

JOURNAL

Tir – Amرداد – Shehrever 1379 AY (Fasli)

● Behman – Spendarmad 1379 AY, Fravardin 1380 AY (Shenshai)

● Spendarmad 1379 AY, Fravardin – Ardibehesht 1380 AY (Kadimi)

Dynamism of the Diaspora

**Building Zoroastrian Communities
Around the World**



Photos: Construction of Darbe Mehr in Dallas-Ft. Worth, Children's performance in Houston.

Also Inside:



Progression of the
Diaspora in the U.K.



Vibrant Communities
in Hong Kong & Singapore



Dynamism of the
Australian Diaspora



New Zealand:
Building a Legacy



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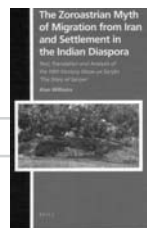


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GUEST EDITOR

TEENAZ JAVAT

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Feroza Fitch
of
Lexicongraphics

Tir – Amordad- Shehrever 1379 AY (Fasli)

Behman –Spendarmad 1379 AY Fravardin 1380 AY (Shenshai)

Spendarmad 1379 AY, Fravardin –Ardibehesht 1380 AY (Kadimi)

*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

Diaspora

The first Diaspora was formed in late 8th C when living conditions in Iran became unbearable under the Muslim rule for the Zarathushtis. They left the shores of Iran and sailed. In Iran there was no religious or economic freedom and they were not permitted to practice their way of life. They sailed east and after several years of wandering they found a welcome haven along the west coast of India, where they established themselves.

To uproot oneself and the family, to live in an unknown environment among people who spoke a different language, ate different foods, dressed differently, requires strength of character and courage and a fervent adherence to one's religious beliefs.

Fast forward 12 centuries, and we find the second diaspora being created in North America, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Hong Kong, England, Europe the Middle East. This diaspora is made up of Zarathushtis from Iran and Zarathushtis from the Indian subcontinent setting sail again seeking new lives in places they knew and read about. This time the migration was not only for religious reasons but for economic, educational and professional reasons, to live as free citizens in an open society. Like-minded people got together to create community. They learnt and appreciated their religion by reading, understanding and absorbing the true meaning, they practiced the religion as it was meant to be practiced.

They shared their religion with pride inviting friends to their places of worship, they presented their religion at conferences. They preserved and adapted, they thought and acted. But they also saw what was happening in their lands of origin and they were saddened, at the self destructive practices of the community they had left behind. They were saddened by the influence in the community of different lobby groups, by compartmentalized and non-flexible thinking, by the inability of the members of their community to see outside the box, by the court battles as to who can pray where, when and how, by the slow disintegration of the once powerful community that had produced Dadabhai Naoroji and Sir Pherozshah Mehta. They are saddened by having to admit the thought *"I am glad I am not there anymore"*

And though in this issue we invited article from New Zealand, Australia, Hongkong, Singapore, Pakistan, England to showcase their reality of their

diaspora, we have concentrated on the diaspora of North America, and the dynamism with which they have flourished in the last 116 years.

They have established associations and institutions, and are now beginning to establish second generation *dar-e-mehrs*. (see articles by Roshan Rivetna and Cyrus Rivetna) they have excelled in their chosen professions, (see articles by Parastu Dubash and Edul Davar). We have also featured individuals who have excelled in their own fields of interest, and pursued their dreams..

We now have to prepare ourselves for the third diaspora created by the resurgence of awareness in the various republics of the original soviet union.

In North America we have reached a stage where we want to think of what we will leave behind. We stepped on shoulders of luminaries that are past and we are building the work that is before us to provide a base for the younger generation to continue. Our second generation is blossoming in the "New World" while maintaining roots in the old.

Each of us is proud to play a small role in this great story.



Dolly Dastoor

A Message from FEZANA President

I am truly honored by the trust you have placed in me by re-electing me your President for a second term (2010-2012). My special thanks to the members of ZANC, ZANT, ZAC-Chicago for nominating me to the position.

I want to thank OZCF for successfully hosting the 2010 FEZANA AGM in Toronto. I thank all the volunteers and especially President, Mr. Rumi Jasavala, and his executive committee for organizing this three day event.

I thank the out-going treasurer, Ms Katayun Kapadia, for her excellent work and services during her term of office, 2006-2010, and I welcome Mr. Ratan Mistry, our new treasurer as a member of the FEZANA executive

I would like to recognize and thank our past president Mr. Framroze Patel for his selfless service in preparing and auditing our financial statements and filing our tax returns every year without charging any fee. He has helped many associations to obtain their Non-Profit status and file their returns..Thank you, Framroze for your ongoing service to our community.

I am happy to announce that past president Dr. Rustom Kevala has agreed to co-chair the FEZANA Fund Raising Committee along with Dr. Jerry Kheradi.

The FEZANA AGM is an annual meeting of member associations, large and small, and is open to all. I encourage everyone to try to attend future AGMs if they are held in your area. This would help you understand the workings of FEZANA and the committees.

As we move ahead we need to start planning for the coming years. FEZANA's first five and ten year Strategic Plans developed in 1997 under past president Dolly Dastoor were completed in 2002 and 2006 respectively. Now it is time for our second five and ten year plans to be defined and for us to start working towards achieving our goals. Ms. Maharuk Motafarm is the chairperson and has taken charge of the strategic planning committee. I request all member association to participate in the survey which she will be sending and help us complete the task in time.

The increased migration to North America from Iran Pakistan and India is changing the nature of our diasporas and making it necessary for us to once again survey our demographics. This year I would like to start a census project. Instead of appointing a committee, I would like all member associations to take responsibility and coordinate with

FEZANA Administrator Zenobia Damania as to the demographics in their jurisdiction. I would like to see this project completed by March 2011.

This year FEZANA will host the Round Table Conference (RTC) in Houston, December 27-28, just before the start of the XV North American Zoroastrian Congress, December 29-31, 2010. The RTC will be co-chaired by leaders from four regions - India, Iran, ZTFE and FEZANA. I welcome the leaders and representatives of all regions and am looking forward to working with them. The RTC is an open event and I encourage all of you to attend.

FEZANA has been in the forefront helping community members by way of educational scholarships, medical assistance, and other welfare assistance. This has been possible only because of your generous financial support. I thank you all and hope you will continue to support FEZANA once again this year, by donating online from the FEZANA web site <http://www.fezana.org>



Bomi Patel

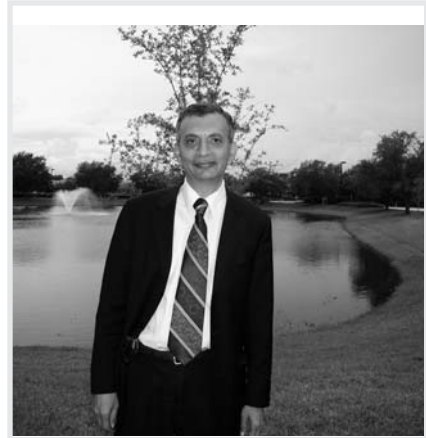
FEZANA PRESIDENT



Sacred Spaces

Behram Pastakia

Thich Nhat Hanh in his book, "Touching Peace" implies that if we are mindful of every moment in which we live, we can create heaven on earth for ourselves. For those bodhisattvas and sashoyants among us who can attain this state of nirvana / moksha/ameratat any space occupied at any given time is sacred. Lesser mortals need geographic set-asides where the individual can commune with the divine. Hence imperfect man tries to create designated sacred spaces. Traditional Zoroastrian homes of yore would have a separate prayer room, reduced in modern day cramped apartments to a prayer niche where a divo is lit and kept burning. The earliest Zarathushtis opted to remain close to nature. A well appointed garden, the clean banks of a stream or river, a grove of trees, an unspoiled mountain top, the shores of the ocean served as places of worship. Prayers extolling the seasons of the year and the seasons of the day celebrating the cosmic laws of asha were chanted facing the sun as a source of life affirming energy. Fire altars of stone were built out in the open. It is only in relatively recent times, give or take a millennium or two, that buildings called Dar-e-Mehrs/Atash-kadehs/ Adarans/Agiaries/Atash-Behrams have become popular.



The FEZANA Annual General Body meeting hosted by the Ontario Zoroastrian Community Foundation on 24 /25 April 2010 on their recently acquired tract of pristine land in Metropolitan Toronto brought the needs of the Diaspora in creating their own Sacred Spaces into sharp focus. Building and refurbishing Agiary infrastructure with architectural "character" is on the minds of our hamdins. Warehouse styled community halls are no longer in fashion. (c.f., Lessons Learned in this issue of the Journal).

Till such time that we build and consecrate our own Sacred Space in North America we can explore bounteous nature to find solace for the soul, as our forefathers did, reflecting meanwhile on the thoughts of the poet:

"Oh brother,
Do you know where heaven is?
It has no beginning, it has no end,
Nor is it any country.
In my heart
Heaven finds her home,
And in my songs
Her melodies..."

Rabindranath Tagore, A Flight of Swans (Poems from Balaka, No. 24), translated from the Bengali by Aurobindo Bose).

8 May 2010

Behram Pastakia is Chair of the Publications Committee of FEZANA.

FINANCIAL PROGRESS REPORT

FEZANA Updates



I would like to take this opportunity to show the Zarathushti community where your hard earned money is spent when you donate to the various FEZANA Funds.

What do your donations support when you give to FEZANA? FEZANA has expanded over the last 10 years and is involved in representing the North American Zarathushtis in many areas on national and international levels. FEZANA representatives are present at Interfaith meetings worldwide where Zarathushtis have a platform to speak about our religion; at the United Nations in the Non-government Organizations (UN-NGO) which paved the way for the UN to recognize March 21 as the International Day of Norooz and recognized Norooz as an Intangible Heritage of Humanity (this was accomplished by the hard work of our Z volunteers over the last 10 years). Other areas include research and preservation of the Zarathushti religion, history and culture as well as literature and monuments; meetings for the Society of Scholars of Zoroastrianism (SSZ) to present their research and papers; and much support for the youth of our community at congresses, in athletics (ZSC) and with scholarships. A lot of work has been done at the Coming Together Roundtable (CTR) by our hard working volunteers to help solve problems and issues within the world Z community.

Stanford University has given the Z community an opportunity to have a full time Zarathushti scholar in a teaching position for the next three years. This position will be dedicated to teaching the Zoroastrian religion. However, there is a catch. The Zarathushti community needs to support this position by funding half the expense. We are proud to say that one of our own from ZAGBA, Dr. Yuhan Vevaina has been selected by Stanford for this position because of his extensive CV.

FIRES (FEZANA Information Research and Education System) is on fire with the progress they have made in cataloging volumes of books for easy access to the Zarathushti community. They need our help in purchasing a scanner to improve on the great job they are doing and get more information into the system for our benefit and use.

Many people are not aware of the various committees and projects which are worked on all year round by numerous volunteers and funded through the FEZANA General Fund. You can choose to support these projects with your donation to the General Fund.

At the Annual General Meeting in April, 2010, which was kindly hosted by OZCF, in Oakville, Ontario, the following budget was approved. Please consider helping to fund these great projects and the hard working volunteers who dedicate so much of their time and effort for the sake of the Zarathushtis in North America.

Budget Approval - \$118,400

\$18,000 Academic Scholarship	\$5,000 World Z Orchestra
\$7,500 Awards	\$1,000 Youth Without Borders
\$15,000 FEZANA office	\$2,000 AGM expenses
\$1,500 FEZANA office supplies	\$4,000 Administrative expense
\$9,700 FIRES	\$ 300 SSZ (scholars)
\$ 0 Funds and Finance	\$3,000 ZSC (sports)
\$3,500 Inform Receive & Disseminate	\$ 0 ZYNA
\$3,000 Interfaith Activities	\$3,000 NAZC (North Amer Z Congress)
\$ 500 Interfaith & Parliament	\$5,000 Youth Congress Vancouver
\$10,000 Journal	\$1,000 CTR (Roundtable)
\$3,000 Jungatwala Lecture Series	\$ 900 Roundtable Admin support
\$1,800 Manuscripts	\$ 0 Stanford Lecture series
\$3,000 Performing Arts Scholarship	\$5,000 Stanford Univ - Dr. Yuhan Vevaina
\$4,700 Religious Education	\$2,000 Public Relations Website
\$2,000 EXISS (sports scholarship)	\$ 0 Research and Preservation
\$3,000 UN-NGO	\$ 0 Next Generation NOW conference

Line items with a \$0 budget are funded by the volunteers who work on those committees and they do not always request a yearly budget.

Due to the fact that over the last two years the donations coming to the FEZANA Funds have markedly decreased, we wish to preserve funds for important issues. We have decided to cancel the FARESHTA Challenge as well as the award that was to be given for this campaign at the North American Zoroastrian Congress in Houston this December. However, all donations coming into FEZANA Funds will be acknowledged quarterly in the FEZANA Journal as usual.

All donations are fully tax deductible. Give from your heart and give generously to support the Zarathushti community. Kindly make your check payable to FEZANA, indicate the fund you wish to support and mail to the new treasurer: Ratan Mistry, FEZANA Treasurer, 1258 Water Lily Way, San Jose, CA 95129. Online donations can be made at

www.FEZANA.org.

Jerry Kheradi, MD, FACG,
Chairperson FEZANA Funds and Finance Committee
Committee: Ratan Mistry, FEZANA Treasurer,
Celeste Kheradi



List of Donations received January 1, through March 31, 2010

(In US \$)

SUPPORT FEZANA

**GIVE FROM YOUR
HEART, GIVE
GENEROUSLY TO
SUPPORT THE
ZARATHUSHTI
COMMUNITY IN NORTH
AMERICA AND
GLOBALLY**

**MAKE CHECK
PAYABLE TO**

**FEZANA
AND MAIL TO**

**TREASURER RATAN
MISTRY**

**1258, WATER LILY WAY,
SAN JOSE CA 95129**

**ONLINE DONATIONS
CAN BE MADE
AT
WWW.FEZANA.ORG**

FEZANA GENERAL FUND

Zarthosti Anjuman of Northern California (ZANC)	\$ 450.00
Aban & Purvez Rustomji, Houston, TX	\$ 200.00
Traditional Masdayasni Zoroastrian Anjuman (TMZA)	\$ 150.00
H. Minocherhomjee, La Jolla, CA	\$ 101.00
Hoshang Baria, Lawrenceville, NJ	\$ 100.00
Nergish Aspi Bharucha	\$ 100.00
Amnavaz & Dinari Sukhia, Cherry Hill, NJ	\$ 100.00
Zoroastrian Association of California	\$ 101.00
Zoroastrian Association on Pennsylvania & New Jersey (ZAPANJ)	\$ 100.00
Thrity Kharas, Sugar Land, TX	\$ 40.00
Khurshid Rudina, Lakeville, MN	\$ 31.00
Manek Dustoor, Carlsbad, CA	\$ 35.00
Farida Divecha, Humble, TX	\$ 30.00
Adil Eduljee, Redondo Beach, CA	\$ 25.00
	\$ 1,563.00

NAUROOZ PRAYER BOOK PROJECT

California Zoroastrian Center	\$ 250.00
Zarthosti Anjuman of Northern California (ZANC)	\$ 250.00
Anahita & Hoshedar Tamboli, Tampa, FL	\$ 150.00
Dara & Freney Sagar, Manhasset, NY	\$ 101.00
Soli & JoAnn Dastur, University Park, FL	\$ 101.00
Anahita & Hoshedar Tamboli, Tampa, FL	\$ 100.00
Atlanta Zarathushti Association	\$ 100.00
Anonymous	\$ 51.00
Freney & Jimmy Deboo	\$ 31.00
Nellie & Darab Unwalla, Boca Raton, FL	\$ 25.00
Goolu & Noshir Baria	\$ 20.00
Roda & Farokh Elavia	\$ 20.00
Shirin & Jimmy Jagos	\$ 20.00
Parveen & Cowsy Wadia, Foster City, CA	\$ 20.00
Roshni & Arthur Hebert, Largo, FL	\$ 15.00
Maparviz Julia Vesuna, Washington, DC	\$ 10.00
	\$ 1,264.00

TOTAL FEZANA GENERAL FUND

\$ 2,827.00

FEZANA WELFARE FUND

H.F. & Dr. F. M. Contractor, Pittsburgh, PA	\$ 1,000.00
Bergez Mistry, Pointe Claire, QC	\$ 200.00
Neville Patel, Modesto, CA	\$ 200.00
Siavos Noruziaan, Kanata, ON	\$ 105.00
Anonymous	\$ 100.00
Farokh Contractor, Kenner, LA	\$ 100.00
Rustum Bankwalla, Washington, DC	\$ 50.00
Burzin Patel, Foster City, CA	\$ 51.00
Burzin Patel, Foster City, CA	\$ 50.00
California Zoroastrian Center (CZC), Westminster, CA	\$ 1,500.00
The World Zoroastrian Organisation, U.K.	\$ 1,000.00
Khashayar Anooosheh, Los Gatos, CA	\$ 500.00
Sahgar Javanshir-Behroozi & Parimarz Firoozgar, Los Angeles, CA	\$ 500.00
Prochy Sethna, San Jose, CA	\$ 500.00
Bahram Banki, San Diego, CA	\$ 300.00
Kamran & S. Behroozi, Flower Mound, TX	\$ 300.00
Bakhtawar & Kershaw Byramji, Houston, TX	\$ 300.00
Farangis Yazdani, North Vancouver, BC	\$ 300.00
Fereshteh Yazdani-Khatibi & Dr. Khatibi Houshang, Laguna Niguel, CA	\$ 300.00
Mitra Mazdyasni, San Diego, CA	\$ 251.00
Mehrbanoobeh Behroozi, West Vancouver, BC	\$ 200.00
Parvaneh Foroodi, Plano, TX	\$ 200.00
Rashid Mehini, Carlsbad, CA	\$ 200.00
I & P Ziatabari, Bonsali, CA	\$ 200.00
Banoo N. Karanjia, Mount Laurel, NJ	\$ 151.00
San Jose Holistic Healthcare Clinic, San Jose, CA	\$ 150.00
Pearl & Poras Balsara, Plano, TX	\$ 101.00
Aban & Khushrav Chhor, Fremont, CA	\$ 101.00
Farida & Houshmand Sharyari, Hoffman Estates, IL	\$ 101.00
Dilnavaz & Hoshang Subawalla, Spring, TX	\$ 101.00
P & H. Irani, Lincoln, CA	\$ 100.00
Ambrose Commissariat, Sunnyvale, CA	\$ 100.00
Neville Dossabhoy, Shreveport, LA	\$ 100.00
Rakshandeh & Nozer Dhalla, Arlington, TX	\$ 100.00
Parvez & Shirin Mody, Orangevale, CA	\$ 100.00
Roya Ganji & Jahangir Mojani, North Vancouver, BC	\$ 100.00
Mahrukh & Feroze Motafram, Brookfield, WI	\$ 100.00
Zenobia & Behram Panthaki, Falls Church, VA	\$ 100.00
Aban & Purvez Rustomji, Houston, TX	\$ 100.00
Yazdi Unvala, San Francisco, CA	\$ 100.00
Kambiz & Homa Yeganegi, Calabasas, CA	\$ 100.00
Freddy Engineer, San Jose, CA	\$ 90.00



List of Donations received January 1, through March 31, 2010

(In US \$)

Khushru & Havovi Jokhi, Kennett Sq., PA	\$ 51.00
Joseph Peterson, Kasson, MN	\$ 51.00
Rostam & Paricheher Salamati, Plano, TX	\$ 51.00
Zarin Randeria, San Francisco, CA	\$ 51.00
Sima Salamati Saradh, Plano, TX	\$ 51.00
Arnavaz Sethna, Missouri City, TX	\$ 51.00
Hormuzd Birdie, Keller, TX	\$ 50.00
Farzeen Chhapgar, Palo Alto, CA	\$ 50.00
Parichehr Foroodi, Richardson, TX	\$ 50.00
Jamshed Gandhi, San Francisco, CA	\$ 50.00
Farhad Khoshnasib, Allen, TX	\$ 50.00
Aloo & Tehmtan Mistry, Saint Louis, MO	\$ 50.00
Goher & Darayes Mobed, Clewiston, FL	\$ 50.00
Homai & Cyrus Zarolia, Sunnyvale, CA	\$ 50.00
Perin Pardiwala, Etobicoke, ON	\$ 50.00
Daugdo & Kobad Jamshed, Foster City, CA	\$ 31.00
Jamshid Kekobad, Santa Clara, CA	\$ 31.00
Farzeen Sukheswalla, Frisco, TX	\$ 30.00
Dali Malaowala, Hercules, CA	\$ 26.00
Rita Engineer, Boca Raton, FL	\$ 25.00
Aspi Mody, Houston, TX	\$ 25.00
Perveen & Shahrukh Petigara, North Vancouver, BC	\$ 25.00
Khorshed Randeria, Fairfield, CT	\$ 25.00
Z.E. & M. Randeria, Vista, CA	\$ 25.00
	\$ 11,301.00
HAITIAN EARTHQUAKE RELIEF FUND	
Anahita & Hoshedar Tamboli on behalf of their children Cyrus, Sarosh & Sanaya, Tampa, FL	\$ 1,000.00
Roda & Aspy Mistry, Marysville, WA	\$ 100.00
Rushna & Perviz Patel, Schaumburg, IL	\$ 100.00
Jamshed Udvadia, Lansing, MI	\$ 100.00
Jeroo & Minoo Chinoy, Flint, MI	\$ 50.00
Nancy & Jahanbux Daruwala, Aventura, FL	\$ 50.00
Khorshed & Key Mistry, Palm Coast, FL	\$ 50.00
James & Kay Moore, Lithia, FL in memory of Khorshed Mody	\$ 50.00
Freny & Jimmy Deboo, Deerfield Beach, FL	\$ 31.00
Goher & Darayes Mobed, Clewiston, FL	\$ 25.00
	\$ 1,556.00
TOTAL FEZANA WELFARE FUND	\$ 12,857.00
FEZANA CRITICAL ASSISTANCE FUND	
Behram Shroff, McLean, VA	\$ 300.00
Noshir & Yasmin Medhora, Houston, TX	\$ 106.00
Cainaz Vakharia, Silver Spring, MD	\$ 101.00
Aban & Purvez Rustomji, Houston, TX	\$ 100.00
Mehroo Homavazir, Thornhill, ON	\$ 30.00
TOTAL	\$ 637.00
FEZANA ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP FUND	
Aban & Purvez Rustomji, Houston, TX	\$ 500.00
Aban Sahni, San Jose, CA	\$ 100.00
Rustum Bankwalla, Washington, DC	\$ 50.00
TOTAL	\$ 650.00
FEZANA Journal	
Daisy & Hector Mehta, Torrance, CA	\$ 200.00
TOTAL	\$ 200.00
Bhathena Family Welfare Fund	
ZAGBA	\$ 500.00
TOTAL	\$ 500.00
FEZANA KHERADI SCHOLARSHIP FUND	
ZAGBA	\$ 500.00
Ruby & Cawas Cooper, Macungie, PA	\$ 50.00
TOTAL	\$ 550.00
KHORSHED JUNGALWALA FUND	
ZAGBA	\$ 500.00
Aban & Purvez Rustomji, Houston, TX	\$ 100.00
TOTAL	\$ 600.00
GRAND TOTAL	\$ 18,821.00

**WHAT DO YOU GIVE
PEOPLE WHO HAVE
EVERYTHING?**

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**SURPRISE THEM WITH AN
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DONATIONS, ADVERTISEMENTS
AND SPONSORSHIPS**

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SUBSCRIPTION STATUS**

**RENEW FOR MULTIPLE YEARS
TO AVOID BOOK-KEEPING**



COMING EVENTS

JUNE 2010 CONFERENCE OF THE SOCIETY OF SCHOLARS IN ZOROASTRIANISM Chicago, at the Arbab Rustom Guiv Darbe Mehr, June 25-28, 2010 Contact Rohinton Rivetna rivetna@aol.com; Pallon Ichaporia kerfegar@aol.com; kayomarsh Mehta kayomehta@aol.com

JULY 2010, 12th ZARATHUSHTI GAMES, California State University Long Beach, California. July 1-5, 2010. Registration www.zathletics.com. Information zsc@fezana.org



AUGUST 2010 63rd Annual UN DPI /NGO Conference Monday, 30 August, to Wednesday, 1 September, 2010, at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Center (<http://www.mcec.com.au/>) in Melbourne, Australia. Theme of the conference; Advance Global Health: Achieve the MDGs . Contact: Co-Chairs FEZANA UN-NGO Committee Afreed Mistry afreed.mistry@gmail.com, homidgandhi@gmail.com, bpastakia@aol.com

SEPTEMBER 17 to 19, 2010

Register your event:
<http://standagainstopoverty.org/>

STAND UP TAKE ACTION
END POVERTY NOW!

SEPTEMBER 12, 2010

"Building Peace by Serving Each Other" Washington D.C.
Details: www.911unitywalk.org

DECEMBER 2010, FIFTEENTH NORTH AMERICAN Z CONGRESS HOUSTON , Preserve, Protect and Perfect, Hotel Intercontinental, December 29 to January 1, 2011, TEXAS, www.zah.org

MARCH 2011 Commission on the Status of Women 55th session Theme: Women and girls in science and technologies: increasing opportunities in education, research and employment. Contact Co-Chairs of FEZANA UN-NGO committee: (see August 2010 on this page)

JULY 2011, FIFTH WORLD ZOROASTRIAN YOUTH CONGRESS, VANCOUVER, BC July 1-4 2011
Congress2011@hotmail.com

AUGUST 2012, SIXTEENTH NORTH AMERICAN Z CONGRESS NEW YORK , August 1-5, 2012. Zarathushti Existence in the Contemporary World www.zagny.org

2012 FEZANA SILVER JUBILEE

At the FEZANA AGM, April 2010 held at Oakville , Ontario,
hosted by Ontario Zoroastrian Community Foundation

President Bomi Patel , Vice president Rashid Mehin; Treasurer Ratan Mistry; Secretary Firuzi Poonewalla; Asst Secretary Nahid Dashtaki were elected

From left:
Asst Secretary Nahid Dashtaki,
President Bomi Patel,
Secretary Firoozi Poonewalla,
Treasurer Ratan Mistry,
(not in photo, Vice-President Rashid Mehin)





Calendar of Festivals

Calendar of Festivities March 2010 to September 2010

Fravardegan/Panjeh/Hamaspathmedayem Gahambar

Five Gatha Days

Tuesday, March 16- Saturday, March 20 (F)

Char-Shambe Soori (Heralding the New Year)

Tuesday Prior to Naurooz

Wednesday, March 17 (F)

NauRoouz or Jamshedi NauRoouz (New Year)

Mah Fravardin, Roz Hormazd

Sunday, March 21 (F)

Khordad Sal (Birth anniversary of Asho Zarathushtra)

Mah Fravardin, Roz Khorshed

Friday, March 26, (F)

Pir e Herisht Festival

Mah Fravardin, Roz Amardad-Khorshed

Saturday, March 27-Wednesday March 31 (F)

Ava Ardvisoor nu Parab

Mah Avan, Roz Avan

Wednesday, February 24, (K)

Friday, March 26, (S)

Fravardegan (Remembrance of the Departed)

Mah Fravardin, Roz Fravardin

Thursday, April. 8. (F)

Jashne Ardibeshgtan

Mah Ardibeshgt, Roz Ardibeshgt

Thursday, April, 22. (F)

Atash-nu-Parab

Mah Adar, Roz Adar,

Thursday, March 25 (K)

Saturday, April, 24 (S)

Maidyozarem Gahambar

Mah Ardibeshgt, Roz Khorshed-Dae-pa-Meher

Friday, April 30- Tuesday, May 4 (F)

Zarathusht-no-Diso (Death anniversary of Asho Zarathushtra)

Mah Dae, Roz, Khorshed

Monday, April, 26, (K)

Wednesday, May, 26 (S)

Dae Mah nu Jashan

Mah Dae, Roz Fravardin

Tuesday, May, 4 (K)

Thursday, June, 3 (S)

Maidhyarem Gahambar

Mah Dae, Roz Meher-Bahram

Saturday, May1-Wednesday, May 5 (K)

Monday, May 31-Friday, June 4 (S)

Pir-e-Sabz Festival

Mah Khordad, Roz Ashtad-Aneran

Monday, June 14 - Friday, June 18. (F)

Pir-e-Banu Festival

Mah Tir, Roz Meher-Bahram

Sunday, July 4 - Thursday July 8 (F)

Maidyoshem Gahambar

Mah Tir, Roz Khorshed-Dae pa-Meher

Tuesday, June 29-Saturday July 3 (F)

Jashne Tirgan

Mah Tir, Roz Tir

Thursday, July 1, (F)

Fravardegan/Muktad/Hamaspathmedayem Gahambar

Five Gatha Days

Thursday July 15- Monday, July 19 (K)

Saturday, August 14-Wednesday, August 18 (Pateti) (S)

NauRoouz

Mah Fravadin, Roz Hormazd

Tuesday, July 20 (K)

Thursday, August 19 (S)

Khordad Sal (Birth anniversary of Zarathushtra)

Mah Fravardin, Roz Khordad

Sunday, July 25 (K)

Tuesday, August, 24 (S)

Fravardian Jashan

Mah Fravardin, Roz Fravardin

Saturday, August 7, (K)

Monday, September, 6 (S)

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



FEZANA Update

The Khorshed Jungalwala Lecture at the 9th World Zoroastrian Congress, “Business Ethics in Zarathushti Context”.

Dubai, December 2009

Rastin Mehri

School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London



From left Firdosh Mehta, chairing the Jungalwala lecture at the 9th World Zoroastrian Congress, Dubai, Rastin Mehri, the Khorshed Jungalwala lecturer



I am truly privileged to be given the honour to speak on the subject that is so deep and all encompassing—and that is: **Business Ethics in Zarathushti Context**.

Ethical conduct of a business enterprise cannot be thought of as being independent from the conduct of a society, political institutions or a religious organization. To function effectively and efficiently, every organization needs an ethical framework and not only laws and regulations. In the following I shall briefly outline how the notion of ethic

within industry, trade and commerce resonates within the corpus of ancient Zarathushti literature.

Highlighting the story of creation and the primeval ordering of things, the first chapter of the Greater Bundahišn – written in Middle Persian – considers the myth which speaks of the activity that brought about order into the universe. The text illustrates the marvel of creation for ancient Iranians who were also expected to partake in harmonizing and ultimate renovation (*frašo-kereti*) of the universe: a harmonization that embraced the natural, social, political and cultural ordering of the society which they inhabited. The Bundahišn describes how Ahura Mazda brought about the cosmic order to the universe by entrapping the Wicked Spirit within the physical world, thereby creating the heavens and the earth and giving equilibrium to the seasons. Stories in the Bundahišn indicate belief in a divine entity who brought about order out of chaos, and its theology elevates the creator, to a status of His own. For a Zarathushti the story of creation stands as a testimony to Ahura Mazda's involvement in the whole of human history. Ahura Mazda is not only the creator, He is also a guide, a confidant and protector who sustains the fertile place where humans settle and find identity. This is the Supreme Being who brings about not only order to the cosmos, but also stability and sustainability for his most supreme creation, human beings.

The Zarathushti scriptures both emphasize and promulgate the nature of the divinity – namely right-mindedness, benevolence, fairness and justice, to name but a few – for the environment within which the Zarathushti faith has and continues to evolve. For many modern Zarathushtis the scriptures are a bridge that connect them with not only the initial flowerings of human civilization, but also with the primeval order, the *aša* – or *hangar-i hasti* in Persian – created and maintained by Ahura Mazda.

Zarathushti businessmen and businesswomen are as ethical as any other group in the modern society, and likewise their professional predicament is complex: Capitalism, as the main driver of modern business today, in itself is based on a foundation that owns dubious morality. Profit maximization leads to unfair distribution of resources and thus contradict and discount the principles of ethics. Despite its manifold inequitable dealings, modern society and the global world to-day cannot repudiate the role of fair and ethical business practice in leading better life for humankind.

Zarathushti business leaders in the past and present are credited for their creativity and for their successful enterprises. The activities of Zarathushti businessmen and businesswomen may not necessarily be in conflict with what is defined as being ethical. The role of individual business leaders renders greatly to the development of the



culture of an enterprise; and business ethics, reflected as they are in the behaviour of business organizations, more often than not are the consequence of the moral value of leading actors.

But does the reading of Zarathushti texts and scripture offer any fresh insight into the sociological and theological dimensions of the business ethics? Do the texts and scriptures remind the practitioner of the faith of any specific protocols and duties which have bearing on their business activities and commerce?

There is a literary genre in Pahlavi Zarathushti texts commonly known *Andarz*, meaning “advice” or “wise saying” and their central theme – and at a glance – can be said to include and emphasize the followings:

1. **Service through industry**
2. **Gratitude**
3. **Harmony and cooperation**
4. **Striving for progress**
5. **Courtesy and humility**
6. **Accord with natural laws**
7. **Fairness**

The following Pahlavi paragraph – from an *Andarz* text – sets forth the manner in which one is to treat not only one’s brethren but everyone else in the society:

PAD NAM-i OHRMAZD

1. *Kirbag karih ray ranj abar xwištan padiruftan*
2. *Andar har gah ud zaman fraron pad menišn daštan*
3. *Sud<-i> getig ray mazg menišn be na hištan*
4. *Tis-i getig xwar ud an-i menog giramik daštan*
5. *An sud na pad sud abayed daštan ki pas az an zian-i vas rased*
6. *ud an ramišn na pad ramišn abayed daštan ki pas az an anduh fragan rased*
7. *An xwoših na pad xwoših abayed daštan ki pas az an taxlih-i gran rased*
8. *ud an xwastak na pad xwastak abayed daštan ki o tan ud ruvan na rased*
9. *An dust na pad dust abayed daštan ki andar saxtuh o faryad na rased*
10. *ud an frazand na pad frazand abayed daštan ki framan-i pid ud mad na bared*
11. *ud an zan na pad zan abayed dashtan ki framanburdar-i šuy na bared ud sud ud zian ud anduh ud ramishn-i šuy hamèigun an-i xwish na dared abag šuy hamsud hamziyan na bawed èi oy az har dušman badtar.*

Frazuft

In the Name of Ohrmazd

1. On account of charity accept hardship upon yourself
2. At every time and in everyplace be true/honest in your disposition/thoughts
3. Abandon not your good/righteous thought/principles for material profit
4. Regard material things as abject, spiritual as essential
5. Do not consider that as profit which results in harm and much loss
6. and do not regard that as pleasure which is the origin/cause of grief/sorrow
7. Do not consider that as happiness which results in much bitterness
8. and that wealth, which does not benefit the body and soul is not to be considered as wealth
9. Do not regard him/her as friend who does not help during distress
10. and regard him/her not as child who does not heed his/her father & mother
11. and consider not her as wife who does not obey her husband, does not regard her husband’s profit, loss, sorrow and pleasure as her own, does not share his profit & loss – for she is worse than an enemy.



FEZANA Update

CONCLUSION.

The above passages highlight the importance and significance of generosity, fairness, truth, making restorations and giving charity. Moreover, the sentences below similarly underline the importance of the correct and fair way to conduct trade and commerce:

*An sud na pad sud abayed daštan ki pas az an ziyan-i vas rased
ud an ramišn na pad ramišn abayed daštan ki pas az an anduh fragan rased*

In addition to the *Andarz* other literary genres also emphasise the same notion of fairness pertaining to trade and business. The following short passage is from a well-known apocalyptic Pahlavi text, the Arda Viraz Namag, (AVN) or the “Book of Righteous Viraz”:

AVN Chapter 31

1. I also saw the soul of a man 2 who, from head to foot, remained stretched upon a rack; 3 and a thousand demons trampled upon him, and ever smote him with great brutality and violence. 4. And I asked thus: ‘What sin was committed by this body?’ 5. **Srosh** the pious, and **Adar** the angel, said 6 thus: ‘This is the soul of that wicked man who, in the world, collected much wealth; 7 and he consumed it not himself, and neither gave it, nor allowed a share to the good; but kept it in store.’

Obviously, for ancient Zarathushtis the failure to follow the correct and fair protocol of trade and business was deemed as a grievous sin. The ancient religion – as is exemplified in the first chapter of the text *Menog-i Xirad* or the “Spirit of Wisdom” – clearly counsels against greed, laziness and waste of time by either remaining idle or by engaging oneself in an unproductive activity: they are attributed and personified as demons and agents of the Wicked Spirit: A□ “greed”, Bušasp “sloth” and Spozgar “tardiness”. In Pahlavi texts Zarathushtis are encouraged to acquire skills and technology and those who strive in order to earn for living are highly praised. Fairness in trade and commerce had played a vital role in the economic and social life of the Zarathushtis throughout the ages, both in Iran and in India. *This is equally true, if not more so, of our contemporary world.*

FEDERATION OF ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF NORTH AMERICA (FEZANA)

NORTH AMERICAN ZARATHUSHTI COMMUNITY AWARDS – 2010

The 2010 North American Zarathushti Community Awards will be presented during the Fifteenth North American Zarathushti Congress to be held in Houston, Texas from December 29 – 31, 2010.

The awards will be presented to North American Zarathushtis selected by an independent panel of judges. The judges will select those Zarathushtis who have made substantial contributions to the promotion and advancement of the knowledge of Zarathushti history, theology, culture and heritage, who have achieved excellence in their chosen business or profession, and who have given of themselves through outstanding humanitarian service or philanthropy. Awards will also be given to youth who have shown outstanding leadership and educational achievements.

Awards will be presented in the following categories:

Category A: Rohinton Rivetna Outstanding Zarathushti Award

Category B: Excellence in Business or Profession Award

Category C: Jamshed Pavri Humanitarian Service Award

Category D: Excellence in Performing Arts, Painting or Literature Award

Category E: Outstanding Young Zarathushti Award

Category F: Outstanding Young Zarathushti Student Award

Category G: NAMC Award for Outstanding Young Zarathushti Priest

The Awards Committee invites nominations of deserving and qualified Zarathushtis for each of the above categories. Nominations must be submitted through the official Nomination Form. The complete Nomination package, including the rules governing the awards, details on each award category, and the evaluation criteria that will be applied by each judge, can be obtained from your association's FEZANA representative or from:

FEZANA Awards Committee

Shehernaz Joshi Verahrami

sjoshi@law.gwu.edu

The closing date for receipt of all nominations is September 1, 2010. Nominations postmarked after that date or not submitted in the prescribed nomination form will not be considered.



FEZANA Update

APPEAL FOR RESEARCH INFORMATION FROM HARVARD UNIVERSITY STUDENT DINYAR PATEL

I am a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of History at Harvard University and the grand-nephew of Dasturji Hormazdyar Mirza. I have been studying the history of the Parsis and Zoroastrianism for the past three years and I am currently beginning my dissertation research, which will be on Dadabhai Naoroji, the "Grand Old Man of India."

I am trying to locate an extremely important collection of personal papers which appear to have gone missing in the Parsi community: the papers of Sir Dinshaw Wacha. Wacha was a prominent early nationalist and a close ally of both Dadabhai Naoroji and Pherozeshah Mehta. During the first decades of the Indian National Congress he served as the Congress' general secretary. Wacha had regular correspondence with both Mehta and Naoroji. Due to the paucity of surviving material that we have on both great Parsi leaders, Wacha's personal papers can provide extremely valuable material.

Wacha's personal papers seem to have been last located in the 1970s, when they were researched by two scholars, Eckehard Kulke and John Hinnells. Last week, Professor Hinnells provided me with some details of what he remembers regarding their whereabouts. The papers were kept in the collection of the Western Indian National Liberal Federation, an organization which Wacha led after he left the Congress. Several other prominent Parsis, such as JRB Jeejeebhoy, Cowasjee Jehangir, Phiroze Sethna, and AD Shroff were members of the Federation.

The papers of the Federation, Professor Hinnells tells me, were kept in a cabinet in the office of a Parsi law firm located in Fort in Bombay. Professor Hinnells learned about their whereabouts through the assistance of D.N. Marshall, then librarian of Bombay University.

I would greatly appreciate any assistance in locating these papers. These papers are not only important for my dissertation -- they constitute an extremely important collection of historical material for the Parsi community as well as the Indian nation. I sincerely hope that these papers have not been destroyed or misplaced, and thereby lost to us forever.

In addition, please do let me know if you or your family have any old letters, papers, or artifacts relating to **Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah Mehta, Dinshaw Wacha**, or other early Parsi nationalists and political figures. With your permission, I would be extremely interested in seeing this material for my research.

