, daughters Zenobia and Diana, and the family's Pekinese dog Bacci. Adi is looking for an experienced Audio Engineer to help him maximize the use of his new state of the art recording studio. He will pay for time and expenses, with the additional benefits of live entertainment, delicious home-cooking and warm hospitality. Adi can be reached at 304-723-5513 or 412-997-2100.

Roxana Dubash is the Secretary of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago and has been an active member of ZAC for a number of years. Roxana lives in Naperville, Illinois with her husband Nevin.

Personal Profiles

Dinyar Wadia: A Zarathushti Architect's Blueprint to Success

DEENA GUZDER

As a youngster growing up in bustling Bombay city, Dinyar Wadia spent countless happy afternoons under the Gateway of India's towering basalt arch. Wadia loved the smooth esplanade on the waterfront, which was perfect for roller skating, and marveled at the Moorish, Oriental and Florentine styles of the nearby Taj Mahal Palace hotel. Wadia's friend's father worked at the famed hotel and occasionally gave Wadia a free scoop of strawberry ice-cream, which sweetened the experience. The more time that Wadia spent at the Gateway of India, the more he appreciated the Indo-Saracenic architectural style and intricate masonry work in the yellow basalt and reinforced concrete. Wadia's passion for architecture further developed as he filled his sketchbooks with drawings not only of the Gateway of India but also the Opera House, Municipal Library and Victoria Terminus.

One day, 16-year-old Wadia saw an architect's blueprint on his mother's table and he declared, "I could do better!" His mother brushed off the comment and encouraged her son to pursue a "respectable" profession such as medicine or engineering. Wadia remained undeterred and shortly afterwards announced to his father that he aspired to become an architect. His father quickly replied, "Architects are bums and they don't make any money!" He later added, "It's not a profession, but a vocation for rich people!" Nonetheless, Wadia completed a five-year program at the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda in India and, in 1965, took a job with an architecture firm that paid him 300 rupees a month. The paltry salary frustrated Wadia who wanted to move out of his father's house with his new wife, Gool, so he could have more independence.

Wadia soon realized that his father was right in one way: architecture is an undervalued profession in India. Perusing the glossy pages of LIFE magazine, Wadia grew enchanted by the images of suburban America—paved streets, red Chevrolets, manicured lawns—and decided to leave home to make a name for himself abroad. In 1968, Wadia moved with his wife to New York City to study for a graduate degree in architecture at Columbia University. When one of Wadia's professors assigned him the lofty project of redesigning the Brooklyn Navy Yard, the young architect realized that his heart was not in urban design but residential design. After graduating from Columbia, Wadia received two very

attractive job offers. The first was an offer from a preeminent New York City firm that promised all the excitement of urban life. The second was an offer to work for one of his professors, Victor Christ-Janer, at a modest architectural firm in provincial New Canaan, Connecticut. Although the New Canaan office was cramped and the position was underpaid, Wadia saw the job as an opportunity to participate in the project designs from their conceptualization to termination so he accepted the offer. In the following years, Wadia learned invaluable lessons about construction and management; his professor also taught him the importance of actively listening to people's concerns and preventing his ego from interfering with the design process.



In the early 1970s, the architecture business crashed on the stock market and Wadia continued working for Christ-Janer unpaid until his professor insisted that he find gainful employment. Wadia spent the next three years dapppling in smaller projects such as building porches, patios and bathrooms. Discouraged, Wadia considered attending Harvard Business School only to learn from several firms that his salary would not benefit from additional education. On his wife's urging, Wadia spent their savings custom-designing and building his first home. The traditional colonial-style house attracted many admirers and Wadia soon received more work. In 1975, he opened "Wadia Associates," but his lack of experience with bookkeeping lost him \$4,000 his first year in business. Learning from his error, Wadia became more diligent and immersed himself into his fledgling company wholeheartedly. As his business struggled to stay afloat, he depended on his wife's supplementary income from "The Little Red Hen," a fast-food franchise that she ran. Wadia reminisces, "Gool looked so adorable in her cute red and white outfit!" Shortly afterwards, Wadia received a fortunate break. A sophisticated woman from Beverley Hills who wore only fur coats and high heels hired Wadia to renovate her 25,000 sq ft. Taggart House. Wadia refers to the woman as his "lucky star" because the multimillion dollar job helped establish Wadia Associates as a bona fide architectural firm.

Over the next thirty years, Wadia's work has spanned the gamut of traditional styles of architecture. Wadia has built everything from a Colonial Revival farmhouse to a French Normandy château; a Georgian

Personal Profiles

style mansion to a quaint English country potting shed; and, an informal American Shingle style home to a Tudor manor house. Using premium materials conducive to intricate workmanship, Wadia strives to build luxury houses that complement their natural surroundings. Wadia grew up appreciating verdant gardens and soothing waterfalls when spending summers vacationing outside Bombay in his family's scenic bungalow; today, Wadia is fond of saying, "A house without a garden has no soul." Each of Wadia's homes is artfully integrated into the natural aesthetic to prevent unnecessary environmental degradation.

Together with his design team—which consists of eight architectural designers, an interior decorator, several construction managers, and numerous support staff—Wadia has earned a reputation for designing and building high-end homes, gardens, and interiors. Wadia Associates has won numerous awards including, most recently, the 2008 Palladio award for gardens & landscapes, which was awarded for Wadia's own estate, "*Gitanjali*." (photos right) Wadia Associates' first monograph, part of the New Classicists series, has just been released and is available for purchase.

Architecture is a difficult field in which to excel, but Wadia says he loves his profession despite the long hours. Wadia hopes that more Zarathushtis will pursue architecture and he advises neophytes to "learn how to draw like crazy" and nurture a vivid imagination.

Guzder is a freelance journalist in New York City. Please feel free to email her at dg2190@columbia.edu (For Bio see page 97)



ANSWER KEY FOR OUR PROPHETS LIFE. (Page 111)

MYSTERY WORD--- GATHAS

- 1 POURUSHASPA.
- 2 DOGDO
- 3 LIGHT
- 4 LAUGHING
- 5 COWS
- 6 WOLVES FIRE
- 7 MAIDHYOMANHA
- 8 VISHTASPA HUTOXI
- 9 HORSE
- 10 PRAYING TURBARATUR.

19. The Occultation

of
Kay Khosrow



Kay Khosrow was one of Iran's greatest kings. He had inherited the throne when he was very young. As King, he made it his mission to ensure that his people were safe and prosperous. He conquered many countries with oppressive kings and liberated their people. All over the world, people knew that Kay Khosrow was a good and just king.

Now, Kay Khosrow had ruled for sixty years. In his old age, Kay Khosrow became worried that now that he had everything, he would not be satisfied with leading a good and simple life. When he was growing up, he had heard the stories of his ancestors: Kings like Jamshid and Zahhak, who started out to rid the world of evil Kings and then succumbed to evil themselves, once they became powerful. Kay Khosrow was concerned that he too may fall prey to temptation and leave the world disgraced.

So Kay Khosrow decided that he wanted to leave this world now, while he could still leave behind a good legacy. He decided to pray to God for deliverance from his human life.

One day Kay Khosrow left his court and went to his chambers. He sent away all his servants and instructed his chamberlain not to let anyone in. Then he washed his face and began to pray to God. Kay Khosrow prayed continuously for seven days and seven nights. He did not even stop to eat or drink. But after a week of praying he felt very weak, so on the eight day, he returned to his throne in the court.

SUNDAY STORIES FROM THE *Shahnameh*

All his courtiers saw how tired the King was. No one had been told why they could not see him for the past week. They all asked him what he was doing. Kay Khosrow answered: "Set your minds at ease, my champions. Nothing troubles me. For a week now, I have prayed to God. I have a hidden desire which I long for God to grant me. When he answers my prayer this will be a blessing for me and I shall tell you openly what it is."

Soon Kay Khosrow left the court again with instructions that he should not be disturbed. In his chamber, the King prayed:

*O higher than the highest, show to me
The ways of righteousness and purity:
Guide me to heaven, let me leave behind
This fleeting habitation of mankind,
And let my heart shun sin, so that I might
Pass to the realms of everlasting light.*

His courtiers were very worried. They thought Kay Khosrow was doing something bad, like casting a magic spell or asking for more powers. They feared that like Jamshid or Zahhak, the King would become evil and sad times would befall Iran again. When a week passed and the King had still not returned to court, they called the great warriors Zal and Rustom to court and asked them to speak to the King.

Again on the eighth day, Kay Khosrow came to the court. His noblemen begged him to tell them what he was praying for. But the King refused. "I will not reveal my heart's desire until it is fulfilled" he said as he went back to his chamber to pray.

After five weeks of praying continuously, the angel Soroush came to him in a dream. "O King, you have been wise and kind. Your prayers will be answered. If you leave this world, you will find a home beside the Source of Righteousness. There is



no need for you to continue here anymore. Give your treasures to those who deserve them; leave this fleeting world to another. And when you've given away everything, you must prepare to depart."

Kay Khosrow woke up from the dream with his hopes fulfilled. He went to the court. All the courtiers had gathered with Zal and Rustom there. They were very concerned about Kay Khosrow. Zal asked the King why he had not held court in five weeks. The King welcomed Zal and then said, "I do not wish to live in this world any longer. I have prayed to God day and night for five weeks to absolve me of my sins and take me into heaven. Last night, the angel Soroush came to me in a dream and said 'Rise, the time for your departure has come.' My reign, dear Zal, is coming to an end."