You may contact me by either email or letter:

dpatel@fas.harvard.edu Dinyar Patel

Department of History, Harvard University, Robinson Hall, Second Floor, Cambridge, MA 02138, USA

+1 (650) 796-2486 Many thanks for your assistance

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FEZANA Update



FIFTEENTH NORTH AMERICAN ZARATHUSHTI CONGRESS DECEMBER 29 – 31, 2010

PRESERVE! PROTECT! PERFECT!
"PRESERVE THE PAST, PROTECT THE PRESENT, AND PERFECT THE FUTURE"

NAZC TWENTYTEN The Countdown has begun

December 28, 2010 Registration starts. We are ready to welcome you. The Congress will be launched with a grand Jashan at 9:00 a.m. Join us a day early and enjoy Houston/Galveston tours. Stay late and catch a cruise from Galveston to the Bahamas or Mexico. The sky is the limit when you are in Houston.

This Congress has a number of "firsts":

Children age 5-15 will have structured activities ...a mini congress

Youth track planned by Youth Committee Chairs

We are going GREEN!! Proceedings on a flash drive will be handed out to each participant on the final day of the Congress...

Early bird registration expires June 30, 2010. The Registration Form is available on our website http://zah.org/nazc-10/registration_form.htm. For an extra \$5.00 per registration, you can register using your Visa or Master Card. Registration includes all the sessions, Opening Day (Day 1) lunch and dinner, FEZANA Awards Lunch on Day 2, and New Year's Eve Gala dinner, Day 3.

Regular Early bird (on or before Jun 30, 2010)

Children	\$150
Students and Seniors	\$225
Regular	\$250
Optional – (Natak/Musical Evening)	\$ 30

We have speakers from around the world presenting topics relevant to our theme Preserve, Protect, Perfect. Apart from the plenary sessions, we have planned several break-out sessions that will meet your interests. We have entertainment for all ages ending with the Closing Ceremony and New Year's Eve Gala. Speakers include Dr. Niaz Kasravi, Dr. Jamsheed Choksy, Dr. Pallan Ichaporia, Dr. Rashna Writer, Rastin Mehri, Dr. Shernaz Cama, Niloufer Ichaporia-King, Dr. Nerina Rustomji, Dr. Saroja, Nina Godiwalla, Jim Engineer - NextGenNow and many more.

Registration rates are kept very low to make this Congress affordable to young families. The balance can only be made up by the munificence of readers like you! The Fund Raising Committee is actively seeking ads for the Souvenir Brochure. The inside back cover is already sold and we are now appealing to your sense of generosity. We have created a new Business Card size ad for \$75 that can fit eight to a page. A group of young entrepreneurs can get together and buy a page. What better exposure than at a North American Congress!!! Call Jimmy Kumana at 281-437-5906 or email him at jkumana@aol.com for more information. Please do visit our website <http://www.zah.org/nazc-10> for more information.

Hotel Intercontinental has given us a special rate of \$89 (plus taxes) per night with a quad occupancy. This rate is offered from December 28, 2010 to January 1, 2011. Call 1-877-270-1390 (Toll Free) to make your reservation. The congress reservation code is FV9.

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DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA

The Guest Editor speaks

Deena Guzder

Coined in the third century BCE, the term “Diaspora” comes from the Greek phrase “a scattering of seeds.” Today, the term refers to the movement, migration, or diffusion of an ethnic group away from its ancestral homeland. The Zarathushti Diaspora is particularly fascinating considering the community’s myriad migrations across time and geography. As Professor John Hinnells notes, Zarathushtis have migrated for millennia; for example, there were settlements in what is now Turkey in pre-Christian times. Although Yazd, Iran is the birthplace of Zarathushti religion, only 200 of its 433,836 inhabitants still practice the ancient religion because forced conversions, centuries of oppression, and voluntary migration have diminished the population. The Parsi community in India is, itself, a robust and thriving Diaspora. The newest wave of the Diaspora has brought Zarathushtis to the far-flung shores of Australia, New Zealand, East Asia, and North America. These recent immigrants desire to assimilate in their adopted homelands, but simultaneously aspire to preserve their ancient rituals, traditions, and culture.

Whenever Zarathushtis uproot and relocate, the Zarathushti identity further evolves. This issue of the FEZANA Journal is dedicated to exploring every angle of the Zarathushti Diaspora. The community’s versatility and amenability has undoubtedly benefited upwardly mobile immigrants, yet has also created internal cleavages as an increasingly dispersed Zarathushti community struggles to define itself as a collective entity. A Zarathushti in Hong Kong may wake up and eat congee (rice porridge); a Zarathushti in London may cook up some “bangers and mash” (sausage and potatoes); and, a Zarathushti in India may instruct her ayah to prepare akuri (egg curry). Yet, all three Zarathushtis are happy to visit an agiary on auspicious occasions, perform sudreh kustī each evening, and partake in animated discussions on the merits and pitfalls of intermarriage. And, no matter what’s on their breakfast platter, all three Zarathushtis would probably prefer a generous serving of dhansak.

A dynamic and enduring force that spans several continents, the contemporary Zarathushti Diaspora is continuing the legacy of its forefathers who fled the Islamic incursions in 10th Century Persia and rebuilt their vibrant community on the Indian subcontinent. Although Zarathushtis who relocate in the 21st Century are more often immigrants in search of wider economic opportunities rather than refugees fleeing religious persecution, they remain similar to their forefathers in their devotion to preserving their ancient religion on faraway shores. Zarathushti expatriates are



understandably proud of their manifold contributions to their adopted homelands; immigrants and their children have excelled in traditional white-collar professions as well as social justice activism and performing & visual arts. Zarathushtis are exploring previously uncharted terrain in their adopted homelands while retaining their core identity. This edition seeks to highlight the challenges confronted, goals accomplished, and culture shared by the global Zarathushti Diaspora.

How will the Zarathushti Diaspora impact the future? How will Zarathushtis in the homelands of India and Iran continue to enrich (and be enriched by) their brethren in distant lands? How will effective leadership create a cohesive Zarathushti entity while respecting communities’ geographical particularities? Will the Zarathushti Diaspora remain malleable in the next generation? Will a dwindling Zarathushti community fracture over irreconcilable differences of opinions on polemical issues such as intermarriage and conversion? Or will Zarathushtis across the globe unite to address pressing concerns through a respectful and edifying exchange of ideas? While such multifaceted questions defy concrete answers, they do begin a much-needed conversation within the Zarathushti community on how to cull from our past to build a promising, sustainable future.

Each contributor to this edition of FEZANA Journal offers a unique perspective on a different facet of the Zarathushti Diaspora. Renowned novelist Bapsi Sidhwa relates a witty and humorous account of her difficulties straddling two cultures that often seem mutually exclusive. Cyrus Rivetna gifts us with a comprehensive account of the architecture of Fire Temples, and notes that North American Zarathushtis have an opportunity to express their vision for a sacred place of worship by

DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA

building upon ancient traditions that harmoniously integrate with their new landscape. Farah Shroff reflects on the lessons her family learned while globetrotting across Southeast Asia, including the importance of making time for loved ones despite our busy schedules in the “new world.” Shernaz Engineer predicts that the scattered Zarathushti community will continue thriving since growing digital possibilities allow us to effortlessly bridge our geographic divides. Noshir Avari provides a detailed overview of the Zarathushti Diaspora in the United Kingdom. Farida Master, Arnavaz Chubb, and Jasmine Dastoor similarly explore the Zarathushti Diaspora in their articles on New Zealand, Australia, and Singapore, respectively. Farrokh Billimoria recounts how Zarathushti Studies was formalized at Stanford University to nurture future academics of our faith. Edul Davar accounts for the achievements of the IIT graduates in North America, while Parastu Dubash lists Zarathushti academicians in North America. Rastin Mehri, a Ph.D candidate at SOAS, delivered an informative lecture at the World Zarathushti Congress in Dubai, which is reproduced here. Parendi Mehta — a young North American with South Asian features, a Persian name, and Zarathushti identity — explains her efforts to put her

faith into action by traveling to Bangladesh to evaluate a project implemented by Save the Children USA. Nina Godiwalla and Cyrus Mewawalla share their personal struggles to stay true to their Zarathushti values while working in the cutthroat world of corporate banking.

Readers are especially fortunate to benefit from the insights of Professor John Hinnells who authored the seminal book, “Zarathushtis Diaspora: Religion and Migration.” Hinnells affection for the Zarathushti religion is unsurpassed and his article — “The Zarathushti Diaspora” — is a labor of love. With an outsider’s critical distance and an academic’s perceptive eye, Hinnells sheds light on distinctive patterns of Zarathushti settlement in different countries.

I am very grateful to Dolly Dastoor and Behram Pastakia for the opportunity to guest-edit this exciting summer edition of the FEZANA Journal. I hope you enjoy the read.

Deena Guzder is a freelance journalist based in New York city who writes for Time Magazine, Washington Post, Mother Jones and other publications. She is finishing a literary non-fiction book on politically progressive religion-inspired social movement “A Higher Calling” (Chicago Review Press 2011)

THE ZARATHUSHTI DIASPORA

John R. Hinnells

Zarathushtis have migrated for millennia, there were, for example, settlements in what is now Turkey in pre-Christian times. The Parsi community in India is, of course, itself a diaspora. In modern times there have been several diasporic settlements. In the 19th century Parsis went for trade to Hong Kong, Singapore, Aden and East Africa. They went to Britain, some for trade, some for education and some for politics. The Zarathushti community in London is the oldest Asian community in Britain. In the twentieth century — between 1950 and 1969 — many Asian communities settled in Britain, including Parsis. But as the doors for migrants began to close in Britain they opened first in Canada, then USA and a little later in Australia and New Zealand. In the 1980s Iranian migrants settled overseas with the establishment of the Islamic Republic (a few had come earlier during the days of the Shah). Although they went to various countries it was mainly to America (particularly California, but also New York) and Canada, mainly British Columbia and some to Toronto. The Zarathushti religion is truly transnational.

But there are different patterns of settlement in the different countries. Britain has more Parsis from East Africa than in other countries, also more Parsis from Pakistan than elsewhere (except in Houston, Texas where there has been chain migration from Pakistan). There are also differences within countries. As my global survey revealed, the Zarathushtis in Chicago had a greater tendency to be liberal than many respondents from Houston who inclined more to an orthodox tradition. Probably a few important factors are the views of mobeds and teachers. However, more American than British Zarathushtis identify with the liberal tradition. But of course, there are always exceptions, for example the work of Siloo Mehta in California and Pervin Mistry in Toronto. But despite acknowledging the exceptions, it is useful to be aware of general patterns. Because I am writing this for the FEZANA Journal, I will concentrate on North America.

In 2005 I published the results of a global survey I had undertaken. The precise figures are published in my *The Zoroastrian Diaspora*, OUP 2005, Appendix 2. This shows that a much higher proportion of American Zarathushtis have undertaken post-graduate education

DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA

than communities in any other country, this is especially true of Zarathushtis in Chicago, New York and in what I have previously labeled the 'scattered groups' that is those who are not living in the main Zarathushti centres. The levels of education are generally higher in Canada than in Britain, but not as high as in the centres in the USA. More USA Zarathushtis studied science whereas in Britain, Canada and Australia the majority were educated in the Arts. In all communities there are few Zarathushti manual workers, but in the USA approximately half are the highest, or executive, level in their careers, this is especially true in Chicago, New York and in the 'scattered groups' and there are more in this level of employment in Canada than in Britain and Australia. More USA and Canadian Zarathushtis read Zoroastrian literature than do those in Britain. In Sydney, more Zarathushtis read Zarathushtian literature than do those living in Melbourne. Whereas in India, the Parsis are an ageing population, in USA, Canada and Australia the majority of people were in their 40s or younger'.

Are there religious consequences of the different demographic features? In a different analysis of the survey I found that those who had undertaken post graduate study tended to pray less, wore sudre kusti less often, observed fewer of the traditions such as festivals, more willing to accept intermarriages, and fewer of them wanted to exclude non-Zarathushtis from the prayer room. They also asserted that their religious beliefs and practices had changed after migration. The same pattern was observed with the differences between those who had studied arts and those who had studied the sciences. So, fewer scientists than arts people prayed daily, fewer observed such traditions as the festivals, fewer wanted to exclude non-Zoroastrians from the prayer room and more of them thought that they had changed their religious beliefs and practices. Given that most USA Zarathushtis tended to have had a post-graduate education and more of them were scientists it did follow that more American and Canadian Zarathushtis approved of intermarriages, with two exceptions namely Houston, which as commented above tended to be more orthodox, and California, where many of my respondents were Iranian Zarathushtis and Iranians are keen on marrying fellow Iranians, in comparison with British Zarathushtis. In Australia, there is a marked contrast between Melbourne and Sydney in the latter many more approve of intermarriages; the difference probably explained by the different leaderships. Similarly on the question of non-Zarathushtis being allowed to enter the prayer rooms, a smaller proportion of Americans would deny such entry than the British, and again there is a contrast between Melbourne and Sydney, with the latter being more liberal.

American Zarathushtis are younger and even more highly educated, which may explain why North American Zarathushtis have taken so many initiatives to further social connections, to develop networks between communities and to encourage the youth to remain in the religion. Obvious examples are FEZANA, and this very professionally produced Journal, the bi-annual Congresses, youth camping trips (see for example, 1993 winter issue of the Journal) ski trips, a Caribbean and other cruises, and Olympic Games. The first World Zarathushti Congress (Los Angeles, 1993) and such splendid productions as the inspiring video made by Tanaz Dubash "In the Footsteps of our Forefathers" following a youth tour of Iran in 2000. Another feature that characterizes the Diaspora in general is the position of the priesthood. Sadly, In India the priesthood (senior Dasturs apart) is not widely respected because of their characteristic lack of a secular education and poor remuneration. Mobeds in America, in sharp contrast, are generally highly educated and often people holding senior positions in employment. The Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce was started in America but is now international. Many American Zarathushtis are convinced that they in the New World represent the future of the religion because there is in America a concentration of dynamic leaders, or as Ervad Dr J. Bagli put it 'the very cream of the progressive [Parsi] community has come over to this continent' (Toronto Congress, 1975, Proceedings, p. 9) or as Dr. Lovji Cama suggested that 'the best of a community has been brought together by a divine plan' (Chicago Congress, 1977).

(A more detailed history of the Zarathushti communities in USA and Canada is in my book *The Zoroastrian Diaspora*, pp. 425-542)

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DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA

THE ZARATHUSHTI DIASPORA IN NORTH AMERICA

*The dynamic saga of Zarathushtis coming to North America,
building their lives and establishing their religious and community infrastructure*

Roshan Rivetna

FROM IRAN TO THE FIRST DIASPORA – IN INDIA

Coming from the homeland of Iran, the few shiploads of Zarathushtis who were to become the first diaspora, in India, grew within a few centuries to become the hallmark for honesty and integrity, industry and enterprise, philanthropy and charity, that prompted Mahatma Gandhi to say:

“... the splendid Zarathushti stock, in numbers beneath contempt, but in charity and philanthropy perhaps unequalled ... The Parsi community is such a marvel ... It finds its way and protection by its wisdom, intelligence and ability. Their charities are so famed in this country that it has no parallel ...”

“In numbers beneath contempt” translates to less than 100,000 Zarathushtis in almost 1.2 billion Indians (i.e. 0.008%).

About the Zarathushtis in Iran in the 1850s, the French Ambassador Count de Gobineau wrote:

“Only 7,000 of them remain and only a miracle may save them from extinction. They teach a lesson that glory is not everlasting, because these are descendants of the people who once ruled the world.”

Thence too, they rose within a century to become leaders of industry and build a reputation for unsurpassed honesty.

With similarly miniscule numbers in North America – perhaps 20,000 in a multicultural sea of over 340 million Americans and Canadians (i.e. 0.006 %) what does the future hold? The struggle to preserve their ancestral heritage and identity, while adapting to their new homeland, is expressed poignantly by Freddy Lakdawalla in the first issue of Gavashni in 1974:

“Today Parsis are migrating to other lands ... Those of us here in North America live reasonably comfortable lives, but we are missing out on something. Our children are absorbed in a materialistic culture ... the Zarathushti faith is dissipating.... What we need is another miracle to salvage our faith and our identity ... pitch in your bit to help form our community into a cohesive group with a strong and clear identity...”

Will they gradually fade away in this multicultural sea, as Lakdawalla fears? Or will they rise like their forefathers, to gain the reputation, recognition and respect they earned in India and Iran?

COMING TO NORTH AMERICA

Zarathushtis came to the USA and Canada, mostly from Iran and the Indian subcontinent, starting with a trickle in the late 1800s and growing to a steady stream by the mid 1900s [1]. Many arrived as students, entrepreneurs or immigrants with barely a suitcase and a scarce \$20 in their pockets, put themselves through college, raised families, secured jobs, opened businesses, and started building their community infrastructure. Many have excelled in their professions, and given back, in no small measure, to the country of their birth as well as to the country of their adoption.

The 1970s and 80s brought a wave of Iranian Zarathushtis to North America. A large number came with the Revolution of 1979, or during the 8-year Iran-Iraq war that followed, for political and economic reasons.

Thus, after a 1,000 years of separation, Zarathushtis of the motherland Iran, and Parsis from the first diaspora in the Indian subcontinent, were coming together in the Western Diaspora. Together they started building their lives and establishing their religious and organizational infrastructure.

BUSINESSES AND PROFESSIONALS

While Zarathushti entrepreneurs in North America have yet to blaze the trails left behind by stalwarts of the stature of the Tatas, Godrejs, Jamshedians or Jahanians, each in his or her own niche, has taken great strides, at tremendous financial and personal risk, weathering good times and bad, each weaving Zarathushti values of integrity and industry into the fabric of the nation. Within the short span they have been here -- they are beginning to have an impact on the North American scene.

A compilation of Zarathushti businesses in 1995 [2] yielded a rich panorama of enterprises, notable among them: Dectron Internationale (Ness Lakdawala, Montreal), ACuPowder International, LLC (EduL Daver, NJ), Pegasus Products (Farokh Patel, NJ), Normak Industries (Farokh Noria, Toronto), the Mobedshahi Hotel Group (Manou Mobedshahi, California), real estate entrepreneur Khodamorad Kamran of Maryland and theater businessman Alayar Dabestani of Seattle. Among success stories in IT are Firdosh Bhathena of Boston and Xerxes Wania of Toronto.

Likewise the talent uncovered in a 1997 study of Zarathushti professionals [3] was inspiring. Among the

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luminaries, one may consider the star to be Maestro Zubin Mehta; but there are many who have earned recognition, be it in Music and Theatre (music conductors Mehli Mehta, Farobag Cooper, Zane Dalal and Cyrus Ginwalla, tenors Dinyar Vania and Sohrab Wadia, counter tenor Bejun Mehta, theatre actor Firdous Bamji); medicine (Dr. Dhun Noria, Director of Toronto Hospitals, and pancreatic cancer surgeon Dr. Malcolm Bilimoria of Chicago); the sciences (nuclear scientist Rusi Taleyarkhan); or academia (Farhang Mehr, Professor Emeritus at Boston University, Beheruz Sethna, President at State University of West Georgia, Keikhosrov Irani who inspired the "K. D. Irani Visiting Professorship in Philosophy" at City College NY, Harvard professor Homi K. Bhabha, and Farrokh Mistree Director of University of Oklahoma's School of Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering); or the Literary Arts (authors Bapsi Sidhwa, Rohinton Mistry, and photojournalist late Sam Tata).

ESTABLISHING RELIGIOUS INFRASTRUCTURE

Establishing Dar-e-Mehrs [4]. It was through the vision and generous financing of Arbab Rustam Guiv and Morvarid Khanum Guiv that all the first generation of dar-e-mehrs were established. They came to the USA from Iran as the first dar-e-mehr – Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr – was inaugurated in 1977, in New Rochelle, NY with their donation. Over the next decade, Arbab's largesse saw fruit in the establishment of six more dar-e-mehrs across USA and Canada [see pages 26-29]. Generous funding was also received by many of the dar-e-mehrs from the Zartoshty brothers, Mehraban and Fereydun. (photo below)



With growing needs, existing Centers were expanded or relocated and new Centers are being added [see pages 32-34]. It is most heartening that much of the 'fire in the belly' to build this infrastructure, is now coming largely from the sons and daughters of the first generation, as they start to take over the reins. These dedicated men and women have raised millions of dollars and put in many, many hours of their time, talents and treasure, working towards their vision.

MOBEDS COUNCIL



Photo above The next generation of mobeds in North America, Toronto, and young children at Muktd prayers, Chicago

The North American Mobeds Council (NAMC) was incorporated as a religious organization in Ontario, in 1992, spearheaded mainly by Er. Kobad Zarolia and Er. Nozer Kotwal, with Er. Jal Birdy, Er. Jehan Bagli and Er. Zarolia serving as succeeding Presidents. NAMC has an independent but symbiotic relationship with FEZANA. It

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provides a forum for dialogue and discourse, develops new programs (e.g. ordainment of mobedyars) and sets future direction.

BUILDING COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Associations. By the 1960s and 70s, the trickle of immigrants was swelling to a sizeable stream. Zarathustis, spread thin in pockets across the land, felt the need to group together to preserve their identity and religion.

While there were some earlier attempts, the first Association to formally take root was the Zoroastrian Association of Quebec (Montreal) in 1967, spearheaded by Jehan Bagli, Ness Lakdawalla, Nowzer Kotwal and others in Montreal, who felt the need to *"keep alive our ancient religion and our rich cultural heritage."* A parallel effort, on the west coast of Canada by Jamshed Pavri, saw the birth of the Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia (Vancouver) in 1968. More Associations followed and today we have 26 formally organized Associations and numerous "Small Groups." [see page 159].

COMING TOGETHER AS FEZANA

The need to organize, is evident in the many early attempts: like the *"Zoroastrian Association"* born in New York in the living room of Phiroze Saklatwalla in 1929, that got wiped out during the great depression; or the ambitious *"Zoroastrian Association of America"* started by Keki Bhote in Chicago in 1965, perhaps a little before its time; or the *The Zarathushti Fraternity* that met in a church hall in Toronto in 1966 to service new immigrants; or the efforts between 1976 – 1978 by Dr. Lovji Cama and Montreal Zarathushtis to form UZANA.

It was in 1985, following a mandate from the North American Congress in Los Angeles, for Rohinton Rivetna to draft a Constitution, that the idea of a Federation of North American Associations (FEZANA) finally took root and the Constitution was ratified, by 16 of the 17 Associations on record following a Constitutional Convention in Chicago in 1987. The vision for Zarathushtis in North America, is expressed by Founding President Rohinton Rivetna:

"Our ultimate mission is to bring about a flowering of the religion of Zarathushtra on this continent. I see a vision for Zarathushtis in North America... a noble community, with a reputation for truth and integrity... a prosperous community, noted for its enterprise and industry... an erudite community, noted for its learning and scholarship... a caring community with a deep and

abiding respect for others ... We have therefore united as FEZANA to bring these goals to fruition. Together, in unity, we shall work towards bringing about a Zarathushti Renaissance."

Succeeding presidents – Dolly Dastoor, Framroze Patel, Firdosh Mehta, Rustom Kevala and currently Bomi Patel – have led FEZANA with vision and foresight through its first two decades. In 1996, then President Dolly Dastoor undertook a 10-year 'Strategic Planning' exercise to draw up a blueprint for the community with collective goals, many of which have now been achieved.

FEZANA has facilitated initiatives across the US and Canada. Foremost among these are philanthropic activities, welfare and critical assistance, scholarships, religious education programs and workshops for teachers; scholarships for religious studies (donated recently in memory of Fereydon Zartoshty) and much more

FEZANA Administrative Office. In 2007, the vision of President Rustom Kevala was realized with the



establishment of a central FEZANA Office with a part time administrator. The Office, located at the Zoroastrian Center of Chicago, though modest in size, is a major landmark in the history of FEZANA. (photo above)

FEZANA Information, Research and Information Systems (FIRES). In 2008, a FEZANA research center was created in the ZAH Library in Houston. More than just a collection of books, FIRES will be a central resource for books, CDs, videos and memorabilia located at centers in USA and Canada, and eventually become a facility for research and learning about Zarathushti religion, culture and history.

Conferences and Congresses. The Diaspora in North America has been foremost in organizing religious

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education seminars, academic and scholarly Conferences (by FEZANA's Historic Research and Preservation Committee or the recently formed Society of Scholars of Zoroastrianism) and national and international Congresses.

ZSO (President Jamshed Mavalwala) took the lead in organizing the First North American Zoroastrian Symposium/Congress, in Toronto in 1975. Subsequent congresses were held in Chicago, New York, Montreal and the 5th in Los Angeles in 1985, which saw the birth of FEZANA. Since then, FEZANA and the Associations have sponsored North American Congresses every other year, the ever popular Zarathushti Games (with the Sports Committee) every alternate year, and Youth Congresses which provide a venue for young Zarathushtis to meet and mingle. The initiative for the First World Zoroastrian Youth Congress was taken by Meher Amalsad in Los Angeles in 1993.

At the turn of the millennium 2000, with the North American Diaspora having come of age, the Seventh World Zoroastrian Congress (chairs Dolly Dastoor and Homi Davier) was, for the first time held outside India or Iran. Hosted by ZAH, this Seventh World Congress drew the largest attendance (over 2,200) of any congress to date, and has resulted in some noteworthy legacy projects (ZWJN; WZCC, AWARDS) .

PUBLICATIONS

The voice of the North American community is reflected in its flagship publication, FEZANA JOURNAL, which has grown from a fledgling newsletter to a world class Journal, aiming to "educate, inspire and inform" under editor Roshan Rivetna (1991 – 2005) and Publication Chairs Rustom Kevala and Khorshed Jungalwala; and current editor Dolly Dastoor and Chair



Behram Pastakia. The Journal was evolved from an earlier publication Gavashni, the first of its kind, created in 1974 by Jehan Bagli from Montreal.

Realizing the two-fold need of raising awareness amongst our North American neighbors, as well as educating and instilling pride among our children, numerous books and publications on Zarathushti religion, history and culture have been published in North America, and well-received around the world.

GLOBAL INITIATIVES SPAWNED IN NORTH AMERICA

WORLD ZARATHUSHTI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. With the wealth of talent and enterprise among the growing community in North America, it was not surprising that the impetus for a Zarathushti 'chamber of commerce' was spawned here, at "A Gathering of



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Dreamers" conference in Las Vegas in 1997 [5]. This idea, whose time was ripe with accelerating globalization and Internet communications, took hold quickly and soon WZCC was launched, at the World Congress in Houston, at the turn of the millennium, with Rohinton Rivetna as the Founding President. Today WZCC is a vibrant networking organization with a state-of-the-art website and a top-class publication SynergyZ. In just a little over a decade, the vision of the gathering of dreamers in Las Vegas, is flowering beyond their wildest expectations.

The ZOROASTRIAN FOUNDATION. One early American attempt in the 1970s at bonding Zarathushtis of the world together was the The Zoroastrian Foundation spearheaded by Homi Kerawalla. Based in Los Angeles, its Purpose was *"to act as a catalyst and liaison to weld Zarathushtis into a world-wide community..."* One of their notable projects was the classic volume *"In Search of My God."*

WORLD BODY [6]. While the vision of forming a "world body" for Zarathushtis has been brewing since the First World Zoroastrian Congress in Tehran in 1960, it was impetus from FEZANA that moved the project forward in the 1990s. The Constitution for a World Council of Zoroastrian Federations (WCZF) was drafted by Rohinton Rivetna in 1991, with the mission:

"... internally to network, coordinate, facilitate, support, nurture and nourish the global Zarathushti community and strengthen the bonds between the homelands and Diaspora; and externally, represent the interests of Zarathushtis in international (governmental, UN, interfaith) forums, and make a positive influence on the course of world affairs..."

The World Body proposal was deliberated upon extensively over the ensuing years, until the breakthrough G-10 Meeting of Regional Leaders in London in 2004, when all parties converged on forming a body with two arms – a socio-economic arm (WZO) and a representative arm (WCZF). To date, however, the World Body is dormant, following protests from the traditional lobby in India who saw the so-called 'cosmopolitan World Body' to be *"a threat to our survival as a community and our religion ..."*

COMING TOGETHER ROUNDTABLE (CTR). While aspirations for a World Body were not to be realized, another initiative, spearheaded by Rohinton Rivetna in 2005 with Behram Pastakia and Firdosh Mehta from FEZANA in 2005 to "come together and work together in hamazori" has materialized as the Coming Together Roundtable. At the 5th Roundtable at the Dubai Congress in 2009, elected leaders from all four major regions

consensually agreed to assume ownership of the CTR and come together for dialogue and action – certainly a watershed moment for the world Zarathushti community.

SOCIETY OF SCHOLARS OF ZOROASTRIANISM (SSZ). Evolving from FEZANA's Historic Research and Preservation Committee, Pallan Ichaporia and Rohinton Rivetna spearheaded the formation of the Society of Scholars of Zoroastrianism (SSZ) with the mission to revive the tradition of scholarship within the community and promote interaction among academicians and practitioners of the faith.

GAINING RECOGNITION AND RESPECT

While much of the energy has been devoted to building infrastructure to preserve and protect the religion and community, there has been a parallel emphasis on adapting and integrating into the fabric of the new homeland, and earning recognition and respect from the broader community. (Photo below Ervad Behram Panthaki with interfaith leaders)

Where once mention of our religion evoked a puzzled "Zorro what???" over the last few decades, little by little, one step at a time, in our homes, schools and neighborhoods as well as in interfaith and government circles, we are bringing awareness and understanding of the Zarathushti faith and community.

UNITED NATIONS. Since 1995, FEZANA has been recognized as a UN-NGO in Consultative Status with ECOSOC at the United Nations; and has been an active participant at conferences and social/welfare programs at UN headquarters, NY.

INTERFAITH. In recent years, Zarathushti presence can be felt at all levels in the Interfaith arena. Zarathushtis are taking leadership roles and participating in local, national and international Interfaith and Multi-cultural



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organizations – viz. the Parliament of World's Religions, United Religions Initiative, World Conference of Religions for Peace, Council of Religious Leaders of Metropolitan Chicago (which was recently expanded from only the Abrahamic Religions to include all major religions) and the Interfaith Council (Washington, DC). The devoted efforts of many are not only working to bring peace and understanding among faiths (which is the major objective) but are also bringing recognition and respect for the stature of Zarathushtra on the world's religious stage.

DYNAMIC DIASPORA HAS "PITCHED IN THEIR BIT"

To Freddy Lakdawala who made that soulful plea four decades ago we can proudly say that the men and women of this dynamic Diaspora have "pitched in their bit!" Within the span of barely a half century, Zarathushtis have established their presence in North America - building their religious and community infrastructure and spawning global initiatives to keep the Diaspora connected with the homelands. Their work in the Interfaith arena has helped towards peace and understanding among nations and brought respect and recognition for the Zarathushti faith and community.

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Roshan Rivetna was editor of *FEZANA JOURNAL* (from 1991 to 2005) and of the popular publications, *The Legacy of Zarathushtra* (2002) and *Zarathushti Connections with Judaism and Christianity* (2009). She is currently gathering material for a forthcoming publication on Zarathushtis in North America, starting with the earliest encounters in the 1800s. Roshan and her husband Rohinton, both active members of the North American Zarathushti community, reside in suburban Chicago, IL



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DAR-E-MEHR'S OF NORTH AMERICA

Evolving the design of Fire Temples
of Iran and India to the Diaspora in North America

by Cyrus Rivetna

Here on the shore of the ocean, as the sun was sinking in the sea, they congregated to perform their religious rites. Fire was there in its grandest form - the setting sun, and water in the vast expanse of the Indian Ocean ... How inexpressibly sublime the scene appeared to me, and how insignificant seemed even our cathedrals made with human hands, when compared with this looking up through nature to nature's God! ... I have seen many modes and forms of worship but never do I expect in all my life to witness a religious ceremony which will so powerfully affect me as that of the Parsis on the beach at Bombay.

Andrew Carnegie, 1890

Zarathushtis revere not only water and the sun, as Andrew Carnegie observed, but all elements of nature and creation. They don't deify nature's beauty, but revere that which provides the very necessities for life on Earth. Fire is considered the most powerful natural element, providing energy, light, life, and warmth, which is counterbalanced with its destructive capabilities. Revered as a symbol of the Inner Light, the Divine spark, and the Illumined Mind, a fire is kept burning in a silver afargan at the heart of every fire temple and is the focal point for the Zarathushti devotee.

EARLY FIRE TEMPLES IN IRAN AND INDIA

FIRE TEMPLES IN IRAN. The religious buildings of Zarathushtis have an evolution spanning almost three millennia, possibly the longest continuous evolution of a

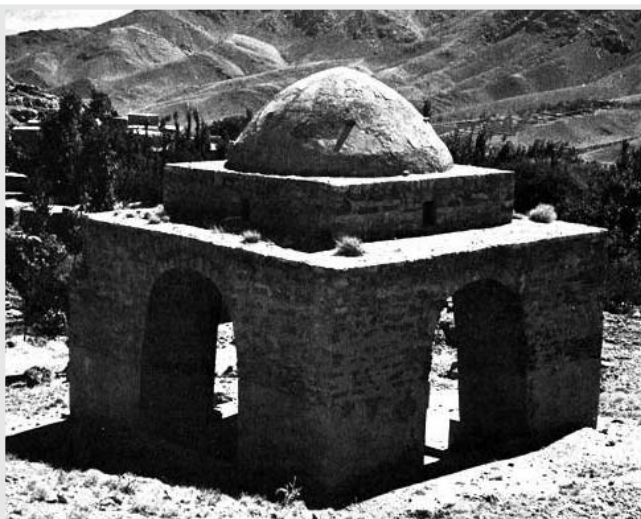
specific building type that continues today. The fire temple evolved from an altar in Achaemenian times (559 – 334 BCE) through the Parthian (250 BCE – 227 CE) and Sasanian (226 – 651 CE) Empires into the *chahar taq*, a square building capped by a dome supported on squinches. Worshippers congregated and ceremonies took place around the fire altars, under the open sky.

The oldest existing holy fire in the world is in the village of Sharifabad in Iran. Continuously burning for over 2,000 years, the fire is believed to originate in *Adar Farnbag*, one of the three great ceremonial fires of ancient Iran.

The ancient fire temples in Iran reveal a captivating story of survival and devotion against the backdrop of an intolerant Islamic environment. To avoid detection, they are inconspicuous, adobe structures hidden amidst residential buildings, and are only known to the local villagers. They often have a decoy fire placed in a prominent position, while the consecrated fire, which has been secretly tended for centuries, is kept well hidden from outsiders behind narrow passageways. Some of the recent fire temples in Iran were endowed by the Parsis and follow the architectural style of those in India.

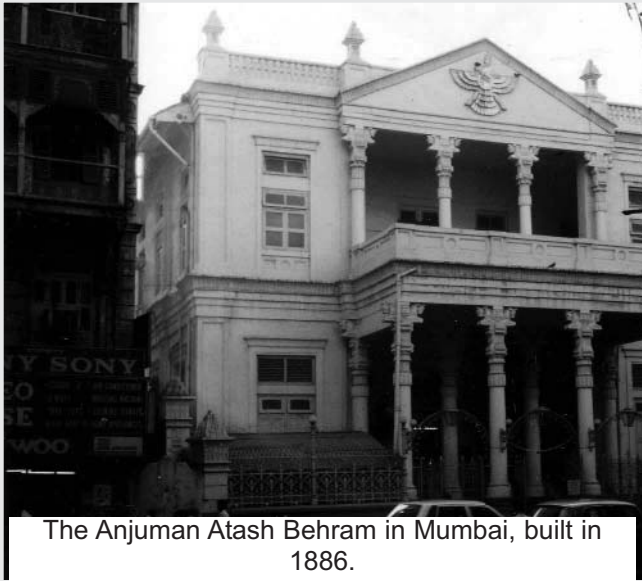
FIRE TEMPLES IN INDIA. When Zarathushtis began building fire temples in India, they housed the consecrated fires in an inner sanctum called a *kehbla*, which is descended from the ancient *chahar taq* in Iran. The *kehbla* is surrounded by ancillary spaces that fulfill the religious and social needs of the community. To this day, fire temples are built using a similar layout.

Evolving over the centuries, the design of Zarathushti fire temples has been perfected for their intended function: a central 'sanctum sanctorum' where the Atash can be 'enthroned' and tended with prayers by the mobeds; a place for worship before the Atash, that invokes a feeling of reverence and spiritual upliftment in the devotees; and a place for mobeds to perform inner



Taq at Neiser, Iran built around the 4th century, restored.

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The Anjuman Atash Behram in Mumbai, built in 1886.

and outer liturgies (Yazeshne Gah). The fire temple environs should be designed to instill a sense of inner peace and one-ness with Ahura Mazda's creation, for Zoroastrianism is an eco-conscious religion. Nature is omnipresent in every Zarathushti fire temple: a garden provides fruits and flowers for rituals, a well provides fresh water for washing, animals are represented by a white bull, and man can be seen in the human scale of the architecture. These elements work together harmoniously to create a peaceful environment for individuals to pray before their Fire.

Sharing a street with hyper ornate Hindu temples and expansive mosques, the fire temples of India are a unique and rare form of architecture that reflect the beliefs and values of their faith: that human beings have been endowed with a Good Mind (Vohu Manah) and are viewed as 'hamkars,' co-workers with God to move Creation forward. God is not to be feared or appeased. Therefore any grand monuments we build are not to glorify God, but more to inspire and invoke the spiritual aspirations within us.

The Parsis of India developed a distinct style of architecture that combined popular British styles with Persian details. The British Raj imported Western architectural styles, such as Classical Revival, Gothic Revival and Art Deco to India, and modified them to suit the tropical climate. The Parsis adopted these styles, but customized them by adding details taken directly from the capital complex of Persepolis, the seat of the Persian Empire. Small scale replicas of double-bull columns, winged bulls, door surrounds, twelve-petal rosettes, and crenelated parapets are used as ornament on fire

DAR-E-MEHRS OF NORTH AMERICA

temples in India. Many Parsi buildings share this style whether they are religious or secular, thus enforcing the importance of man in God's world.

A unique technical aspect of the fire temple is the *Gumbad*, designed to create a cool, smoke-free environment while housing a continuously burning fire. This is achieved naturally, without the use of electricity, by using the simple concept of a chimney. The entire room where the fire is kept acts like a chimney flue with vents or monitors at the roof for the elimination of smoke. The fire is usually kept at the center of the building, which coincides with the highest point of the roof, and thus achieves the greatest draw. As hot air exits, it is replaced by fresh air from first floor windows and transoms, creating a pleasant breeze.

The Parsis built about 200 fire temples throughout India; about 150 remain today, with 50 located in Mumbai. On my fire temple study tour to India [2] in 2003, while in Bharuch, I stayed in a fire temple that was converted to a dharamshala. The gumbad and prayer hall were faithfully restored to their original construction. With research I discovered that the building was built in 1791, which was the oldest fire temple that I came across in my study. Where once Bharuch had a thriving Zarathushti population and 6 agiaries, only four agiaries tended by two priests now remain. It is of interest to note that many of the afargans from closed agiaries have now been installed in the Prayer Halls of North America.

While the oldest fire dates back to the Iranshah (consecrated in Sanjan in 721 CE), possibly the oldest existing fire temple building is the Dadiseth Atash Behram in Mumbai, consecrated in 1783. Sadly, the Indian penchant for anything new, has resulted in many fire temples being drastically remodeled: marble wall paneling is replaced with white (bathroom) tile; three-inch thick Basalt stone flooring with ceramic tile, and fine carved mahogany cabinets with metal 'Godrej-ni-cupboard'.

EVOLUTION OF DAR-E-MEHRS IN NORTH AMERICA.

North American Zarathushtis have an opportunity to express their vision of a fire temple that would build upon traditions yet integrate harmoniously into the new landscape.

However, driven by the need for the early settlers, scattered as they were, to gather together for social and sacred events and, above all for fellowship, building a 'community center' almost took precedence over establishing a house of worship. In most of the early dar-e-mehrs here, the Prayer Room housing the afargan is an

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ancillary room off the main hall, sometimes even on an upper floor. And many of the early dar-e-mehrs were existing church or residential buildings – at best, a short-term solution.

Nevertheless, for those young families who worked against tremendous odds to raise funds and buy/build the early dar-e-mehr of their dreams, it was a matter of great pride and accomplishment. Madame Morvarid Guiv expressed it well in 1983, as she offered the first piece of sandalwood at the inauguration of the Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr in Chicago: ***“To some this may be only a humble prayer room, but to me it is my Atash Bahram.”***

One cannot forget the tremendous effort and determination of those early settlers to establish Zarathushti presence on this continent. Their stories and struggles to build the first generation of dar-e-mehrs, in the two decades after their arrival in the mid 20th century, are given elsewhere [1]. Here we give a glimpse of the evolution of the next generation of dar-e-mehrs on this continent, in chronological order.