All the King's men were saddened to hear this. Zal thought the King had lost his mind. Perhaps he was under some evil spell. Zal lectured Kay Khosrow and told him not to abandon all the worldly things God had blessed him with. "What demon has captured your soul that you wish to throw away the wonderful world that God has laid at your feet?" demanded Zal. Kay Khosrow answered quietly, "It is to God that my soul inclines. I do not wish to become like Jamshid or Zahhak. I want to leave a good legacy behind. I am not under any evil spell. I simply want to give away all my worldly possessions and retire in the service of God."

Hearing this, Zal and all the other courtiers felt very sad. They knew now that their great King was in his right mind and would be leaving them soon. They decided to support him.

Shazneen Rabadi Gandhi lives in Marina Del Rey, CA. She writes as a hobby



Picture 1: Kay Khosrow, excerpted from, *Kay Khosrow Celebrates His Accession*, painted by painter C, c. 1520-30 / folio 223r, appearing in Dick Davis, trans., *Fathers and Sons: Stories from The Shahnameh of Ferdowsi*, Vol. II, p. 184.

Picture 2: *The angel, Soroush*, source unknown, appearing in Dick Davis, trans., *Fathers and Sons: Stories from The Shahnameh of Ferdowsi*, Vol. II, p. 191.

A big celebration was held outside Kay Khosrow's palace. Kay Khosrow spoke to his people and told them not to grieve for him. He gave away all his possessions to his friends and to poor people who needed help. He advised his warriors. And finally, he passed his crown to Lohrasp, who was a descendent of King Hushang.

Then Kay Khosrow and his nobles rode off into the mountains. They camped at the top of the mountain for a week, enjoying their last few days together and remembering happy things from their past. When they woke on the seventh day, they discovered that all the people in the land had come to the mountain. The mountain side was filled with people who were grieving for the loss of their King.

Kay Khosrow spoke to his people for the last time. He said:

*Farewell forever. When the sun's first beams
Appear, henceforth I'll come to you in dreams
But you will never see me here again.
Go back tomorrow to the Persian plain –
Even if musk should rain down far and wide
Don't linger on this lonely mountain side;
A wind will blow here soon, a wind to freeze
The mountain slopes and uproot stalwart trees,
From dark clouds snow will fall, you'll lose your way
Back to your Persian home, if you delay.*

That night, everyone had a restless sleep. When they woke up, the King was nowhere to be found. Soon it began to snow and, remembering the King's prophecy, the Persians hurried back to their homes.

BIRTHS

Zaal Navzar Hormazdi, a boy, to Mahnaz and Navzar Hormazdi, grandson to Goolnar and Bomi Patel (Pune, India) and late Dolly and Dr. Rustom Hormazdi (Pune, India) and nephew to Farrokh and Hatice Hormazdi in Vancouver, Washington on April 7, 2008.

Parisa Khory, a girl, to Zara (nee Khory) and Dimaz Ladak, granddaughter to Dilnavaz and Rustom Khory, great granddaughter to Homayun Irani (Burlington, ONT) in Richmond Hill on June 9, 2008.

Xerxes Gandhi, a boy, to Sarosh and Rashna Gandhi (Houston, TX) on June 12, 2008.

Ashdin Zubin Khambatta, a boy, to Daisy and Zubin Khambatta, grandson to Aban and Parvez Khambatta (Cleveland, OH) and Roshan and Jimmy Kapadia (Austin, TX) in Chicago, IL on June 19, 2008.

Eric Neville Patel, a boy, to Firoozi and Neville Patel, brother to Natasha, grandson to Aban and Dinshaw Dastur and Dolly and late Homi Patel in Brampton, ONT on June 25, 2008.

Yazad Viraf Karai, a boy, to Winifer and Viraf Karai, brother to Behzad, grandson to Freny and Phiroz Karai (Pune, India) and Piloo and Sarosh Kasad (Mumbai, India) in Mississauga, ONT on July 13, 2008.

Shireen Rustom Anklesaria, a girl, to Zia and Rustom Anklesaria, granddaughter to Pervin and Vispi Sagar, niece to Ayesha in Houston, TX on August 2, 2008.

Rohan Naushad Pagdiwalla, a boy, to Sophia and Naushad Pagdiwalla (Chicago, IL) on August 4, 2008.

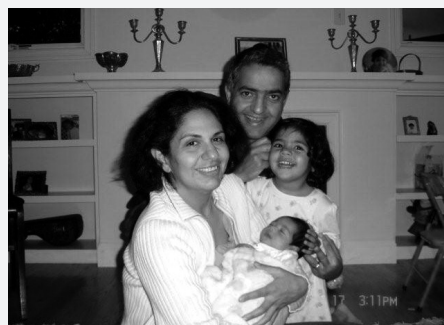
Ashton Jehangir Khory, a boy, to Jehangir and Danielle Khory, grandson to Dilna and Rustom Khory (Burlington, ONT) and Dolly and Harry Wilson (Weirton, W VA), and great grandson to Homayun Irani, in Hamilton, ONT on August 27, 2008.

Armaan Bharucha, a boy, to Minal and Jaavid Bharucha (Chicago, IL) on September 3, 2008.

Kyle Hoshedar Bamboat, a boy to Khushnuma and Hoshedar Bamboat, brother to Karmin, in Toronto, September 26, 2008.

Anaiya Anahita Khory, a girl, to Cyrus and Anahita Khory, granddaughter to Fredoon and Pervin Khory and Rustom and Dilnavaz Bozorgi, and great granddaughter to Sherroo Mistry and Katyaon Khosravi, niece to Cyrus Bozorgi, Anita Khory and Natasha Bozorgi in Toronto, ONT on September 26, 2008.

Elnaz Mehregan Khosraviani, a girl to Bijan & Negin Khosraviani, sister to NeeKee, granddaughter to Pouran & Bahram Khosraviani and Manijeh & Hooshang Shojaee in Boston, MA on Wednesday, October 1, 2008. (photo below)



Parinaz Behzad Dastur, a daughter to Delnavaz (Della) and Behzad Dastur, granddaughter to Arnavaz and Byram of Toronto - niece to Afreed Mistry, & grand daughter to Sanobar and Rusi Dastur of Ahmedabad in Fremont, CA, on October 25, 2008.

NAVJOTES

Shanaya Desai, daughter of Darius and Anita Desai, granddaughter of Cawas and Kamal Desai and Bapsy and Kersey Vakharia, on April 26, 2008.

Afreen Satarawalla, daughter of Pesi and Annu Satarawalla in India on June 1, 2008.

Katie and Zubin Master, children of Percy M Master and Sharmeen Baria, grandchildren of Gool and late Minoo Master and Sanobar and Minoo Baria in Houston on June 13, 2008

Alisha and Darius Banker, children of Persis and Cyrus Banker in Mississauga, ONT on June 29, 2008.

Darius Dalal, son of Tina and Tauzer Dalal, grandson of Rumi and Homai Sapurji (Mississauga, ONT) and Jimmy and Katy Dalal (Mumbai, India) in Oakville, ONT on July 5, 2008.

Ayana Unwala, daughter of Jamshed Unwala and Khorshed Vakil on July 11, 2008.

Abaan Kermani, daughter of Neville and Maharukh Kermani in Mumbai, India on August 1, 2008.

Ava and Sanaea Suntoke, daughters of Armene and Kaiwan Suntoke in Oakville, ONT on August 2, 2008.

Natasha and Shiamak Kalwachwala, children of Homiar and Jayshree Kalwachwala on August 3, 2008.

Daztar Pagdiwala, son of Neelam and Keki Pagdiwala, brother of Yolancia in Bolton, CT on August 3, 2008.

Nadia, Tara and Roxana Jam, daughters of Bahram and Mitra Jam, grandchildren of Jamshid and Pervin Jam, and Dinyar and Katayoon Hakhamaneshi in Toronto, ONT on August 17, 2008.

Katayun Kamdin, daughter of Jimmy and Wendy Kamdin at the Chicago Darbe Meher, Burr Ridge, IL on September 13, 2008.

Shanaya Bedford, daughter of Binu and Bruce Bedford, and granddaughter of Farida and Sarosh Khambatta, in Chicago, IL, on October 11, 2008.

WEDDINGS

Xerxes Cooper, son of Kersi and Aniheeta Cooper (Toronto, ONT) to Karen Tu, daughter of John and Mary Tu (Niagara Falls, ONT) in Woodbridge, ONT on May 17, 2008.

Darien Kavasmaneck, M.D., son of Aban and Percy Kavasmaneck (Palm Beach Gardens, FL) to Gulshan Langrana, daughter of Nergish and Aspi Langrana (Mumbai, India) in Miami Beach on September 7, 2007 followed by a wedding ceremony at the Colaba Agiary, Mumbai, India on February 8 and a wedding reception at the Mirasol Country Club, Palm Beach Gardens, FL on May 24, 2008.(photo below)



Feroza Mistry (Philadelphia, NJ) to Gil Nusbaum on May 25, 2008.

Lillian Bharucha, daughter of Adil and Veera Bharucha of Houston to Cyrus Irani, son of Behram and Farida Irani (Plano, TX) in Dallas, TX on July 5, 2008. Wedding officiated by Dasturji

Firoze Kotwal of Mumbai and Ervad Maneck Sidhwa of Houston. First wedding performed by Dasturji Kotwal outside India

Amie Hakim and Neel Katyal in Calgary, Alberta on July 5, 2008.

Erin Balsara, daughter of Zarine and Paul Balsara to Massud Naderi, son of Nasreen and Hamid Naderi in Danville, CA on August 30, 2008.

Zubin Gyara, son of Mahrukh and Rohinton Gyara (Santa Clara, CA) to Sharmin Irani, daughter of Perin and Shahrukh Irani in Mumbai, India on September 5, 2008.

Dinaz Todiwala and Joseph Naoki Kain (Sunnyvale, CA) in Cancun, Mexico on September 14, 2008.

Eric Mistry, son of Roshan and Khushrow Mistry, to Cristina Garcia, daughter of Norma and Javier Garcia in San Jose, CA on October 17, 2008

DEATHS

Putlamai Minocher Tengra, 85, mother of Khurshed, Rohinton, Zarine and Meher, mother-in-law of late Navaz K. Tengra, late Minoo R. Ranji, Kamal R. Tengra and Rita M. Tengra, grandmother of 10, and great grandmother of 8 on January 14, 2008.

Vira Aspi Todiwalla, mother of Dilnavaz and Naznin in Mumbai, India on July 2, 2008.

Persees Divecha Goebel, 66, wife of John Goebel, mother of Shenaya Swatz-Goebel in Foster City, CA on July 14, 2008.

Goola J. Nagarwalla, 92, mother of Pheroze (Renate) (St. Charles, IL), Jehan (Gerrit) (St. Charles, IL) and Zarir and Meher (Mumbai, India) in Mumbai, India on July 18, 2008.

Shapoorji S. Surty, 72, husband of Tara, father of Yasmin Sharook Kapadia (Burnaby, BC), and son Zoobin and granddaughter Benafsha, in Mumbai, India on July 23, 2008.

Alice Hoshang Behrana, sister of Adil and Meheryar Bharucha, Hutoxi Mulla and Kashmira Bhader, sister-in-law of Mehelli Behrana in Karachi, Pakistan on August 9, 2008.

Rustomji S. Billimoria, father of Nergish (Kayomارش) Mehta, Yazdi Billimoria, grandfather of Roxana (Nevin) Dubash, Zenobia (Ethan) Sribnick, Farhad and Rashni, great grandfather of Kaizad in Chicago, IL on August 29, 2008.

Neri Framroze, husband of Naj, father of Cyrus (Vashti), grandfather of Alisha and Darius in Toronto, ONT on August 31, 2008.

Roshni Bharda, 68, wife of Darayes Bharda, sister-in-law of Mahrukh Cama (New Jersey), and Arnavaz Sethna (Houston) in New Jersey on September 4, 2008.

Kawas Irani, husband of Hadokht, father of Jehangir and Shanaz, and Percy and Gulnar, grandfather of Neal, Sinaya, Zenia, and Cyrus in Los Altos, CA on September 9, 2008.

Gool P. Reporter, wife of Phiroze M. Reporter, mother of Viraf (Trudy) and Cyrus, grandmother of Sami, Emet, and Delara, sister of Ervad Jehangir Panthaky, (and late Khorshed) of Vancouver, BC, Ervad Jal (Nergish), of Montreal, Noshir (Jai) of Toronto, ONT, Rohinton (Naju) of San Diego, CA, Siloo (Darius) Nazir of Ancaster, ONT, and Kety (Vispi) Patel of Toronto, ONT, in Burnaby, BC on September 18, 2008.

Homi Maneckji, father of Zarina Elavia (Houston, TX) in Mumbai, India on September 28, 2008.

Gustad Shekhdar (Karachi, Pakistan), husband of Keroo Shekhdar, father of Jhangoo Shekhdar, Mickey Shekhdar, Freny Goody Pajnigara, and Beroze Ron

Mirza in Canada on September 30, 2008.

Pesi Cawasji Sagar, 79, husband of late Mehru Sagar, father of Gustad (CA) and Mahrukh (Vancouver, BC), father-in-law of Avan (nee Amalsad), brother of Perin (Burjor) Bajina (India); also survived by Nephews Cyrus (Benaz), Kayomas (Dinaz), grand nieces and Nephews Shehnaz, Kayzad, and Kerman in Ottawa, ONT, on October 2, 2008.

Tehmurasp Minocher Daboo, brother of Mani Nusswan Rustomjee, Banoo Anklesaria, Pervez Daboo (Houston, TX), Villie Azhar (Houston, TX) and Rohinton Daboo (Houston, TX) at US Naval Base in Philippines on September 21, 2008.

Aloo Billimoria, 79 wife of late Dhunjisha Billimoria, mother of Khorshed Cyrus Mistry of Blue Bell, PA and Meher Baburaj of Mumbai, India, grandmother of Sanobar Keith McNellis, Phiroza Gil Nusbaum and Priyanka Baburaj in Mumbai, on October 5, 2008.

Farahad Jal (FJ) Irani, son of late Jal and Arnavaz Irani, brother of Rompy and Freddy (Washington, DC), uncle of Behnaz Vispi Byramji (Mississauga), in Brampton, ONT, on October 9, 2008

Cyrus Desai, 21, son of Thrity and Rohinton Desai, brother of Anahita Desai in Houston, on October 12, 2008.

Ervad Parvez Pavri, husband of Kate Pavri, in Toronto, ONT, on October 14, 2008.

Freny Gustad Patel, mother of Peshwan (Zarine) of Oakville and Zavahir (Queenie) of Victoria, BC. in Mumbai, on October 23, 2008

Jehangir Savak Mobed, 67, husband of Mahrukh and father of Naomi of Lawrenceville, NJ on October 24, 2008.

Perin Bamboat, mother of Ronnie (Nilu) of Brampton, Mickie (Shahnaz) of Dubai, Eddie (Khurshid) of London, UK in Brampton, Ont, on October 28, 2008.

Adi Patell, 75, husband of Rashne, father of Darius and Dilnaaz Rustomji, brother of Framroze (Armaity) of NJ and brother-in law of Niloufer (Edul) Davar of NJ, in Chicago, on November 4, 2008.

Matrimonials

FEZANA Journal will coordinate initial contacts between interested parties. We do not assume any responsibility for verifying credentials. Contact Roshan Rivetna rrrivetna@aol.com.

Zoroastrian girl, 29, in the medical profession in Maryland would like to correspond with a 35+ established male who (1) Has a good sense of humor (2) Is fit and active (3) Enjoys fine dining, visiting Vegas and other weekend trips (4) Is affectionate and communicative and (5) Someone who works to live and not vice versa. Contact Seema at : sacu1009@yahoo.com [F08-31].

Looking for a Soul Mate?

Try these matrimonial sites and services:

<http://matrimonial.zoroastrianism.com>

www.TheParsiMatch.com

www.shaadi.com

Mrs. Gool Banaji, Parel, Mumbai,
goolpesi@gmail.com

Mrs. Serah Kotval, Dadar, Mumbai
Tel: 91 22 2142 3570.

Please send all submissions for "Milestones" to Mahrukh Motafram, 2390 Chanticleer Drive, Brookfield, WI 53045, mmotafram@msn.com, Tel: 262-821-5296. NOTE: If no year is specified, it implies "within the past 12 months."

Dastur Nadirshah Pestonji Unwalla 92, husband of late Manijeh, father of Adil, Aban, Yezdi (Kamal) (Bangalore) and Khurshed (Perveen), Toronto grandfather of Kainaz, Neville, Franak and Shahrukh. brother of Jamshed (Bangalore) Nergis Adi Unwalla (New Jersey), Banoo Dhunji Sidhwa (Bombay) and late Gool Homi Unwalla, Fram Pestonji Unwalla, Dhun Dara Motafram; Pilloo Dara Motafram, in Bangalore, November 25, 2008. Dearly loved and respected by his extended family of nieces and nephews.



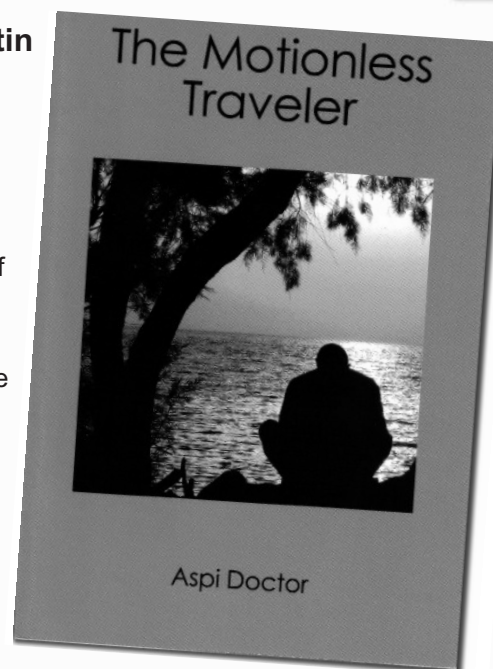
The Motionless Traveler

By Aspi Doctor

ISBN 1-4196-9114-7 pps 227 published 2008 by author

Reviewed by Zareen Hakim Austin

BOOKS
&
ARTS



The future doesn't look so bright in Aspi Doctor's *The Motionless Traveler*. The book takes place in 2151 AD in Bombay (Mumbai), India,

where the state of the world is anything to be desired. Natural resources have been depleted, people live with only the bare necessities, and the streets have become dangerous. In the first few pages, we are introduced to Krish, the main character, and until about page twenty, his life seems unbearably boring. Fortunately, once the reader gets past the grim and mundane descriptions of the future, the story gets a little more interesting. Forty-something Krish ends up saving the life of Kumon, a beautiful girl, after some hoodlums attempt to accost her. This marks the beginning of a pleasant, but strange relationship between the young Kumon and Krish, who is more than twice her age. Predictably, Krish's wife, Zeena, is painted as a somewhat sour, detached and unremarkable woman. To thank Krish for saving his daughter's life, Kumon's father, Sobsung, gives him a unique Buddha figurine. This Buddha has special powers and for people who can summon these powers, it allows them to levitate in the air. In order to keep the Buddha statuette safe, we follow Krish on a series of

"motionless travels" to different parts of the world.