ARBAB RUSTAM GUIV DARBE MEHR, NEW YORK, 1977

The first dar-e-mehr on this continent, a two-storey mansion in New Rochelle, NY, was inaugurated by the benefactors Arbab Guiv and Madame Morvarid Guiv in 1977. *“Now, for the first time, Zarathushtis in North America could gather to worship, to reinforce their identity, to meet regularly for religious classes, perform navjotes and weddings and celebrate festivals, in a place*

of our own,” notes ZAGNY president Gev Nentin. Towards the late 1990s, the realization came that the building was too old (over 100 years), too small for the growing population in the tri-state area, and required too much attention and expense for the limited purpose it served.

Thus, in 1999, fourteen families contributed \$10 to \$20 thousand each to raise \$220,000 as seed money towards a new property, and within a year, with a massive fund-raising effort, the DMZT/IZA/ZAGNY organizations proceeded with the purchase of a 4-acre property in Pomona, NY, for over \$1.2 million. The New Rochelle property was later sold for \$610,000, and proceeds contributed towards the new property. The property, which was originally a Jewish center has a 8,000 sq. ft main building with a large circular hall; a second building with a care-taker’s apartment; and a 4-bedroom house that is currently rented out. *“A room in the main building has been renovated as a Prayer Room where priests and community members now congregate to pray,”* says DMZT trustee Mehru Cama, *“In the absence of a local agiary, this Prayer Room serves its religious purpose well.”*

THE MEHRABAN GUIV DARBE MEHR, TORONTO, 1978/2010

In 1978, Arbab Rustam Guiv purchased a historic mansion in Toronto, from funds left by his late nephew Mehraban. to serve as a Zoroastrian temple, the first in Canada. For many years it has served the community well, however, by the late 1990s with an increased Zarathushti population (approaching 5,000) the property



Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr in Pomona, NY, purchased in 2000.



Conceptual rendering of the proposed Mehraban Guiv Darbe Mehr in Toronto. Designed by Oleson Worland Architects, Toronto.

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which is a large house with an addition of a 1950 sf hall, became a compromise in accommodation and functionality, and ZSO started consideration of a larger and more functional dar-e-mehr. *"In 2001, 78% of the membership voted to rebuild the dar-e-mehr on the same site," notes president Sam Vesuna "it is centrally located, has access to public transport, and has an attractive topography of trees with a ravine bordering a stream."*

By late 2005, thanks to the dedicated efforts of fundraising chair Dr. Dhun Noria, the funds collected and pledged, approached the estimated project cost of \$2.2 million. The Architects have now drawn and revised plans numerous times to address all City of Toronto concerns (most recently issues related to the premises being listed as a Heritage Property) and construction is expected to commence in 2010.

The community is elated to have received four moldings from Takht-e-Jamshed (Persepolis) from the Royal Ontario Museum that were originally made on site in Persepolis by the Metropolitan Museum of Art. These will adorn the exterior façade and interior lobby of the new dar-e-mehr. There will be a larger separate dadgah, built like a traditional agiary, a 5000 sf assembly hall and library on the ground floor. The second floor will accommodate classrooms, office, a separate room with an attached bath (for nahn) as well as an administrator's apartment. The total floor area is 18,000sf of which 15,450 sf is enclosed. There will be underground parking and provision for an elevator.

ARBAB RUSTAM GUIV DARBE MEHR, CHICAGO, 1983

In 1983, the Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr became the first dar-e-mehr to be constructed on this continent. The building has served the community well. However, *"For the body, mind and spirit when the process of generating stops, the process of degenerating starts,"* notes ZAC President Hosi Mehta, *"During these past 26 years we have kept growing, in stages, sometimes internally, sometimes externally and sometimes both."* Their first growth was to build kushti rooms. Next, in 2001, was building the 2000sf Rohinton and Roshan Rivetna Hall. A year later the community purchased an adjoining 1-acre property with a 4-bedroom house which is currently rented. In 2005, another adjoining vacant property was purchased by Mazda Partners for future development. A watershed moment for Chicago, and for all Zarathushtis in North America, came in 2008, with the



The Rohinton and Roshan Rivetna Hall, a 2000 sf addition to the Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr, Chicago, was added in 2001.

establishment of the FEZANA Office in a remodeled area of the new wing.

"We are in our early growing stages and we are learning as we grow," says Mehta, "My dream for our community is to see ZAC as a place where we belong, where we enjoy coming to, because it fulfills our spiritual, religious and social needs."

That dream is reinforced by past-president Rohinton Rivetna, who has the vision of *"bringing Frasho-kereti to our little corner of the world."* *"We have a dream of a loving and caring community gathered around our dar-e-mehr, with the aged living next door, imparting to the young their rich heritage, and the young making life meaningful for the aged. During the day there is hustle bustle of activity: mornings reverberate with the sounds of mobeds chanting, and evenings are full of fellowship and laughter."*

There is ample space on the dar-e-mehr property and a growing and vibrant community base, to fulfill this vision. The plan could include: a North American Center with FEZANA headquarters, Information Center and heritage museum, and maybe also NAMC, WZCC and SSZ administrative offices; a Zoroastrian Supplies shop; residences for the elderly; residences for mobeds; and a separate fire temple with facilities for performing inner liturgies and ordainment of mobeds.

ARBAB RUSTAM GUIV DAR-E-MEHR, VANCOUVER, 1985

The dar-e-mehr property, formerly a church, was purchased by the Guiv Trust in 1985 and leased to ZSBC.

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With the population now near 1500, the assembly hall (capacity 110) and the adjoining prayer hall (capacity 60) are cramped, and cannot be expanded due to zoning restrictions.

In their ongoing search for a new property, the Arbab Rustam Guiv Trust-Vancouver has set their sights on a prime location in North Vancouver. *"Right on the Pacific Ocean, and already zoned for assembly use, this is our dream location,"* says Trust chair Fariborz Rahnmoon, *"Imagine Bombay's Taj Mahal Hotel with the backdrop of our Northshore mountains and downtown skyscrapers across the water! A Takht-e-Jamshid style structure reflecting our glorious heritage or a modern marvel like Delhi's lotus temple could add to the waterfront view of every passing cruise ship."*

Between this dream and reality is a \$5 million price tag. Fariborz appeals to all Zarathushtis of the world: *"Every penny of it will be worth its weight in gold. It will be a place that all Zarathushtis can look to with pride. So lets come together and leave behind our footprints in the sand of time."*

RUSTAM AND MORVARID GUIV, SAN JOSE, 1986

When Mr. Sarfeh of the Guiv Trust saw the 10-acre property on the hills above San Jose, in 1985 he declared "This is the best dare-mehr property in the USA," and increased the Late Arbab's pledge of \$300K, to \$400K! Later Madame Guiv also loved the property and expressed her wish to stay upstairs in the building on the site, and donated another \$120K. With additional fundraising efforts by ZANC and PZO, a new Atash Kadeh building was completed in 1992, and continues to serve the community well. Management is under the control of PZO, but ZANC shares in the maintenance. "I cannot speak about future plans," says ZANC president Nazneen Spleidt, confirmed by Kambiz Zomorodi of PZO *"but for now we are happy with what we have."*

RUSTAM GUIV DAR-E- MEHR, LOS ANGELES, 1987

Possibly the largest in the West (8,000sf) when it was built, in 1987, the California Zoroastrian Center is unique in that it is open 7 days a week, with a full-time priest and a full-time office administrator. The imposing façade has four 23 ft. tall Achaemenian columns with bull capitals, as seen in Persepolis, designed and manufactured in concrete and steel by architect Keki Amaria and contractor Iraj Mavandadi, at a cost of \$30,000. The kehbla is located behind a glass wall that stretches across the back wall of the stage in the main hall. CZC trustee Sohrab Salamatipour informed us that an

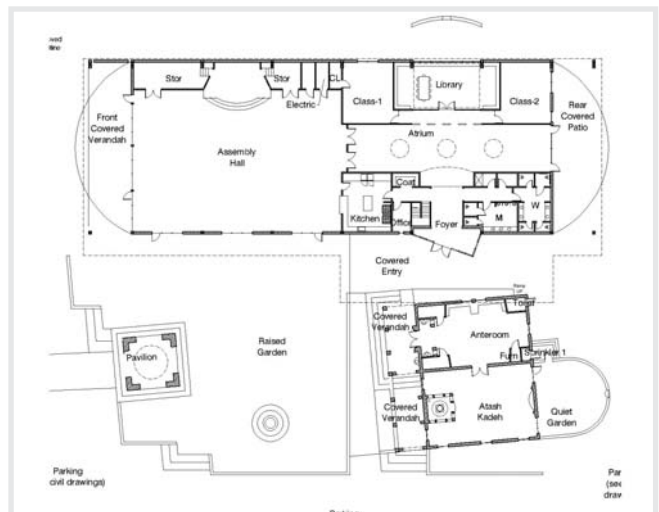
adjoining medical building, now named Farhangi Brothers' Building in honor of the major benefactors, was purchased as an investment property in 2001.

ZOROSATRIAN CENTER AND DAR-EMEHR OF METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON, 1990/2010

In 1990, a beautiful 7-acre plot of land was acquired by the Vandsar (Avestan for 'Center') Committee (registered as the ZCDMW) led by Khodarahm Shahryary and Dariush Jahanian, from a grant by the Guiv Foundation. The Washington community has used the small house on this property for classes and gatherings and converted one room as a Prayer Room.

Now two decades later, Khodarahm's sons Bahram and Farhad are on the ZCDMW committee that is spearheading the effort to build the Center, working with Rivetna Architects. The design features an Atash kadeh (Phase I) with traditional details and a separate more contemporary community hall (Phase II) both sharing a central garden with a pavilion reminiscent of a Sasanian chahar taq at the head of a colonade of old cedar trees. There is a quiet, secluded prayer garden off the Atash Kadeh. They have raised \$350K of the expected cost of \$650K for Phase I. Zoning has been approved and site work is expected to begin shortly.

"Our vision is to make this a National Center, with an atash kadeh, library, education and research center and more...", says Bahram, of this ambitious project, *"a place*



Conceptual site plan of the dar-e-mehr for metropolitan Washington DC. A separate Atash Kadeh and Community Hall share a central garden. Designed by architect Cyrus Rivetna, Chicago.

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where we can proudly host interfaith gatherings, such as those now held at the National Cathedral."

we do have a new group of volunteers stepping up to the plate, but they have extremely large boots to fill."

ZOROASTRIAN HERITAGE AND CULTURAL CENTER, HOUSTON 1998

ZHCC was the first Center built with a collective funding effort from the community. Spearheaded by Purvez Rustomji, the driving force behind the Center, 40 families donated \$20 per month for a good 10 years. In 1993, the Zarathushti Group got together, formed an LLC, and purchased a 20 acre property at a very reasonable price of \$150,000. Over the next few years, the group donated 6.8 acres to ZAH, another 3 acres were retained by a community member for future use, and the rest of the land was sold. Additional funding from three major donors Mehraban Zartoshty, Feroze Bhandara and Yezdi Sidhwa enabled completion of Phase I (hall, kitchen and prayer room) in 1998 and Phase II (atrium, library, storage and classrooms) in 2000. The large central atrium is a unique feature of this Center. *"Though expensive,"* notes Purvez, *"it adds a feeling of an old Persian courtyard, and brings sunlight and the exterior inside."*

Future plans are to double the hall to 5,000sf, enlarge the prayer room, add more classrooms and a children's play room. ZAH also has a vacant 2.5 acres where they hope to build apartments for seniors. *"The challenge is to*



Zoroastrian Heritage and Cultural Center, built in 1998. General contractor Feroze Bhandara.

find dedicated people," says Sarosh Collector, a community stalwart himself, *"We have been blessed with the likes of Purvez Rustomji and Hoshang Sethna. Now,*

ONTARIO ZOROASTRIAN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION, (OZCF)TORONTO 2005/2009

With the ever-increasing growth of Zarathushtis towards the west of Toronto, and the need for a larger dar-e-mehr, OZCF was formed in 2003 with a three-fold vision of building an agiary, a hall and an old age home, and facilities for a school for children, youth and adults, in a new, more central location, with space to expand. Within two years, OZCF collected \$1.2M and purchased a 10.4 acre property for 1.5M that has a house and a workshop. *"All but \$150K came from within Ontario,"* notes founding president Kobad Zarolia, *"It was all made up of many small donations, because people believed in our dream."*

"Our short term plan was to renovate the 1200sf workshop into a beautiful hall that can accommodate 200 people," notes president Rumi Jasavala, *"the renovation was completed in June 2009, at a cost of \$450K, since then we have held numerous jashans, muktad,*



The new Assembly Hall on the OZCF property, renovated in 2009 from a workshop.

gahambars and social events there." They are now working on proposals for future growth.

Er. Zarolia, who is also president of NAMC, is passionate about all North American communities building an agiary, *"It is the only thing that will keep our community alive,"* he says, *"All the halls we build are not going to give our youngsters pride in our religion. Only an agiary will. And that is what will preserve our religion."*

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ZOROASTRIAN CENTER OF NORTH TEXAS, DALLAS, 2010

The most recent new construction is the Center in Dallas – the culmination of a 20 year journey and a true labor of love, for the North Texas community. It is heartwarming to see that the spirit and workhorse behind this latest dar-e-mehr, to be inaugurated in 2010, is the next generation of young Zarathushtis. This vibrant young community rose to the challenges of fundraising, design and construction, using Zarathushti architects and engineers, and doing the general-contracting themselves, to keep costs within their budget.

"It appeared that all the stars had lined up right," notes ZANT president Kamran Behroozi, of the purchase, in November 2006, of a small ranch house on 2.6 acres in Flower Mound, TX, for \$253,600, *"the property was owned by a church group with a nonprofit tax benefit already in place."* Under the leadership of former ZANT president Behram Irani and his fundraising team, the



Making the new ZANT Center in Dallas happen: Behram Irani, Kamran Behroozi, Jamshed Rivetna, Spenta Irani, Darius Shroff, Jamshed Jamadar, Kali Buhariwalla and architect Cyrus Rivetna.



Phase one of the ZANT Center under construction, Dallas. Designed by architect Cyrus Rivetna, Chicago.

aspirations of area families were surveyed, and an overwhelming majority opted to replace the existing structure with a new building.

"Our Zarathushti architects and engineers went to work and presented a plan to the community," notes a ZANT report. A building design with a prayer hall featuring a traditional kehbla and gumbad tower in Phase I, and a large assembly hall in Phase II, was approved, and the project started in November 2008. The design features a columned entrance verandah leading to a vaulted central gathering space with skylights, incorporating passive solar techniques, and good indoor-outdoor flow for large functions. The plans allow for easy

future expansion, and addition of details reminiscent of Persepolis.

The fundraising team also went to work in earnest. Pledges and donations were received from over 80 families. Seventy percent of the capital financing was raised from within the local community and thirty percent from Zarathushtis at large in the US and abroad.

Another bold decision was for ZANT to act as its own general contractor. A building committee of 7 individuals experienced in the construction, engineering and architectural industry, headed by Jamshed Rivetna was empowered to build the project on behalf of ZANT, resulting in cost savings of over 15% percent. *"Our capable Building Committee has delivered on their commitment with hundreds of hours of volunteer work on contract evaluations, material selections, and supervision of subcontractors as well as communication with the architect, engineers and city officials,"* notes Mr. Behroozi.

Total project costs are estimated to be \$989,700, of which Phase I estimate is \$760,000. As of February 2010, a ZANT report notes their available balance of \$209,430 is a little short of their estimated remaining cost of \$235,190.

"This challenge will also be met," says Mr. Behroozi, *"We are blessed to have dedicated volunteers, and with Ahura Mazda's help, our Center will soon be a reality."*

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TOWARDS THAT DREAM

There are others who have embarked on this ambitious journey, and are at various mileposts towards fulfilling their vision.

ZAPANJ (PENNSYLVANIA AND NEW JERSEY)

ZAPANJ / ZACUCE (Pennsylvania and New Jersey)

On March 31, 2010, the ZACUCE (Zoroastrian Cultural Center) the sister organization of ZAPANJ announced a landmark moment in their quest for a Center: *"ZACUCE is proud to announce that this afternoon we closed on a 1.66 acre piece of land at 808 South Church Street, Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054, for \$225K ...*

1424 E Walnut Ave., Orange

... from the street



... From the car park



We still have a lot of work ahead of us, but are certainly excited at this milestone event."

"The property is located in the Cherry Hill area where our core ZAPANJ members reside," writes ZAPANJ president Veera Karanjia, "It is close to major highways like 295 and NJ Turnpike, and most members will be less than an hour away. We plan to build a Center of about 7,000 to 8,000 sf."

"Between donations and pledges we have raised close to \$630K" notes ZACUCE board member Jehan Kasad. "We bought the property for \$225,000 and we plan to build the Center in two phases. First phase would be 3500 to 4000 sq. ft that will include a Prayer Hall, a library, two class rooms, kitchen and bathrooms. We estimate it would cost us about \$600,000. Thus we will need to raise about \$200, 000 more. The second phase will be a Hall approximately 3500 to 4000 sq. ft and would cost about the same. We will aggressively start fund raising once we have necessary approvals." "We plan to build a facility with a prayer hall and classrooms as the first priority and an assembly hall later."

Their vision is clearly articulated in their mission statement:

"To preserve Zarathushti heritage and faith ... through religious education and cultural activities ... to build a ... Center that will bring the community together... give us a sense of belonging and help us preserve a legacy for the future."



The ZAC (California) Hall committee: Back row [L to R] Phiroze Gundevia, Tehemtan Arjani, Chisti Dadachanji, Yasmin Gundevia, Noshir Lakdawalla, Manek Damania, Khushroo Lakdawalla. Front row [L to R] Lily Mistry, Tehmi Damania, Vira Santoke, Sheila Madon, Farida Lakdawalla

ZAC (CALIFORNIA)

"On Thursday, May 20, 2010, by the grace of Ahura Mazda, we closed the deal on a property for ZAC," writes ZAC president Vira Santoke. The new purchase, for \$2.6 million, is a 9300sf church building on a 2-acre plot, at 1424 E. Walnut Avenue, Orange, CA 92867, in Orange County. At this time there are no plans for any new construction.

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Since mid-2005, when the ZAC general body approved the decision to buy/build, ZAC has been hard at work raising funds, with walk-a-thons, nataks, youth shows and the like. Counting donations and pledges, they have raised about \$2 million.

"With our members spread from San Diego in the south to the San Fernando Valley and Canyon Country in the North, a distance of over 170 miles," says Tehemtan Arjani, who is spearheading this effort, "Deciding on the location has been a real challenge."

"Tehemtan Arjani, Tehmi Damania and Noshir Lakdawalla, along with other dedicated volunteers have worked really hard," writes Vira, "and it appears that our dream of a place where the young and old can come together often without having to book halls and pay rent, is now close to becoming a reality."

ZAGBA (BOSTON)

There is a vision among many in the Boston area that someday we will have a Center that will serve as a place of worship, learning, cultural celebration and community events," says ZAGBA president Jamshed Dubash, "There have been periods of strong enthusiasm to discuss feasibility, location, funding, administration and costs of a Center. Community members have made generous pledges, and some, including children, have donated towards this dream. At this time, however, no significant amounts have been committed or collected." Some members are ambivalent about the feasibility of supporting a Center. The 200-strong community, with more than 50 children under ten, holds regular children's classes and small gatherings in a Bedford community house, and big functions like Navroze and Pateti in a rented hall.

ZAKOI (KENTUCKY, OHIO, INDIANA)

"We believe in the importance of having our own Center in our tri-state-area," writes Bakhtavar Desai, chair of ZAKOI's Center Fund Committee and the driving force behind this effort, "It will be the place to worship together, learn about our religion, culture, history and heritage, and celebrate festivals and other events ... and will serve to keep the flame of our religion and culture alive for this and future generations."

This small community of 45-50 families is doing their bit to keep the flame alive traveling long distances (over 2 hours between Columbus and Cincinnati) to gather for children's classes, youth camps, festivals, jashans, mukhtad and interfaith events. Committed to the cause in spite of many challenges ahead – cost, long distances,



Members of ZAKOI at a fundraiser dinner [L to R] Pourou Dastur, Armin Daroona, Anahita Rao, Pheruza Tarapore-Antia, Kashmiri Sadri and Bakhtavar Desai (host of the fundraiser) and [seated] Zavera Kanga.

and lack of full support from everyone – the group raised \$10,000 last year, bringing their Center fund up to \$23,000 to date, but they have a long way to go. Bakhtavar (bfdesai@aol.com) appeals to fellow Zarathushtis around the world: "We will be deeply appreciative and grateful for any financial support to help us realize our dream."

ZSWS (WASHINGTON STATE, SEATTLE)

The establishment of a Center in the Seattle area is one of the projects recently taken on by the WZCC (Seattle chapter, chairperson Bahram Shahrivini). They plan to write a business plan shortly to help this project gain traction, and for the planning, funding, purchasing and construction/remodel work to be managed in a professional manner.

"We are excited about the high proportion of young persons (under 40) in the Seattle area and the rapid pace at which we are growing," writes Jehangir Bharucha, the driving force behind this dream of several years, "We are looking for inputs from existing Centers so that we are not reinventing the wheel, and better aware of the opportunities and hurdles to look out for."

MAZDAYASNI ZARATHUSHTI DAR-E-MEHER (Houston)

A group of Zarathushtis from the Houston area have a dream of building a traditional Mazdayasni Zarathushti Dar-e-Meher, possibly on land near the existing Zarathushti Heritage and Cultural Center.

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When this vision comes to fruition, the Zarathushti community will have taken yet another step forward toward entrenching our religion on North American soil.

AN ATASH BEHRAM IN NORTH AMERICA?

At the turn of the millennium, now, as the community here matures and grows one can discern a pleasing new trend in the next generation of dar-e-mehrs. Where once the urgent need was for community centers, the focus now is turning towards building beautiful structures that also give expression to our spiritual aspirations.

The dar-e-mehrs in North America are all installed with an 'Atash Dadgah', of a grade similar to the simple hearth fire, which is not consecrated and need not be tended continuously, while most of the agiaries in India and Iran are consecrated with the higher level of 'Atash Adaran,' or the highest, the Atash Behram. Maybe the North American Mobeds' Council could work with the High Priests in Iran and India to develop procedures to consecrate an Atash Adaran in North America.

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Cyrus Rivetna of Rivetna Architects, Inc (crivetna@rivetna.com) in downtown Chicago, has a portfolio of residential and institutional projects, but his deepest interest is in the design of Zoroastrian fire temples. In 2003 Cyrus spent 4 months in Mumbai and Gujarat studying the history and architecture of fire temples in India and design considerations for Centers in North America. Cyrus is the architect for the new ZANT Center in Dallas (2010) and the addition to the Chicago dar-e-mehr (2001). He has also prepared a conceptual design for a traditional agiary with a continuously burning fire, and is currently designing a Center for the Washington, DC area.



ZARATHUSHTIS YEARN TO PRACTICE THEIR RELIGION IN NORTH AMERICA

FEZANA AGM - 23 to 25 April 2010, Toronto, Canada

LESSONS LEARNED: Building Infrastructure

Behram Pastakia

- The first step is to acquire land; preferably large tracts of it in areas likely to appreciate in value.
- Acquisition of land works best when achieved by local donations. This model creates committed stakeholders who see the building project to completion.
- Gifts from trusts often come with strings attached. Nascent in such gifts is the potential to sow acrimony draining the energy of volunteer trustees elected to serve the community.
- Donors at grass roots are reluctant to give if unsure whether property once developed would revert back to a trust which leases land.
- Self reliance & moving away from a mind-set of entitlement is to be encouraged.
- Maintenance funds for built infrastructure are best created as part of visionary planning in the building project itself. Real estate fully paid for, profitably rented to bring in revenues for the upkeep of the Dar-e-Mehr is an option to consider.
- Governance needs to be transparent and democratic.
- Volunteers serving on boards to oversee construction should be committed for the long haul.
- Financial books, construction plans and permits are to be available for inspection at all times.
- Annual reports, including financials to be accessible in the public domain.
- Decisions regarding buildings and their usage are best made at the local association level.
- Eco-friendly buildings with low maintenance costs are in. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified places of worship, if built, by their very existence proclaim the Zarathushti environment friendly ethos and our arrival on this continent.
- Innovative solutions can satisfy LEED requirements while maintaining our tradition of a continuously burning consecrated fire fed with kathi and sandal wood.

Elements which go into the construction of an Agiary and requirements for consecration ("Atash Ahurahe Mazdao puthra") are now freely available from multiple sources in cyberspace.

Youth Leadership Enhancement Program (YLEP)

By Deena Guzder



From December 28 - 31, 2009, approximately 750 Zarathushtis flocked to Dubai for the 9th quadriennial World Zoroastrian Congress, which was convened under the banner, **"unity through the sands of time."** Roughly 1 out of every 187 Zoroastrians worldwide attended the four-day conference

Community leaders attending the jubilee year of the World Zoroastrian Congress spoke of Zoroastrianism's proud history of safeguarding human rights, promoting women's rights, and protecting the environment. Almost one-fifth of the delegates registered for the Congress were under the age of 35, and they came ready to discuss concrete proposals for enhancing their vibrant community beyond simply increasing its numbers.

The Youth Leadership Enhancement Program (YLEP) is an innovative endeavor geared towards connecting and empowering Zarathushti youth. YLEP, a new legacy program introduced by the World Zoroastrian Congress, provides an indispensable forum to young community members for exchange of ideas. By developing future community leaders, YLEP encourages entrepreneurs to brainstorm ideas to unite Zarathushtis and fortify their bonds in an era of rapid globalization and intercontinental dispersion.

Zarathushtis between 23 and 35 years of age formed six teams hailing from Iran, Australia, India, United Kingdom, North America, and Dubai. Each team participated in the YLEP challenge by dedicating several months to preparing a detailed project that they presented on the first afternoon of the Congress. (photo above of the 6 YLEP team with their mentors)

IRAN The team from Iran comprised of Behzad Jamasbi, Shahnoosh Behzadi, Armita Kyani, Fereshteh Shagoshtasbi, and Arman Falati. The young Iranian Zarathushtis described their efforts to hold the first youth congress in Iran, a country that has witnessed political volatility in recent years. The team received applications from 115 "outstanding youth" and chose 43-51 finalists to participate in a 3-day conference that covered religious study and cultural tours as well as socializing, networking, and outdoor activities. The initiative was particularly commendable since many youth came from small Iranian towns outside of Tehran and appreciated the opportunity to intermingle with their brethren away from home without worrying about acquiring a visa or raising large sums of money to travel abroad for a youth congress. Khodayar Attaie did a phenomenal job mentoring the team from Iran, which won the first place prize for their YLEP project.

AUSTRALIA The team from Australia comprised of Karishma Sarkari, Kobad Bhavnagri, Sharmin Adaggra, and Shiraz Contractor. The young Australian Zarathushtis focused on C-o-n-n-e-c-t-i-n-g young Zarathushtis in their professional lives through networking. Given the global economic downturn, their project was especially timely for focusing on Zarathushtis in business and employment. Phil Madon did an excellent job mentoring the Australian team.

INDIA The team from India comprised of Freyaz Shroff, Hoshang Gotla, Manek Kalyaniwala, Shireen Cama, and Zarir Bhesania. The young Zarathushtis unveiled a new website www.ZFunds.org that aims to

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YOUTH LEADERSHIP ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

extend aid through a collaborative electronic platform. This site is designed to help simplify and streamline the application process for educational and medical scholarships and loans. Registering on the website allows your application for assistance to reach multiple trusts at once, saving you and the trusts valuable time. Shireen Cama explains, "*Team India's project was borne out of a need to create a more efficient and transparent application and communication process between donating trusts and applicants.*" Homai Mehta of Sir J.J. College in India did a fantastic job mentoring the group. "*I have always focused on developing [young people's] personality and imbibing values,*" noted Mehta. **"The highest satisfaction has been to place our students in lucrative jobs and over the years see them rise the ladder of success in their respective professions."** The team from India shared the second place prize with the team from North America for their YLEP projects.

UNITED KINGDOM The team from the United Kingdom comprised of Bomi Gandhi, Diana Batliwalla, Jennifer Batliwalla, Mandana Moavenat, Nazreen Avari, and Tina Mistry. The young British Zarathushtis aimed to revive the Zoroastrian Fun Club. Guided by the belief that religious preservation requires making religious education enjoyable, the UK team wished to draw young adherents into the fold by holding social mixers, game nights, and other events to bolster participation. Since many young Zarathushtis grow up learning about their faith by creating strong friendships within the community, the UK team hoped to foster a fun environment that led youth to proactively get involved with preserving their Zarathushti identity in the Diaspora. Paurasp Jila performed a brilliant job mentoring the team from the United Kingdom. The team from the United Kingdom shared the third place prize with the teams from Dubai and Australia for their YLEP projects.

NORTH AMERICA The team from North America comprised of Afreed Mistry, Carl Irani, Eric Engineer, Ferzeen Chhappgar, and Hormuz Nicolwala. The young American entrepreneurs worked on a **Zarathushti Stimulus Plan (ZSP)**, which is a program that provides unemployed Zarathushtis worldwide a simple, confidential means by which to discover job openings shared by other Zarathushtis and to connect with career mentors from the Zarathushti community. Via its website www.zorostimulus.org the ZSP privately links participants with other Zarathushtis—who are hiring for their own businesses, know of particular job openings, willing to assist them in finding a job, or ready to provide career/entrepreneurship advice. ZSP is a timely endeavor considering job losses continued to mount last year and unemployment hit a 25-year high in March 2009, according to the US government's latest reading on the battered labor market. Carl Irani reflected, "I like

my Zarathushti community and I wanted to be a part of the new blood that would try and do something good for the community." He continued, "I hope the project I worked on will help Zarathushtis get jobs in this down economy and college students to be able to get mentoring in their job sectors."

To date 190 unemployed Zarathushtis from 8 countries have registered for the ZSP service and over half the registrants are "youth" between 20-30 years old. Over 100 Zarathushtis have shared 500+ job openings on the site; with jobs spanning a wide variety of functions/industries/geographies. Several Zarathushtis have received interviews and jobs via the service. In addition 40 Zarathushtis from a variety of disciplines and countries have signed up to be "mentors"—willing to provide guidance and introductions.

Another North American project, **Zoroastrians for Renewable Energy Activities (ZOREA)**, aspired to follow the law of Asha that states humans should act as good stewards to the natural world. Two other projects, **Youth Life Skills Workshop** and **The WZCC Youth Initiative**, strive to increase the number and engagement of Youth members in the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce. Firdosh Mehta, Behram Pastakia, Natalie Vania Gandhi, Nilufer Bhesania, Meher Amalsad and Bomi Patel expertly mentored YLEP participants from North America.

DUBAI Team Dubai comprised of Farzan Dalal, Homi Gandhi, Homiar Kateli, Jasmine Tavadia, Parinaaz Davar. The young Dubai Zarathushtis introduced the Right Advice Project serving as an information portal to encourage dialog across geography.

YLEP goals for the future include increasing the membership platform, planning successive projects, implementing a global exchange program, encouraging religious education, and funding initiatives. Shireen Cama of Team India reflected on her experience with YLEP. "*I think it is important for youth to get involved in the community in ways that will move towards the community's advancement,*" notes Cama. "*Many youth become disillusioned by the discussions about intermarriage and conversion that often make up the current discourse at congresses and events; many are looking for an alternative focus. YLEP offers an opportunity for youth to collaborate on the issues that we feel are most pressing and allows us an opportunity to channel our creativity and personal skills while staying active and engaged within our religious community.*"

In each issue of FEZANA Journal an update of the YLEP projects will be given to track the enthusiasm and extraordinary effort of the Youth Leaders of the future. Editor

DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA

YOUTH LEADERSHIP ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

THE ZARATHUSHTI STIMULUS PLAN: zorostimulus.org

Help find jobs for 190 unemployed Zarathushtis!

The Zarathushti Stimulus Plan (www.zorostimulus.org) has 190 registered Zarathushtis who are un/under-employed and seeking a job. Please take a few minutes of your time to do your part in assisting fellow Zarathushtis find a job and support their families during these historically difficult economic times. Registrants are from all over the world, and several are in your local community.

• POST A JOB OPENING.

Is your company hiring? Know of a new job opening? Post the job information at www.zorostimulus.org.

• REACH OUT TO THOSE REGISTERED FOR THE PROGRAM

Take a few minutes to review the profiles of fellow Zarathushtis seeking job assistance at www.zorostimulus.org

- If you have a network in an industry/geography and can be of assistance to a specific individual, please don't hesitate to reach out to them. You can also register to be an official Mentor at the website.

UNEMPLOYED ZARATHUSHTIS ARE URGED TO VISIT zorostimulus.org WHERE THEY CAN:

- Anonymously share their career profile with Zarathushtis who might be hiring
- See a listing of 500+ jobs shared by other Zarathushtis
- Contact any of 40 mentors in a variety of fields/industries

If you have any questions/concerns, feel free to email the Zarathushti Stimulus Plan team at zorostimulus@fezana.org.



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CREATING A LIST OF NORTH AMERICAN ZARATHUSHTI ACADEMICS

Parastu Dubash Ph.D

For this issue of the FEZANA Journal, as part of the "Dynamism in the North American Diaspora" theme, a project was initiated to create greater awareness of the many "academics" living and working in North America. To achieve this awareness, rather than write about a handful of highly successful academics, it was decided that putting together a "representative" list would be valuable in providing the reader a sense of who some of these academics are, through the diverse departments in which they work and the geographic areas in which they live.

EXPLAINING THE TERMS

For the purpose of creating this particular list, the following terms were used:

- "North America" refers to United States and Canada.
- "Zarathushti" refers to individuals with a Zarathushti family lineage, affiliation or connection.
- "Academics" refers to the individuals involved in teaching, research, administration, and support/services at colleges, universities, and graduate/professional schools such as business, law and medical schools.

NOT AN END BUT A BEGINNING

The list that appears in this issue of the FEZANA Journal is a list of "North American Zarathushti Academics" created by this author. Others charged with the same task would likely use different parameters and produce lists that may look completely different in terms of the actual names and information that appear on them. The current list is a geographic-based listing of over 100 academics that invites the reader, who may share common interests (or a common last name!) to take the initiative to look up an individual through a search engine on the Internet and be impressed with the scope of his or her academic and non-academic work. This list is not intended to be a "directory" as through the use of the Internet, entire biographies, comprehensive curriculum vitae and detailed contact information are accessible to all.

After reading further about these academics, I am certain the reader will share my admiration in recognizing the tremendous contributions these individuals are making in educating, training and supporting students; providing governance and oversight to the affairs of institutions; advancing knowledge and understanding in their respective fields; collaborating with communities and corporations, making groundbreaking discoveries, and addressing complex, real world problems with

innovative solutions. In addition to being a source of pride for Zarathushis, it is hoped that this list can be meaningful to those who read it. Students may find mentors for particular fields, schools or careers. Young people may be inspired by the dedication and passion of these academics. Individuals, including the academics, may create personal connections or professional collaborations with others from nearby institutions or with similar interests.

I recognize that for many readers, my definition of "academics" may be too broad and for others, my definition of "Zarathushti" may be too broad. I have included adjunct, clinical and part-time faculty and also other administrative and support/service professionals, many of whom would not typically be thought of as academics, however their work in higher education is worthy of mention here. I have also included spouses who by traditional definitions would not be considered Zarathushti, but by my definition here, that of affiliation and connection, are welcome and valuable additions to this overall list.

THE DISCLAIMER

Despite being fairly long, this list is by no means comprehensive or complete. To expect that one could produce a comprehensive list of North American Zarathushti Academics is quite unrealistic. There are dozens of current and former academics whose names are not here due to complexities in communicating this project, identifying potential academics (through the Internet, networks, friends and other academics) and then contacting them to confirm their information. My apologies to those accomplished academics whose names are missing from this current list and for any errors that appear in the information provided. However, given the complexities and constraints of time, this "representative" list contains perhaps the largest to-date listing of North American Zarathushti academics. And with so many diverse individuals at varying stages of their academic careers, this list contains their names alphabetically for each state/province rather than by fields of study or years of service and provides only their academic information and not their extensive non-academic affiliations.

THE CHALLENGE OF SELECTION

Although I was originally intending to profile a small number of academics in this article, I hope the readers, including the academics themselves, appreciate the challenge of having to select only a few from this

CREATING A LIST OF NORTH AMERICAN ZARATHUSHTI ACADEMICS

extensive list. I found this to be an almost impossible task, one that I was not brave enough to tackle.

Within this list are scholars of international distinction who are recognized and respected as teachers of exceptional ability. They have won prestigious national awards and honors; made stellar contributions in their fields; conducted and published seminal work in leading refereed journals; written books and provided valuable professional, university and public service. They have been elected fellowships to societies and academies; served on the boards of major professional associations, public and private companies, and journal editorial boards; invited to be keynote speakers at conferences around the world, been sought by media outlets and government panels for their expertise; directed cutting-edge laboratories, developed innovative treatments and therapies, and founded internationally renowned research centers and institutes. Some others are part of university administrations providing extraordinary leadership and governance to their campuses while others are academic coordinators, trained counselors, and technical experts providing services and programs to enhance the experience of students and faculty. And yet others are professional practitioners who share their expertise as clinical or adjunct professors inspiring students as they teach and train with passion. Given such stellar credentials of academic life from which to select, determining whose work was to be profiled for an accompanying article was an extremely difficult task for me.

GIVING THANKS

I am grateful to all who provided guidance for this project and identified academic friends and colleagues. Without their help, I would not have been able to include most of these names. I also appreciate the promptness and graciousness with which the academics I contacted responded to my email request for corrections to their information. It should be noted that this project was completed solely using email communication and Internet access to information. Any attempt to complete such a project even 10 or 15 years ago would have required much greater effort.

NOW WHAT - THE NEXT STEP

Each of the accomplished individuals on this North American Zarathushti Academics list deserves an article profiling their work. Although some of these individuals have appeared in the pages of FEZANA Journal in the past (and some have been recipients of FEZANA

awards), I am sure you will see more of them in future issues.

Education is of great importance and relevance to many Zarathushtis who live and work in North America today. Many Zarathushtis came from Iran and the Indian subcontinent as students to pursue further studies at colleges and universities across the US and Canada. They have since established successful careers and watched as their own children have grown up and gone through the college experience. Our North American Zarathushti community also continues a long tradition of providing scholarships and encouraging our youth in their pursuit of higher education. And as evidenced by this list of North American Zarathushti Academics, a great many Zarathushtis make it their life's work to educate, train and support students. I suggest in the future, an entire FEZANA Journal issue be devoted to the topic of education with a major focus on Zarathushti Academics!

Parastu Dubash (*nee Mehta*) earned a BA in Psychology from Colgate University and a Ph.D. from Carnegie Mellon University. She has taught at the UMass Dartmouth, College of Holy Cross, WPI, Providence College and Fitchburg State College. Parastu served as President of the Zoroastrian Association of Greater Boston Area (ZAGBA) for 4 years. In 1998 she was a recipient of the FEZANA Outstanding Young Zarathushti Award. She has a keen interest in the processes and activities that strengthen Zarathushti identity and enhance Zarathushti communities. Parastu lives in Shrewsbury, MA with her husband Jamshed, and their children Zarius (10) and Zinara (7).



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Pervin Shroff, Ph.D.

Carl Nelson Professor of Accounting
Carlson School of Management
Univ. of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN

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Dept. of Social Sciences
Brookdale Community College,
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Farok J. Contractor, Ph.D.

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NJ

Farrokh Langdana, Ph.D.

Professor of Finance and
Economics

Director, Executive MBA Program
Newark/New Brunswick, NJ

Noshir A. Langrana, Ph.D.

Professor and Chair, BioMed
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NORTH AMERICAN ZARATHUSHTI ACADEMICS

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Piscataway, NJ

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Avani Palkhiwala, MPS
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Nilufer K. Shroff
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NM
Visiting Professor, Univ. of Hawaii –
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State Univ. of New York – Geneseo,
NY

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Professor of Piano
Ithaca College School of Music,
Ithaca, NY

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Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

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The Methodist Hospital Research
Institute
Director of Cytopathology,
Laboratory and Fellowship
The Methodist Hospital
Professor of Pathology and
Laboratory Medicine
Weill Medical College of Cornell
University
New York, NY

Porus Olpadwala, Ph.D.
Dale R. Corson Professor and
Dean, Hans Bethe House
Professor of City and Regional
Planning
Cornell University, Ithaca, NY
Adjunct Professor, Community and
Regional Planning
Univ. of New Mexico, Albuquerque,
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Professor of Immunology

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Nisha Thapliyal, Ph.D.
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Dept. of Educational Studies
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Laboratory of Atomic and Solid State
Physics
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State Univ. of New York at
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Wheat Germplasm Enhancement
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Weatherhead School of
Management,
Case Western Reserve University,
Cleveland, OH

Shahrukh Irani, Ph.D.
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Integrated Systems Engineering
Ohio State University, Columbus,
OH

NORTH AMERICAN ZARATHUSHTI ACADEMICS

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University of Cincinnati
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Ness B. Shroff, Ph.D.