Because the story takes place in the future, Doctor has a great opportunity to be creative. And while his depiction of the future is relevant in today's times, i.e. the lack of natural resources, the need for conservation and responsible usage of energy, I wish Doctor had used this chance to create a more interesting "future". Instead, the book is filled with stereotypical descriptions of places and people, having reverted to their traditional lifestyles. In some cases, I found his descriptions of certain ethnic groups offensive. There was even an instance where he describes the run-down town of Kamtipor as suffering from a repulsive disease, which "...was the direct result of indiscriminate sexual promiscuity and homosexuality". This didn't have much to do with the story, so one wonders if the author is trying to make a negative statement about certain lifestyles. Perhaps Doctor wasn't aware of how some paragraphs could be perceived, but either way, it wasn't appealing. Furthermore, even though the story takes place in the future, the

language used in the dialogues is a bit formal and outdated. It makes it difficult for young readers to identify with.

In my opinion, as it stands, this is not a "must read" novel. The story has great

potential, though. With a little polishing and a thorough proofreading, I think the story is even worthy of two separate books – one which develops the characters further and one which describes the journeys with the Buddha in full detail. There was too much packed into this book – the story took off too slowly and ended too abruptly. We never know what happens to the most important characters. The passion for storytelling is clear, though, and for that, I commend Aspi Doctor's first attempt at fiction.

Zareen Hakim Austin is a graphic designer, living in Laval, Quebec, with her husband and two young children.

Hamari Dunyani Musafari

BOOKS

ARTS



(Our World Travels)

Manchersha Manekji Bharucha

Jehangir Rustomji Vatcha Gandhi, Publishers, 1933, Sanj Vartman Press

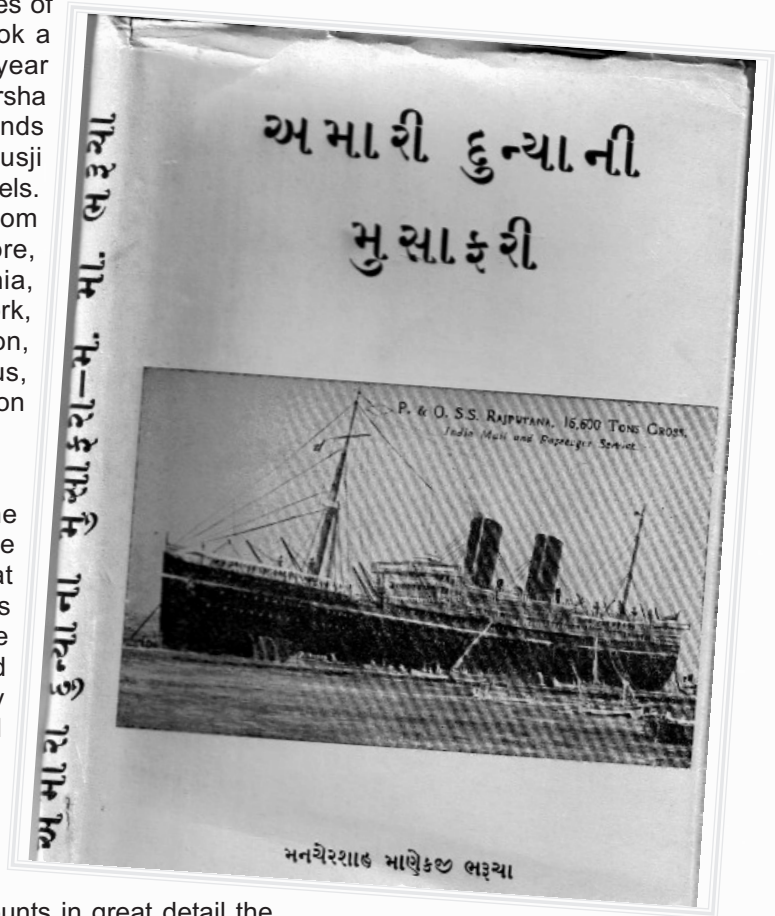
312 pages

Reviewed by: Roshan J. Bharucha

This is a book of travel experiences of three close friends who undertook a journey to see the world in the year 1929. On May 10, 1929 Manchersha Bharucha along with his friends Nadirsha Cawasji and Hormusji Bhabha set out on their world travels.

They traveled the high seas from Colombo, to Penang, Singapore, China, Japan then to Honolulu, California, Chicago, Toronto, Montreal, Boston, New York, Panama Canal into Cuba then on to London, Europe, Greece, Constantinople, Damascus, Syria, Jerusalem, Middle East and back home on December 6, 1929.

The author has focused on two aspects, the natural wonders and landscapes of the lands he visited and the manmade structures of that time. He has provided insight into various aspects such as origin of some city names, the underground train systems, different and varied cultures, and landscapes. The book is very well illustrated by many photographs and detailed write ups. One must remember that this book is the experiences of three young men and what they saw and perceived in the year 1929. In fact some of the structures – buildings and monuments photographed may not be standing today. The author also recounts in great detail the names of every shipping line and details of the ship and all the seas, oceans, straits they traveled.



The Forward to this book was written by Dr. Sir Jivanji Jamshedji Mody who compares the author to Lord Bacon's essay on travel and states that Mr. Bharucha on his return from his travels remained true to himself, his Zoroastrian community and to his country. The travels did not change his perspective in fact, he has shared his experiences and what he learned from his travels in the book.

Roshan Bharucha is the daughter-in-law of the author and lives in Bryn Mawr, PA. She considers it her privilege to review this book .

With Cyclists Around the World

Written By: Adi B. Hakim, Jal P. Bapasola,

Rustom B. Bhumgara

Published by Lotus Roli

ISBN: 978-81-74366184 -

Rs. 350

BOOKS

ARTS



The authors who were residents of Bombay conceived a plan in 1921 to go across the world on bicycles.

They started from Bombay, and after passing through numerous villages, reached Agra of the famed Taj Mahal monument. They then proceeded to Dehli, Multan, and Quetta, which were still part of India.

From India they went to Iran visiting the famous cities of Kerman, Yezd, Shiraz, Isphahan, Teheran, and Hamadun. From Iran, they entered a country then called Mesopotamia, and visited Baghdad.

From Baghdad they went to Syria and visited Aleppo and Damascus, entering Palestine, and visited Jerusalem. Their next stop was Egypt, where they visited Ismalia, Cairo and Alexandria. Finally they left Asia and entered Italy, visiting Brindisi, Naples, Rome, Florence, Genoa, Venice and Milan.

After Italy, they went to Switzerland, and on to Lusanne, Berne, Lucerne, Zurich and Constance, continuing to Austria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, followed by Holland, Belgium, France. They finished their European travel in England, Scotland and Ireland.

From Europe they crossed the Atlantic to the United States, where they visited New York, Boston, Chicago, the Yellowstone Park and San Francisco.

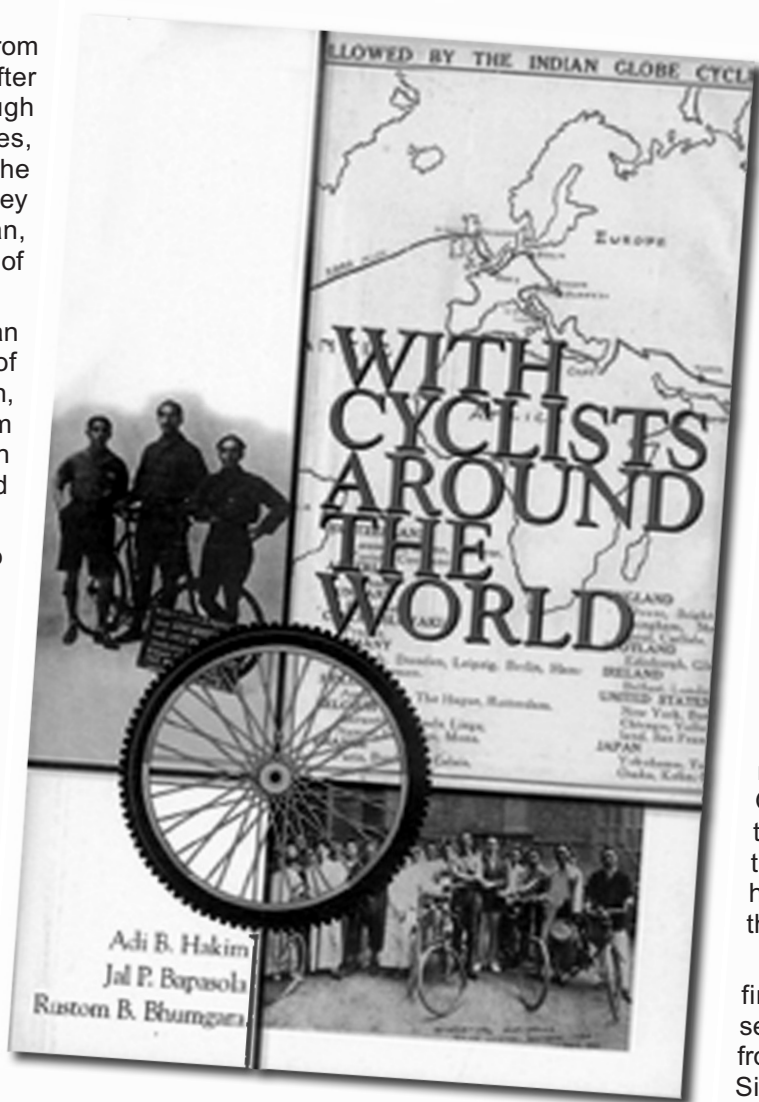
They finally left the west coast of United States, crossed the Pacific to Japan, entered China, before returning to India.

In their voyage they covered the distance of 44,000 miles in four years and five months.

It is fascinating to see the enthusiasm of these young lads surviving on their wits in so many countries. Only once did their gift of gab fail them badly and horror of horrors they were jailed.

The initial finances were secured by the lads from Sir Dorab Tata, Sir Cowasji Jehangir, Sir

Hormusji Wadia, Capt. Unwalla, Capt. Sorab Mody, Dr. Jilla, Messrs. Muncherji Patel and a host of others.



All the lads belonged to the Bombay Weightlifting Club. The skill they acquired in the club was most helpful when traversing through a terrain where they couldn't ride their bicycles they had to carry not only their luggage but also their bicycles.

The book is also replete with humorous incidents. Let me give you an example. When the boys were looking for financing for the trip, they obviously prepared their presentation with great care. In their words:

"Realizing fully well the dangers of exposing our plans to publicity we nourished them within our bosoms as some conspirators perfecting an evil design. The floodgate of unsought advice that in such a case would have been opened upon us would have completely ruined all our plans. As it is gratuitous advice against the perils of such a task and on matters both relevant and irrelevant to the enterprise, was forthcoming in unpleasant abundance. Each kindly tenderer of advice vied with the other in chilling our enthusiasm. We never for a moment knew before this that human nature was so exceptionally prone to giving advice; if only men retained and digested what they give out so lightly to others in form of admonitions would not this world be a much happier place to live in?"

On another occasion, they met a Parsi gentleman whom they described as Mr. X who was living in a gorgeous villa in a respectable quarter of Bombay. They were greeted at the entrance by a person with very clean clothes whom they mistook as the household servant and requested him to inform the master Mr. X of their arrival. "I'm Mr. X myself." The lads narrated their plans. Mr. X heard them, shrugged his shoulders with "a contortion of his facial muscles." And lectured them on their folly for an hour.

These young men appreciated the great benefit of getting letters of introduction from people of power and prestige. They had a letter from the Governor of Bombay to the Governor-General of India, Lord Reading in Delhi. The Governor-General in turn gave them a letter of introduction to the Secretary of State for India in England. Such letters saved them from many grievous situations which they encountered later on.

The weather was a constant challenge to travelers on bicycles, encountering high winds and sandstorms

going through deserts and mountainous areas. Many a times they had nowhere to sleep and they spent their nights in the open under miserable and cold conditions

The book also describes in vivid details the curious customs in various countries they visited. For example in Baluchistan, when the head male person dies, his eldest son becomes his heir and representative, including his mother as his property.

The boys learnt the art of eloquence, making good speeches which would be rewarded with money. In addition they also resorted to giving public performances of physical feats such as bar bending, stone breaking on chest, fencing, boxing etc. This would attract a huge crowd of people who witnessed their performances and received donations.

It must have been hard on these individuals with disparate personalities to tolerate each others' limitations for such a long period. One of them left the group from the travel and returned to India. Sad to narrate that when they reached Damascus, a strong difference in opinion occurred between them and they separated into two parties.

I would like to end this review by quoting the foreword by the first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru:

"I envy the young men who have made this book. I too have some of the red blood which seeks adventure; some thing of the wanderlust which even drives one forward. But fate and circumstances have prevented me from satisfying it in the ordinary way – I seek adventure in other ways. And I envy those who like our young friends have girdled the globe and tasted adventure to the full. I hope other young men will read this brave record and that it will fire their imagination and make them do great deeds.

NEW WEBGROUP
freedomofchoice@yahooogroups.com
ZARATHUSHTI RELIGION BELIEVES IN
GOOD THOUGHTS GOOD WORDS.
GOOD DEEDS

Parsis in India and the Diaspora

BOOKS
ARTS &

JOHN R. HINNELLS & ALAN WILLIAMS (EDS.):

ISBN: 978-81-74366184 -

xiv, 290pp., 80.00 GBP 145.00 USD

Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2007. £130.00

ISBN: 978-0-415-44366-1 (hardback)

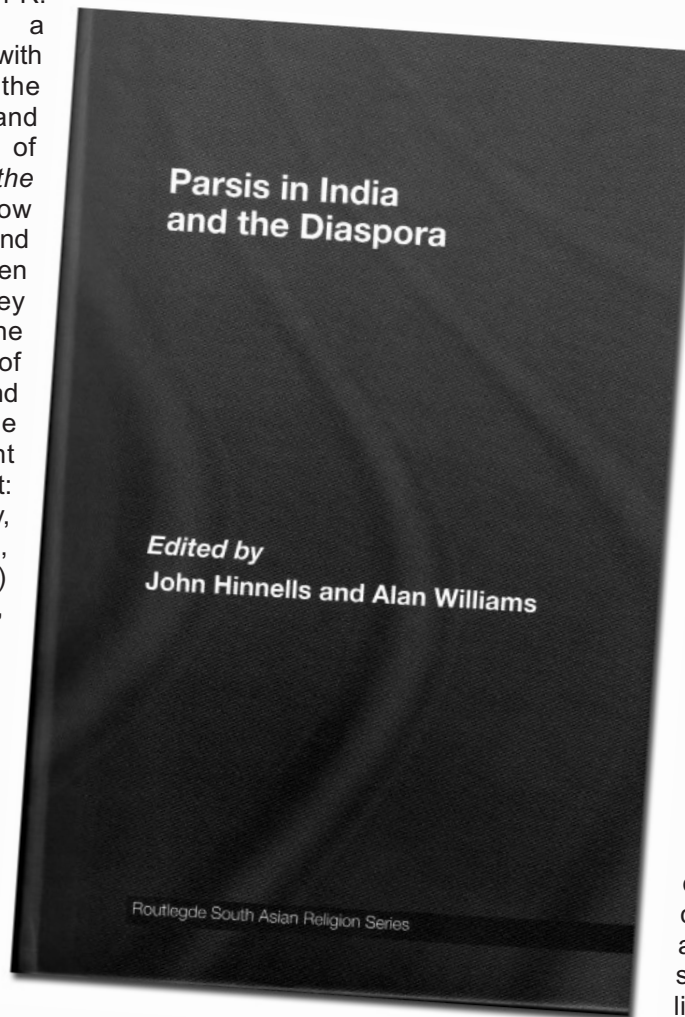
978-0-203-93450-0 (electronic)

In July 2006 John R. Hinnells organized a Research Workshop with leading scholars at the School of Oriental and

African Studies in the University of London on *Parsis in India and the Diaspora*. These papers have now been published as *Parsis in India and the Diaspora*, a collection of thirteen essays that focus on three key periods: the settlement from the eighth century, the development of the community in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and the diaspora. The authors represent different approaches to the subject: *religious* (Hinnells, Stewart, Choksy, Stausberg), *social* (Palsetia, Wadia, McLeod) and *legal* (Sharafi) *historical*, *linguistic* (Williams), *sociological* (Mehta) and *archaeological* (Nanji and Dhalla). Rather than presenting broad surveys, the individual articles offer in-depth studies "in sharp focus and vivid colour" (Hinnells, p. 4), and each is part of a separate long-term research project.

The book is dedicated to *Faridoon and Mehraban Zartoshty*, two brothers who, along with the late *Mary Boyce*, are the main benefactors for the study of Zoroastrianism at the School of Oriental and African Studies.

The articles are based on original research and challenging established positions. Thus, *Alan Williams*,



"The structure, significance and poetic integrity of the Qesse-ye-Sanjan"

(pp.15–34)

questions its common reading as a 'folk chronicle'.

Instead, he argues that the "key to understanding the apparent ahistoricity and inexactitude of the text is to see its fundamentally religious-

mythological conception and design" (p.21). The compositional

structure which he detects consists of five parts: introduction, three central sections and conclusion. Each has an internal threefold structure, which Williams correlates with the Zoroastrian cosmological stages of

"creation" (*bundahishn*), "mixture" (*gumezishn*) and "resolution" (*wizarishn*) (p. 25).

The archaeological evidence for "The Landing of the Zoroastrians at Sanjan" in Gujarat is examined by *Rukshana Nanji and Homi Dhallia* (pp. 35–58). Based on excavations carried out from 2002–2004 by the World Zarathushti Cultural Foundation, they date the Zarathushti presence at Sanjan to the early to mid-eighth century C.E. and argue that such migrants settled in a place that had already been an Iranian trading outpost during the Sasanian period. These mercantile groups "would have been the impetus for the increased trade in the eighth and early ninth centuries" (p.53). It is likely that many subsequent migrations took place. The excavations of the *dokhma* show clearly that from an early date there was a large Zarathushti population. The ceramics found in the mortar of the building material indicate that the *dokhma* was constructed between the tenth and twelfth centuries, while bone samples suggest that it was last used between 1410 and 1450 C.E. This makes it the earliest *dokhma* on Indian soil (p.50). After the sack of Sanjan, probably in 1465 (*S.H. Hodivala, Studies in Parsi History. Bombay 1920*, pp. 37–66), the Atash Behram was taken to Bansda.