Ohio Eminent Scholar in Networking
and Communications

Chaired Professor

Departments of ECE (Electrical and
Computer Engineering)

and CSE (Computer and Systems
Engineering)

The Ohio State University,
Columbus, OH

Ramteen Sioshansi, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

Integrated Systems Engineering

Ohio State University, Columbus,
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John and Mary Moore Chair

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Univ. of Oklahoma, Norman, OK

Professor Emerita

The G.W. Woodruff School of
Mechanical Engineering

Georgia Institute of Technology,
Atlanta, GA

Farrokh Mistree, Ph.D.

Professor, L.A. Comp Chair and
Director

School of Aerospace and
Mechanical Engineering

Univ. of Oklahoma, Norman, OK

Professor Emeritus

The G.W. Woodruff School of
Mechanical Engineering

Georgia Institute of Technology,
Atlanta, GA

OREGON:

Dilafruz Williams, Ph.D.

Professor of Educational Leadership
and Policy

Graduate School of Education

& Professor of Public Administration
(Courtesy)

Mark O. Hatfield School of
Government

Portland State University, Portland,
OR

PENNSYLVANIA

Anahita Deboo, MD

Assistant Professor of Neurology

Director of the Clinical
Neurophysiology Fellowship
Program

Drexel University, College of
Medicine

Philadelphia, PA

Kaikobad Irani, MD

Associate Professor of Medicine,
Pharmacology, and Chemical
Biology

Director of Vascular Biology
Research

Cardiovascular Institute

Univ. of Pittsburgh Medical Center,
Pittsburgh PA

Rohinton Morris, MD

Clinical Associate Professor

Surgical Director – Heart Transplant
and Mechanical Assist Programs

Division of Cardiovascular Surgery

Univ. of Pennsylvania Health
Systems, Philadelphia, PA

Behzad Pavri, MD

Associate Professor, Dept. of
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Division of Cardiology

Thomas Jefferson University
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Director, Cardiac Electrophysiology
Fellowship

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Shiavax Cowasji, MD

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Bio Med Medicine

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Brown University, Providence, RI

Kaivan Munshi, Ph.D.

Professor of Economics

Brown University, Providence, RI

Kurush Setna, MD

Clinical Assistant Professor of
Medicine

Warren Alpert Medical School

Brown University, Providence, RI

Jamsheed Vakharia, MD

Clinical Assistant Professor of
Surgery

Warren Alpert Medical School

Brown University, Providence, RI

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Austin Peay State University,
Clarksville, TN

TEXAS

Poras T. Balsara, Ph.D., P.E.

Professor of Electrical Engineering

Associate Chair for Graduate
Studies

Univ. of Texas at Dallas, Richardson,
TX

Cyrus C.M. Mody, Ph.D.

NORTH AMERICAN ZARATHUSHTI ACADEMICS

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Bapsi Sidhwa
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College
Fanny Hurst Chair, Brandeis
University
Lecturer, Univ. of Houston, TX

Danesh Tafti, Ph.D.

William. S. Cross Professor
Mechanical Engineering Department
Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA

WASHINGTON D.C

Soli K. Choksi, B.D.S., M.Ed. (retired 2004)

Professor & Chair
Dept. of Oral Diagnosis and
Radiology
Dept. of Oral and Maxillofacial
Pathology
Dept. of Endodontics
Howard University College of
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Zaneeta E. Daver, Ph.D.

Associate Director
New Leadership Alliance for Student
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Washington, DC
Previously Assistant Director of
Student Activities and Leadership
Programs Univ. of Miami, FL

Homi Kharas

Senior Fellow, Global Economy and
Development, Wolfensohn Center
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Rohinton M. Tengra

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Provost, Howard University,
Washington DC.

Shehernaz Joshi Verahrami, M.S.

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Mehraban Khodavandi, Ph.D.

Distinguished Professor
Chair of Education Division
Professor of Education and
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THE STORY OF ZOROASTRIAN STUDIES AT STANFORD

By Farrokh Billimoria

In 2004 I was approached by Stanford University for help with some of their initiatives related to India. While working with them, I realized that here was a world class university that offered courses in various religious studies but until now had nothing about our religion.

Realizing the opportunity inherent in having a program in Zoroastrian Studies at a major American university, I spoke to other faculty and found they had an interdisciplinary interest across several Stanford departments in introducing Zoroastrian studies. They liked the idea and since they knew me, asked me to be an advisor to the program. I also started to talk to other members of the community about Stanford's interest. This has resulted in the development of an informal advisory panel of community members.

The advisory group soon concluded that initiating a lecture series would be ideal. We could bring world class Scholars in the religion to come and talk about various aspects of it. The lectures would build knowledge of and interest in Zoroastrianism and visibility for the Program, both on campus and within the community. A lecture series requires a fairly modest outlay to get started and provides a measure of interest and commitment that is a useful metric for further development of the Program.

Stanford liked the idea but wanted us to raise money for it. I responded that we needed to see their interest in doing this before raising funds. So the first year Stanford funded the program and invited some world class people to the campus for the lectures. They were held in the evening so that the local community as well as the Stanford community could attend. It was one of the best attended lectures series they had seen. Stanford initiated the lecture series by arranging and sponsoring one lecture each quarter by a prominent scholar in Zoroastrianism. Some of the speakers over the last few years have been *Professor Stanley Insler of Yale, Professor Martin Schwartz of UC Berkeley; Dr. Yuhan S-D Vevaina, Harvard University, Dr. Richard Frye, Professor Emeritus of Iranian Studies at Harvard University, Dr. Touraj Daryaee, Professor in the History of Iran University of California Irvine; Professor Almut Hintze, Department of the Study of Religions, University of London; Kaikhosrov Dinshah Irani, Professor of Philosophy, Emeritus, City College of New York; P. Oktor Skjaervo, Professor of Iranian History, Harvard University, Dr. Farhang Mehr and others.*

The following year we agreed to a partnership where we shared half the funding with Stanford, but we also wanted to start an undergraduate course. We raised funds from the community mainly in CA and NY areas. Contributions were made both by Parsi Zoroastrians as well as Iranian Zoroastrians. We contacted Dr. Jenny Rose from Claremont University and she agreed to teach an undergraduate class once a year on our budget. She flies in from Los Angeles to teach the class as a visiting

faculty. It has been very well received, and each year, on the last day of class we have a Jashan by both Parsi and Iranian priests followed by *ravo and sev*. We have now had 3 years of the course and a lecture series since 2005.

I think the stakes are fairly high for our community. Here is one of the top tier Universities showing its readiness to involve itself with our religion and community. If Zoroastrian Studies is established at Stanford it will be a model for other top tier universities to follow. We on the community board feel that we should not miss this opportunity. This process has been a roller coaster. There were times we were not sure if we would have the funds to continue the program. However through tenacity and support we have managed to get so far. We no longer have funds to continue the lecture series and the undergraduate course for the next academic year. Due to the economy and endowment issues at Stanford they are not in a position to fund this either. We are hopeful that members of the community will again rise to the occasion. Our long term goal would be to have this program endowed and that is now my next quest!!

Farrokh Billimoria is the founder of Mynt Capital, and prior to that was the founder of Artiman Ventures, a fund he founded, focused on US-India cross-border deals. Before Artiman, he was at the Sprout Group (CSFB Venture affiliate) as a General Partner since 1999. Prior to that he was at Hambrecht & Quist (now JP Morgan/H&Q) where he was a Wall Street Analyst. He was actively involved in the corporate finance and venture capital initiatives at Hambrecht & Quist. The Wall Street Journal ranked him as an All-Star Analyst for a number of years.



Previously, Farrokh was a Managing Director at Bankers Trust (acquired by Deutsche Bank) He has held senior managerial roles in development engineering with various networking equipment companies and service providers.

Farrokh has a bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering and a Master's degree in Computer Science; he is a regular speaker at various conferences and is often quoted in the Wall Street Journal and various magazines and trade journals for his technical and competitive expertise. He has been an active board member of a number of technology. He is on Stanford University's Fulbright Screening Committee for the Fulbright Scholars Program.

ZOROASTRIAN LECTURE SERIES AT STANFORD UNIVERSITY

2008-09

"The Zoroastrians of Sogdiana: Prime Movers on the Silk Route"

Dr. Jennifer Rose, Professor Claremont Graduate University

November 14, 2008

"Archaeology, Diaspora & Identity: New Frontiers in Zoroastrian History and Culture"

Dr. Yuhan S-D Vevaina, Harvard University.

February 27, 2009

2007-08

"Exploring the Early History of Zoroastrianism: Were the Achaemenids Zoroastrians?"

Dr. Richard Frye, Professor Emeritus of Iranian Studies at Harvard University

November 1, 2007

"Zoroastrian Apocalyptic Texts as History"

Dr. Touraj Daryaee, Howard C. Baskerville Professor in the History of Iran and the Persianate World, University of California Irvine.

February 8, 2008

"Defeating Death: Eschatology in Zoroastrianism, Judaism and Christianity"

Professor Almut Hintze, Department of the Study of Religions, University of London

April 10, 2008.

2006-07

"The Enlightenment View of Religions and Zarathushtra's Contribution"

Kaikhosrov Dinshah Irani, Professor of Philosophy, Emeritus, City College of New York

October 27, 2006

"Two Millennia of Orality: Continuity and Integration in Ancient Iranian Literary tradition from Central Asia to Mesopotamia"

P. Oktor Skjaervo, Aga Khan Professor of Iranian, Harvard University

January 19, 2007

"Zoroastrian Elements in Sogdian Tombs in China"

Albert Dien, Professor of Chinese, Emeritus, Stanford University

April 10, 2007

"Zarathushtra's Puzzles"

Dina McIntyre, Attorney and Zoroastrian Scholar

April 18, 2007

"Minority Sociopolitics in Contemporary Iran: The Zoroastrian Case"

Jamsheed Choksy, Professor of Central Eurasian Studies, Indiana University

June 5, 2007

2005-06

"Zoroastrianism and its Contributions to World Religions"

Farhang Mehr, Professor of International Relations, Emeritus, Boston University

November 17, 2005

"Zarathustra: The Man and the Message"

Stanley Insler, Salisbury Professor of Sanskrit and Comparative Philology, Yale University

March 13, 2006

"Revelations of Zarathustra: Poetry of Mysteries and Mysteries of Poetry"

Martin Schwartz, Professor of Iranian Studies, University of California, Berkeley

May 11, 2006

**"And may we have the Best
the Lord bestows;
As we strive for enlightened purpose;
may we attain it!"**

Yasna 43:2 (Translation by Dinshaw J. Irani)

ZOROASTRIAN STUDIES PROGRAM, STANFORD UNIVERSITY- UPDATE

AN APPEAL TO FUND THE PROGRAM

Farrokh Billimoria of Redwood City California has been working continuously behind the scene to enable us to continue funding Zoroastrian Studies. The acting head of Religious Studies at Stanford is a big supporter of Zoroastrian Studies and with his help Farrokh was able to re-start the program of lecture series and undergraduate course in late 2009.

One of the recent lectures was by Yuhan Vevaina. Stanford became interested in Yuhan as a possible faculty member and interviewed him and really wants to hire Yuhan Vevaina as a full time faculty member in their Religion Department. This is a fantastic opportunity to have a permanent Zoroastrian presence in the Religion Department at Stanford. Yuhan has an impressive set of accomplishments and training for a young person, which is the reason for Stanford's interest in him.

Yuhan's commitment at Harvard ends in December 2010 and he is available starting January 2011. Stanford likes to appoint faculty for a minimum of 2 full academic years (i.e. September to August). This requires funding from January 2011 to August 2013

Through the efforts of Farrokh Billimoria and the members of the community advisory group most of the funding is in hand but we are short \$60,000 (i.e. \$20,000 per year over the next 3 years). FEZANA has pledged \$5000 per year for the next 3 years. We need to generate \$15000 a year for another 3 years.

This faculty position will only materialize if the Zoroastrian community will share in the cost of hiring him. The yearly cost is \$60,000 salary. Another \$20,000 in benefits is being taken care of by the University.

After three years it is up to Yuhan and Stanford University to figure out a way to continue on without the community involvement.

One way to overcome the deficit of \$20,000/yr would be for individual associations to pitch in and make a commitment of about \$1000/yr for the next three years (depending on the finances, size and interest of each association). Members of the community at large who see this development as a great opportunity for the community could also

make a commitment at whatever level they are comfortable with.

Zoroastrian Associations in North America as well as individuals should seriously consider this opportunity provided to our community and contribute to this cause. The matter is fairly urgent as the person who is driving this inside Stanford will be going on a sabbatical in June 2010 and it is important to agree on this before he leaves.

If an association or individual decides to contribute, and we hope you will at this critical juncture for the program please send a check made out to Stanford University (memo saying "For Zoroastrian Studies") and mail it to Farrokh Billimoria at the address below. Farrokh will hand deliver it to ensure that they do not get deposited in the General University Funds.

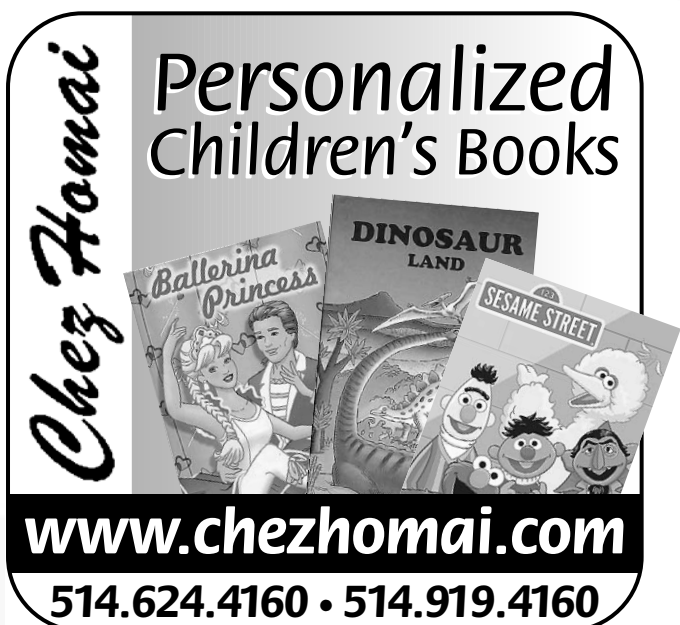
If you have any questions, please let me know.

Lovji Cama, Chair,

**Education, Scholarship and Conference Committee,
FEZANA**

201-569-7359, ldcama@gmail.com

**Farrokh Billimoria, 10 Woodleaf Avenue
Redwood City, CA 94061**



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF ZARATHUSHTI DUATES

Edul Daver

Prime Minister Nehru dreamt of creating world-class technological institutes in India that would produce renowned engineers, propelling India's industrial and economic revolution. The dream materialized with the start of IIT Kharagpur followed by Bombay, Madras, Kanpur, Delhi and beyond. Unfortunately, India's relative lack of free enterprise from the 1950's to early 1990's resulted in "brain drain". Zarathushti graduates of the IIT's and other elite universities immigrated en masse, mainly to North America.

Young Zarathushti graduates nurtured their own dreams by working diligently and earning their employers' admiration. They burnt the midnight oil, pursued higher degrees, and excelled in myriad careers. Soon the IIT's gained a 'crème de crème' reputation and were even featured in the TV program '60 Minutes'. The anchorwoman interviewed a leading Indian CEO who illustrated the IIT's extreme selectivity by explaining his son regarded IIT as his first choice and Cornell University as his back-up.

Zarathushti IIT graduates' parents often worried their emigrating children would encounter the notorious "glass ceiling" abroad and not gain positions as top executives. The graduates surpassed expectation by attaining the highest management positions in corporations and universities as well as registering patents, publishing books, winning professional awards and receiving high accolades. Excelling in their specialization, a minority beat the odds and emerged as successful entrepreneurs. The Land of Opportunities dispelled the myth of the Glass Ceiling and the U.S. Congress went as far as officially recognizing IIT graduates for their outstanding contributions to their adopted homeland.

Ambitious Zarathushtis built robust careers as well as raised responsible children without the support of extended family. When asked about their proudest achievement, a large number mentioned their children. Numerous Zarathushti graduates proudly remember their roots by supporting organizations in their motherland as well as financially assisting their less fortunate brethren. They formed countless professional, business and educational connections as well as joint ventures,



IIT KHARAGPUR

technological collaborations, corporate postings, and import/export trade.

To the best of my ability, I endeavored to contact all Zarathushti IIT graduates; however, I inevitably was constrained since some people either remained unaware of this project or chose not to respond. This is not an exhaustive list and, due to space constraints, it reveals only a sliver of each graduate's lengthy accomplishments.

IIT- KHARAGPUR GRADUATES

Vinita M. Chinoy: IIT-Kharagpur, 1986. Physics. M.Tech-1990 in Material Science and Engineering. Vinita's has been working in the software industry for the past 12 years and resides in Tampa, FL. Vinita has the distinction of being the only woman in the present listing.

Sarosh Maneckshaw: IIT-Kharagpur, 1968. Chemical Engineering. MS-Chem Eng. Sarosh was *Corporate Director of Environmental, Safety and Health Affairs at Pennzoil Company in 1999*. He then started 'Manekshaw Consulting' and is presently doing environmental and safety management projects globally. Sarosh resides in the Houston, TX area active in ZAH activities serving on its Executive Committee, & conducting Sunday School for youth and adults. He was Co-Chair for the 2nd Gatha Conference, Vice-Chair of the 7th WZC and participates in interfaith and Zarathushti

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF ZARATHUSHTI GRADUATES

conferences . He has published articles in the Fezana Journal and served as its guest editor.

Farrokh Mistree: IIT-Kharagpur, 1967. Naval Architecture. Ph.D. University of CA, Berkeley. Farrokh pursued teaching and research becoming Assoc. Chair, School of Mechanical Engineering at Georgia Tech-Savannah. Currently, he is *Director of the School of Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering at the University of Oklahoma, in Norman, OK*. He has published over 325 technical papers and co-authored two textbooks. He is a Fellow of ASME and Associate Fellow of AIAA. Farrokh is spearheading two Pan-IIT initiatives - 'Education anchored in collaborative research' and 'Faculty for the Future'. Farrokh is a pioneer in Sunday School education for Zarathushti youth and for counseling college bound students. He was instrumental in starting the Atlanta Zarathushti Association and served as Assistant Secretary of FEZANA .

Nawzer T. Parakh: IIT-Kharagpur, 1968. Chemical Engineering. MBA- IIM. Nawzer held Senior R&D and Mfg positions with *Union Carbide – India*. Nawzer was on

Doha, Qatar. He Emigrated to the US in '93 and changed careers to become Financial Consultant with *Axa Advisors* and simultaneously obtained ChFC (Chartered Financial Consultant). Mackey is still with AXA and has built a successful business. He resides in Allison Park, PA.

Jehangir Vania: IIT- Kharagpur, 1968. Electrical Engineering. Jangoo was Maintenance Superintendent/Chief Project Engineer with Crucible Materials Corporation. Most recently, he was *Nuclear Engineer with Entergy NPP* having retired very recently in 2010. Jangoo resides in Syracuse, NY.

IIT-BOMBAY GRADUATES

Ervad Xerxes Antia: IIT-Bombay, 1980. Civil Engineering. Worked for Tata Power before immigrating to the US. Xerxes is currently Senior Associate at the Environmental Consulting & Engineering firm, "Prestige Environmental Inc." and resides in Burlington, NJ. Xerxes provides much needed services to the Zarathushti community as a mobed and also supports *Ummeed Mumbai*,

Adi K. Asavaid: IIT-Bombay, 1974. Aeronautical Engineering. MBA- Kellogg Business School. Currently *Senior VP, Information Resources Inc.* responsible for Worldwide Application a non-profit organization for the developmentally disabled children in Mumbai. Development and Deployment. He spent 20 years in Latin America, of which 11 were as General Manager- Latin America.

Hormazdiar G. Behziz: IIT-Bombay, 1969. Electrical Engineering/Electronics. He worked as Control and Automation Engineer in various industries – Iron & Steel, Copper, Oil & Gas and Environment. Hormazdiar resides in Hacienda Hts, CA.

Phiroz Bhagat: IIT-Bombay, 1970. Mechanical Engineering. President/Owner Strategy Engines LLC. Phiroz pioneered development and deployment of Pattern Recognition Technology for industries, project management & finance. Published "Pattern Recognition in Industry" (Elsevier Press). Phiroz resides in Westfield, NJ.

Homi C. Bhedwar: IIT-Bombay, 1972. Metallurgical Engineering . M.Eng-Cornell, Ph.D.-Carnegie Mellon. At present he is the Director, DuPont Knowledge Center in Hyderabad, India. where he is assigned to construct and operate DuPont's largest R&D center outside the US. Homi was featured in *Business World* as one of the "Geek Gods" returning to help India.



the UCC Bhopal investigation team and it's spokesperson. He transferred to the US in 1988 with UCC becoming DOW in 2001. He was VP-Operations & Global Mfg Director, for two Dow units, before retiring in 2009. Nawzer received an Award from Dow for site's response during Hurricane Katrina. He also received the Asian American Business Development Council Award as one of 50 outstanding Asian Americans. Nawzer resides in New Orleans, LA and recently served on the transition team of Louisiana Gov. Jindal for Government and Fiscal Reform.

Meherji (Macky) Siganporia: IIT-Kharagpur, 1967. Electrical Engineering. Macky started as Power Distribution Engineer with the Calcutta Electric Supply and then joined the Ministry of Electricity & Water in

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF ZARATHUSHTI GRADUATES

Yaz F. Billimoria, Ph.D.: IIT-Bombay, 1968. Metallurgical Engineering. Yaz launched two businesses, one in IT and other in food services. Billimoria Computer Systems was recognized by Deloitte & Touche and awarded the National Technology Fast 500 Award in 1997 & 1998. Yaz, resides in Carlsbad, CA and is now launching another company based on an innovative concept for managing traffic and reducing gridlocks on highways.

Homi Byramji: IIT- Bombay, 1967. Mechanical Engineering. MBA-Rutgers. Homi specialized in software developments, he acquired and turned around 'Market Guide', making it an industry-leading fundamental database provider. Homi sold Market Guide to *Multex* but continued with them as a senior manager and board director. Homi is an ardent conservationist and currently co-owns a wildlife refuge on the Pacific Coast of Nicaragua planting 80,000 trees, building a turtle hatchery and eliminating poaching in the local area. Homi, resides in Boonton Twsp, NJ and is a generous donor to ZAGNY.

Percy Chinoy: IIT-Bombay, 1985. Chemical Engineering. Ph.D.— RPI/1991, MBA/1999 Percy is *Director of Process & Product Development at American Superconductor*, responsible for technology and business development, residing in the Greater Boston, MA area.

Cawas Cooper: IIT-Bombay, 1974. Chemical Engineering. Ph. D.-University. of Delaware. Cawas started with Air Products and Catalytica and then started consulting in the field of Catalytic Processes, kinetics, and thermo chemical reactions. He has published papers, authored a chapter and holds four patents. Cawas is Fellow of AIChE, National Chair of the Process Development Division, and a Professional Engineer in PA. Cawas resides in Allentown, PA and is active in ZAPANJ. He gives back to his home country including helping an Indian chemical company grow in the USA.

Khershed P. Cooper, Ph.D: IIT- Bombay, 1975. Metallurgical Engineering. Khershed is a Research Scientist at the Naval Research Laboratory. His proudest accomplishment is to run the manufacturing science research program at the office of Naval Research. Khershed also manages projects that are funded through the university research initiative, young investigator and small business programs, thus contributing to the engineering education of young minds. Khershed resides in Fairfax, VA and is active in ZAMWI and manages the financial end of the Fali Chothia Trust.

Keki Dadachanji: IIT- Bombay, 1971. Mechanical Engineering. MS & Ph.D from Case Western Univ. Keki was **Business Transformation Manager and Logistics**

Director at M&M Mars retiring in 2005. Since then he has been teaching Mathematics at Parsippany High School and Supply Chain & Mathematics courses at Rutgers University as an adjunct professor. Keki, resides in Randolph, NJ and has served on the WZCC-NY Chapter Board. He is currently Secretary of ZAGNY and also chairperson of the 2012 North American Zarathushti Congress Program Committee.

Dady Dadyburjor: IIT-Bombay, 1970. Chemical Engineering. MS/Ph.D-Univ of Delaware. Dady is currently, *Professor of Chemical Engineering, West Virginia University in Morgantown, WV*. Previously, he was Department Chair, WVU and Interim, Associate Dean-College of Engineering, WVU. Dady received the Distinguished Alumnus Award, IIT-Bombay. He has endowed two undergraduate scholarships to IIT-B and frequently visits to consult with IIT faculty/students and present lectures to Indian Institute of Chemical Engineers, Catalyst Society & UN Dev Programs.

Boman J Damkevala: IIT- Bombay, 1969. Civil Engineering. MS- Illinois Institute of Tech. Chicago. *Senior Project Engineer, Sargent & Lundy Consultant Engineers*. Bomi specializes in the Cost Information Division in the field of Power plant Design. Bomi resides in Naperville, IL, is very active in Zoroastrian Association of Chicago and was ordained as a mobedyar in April 2010.

Phiroz P. Darukhanavala: IIT- Bombay, 1971. Mechanical Engineering. MS & Ph.D. – Case Western Reserve University. Phiroz is currently *VP & Chief Technology Officer, Information Technology & Services for BP plc*. His team introduces external technology innovation to solve business problems that defy traditional IT solutions. His team's 'game changing' technology introductions have won numerous awards. Phiroz resides in Naperville, IL.

Toos Daruvala: IIT-Bombay, 1977. Electrical Engineering. MBA-University of Michigan. Toos is currently *Director (senior partner) at the global management consultancy; McKinsey & Co.* and leads their Americas Banking & Securities practice. He is also Board member of McKinsey Investments office and Board member of the New York Philharmonic. Toos resides in Scarsdale, NY and is a generous donor to ZAGNY causes.

Ervad Soli P. Dastur: UDCT-Bombay, 1960. Chemical Engineering. Soli informs that UDCT was the first predecessor Chemical Engineering IIT. MS/Ph.D.- Northwestern University, IL. Soli was *Manager, Worldwide P&G Sales Technology* before retiring 10 years ago. Since then he has been serving the

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF ZARATHUSHTI GRADUATES

Zarathushti community almost full time, fulfilling their religious needs. He financially supports the Farohar Foundation in Mumbai and is active in ZATAMBAY and Zoroastrian Association of Florida.

Edul M. Daver: IIT-Bombay, 1966. Metallurgical Engineering. MS/MBA. Edul is currently President/ Owner of ACuPowder International LLC a 1995 LBO of Alcan Powders. ACuPowder is a dominant producer of copper based powders, selling globally including India. ACuPowder collaborates with the IIT's and the powders were used in an IIT experiment on the Indian Space Shuttle. Edul received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from IIT-B and Distinguished Service Awards from MPIF (US) and PMAI (India). Edul resides in Green Brook, NJ, is active in ZAGNY and was founding Director of World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce.

Nariman Deboo (1945-2007): IIT-Bombay, 1967. Mechanical Engineering. MS-MIT. Specialized in Operations Research with American Airlines and American Express. His last position at American Express was that of Senior Director, Global Operations and Technology. Nari had resided in Darien, CT and passed away prematurely in 2007.

Jimmy F. Dholoo: IIT- Bombay, 1972. Electrical Engineering. Jimmy is currently *Vice President-Engineering, Aeroflex/Weinschel*. Jimmy is a major contributor to the DSCC Military specifications for RF coaxial attenuators and has been elected to the IEEE connector committee to generate and standardize industry specifications. Jimmy is also an inventor with two US Patents to his credit and resides in Gaithersburg, MD.

Manek Dustoor, Ph.D.: IIT-Bombay, 1968. Metallurgical Engineering. Manek worked on materials development in various industries. He was responsible for the commercial development of a new coating concept called Conforma Clad. At Haworth, a major office furniture manufacturer, his group was awarded the *Business Week Gold Award* for idea generation. Currently he has a consultancy practice to help startups with strategic positioning, market development and idea generation and is also partner in a startup in Traffic Management based in Carlsbad, CA.

Mehernosh(Mike) Engineer: IIT-Bombay, 1969. M.Tech- Thermal Power Engineering. PE. Mike is currently, Principal Control Systems Engineer with Flour Corporation. Mike specializes in Automation/ Instrumentation/ SCADA on multi-billion dollar projects in the US, Europe and the former Soviet Union countries from front end engineering to commissioning. Mike resides in Stafford, TX.

Jamshed R. Kapadia: IIT-Bombay, 1970. Electrical Engineering. Jamshed, is proudest to be part of the IT revolution in India. *Digital Equipment Corp* was facing a shortage of affordable top-notch software talent. Aware of the IIT potential Jamshed, in 1980, proposed to start software development in India. The idea was ahead of its time, but despite intense objections, he championed it to fruition. The initiative led to Digital India, then Compaq India and now HP. Jamshed resides in Carlisle, MA.

Jimmy D. Kumana: IIT-Bombay, 1969. Chemical Engineering. MS-Univ. of Cincinnati. Jimmy has spent most of his career in the consulting field, specializing in industrial energy efficiency. This indirectly led to a 6-year stint with Saudi Aramco. Jimmy is proudest of his work in energy efficiency, with attendant reduction in GHG emissions to the atmosphere. He has authored more than 50 articles and 3 chapters in a book. Interestingly, in 1980, Jimmy participated in foiling an attempted airplane hijacking. He currently operates a consulting firm, Kumana Associates and resides in Houston, TX.

Sharookh Lala: IIT-Bombay, 1973. Mechanical Engineering. Sharookh was Engineering Manager at General Motors before retiring in 2009. He has a patent to his credit while working for an automotive supplier in the Chicago area. He was somewhat active in the early phase of setting up ZAC. Sharookh resides in Farmington Hills, MI.

Khushroo Lakdawala: IIT-Bombay, 1981. Chemical Engineering. MS/Ph.D.University . S. California. MBA-California State Univ. Khushroo was *President of Sierracin Sylmar Corporation* from 2001-2006. The Company was bought by PPG and he is now Global Dir. of Engineering & Technology for PPG Aerospace, manufacturing windshield and transparent armor for aircrafts and military vehicles. Khushroo resides in Santa Clarita, CA.

Sorab K. Merchant: IIT-Bombay, 1976. Mechanical Engineering. Currently with Videotron residing in Cadiac, Quebec, Canada.

Cyrus R. Mehta: IIT-Bombay, 1967. Civil Engineering. MS/PhD-Operations Research from MIT. Cyrus is *President and co-founder of Cytel Inc.*, which supports the Biopharmaceutical industry with software and consulting services. Cyrus is also an Adjunct Professor of Biostatistics at Harvard. He is proud of getting Zoroastrianism listed on the religious interest cards of entering students and also for being the Zarathushti Chaplain at Harvard and MIT. Cyrus resides in Cambridge, MA.

Ruyintan E. Mehta: IIT-Bombay, 1970. Chemical Engineering. Ruyintan resides in Watchung, NJ.

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IIT MADRAS

Rusi F. Patel (1948-2008): IIT-Bombay, 1971. Mechanical Engineering. Rusi's last position was *Global Energy Program Manager at CB Richard Ellis*, where he developed clean energy programs for large corporations such as State Street Bank in Boston and EDS in Texas. Rusi was proud of being a pioneer in the Clean Energy Business. Rusi had resided in Concord, MA and passed away prematurely in 2008.

Hoshang Presswalla: IIT-Bombay, 1968. Civil Engineering. MS-Univ of CA, Berkeley. Hoshang was *Division Engineer with APC (Atlas Prestressing Corporation) and then Engineering Manager with Inland-Ryan*. Hosang is a specialist in 'prestressed concrete' for nuclear power plants, bridges etc. Since 1990, he has his own consulting service. Hosang resides in Tampa, FL and is also a Karate expert who will be soon testing for his 5th Dan black belt.

Behruz N. Sethna: IIT-Bombay, 1971. Electrical Engineering. MBA-IIM (Ahmedabad). M.Phil & Ph.D – Columbia University, NYC. Behruz is currently, *President of The University of West Georgia in Carrollton, GA and has the Distinction of being the first Indian-born President of any US University*, having served twice as Interim Executive/Senior Vice Chancellor for the University System of Georgia. Behruz has received resolutions of Commendation from the Senate of Georgia & from the Board of Regents and received the IIT-Bombay *Distinguished Alumnus Award*. Behruz has paved the way for Indians to reach top academic positions, facilitated multiple delegations from India, and has funded and operates a small charity in India to help less fortunate people.

Erach Tarapore: IIT-Bombay, 1972. Metallurgical Engineering. MS/PhD/MBA- University of CA, Berkeley. Erach worked in R&D for *Kaiser Aluminum* for 24 years and was recognized for increasing operating efficiency to

World Class levels using computer modeling and process control. Erach is very active in community work serving on the ZANC Board in various positions including President. He helped organize the 2005 North American Zoroastrian Congress in San Francisco and also teaches Sunday School in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Jimmy Uranwala : IIT-Bombay, 1972. Jimmy is President of Turnkey Test, Electronics Consulting Firm, in Pleasanton, CA.

Sorab Vatcha: IIT-Bombay. Chemical Engineering. SM – MIT, Ph.D. – Caltech, PE. Sorab is a consultant and author in chemicals, energy, and environment, with a focus on renewable, sustainable technologies. He obtains external funding for R&D, analyzes technological trends, business trends and opportunities, and writes or edits technical publications. Sorab resides in Mountain View, CA.

IIT- MADRAS GRADUATES

Farhad J. Cama: IIT-Madras, 1967. Chemical Engineering. Farhad is *Principal Scientist, Bayer Material Science LLC* where he introduced and implemented material characterization techniques such as dynamic mechanical analysis, and scanning electron & atomic force microscopies to the Bayer organization in the NAFTA region. Farhad resides in the Pittsburgh area.

Barjor Santoke: IIT-Madras, 1974. Chemical Engineering. Barjor resides in Huntington Beach, CA

I am sure you agree that the above accomplishments are awesome.

"It is in Dreaming the GREATEST DREAMS ...Seeking the HIGHEST GOALS that we build the BRIGHTEST TOMORROWS."

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF ZARATHUSHTI GRADUATES

Each person has made their dream come true with
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Hard Work, Integrity and Charity.

As Winston Churchill said,
"We make a living by what we get, but
We make a life by what we give."

Edul Daver came to the US in 1966, as a JN Tata Scholar, after attending the Doon School in Dehra Dun and the IIT, Bombay where he obtained his B.Tech in Metallurgical Engineering. This was followed by a MS in Met Eng. from the University of Wisconsin; an MBA in Industrial Management from Farleigh Dickinson, NJ and OPM(Owner/President/Manager) program from Harvard University.



Edul joined Alcan Metal Powders NJ, in the Technical area and in 1987 become the General Manager. When Alcan started divesting downstream companies he saw the opportunity and led a highly leveraged buyout of the Division, at debt to equity ratio of 60:1. As President and CEO of ACuPowder International, LLC, he implemented 'Open Book Management' techniques and shared 20% of pretax profits with all employees, with results better than his wildest expectations. In early 2000 ACuPowder purchased a competitor in TN and became the dominant supplier of Copper based metal powders in North America with a market share of over 50%.

In 2003 Edul received the Distinguished Service Award, of the elders Metal Powders Industries Federation (MPIF) in 2003 and served as their President from 2005-2007.

ACuPowder and Edul are active in the Indian Powder Metallurgy Arena including IIT academia. He received the IIT-Bombay Distinguished Alumnus Award in 2001 and the Powder Metallurgy Association of India (PMAI) Fellow Award in 2003.

Edul served on the Board of ZAGNY in the '70's and was founding Director & Secretary of the World Zoroastrian Chamber of Commerce (WZCC) from 2000-2006.

Edul is married to Niloufer Davier has two daughters, Zaneeta and Farzana (Cyrus Cama) and two grand children- Delara and Rayan. He enjoys all sports and still plays competitive Racket Ball.



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DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA

WEALTH AND PHILANTHROPY IN THE DIASPORA

Mehroo Patel

As the Diaspora communities mature, a desire to share individual and collective wealth among those in need become apparent - sometimes imminent and urgent. Starting with the inner circle of family, relatives, and friends it expands and spreads among greater and greater circles of communities. It is important and advisable that such sharing and giving be done responsibly and need-based, rather than 'me too' or 'wants'.

In the US, sharing of such wealth, i.e. philanthropy, is encouraged at the federal and state levels, by according charitable expense deduction, on annual IRS tax returns when giving to organizations with 501(c)(3) not-for-profit status. Thus all individuals are encouraged to contribute and avail of tax benefits. If done well in a disciplined and regular manner everyone benefits. Most of us give regularly through our personal connections to tax-beneficial community organizations like Red Cross, Community Chest schools and community associations. FEZANA and many local Zoroastrian associations carry tax-benefit status for their members. Such donations may be nondiscretionary, semi-discretionary or discretionary. They are claimed to account for 60% to 70% of giving in the US.

Another approach to giving is reactionary or 'response driven' by disasters – both natural and human. The needs are announced and propagated and giving is impulsive and emotional to meet one-time, urgent and compelling needs. Given the human frailty, some such requests tend to be exaggerated, with wants neither so compelling nor urgent. Such emotional appeals should be well evaluated and researched by the intermediary organizations, before being distributed among its members. This is often not done due to time constraints and paucity of staff/personnel. In some situations, a portion of the contribution is diverted to management and administration expenses. Many large charity groups make known their costs and such diversion percentages, but not all do. It is up to the giver to find this information. Some organizations accept donation of new or used goods - furniture, clothing appliances, but most do not.

Financial and wealth management institutions encourage philanthropy by creating a philanthropic account in their own organizations, thus facilitating clients to deposit their money to hold and grow by investing. When the client wants a portion of the money to be given to a charity they then disburse the amount according to the client's direction. Charles Schwab Charitable was started ten years ago and is one of the largest such organizations. There are others with Fidelity, Vanguard and more. This type of account management encourages fiscal discipline and responsible philanthropy. They

educate their clients by way of periodic newsletters. A seven-point advice appears in Schwab Charitable's newsletter of spring/summer 2010.

Philanthropy does not begin nor end with giving money to the charity. Sharing our time and talent is another form of giving and is perhaps more pertinent, forceful and meaningful. Such type of sharing of time and talent towards the benefit of less advantaged in terms of health care and education abounds and is well known.

Some people contribute their time and talent by organizing activities i.e. fund-raisers, others develop organizations within the communities – FEZANA, WZCC, NAMC and other Zoroastrian community organizations and/or their committees dedicated to individual purposes. These tend to get bogged down by constitutions, by-laws and administrative burden some of which turn acrimonious with not very pleasant consequences. Many cherish their individuality by managing their own philanthropies in their own small groups of likeminded individuals. These suffer from lack of publicity but benefit from their ability to direct their efforts and their treasures towards the causes they believe in. They often use more of their talent to benefit the cause i.e. provide hands on healthcare or education, than hold fund raising events, banquets and get together.

According to Ad Hoc information at hand, many Zoroastrians in North America are involved in such charitable efforts. A couple of examples are:

1. **Baimai (Surti) Foundation** for education support (Canada). This fund is managed by individuals in Canada. Their fund raising activities seem to be tightly managed and monitored. The fund disburses to needy individuals of Zoroastrian/Parsi persuasion only, across full spectrum of social welfare – preparing them for meaningful occupation, health, education and other needs and follow-up with them. The funds has disbursed over six cores of Indian Rupees within the past decade
2. **Gram Seva Trust Foundation** www.gramseva.org A social justice organization for health and welfare of most disadvantaged children in villages of South Gujarat. Here the benefactors work 3 – 4 months each year at site, as well as collect and utilize funds since early 1990's.
3. **Yasmeen and Jamshed Ghadialy** generate community support by holding successful lunches each year, since almost half a century to benefit patients of Parsi General Hospital. This could be by far the very first of charitable activity of Zoroastrians

DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA

Wealth and Philanthropy in the Diaspora

in North America. The money is given to Parsi General Hospital and not directly to the patients.

4. **Bel-Air Hospital dedicated to HIV/AIDS.** Support since 2004 has helped the creation and growth of the Bel-Air College of Nursing (CON) in 2007. Started, to support the hospital as a capacity building project, it's first class of 29 students will graduate with B.Sc.(Nursing) degree in late 2010. University of Illinois Foundation also supports nursing education in India through its " *Minu K. & Mehroo M. Patel Nursing Advancement Endowment for India Fund*" within its folder. They personally teach nursing students at Bel-Air CON which is the couple's most rewarding annual enterprise. "Minu K. and Mehroo M. Patel Charitable Gift Fund" within Schwab Charitable's Folder supports their other humanitarian funding, namely, Dadar Athornan Institute, FEZANA Welfare, Gram Seva Trust, Kanpur Agiary, Rustom E. Nania Education Trust in Secunderabad India, Sir Shapurji Billimoria Trust's RITE Foundation for children with different abilities are some of them. The support is given to institutions rather than to beneficiaries

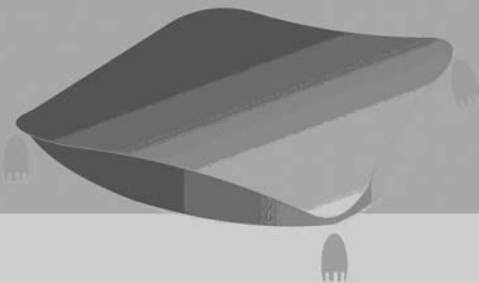
themselves. Personal visits and evaluations are done by donors themselves.