Sarah Stewart, "Parsi prayer and devotional song in the Indian diaspora" (pp. 59–77) examines the relationship in lay Parsi devotional life between ancient Zarathushti prayers, on the one hand, and a Parsi Gujarati song, the *Atash nu Git* or 'Song of the Fire', on the other. The latter was composed in 1765 by laymen, and celebrates the participation of both laymen and women in the founding of the second Atash Behram in India. Subsequently the song was transferred from the temple sphere into the realm of female devotional life, and since then has traditionally been recited by women when preparing the hearth fire on the name-day feast of fire, for weddings and sometimes navjotes. Stewart suggests that after the hearth fire had been elevated to the temple fire, the latter re-entered the domestic sphere in the form of the *Atash nu Git*, which thus represents "the domestication of the temple fire" (pp. 67, 71f.).

In "Partner in Empire: Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy and the public culture of nineteenth-century Bombay" (pp.81–99), *Jesse S. Palsetia* explores the collaborative relationship between Parsis and the British within the confines of colonialism. Using Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy (1783–1859) as an example, he argues that Indian notables "utilized the very mechanisms of British authority to satisfy Indian requirements" (p. 86). Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy raised his public profile by

promoting both his social status in Bombay society and his personal involvement in decision-making alongside the British (p. 87). He was the first colonial subject to enter into partnership with the British for developing large-scale charitable projects, in particular the *Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy (JJ) Hospital*. At the time of his death on 15 April 1859, his charitable gifts were in excess of £245,000 (p. 87). Having received the first Indian knighthood in 1842, his many socio-political contacts in both India and Britain resulted in Queen Victoria conferring on him the first Indian baronetcy on 24 May 1857 (p. 94).

John R. Hinnells, "Changing perceptions of authority among Parsis in British India" (pp.100–118) argues that since the migration from Iran, the Parsi community has lacked a clear concept of authority. He shows the various transfers of authority which occurred within the Parsi community: from one religious centre to another (Navsari to Bombay) and from one family to another (from the Wadias via the Jejeebhoys to the Readymoneys and Adenwallas). Authority was also transferred from Parsi institutions, such as the Panchayats and Anjumans, to Muslim, Hindu or British law courts. While there used to be a hierarchy of authority between different priestly families, the order in Navsari was different from that in Bombay. Hinnells emphasizes the significance of Anjuman meetings and the predominance they had even over the dasturs, although there were disputes over who had the authority to call such a gathering.

Rusheed R. Wadia's article on "Bombay Parsi merchants in the eighteenth and nine-teenth centuries" (pp.119–135) surveys Parsi economic history under British colonial rule, focusing on Parsi merchant activities and commercial networks of friends and relatives, highlighting the link between business and community formation. The latter was strengthened, by the Bombay Parsi Panchayat, by Parsi protest against the June 1832 Government ruling sanctioning the killing of stray dogs, by the joint opposition to Christian missionary activity, by an increased awareness of their Iranian heritage, and by a legal framework regulating community life (p.129).

John McLeod, "Mourning, Philanthropy, and M.M. Bhownaggee's road to Parliament" (pp.136–155) studies the projects which Sir Mancherjee Merwanjee Bhownaggee (1851–1933) undertook to commemorate his deceased sister Awabai (1869–1888), whom he had raised since the death of their father in 1872. Awabai was bright and well educated, and her elder brother regarded her as the

model of a modern Indian woman. Bhownaggee dealt with the profound depression resulting from her sudden death by merging the *"Victorian tradition of mourning through public monuments with the Parsi custom of charity in commemoration of the deceased"* (p.151). In memory of his sister, he undertook several charitable projects all of which reflected his commitment to female education, medicine, and the British Empire. McLeod argues that the failure of the memorial hall project in Bombay contributed to Bhownaggee's 1892 decision to transfer his home to London (p.147f.). His donation of £3,000 for a corridor at the London Imperial Institute had the dual purpose of commemorating his deceased sister and strengthening his own position in high society (pp.146, 151), and coincided with his entry into Parliament in 1895 (p.149).

Mitra Sharafi, "Judging conversion to Zoroastrianism: Behind the scenes of the Parsi Panchayat case (1908)" (pp.159–180) offers new insights into *Petit v Jijibhai*, the court case about the conversion to Zoroastrianism of the French Soonu Tata, née Suzanne Brière, after her marriage to R.D. Tata in 1903. Sharafi examines what happened in the courtroom during the nine weeks of the hearings – from 7 February to 13 April 1908 – and between 13 April and the delivery of the court's decision seven months later on 28 November 1908. The two judges, Dinshaw Davar, (the first Parsi judge named to the Bombay High Court on 9 November 1906) and Frank Beaman, were both initially in favour of limited conversion. However, Davar changed his mind and adopted an anti-conversion stance midway through the hearings between 7 March and 13 April, and Beaman yielded to him between 13 April and 28 November 1908 (p.165), for *"Davar dominated Beaman by force of personality, seniority and membership of the Parsi community"* (p.174). Drawing on unpublished case papers and Davar's and Beaman's judgment notebooks, which she discovered in the archives of the Bombay High Court, Sharafi argues that Davar's volte-face was influenced by the expert witness of the scholar-priest J.J. Modi, who took an anti-conversion position in the courtroom, although previously favouring limited conversion in his published work. While the legal record offers no clues as to how the change of mind of Davar and Modi came about, Sharafi, based on external evidence, suggests that both men were influenced by the Parsi orthodox solicitor and charismatic orator J.J. Vimadalal (pp. 161, 170).

Jamsheed K. Choksy, "Iranians and Indians on the shores of Serendib (Sri Lanka)" (pp.181–210) surveys the history of the Sri Lankan Zarathushti diaspora, which goes back at least to Achaemenid times. From the 16th century onwards, his account is partly based on unpublished records compiled by Kaikhusru D. Choksy (1863–1938), who migrated from Bombay to Sri Lanka in 1884 first as bookkeeper, but subsequently becoming manager and finally corporate attorney of the Parsi firm Framjee Bhikhajee and Company (p.190). Parsis worked as planters, made fortunes as merchants and involved themselves in politics and social activities. Their numbers peaked to 400 members between 1930–1945, when Sri Lanka was British Ceylon (p.192). After the island became independent in 1947 nearly half of the Parsi population returned to India. Others left in 1972 for the USA and Canada when Ceylon became the Republic of Sri Lanka (p.193f.), to seek better educational and economic opportunities. By 2006, only 61 Parsis remained in Sri Lanka, constituting just over 0.0003 per cent of the island's total population of 18.76 million (p.204). For many centuries Parsi ritual, social and funerary affairs had been administered by a range of charitable funds and trusts (p.195), until 1939 when the Ceylon Parsi Anjuman was established. Its funds are generated through annual membership fees and voluntary donations, and the three trustees are elected every five years. The Anjuman has authority over both priests and laity. Its charter defines a Zarathushti as a person whose father is a Parsi or Iranian Zarathushti and who has undergone the navjote initiation. By contrast, children of Zarathushti mothers but non-Zarathushti fathers have no valid claim to community membership (p.198).

Gillian Mary Towler Mehta's article on "Zoroastrians in Europe 1976 to 2003: Continuity and Change" (pp.211–235) discusses the attitudes of European Zarathushtis, especially women, to the purity laws concerning menstruation and child birth. Her data, which she obtained from a postal questionnaire survey carried out in 2003, suggests that more women than men affirmed such regulations. Moreover, within the female subgroup the older, less educated individuals who came to Europe as adults from Pakistan, India and East Africa were more in favour of observing them than the younger, intermarried, highly educated ones who were either born in Europe or came to Europe as young children. Most Iranian Zarathushtis also rejected the purity laws (pp.226f.).

Michael Stausberg, "Para-Zoroastrianisms: memetic transmission and appropriations" (pp.236–254) outlines seven reconfigurations of Zarathushti features by individuals who were not born into the ethnic religion. He refers to such features as "memes", a term coined by biologist Richard Dawkins in 1976, and to their movement from one cultural or religious context to another as "memetic migration" (p.236f.). Unless they are strictly kept secret, religious memes "easily spread across the boundaries of the communities that claim possession of them" and may change ("mutate") as they are adapted to different cultural contexts (p.237). The first of the seven sketches discusses various uses of Zarathustra's name as a memetic unit. These include not only texts ascribed to the Iranian prophet, such as the so-called Chaldean Oracles and Friedrich Nietzsche's Thus spake Zarathustra of 1883–85, but also the

bronze statue of a gigantic male nude by the Australian sculptor Peter Schippenheyn (pp.238–241). The other six sketches concern religious movements that in one way or other "reinvent Zoroastrianism" outside the ethnic boundaries of established Zarathushti communities (p.242). They cover Mazdaznan (pp.242–244), Dastur Sraosha Kaul (pp.244f.), The Mazdayasni Zarathushti Anjuman, subsequently renamed The International Mazdayasnan Order (pp.245f.), the Zarathushtrian Assembly with its figure-head Ali Akbar Jafarey (pp.246–248), the former Swedish pop star Alexander Bard (pp.248f.) and finally, the esoteric Astro-Zurvanism of the post-Soviet media celebrity Pavel Pavlovič Globa (born 1953) with his Avestan Schools of Astrology (pp.249–251).

Finally, John R. Hinnells, "Parsis in India and their diasporas in the twentieth century and beyond" (pp. 255–276) highlights Parsi achievements in the twentieth century and counters the idea that their influence and standing has declined since the nineteen hundreds. He shows that Parsis continued to do well in politics (*Shapurji Saklatvala, Khurshed Nariman, Firoze Gandhi, Homi J.H. Talyarkhan, Sir Homi Mody, Jamshed Mehta, Jamshid Marker*) and to excel in the professions (*Field Marshal Sam Maneckshaw, India's Attorney General Soli Sorabji and Solicitor General Tehmtan Andhyarunja, and others*), industry (*Tata Companies and the Godrej family firm*), sport (especially cricket), the arts (*the conductor Zubin Mehta, the pop-star Freddie Mercury, the novelists Rohinton Mistry and Bapsi Sidhwa*) and science (*Homi Bhabha*). Hinnells then discusses changes in twentieth century Parsi religious belief and practice, such as

Ilm-i Khshnoom or 'path of knowledge', which is their version of theosophy, as well as some of its leaders (*Dr Meher Master-Moos, Adi Doctor and K.N. Dastoor*), the reformist effect of *Dastur M.N. Dhalla*, Hindu influence on *Dastur Bode*, and the orthodox position of *Khojeste Mistree* and his "Zoroastrian Studies". He also addresses recent developments in the debate about mixed marriages, in particular the foundation of an Association of Intermarried Zoroastrians in 1992 following the tragic death of Roxan Shah in 1990 (pp.262–265). After surveying the twentieth century Parsi Zarathushti diasporas in Britain, where Zoroastrianism is one of the nine formally recognized religions (p.267), and also in North America, and Australia, Hinnells discusses the World Zoroastrian Organisation (WZO), various unsuccessful attempts to form a world body, and demographic figures. He concludes that declining numbers in India and assimilation in the diaspora could be seen as indicating that the religion is under threat, but that Zoroastrianism still remains a dynamic religion which continues to produce major achievers around the world (p.273).

While each chapter is a self-contained unit, coherence of the volume as a whole is created by themes interspersed throughout the book and numerous cross-references between the individual articles. Such common motifs include poetic structure (*Williams, Stewart*), the landing of the Parsis at Sanjan (*Williams, Nanji & Dhalla*), Parsi charity as a means of raising one's public profile and promoting Indian interests (*Palsetia, Wadia, McLeod*), intermarriage (*Hinnells, Sharafi, Choksy*) and religious authority (*Hinnells, Choksy*). Overall, this collection presents a fascinating, multi-faceted picture of a most remarkable religious minority whose cultural, intellectual and economic influence has been enormous and totally out of proportion to its numerically microscopic size. It again illustrates extraordinary ability of Zarathushtis, not only to adjust to different cultural contexts and political situations, but also to contribute to whatever society they live in as a Diaspora community. This important book offers a wealth of information and deep, at times revealing insights, which the general reader will find illuminating and the professional scholar indispensable.

On p.165 the date is given as 27 November, but Dr Sharafi confirmed that on the published judgment the date given is 28 November 1908.



World Zoroastrian Congress Dubai 2009

“Unity through the sands of time”

21st September, 2008

Respected Community Members,

Since the holding of the 8th World Zoroastrian Congress in London, in the year 2005, the 9th World Zoroastrian Congress, is now just 16 months away from its scheduled date of 28th to 31st December 2009 in Dubai.

Dedicated efforts put in by the Congress Organizing team are steadily coming to fruition. We are pleased to announce that the Congress registration facility will be open effective 25th September 2008, through the website www.wzcongress.org

The Special Rate is as follows:

	Individual (Born on or before 31 Dec 1997)	Child (Born on or after 1st Jan 2007-Free) Child (Born between 1st Jan 98 & 31st Dec 2006)
FULL PACKAGE (All 4 days)	AED 1750 (US\$ 480/- approx)	AED 875 (US\$ 240 approx)

The rate is inclusive of Coffee/Tea breaks, lunches, dinners, cultural events in the evenings and the Desert Safari.

The “Special Rate” will be applicable to first 300 persons only who register themselves for the Congress or upto 31.12.08 whichever is earlier. The rate will change thereafter. The Spot Rate for registration on 28th December 2009 will be Aed.2500/- (US\$ 685 approx) and shall be offered subject to availability of space.

The Official Venue for the Congress is “The Crowne Plaza Hotel”, a luxurious hotel located in the heart of the city.

The Congress Team is currently working towards negotiating accommodation rates with 5, 4 and 3 star hotels and some good properties comprising of apartments and large villas where families and friends can stay together as a group. Rates will appear from October 2008 onwards. Shuttle service will be available from identified hotels to the Congress Venue at designated hours. As of now the accommodation facility is in place at “The Crowne Plaza Hotel”. Please click on “Accommodation” icon available on the www.wzcongress.org website for more details and book your accommodation at the hotel.

The World Zoroastrian Congress will be a mega event. Don't miss this event.

The Congress Organizing Team looks forward to meeting you along with your family and friends at the Congress.

Sincere Regards,
Meher Bhesania
Congress Chair – WZC 2009
Email: wzcongress2009@gmail.com



WZCC -Chicago Celebrates Zarathushti Business and Enterprise

By Professor Yezdi H. Godiwalla, WZCC-Chicago Chairperson

The World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce-Chicago Chapter (WZCC-C) celebrated Zarathushti business and enterprise on September 1, 2008 at the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago (ZAC) Darbe Mehr as part of a three day Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the ZAC Darbe Mehr. The WZCC celebration was broadcast live through Webcast with the efforts of *Eric Rustomji in Chicago and Yazdi Tantra in Mumbai*. The WZCC event had the twin purposes of a celebration for Zarathushti business and enterprise, and, a stimulus for younger Zarathushtis for actively thinking about going into business if it is fitting to their personal situation.

All things start with Ahura Mazda, The Wise Lord. *Bomi Damkevala and Ervard Yazad Y. Godiwalla* performed a benediction. *Mani Rao* sang a Monajat.

In a session chaired by Attorney *Neville Bilimoria*, the general counsel for WZCC-C, the WZCC-C Chairperson, *Dr. Yezdi H. Godiwalla*, welcomed the guests. He extolled the striving, risk-taking, industrious and enterprising Zarathushti immigrants to Canada and USA for their achieving graduate degrees in a very different education system, climbing the corporate ladder, and, as if that were not all, starting and running thriving businesses. It is most commendable that they pursued progress and prosperity in a manner that is consistent with the Zarathushti dominant principle of Wisdom, together with its other attributes of "Best Righteousness", high integrity, ethics, charity and social responsibility. They have set an example for all of us, traversing over hills and valleys of life, regarding obstacles as mere molehills, continuously taking their business to next levels, applying their business and technical acumen, and making it in the US, the toughest and most competitive market in the world. That in itself is a high measure of success. They adapted to contemporary realities of the North American business and cultural environment and they became facile in the practice of management as they tenaciously pursued their owner-

manager roles with a clear vision, strong goal focus, and high energy-driven action. A sound corporate strategy is of little use unless it is properly and vigorously implemented. Further, he exhorted younger Zarathushtis to participate earlier in their student or professional life in the WZCC activities so that they, in time, may go into business for themselves if that is

fitting to their personal situation, rather than trade hours for dollars. One has to dig a well much before one is thirsty. He reminded us of the bright legacy of the many yesteryear enlightened, visionary Zarathustis, such as the Tatas, Wadias, Petits, Godrejs and Jeejeebhoyas, who have given so much to our community and country.





Business ethics and social responsibility values must be included in the initial phases of strategic management process. They must be the core components of a firm's corporate strategy. Good business ethics and social responsibility are good for business.

Rohinton Rivetna is the founder of WZCC. He has articulated that Zarathushtis have been active in industry and with high integrity, the two tenets of Zarathushtis. He also noted that there has been a movement from business for oneself to professionalism. He believes that when a community's business picks up momentum at a location, the community itself grows at that location. Aban Daboo called Rohinton's creation of WZCC as "the jewel in your crown", implying that among the many services he has long performed for the Zarathushti community in Chicago and other parts of the world, WZCC may yet be his best service. Rohinton introduced the *executives and chapter chairs of WZCC: Edul Daver, Framroze Patel, Ervad Kobad Zarolia, Rusi Gandhi, Ervad Soli Dastur, Hoshang Karani, Firdosh Mehta, Pheroze Nagarwala, Sarosh Khambatta, and Ervad Yezdi Godiwalla*. He praised them for their wider roles of service for providing the business-for-oneself impetus to and opportunities for networking among the Zarathushti communities of Canada and USA.

Bomi Boyce of Toronto, President of WZCC (world-wide association) had sent a message which was read to the audience. He gave his best wishes and he stated he was glad that we were celebrating the Zarathusti business and were also conducting a seminar. We are aware that he is not in good health and we pray for his quick recovery.

Edul Daver of ACuPowder, gave an educative talk on "*Entrepreneurship and Motivation*", using his experiences in his company as it uses enlightened approaches to improving the worth of his company people. His talk was a model for treating employees well, in the same vein as: dignity denied is paradise prevented. Employee participation in all spheres of organizational activities and their fair treatment are the cornerstones of an organization.

Hoshang R. Karani, in his talk "*Growing Up After 60!*", narrated the success story of his and his very "I-will-stand-by-you-forever-no-matter-what!" wife, Bonnie's, searching for a new business (they searched many opportunities and intensely investigated a baker's dozen), and, they finally purchased the eighty year old Coleman Fire Proof Door Company, in Chicago area, and, with significant effort, turning it around to become an efficient engine of business growth. Their search process for a purchasing business in itself is lesson of how to systematically and rigorously search for a profitable market opportunity, the hallmark of effective strategic management. Their (14 hours a day, 7 days a week) assiduity is noteworthy and their fair practices are as exemplary as their business and organizational acumen. We are awed by their industry. Every life has a tale. So too it is for this couple. Their business story is characterized by intense rigor and stress. It is a model of how spouses should support each other during a compass-less embarking into an uncertain search and then bring a mid- 20th century organization to the 21st century. Soul mates are really tested for their mutual loyalty in life's battlefields and in business rigors too. Now they are both, soul and business mates. They stand shoulder to shoulder in their organization. With such a united spirit, how can they not but succeed! Such spirited stories of entrepreneurial and business striving should not be bottled in a hall audience, but spread throughout the Zarathushti community. Rohinton Rivetna had fittingly stated at a previous celebration honoring the Karanis at their Coleman Fire Proof Door Company, "We are beholden to you".