5. FEZANA lists 17 plus named and dedicated funds in its folder for health, education, arts and welfare. A comprehensive synopsis can be published in a future FEZANA Journal issue as more information becomes available.

Finally, giving from the heart guided by the Good Mind (Vohu Mana) is everyone's privilege and responsibility which all Givers cherish.

Mehroo M. Patel,

Biostatistician, University of Illinois at Chicago, College of Nursing, Research Resources Center(M/C 937) Department of Biobehavioral Health Science.



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WHAT THE DIASPORA CAN DO FOR INDIA AND WHAT INDIA CAN DO FOR THE DIASPORA?

Khojeste P Mistree

9th World Zoroastrian Congress, Dubai, 31st December 2009



According to the Oxford Dictionary, Diaspora means the dispersion of a group of people or a community to different parts of the world. In our case, it refers to the dispersion from India, Pakistan and Iran of pockets of our Parsi Irani Zarathushtis, who in the last 50 years, moved and settled in different parts of the world. Although India may be seen as part of the earliest Diaspora, by virtue of over a 1000-year period of history, during which the Zarathushtis of Iran, i.e., the Parsis, settled here, India has become the institutional home of Zarathushtis, while Iran is the land of our ancestors where our faith began and our recorded history unfolded.

It is noteworthy that only in Iran, India and Pakistan we continue to have consecrated Fire Temples and other religious institutions, such as Towers of Silence and priestly schools. From this fact, a need arises to preserve, perpetuate and safeguard these institutions and the practices of the faith, if the power bases of the religion, both in India and Iran, are to continue to give sustenance to those in the Diaspora.

THE PARSI IRANIAN ZARATHUSHTI POPULATION:

According to the Indian census figure of 1961, the Parsi population in India was 100,772. The total Parsi and Irani Zarathushti population the world over in 1961 was not much more than 140,772 individuals, comprising of 100,772 in India, 29,000 in Iran, 5,000 in Pakistan, 3,000 in the UK, 2,000 in the USA and Canada and 2,000 elsewhere in the world.

What is the guestimate figure today? As per the Indian census figure of 2001, the Parsi population is estimated to be 69,601; And the total Parsi Irani Zarathushti population worldwide is presently estimated to be around 126,000. However, from figures given to me at the Congress, by M/s. Bomi Patel, President of FEZANA and Dorab Mistry former President, ZTFE -UK our population goes up to nearly 142,000 which is more than the 1961 figure.

In 2001 the Parsi Irani population in India as per the census is 69,601, North America 33,000, Iran 25,000, UK/Europe 6,000, Australia /New Zealand 3,500, Middle East 2,000, Pakistan 1,700, elsewhere 1,000, this total should come to 141,801 individuals. (I am not including converts or neo-Zarathushtis, whose numbers are claimed to be far in excess to that of the Parsi Iranian Zarathushti population).

Ours is an ancient community and faith and the ultimate real value of our community is in the substantive ethical obligation which a Parsi or Irani adheres to and which emerges from the community's self identification with its ethnic core. This is what people will take with them when they settle in the Diaspora. This ethos comes from an expansion of an individual's moral capacity achieved and absorbed through an adherence to the religious precepts of the faith. For it is this ethos, emerging from the religion, which best serves the interests of our people in whichever country we, as a community, choose to live in.

THE IMPORTANCE OF IDENTITY:

Our ethnic identity is the key to our survival in the Diaspora as well as in India and Iran.

If we weaken our ethnic identity, particularly in the Diaspora, then I foresee a major community crisis emerging in the next 50 years. As a student of World Religions and History, I have yet to find an encouraging historical signpost to show that the religion, in our case, Zarathushti religion has in any way or form survived, successfully, without its all-important ethnic or community identity. Let us even assume for a moment, that some non-Parsi and non-Iranians became Zarathushtis at some point in their respective histories, there is no evidence today, of their Zarathushti beliefs and practices

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having survived, in a sustained, institutionalized way even for a hundred years after their alleged conversion.

There is little use in measuring industrial and entrepreneurial success if our Parsi and Iranian identity vanishes over a period of time. In fact, our Iranian Zarathushti counterparts have clearly understood the importance of this identity and take great pride in being called Iranians or Iranis, thus consciously or unconsciously preserving their ancient Iranian ethnic identity. In fact, the Iranian Zarathushtis further micro-filter their ethnic identity by calling themselves a Zeinabadi or Yazdi or Kermani as the case may be, thereby giving an ethno-geographical community allegiance, as well. Any attempt, in my opinion, to disconnect the Parsi Irani identity from the religious aspirations of the community, is a retrograde step. By delinking the community from its historical context in the past will turn us into a faceless religious group with no true discernable roots or history.

Another point to consider is the fact of intermarriage which I believe is a key factor weakening our ethno-religious identity. Only one in a hundred of mixed marriage progeny marries within the fold, as the statistics have shown. In other words, in the first generation a child born of mixed parentage is 50% Parsi or Irani, as the case may be. As 99 out of 100 will marry out in the second generation, the Parsi Irani ethnicity goes down to 25% due to the continued process of intermarriage, in the second generation. In the third generation, when again only one in hundred will marry within the fold, the Parsi ethnicity will go down even further to a mere 12½%. Clearly, in the fourth generation, some 80 to 100 years from today, there will be no ethnicity left. And if that happens, I do not believe that the religion will survive minus its deep rooted ethnicity going back thousands of years.

THE ROLE OF THE DIASPORA:

As a Diaspora, I urge you to maintain a distinct and discernable ethno-religious identity. The term Parsi and/or Irani, (which includes Iranians of course), is our ancestral-ethnic nomenclature, which should not be dropped in the Diaspora for quasi-social reasons, or as a gesture made to facilitate acceptance amongst the host culture. This is a trend that we in India have observed, that most of our migrant communities have for convenience, chosen to de-link themselves from this important ethnic identity the label of being a Parsi Irani or Iranian Zarathushti.

The question arises, as to whether in the Diaspora one wishes to build a community such as the one our ancestors built in India and Iran, or should one in the diaspora leave behind a legacy of an amorphous form of Zoroastrianism, with no discernable ethnic community identity, or a brand image connected with the community's historical past?

In my view, the community in the Diaspora must seek to strengthen this ethnicity by maintaining strong bonds with their ancestral homes in India and Iran. It is this link and continuity which the Diaspora can give us in India. The great high rituals of the Mazdayasni religion are largely now performed only in India by the Shenshai and Kadmi priests. There is a need for the Diaspora to establish a strong ritual tradition abroad, if they wish to retain and leave behind a legacy of a distinct ethno-religious identity. Our youth needs to be given a strong ritual base in our Diaspora in order to experience Zarathushti spirituality. If Zoroastrianism is promoted merely as a religion of good thoughts, words and deeds, devoid of its rich ritual and spiritual traditions, then there is little difference between Zoroastrianism and the other world religions which I submit also encourages its followers to follow the path of good thoughts, words and deeds.

The young of our community should be encouraged to visit India and Iran often, so that they can interact and mingle with their own community, on a larger scale. Our youth interaction across the world can only yield positive results, of getting to know each other better, and working towards marrying within the community, which I think should be rated as a very important priority within our community's wish list.

THE GIVE AND TAKE OF THE DIAPOSRA:

It is clear that our members in the Diaspora have done remarkably well on the economic front. Our first generation youngsters, born in the Diaspora, have taken advantage of the educational diversity offered to them in their country of residence. Today, we have more millionaires in our Diaspora than at any given time of our history. Pro-rata, we are the richest community in the world, but sadly we have become a community of takers as versus our forebears who were known for their unstinting charity and benevolence. *This must change. We must learn to give.* Our community members in the Diaspora, should with renewed vigour support the

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Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP), our religious institutions, such as our Fire Temples and the Towers of Silence and other community organizations in India and strengthen the religious base within the community much like the Jokhi family of Hong Kong and the Zarthoshty Brothers of Iran who have been outstanding philanthropists over the past 40 years. After all, many of us have been recipients of some form of charity or help given by the BPP or other community based institutions in one's country of origin.

THE BPP AND THE DIASPORA:

The BPP is a 350-year old institution and is seen as the premier body of the community, globally. The BPP wants to liaise with the Diaspora in all possible ways in order to develop a bond of friendship and amity amongst all our fellow Parsi Irani Zarathushtis, globally. We would like to offer to arrange a socio-religious get-together, as a pilot project for a group of young community members to visit India, on perhaps through an invitation given by the BPP youth group, ZYNG. We would like to organize a 10-day tour of religious sites and fire temples in India, so that our youth may experience the traditions and practices as followed in India as well as imbibe the Parsi Irani way of life and through it interact with our youth. The same sort of "roots tour" should be undertaken in Iran, by our youth and the older generation as well by both our young and old.

WHAT THE BPP CAN OFFER THE DIASPORA:

The BPP can offer the Diaspora a host of social services and help the community living abroad to maintain a continuous link with India. We have a fine collection of books on community issues and the religion; we welcome young people to earn degrees in Zarathushti studies inclusive of research on the Parsi Irani community. We have a community museum, The Alpaiwalla Museum, which houses wonderful treasures, some going back to the pre- Achaemenian period. We would like help from the Diaspora to reorganize, and revamp the museum and bring it to a professional level, so that we can be proud of our ancient heritage. For the elderly wishing to return to India on a permanent basis, the BPP is thinking of creating facilities to live in India on the lines of a community centre for senior citizens. The BPP Trustees want to project a new and dynamic BPP, keen to liaise with the Diaspora, providing that members of the Diaspora in turn realize that the Parsi Irani identity is non-negotiable and is to be fostered at all times.

IN CONCLUSION ,

Between the BPP and the Diaspora, there is a mutually beneficial path that we can embark upon, together. Importantly, we must remember:

- (1) To maintain our Parsi Irani/Iranian identity, for if this becomes a "*Diaspora focal point*", it will strengthen our community the world over.
- (2) Strengthening community ethnic identity will fortify the religious base in India and Iran, will bring about greater religious awareness upholding our traditional ritual practices, and this in turn will give us the security and comfort of being linked to our spiritual heritage and historical origins.
- (3) There is a need for the younger generation to bear witness and experience the rituals of the faith and visit our sacred places of worship, be it Mumbai, Udwada, Navsari or Surat in India or Yazd, Kerman or Sharifabad in Iran.
- (4) There is a need to maintain the language link for Parsis to speak Gujarati and for the Iranians to speak non-Arabicized Persian and Dari.

"From knowledge of the religion there comes about the consideration of the sacred word (or prayer), from consideration of the sacred word, there comes about an increase in one's calling of the religion, (and from it comes) the elimination of the demons of the world; from the elimination of the demons of the world there comes about immortality, the Renovation of the community and the Resurrection". (Denkard Book VI, vs. 75, trans. By S. Shaked p. 171).

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[The complete version of this presentation is available at <http://parsikhabar.net/diaspora-a-talk-by-khojeste-mistree/> Editor]

DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA

What Makes The North American Zarathushti Community Different?

Nawaz Merchant

An immigrant community in a rapidly evolving western world understandably changes through the years. The original immigrants may differ greatly from their progeny. Many of the earliest Zarathushtis in North America left their wealthy, educated families to chart foreign terrain. If their pioneering spirit and versatility are inheritable traits, the contemporary Zarathushti community is extremely robust and resilient. Early immigrants identified and addressed future community needs. For example, the association in New Jersey focuses on fundraising to purchase land and build a Dar e' Mehr to hold annual functions as well as monthly religious classes. Our communities know they must depend on themselves to thrive in the New World.

The achievement of the North American communities does not diminish the successes of those who remain in India, Iran or elsewhere. This essay is not intended as a criticism or comparison. Many of the strengths of the NA resonate with our forefathers principles, and are a continuation of their proud legacy. However, how that identity materializes into active contributions and allows us to preserve Zarathushti life in North America is a topic worth exploring.

COMMUNITY CENTERS

In the US, the community centers are venues for social interaction and religious ceremonies. Mature Zarathushti Associations have reconfigured or constructed Centers or Dar'e' Mehers, while fledgling associations tend to rent public buildings, school halls and banquet facilities for their events. The Centers provide a number of activities for children, such as religious classes. social opportunities allow co-religionists to share experiences and make friends. The annual Ivy Gandhi Youth Camp, for example, is hosted in Pomona with chaperones from the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York (ZAGNY) community. Approximately 30 children from age 6 to 15 enjoy the annual 'Hike up Bear Mountain.'

These monthly interactions are a much anticipated 'holiday', where individuals and families look forward to meeting a wide set of neighbors. Organizing the associations creates a structure fostering social relationships. Shared activities, such as clothing drives and fund-raisers for charitable causes, make it easy to multiply our efforts into a sizeable contribution. This

mitigates the feeling of "What can just one person do to help the world?"

INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS

In many less populated parts of the US and Canada, priests were not found in time to perform the paydast (funeral) prayers when a Zarathushti passed away. Our wise mobed community (NAMC) recognized the need to train individuals who can recite the paydast prayers in rural areas. They created the Mobedyar program which provides one-on-one tutoring and mentoring. It partners a lay Zarathushti youth with a mobed to teach him to perform certain prayers. Other innovations such as audience participation during Jashans increase the engagement of the host family and their guests in the prayer ceremony. In 2002, during the XII North American Zoroastrian Congress in Chicago, the community was polled on whether congregational participation in prayers was desired. Unanimously, the community revealed that this was desired. A publication issued in following months (Congregational Prayers for Jashan Ceremonies) encourages the laity to participate in the religious ceremonies. This booklet would benefit from wider exposure since it transforms ceremonies from spectator sports to participative endeavors. Additionally, in 2006, the North American Mobeds Council opened its annual meeting to the laity. Each year, interested individuals listen to the lectures and have a chance to share their thoughts. Problem solving and community building have become more collaborative.

While some traditionalist Zarathushtis may disapprove, the community has moved to performing rituals in a public forum. Previously, prayers were always performed in the enclosure of the 'prayer room'. During NauRoos and Pateti functions, the Atash ni-yash prayers are said in the common hall, in front of the whole community, including the non-Zarathushti spouses of our community members. Many individuals embrace openness and inclusivity, rather than ethnocentricity and parochialism. Community centers frequently encourage members to learn about other religions and the similarities between cultures. In 2009, ZAGNY held a 6 session series of lectures on understanding the commonality between Zoroastrianism and other religions. Organizations like 'Religions for Peace' encourage youth to speak up about their Zarathushti roots, and participate in interfaith activities. This creates well-rounded, diverse individuals who eloquently articulate their Zarathushti identity.

DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA

What Makes The North America Zarathushti Community Different?

ADAPTIVE, RESILIENT, ABLE TO CHANGE

A few years ago, the word NauRooz was spelled at least 5 different ways. It caused some angst in the Indian-born Parsi community members, who traditionally spell it as Navroz. Today the spelling has generally been accepted as NauRooz. The traditions of Sadeh, Tirgan, Mehrgan and Yalda are gaining popularity as more members satiate their curiosity by partaking in these festivals.

The community has leveraged technology to its advantage, which facilitates participation in organizing events. Email is a common method for disseminating information. Electronic newsletters inform the Diaspora about upcoming events as well as summarize functions and achievements. The FEZANA Yahoo-group email digest provides an intra-association sharing of news, information, appeals, and opinions.

This is a vibrant and active community — the NauRooz, Pateti, and New Years events are fun-filled, and include all sorts of entertainment from Ghazals to BellyDancing! Members generally agree the diverse entertainment, traditional food and social ambience encourage families to attend these functions.

LETING GO OF UNPRODUCTIVE ATTITUDES

The NA community generally maintains no restrictions on clothing, food, or days of the year (such as restrictions on use of metal scissors, sewing needles etc. on Gatha days). Individuals still observe some preferences in observing Baman Roj, for example, but it is a personal choice, not mandated by any governing body.

Since our children are generally accepted when they marry outside the community, as young adults they are more willing to participate in activities. Their spouses sometimes take a great interest in the community affairs, and generously volunteer their time. Toni Ghadialy, Shailendra Dusaj and Jasely Dukandar are excellent examples of such community service.

In a predominantly professional community, there is little desire to harbor grudges. When enough families participate, most individuals can find a friend on the first visit to a Center. However the community is widely distributed geographically and families cannot rely on each other for the needs of childcare or elder-care. Each family is a whirlwind of activity, meeting only on the periodic social occasions at the Dar e Meher, or their own homes.

Many members of associations are professionals, business owners, and global consultants. This network facilitates helping each other professionally; mentoring

youth and imparting career advice. WZCC (World Zoroastrian Chamber of Commerce) holds monthly meetings on professional issues as well as maintains an online bulletin board for employment networking. While this endeavor needs further development, it is certainly a factor in why individuals in NA might be more dynamic and contributive, despite the tendency of young people to move with their jobs, across the continental US and Canada.

In North America, we treasure being Zarathushtis, and actively seek engaging with the community. The NA family is comfortable engaging in multiple social circles: neighborhood or PTA group, Indian friends group, work-friends group, and Zoroastrian community group. When there are *"Only 24 Hours in the Day"*, many families agree that *"Energy makes time Elastic!"* With numerous children's activities, social commitments, exercise and wellness activities and ever-growing professional demands, the North American Community is flourishing, while holding on to who we are – *first and foremost, Zarathushtis.*



Nawaz Merchant is a mother of two boys, and Pharmaceutical Executive living in New Jersey. She volunteers as an ESL (English as a Second Language) Tutor and as a Program coordinator with Literacy Volunteers of Mercer County. Along with her husband Hoshi, she is an active member of the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York. She is also a writer, focused on the stories of Immigrants and their families.

THE PARZOR PROJECT Tradition and Transmission

THE INTANGIBLE HERITAGE OF A COMMUNITY

Shernaz Cama Ph.D



Ten years ago in 1999 UNESCO New Delhi invited me to start the UNESCO Parsi Zoroastrian Project. The question UNESCO asked me to explore was: Why was the Parsis' ancient heritage disappearing? Why is there so little acknowledgement about their contributions? The UNESCO Parzor Project began as a long term plan of recording and documentation.

It is not our declining demographic numbers that alone concerned UNESCO or Parzor. It was the loss of culture and disregard for heritage which was even more alarming. As we continued research and documentation, it was sad to see how little recognition the Zarathushti (Zoroastrian) contribution to world history has received. This became an issue worth exploring. Was it linked with a lack of written records?

Oral transmission has been the main methodology followed by the Zarathushti tradition. For cultural specialists, what is interesting is how, despite these adaptations and assimilations, the core culture of the Parsis remained unchanged from the Bronze Age till modern times. But for those of us working at UNESCO Parzor there was also the question as to why over the past fifty years this culture seems to have lost resilience and rooted-ness.

Is it because we have forgotten our oral traditions? These were a way of life which kept the culture alive from the Bronze Age till the 20th century. In modern times value is only given to textual records, that which is tangible. UNESCO advised us to first try and save what at the moment is now finally being seen as even more important—the intangible heritage of a community. This we would do by recording oral traditions or memory.

This paper examines three areas which we found remained alive through the oral traditions even when the geographical location changed from the Iranian and Central Asian regions to Western India, the language changed from Persian and Dari to Parsi Gujarati and the clothing and food adapted to new circumstances. These areas of transmission concern core ecological beliefs, the musical tradition and the crafts of weaving and embroidery.

ECOLOGICAL BELIEFS

Despite changes of history and geographical location the Parsi Zarathushtis have maintained ecological awareness and some traditions which date back to the beginnings of Zoroastrianism. This small example should help. I wonder if any of you remember seeing it observed? Each morning a Zarathushti is meant to bow to all four cardinal points reciting the Chaar–Deesha–no–Namaskaar.

"I bow in reverence to the entire creation of Ahura Mazda, the waters, the earth, the trees and the sky, the pure winds, the stars, the moon, the sun.....and to all men and women who tread the Path of Truth, I bow to them all."

The older Gujarati Parsis and priests even in Bombay still follow it each morning. It reflects an integral respect for Creation which is one of the main tenets of Zoroastrianism.

Each morning, most of us still gird ourselves in a sacred armor, the sudreh kusti, to be warriors for the Spenta or Good Creation. Each day, we try to fill the *gireban*, the one square inch pocket of our sudreh, with at least one good deed towards our fellow man or the Good Earth.

All the actions relating to this daily ritual are transmitted from parent to child through an oral method. In this "religion of action," the kusti knots are tied at the recitation of the word *shyothenanam* which means to work or to act. The Zarathushti girds himself to be a worker of the Lord, the best service to God being service to his creation.

A recent Parzor study of Delhi youth revealed that while 100 percent of the respondents recognized these garments as very important to the faith, less than 50 percent wore them regularly. So when these main emblems of the faith, the sudreh kusti, are being given up because of their "inconvenience", in a world of spaghetti tops, can other traditions survive?

A sense of the sacred is inherited in an osmotic process, mainly through living examples of elders in the

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The outer public ritual of the Jashan also reflects reverence for Creation

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family. During our childhood in Gujarat, we heard that it was a sin to pluck a flower after dark, because it was "asleep." A seedling was planted with a little prayer. Each aspect of Creation, be it plant or stone or earth, we were told, has a Fravashi or an indwelling divine essence and was to be respected. We were told even to walk respectfully because we stood on Spenta Armaiti, Mother Earth. All this was followed; it was a lived concern about the environment, through a faith that could not be taught by books.

Zarathushtra's entire teaching and ethics can be compressed into three commandments, "Humata, Hukata, Huvarashta," Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good Deeds. Idleness and sloth are evil; to make this earth productive is a spiritual duty.

This realization of values was also understood by learning the symbolism of the objects surrounding one in the home and by experiencing seasonal and life cycle rituals. The Silver ses, which each Parsi girl carries into her married home with her father's name inscribed on it, symbolizes the family united in affection, as the holiest of all institutions. The round plate stands for unity - where fire, water, plant and animal life are represented in silver, the holy element. The divo or oil lamp is lit within it daily to remind one of the enlightenment of wisdom.

The rooster, sacred to Sarosh, angel of prayer, for he drives away darkness and welcomes the light of dawn, is not to be eaten and is a symbol of blessing found in various aspects of Parsi life. Before each meal a thanksgiving called the Jamvani Baj is to be recited and before a person eats, the first serving is to be kept aside cleanly for the community dogs outside your home. This is the *Kutra no buk or Morsel for the Dog*. It is followed even today in the villages of Iran and Gujarat, to thank

man's friend and protector from the pastoral age. The Prophet's love of dogs is told in oral legends and has been recorded in later texts.

LITURGICAL CEREMONIES

The second form of oral transmission of this care for Creation which I have recorded is through the liturgical ceremonies performed by the priests. These range from simple recitations to bring rain and defeat the evil of drought, the *Vanant Yasht and Nirang*, specially linked through history with the Navsari priesthood, to the complex ritual of the Yasna.

Believed to have its origin in the chief act of worship of the proto-Indo-Iranians, the Yasna ceremony, maintained from prehistoric times, is one of the great heritages of humanity. Once a daily prayer in the most sacred inner sanctum of the great Atash Behrams, today few priests can perform this ritual. It starts before dawn with the drawing of water from a well and develops into a complex web of prayers, which bring all the seven creations, the elements, and the cosmos itself into a sacred space. There are no statues or icons here. The only objects of veneration are natural, as the priests bless and purify all creation. Finally, after hours of intense chanting and symbolic ritual, the water—now energized and consecrated—is poured back into the well in the light of the sun to strengthen the new day.

Each movement in this ceremony is symbolic. The priests recite the Yasna by memory; their actions synchronize with the recitation. There is no text before them; it is all part of oral tradition. Today there is no Yasna performed at all in Iran. Even in India very few priests are qualified or eager to perform this arduous task.

PARSI GUJARATI: DYING LANGUAGE, DYING CULTURE?

So, we see that Bronze Age rituals survived with the Parsis in their land of adoption, India's tolerance helped preserve identity, and its caste codes perhaps helped maintain differences. Over the centuries in India, the languages of Avesta and Pahlavi were forgotten except by the priests. The community still recited the prayers but without access to meaning, while a new spoken language emerged: the Parsi Gujarati dialect. This is a unique blend of imperial Pahlavi and Dubra or out-caste Gujarati. It was acquired through contact with agricultural workers who actually tilled the soil along with the refugees. Yet this dialect succeeded in maintaining traditions, a unique lifestyle and core beliefs for over a thousand years.

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Specific Stages listed by UNESCO in the *UNESCO Atlas of World Languages in Danger, 2009.*

These stages are linked with intergenerational transmission of language.

Safe- Language spoken by all- Intergenerational transmission is uninterrupted.

Unsafe- Most children's speak languages but restricted to domain of home.

Definitely endangered- Children no longer learn language as mother tongue.

Severely endangered - Language spoken by grandparents. Parent generation understand, they do not speak it to children.

Critically endangered - Youngest speakers are grandparents and older and they speak it infrequently.

The Parsi Gujarati dialect was not taught; it had no texts or dictionaries. It was absorbed by generations of Parsis and carried the meaning of prayers, ethical beliefs, cultural practices, humor and of course some terrible cuss words!

Today, we know that every fourteen days a language becomes extinct. Three-thousand of the world's 6,000-7,000 languages are liable to be lost before the end of this century. Language death has occurred throughout history but currently there is a dramatic upsurge in loss because of rapid globalization and the economic importance of changing to the dominant language, English.

The linguistic heritage of a community carries its culture, its songs, prayers, folk tales and wisdom, and with its loss a community loses its cohesion and identity. UNESCO has been examining language loss, for it is seen that language death is a primary maker for the end of a culture.

MUSICAL TRADITIONS

Each language carries a special idiom. Parsi proverbs, sayings, stories and jokes have almost disappeared. The greatest loss of transmission has however been in the core musical traditions, which were handed down through families till our generation in the form of songs called *monajats*. Music is an important tradition for us: the Gathas were songs or metrical chants and music propagates faith in most cultures. Parsi Gujarati monajats have carried for Parsis the memory of their culture.

A monajat is a personal communion with God. In the field of Zoroastrian oral transmission, the monajat is one the simplest forms of prayer. It is taught in childhood for children are easily able to memorize rhymes and songs as a fun-filled part of a day. So the monajat became the oral equivalent of cultural transmission even before a child had learnt to read.

How did we learn monajats? I remember learning monajats in Ahmedabad at our ancestral home. When the loban was taken around in the evening it was the time for grandparents and great aunts to sing monajats on the big verandah as we children listened and learnt. These monajats were a family centered transmission, bonding joint families in music.

We began our research into the monajat tradition at a time when we were also moving into archival heritage restoration and preservation at the Meherjirana Library in Navsari. At the library we discovered monajats in manuscript. A few are ascribed to a Dara Pahlon (Persian in Avestan script), some to the Dastur Jamasp Asa family and Dastur Erachji Meherjirana (between 1840-1860), and some to one Behdin Navroji Meherji Homji (1809 CE). Thus this tradition was carefully maintained and handed down across generations of priests.

Some older copies of the Khordeh Avesta contain monajats but none of the written manuscripts have their music. Ultimately those which have survived are those that have been regularly sung. Unlike the bardic tradition, the monajats had no one performer as it was an essential part of family life.

It is through the monajats that core values enter a child's consciousness to reinforce precepts. While they are very simple, they show how a religion transmits itself. Important Avestan words and concepts from the Gathas, a very complex set of songs, have been carried in a simple way through Persian monajats, Gujarati monajats, and into what I call the English monajat of today.

Here is an example of a monajat for the Ashem Vohu prayer:

Prayer:

Ashem Vohu, Vahishtem asti

Ushta asti, ushta ahmai

Hyat ashai vahishtai ashem.

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(Truth is the highest good. Happiness comes to those who work with truth for the benefit of others.)

Monajat:

*Ashem che ashoi, bhalayi nu nam
Che servethi uttam ne sukh no pegam
Kharu sukh aa jag ma te pame taman
Ashoi ne khatar asho jena kam.*

CORE MEANING

(Asha is Truth; it is pure and good to be truthful. True happiness (Sukh) comes only to him who does good deeds (kam) for others. Three cardinal beliefs are Asha or Truth, Kam or work/deeds and joy or Sukh. They go together in this prayer and Monajat to explain the core beliefs of Zarathushti Religion)

The next Monajat is a personal favorite. As children we sang it as the final song in the evening (sharu thai che raat) and even the birds in the chikoo trees of our compound seemed to stop their crazy chatter and settle down with this hymn. It is a blessing which is sung as a lullaby to children but despite its soothing quality it still reminds a child even as he goes to sleep of core beliefs, Manashni, Gavashni, Kunashni. The child sleeps with the promise that God will keep him safe all night and will awaken him to perform good deeds (bhala kam) in the new day.

Khudavind Khavind:

Khudavind Khavind O! Parverdegar
Namu tari Dadagah e hu khaksar.
Thayo roj akhar sharu thai chhe raat
Tane raji karvathi, hu chu pacbat.
Dayalu khudavind O jag na re baap
Mane saaru dahpan ne buddhi tu aap
Ke bhulo sudharun bavey roj be roj
Bhalai vadharun kari nitye khoj .
Ke tari madad thi hu rakhu vivek
Manashni, Gavashni Kunashni te nek.
Mane pasabani ma tari suvad
Bhala kamo karva savaarey uthad.
Bhala Kamo Karva Savaarey uthad.

CORE MEANING

(Great lord, I bow at my household fire as night falls. Help me to achieve wisdom with obedience. Help me to correct my mistakes and increase my good deeds. Keep me on the path of wisdom -the path of good thoughts, good words and good deeds. Keep me safe in your care all night and awaken me to perform good deeds in the morning).

Oral traditions survive because they permit flexibility. For us, thirty years ago, Gujarati was the language which explained our prayers. In the globalized world of today, our children live far from ancestral roots. In the 1960s and 1970s a wave of migration took many Parsis far away from Gujarat and some away from India. This gave rise a few years later to a new type of monajat, the English monajat. The aim remained the same: to teach the meaning of prayers and explain our ethics to our children. Pilloo Jungalwalla of Delhi started this tradition fifty years ago in the Delhi Anjuman classes she conducted. Zoroastrian Studies run by Khojeste and Firoza Mistree, along with the late Shernaz Munshi, recorded English songs for another generation in their early work *Khushali na geet garba*.

Other songs, garbas and khyals adopted from the Indian tradition were sung at births, navjotes and marriages to accompany celebrations. In the cities today, this tradition of oral transmission through music has become a part of the disappearing world of the joint family system and the ancestral home.

WEAVING AND EMBROIDERY

My final section shows again how intangible cultural heritage also carries tangible material culture. I draw upon crafts of the Parsis which were also inherited through oral tradition. Parsi embroidery is perhaps the best-known of Parsi material culture. However, an even



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Kusti weaving

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older craft was the ancient weaving tradition, believed to have come down from the time of the Prophet himself. The weaving of the kusti on the loom is an intricate craft tradition with great symbolic value. While it is a material craft, its transmission has been purely through oral tradition. Parzor has made the first-ever written document on kusti weaving, with Ashdeen Lilaowala, a textile expert, studying and documenting this ancient heritage.

Kusti weaving was only part of an ancient craft tradition. The weaving of the base fabrics, ghat and gajii, for Parsi embroidery is part of the world's multicultural craft history.

It is imperative that Parzor's years of research in textiles and Parsi embroidery appear in book form. Parsi embroidery is truly a multicultural heritage of humanity. It combines Persian, Chinese, Indian and European motifs and stitches becoming the most attractive aspect of the hybrid Parsi Zarathushti culture. The way in which symbols have come together shows a culture which is inclusive, taking the best of East and West to create something of astonishing beauty.

Parsi embroidery carries ancient history and shows continuing traditions. Xenophon described Cyrus the Great coming into battle "wearing a purple tunic shot with white ...and a mantle all of purple." This color combination remains very popular even today among the Parsis.



A fish Gara

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The Rooster sacred to Sarosh Angel of Prayer, is seen especially in embroidery on Jhablas to protect children before their Navjote. The Rooster is seen here on the Chinese Divine fungus, which keeps away the evil eye.



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Khakho Gara

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The Zarathushti love of nature and transmission of its motifs can be seen in embroidery. During the Tang and Song dynasties (618-907 C.E. and 960-1279 C.E.) intercultural exchange brought together the skill of Chinese embroidery schools and their symbolism with Persian naturalistic scenes to create a beautiful cultural amalgam.

In the Zoroastrian Pahlavi text "The Bundahishn" (The Story of Creation), every flower symbolizes an angel. The thirty Yazatas or archangels and angels whose names are applied to the thirty days of the month can be seen across generations of embroidery traditions. Marco Polo described the embroidery of Kerman women "in silk of all colors, with beast and birds and other figures....a delight to the eye." While the Parsi Zarathushtis adopted motifs of protection from Chinese embroidery such as the "divine fungus" and added it into their repertoire, they kept Zarathushti symbols of protection like the rooster of Sarosh, the legendary Iranian simurgh which roosts on the Tree of Seeds in the Avesta and has healing powers, and the ariz or fish, an emblem of fertility.

Through oral transmission not only symbols but also stitches like the *khakho* or seed pearl stitch came down across centuries. It was called the "*forbidden stitch*" because of the toll it took on one's eyesight. We have lost this intricate stitch today because we did not manage to learn it in time from the last practitioner in Ahmedabad.

LOSS OF TRADITION

There are so many other oral traditions of this ancient culture, such as the tradition of medical healing, with us now only in the form of the Hadvaid, all of which are rapidly becoming extinct as the Parsis lose touch with their oral traditions.

Is this generational loss of our oral traditions one of the reasons why our children are forgetting their culture? They are under great pressure to "fit in" as are children of every culture across the world. But a mono-cultural norm is destructive to diversity.

It is difficult to pinpoint when and why such carefully guarded transmission began losing its value. The Zarathushtis have always absorbed change but have never been swept away by it. The Parsi Zarathushtis of Hyderabad are a perfect example of adaptation to the local environment in social life while keeping their core culture intact. They were pioneers in trade and were respected members of the Nizam's Court, they observed a type of purdah, and they read Turkish fairy tales to their children. But their two agiaries are still important centers for the community. Their faith and enterprise across centuries is another book waiting to be written. From

ORAL TRADITIONS

Dr. Shernaz Cama

The World Congress in Dubai was personally a revelation. There were men and women from every corner of the globe, working quietly on issues that concerned the Zarathushtis. Again, in every country, Zarathushtis continued to excel and serve – as doctors, teachers, managing trusts or businesses, in the political field, and they did this without expecting reward or recognition, continuing perhaps unconsciously, to follow the key tenet of their religion – service to Spenta Creation.

It made me think of why the Zarathushti has always managed to stand out in a crowd and why it is imperative to save a cultural heritage which continues to create remarkable human beings. For the first time, I realized many carry memories, which they need to reinforce with confidence in the next generation. These may be memories of Iran or Pakistan, India or Singapore, history they have witnessed, songs which they have almost forgotten and crafts which they remember only when they look at them again.

Tradition etymologically means 'to hand on', we need to record but even more to hand on what this racial memory contains. It may be ecological consciousness or an ethical value system, it includes a sense of fun; enjoying good food, dressing elegantly, laughing at crazy jokes. Let us keep alive for the next 5 years this sense of community belonging that was so apparent in both the serious and light hearted aspects of the Congress. Let us also resolve to use that wonderful creation – instant communications, so that wherever we are we can reach out, share and care about each other and our heritage.

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Multan to Kyoto, Parsis adapted in dress and in habits, fitting in rather than standing out.

From the 16th century onwards, the Parsis began spreading across India and the world. They moved north to the Mughal courts and south towards Madras for trade. They had no caste bars to prevent intermingling with foreigners and an ability to adapt to circumstances. By 1640, Dorabji Nanabhai became the first Parsi to live in Bombay. By 1850, more than half of the community had shifted to cities, serving first Portuguese and then British masters. But core traditions continued. The joke about the Parsi cricket team performing the kusti before going in to bat at Lords is legendary.

Oral traditions survive only when they are practiced. In a great rush to embrace change, one of the first losses was that Parsis left their land and became almost totally an urban community. Today the majority of the Parsis live in Mumbai. Their rooted-ness in the soil, community life, and then family life all changed. So, while Parsis recall the 19th century with pride due to their creation of wealth, paradoxically this was the very period when they sustained a great loss of inner memory and traditional wealth of knowledge.

The history and development of much of modern India, from the creation of the ports of Surat and Bombay, to the first bank, the first steel plant at Jamshedpur, and even the pioneering of atomic energy, were all contributions of this small community. We have recorded two such pioneers: Homai Vyarawalla, India's first woman photographer, who was little remembered till Parzor found her well over 90 years old and living alone in Baroda; and Sam Maneckshaw, "Apro Sam," India's first Field Marshal.

CREATING AWARENESS

A lot more needs to be done to create public awareness. Parzor, with the collaboration of the Prince of Wales Museum of Mumbai, has been in discussions about a very major international exhibition in the near future. The ultimate aim of the Parzor Project is to create a Museum of international quality on the Parsi Zarathushtis. This would be a permanent tribute to a community which in modern India has given so much and asked for so little.

This museum is urgently needed to preserve heritage and history because of the events of the past fifty years. With migration, Parsis have chosen to become very adaptable and have given up or forgotten much that made up their identity. They fit in whenever they go, a global people spread from Alaska to Australia. The few

who have chosen to stay back in the villages live in dire poverty in order to guard an ancient, crumbling heritage.

When adaptability becomes assimilation can a community survive? Reactionary reversals or living without an identity are not viable choices. The linguist David Crystal notes how highly we value little scraps of personal documentation: a grandparent's diary, lines at the back of a photograph, etc. These provide us with our ancestry and we take pride in their preservation. A culture once lost cannot be replaced. Is there a way to escape the predicaments of progress? Can the way back also be a way forward?

To learn more about the Parzor Project and its activities, visit <http://www.unescoparzor.com/>. Donations can also be made online.

Shernaz Cama is the Director of the PARZOR project funded by UNESCO

Abstracted from paper presented at World Zoroastrian Congress, December 2009



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نماد پیروزی گرما بر سرما
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انجمن زرتشتیان کبک

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THE PROGRESSION OF THE ZOROASTRIAN DIASPORA IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

by NOSHIR J AVARI

Honorary Life Member and Counsel Emeritus Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe (Inc)
(ZTFE)

Apart from Iran, the UK has the oldest Zoroastrian settlement outside the Indian sub-continent. While the social and economic privileges that the Parsis enjoyed in India under the British undoubtedly helped in their ventures abroad, the UK community has achieved a great deal in its own right and greatly contributed to British life in the last 200 years.

EARLIEST PARSIS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

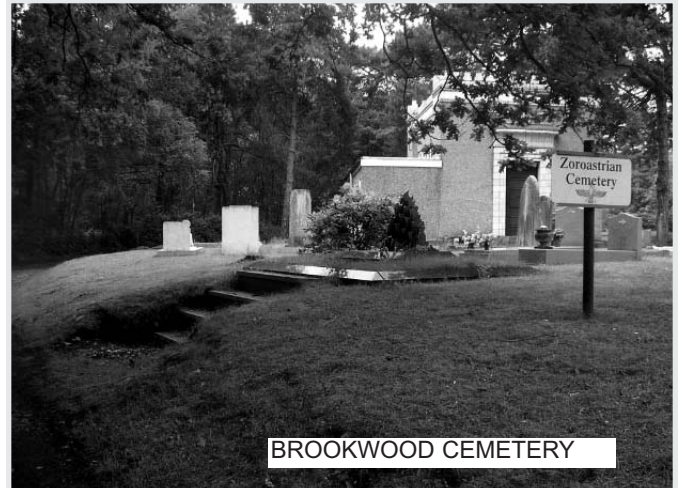
The first Indian to travel to the UK was Navroji Rustomji Manek Seth, a Parsi-Zoroastrian. The earliest UK Parsis fell into three main categories - traders, students and wealthy tourists. Some of the visitors kept detailed travelogues containing fascinating anecdotes, such as when the Great Queen Victoria spotted K R Cama and Dosabhai Framji at the Balmoral Castle and invited them to lunch at her castle! From the great 19th century trading families of the Wadias, the Tatas and the Camas came their agents and apprentices, such as Ardeshir Wadia, Jamshetji Tata, Dadabhai Naoroji and K R Cama. The first Indian to graduate from St Andrews University in 1861 was Muncherjee Kolah, who qualified as a surgeon with FRCS from London. Cursetji Maneckji Shroff, the first High Court Judge to sit on the Bench in Bombay, was a Zoroastrian who had studied law at Oxford in 1864. In 1886, every member of the first Indian cricket team to tour England was a Parsi. The emancipation of women occurred among Parsis much earlier than other South Asian communities. In 1885 Cornelia Sorabji, was the first Indian lady to graduate from Oxford.

PARSI CONTRIBUTION TO UK LIFE

Parsis contributed to British public life in the late 19th and early 20th centuries through the medium of politics. The renowned Dr. Dadabhai Naoroji of the Liberal Party was the first Asian MP in Britain. In 1895, Sir Mancherjee M Bhownagjee entered the British Parliament as a Conservative. A third Zoroastrian, Sir Shapurji Saklatvala, later served as the Labour-Communist MP. Taking a less conventional route, Madame Bhikaiji Cama became an ardent revolutionary for Indian freedom. She

unveiled the flag of Indian independence for the first time in public at the World Socialist Conference in Stuttgart, Germany in 1907. In 1923, Sir Dadiba Dalal was appointed the first Indian High Commissioner in London. More recently, Lord Karan Bilimoria (founder of COBRA Beer) was appointed to the House of Lords as a cross-bench Peer, following his very successful Chairmanship of the Indo-British Partnership and his services to the promotion of business and entrepreneurship in the UK.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PARSI COMMUNITY IN THE UK



BROOKWOOD CEMETERY

In 1861, Muncherjee Hormusjee Cama, Dr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Ardeshir Khurshedji Wadia and Phirojshah Pestonji founded the first Asian ethnic religious association in the UK: Religious Fund of the Zoroastrians of Europe. The prescient founding fathers aspired to build a community center to pray and socialise; a burial ground for their dead; administrative offices; and, most importantly, a charity fund to assist indigent Zoroastrians. A burial ground was acquired at Brookwood in Surrey in 1863 and is still maintained by the Association, which is now named the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe (ZTFE). Famous Indian industrialists such as Jamshetji N Tata and Nawrojee N Wadia rest eternally in this peaceful

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WEST HAMPSTEAD



Dhunjibhoy Bomanjee (£6,000) and Dr E J Khory (£1,500). President Jehangiji Moos wrote in a position paper in 1959 that “members of our community are reluctant to go to a crowded Zoroastrian House” and that “a Zoroastrian cannot live by bread alone. The spiritual side of life is of vital importance to any religious community”. Consequently, a community center was purchased at West Hampstead in 1969, which also had a Satayesh Gah lovingly established within the premises by Dasturji Dr Sohrab H Kutar, upon whom was conferred the honourable title of High Priest. (photo right)

In the late 1960s, Parsis from a politically volatile African continent arrived in the UK. In 1979, large numbers of Iranian Zoroastrians flocked to the UK after the overthrow of the Shah. To accommodate the growing community, the UK center was expanded thanks to donations from Arbab Rustom Guiv and the Zartoshty Brothers. In 1983, President Mr Shahpur F Captain inaugurated the extension.

LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE UK PARSI COMMUNITY

In 1993, Chairman Noshir Avari wrote a visionary paper - “The Unimpeded March of the Zoroastrian Spirit in the 21st Century.” In 1997, ZTFE benefited from the charisma of President Dorab E Mistry who increased participation by laypeople and donations by Zoroastrian

complex. Six decades later a freehold property in Kensington was secured thanks to benefactors, Sir



HARROW

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philanthropists. The late Mobed Faridoon and his brother Mehraban Zartoshty donated magnanimous sums, and the community remains indebted to munificent Mehraban Zartoshty in particular.

In September 2000, the ZTFE relocated to Harrow – the most religiously diverse borough in the UK. The building was renovated under the guidance of Past President and Honorary Architect Mr Shahrokh Shahrokh and the English Heritage. The building's magnificent Assembly Hall is aptly named the "Zartoshty Brothers Hall". An expensive, new Satayesh Gah with marble imported from Italy was inaugurated. After the West Hampstead property was sold in January 2005, the Zoroastrian Centre formally opened June 24, 2005 to coincide with the 8th World Zoroastrian Congress held in London. On May 6, 2008 the mayor graced an awards ceremony at the Harrow Civic Centre where the Zoroastrian Centre was conferred the Highly Commended Award for its architectural and environmental design. Hundreds and thousands of people passing through Harrow stop to marvel at the centre.

The new Zoroastrian Centre is the focal point of our community. Apart from regular religious functions, classes teach youngsters about our religion and its importance in a society inundated with materialism and consumerism. Many distinguished people and politicians from all sections of the wider community come to visit the Centre. We had the great honour of hosting HRH Prince Edward and the Countess of Wessex.

THE ROLE OF THE ZTFE TODAY

The ZTFE routinely shares the principles of Zoroastrianism with the wider British society. Today, the sole chair in Zoroastrian studies in the Western Hemisphere is at the School of Oriental and African Studies – London University – thanks to the munificent donations from the Zartoshty brothers and the late Professor Mary Boyce. Zoroastrianism was depicted at the Millennium Dome as one of the nine major religions of the United Kingdom. Our Ervad Rustom Bhedwar had an audience with the Pope at the Vatican. On Her Majesty's 50th anniversary on the throne, several Zoroastrians were invited to Buckingham Palace.

Paurushasp B. Jila was elected President of the ZTFE in November 2005 at the age of 31 and became the youngest ever President in the Association's 149-year history. He is the first President of the ZTFE to have been born in the UK. In November 2009, Malcolm M. Deboo succeeded Paurushasp B. Jila as President. Malcolm

has a long history of dedicated work in the community in the UK and also in the field of interfaith relations.

The ZTFE runs Europe's only Zoroastrian place of worship and burial ground. Recognised by the UK government as the representative body for the Zoroastrian community in Europe, ZTFE is registered to solemnise weddings, arrange religious ceremonies according to both the Iranian Zoroastrian and Shahenshai calendars. The World Zoroastrian Organisation, the Harrow Zoroastrian Group, Zoroastrians of South London and the North West Zoroastrian Community all serve similar functions.

British Zoroastrians are an upwardly mobile community. A variety of professionals – doctors, lawyers, engineers, accountants, opticians, dentists, university lecturers, computer consultants, architects – exist within our tiny community. There is no shortage of talent in the community; Freddie Mercury was the icon of rock music; Lord Karan Bilimoria of Cobra Beer; Zarin Patel, the Finance Director of the BBC; and, many others have succeeded in the British Zoroastrian diaspora. Against this vibrant background of talent, the World Zoroastrian Chamber of Commerce is also thriving in the UK. With one of India's greatest sons – the legendary House of Tata – having now firmly acquired a strong foothold in the British economy, following the purchase of Tetley Tea in 2000, Corus (former British Steel) in 2007 and Jaguar Land Rover in 2008, there is no doubt that the Zoroastrian diaspora in the UK will continue to flourish in the 21st Century and beyond.

Noshir Jal Avari of Avari & Associates Ltd is a consultant in Tax Investigations. Noshir originates from Mombasa, Kenya and came to the UK as a student. He was one of the first Asian / Indian of Officer Grade for Her Majesty's Inland Revenue, now known as Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs. He has been the Trustee of the ZTFE for 14 years



Photo credit, Zoroastrian Trust funds of Europe

DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA

ZARATHUSHTRA AND THE EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE

A Model for the Seekers of Freedom

Dr Khosro Khazai (Paradis)

Speech at the 3000th Anniversary of Zarathushti Culture, Los Angeles, December 20, 2003

Speech by Presented for UNESCO's ceremony in honor of 3000 years of Zoroastrian culture, the 20th December 2003 in Los Angeles



Dr. Khosro Khazai (Paradis) speaking at Unesco 3000th anniversary celebrations

It is well known that the past experience can be a guiding light for the present and future actions. In this context I believe that the European experience in search of an identity and freedom of thought started from the Renaissance to the end of the 19th century, and the major role played by Zarathushtra throughout this experience, can be of the highest importance, as a model, for today's seekers of freedom.

In fact for the past 2500 years Zarathushtra's ideas and views on the existence and the world have been an integral part of the European culture. But this very long period has not always been a love story. It has been marked by the alternation of the highest veneration for Zarathushtra and the deepest rejection of him.

Praised and venerated passionately for about 1000 years as the highest symbol of knowledge by almost all the ancient Greek and Roman philosophers, Zarathushtra, was severely demonized as from the 6th century by the Church in Europe as the father of Dualism; and with him all the Persian doctrines such as Mithraism and Manichaeism together with Platonic philosophers were rejected.

The 6th century was the beginning of the Middle Ages in Europe. A horrible time called "the great heresy". A period of terror, obscurantism and inquisition that

destroyed by what is called today "collateral damage" the finest part of the Western European civilization

The Church had decided that any idea, any philosophy or any movement that has incorporated in their Christianity a belief in Dualism, was at war against God. Thus they should be punished. And punishment meant either to be killed or to be burned in public places.

Behind the concept of "dualism", according to which the existence is conditioned by the struggle between two opposite forces, good and evil, the Church saw mainly Zarathushtra.

With Zarathushtra's rejection, almost the whole Pre-Christian European civilization was rejected by the Church.

In fact, many of the Greek and Roman philosophers, mostly dualistically inspired, had astonishingly either sheltered their philosophical or scientific work under the cover of Zarathushtra's authority or had related themselves in one way or another to Zarathushtra

For instance Pythagoras the great philosopher and mathematician of the 5th century BCE, a convinced dualist, called himself a pupil of Zarathushtra, another great dualist philosopher, Plato of the 4th century BCE. was called by his famous student Aristotle, a reincarnation of Zarathushtra, so much he was influenced by the Persian Master.

There were also the Manichaeism, another Persian religion, under the form of the Southern French Catharism and many other movements around the Mediterranean sea and in Central Europe, behind which the Church saw again Zarathushtra, as the great evil.

The fifty years of a terrible war initiated by Pope Innocent III in the 13th century, on the Cathars and the horrible carnage at Montsegur the Cathar's stronghold in the South of France, is well documented (1). As, Paul Kriwaczek, the author of "In Search of Zarathushtra" points out, "the more one reads accounts on successive crusade that left hundreds of thousands dead and the conquest of the south of France by Catholic orthodoxy, the more one is reminded of the totalitarian tyrannies of our own time".

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Perhaps it is worthy to note that, the Protestant Churches, since the Reform, kept distance with the Catholic Church and didn't praise any of Catholic excommunications (2).

The confusion and the absurdity regarding Zarathushtra went so far that during the whole European Middle-Age, Zarathushtra was called prince of the Magi, when the magi in return were strangely mistaken for magicians! Even the invention of astrology, alchemy and the Jewish Cabala was attributed to him (3)!

In such a confusing and repressive climate, gradually the discontent voices of some enlightened minds against the religious totalitarianism, here and there, start to raise.

We are in the 14th century, the beginning of the slow European Renaissance. Europe in search for a new cultural reference and a new identity starts to be interested in the long forgotten culture and civilization of the ancient Greece and Rome. Everything was to rediscover.

At this time the great and influential Byzantine philosopher of the 14th and 15th century, Giorgius Plethon, who was initiated into the Zoroastrian philosophy by his Jewish master Eliaus, decided with a number of intellectuals of that time to promote an ambitious, perhaps too ambitious idea.

He said, *"the world is tired of the endless wars between the three religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. So let's try another road, another vision for this world"*.

Using his important political influence at the Byzantine court and his great intellectual notoriety among the Intellegencia of that time, he tried to set up a universal religion made of Zoroastrianism and Platonism to replace the three mentioned religions (4).

Despite the years of huge effort, he did not succeed. However, his ideas spread among European elite and flourished within the famous Platonic academy in Florence. They became the basis of the process that lead to the humanism in Europe during the Renaissance. As from that period the interest in Zarathushtra was once again reborn in Europe.

The cultural freedom fighters of that time, namely philosophers, historians, writers, musicians, scientists, poets and many others, in search of the means for their struggle against the totalitarian power of the Middle Age Church, felt that Zarathushtra could bring them a new light and a new instrument in their fight.

But in those times, who really knew what exactly Zarathushtra's existential philosophy was, or what did he say. Since at least 1500 years, even Zarathushtra's

language had been forgotten. The Moslem invasion of Persia, in the 7th century had burned and destroyed almost the whole Zoroastrian texts and literature.

So, everything was to be rediscovered. But this attempt of rediscovery, and consequently the recuperation of Zarathushtra, became a pretext for another battle between the Christian, Jewish and Humanist scholars.

The first attempt by the Christians in that direction was made by a professor at Oxford University, named Thomas Hyde at the end of the 17th century. He based himself on all sources available at the time, and wrote a large book in Latin. This work was to influence all the subsequent researches on the subject (5).

Hyde was a fervent Christian, for whom everything in the history of mankind turned around Christianity. Therefore, he tried to show Zarathushtra and his doctrine in the light most favorable and acceptable to Christian eyes. He wrote *"in reforming the ancient Persian religion, Zarathushtra repeated the work of Abraham, and showed the religion of one and only God"*. He insisted that Zoroastrians were always monotheists, because in their religion God namely Ahura Mazda had priority over the evil called Angra Mainyu.

It was of course a huge change compared to Christian dualist view of Zoroastrianism throughout the Middle-Ages.

But, only two years later, Hyde was severely attacked by other zealous Christian scholars.

The first one was Pierre Bayle. A famous French scholar who wrote in 1702 in his important work *"Dictionnaire historique et critique"* that Hyde's argument on the monotheism of the Zoroastrians was weak and false. He wrote *"because the Zoroastrians, submitted to the hard rule and hatred of the Moslems, wanted to protect themselves; so they adopted the Semitic religions belief according to which God has created evil"*.

Bale's attack on Hyde was to be carried on by another French scholar Abbe Foucher.

He blamed Hyde in his numerous papers with much arrogance for having put doubts on the ancient Greek authors' affirmations according to which the Persians were dualists.

He then advised Hyde, a devout Christian himself, to stay in the line of serving the true Religion, that is to say Christianity.

In this scholastic quarrel, undermined by the religious militancy, another famous scholar, this time a Jew named Humphry Prideaux, enter the battlefield.

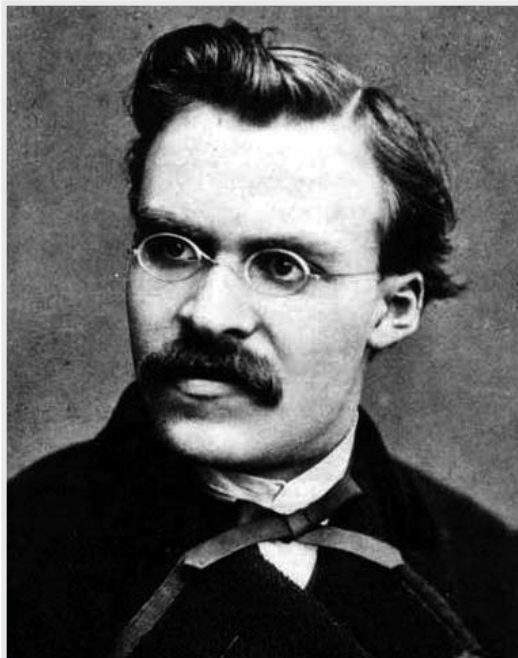
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In his book *"History of the Jews"* published in 1715, he pushed the argument to such an extent that he considered Zarathushtra had been born a Jew ! So he was a monotheist.

He even situated Zarathustra's birth in the 5th century BCE. and designated Zarathushtra's Jewish teachers namely Elias, Ezra and Daniel.

With the rediscovery and translation of Avesta, in the late 18th



century by the French scholar Anquetil Duperron, it was the turn of the Humanists, made of philosophers, scholars, writers, poets, musicians, artists to enter this ideological battle.

The translation of Avesta provoked passionate discussions in Europe. Voltaire (6), Grimm (7), Didérot (8), Goethe (9), Von Kleist (9), Byron (10), Wordsworth (11),

Shelley (12) and later Nietzsche (photo above) and many others joined this ideological fight (6). The great musicians participated as well. Rameau included Zarathushtra in his opera *"Zoroastre"*, Mozart in his *"The Magic Flute"* and Richard Strauss in his symphony *"Thus Spake Zarathushtra"*.

The main interest, for the European intellectuals in Zarathushtra, was that they thought they had found a weapon against the power of the Church. To them the Church did not have anymore the monopoly of the truth. The truth could also be found in a non-Christian tradition, much older than Christianity.

More and more, as Jacques Duchesne-Guillemin in his book *"Western Response to Zoroastre"* points out, *"Zarathushtra became part of an attempt in Western Europe to emancipate modern men and women from Christianity"*.

Zoroastrianism was praised with all the virtues which Christianity was supposed to be lacking: such as rationality, simplicity, contact with nature, constructive and positive instincts, and above all, Zarathushtra was acclaimed for his dualistic solution to the problem of evil.

The old and disturbing question about the nature of Jewish and Christian God that had been left unanswered for at least two thousand years, once again, was brought forward:

You say: your God is All Knowledgeable and All Powerful. Tell us why He has created a creature named Satan, to deceit the weak human beings, that He Himself has created. Either this God is not All Knowledgeable or He is not All Powerful or the Evil is a part of Him.

In reaction to this embarrassing question, the Christian intellectuals counter-attacked and changed the front. They accused Duperron of being a forger and the translation of Avesta a forgery. Facing such a poisoning situation, Duperron, himself a faithful Roman Catholic, set back and refused to see anything in the Avesta that could be used against Christianity. His attitude, of course, disappointed the anti-church intellectuals, though Voltaire insisted on Duperron's courage.

At this point philologists and linguists also joined the battle. Three years later another translation of Avesta made by the German linguist Kleukers proved that Duperron was right and Avesta entered for good the field of scientific research (15). It took however another thirty years until the last panchristian resistants give in and recognize its authenticity. From then on the scholars became interested to search the hidden sources of Christianity within the Zoroastrian doctrine.

The discovery of Sanskrit and the relationship between this language and the Avestan language, made easier the comprehension of the Avesta. The idea of the common origin of the civilization of Iran and India was thus established.

For the Humanists however, there was another victory on the way. That was the recognition and translation of the Gathas, in the middle of the 19th century, by the brilliant German philologist Martin Haug (16).

Through a very hard study, he isolated and translated 17 out of the 72 chapters of the Yasnas in Avesta, written in a much older language. These 17 chapters, the

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Gathas, proved to be the words coming from the very mouth of Zarathushtra, about 3000 years earlier.

Brussels, November 2003

Haug could thus distinguish between Zarathushtra's theology, that was monotheistic and his existential philosophy that was dualistic. This affirmation was enthusiastically welcomed by the Parsis in India because it was pointing out their original monotheism.

But some other scholars, such as Spiegel and Darmesteter could hardly digest the fact that Zarathushtra could be the discoverer of monotheism. (17)

So they counter attacked. The first one tried to show it was the Hebrews that had given to Zarathushtra the idea of a single God in the Gathas, and the second went farther and claimed the Gathas were forgeries, composed under the influence of Hellenizing Jews.

Of course neither of these views could be sustained for longtime, specially when the further researches proved that Zarathushtra had lived in Eastern Iran where the Jewish ideas had not penetrated at the time of Zarathushtra. These claims were abandoned soon even by their authors themselves.

This kind of attitudes led other German scholars such as Rhode (18) and Creuzer (19) to claim the Zoroastrian origin for all cultures, Western and Eastern. Perhaps such claim was excessive, but it was the climate of the intellectual battles of that period.

Just a few years after the rediscovery of the texts of the Gathas, the gist of Zarathushtra's ideas expressed 3000 years earlier was recovered in a brilliant way in 1883 by one of the greatest philosophers of our time, Friedrich-Wilhelm Nietzsche, in his book "*Thus Spake Zarathushtra*".

His work based on an extremely good understanding of Zarathushtra's revolutionary concept and ideal, rendered in European thought, is considered as the final victory in the struggle against the power of the Church in Europe. It changed radically the European thought of modern times, delivering people from the sins they had never committed (20).

Please let me finish this short talk by this phrase:

"I am from today and I am from yesterday; but something in me is from tomorrow, from after tomorrow and from always" *Thus spake Zarathushtra*.

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Khosro Khazai (Pardis)

DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA

EUROPE

Doctor Khosro Khazai (Pardis), received his Ph. D. in 1978 from the Universities of Brussels and Ghent in Belgium. He is specialized in Middle Eastern and Central Asian Studies, with the main interest in History of Civilizations and Ideas.

For the past 30 years, he has been a scientific researcher and teacher, in Middle Eastern, Central Asian and Zoroastrian Studies in different universities and cultural institutions in Europe.

Since 2002 he is the Director of "European Centre for Zoroastrian Studies" a cultural, secular, and free-thinking institution. Its main office is in Brussels, Belgium.

Dr. Khosro Khazai (Pardis) has published 10 books and about 200 articles, mainly in history of civilisations and ideas and Zoroastrian thought and doctrine; among the books can be mentioned:

-Birth and Evolution of Writing 5000 history of writing, (in French), translated to Dutch, Brussels 1985, reprinted. 7 times

-From Sumer to Babylonia ;(in French), translated to Dutch, Brussels 1983, reprinted 6 times

-The Book of Existence; a trip into the Zoroastrian existential philosophy (in Persian) Paris 1990.

-The Wayfarers of Arta ; An experience in the Depths of Zarathustra's Existential Philosophy for Self-knowledge, Self-liberation and Self-creation; (in French); Brussels, 1993.

-The Gathas, the Sublime Book of Zarathustra, (released in Persian, in 2006 and in English in 2007.

The French version will be released in May 2010)

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SAVE THE BAHROT CAVES

Dr. Homi Dhalla, the Founder-President of World Zarathushti Cultural Foundation, has taken immense pains to initiate gigantic efforts to Preserve and Save the Bahrot Caves as a precious heritage structure since the last several years.

In a first of its kind, he has now initiated an online signature campaign, to be submitted to the Director-General, Archaeological Survey of India, to step up efforts in that direction. You can read the petition at

<http://www.petitiononline.com/savbah/petition.html>,

and if you agree to the contents, you may sign it online. It just takes a minute to sign and forward the same to your friends and relatives. It can be signed by Zarathushtis and friends of Zarathushtis interested in saving the community heritage.

For a brief video on the state of the Caves, please visit **www.zoroastrians.net**

Do spread the word and take action now !

Zarathushti Youth Without Borders

The elected representatives from member associations of FEZANA at the Annual General Body meeting held in Toronto, Canada, April 23 to 25, 2010 have approved funds to provide partial support for Zarathushti youth who volunteer in countries abroad for humanitarian and social service missions.

Individuals who wish to apply are expected to provide a summary of their planned project, a letter from the hosting agency confirming acceptance for the service period and a written report to the Federation at the completion of their tour of duty.

Contact: Shara Godiwalla,
sharagodiwalla@juno.com, or Behram Pastakia
bpastakia@aol.com



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE
DYNAMIC ZOROASTRIANS

FROM
DHUN, FARROKH,
ZUBIN AND SABRINA NORIA
North Toronto Sleep Centre



BUILDING A LEGACY

"This nation was built by men who took risks — pioneers who were not afraid of the wilderness, business men who were not afraid of failure, scientists who were not afraid of the truth, thinkers who were not afraid of progress, dreamers who were not afraid of action."

- Brooks Atkinson

Pioneering across uncharted terrain and spearheading a mammoth project are never easy endeavours. They come with a hefty price tag.

Sitting in the Nixon Park community hall, which is adjacent to the Bowling club in Howick, Auckland, the men with a mission are counting the minutes, waiting for the hall to fill up.

The people trickling in are perceptibly anxious. The presentation is about the growing band of Zarathushtis in South West Houston who built a Zarathusti Heritage and Cultural Centre where they now congregate for community events. It's also about taking an illustrious page out of the books of the Australian Zoroastrian Association in Sydney and following their footsteps in New Zealand. But more than that, it's about translating an ambitious dream into reality.



Trustees (From L to R) Rohinton Patrawala, Tehmus Mistry, Tanaz Siganporia, Vicky Mistry and Shahazad Contractor

The Zarathushti population in New Zealand has grown from a tiny community of about 20 in the late 1980s to today being a sizeable 1,200 most of whom have settled in Auckland.

Meet the men and the woman with a vision, who are united in their sense of moral responsibility to constructively support the increasing community of Zarathushtis in Auckland. The energetic board of trustees comprises of Rohinton Patrawala, Shahazad Contractor,

Tanaz Siganporia, Tehmus Mistry and Vicky Mistry. They are extremely passionate about their cause and with good reason.

"We need to think of the future of our children and how we can contribute towards it," says Shahazad Contractor, Business Manager Corporate Trust, Trustees Executors Limited, who has conducted in depth online research to garner support from every corner of the world. "As a community, collectively we need to initiate the generosity demonstrated by our forefathers, like the illustrious Tatas, Wadias and Godrej, in order to achieve this goal" he insightfully notes.

The Zarathushti population in New Zealand has exponentially grown from a modest handful of about 20 in the late 1980s to a robust community of 1,200 today, most of who live in Auckland.

"Initially, the size of our community meant that social and spiritual events were held in peoples' homes. As we have grown, we have resorted to hiring community halls and restaurants for our functions, a lot of which don't have smoke alarms or have to be vacated early," points out Rohinton Patrawala, Trust Accountant, Guardian Trust, who is the first to raise his hand whenever volunteers are need for community work. "This creates challenges, especially with respect to religious ceremonies. Our growing community has become keenly aware of the need for a spiritual, cultural, and social centre that will serve the Zarathushti community in New Zealand."

To respond to this need, the Zoroastrian Community Trust of New Zealand (ZCT) was set up by the committed five as a registered Charitable Trust under the laws of New Zealand in March 2007. The trust deed is transparent and available for viewing: www.zct.co.nz

Considerable thought, deliberation, debates and community meetings resulted in electing a dynamic team to construct a building or buy an existing one with enough parking.

The objective of ZCT is to establish a Zarathushti Community Centre and place of worship in Auckland, New Zealand. The approximate cost of building a modest centre is around NZ\$2million. They plan to raise the money needed for the establishment and ongoing management of the Community Centre by collecting

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NEW ZEALAND

funds through philanthropic donations and fundraising activities.

Our community centre will provide a space for the younger generation to forge lasting relationships. Also, members of the community can celebrate auspicious occasions such as navjotes, weddings, anniversaries, birthdays, baby showers, barbecues or simply bonding over housie and bridge.

With the assistance of a fund-raising team of around ten volunteers, ZCT has already enjoyed several very



successful fundraising events. A tidy sum has also streamed in from pledged donors within the community who contribute between \$10 and \$50 a week towards achieving our vision.

Proceeding in a very methodological manner, the tireless trustees leave no stone unturned in their efforts to raise the needed sums. "Though the amount looks big it's not impossible," explains the soft-spoken Vicky Mistry Finance Manager, Imagetext Publishing Systems Limited, who is very passionate about the project. "It's just a question of every Zarathushti feeling a moral responsibility and asking themselves what have I left behind for the next generation? The amount we plan to collect is not an impossible one."

"In consideration of the demographics in New Zealand and taking into account challenges faced by us as first generation Zarathushti migrants in New Zealand, we are reaching out to Zarathushtis around the world for assistance," says the well travelled Tehmus Mistry, Services Development Manager, Customer and Information Services, North Shore City Council, who resides with his family in Houston. Tehmus shows us the slides of the Darbe Meher in Houston and Sydney and tells us the story of how these were gradually built.

"I can understand why some people are not very enthusiastic or are a little hesitant," says Tanaz Siganporia, Client Advisor, Private Wealth Management, Guardian Trust, who is the only lady in the team and juggling a lot of responsibilities. "They probably want to see something constructive happen and only then will they all come forward to support the cause," she smiles.

Stories abound of how various communities have built prayer halls across the city. These visionaries zealously believe that fortifying a community that has generously supported them as recent immigrants is a part of their *raison d'être*.

Towards this end, appeals have been issued for donations to various Zarathushti associations and their members worldwide. The Trustees are keen to receive any form of support from the international and local community. To get involved, kindly email: zcentre@gmail.com

Farida Master before coming to New Zealand, six years ago with her husband and daughter, was the editor of three magazines and a newspaper, in Mumbai living a life pulsating with headlines and deadlines. Starting her career as a cub reporter with 'Stardust,' she became the editor of the largest selling Bollywood magazine. She moved to Pune, after her marriage, and launched a city magazine 'Citadel' -- the longest surviving city magazine in India.

After spending almost twenty years with Magna Publishing Company Ltd., Farida moved on to editing the eight page daily supplement of 'Pune Times of India.'

She has also authored 'The Making of a Legend' a biography of Dr. K. B. Grant, the iconic doctor who built the state-of-the-art hospital, Ruby Hall Clinic in India.

Currently, Farida Master is the Features Editor of 'The Auckland,' a community newspaper with The New Zealand Herald, and also writes for Woman's Weekly, My Generation, The Indian Weekender and Society magazine in India.

Her story has been published in 'Sari' a book that speaks about Indian professionals who have settled in NZ



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The Zarathushtis of Perth , Western Australia

Pervez Mistry

The Zarathushti population in Perth has steadily grown over the years and currently numbers over 200 individuals.

Demographically, the community is made up with a good mix of young as well as mature families, retirees, professionals and overseas students choosing to enjoy the lifestyle that sunny Perth has to offer. The Perth Zarathushti community has come a long way since its humble beginnings in Western Australia, when the first Parsi family of Late Jijibhoy Pestonji Guzder settled here in 1956 from Mumbai.



community members to acquire knowledge of Zarathushti concepts, history, literature and arts.

The dynamic ZAWA youth contribute actively in the community. Our youth are represented on the ZAWA committee, assist in organizing events and contribute to many of the ZAWA social events. Some of our youth members took leadership roles in organizing the 4th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress held in Ballarat, Australia in December 2007.

With a growing community, the need to form a Zarathushti association was evident, hence the Zoroastrian Association of Western Australia (ZAWA) was established in 1997. Since its inception, ZAWA has been dedicated to preserving and advancing religious and cultural knowledge of the Zarathushti religion in Western Australia. Perth has hosted a variety of distinguished scholars and speakers

As with most other Zarathushti communities around the world, one of ZAWA's long term goals is to establish premises of our own. However, in saving for the future, we cannot afford to neglect the present – on many occasions, the success of our events are measured by the good time experienced by attendees, not by profits generated. This strategy cements the community together and helps bring about a sense of identity in the younger generation.



from various backgrounds to present lectures on Zarathushti religion, customs and traditions.

Over the years ZAWA has facilitated Jashans, Gahambars, Navjotes and other religious ceremonies. The yearly celebration of Iranian Nouruz and the Parsi Navroze becomes the focal point for everyone to meet and enjoy. We are very active on the social front as well, with various picnics, quiz nights, car rallies, etc. Many of our social functions have generated funds directly for various charities and causes.

In keeping with ZAWA's vision in maintaining our identity, from time to time, ZAWA conducts religious classes to educate Zarathushti children and interested

The Zarathushtis in Perth display religious tolerance, respect for all, and recognize the essential unity of all religions. ZAWA is a member of the umbrella organization "*Indian Society of Western Australia*", and actively participates with our fellow South Asian associations when there are wider community issues to deal with. One such issue is the pooling together of resources to eventually establish an "Indian" community centre that can be used by all member associations.



Within our modest community we have a wide range of professions, including overseas university students, public sector employees, engineers, accountants, bankers, scientists, travel agents, immigration consultants, maritime "shippies", tour operators, seafood importers, and real-estate developers, just to name a few.

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PERTH, Western Australia

The successful entrepreneurs within our ranks are all self-made and represent the sense of determination and hard work that all Perth Zarathushtis value.

The past 50 or so years have seen Zarathushtis leaving their traditional homelands of India, Iran and Pakistan to move to greener pastures – forming Zoroastrian Associations around the world are a good way to “shelter” our religion and culture from the constant pressure of being assimilated into the host culture. By observing and celebrating our religious and cultural events, we are passing on our “uniqueness” to further generations. We all speak the same language as the locals, we dress like the locals, we do the same jobs as the locals, but what makes us stand apart is our religion, and that’s what ZAWA is there for – to promote and preserve what we can, and also grow and strengthen ourselves as a community. The first generation here in Australia needs to live the religion enough to develop a permanent bond to the religion, which will hopefully continue to be passed down to further generations.

Pervez Mistry

(Chairperson, Zoroastrian Association of Western Australia)

Pervez J. Mistry was born in Toronto, and has lived in various parts of Canada and the world including Papua New Guinea, Italy, New Zealand, and now Australia. He is married and is the proud father of three young boys and a girl. Through his parents, Pervez has been exposed to Zoroastrian “politics” since an early age



– both mother and father took an active leadership role in community affairs in Toronto and Bombay. Pervez has attended nine congresses as well as several FEZANA AGM’s over the years. In addition, he has presented at three congresses, including a plenary session at the WZC2000 in Houston. In Toronto, Pervez served on the Executive Committee of the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario (ZSO) for two years, and for many years chaired the Youth Sub-Committee. He was Youth Liaison, as well as lead-editor of the ZSO Newsletter. In New Zealand, he was twice elected President of the Traditional Mazdayasni Zarathushti Anjuman of NZ, and is currently the Chairperson of the Zoroastrian Association of Western Australia.

Opportunities abound as a new global strategic partnership is forged. U.S.-India Strategic Dialogue

Sustainable growth, economic development, partnership, trade, investment, security, green buildings, science, technology, arts, education, global health, world hunger, women's empowerment, microfinance, energy efficiency, quotations from Mark Twain and Max Mueller and chappaties were included in an on-going dialogue with a vision for world peace at a reception which included the Indian-American Community in the ornate Benjamin Franklin Room of the State Department in Washington D.C. on 3rd June 2010.

Remarks of the Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, External Affairs Minister from India Shri S.M. Krishna, and President Barack Obama:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/photosw-and-video/video/us-india-strategic-dialogue>

20:34 minutes

FEZANA was represented at the reception held at the US State Department in Washington D.C. for the visiting team from India led by External Affairs Minister, Shri S.M. Krishna

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Mithi Davar

SYDNEY AUSTRALIA

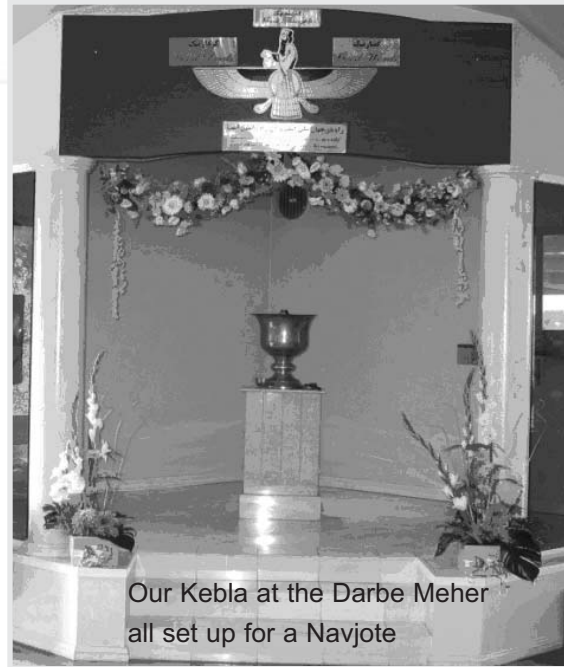
Bearing in mind that I am biased, let me provide a little background on what I consider to be one of the best destinations in the world: Australia. The Land of Oz is blessed with immense natural resources and great scenery. We enjoy one of the best climates in the world and benefit from one of the most educated, skilled work forces in one of the world's finest democracies. We are a tolerant society and a peaceful, harmonious nation. Our democratic values, cultural diversity, economic strength, and high quality of life have made us the envy of the world. We proudly identify as Australians in this multicultural society and have happily assimilated with the rest of the population.

Zarathushtis started migrating to Australia in 1967 when the white Australian policy was lifted. In 1970, approximately 30 Zarathushtis resided in Sydney. The majority of migrants were professionals — doctors, engineers, accountants, scientists and businessmen. The Australian Zoroastrian Association of NSW was established in 1970. Most Zarathushti immigrants started from humble beginnings but succeeded quickly in their new homeland.

In 1986, our dream of having a place of our own was fulfilled and we bought a 5 acre property in a quiet country suburb of Sydney, Annangrove.

Today we have over a dozen Mobeds, and our community is reassured that a second generation of priests will continue meeting our spiritual and religious needs in the future. We have several doctors, engineers, accountants, actuaries, businessmen, restaurateurs, teachers, hairdressers and computer specialists. By God's grace, most of the Zarathushtis who have settled here are excelling. Our second generation of Zarathushtiis is also shining in their chosen fields.

From a humble beginning of about 25 Zarathushtis in 1967, the Australian Zoroastrian Association of NSW has



Our Kebla at the Darbe Meher
all set up for a Navjote

cohered today and, with the abundant grace of Ahura Mazda, there are more than 1,500 Zarathushtis in NSW. Our 5 acre property at Annangrove is a joy to behold — a veritable oasis. We have beautiful landscaped gardens, some sandal wood trees, and our own dam in idyllic country surroundings. Our working bee, ably led by Tim Desai, meets once a month for maintenance of the gardens and property. The property is fully utilized. We have our Jashans, Ghambhars, Navroze, Sunday school and Senior Citizens' meetings at our Darbe Meher. We even have our own Zarathushti florist, Mithi Davar, and Zarathushti Marriage celebrant, Behroze Billimoria. Mithi runs her floral business, Davar's Flowers, and provides bouquets during these auspicious functions. Behroze Billimoria won the award for the "Best Marriage Celebrant



Darbe Meher 1986



Darbe Meher 2005

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in NSW" in 2005 and has performed more than 1000 weddings to date.

We have several Zarathushtis from Pakistan, India, UAE, Iran, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong and other parts of the world. We try as far as possible to call ourselves Zarathushtis - not Parsis or Iranis or Pakistanis. There is no animosity between the Indian and Pakistani Zarathushtis, only friendly rivalry. Zarathushtis and non-Zarathushtis are allowed to attend our prayers, jashans, and funeral ceremonies. In fact some of the most diligent, enthusiastic and hardworking members are our non-Zarathushti spouse members. Ours is a peaceful and harmonious community. Although Sydney is a vast city and our community well dispersed, there is a great spirit of camaraderie and concern amongst us to help each other through thick and thin.

Dr. Peshotan Katrak is the Head Priest of the Zarathushti Community of New South Wales. In spite of his busy schedule as Senior Staff Specialist in Rehabilitation Medicine at the Prince of Wales Hospital in Sydney, Peshotan finds time to perform prayers at navjotes, weddings, funerals, Jashan ceremonies, and teaches prayers to all our Sunday School children once a month. Most of the funds received by our Dasturjis for the prayers are given back to the Zoroastrian Association.

Dr Rusie Rustomjee, aged 97 years, was the doyen of Sri Lankan doctors in Australia. He was a highly regarded Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT) specialist in Sri Lanka, and was the first Asian to receive a Fellowship of Royal College Surgeons in ENT. He practised medicine for 70 years – indeed a unique achievement – and lived by his religion, helping everyone.

Kersi Meher-Homji was a Virologist and Genetic Toxicologist with Sydney University and coordinator for The National Quality Assurance Programs in HIV-AIDS and Hepatitis B and C viruses with the Red Cross Blood Service. He is an internationally respected cricket writer and statistician with 12 books published in Australia and overseas. He has regular columns in sports magazines. He is the only Australian Zoroastrian listed in Wikipedia, the online Encyclopedia.

Former Director of the WZCC in Australia, **Phil Madon** fled from Iran, leaving everything behind. He started life anew in his new adopted motherland, Australia, and together with his children has successful franchises of McDonald's family restaurants as well as the Organic food business which he runs with his son Danesh.

Dr Sam Kerr is Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine (London) and of several Colleges of Surgery. Sam was Surgeon/Lecturer, at the University of NSW and

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its College Hospitals in Sydney, Australia from 1968 to 2003. He is now Emeritus Surgeon at the University and Hospitals. In addition to his professional writings he has published and lectured on the social, cultural, historical and scriptural aspects of the religion of Zarathushtra

Purvez Kolsawalla, one of our community's early arrivals, holds a PhD in Zoroastrian studies. He is one of the stalwarts of our Association having served as President of our Association on numerous occasions.

Farida Irani runs a busy practice and enterprise in Sydney called Subtle Energies clinic. She is a qualified Ayurveda Practitioner, a clinical Aromatherapist and Teacher, Senior Bowen Therapy Instructor, a Remedial Therapist and a Reflexologist. Farida has pioneered Ayurveda Aromatherapy in Australia.

Dr Rustom Kanga has started a company focusing on the use of Artificial Intelligence for video based security systems. His company, iOmniscient, recently won the Global Security award for the most advanced new Security Technology. His products are used in airports, railways and other at-risk environments across the globe as well as by private organizations such as Disneyworld. Next time you transfer through Abu Dhabi airport, or are stuck in traffic in New Delhi, or catch the very fast train in China, you can be assured that iOmniscient's technology is guaranteeing your safety. His wife, Marlene is Vice President of Engineers Australia.