Dr. Natalie Vania-Gandhi chaired the Hoshang and Bonnie Karani session that subsequently continued into business show cases presented by: *Farokh Billimoria, Aban Daboo, Rusi Gandhi, Sarosh Khambatta, Dr. Murali Rao, Shazad and Hosi Mehta, Cyrus Rivetna, Roshan Rivetna, and Kobad Zarolia*. These presenters briefly



explained their business and presented their commercial wares and promotional materials. Subsequently, there took place good interaction and networking among the attendees. We knew that people would benefit from such networking. For example, Niloufer Darukhanavala of Kumon tutoring system, found at the celebrations itself that two other people were interested in pursuing Kumon opportunities. Networking at WZCC has its own rewards.

Carl Darukhanavala, the young session chair, introduced the venerable *Keki Bhote*, whose wise hand has guided the Chicago Zarathushti community in its earlier years. His entertaining discourse covered important past issues of Zarathushtis in Chicago and he suggested better paths for them to follow for the future. Keki, himself a prolific author, spoke with the superb erudition of a scholar. Even so, his long and successful professional experience is as enviable as that of W. Edwards Deming and Joseph Juran. He is an example of a true scholar who is also a good practitioner.

Farrokh Patel (below) of Pegasus Products, and, The Cover Company, N.J., in his talk on "Challenges of a New Business", explained his proven methods that he used in his swimming pool liner business in New Jersey. His hands-on approach was something of a learning experience to all. His family had also come with him. They truly honor us for coming here all the way. His management succession plan, which every owner-manager must have in place, includes his daughter now running the business in its entirety. Great leaders are always succeeded by greater leaders.



In a session chaired by our young manager-businessman, *Shazad Mehta of Mehta Motors, Chicago area*, the following business people presented their show cases: *Niloufer Darukhanavala, Edul Daver, Dr. Natalie Vania-Gandhi, Dr. Shirley Godiwalla, Hoshang and Bonnie Karani, Rohinton Rivetna, Zubin and Zenobia Tantra, and Hormaz and Yasmin Vania*. As in the previous business show case session, these Zarathushti business people too presented their wares and promotional materials. This was also followed by networking.

The young session chair, *Burjis Sethna*, introduced the experienced yet very entertaining speaker, *Farokh Billimoria*, who spoke about how he started the then new business of financial planning. His very witty, humorous talk, "*Making a Career in Financial Advisory Services*" is a tribute to his scintillating brilliance and his sustained, decades long, virile entrepreneurial endeavor. He is a model of a person who displays the restless quest for reaching the next blue mountain of opportunity. What a superb example of the many brilliant talents that we have in our community! His talk may indeed also convince one that, while he may continue with his successful business that he built from scratch, he would also be equally successful as a charismatic show host of a popular television series.

Closing remarks were led by *Rohinton Rivetna*, followed by those of *Yezdi Godiwalla and Rustom Engineer*. The major observations were: make WZCC a grass roots effort in additional locations, continued networking among Zarathushti businesses to engender business synergies, involve younger Zarathushtis in WZCC activities, and integrate WZCC activities and conferencing around the world through the e-media.

It is important to acknowledge the work done by many people for various tasks, such as registration and reception, audio, video and Webcast, and preparing breakfast and lunch. They worked hard to make the event a success. The people include: the most remarkable *Roshan Rivetna*, and her husband and son, Rohinton and Cyrus. We also acknowledge the great work done by: *Eric Rustomji, Ken, Dinaz and Katie Weber, Bonnie Karani, Mani Rao, Bachi Damkevala, Renate Nagarwalla, Farida Khambatta,*



Zarin Karanjia, Freya Dhunjisha, Soli and Jo-Ann Dastur, Mahrukh Motafaram, Jamshed Kavina, Bakhtavar Press and Aban Daboo. They set up the hall and provided breakfast and lunch. Their culinary arts, with French toast, fruit bowl, Crepes a La Florentine, Cottage Fried Potatoes, Seven Layer Salad and other delicious dishes, rival those of the pioneering Julia Child.

The people who worked together for organizing the WZCC celebrations are Roshan and Rohinton Rivetna and the past and present WZCC-C chairpersons: Sarosh Khambatta, Hoshang R. Karani, Phiroze Nagarwala and Yezdi H. Godiwalla. Their past experiences in organizing seminars and talks were most helpful.

The most remarkable Roshan Rivetna, the main and central person for organizing the entire three day ZAC Silver Jubilee Celebrations, and her husband, Rohinton, the founder of the WZCC, were always at the center of all preparations for these WZCC celebrations. They attended to every detail with tireless and humble care. As always, they carried the bulk of the responsibilities to ensure that the event was a resounding success.

Dr. Yezdi H. Godiwalla is Professor of Management at University of Wisconsin-Whitewater for over three decades. He has a BA Honours, Ranchi University; MBA, Indian Institute of Management-Ahmedabad; and PhD, Oklahoma State University. He has over 40 years of experience in the fields of strategic management, international management, social responsibility, and organizational theory and behavior in industry and university and consulting settings. He has conducted numerous professional conferences and seminars. He has published 3 research and scholarly books and over 150 scholarly articles and papers. He has served as the department chairman, and, on numerous faculty and administrative committees in his university and professional organizations and on boards of reviewers of scholarly journals.



Photo top: Keki Bhote with Roshan Rivetna, Rohinton Rivetna with mike

Photo bottom: Dr Yezdi H. Godiwalla, WZCC-Chicago chapter chair

Photo right: Table top displays



Table top displays

BUSINESS

WZCC-NY YOUTH PANEL

“The Growth of Knowledge, the Advance of Science, and Entrepreneurship”. Natalie Vania-Gandhi

On September 28th with WZCC-NY President Arnaz Maneckshana's enthusiasm and dedication, the Youth delivered excellence at the Arbab Guiv Darbe Mehr in Suffern NY. Natalie Vania (Vania-Gandhi), PhD, developed September's Panel, “*The Growth of Knowledge, the Advance of Science, and Entrepreneurship*”. Three panelists, *Deena Patel, PhD, Physics, Energy and Transportation Systems Consultant; Paul Daruwala, Global New Products Leader in Merck's Vaccine & Infectious Disease Division; and Zubin Canteenwalla, Columbia 2009 MBA*, participated. They examined personal journeys with the brilliant sciences of our times.

Panelists spoke about choices for acquiring knowledge in academic and business life, each embracing the theme of continual learning, explaining how questions arising from one set of endeavors led to answers in their next endeavors. As well, panelists addressed how knowledge affects their industries and expertise.

The audience received insight into major issues with pharmaceuticals in the global marketplace, energy efficiency, and starting high-tech businesses. *Deena Patel* alerted people to traffic accidents, which is the leading cause of death among young adults in the US. and that more safety research is required.



From left, Zubin Canteenwalla, Deena Patel, Paul Daruwala, Natalie Vania

Paul Daruwala explained consumer trust in vaccination programs.

Motivating populations for vaccination is necessary. Despite widespread access in major countries, thousands of infants go unvaccinated. Coverage for polio and other preventable disease is below 50% in places: Huge harm results. Globally, we need to work on both trust and access. *Zubin Canteenwalla* gave strategic advice on how entrepreneurs gain credibility with investors. Conveying deep excitement for clean-energy technologies, Zubin reinforced Deena in discussing a startup that monitors real-time traffic patterns. *Deena* spoke of the Bel-Air Hospital project in India, a wonderful example of social entrepreneurship.

This was a committed group: Panelists held conference calls prior to the event to insure depth, with the online tool, Google Sites, assisting them. Web tools helped with dedicated pre-event work and also helped create post-event resources which are at <http://sites.google.com/site/nvania/>. Consider especially the "Wrap-ups" and P. J. O'Rourke's funny article "On God".

Rarely has an audience applauded as many times: They found real brilliance from the panelists. A genuine Epistemologist, distinguished Prof. Emeritus K.D. Irani, honored the panel as an audience-noteworthy. Youth with stealth high-tech projects, and one person, reminded of Vohuman as an entrepreneurial tool and gift, enjoyed the session.

WZCC World Director *Rusi Gandhi* mentioned the AGM at Houston and the World Congress at Dubai. He pointed to the convergence of political and technological partnership in India's \$250 million nuclear entrepreneurship. *Homi Gandhi* reflected on the sense of lifetime achievement that he saw in *Prime Minister Manmohan Singh* as Singh learned of nuclear-deal approval by the US Congress. *Framroze Patel* mentioned the BPP. *Dinyar Hodiwala* remarked profoundly on entrepreneurial honesty and dedication. These remarks by engaged audience members contributed to the Chapter's consideration of the panel topic.

Many participants gave help; *Keki Dadachanji* (closing remarks), *Noshir Dutia* (logistics), *Meher Hodiwala* (Agendas, logistics) *Dilshad Todiwala* (fine catering).

For November, more Youth activity was on-board. *Usheen Davar*, of WZCC-NY's Young Professionals and Entrepreneurs, organized a superb "Lunch and Learn: Leveraging Social Networks for Results: In Life, Career and Community" with *Yazad Dalal* and *Gool Thakrar*. Members learnt about online tools for social, business, and community networking. Members have started a WZCC LinkedIn Group. Usheen, Yazad, and Gool will deliver another insightful, cutting-edge session.

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