Their son **Zubin**, graduated with the Gold Medal in Music and won a scholarship to do a Masters degree at the Royal School of Music in London which he completed last year. He is currently working on a PhD in Music (also at the Royal Academy). Zubin has performed both solo and with ensembles and orchestras in the UK, Australia and the USA. His younger brother Jehan is also a musician and is the Musical Director of the Sydney University Madrigal Society. Last year he orchestrated the Verge Festival in Sydney.

Tirandaz and Homyun Kermani run a popular Indian restaurant, "The Bombay Heritage". Homayun also manages 3 very successful childcare centers in Sydney.

Veera Ostowari arrived in Australia almost 28 years ago with two suitcases and \$800 to her name. She didn't know anyone in this country when she arrived, but now Veera works with the large global advertising Media Agencies at a senior level. She successfully built a highly successful career in advertising that she started in 1975 back in Mumbai. Veera is now the founder and Managing Director of *Cut Above Media*, a company she founded almost 8 years ago. *Cut Above Media* manages many renowned Global and Australian brands and provides a

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platinum service to all its clients, with billings in excess of \$40Million.

It is heartening to note that our women in Sydney are excelling in their chosen fields. Our second generation in particular, has produced some fine doctors in the last few years.

Dr. Anahita Doctor, (MBBS, F.R.A.C.G.P.) daughter of Dr. Behram Doctor, works as a General Practitioner in her father's practice.

Dr. Navaz Hiranek, a General Practitioner, is actively involved in medical research and has published papers on a variety of topics. She is also a senior tutor and examiner for the University of Sydney Postgraduate medical program.

Dr Farah Meher-Homji attained her M.B.B.S. degree from the University of Sydney in 1999. She is currently a Registrar in Psychiatry at St. Vincent's Hospital in Sydney.

Dr. Freny Kalapesi was awarded her PhD in 2008 from the University of NSW. She is currently an Ophthalmology Registrar at Prince of Wales Hospital and Sydney Eye Hospital and is presently sitting for her last ophthalmology exam.

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Now, second and third generations of Zarathushtis are calling Australia their home. What will their future be

in another decade? **Beghzad Bana**, our young Mobed, has this to say, *"I am confident that our generation of Zoroastrians will keep the flame burning. I am not sure what happens after us, but if we can inculcate the same teachings our parents imbibed in us, then the future looks bright"*.

Our children and grandchildren will certainly network better. They will not be concerned with old issues like intermarriage, conversion or Dakhma nashini. Their challenges and issues will be different, many of which we can't even visualize today. But they will rise to the occasion, of that we can be certain.

Mithi Davar was born in Mumbai, graduated from Sydenham College, worked at the State Bank of India and immigrated to Australia in 1978. In India she was very active in sports and represented the State and University of Bombay in Hockey, Basket Ball and Athletics

In Australia, she has been actively associated with the Australian Zoroastrian Association for the past 32 years. 8 of which were as editor of *Manashni*, the AZA newsletter, and as editor of the Australian chapter of Synergy. Always interested in gardening and Floristry she volunteered floral decorations for navjotes, weddings and jashans for more than 25 years. Then in 2003 after working for 16 years at a secure and rewarding career at CSIRO (Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation), she left it and qualified as a professional florist and started her own floral business "Davar's Flowers". Being the only Zarathushti florist in Sydney she has done floral decorations for most of the Zarathushti families. A few months ago she did the floral arrangements for a bride - whose Navjote was her first attempt as an amateur florist some 25 years ago.

Mithi loves gardening and spends many happy hours in her beautiful garden



UNIQUE BUT UNIFIED

ARNAVAZ CHUBB

The loss of a home land appears to have made an indelible impact on the Zarathushti psyche. Perhaps this is why the aspiration and goal of most, if not all Zarathushti communities in the Diaspora is to establish a place of their own.

Many moons ago, when a group of displaced Zarathushti refugees from Iran first landed on the shores of India, the Qissa Sanjan – the story of the arrival of the first Zarathushti refugees from Iran to India, tells us that establishing a place of worship of their own was high on their agenda. The story goes that a promise was made on the hazardous sea voyage from Iran to India, that if they reached their destination safely, as an act of thanksgiving an Atash Bahram would be consecrated. The rest is history.

Wherever Zarathushtis have settled and a group of them have congregated, this dream, hope and aspiration of a place of their own has taken root and often come to fruition. This hope is alive and well amongst the Zarathushti community of Victoria in Australia. The current hopes and aspirations of the mainly first generation of Zarathushti migrants very definitely centre around a bricks and mortar edifice to identify with.

Such a place, would be something for our children would identify with, something that would provide them with a sense of belonging. The wavering Zarathushti identity would thus be firmly anchored. The issue of identity is definitely an important one – the eternal questions of who am I and where do I come from, have beleaguered many philosophers. Zarathushti children of the Diaspora are plagued by this too and parental insights into this deep and meaningful query are often ambiguous and cursory, creating confusion that no amount of bricks and mortar could bind one down to.

While Zarathushti parents may identify themselves with either India or Iran, the youth are breaking free of these narrow confines and are more apt to think of themselves in global terms and beyond. We are all children of the Universe and the religious paradigm is shifting away from organised religion and towards individual spirituality. This search for spirituality quite clearly plays second fiddle to the pursuit of the parental goals of education and occupation. For our parents, following the dream of getting a good education, a good job, and moving up the corporate ladder made perfect sense, but the younger generation want to be less risk-averse, take an unfamiliar path to success and be recognized for being outstanding - not just average.

“Living your early years in Melbourne is like riding a rollercoaster that doesn’t go faster than 25 kms per hour. You’ll have a great ride, but you won’t walk away feeling



ZOROASTRIAN
ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA INC.

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

exhilarated”, says Kurush Zaiwala, one of the younger generation of Zarathushtis. “We want to be on a faster rollercoaster, but sometimes get lost on the path to find one”, says Kurush. *“What we do find though are other fellow Zarathushtis on the same quest, the quest to be unique, entrepreneurial and the best at what we do. We won’t compromise our lifestyle though”, he says, “a true Aussie beef pie in one hand and a beer in another, along with great friends and family is a must-have”.*

Most youngsters are well aware of the glorious history and heritage of the Zarathushti people and undoubtedly they are proud to be Zarathushti. It is however a bit hard to reveal that pride when Zoroastrianism is an unknown quantity in our adopted country and where assimilation is the order of the day. The Gen Y’s and Z’s know that the Zarathushti religion is unique and they hope to raise awareness about who they are, and where they came from. They would love for every Melbournian/Australian to know who the Zarathushtis are. The path to creating this awareness is as yet not clearly defined, but so long as each of us strives towards our own unique goal to be the best at what we do individually, the glow of the spotlight will be on us collectively. The community’s honorific title of “aapro or aapri” will then be bestowed upon such an individual.

The hopes and aspirations of the Victorian Zarathushti community are perhaps best expressed by the sentiments voiced at the Melbourne Plenary of the recently concluded Parliament of the Worlds Religions:

“Like sugar softly sweetens milk we (the Zarathushti community) dissolve into the fabric of Australian society enriching but never overpowering, contributing but not confronting, co-existing not isolated, unified but still preserving our uniqueness.

Through the co operation and commitment of the diverse cultures that make up this magnificent city Melbourne, we are one in justice, one in truth, one in right action. We pray the stream of clear reasoning leads to understanding, tolerance and respect all”

Arnavaz Chubb, past President and current committee member of the Zoroastrian Association of Victoria Inc



DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

Kayzad Namdarian, of Melbourne expresses his personal opinions on the Future of the Diaspora in Australia

Qu. How long have you been in Australia?

- Born in Melbourne. Father from Yazd, Iran. Mother from Mumbai.

Qu. How has the Australian society shaped your thinking and outlook on life:

- I have had to balance a heavy western upbringing (compared with 90% of my peers in Melbourne who were born overseas) on top of maintaining eastern Zarathushti roots and linkages. Visiting Mumbai every few years has helped with this. Having an Iranian father, and a Indian mother added to a multi-diversity, multi-perspective upbringing and helped me appreciate the eastern styled outlook. It has been tough, however maintaining Zarathushti values and Zarathushti influences will be hard for future generations of the western Diaspora.

Qu. Do you practice your religion, and what do you see as the future of your religion outside India and Iran:

- Yes. I predict that in 5 to 6 generations, the Zarathushti western community will evolve to a point of true westernness, that is a thousand years of parsi/irani tradition will be put at risk.

Qu. What are your priorities in the preservation of the religion in Australia and in the world:

- Greater forward generational planning to maintain and preserve Zarathushti culture and religious priorities.

- Reconciliation of Zarathushti conservative and liberal sides, or rather to try to manage this.

- Zarathushtis are making their life in the West. Therefore future westernization of Zarathushtis means that the average Zarathushti of the future will have a pure and utter western mindset with no emotional or family ties to any eastern influence. Preserving cultural influences, priestly traditions, religious, cultural and marriage traditions and methods will be a key priority. Otherwise we fall the way of the Druid, ancient Egypt and other failed ancient religious traditions in 100 to 200 years.

- Zoroastrianism in the forefront of world's religions No more footnotes in mainstream books.

- Greater unity around Zarathushti communities to assist in community development (my community has failed for various reasons to establish a place of worship. Now that I have left the community for work abroad, I lost a vital linkage with my faith, as a place of worship was always a novelty to me).

- An annual 'State of Zoroastrianism' survey/census to be established, collating information from all communities, to truly measure and analyze the situation (something I want to start).



PUBLIC HEALTH AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

A paradigm shift for Global Health Care

Zarathushtis to present workshop at the 63rd Annual DPI/NGO conference in Melbourne, Australia August 30 to September 1, 2010.

Team Leader: Kayzad Namdarian. **Participants:** Arnavaz Chubb (Australia), Armene Modi (India), Anita Rao (USA), Kayzad Namdarian (Australia), Homi Gandhi (USA)

Zarathushtis interested in joining the FEZANA UN-NGO team can contact Co-Chairs:

Afreed Mistry afreed.mistry@gmail.com,

Homi D Gandhi homidgandhi@gmail.com,

Behram Pastakia bpastakia@aol.com,

with a copy of their biodata and a letter of intent stating how they see themselves promoting the mission and vision of the United Nations. Details accessible at: www.un.org

DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA

Yazdi Parekh

Hong Kong's Helping Hand



The contributions that Hong Kong and its surrounding area of Canton and Macao have had on the Zarathushti community in India are quite possibly unparalleled in modern history. Much of the great early philanthropic work in India, especially in Mumbai, was financed by individuals and families that engaged in the China trade through Canton. One of the most famous China traders and philanthropists was Baronet Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy. Even the first three Atash Behrams in Mumbai, the Dadyseth, the Wadia, & the Banaji Atash Behrams were built by families that made much of their fortunes from trade with China.

The contribution of Zarathushtis to Hong Kong has also been great. Sir Hormusjee Mody paid for the building of the University of Hong Kong, currently ranked as the #1 University in Asia. Jehangir Ruttonjee founded the Ruttonjee Hospital in Hong Kong. Two of the 13 members of the committee that established HSBC (Hongkong & Shanghai Banking Corporation) in 1865 were Hong Kong Parsis.

The Zarathushtis in south China were very forward thinking and the formation of the current Anjuman can be traced back to 1822. Over time, members began donating land, buildings, and money. Through wise investments in companies such as HSBC and minimizing expenses by Anjuman Trustees working voluntarily and paying many expenses themselves, the funds accumulated. In many years part of the dividends were reinvested in shares thus increasing the capital over the decades. In 1991 the 60 year old three-storey Zoroastrian Building was redeveloped into a 23-

storey commercial tower. Four of the floors are used by the community while the rest are rented out and provide a significant source of revenue.

The Zoroastrian Charity Funds of Hongkong, Canton and Macao (HKZCF) use the income generated by their investments to make vast philanthropic contributions to the Zarathushti community around the world. In 2009 the HKZCF donated Rs. 74 Million to thousands of needy individuals and institutions. Over the last decade they have distributed Rs. 422,000,000 in aid, all without any fanfare or publicity.

The HKZCF channels much of its funds through the WZO Trust in Mumbai along with institutions and Anjumans of various places such as Poona, Navsari, & Udwada. Many of the recipients may not even realize that their appeals have gone to Hong Kong, been approved by the HKZCF Trustees, and the donation money sent from Hong Kong before a cheque is issued by an Indian charity to the recipient.



The HKZCF provides three types of aid to the needy. Individuals who are too old, sick, or disabled to find work are given an average monthly stipend of Rs. 3,000 to help them meet their needs. In 2009 the HKZCF supported almost 400 individuals & families at a cost of well over Rs. 1 Million every month. In addition to one-off grants should they need specific aid, almost 40 retired Mobeds are also given a monthly pension to help them meet their living expenses. Other individuals who do not receive stipends but need help meeting their medical costs are given up to Rs. 100,000 per case, though more money may be given in special circumstances. The HKZCF gives one time grants to around 100 different individuals or families every month, sending Rs. 5 Million in December 2009 alone.

The youth are the future of the community and the HKZCF is one of the premier institutions helping Zarathushti youth get ahead. They provide interest free educational loans of approximately US\$3,000 per person per year to students who need help paying their university tuitions. Currently the HKZCF supports over 800 students worldwide who want a higher education.

DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA

HONG KONG



Trustees from left: Rustom Jokhi, Neville Shroff, President Jal Shroff, Secretary/Treasurer Viraf Parekh, Kawas Pavri.

Over the past decade, the HKZCF has donated over Rs. 130 Million to the Parsee General Hospital, (PGH) Mumbai. They have entirely financed the renovation of the whole first floor of the Main Wing (free and highly subsidized wards) and an Extension Wing of the PGH. The HKZCF also helps the PGH cover ongoing expenses related to free and highly subsidized patients.

The HKZCF has donated substantial funds for other large projects such as constructing a 36 flat building at Malcolm Baug, Mumbai at a cost of Rs. 40 Million. They have built other residential buildings in Mumbai and Navsari. They have built a school in Dahanu and paid for half of a new 3 story school building in Valsad. The HKZCF has donated large sums to buy medical equipment, generators, and other essential items for many hospitals throughout Mumbai, Pune, and Navsari.

The HKZCF also gives large donations to a multitude of other Zarathushti charities. Some of these institutions are the R.T.I., Parsee Ambulance Division, Navsari Orphanage, Free Food Service, Parsi Infirmary, and School for the Blind; the list goes on and on.

While the HKZCF's main thrust is charitable works for Zarathushtis, they also do an abundance of work for non-Zarathushtis. They support dozens of local Hong Kong charities as well as provide large donations worldwide for relief from natural disasters. For instance, the HKZCF donated hundreds of thousands of dollars each for the Asian tsunami, the Szechuan earthquake in China, and the Bam earthquake in Iran.

The Hong Kong Zarathushti community is very close knit and amicable, meeting almost every week at the

Zoroastrian Building to socialize. They feel it is essential for Zarathushtis in other cities to have a place where they can pray, bond, and socialize also. So last year the HKZCF donated US\$200,000 to build a Zoroastrian Center in Dallas. Previously they helped build a new center in New York and have pledged donations for a new center in Toronto.

Though the togetherness of the Hong Kong community has not changed, the makeup of its members has. While the number of Zarathushtis in Hong Kong has remained roughly the same over the last 25 years, the transience of the population has grown significantly. Previously, most Zarathushtis had their own businesses and once they arrived in Hong Kong their families would remain for generations. Now only around one third of the working population have their own businesses. Another third is made up of professionals who have made Hong Kong their long-term home. Most new arrivals make up the final third, professionals who are in Hong Kong on a few years' assignment only. Depending on how this dynamic evolves over the next decade or two, it may become a source of concern for the future continuity of the community and its long term philanthropic works.

People used to be concerned that the handover of Hong Kong to China in 1997 would make drastic changes to their lives and livelihoods. However, the transition went smoothly and there were even benefits such as being able to obtain permanent residency in Hong Kong, something never possible under British rule. With the liberalization and strong growth of the Chinese economy, it seems Hong Kong is filled with hope of a brighter future.

Yazdi Viraf Parekh

was born in Bombay, India and lived in Hong Kong from 9 months to 18 years. He is the third generation of a family that has lived in Hong Kong since 1933. Yazdi moved to Los Angeles to attend university at UCLA and later obtained his M.B.A.

and M.Acc. After founding an internet company, he moved back to Hong Kong in 2001 to join his family's business, K. P. Parekh & Sons. Currently he resides in Hong Kong with his wife Chermeen and daughters Sanaya & Ava.



DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA IN SINGAPORE: ITS HISTORY AND EVOLUTION

Jasmine Cooper Dastoor

Located at the crossroads of Asia, Singapore is a cosmopolitan city with an exquisite blend of rich cultural traditions of the East, and the modern, dynamic energy of the comfortable West. Since the mid-nineteenth century, this well executed blend has attracted many Zarathushtis to Singapore. With concerted governmental efforts to promote religious harmony, it is little wonder that so many Zarathushtis are drawn to this tropical paradise.



Currently, approximately 200 Zarathushtis reside in Singapore. Some are proudly integrated Singaporeans, and have been established here for the past two or three generations. Other Zarathushtis have more recently adopted Singapore as their home. Many initially came hoping to economically thrive and later return home, but soon fell in love with this island nation and became residents. Others have been posted here for under 5 years, but will retain unforgettable memories of their stay even after they move on.

There are many Zarathushtis who have richly contributed to building Singapore into a contemporary metropolis, and many more who continue contributing to the current fabric of Singapore society. Below is a brief preview of the contributions some Zarathushtis, past and present have made in Singapore.

Some of the most prominent Zarathushtis of yesteryears in Singapore were Mr. Cursetjee Sorabji, founder of John Little & Co. a large retail store, Mr. Dhunjibhoy Hormusji, who served on the Grand Jury in 1854, Mr. Cama of Byramjee Hormusjee Cama and Co., who opened an English school which was free for locals, Mr. Edaljee Khory, an advocate and a solicitor had a Masonic Lodge named after him, Mr. Heerji Pestonji Kaka started a Chinese newspaper and in 1906 Mr. Sorabji Kavasji became editor of the Eastern Daily Mail and later editor of the Straits Press Syndicate.

Mr. Phirozshaw Manekji Framroz and Mr. Navroji Mistri made their mark in the aerated water business, and later Mr. Navroji Mistri, became partners with his cousin Mr. Pesi Davar. Both Mr. Davar and Mr. Mistri have left their marks permanently in Singapore through great acts of philanthropy and benevolence. Mr. Davar, on his demise, left his entire fortune for charitable and educational purposes for both Zarathushti and non-Zarathushti recipients. Mr. Mistri, on his demise, donated his fortune to build a children's wing at the Singapore General Hospital. In recognition of these incredible acts

of largesse, two roads were named Mistri Road and Parsi Road by the Singapore Government.

As Singapore's fortune bloomed, many Zarathushtis settled in throughout the 1960's and 70's. A notable Zarathushti of this period is the late Mr. Soli Setna, a director of Neptune Oriental Lines, Singapore. Dr. Pesi Chacha was the Head and later Professor of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the National Hospital of Singapore, from 1972 to 1980. His accolades include the "Ordre des Palmes Academiques", Grade of Chevalier by the Government of France in 1976, the Arris and Gale Memorial Lectureship, Royal College of Surgeons, U.K. (1979) and in 1996 he won a prestigious award from the International Society of Reconstructive Microsurgery.

Mrs. Nergish Medora, a dedicated social worker, is also noteworthy having received a Public Star for her selfless dedication to help others, especially leprosy victims, until her death in 2000. Mr. Jamshed Medora, a chartered accountant and Justice of Peace, was awarded a Public Service Medal in 1991 and Public Service Star in 1993. Dr. Jimmy Daruwalla, an orthopedic surgeon is the dedicated Founder-President of the Dyslexia Association of Singapore founded in 1991. Many of the Singapore Zarathushtis are also very involved in voluntary organizations including but not limited to the Rotary Club, Inner Wheel Club, and Lions Club.

In the arena of sports, the Zarathushti version of the William sisters: the Ghadiali sisters (Natascha and Kharmayne) proudly represented Singapore at the South East Asian games in the field of gymnastics in the 1980's. Ayesha Karkaria has won the Colgate Palmolive Individual and Doubles Tennis Championships and Rohan Bhappu was the under 19 Singapore Junior Squash Champion (1996-98) and won the Trinity Open Junior in the U.S. in 1998. Zubin Shroff has captained the Singapore Cricket Team in overseas competitions. Although small in numbers the Singapore Zarathushtis have been outstanding in their contributions to society in a wide variety of areas.

The government of Singapore is a strong proponent of peace through understanding of different religions, and has always supported our faith in its events. In 2004 the Parsi Zoroastrian Association of South East Asia, Singapore (PZAS) and the Zoroastrian Charity Funds of Hong Kong, Canton and Macau successfully celebrated the 3000th anniversary of the Zarathushti faith and the 50th Anniversary of PZAS by hosting an exhibition at the

DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA

SINGAPORE

Asian Civilization Museum. This event was opened by H.E. Mr. S. R. Nathan, the President of Singapore and was attended by 6700 visitors. An outstanding commemorative volume was produced for this event, and a first day cover and stamps were sold to the public. The entire community worked in hamazori to make this event a resounding success.

Mr. Russi Ghadiali's unceasing representation of our faith at the Inter Religious Organization (IRO) of Singapore is truly commendable. He was the past

importance since we hope our children will assimilate in our adopted country while maintaining their allegiance to the Zarathushti fold.

In conclusion the flame of the Zarathushti faith burns brightly in this small yet dynamic community. We strongly believe that our children, the flag bearers of our religion in the future, will continue to feel the same sense of religious identity and pride as we do.



President of the IRO, and is currently their Vice President. Under his able guidance, in Dec 2009, Singapore hosted an extravagant and culturally rich "China-Singapore Cultural and Religious Exhibition". The Zarathushti flame burned as brightly as our colorful garas, sparkling ses and blazing atash.

The Parsi Zoroastrian Association of South East Asia, Singapore, helps in maintaining cohesive bonds between its members. Monthly events are held to fortify these bonds. Some exciting past events have been "Plant A Tree" to save the environment, river cruise on a Chinese junk ship, a children's carnival to support charity, Gara fashion show, Navroze and Pateti celebrations, and a Christmas charity event. These events foster communal harmony, understanding and, most importantly, imbibe our children with a sense of fellowship and identity. This is of utmost

Jasmine Cooper Dastoor, born in Mumbai, India, completed her Master's at McGill University, Montreal, and worked as an Occupational Therapist at the Montreal Children's Hospital, and lecturer at McGill University. After her marriage she moved to Virginia, where she headed a rehabilitation department of a 350 bed community hospital and was involved with community education, especially on Back Problems, and Ergonomics. She currently resides in Singapore with her husband Zubin, and sons Jehan and Zane. She is currently a dedicated "stay at home mom", who is the secretary of PZAS, and does many volunteer activities at the children's school.



DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA

A PROFILE OF THE PAKISTANI DIASPORA

Toxy Cowasjee

Now that I am considered a senior member of our Karachi Zarathushti community, though looking around me I feel this category does not fit me yet, these are my thoughts.

We are today only 1,724 people left in Karachi with another 82 Zarathushtis living in Punjab and Baluchistan. A very few, but we are totally cohesive - each one there for the other, which speaks volumes for our community. This is our best asset and as one says "nazar nahi laga"!

Fortunately the general attitude towards religion has been neither over zealous in orthodoxy nor ultra liberal, observing as best one can in the 21st century. Religion and how we practice is a private matter and answerable only to the Almighty. Our major problem is to deal with the idea that dokhmaneshi is not the solution for disposal of our dead and though some of us in the past have tried to persuade the idea of having a crematorium as an option, we have failed. It is now up to the younger generation to see this happens, if change is what they want.

The other problem is the need to have a centre, at least a day-care for the elderly and lonely, giving them the opportunity of having some company, knowing someone does care for them and receiving suitable daily nourishment. This is no longer a subject to be pushed under the carpet.

We have two agiaries, one is in an extremely congested part of the city with no parking facilities, the other being run by the Anjuman in a more accessible spot. Today only two of our mobeds are from Karachi, the balance of four from other parts. A few years ago two of our young lads did become navars but very possibly they will not be taking up the role of a mobed as a full time occupation. This paucity of priests causes many a time untold problems.

Two excellent institutions for schooling started in the 1800s for boys (BVS) and in 1918 Mama school for girls, which till the Partition were originally for Parsis only, today have just about 40 of our children studying here. Parents seem to prefer sending their children to other schools of the city whereas the non Parsis try everything in their power to gain admission in our two schools!

With the depletion of numbers in Karachi, so many of the flats built by the philanthropists with rents at minimal lie empty but the saddest sight is our Katrak Parsi Colony having individual homes and some flats, vacant and locked with the hope of a sale.

All this sounds so much of gloom and doom yet we are happy, respected by all, both in the work place and by the Pakistani community. The few in the younger generation who are left and are just biding their time to leave, need to take greater interest in our community affairs. They do visit the aged who are in the Infirmary and at the Parsi General hospital, but there is plenty more they can do to make this community vibrant again. Thankfully today we have one colony left that is still humming with life and that is the Cyrus Minwalla & Dinshaw Avari colony where most of the younger generation live. But is this enough? Masti-majha? (fun and games)

The lifestyle has changed. Most people work hard at their jobs leaving no time for anything else or so they say, but as repeatedly told to them, this will be their routine when they emigrate as well. Yet, our community in the West does so much in spite of having a hectic life, which puts us to shame.

We have to find a way to motivate our youth who are still living in Pakistan even if they feel there is no future.

Toxy Cowasjee,
*a senior member of
the community, is
presently Vice
President of World
Zoroastrian
Organization and
Editor of Hamazor.
Previously, was the
first Lady President
of Karachi Parsi
Institute in its history of 117 years and
President of Karachi Zarthosti Banu Mandal.*



CONCERNS OF PAKISTANI ZARATHUSHTIS AND OUR CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY IN GENERAL

Dinshaw Avari

Pakistani Zarathushtis are generally well respected, tolerated and are not harmed. This is largely due to two factors –

- that we are no threat to the majority community due to our tenet of non-conversion; and
- our non-aggressive manner (which sometimes tends to work against us as we are considered timid and easy to “push over”).

However, due to security concerns, which are prevalent around us and an increasingly stifling society and environment, Zarathushti youth are leaving Pakistan for better prospects and life in Western countries.

While the creature comfort of life is much better in Pakistan (than the west), our youth are willing to forego these comforts for better security, fair play and merit. This is leading to an ageing Zarathushti population in Pakistan.

Another concern is that Zarathushti businessman/entrepreneurs are also a dying commodity, as our community is risk-averse and prefers job security and steady income rather than the turmoil of entrepreneurship where each day can be a struggle to survive the pressures of competitors & the government and running the risks of being targeted and victimized.

On the positive side, our contribution to society is what makes us well-respected & well-known in society in general.

- **Trust** – that society has in our Zarathushtis in general
- **Business & Commerce** – we have contributed to development of hotels, shipping, trade, stock markets etc
- **Our professionals** – doctors, lawyers, artists, architects and secretaries (the latter who are a prized commodity & very much in demand in the business field)
- **Social services** – our most leading figure was the ex-Mayor of Karachi, late Mr Jamshed Nusserwanjee Mehta.
- We are not a burden on the Government or the State, as we look after our own from “womb to Tomb” by way of our own housing, hospitals, infirmaries, doctors, charitable trusts, jobs etc

My family and I would not want to move anywhere, though what the future holds is really uncertain.

Dinshaw B. Avari 42,
is Director of Avari Group
of Hotels Karachi, Pakistan



reserved for KOBAD ZAROLIA

1/2 page

DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA

Pakistan

Concerns of Pakistan Zarathushtis as we move into the 21st C

Meher Cawasji

In order for any community to have an impact on society it is essential to have a certain level of population base. Yet the Zarathushtis of Pakistan have left a mark in every field here, particularly in Karachi despite their low numbers.

This miniscule community continued to prosper even after the partition of the sub-continent especially the businesses which contributed greatly in the economic progress of the nation. In the early 1960's we numbered around 5,000, but this unfortunately has now diminished to its present level of around 1,800 and is also an aging community with a large segment of the youth migrating to the west. A change that has taken place over the years is that more and more Zarathushtis are seeking jobs as compared to the business minded people of the past, which in turn will reduce their philanthropy in an individual capacity. However, we are a very compassionate lot and tend to stand together in times of need and the amount of charity that is done within the community through different Trusts is phenomenal.

Clearly the greatest impact which we can make is on the strength of our commitment to education. In the 19th century and the early part of the 20th, it was enough to make a contribution by establishing two excellent schools. At that time nobody went into higher education save the very top of the social league. Now everybody seeks to become a graduate, but they need more in terms of postgraduate qualifications and more importantly quality education. The quality of higher education in Pakistan is very limited and foreign education has become exceedingly unaffordable. Hence, youth from deprived social backgrounds may not be able to acquire the desired education and end up with office jobs with little scope for career progression.

During the British Raj, Parsis had the ear of the British officials who saw us as sensible, un-volatile, educated and committed persons due to which we had their patronage. That patronage gone, we have since entered all fields with a sense of equality and proved our mettle. To make an impact we need to be not only twice or three times better but way above the rest. Yes, there are lots of not so qualified people doing good jobs but if we need to make our marks in science, industry, business, education, we need to tackle millions of very able, very sensible young persons who are as good if not better than us. The trouble is, with the immigration of many of our youth, a vacuum is being created which will

reduce the effect that our community could have on society. In some sectors our sense of moral values and commitment is still regarded as the one thing which gives us a head-start.

It follows that in a culture of corruption, it is important for the youth of today and tomorrow to maintain these high standards without which our decline will be terminal.

Meher Cawasji is a 46 year old educationist, working with children in need of special care. (Down Syndrome and border line children with other behavioral problems).



**Yada ashem
zevim anghem mazdaoscha
Ahuraongho ashicha aramaiti**

**May the wise lords reward
when we invoke Righteousness
with sincere devotion**

Ys 31.4

DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA CONCERNS OF PAKISTAN ZARATHUSHTIS

Pouruchisty Sidhwa



This is probably the first time ever that I have been asked to write down what concerns me as a Pakistani Zarathushti. Here are my basic concerns:

INTERMARRIAGE:

The Ratio of girls to boys in our community in Pakistan is a growing concern. We find more and more of our eligible girls not finding suitable partners in the community. Those that cannot find what they want in our community because of ratio of girls to boys, the age differences, parental involvement or more importantly lack of involvement from the suitor, opportunity, prejudice from opposing groups...so many factors, seek the next best opportunity and opt out. Whoever makes one happy, secure and feels respected is the ultimate goal for most. Some of them wish to remain inside the precincts of our religion but cannot do so as the religion does not allow it.

Globalization, which led to our dispersion in the first place, may well now be used to bring us together again: with a properly structured, sound and strong world body to keep the far flung pockets in the Diaspora connected with our roots in the homelands; with high tech travel and communication; and by meeting frequently, locally at social and religious gatherings, and globally at conferences and congresses, across all ages and all interests.

If a community truly wants to survive, they must adapt to the modern age and practices. Inter-marriage is not a threat; it is an opportunity to engage new potential members to our community. Assimilation is a by-product of being in contact with other human beings, and cannot be ignored. For those who are on the fringes, one must look to the root and find why they are in this situation? Talk is good but action is better. For decades this topic has come up time and time again. Worry changes nothing. **Change, Root focused Action and Positive Envisioning can help lead the way.**

So what can we do?

To all those going out (be it through apathy or inter-marriage or conversion) can we appeal to their sense of responsibility to their religion and community (on grounds of religious belief or ethnic preservation or societal compatibility) to stay in?

To all those going out, rather than debar them, can we not, instead, 'lure' them into staying in – by offering succor, spirituality and self-actualization (ultimate fulfillment).

To all those on the fringes, can we not show them the benefits of bonding and belonging to our global Zarathushti fraternity?

THE KEY IS COMING TOGETHER

DOKHMANASHINI

We call ourselves forward looking but tend to hang on to rituals, customs and views that suit some and appease most. One of these rituals is Dokhmanashini. An oft repeated subject and one that is perhaps not discussed openly for fear of being ostracized Dokhmanashini is at best tolerated by today's youth. Absence of vultures, use of acids and other materials to decompose the dead bodies is not what the religion ever envisioned could become of this ancient ritual. Dead bodies were left on mountains in ancient Iran far away from any sort of habitat. Here in Karachi we live right next to the Dokhma and do not know the kind of toxins we inhale every minute. An option of dokhmanashini, burial or cremation should be given to each member of the community. Funding for this could be obtained if there is a general consensus on this issue.

SHORTAGE OF MOBEDS

We are forever relying on Mobeds from India as our own dwindling mobed population is now neither robust nor willing to take on responsibilities of our two agairys. Are we going to rely on India for ever? Can we not allow 3rd and 4th generation Ostaz to become navars and practice? Can we not find some kind of funding mechanism so that 3rd and 4th generation Ostaz can also participate in the initiation process in India?

DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA

PAKISTAN

CONTRIBUTION:

The Pakistani Parsees have perhaps produced the best people as doctors, lawyers, businessmen, architects, engineers, bankers, teachers, artists etc. But these are now mostly part of the Diaspora that is now in North America and Canada. My concern is that even if we continue to produce such nuggets these will continuously reach out to the West as the socio-economic and political climate in Pakistan does not encourage the youth to stay on in this country. Pakistan has lost more Parsees to emigration than to intermarriages and deaths. Every new and upcoming youth would like to settle away from his/her homeland to secure a better and safer future. The youth is just not concerned what happens to the community here, their target is to get out of here as fast as he/she can.

The biggest concern therefore is that the youth today see no future in this country. Sad But true

Pouruchisty Sidhwa. 44 year old, is Head of Human Resources at Royal Bank of Scotland in Pakistan



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AN APPEAL FROM FROHAR FOUNDATION

The Frohar Foundation is known for its Tele-Serial "**HUMATA HUKHTA HVARSHTA**" which projects and showcases Zarathushti values, culture and the way of life, This serial creates awareness of our background, instills a sense of pride of belonging and motivates our youngsters to become better Zarathushtis. It is also educational as it gives a lot of importance about the Parsee Zarathushtis-their religion, rites and rituals, prominent personalities , heritage structures etc.

Over the past few years the Frohar Foundation has been telecasting the Tele-serial "**HUMATA HUKHTA HVARSHTA**" on every Sunday on Indian Television Channels. At present the cost involved for each episode is: Production Rs 48,000/- plus Rs 6700/- totaling to Rs 54,700/-

While our efforts evolve around giving of our time and our talent, finance is very crucial, it is required to continue production of new episodes and to telecast them . Each and every one of our episodes has been produced from donations

Your support will help to keep "**HUMATA HUKHTA HVARSHTA**"- the only program of the community alive and enable us to support the charitable and educational activities of Frohar Foundation

Make cheques in favour of FROHAR FOUNDATION cross and order and mail to

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Sincerely

Cyrus Dastoor, E. Mail froharfoundation@rediffmail.com/ froharfilms@yahoo.com

DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA

INDIVIDUAL STORIES

THE DIGITAL DIASPORA

Shernaz Engineer

I am optimistic that our scattered Zarathushti community will continue thriving since growing digital possibilities allow us to effortlessly bridge our geographic divides. In the past, immigrants were forced to diligently save money to travel home once every few years. These days, immigrants can stay connected to their families and friends at home through emails and instant messages. The digital Diaspora also offers myriad opportunities to retain contact through technological advances such as the Skype and other video-audio features. As a businesswoman, I know corporations save time and money by arranging meetings online rather than ferrying their representatives across the world, which is a lesson that may benefit our community. Young Zarathushti professionals across the world should consider meeting one another in virtual conference rooms to network about work, life, and leisure.

Throughout time and across geography, Zarathushtis have immigrated in search of better professional and educational opportunities as well as freedom from religious persecution and economic stagnation. In the 21st Century, globalization has changed the face of the world and the reasons for the community's continued mobility. Zarathushtis now travel on vacations to gain an appreciation for other people's cultures. Many Zarathushti immigrants also travel to retain their own culture by exposing their children to the traditions of their motherlands. Zarathushtis have benefited from the diffusion of technological and scientific advancements, but the real issue is how globalization has created inequalities both through omissions (debt forgiveness, fair trade, medical initiatives, environmental restraints, etc.) and commissions (involvement in globalized arm trade). Young Zarathushtis in the global North will need to acknowledge that their brethren in the global South that have fared less favourably in the globalized world, and they will have to use all available technological resources to level the playing field.

Zarathushtis will survive as a cohesive entity if they successfully embrace digital portals available for community preservation: online chat rooms, email listservs, and video conferencing. If the Zarathushti business community promotes its brand as "Good People to Do Business With", the online financial world will equate Zarathushti faith with the edicts of our faith: honesty, righteousness, and philanthropy. Business negotiations will benefit from the Zarathushti imprimatur of success since the online finance world will respect the Zarathushti seal the same way the Indians and British respected the Tatas, Wadias, and Godrejs.

Shernaz Engineer, CEO Verity Recruitment Group, England



OF ZARATHUSHTIS FAR AND WIDE, what unites us and what does us divide

INDIVIDUAL STORIES

Nauzad Tantra

I find this topic fascinating because I have met many a Zarathushti in my lifelong travels, but never thought of the similarities and differences between them. My story starts in Mumbai, the focal point of contemporary Zoroastrianism. Mumbai is a busy bustling city, filled to the brim with people from all walks of life. It is a multi-cultural, multi-religious metropolis which lies along the western coast of India. Zarathushtis have flourished in the city partly thanks to jobs created by the Westerners as they made inroads into the Indian subcontinent. As the early Zarathushtis found success in their city of dreams, they built charitable institutions, housing and enterprises to make the city more welcoming to other settlers. The city grew quickly and its booming growth was largely unplanned, leaving roads looking like branches of a tree rather than the Euclidean geometry that western cities support. And perhaps the ethos of the city is like a tree too, unstructured and chaotic, but

nurturing life, giving shelter and providing hope to all who pass through.

The Zarathushtis' colonies and baugs in Mumbai have nurtured a unique culture within themselves. It may not be as distinguishable today, but not long ago there were always "aunties" in "gavans" looking over you and any misdeed would be followed with a gentle rebuke. And then there was the classic "bawa-hindi", a source of joyous confusion to those who were well-versed with the local dialect.

But a little of this charm extended to Zarathushtis who settled outside the baugs in the larger community of Mumbai. In fact, the easiest way to distinguish whether a bawaji was from a baug was to try to get him to talk in Hindi or Marathi. However, despite the differences, the community stays largely prosperous and industrious.

DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA

As you move out of the city of Mumbai, you come across another kind of Zarathushti. Strong and well built like his Mumbai counterparts, but with his ancestral roots in agriculture, for this was most Zarathushtis' livelihood before Mumbai materialized new opportunities. As you take the train to Udwada, you pass towns and villages that house Zarathushti orchards and farms. But, as the train moves further away from Udwada, the orchards disappear and you would find Zarathushtis tilling the land to eke out a living. Their big hearts more than compensate for their empty wallets and their knowledge of the environment exceeds that of most Westerners. They could explain the timings of the tide by looking at a traditional calendar, cull the best fruit from a tree, and show you their traditional air conditioning and rain-water harvesting systems that their houses are built on.

The British rule in India encouraged some of the Zarathushti flock to head to the UK. The British were an innovative and meticulous lot. Rising to prominence in the world after the industrial revolution, the British built their country by careful planning and organization, which is observed even today. And the thought that they put into each aspect of their lives is commendable. For instance, amongst all the road systems I have travelled across the world, the system in the UK is the best I have encountered.

With greater access to education and perhaps greater interaction with people from different countries, the Zarathushtis in the UK are liberal and open-minded. Some of the innovative, inquisitive, and questioning minds in the UK are looking to "adjust" their religion to suit their lifestyles, but still remain a happy, well established, and hardworking lot!

Among the citadels of the British Empire were the islands of Hong Kong, and trade during the British era took Zarathushtis to the shores of the distant islands. The city is undoubtedly capitalistic, but its population has its feet firmly rooted in tradition. In the hustle and bustle of the trading district, it is not uncommon to wander through the serene gardens of a Buddhist temple.

Today, Zarathushtis in Hong Kong work in a variety of professions. And many there have reached the pinnacle in their field of enterprise in true capitalistic fashion. Yet, following their proud tradition, they have retained the charitable zeal that once identified Zarathushtis. It is one of the few Zarathushti communities today that reach beyond their borders to actively seek and help Zarathushtis in other countries. The Zoroastrian charities of Hong Kong, Canton and Macau probably spend an equal part of their budget on non-local Zarathushtis and their own countrymen, which is a magnanimity of spirit that deserves appreciation from the larger community.

Not far from the shores of the islands is China. The Chinese desired the monetary accumulations stemming from capitalism, but would not let go of their responsibility to their tradition, elders and community. Surprisingly, the Chinese population is more aware of Zoroastrianism (called Xianjiao in Chinese) than their British or the

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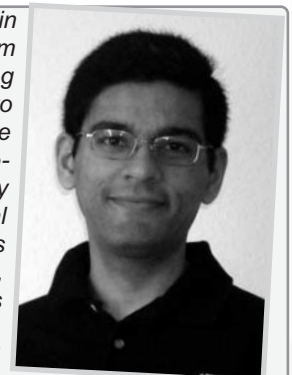
Americans counterparts. The Zarathushti population in China is warm and welcoming, proudly don their sudrakusti, speak "Parsi Gujrati", and have a "Zarthost ni sabi" prominently displayed in their homes. And like most other Chinese, they embrace the materialism associated with progress while maintaining traditional value systems.

If you look eastwards from China, you see the vast expanse of the Pacific Ocean. And perhaps the vastness of the ocean prepares you for the vast change in ideology, for on the other shore you reach the land of capitalism, the USA! I have just arrived in the USA, and my interactions with the Zarathushtis have been extremely limited so far. But I expect them to be like the American population: hard working, materialistic, and ready to defend their opinions.

So what unites all these Zarathushtis? It's certainly not our profession, for we have excelled in diverse fields of enterprise. It's probably not our food or clothing although we all love dhan-saak and have a tendency of being "well-dressed" even at home, just in case someone pops in to say "Hello". There is no common language that binds us, for there are Zarathushtis who wouldn't know a word of Gujarati or Farsi, while others who couldn't speak a word of English. And, contrary to the Bollywood stereotype of the fair topi-wearing bawaji, we don't all look the same.

But what unites us resides far deeper within our culture. Our will to work hard and succeed in our ventures as well as our honesty in our dealings (business or otherwise) are the common threads connecting us to each other. We all respect our environment and its many creatures. We all strive to help those who are less fortunate than ourselves. We accept our circumstances and flourish within the rules and regulations those circumstances create. Our ability to sit at the end of the day (with or without the Parsi peg= a shot of scotch) and have a hearty laugh, even at our own expense, is one of our endearing traits! Regardless of where you are when you're reading this article, at the end of the day you can proudly call yourself a member of the Zarathushti community!

Nauzad Tantra holds a masters in manufacturing and a doctorate from the University of Nottingham. During his PhD he worked with Rolls-Royce to develop waterjet and electro-discharge machining technologies for aero-engine turbine manufacture. Currently he is working with IMI plc as a global graduate and his technical interests include low cost automation, mechatronics, green technologies and non-traditional machining. He is a keen student of technology and knowledge management. His hobbies include sports, cycling, trekking and tinkering around like a typical engineer!



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Why not there? A year in Bangladesh

Parendi D. Mehta

A year out of college with an economics degree and a year of corporate consulting behind me, I was eager to answer two questions: (1) what is my life's passion, and (2) what does it mean to really work for "international development"? So when I received a job offer from a research center in MIT's Economics Department, the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (JPAL), to work on a project in rural Bangladesh, I jumped at the opportunity to do field work.

Of course, the decision provoked many questions from friends and my large Parsi family:

"Wouldn't you prefer rural India over Bangladesh?"

"Isn't it so poor...unstable...corrupt?"

"Why there?"

While it is true that Bangladesh faces innumerable challenges (as does any developing country), the country is fascinating in many ways. Precisely because of these challenges and the social responses they've generated. Bangladesh is home to a massive network of NGOs and research institutions operating throughout the country (including Grameen Bank, the Nobel Peace Prize winner Muhammad Yunus microcredit institution, and BRAC, the world's largest research organization headquartered in a developing country). With political corruption at all levels of government and an inefficient tax and social welfare system, Bangladeshis have integrated NGOs into their daily lives

to compensate for the absence of government services. Indeed, I have heard locals declare that NGOs and the Grameen Bank are more important than the government!



My little niche within this NGO network was to monitor and evaluate a girls' empowerment project implemented by Save the Children USA, in a southern division of Bangladesh. The goal of our work with JPAL was to identify the successful aspects of the project to increase funding efficiency and improve future projects. In the development economics field, JPAL has pioneered the use of the randomized trial method to quantify the effectiveness of development programs. This evaluation design—randomly selecting villages to receive a certain program and monitoring the others as a control group—uses survey data between the two groups to measure

the impact of the intervention (similar to a medical drug trial).

The program we evaluated had established peer groups for girls in over 200 villages. In these groups, adolescent girls openly discussed issues such as domestic violence, depression, family, hygiene, nutrition, and safe water sources. We aimed to determine which part of the program effectively delayed the girls' age of marriage, a factor that has been found to improve women's health and the well-being of their future children. One program component provided financial literacy training to the girls in some villages, while another component gave 15 to 17-year-old girls an in-kind incentive (cooking oil) four times per year if they remained unmarried. (*Parendi in photo above facing camera*)

For the project, I traveled to rural communities every month on field visits, where villagers always had plenty of questions about my identity—particularly my nationality, marital status, age, and religion. As a 23-year-old American who looks South Asian, has a Persian name, an American accent, and is a follower of Zoroastrianism, I created more

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confusion than the typical white American expatriate. These introductions often evolved into broader discussions about culture and community, and I was often asked questions about my Zarathushti faith. With the elections in November 2008, my nationality as an American overshadowed these religious discussions, as villagers even in the most remote areas would rush towards us, pumping their fists into the air and yelling jubilantly “Obama! Obama!” It felt good to celebrate the election with the world, even if I couldn’t be there at home.

Like many people who spend time abroad, I came back reflective, analyzing everything that had always been “normal” to me as an American. I became more attuned to the amount of time I worried about petty materialistic things, and I marveled at what was considered “important” news coverage. I constantly thought about the life I had just left—especially the Bangladeshis’ resilience, creativity, and community. When their homes and fields were flooded, they surrendered to the forces of nature and simply shifted to the next village; when their resources dwindled, creativity abounded to fill their needs; when a boat was three hours late, everyone complained, then laughed and sang songs together to pass the time.

Through constantly sharing and reflecting about my experiences from last year, I have grown into a global citizen who respects and accepts any community as my own. Now I look forward to applying my energy, interest, and passion in social innovation.

**WHY BANGLADESH?
THIS IS WHY.**



Parendi Mehta is a graduate of Brown University (B.A. Economics) and is currently a Research Consultant in the Education Division at the Inter-American Development Bank Headquarters in Washington, D.C. She soon plans to obtain a graduate degree in agricultural economics and research the links between poverty, land resources, food habits, and agricultural policy.

For more information about JPAL, please visit <http://www.povertyactionlab.org>.

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MY PERSPECTIVE

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ENGLAND -

Cyrus Mewawalla

For most of us, our formative years are dominated by our parents and our teachers. For my brother and I, there was the additional dimension of overseas travel, exposing us to different cultures and value systems through our childhood. We were fortunate enough to have attended schools in Pune, Manchester, Tokyo and London. At an early age, we picked up on something pretty important: success in life can mean different things to different people.

When I was eleven years old, my father was transferred from Japan to England. During my first week at my new primary school in Hampstead my teacher asked me to write an essay contrasting my Japanese school with my new school in England. For good measure, I included my school in Pune in the comparison as well. I concluded that the biggest difference was how my peers defined 'being cool'. In India and Japan, the coolest boy in the class was the boy who came top in every subject. In England, coming top made you a target of derision, much cooler to be not "too" clever!

As an adult, it took me a long time to eventually find out what I really wanted to do with my life. After graduating in Economics from Cambridge University, I spent ten years at Price waterhouse Coopers. It took me that long to realise that accountancy was pretty boring. So I tried my hand at something I thought might be interesting – I got a job as a stock analyst in a leading Bank, specialising in telecoms. I loved the job. It was 1999 and stock markets were booming. The City was full of excitement and I wanted a part of the action. I wanted to move stocks, make markets, drive a nice car, hold four phones in my hand at the same time and shout loudly at the screens.!

From the outside, *The City* looked like the perfect world – clever people using their brains to make lots of money. Once I became an insider, however, I very quickly learned the truth. Investment bankers weren't succeeding because they were smart; they were making money because they were bending the rules and fixing the match, the authorities stood on the side lines and turned a blind eye as vast tax receipts rolled in. *The City* was not a place for the principled.

Increasingly I felt that the personal price and compromises that were being asked of my own integrity were completely at odds with the essence of everything that I had been taught to believe in. So in 2002, I left my dream job. I left because there were – and still are – huge conflicts of interest for a research analyst working in a global investment bank, and I didn't want any part of it. Conflicts so significant that a few months later, Eliot Spitzer, New York's Attorney General, fined the top ten US investment banks \$1.4bn for following unethical working practices within their Research Departments. The hidden agenda was exposed. Today few investors trust the research that comes out of big banks.

Many people told me I was stupid to give up a well-paid job on "principle", but they did not understand the torture of being forced to live one day after the other questioning your conscience and the values you hold dear. Constantly faced with the moral dilemmas posed by two contrasting cultures; brought up in the West, yet within the Eastern atmosphere of our homes, we are expected to become a part of society and benefit from it, whilst at the same time retaining our Eastern identity and values.

For me, it was what I learned as a child that ultimately made my decision for me. As a Zarathushti, my religion taught that it was for me to take responsibility and choose the Right path, along with an ethic of honesty and hard work that my parents instilled in my brother and me no matter where we were in the world. Living in Japan during my formative years and my ongoing study of Karate for twenty years only served to reinforce these values in me.

Our lives are all informed by the values and experiences ingrained in us, they form the fibre of our being, and we never really think about them until they are undermined. When I left corporate banking, I decided that I would take courage from my conscience and write my debut novel.

In *City of Thieves*, a murder thriller set in the cutthroat world of investment banking, I contrast Eastern philosophy with Western values. My novel tells the story of one man's fight to protect his honour in a world where honour holds no value.

Today I've gone back to doing what I love. I'm a stock analyst, but I work for myself. I run my own independent research firm called CYKE Partners with my friend and co-founder, Keith. I have the same clients I had when I was a big-ticket investment banker and I still have to compete on a daily basis with research from Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley and Citibank. It's hard to make a living competing with the world's biggest money making machines ... unless you have something the big guns don't have. My clients include some of the finest pension funds in the world. They come to my Company because I have their trust.

Cyrus Mewawalla is the author of "*City of Thieves*" a fast-paced murder thriller set in the murky world of investment banking. His novel was published in July 2009 by Little Brown under his pen name Cyrus Moore and is now an international bestseller. He lives in London with his wife and two children. www.cyrusm.com



*DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA

Individual Stories-Canada

TRANSFORMATIONAL TRAVEL

Farah Shroff Ph.D.

A Diasporic Zarathushti Family Beats with the Rhythm of the Human Family

My sister and I had the great blessing of being raised by our bapaji (paternal grandma) and mamaji (maternal grandma) as well as our parents. We benefited from the best of the 'old' world and the 'new' world. Our grandmothers' stories and wisdom imbued us with Zarathushti cultural values and traditions as well as molded our identity as Parsis. We simultaneously took advantage of scholastic and athletic opportunities available in Vancouver, Canada.

My mother taught us that travel was one of the best forms of education. When I was 15 years old, our family traveled to Mumbai and Karachi, my parents' hometowns, and I have never been the same since! I had a feeling of solidarity with those suffering from lack of food, shelter, and other basic needs that made me question my role on this earth. I realized I could have been one of the kids eking a living in the gutters outside Rustom Baug where my mother was raised. I no longer aspired to become rich and famous, but wished to make a humble contribution to the betterment of the human condition.

Fast forward a couple of decades: My husband, Roozbeh, and I want to travel with our children, but there are many barriers that give us pause: possible tropical illnesses, not enough vacation days, expensive airplane tickets, etc. After my sweet mother-in-law suddenly passed away, we decided that dreams should not wait since one never knows when one's time is up.

We took our sons—Arman, 4-years-old, and Zubin, 7-years-old—to Southeast Asia for 3 months. We chose this region in hopes of gaining exposure to a child-centred society. We didn't map out every move, but safety was our main concern since we had never traveled outside of Canada with the children.

The flight to Bangkok from Vancouver was delightful. Despite stopping a few times en route, the kids found novelties on each flight: whew! The kids loved to fly, and this continued throughout the voyage. Despite the fact that our flight arrived at 2 am, our friends in Bangkok warmly welcomed us to their home. We settled in to the extremely hot Bangkok weather. Once we got our bearings, we found Bangkok to be a city full of helpful people who beamed at us with deep, genuine smiles. One day, we got on a bus after a long day and a woman gave up her seat for both of our sleepy kids. Immediately, Zubin fell asleep with his head on the woman passenger's shoulder. Roozbeh and I were so touched to see the stranger embrace Zubin and caress him. This kindness was so unexpected and wonderful, especially given Bangkok's reputation for roughness, violence and drugs. Virtually every day, a similarly serendipitous event would occur whether we were in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Malaysia, Korea and India. The vacation was the most relaxing experience I've had as a mother to date.

We surmised that Canadians like kids but Asians LOVE kids! And our kids thrived on this warmth. Arman kept repeating "I want to stay in Asia forever!" and we figured that this sentiment was due to a delicate combination: the warmth of locals, the whole family spending time together, enjoying great adventures together, and experiencing freedom to do whatever we felt like on a given day.

Both kids were particularly awe-struck when we went elephant riding in Pai, northern Thailand. We all mounted Boonma, our 43-year-old mama elephant and walked through rivers and jungle. We had been told that we would be getting an elephant shower. The climax arrived when Boonma, at the hidden instruction of the mahoot (elephant trainer), submerged in a shallow pool of muddy water and toppled us! We were surprised, to say the least. The mahoot told us to get back on top of Boonma and when we were comfortably prepared to continue our journey, Boonma tipped over again, and again and again! The kids were laughing, giggling and truly in paradise! After this experience, Arman stopped calling me Mom. I was 'Boonma' for the rest of our time in Asia. And as for himself, he was now "Baby Chang" meaning Baby Elephant. Thai locals found this much easier than Arman, as they have difficulty pronouncing 'r'.

Korea, Laos, Cambodia and Malaysia were also filled with adventures. We were amazed to see the beautiful Hindu and Buddhist Empire of Angkor Watt in Cambodia: a testament to



splendid architecture, peaceful cultural values, strong leadership, support for the fine arts and more. While we were there we met a family of 8 who were sharing one tiny hotel room. It really made us think critically about how accustomed we are to having so much room around us while this family was thoroughly enjoying themselves on their holiday too, without complaining about being squished like we'd have been doing.

After 3 months, as planned, Roozbeh and Zubin went home for work and school but because Arman had repeated his love for Asia so many times, the 2 of us stayed behind so that we could make a quick trip to India to see my 96 year old grandma--his great-grandma. Despite the fact that we were only in Mumbai for 2 weeks, India had a great impact on Arman. Batman, Superman, and Spiderman were replaced with Ganesh, Hanuman, and Kali who can do truly amazing feats! Our son was completely turned on to Indian culture through the Ramayana and other stories. Even Curious George wasn't as naughty as Ganesh and Baby Hanuman!

Our trip to Asia was a positive life-changing experience in every sense. We came to respect Asians for bearing such immense heat, and we realized that Canadians have it much easier dealing with winters by layering. But, most importantly, we realized that life consists of a series of moments. How we choose to spend each moment constitutes our whole life and reflects our basic values. In North America, many people are always in a rush and lack time to spend with their family and friends. Our lifestyles are centered on materialism. We are encouraged to believe that consumption will make us happier and go into debt for that fancy car or other "gotta have" item. The undiagnosed pandemic of depression in this culture is partly a result of the realization that these things don't make us happy and debt is no fun. By contrast, most Asians we met have their priorities set very clearly: nurturing caring relationships between people is most important. While life may be very difficult financially, politically, and socially, our new Asian friends showed us how patience, sweetness, and a big heart leads to a higher quality of life.

While I cannot deny the very real social problems of poverty, hierarchical social structures and other serious concerns, I must acknowledge that happiness is within the reach of all. As an emigrant to this wonderful country of Canada I hope that all of us who come from cultures where kindness and caring are prioritized can enrich our adopted homelands by mainstreaming these values. We Parsis pride ourselves in adapting well to our host culture, which has helped us to succeed in the Zarthushti diaspora. Yet I pray that we keep that part of ourselves intact that tells us to honor an open heart above all. This trip helped our family to remember that compassion, kindness, and love are truly more important than material things or accomplishments. Maryam, my late mother-in-law, embodied and lived these values, based in her Iranian upbringing. We feel 'richer' for having met humble, warm people who shared her spirit in so many ways.

Farah Mahruk Coomi Shroff, PhD, is a public health researcher, writer, activist who teaches at the Medical School at the University of British Columbia amongst other professional engagements.

¹We are most pleased that on April 10, 2010 she completed 100 years!

JAAN

a poem for Coomi Munshi born April 10,1910

by Farah Mahruk Coomi Shroff, grand daughter



Coomi Munshi with her grand daughter Farah and her great grand son Zubin

My Granny (now 100) and I play a fun game
Twinkling Eyes Dancing Hands

Giving Receiving Love for Love

Granny: "tu mari kaleji chhe"!!

I am her kidney, inside her, a vital organ

Me: "tu maru bejoo chhe"!!

She is my brain, whispering wisdoms

Granny: "tu mari dihl chhe"!!

I am her heart, beating life into her being

Granny and me, back and forth,

Until all the vital organs have been named:

"tu mari jaan chhe"!!

You are my life, the breath that makes me who i am,

A vibrant song reverberating deep in my soul?

Farah writes: Coomi is my Grandmother's first name; Mahruk is my mother's first name and Shroff is my father's last name. When I was 8 years old, having learned how I came into the world, it seemed sensible for my name to reflect as many of the wonderful people who raised me so I changed it to do just that!

In our language, Gujarati, expressing love is like saying "you are so important to me that I can't live without you—just like I can't live without my kidneys" and the ultimate form of devotion is to declare that our beloved is the essence of life itself, our soul (jaan).

This poem was published in Canadian Women Studies Vol 24, Nos 2,3 (2005)

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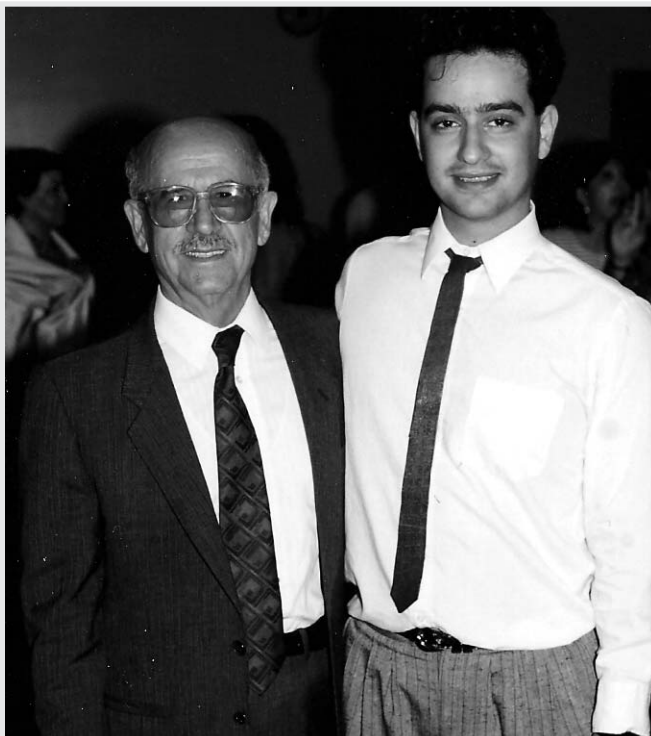
Shervin Shahriari

MY EXPERIENCE LIVING IN THE DIAPSORA

Every person is provided with a unique “hand of cards” and I was no exception. I ended up by myself in North Vancouver, Canada, at the age of seventeen as a refugee by a series of unpredictable events. I had never seen a photograph of Vancouver before I arrived in 1983. Nonetheless, the following are the key highlights of my experience living within the Zarathushti Diaspora in the Greater Vancouver area. I will share with you how I was welcomed when I arrived, managed to fit into a new culture, changed my behaviour, learned the Zarathushti basics, became an active Zarathushti youth, and learned different Zarathushti cultures.

BEING WELCOMED

The first impression of an individual from a community is a long lasting one. The B.C. Zarathushti community left a very good impression on me. At my first Nowruz event in Vancouver, I sat at a round table with a



few relatives. The late Mr. Jamshid Pavri came to our table after everyone was seated and shook my hand and said “I heard you are new to Vancouver ... welcome, Shervin.” I know I was not the only one he and his wife welcomed through the years. Earlier that night I had been welcomed by another gentleman which I soon learned to be Mobed Mehraban Zartoshty. (photo above)

He was welcoming every single person entering the hall that night! I was in the midst of a small community with strong leaders who constantly spread love and righteousness.

FITTING IN

In the 1980s the Zarathushti Community was just establishing itself. The community was too small to offer newcomers any services. I needed to go to school and get a job, and needed to establish myself in my new home. I had some similar cultural challenges as a youth member of the Zarathushti minority in Iran. However, attaining cultural fitness in Canada was an extremely different undertaking for me. In Iran, I knew the history and had my family and community - my support system. In Canada, I did not even initially understand what the newspapers were saying about the previous night's hockey game. I did not know what NHL was and I barely knew what hockey was. Although I spoke English, I had an accent. However, I was determined to play my cards to my advantage and made an effort to experience the culture of my new home. I surrounded myself with Canadians and allowed them to correct my English whenever I made a mistake. A small outcome was that my English improved but the larger outcome was that I developed some good friendships outside of the Zarathushti or Iranian Communities. Moreover, I ended up becoming a fairly knowledgeable hockey fan!

SPEAKING UP

In the Iranian culture, being quiet and reserved, we were told, demonstrated one's wisdom. I had been advised by my parents to stay quite when others – especially older people – were talking. I had learned to speak only if necessary. Intimidated by everything around me, I ended up being quite most of the time. With this behaviour, I was barely noticeable at first. I remember I was an unsuccessful candidate for a job at the university coffee shop because I was so reserved about selling myself. I changed. I started to speak up and soon after started noticing things were going my way more often than not.

LEARNING ZARATHUSHTI BASICS

I have to admit I did not know much about the religion or the faith I was born into before coming to Canada. In Iran, I had received an old school Zarathushti education. In other words, I used to memorize the prayers and their meanings without understanding them. Those days, the young Zoroastrian Society of BC, held regular speaking arrangements and this is where I

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INDIVIDUAL STORIES CANADA

learned the basics. Luckily, we were fortunate to have guest speakers who helped me discover the beauty of the Gathas. I found out that the Zarathushti teachings can be applied in our daily lives. Also, I soon realized that what I share with other Zarathushtis goes beyond culture or certain rituals. It is the Gathas.

BEING AN ACTIVE ZARATHUSHTI YOUTH

I participated in youth events and soon realized that the Zarathushti community is a supportive place for me

LEARNING DIFFERENT ZARATHUSHTI CULTURES

Living in the Vancouver and North American Diaspora has been unique. First of all, I managed to make so many Parsi friends and have appreciated their dedication to Zarathushti rituals. I have also heard from my Parsi friends that they too have appreciated the Irani Zarathushtis dedication to cultural celebrations such as Mehregan or Sadeh. The Parsi/Irani interactions have been enriched by the fact that we live in countries that value freedom of expression. If I did not live in the Diaspora, I am not sure if I would have ever had the opportunity to interact and learn the Parsi/Irani cultures



to develop my leadership attributes. I ended up the president of the youth committee, the Chair of the 5th North American Zoroastrian Youth Congress and also delivered presentations and speeches on different aspect of Zoroastrianism in many different cities of the world. Being an active youth member of the Zarathushti Community gave me the confidence to apply some of my learning to my career as well. My achievements including the recent publication of my first book would not have been possible without the confidence that I earned as an active Zarathushti youth in BC and the skills I obtained as a Zarathushti community volunteer. It is not difficult to understand why I still encourage everyone to be active members of the sometimes loosely linked Zarathushti bunch. Perhaps it is because my experience living in the Diaspora has been enriched by participation in this community.

Shervin Shahriari holds a Bachelor of Science degree and a Master of Business Administration from Simon Fraser University, BC. He served as a member of the North Vancouver Museum and Archives Commission from 2003 to 2007 and chaired the commission in 2008 and 2009. He has held senior information technology management positions with various firms and currently works for a global engineering and environmental firm. He lives in North Vancouver with his wife Homa and five year old daughter Noosha.



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A SUBJECTIVE VIEW OF THE DIASPORA

Bapsi Sidhwa

Like every migrant community we Parsis have our own way of coping with a new environment. A lot, of course, depends on where we come from and the cultural mores that prevail there.

No culture is simple, especially not American culture. Despite the surface uniformity imposed on it by its McDonalds, its TV advertisements and its identical shopping malls, America has startling depths that are not easily explained but only gradually inferred.

When I semi-moved from Lahore to Atlanta in the eighties, and then on to Cambridge and New York, I found myself abruptly transported from the bullock cart pace of my past to the dizzying speed of life in the New World. Everything about my life underwent transformation: my friendships, my interaction with my family, even my expectations. My social behavior was spun 180 degrees and I existed in a bemused state of perplexity and trauma from which I am yet to fully emerge.

Let me give you an example. In traditional semi-segregated societies like we have in Pakistan, women maintain a degree of reserve. We wear a haughty look when mingling with the multitude and keep our eyes averted from strange men. If a stranger has the effrontery to stare, or, God forbid, smile at us, our demeanor becomes positively forbidding. To act otherwise is to be considered licentious. Many a man accosted by the remark: "What're you staring at for, shameless fellow? Don't you have mothers and sisters at home?" They are chased away by better-mannered gentlemen. And if a male family member happens to be accompanying the women, the offender can be treated to a slap or two on his head.

In America I wandered around oblivious of my stance, until I was told by my daughter - who was studying in America - that I gave an impression of being insufferably stuck-up, if not downright rude. I was instructed to smile.

- Even at strangers?

- Yes.

I braced myself to glance at strangers in shopping malls, on streets, in theaters, and a wonderful transformation took place. The men and women smiled back pleasantly, often in a way that reflected a compliment, and went their way. I was hooked. I started to relish the carefree sense of possibility that lurked in these casual encounters. I locked friendly eyes with complete strangers and my loneliness in America appeared illusionary in the wake of the affable and responsive wealth of smiles beamed my direction. We can count on our offspring to keep us on track. Before long I was told:

- You don't have to look so directly at everyone you pass, you know... it's rude.

- They don't mind; they smile back --- I protested.

- You force them to when you stare at them.

Even though I recognized that a parent can do little right in the empathically censorious view of one's growing progeny, this game was bewildering. The finer rules were again spelt out. I was to maintain a generally friendly expression and smile back only if our eyes met accidentally.

Two years later, I returned to Lahore. As I trundled my luggage cart in the cavernous hall of the airplane hanger that had been converted into an airport, I accidentally glanced at a man. He happened to be looking at me and I reciprocated with a bright smile; it was entirely reflexive. It was only when the startled man moved forward with the happy look of a bingo winner that I realized I was in Lahore, and what I'd done was inappropriate. Of course, I immediately raised my nose and haughtily averted my face, and the flummoxed man slinked off like a rebuked child.

Each time I travel to the Indian subcontinent I have to unlearn in the ancient world what I have grown accustomed to in the new.

For a long time I was uncomfortable in social situations in America. I often felt disconcerted and even slighted until I eventually learned to be more open and at ease and less self-conscious.

It is difficult to navigate an existence which spans two cultures. But the unnerving pressures of this simultaneous existence have provided me with fresh material for my novels and inspired me as a writer. My fourth novel *An American Brat* is born of these experiences. In handling a narrative that must be sustained in both the East and the West, I must inevitably compare how I perceive life in the New World with the ways and values of the world to which I am more accustomed.

Bapsi Sidhwa is an internationally renowned author, living in Houston..



A ZARATHUSHTI'S WALK THROUGH WALL STREET

By Nina Godiwalla

"What?!" is usually the response I get when I explain I'm Zarathushti.(Zoroastrian). It's that vocabulary word you may have learned in your seventh-grade history class when you read about the world's oldest monotheistic religion. It makes sense that it is not a commonly referenced word since you don't run into Zarathushtis as often as you would during Cyrus the Great's Persian Empire. Currently, there are only about 140,000 left in the world and the ones in the U.S. flock to the five largest cities. My parents emigrated from India and raised me in Houston's tight-knit Zarathushti community, where we spent most weekends driving about an hour to rotating Zarathushti dinner parties and social events. Growing up, my parents and community stressed the importance of economic success and prestige. So when I had the privilege to work on Wall Street, the epitome of the American dream--I was sold. It wasn't something that people like me - second-generation, middle-class immigrants from the Texas public school system - got the opportunity to do.

The Zarathushti world is tight - so much so that two degrees of separation usually make you an uncle-brother or sister-aunt to someone you've just met. Zarathushtis have also enjoyed significant economic success, primarily in Mumbai, India, where most reside. Facing an unfamiliar country, the first-generation U.S. immigrants seemed even more eager to succeed and carry with them their successful Indian roots. I was a typical second-generation Indian immigrant product, watching my parents navigate a country with which they were unfamiliar. They stuck as closely as possible to their community, and learned as much as they could from each other, hopeful that their kids would revel in the American Dream. They expected their lives would be better than they were in India, but that our lives would be exceptional. As my dad explains, "When you are a foreigner, you take what you can get, and hope that your kids have it much better."

My parents' support, coupled with my determination to succeed, got me a full-time job as an investment banker with Morgan Stanley. The Zarathushti community in New York reached out to welcome me including an aunt who housed me rent-free, families who extended invitations to holiday gatherings, and aunts who substituted as my family by throwing me birthday parties. Initially, investment banking amazed me the way a buffet does immigrants - the unlimited food is a privilege. Everything I experienced was foreign and evoked a sense of awe. It was as if someone had flung me into one of my grandmother's soap operas, yet unlike her, I didn't believe anyone really lived this lavishly. As a corporate event, we took a field trip to an executive's summer mansion outfitted with a tennis court. I found myself looking at their children, wondering what it was like to eat fresh baked chocolate-filled croissants for breakfast instead of Pop Tarts and spend weekends ordering banana splits with chocolate, vanilla, and strawberry ice cream at country clubs that didn't allow you to wear shorts. With every new place we went, I knew I was out

Dynamism of the Diaspora

of my element, but my curiosity and excitement for the extravagance I wouldn't see otherwise, kept me hungry.

Over some time, my fascination faded. The investment banking culture's end-game wore on me. Money. It was tiring to chase only one thing, blind to other costs. The day we found out one of our colleagues was found dead in her apartment, several senior managers crowded in a conference room with fiery faces, annoyed that they were getting paid less than one of their counterparts whose salary was mentioned in the newspaper article. More talk went around about money than about our colleague's death. In the Corporate Finance department - one of the most powerful departments in an investment bank - hazing of young employees was the norm. We worked extremely long hours, and were expected and encouraged to sacrifice our personal life. Having missed one of my family vacations to work on a deal, one of my senior managers applauded me, noting "I'm sure you'll get some good projects that you'd otherwise have missed." Over time, many examples like this wore me down. I'd grown-up determined to prosper in this country, but I had enough deep-rooted values to know money couldn't be my only goal.

One of the most disconcerting qualities of Corporate Finance was that the culture tended to shun different backgrounds and ideas. The predominant attitude tended to be the faster you conform, the more likely you will succeed. As a second-generation immigrant growing up in a small, racially homogeneous, predominately Christian suburb of Texas, I was used to adjusting in order to fit in. But this corporate assimilation somehow felt more like a conversion of sorts. The more dissimilar you were-- whether it be your race, gender, or class--the less of a voice you had. Having grown up in a tight, supportive family and Zarathushti community, it was hard to let go of so much of who I was to fit into the cardboard cutout the banking culture often demanded. After a few years in banking, I made a switch for the better, carefully choosing to work for companies that were mission-driven rather than money-driven.

To find out more about her upcoming book join her Facebook group: "Nina Godiwalla Author Page"

This article appeared in the Washington Post March 22, 2010, reproduced with permission.

Nina Godiwalla is the author of *"Suits: A Woman on Wall Street,"* which will launch in late 2010. Her work has appeared in the *Houston Chronicle* and *Austin Business Journal*. She has a Wharton MBA and has worked for several major Fortune 100 companies



DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA**CANADA****Canada's Iranian Zarathushti Community***Richard Foltz, Ph.D.*

While the first Zarathushti communities to establish themselves in Canada were Parsi, because of accelerated rates of Iranian immigration since the 1979 revolution, the Zarathushti populations of Ontario (around 6,000 total) and British Columbia (about 2,000 total) are increasingly Iranian. In Vancouver they may constitute half or more of the total Zarathushti population, and in Toronto, they are currently, as much as a third.

Conversion has been a particularly lively issue among Iranians, because since the Islamic revolution in Iran many Muslim Iranians have sought to "re-convert" to the religion of their distant ancestors as an act of resistance against Iran's revolutionary regime. Such "reversion" has been more visible in North America than in Iran, although some claim that Iran is now full of clandestine Zarathushtis.

In terms of religious practice, Iranian Zarathushtis continue to celebrate two annual festivals, Mehragan and Jashn-e sadeh, that were abandoned in India, in addition to the six gahambar festivals still celebrated by Parsis. A more significant difference is that because Zarathushtis in Iran and India were irregular in observing intercalary months, their ritual calendars became increasingly separate from each other over the years. Thus, Iranians and Parsis do not celebrate their festivals on the same day, and the dates on which the Parsi rituals are celebrated no longer bear any correspondence to the seasonal cycles that the rituals were originally intended to commemorate. The Persian new year, No ruz, which for Iranians of all religious backgrounds remains the most important festival of the year, is celebrated at the spring equinox by Iranians but in late summer by Parsis, though in locations where the Zarathushti population is small the Parsis may join in with the Iranian celebration. The result offers some interesting examples of cultural hybridization: In the case of Montréal, the Zarathushti No ruz ceremony begins with a prayer recitation by Parsi priests using such distinctly Indian features as flowers and sandalwood, but is followed by a communal dinner of Iranian chelo-kabab. The haft sin table laid out is also distinctly Iranian.

In general, Iranian Zarathushtis see themselves as being less concerned with rituals than Parsis, and consider their religion to be more inward and personal. They tend to see the faith as being embodied mainly in the Gathas, and mostly reject the legalistic "Sassanian" version of the religion. Iranians are also typically less concerned than Parsis (and sometimes not concerned at all) with issues such as ritual purity, the wearing of the sacred undershirt (sedreh) and cord (koshti), or

ceremonies in general. In real terms, apart from matters of personal belief and practice the major differences between Iranian and Parsi Zarathushtis in Canada arise from the use of separate calendars and languages. The calendar issue, mentioned above, means that Iranians and Parsis are rarely physically present at the same ceremonies even when they share the use of a building.

Iranian Zarathushtis in Canada are concentrated in two major cities, Toronto and Vancouver, both of which have been prime destinations for Iranian migrants of all religious backgrounds. Toronto's Zarathushti community, with a population that likely exceeds 6,000, is the largest in Canada, and indeed, the largest in the world outside of India and Iran. Of this figure about a third are Iranian, but their proportion seems to be increasing relative to Parsis.

The Toronto Dar e Mehr temple was established in 1980 through a trust established by an Iranian Zarathushti immigrant to the US, Arbab Rostam Guiv, who specified that such temples should be "open to all". The trust bought a large house on a woodsy property bordering the Don River, and converted it into a multi-purpose building which serves both as a community centre and as a site for ritual activities. The Zoroastrian Society of Ontario (ZSO), which runs the property, has recently succeeded in raising money to replace the building with a new, purpose-built structure, which will be the first in Canada. The plans are impressive: an entryway modeled on the façade of the Apadana palace at Persepolis and casts of old Persian monuments to be incorporated into the structure of the building.

The social and religious life of Toronto's Iranian Zarathushtis falls under the guidance of the Iranian Zarathushti Cultural Kanoun, (IZCK) which was established in 1984 as a distinct body within the ZSO. The IZCK organizes and oversees the celebration of the six annual gahambars according to the fasli calendar, although there exists at present not a single Iranian priest among the 44 listed in the ZSO directory. The IZCK recently attempted to bring a priest from Iran, but his visa was refused by Canadian immigration. The IZCK also organizes events celebrating Panjeh (the five last days of the year, when the souls of the departed are honoured), Mehragan, Tirgan, Sadeh, Zarathosht's birthday, and No ruz. The IZCK also holds Avesta classes, in Persian, as well as Persian language and literature courses for members of the community. They have sections promoting sports for youth, Iranian handicraft production, and organizing social events such as picnics.

The second largest Zarathushti population in Canada is that of Vancouver, numbering perhaps 2,000 people, more than half of whom are Iranian. The city is also

DYNAMISM OF THE DIASPORA

CANADA

something of a media centre for Iranian Zarathushtis. It is home to the Ancient Iranian Cultural and Religious Research Development Centre, which hosts a website and publishes a scholarly journal in Persian, *Iran Zamin*. A Zarathushti Persian-language news quarterly, *Payk-e Mehr*, is published by Mehraban Sharvini. There is also an online Zarathushti News Agency (ZNA). Another Vancouver-based website is that of the O'Shihan Cultural Organization.

Iranians of all religious backgrounds tend to be fiercely nationalistic, and often even more so in the case of Zarathushtis who hold claim to be the custodians of Iran's "original" religion. Even within Iran many Iranians consider their national identity to be more important than their religious affiliation, and among the Iranian diaspora this tendency is stronger still. Iranian expatriate communities are characterized by their high level of education and their urban, professional lifestyles. Frequently their outlook is highly secularized, particularly since many left Iran precisely to escape what they saw as an excess of religion.

It is therefore not surprising that most expatriate Iranians in Canada, as elsewhere in the world, choose to express their Iranian-ness through cultural activities rather than religious ones. Canada's major cities all have Iranian restaurants and often host concerts of Iranian pop and classical music, dance, and other events. There are Iranian nights in many of the country's nightclubs, especially around the time of No ruz. Toronto has several Persian-language weekly magazines, while Montréal has a bi-weekly paper and a new weekly magazine as well as a monthly magazine which is distributed throughout Canada. Many Iranian homes receive Persian-language satellite television, with the bulk of programs coming from Los Angeles but some originating from Toronto as well. A Toronto-based Iranian clothing manufacturer, TNIG, produces t-shirts and dresses featuring Zarathushti symbols, though apparently appealing to the nationalist rather than religious sentiments of young expatriate Iranians.

In comparison with Toronto and Vancouver, Montréal's Iranian population (around 1,600) is low, and the number of Zarathushtis about 300 individuals, of which only 40 or 50 are Iranian. An Iranian bookstore/art gallery in Montréal, *MÉKIC (Maison d'Édition Ketab-e Iran-Canada)*, which opened in 2007, is owned by a Zarathushti, Kaveh Vafadari, but the frequent lectures, poetry readings and art exhibitions held there are attended by Iranians of all religions, and indeed, religion is little discussed there. A cultural organization known as *Supporters of Zoroaster (Dustdaran-e Zartosht)* sponsors public lectures in Persian by well-known Iran scholars.

Because most Iranian Zarathushtis are less concerned with ritual matters, their dependence on guidance from religious authorities "back home" is less than among the Parsis. In the case of both Iranians and Parsis, however, it would appear that North American communities, particularly through demands for less exclusiveness and simpler rituals, are having more of an influence on their communities of origin in Iran and India than the reverse, and are thus taking the lead in how the religion is defined and practiced. As a growing and self-conscious community within Canada's cultural mosaic, Iranian Zarathushtis are playing important roles in the evolution of Zarathushti, Iranian, and Canadian identities.



Richard Foltz is Associate Professor of Religion and MA Program Director at Concordia University, Montréal. He also teaches the Zarathushti Religion.

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In The News

TRIPLE NAVJOTES IN DALLAS –Ervad Burzin Balsara (10 years) performing the navjote of his friend Hormuz (6 years)



On Saturday May 15th, Dallas Metroplex area witnessed an extremely joyful event, the auspicious Triple Navjotes of the Buhariwalla boys, ZAAL (10yrs), CYRUS (9yrs) and HORMUZ (6yrs).

The initiation ceremonies were performed by Ervad Poras Balsara (on left in photo) and his son Ervad Burzin Balsara, (in middle on photo) and Ervad Zubin Kotwal (on right on photo). It was an extraordinary event to witness, our youngest Navar Ervad Burzin (10 Yrs) performing his first Navjote for his friend Hormuz, creating lasting memories for the boys.

Their mother Keshvar and father Kali were floating on cloud 9 the whole evening, as they had celebrated their own wedding at the same place 12 years ago.

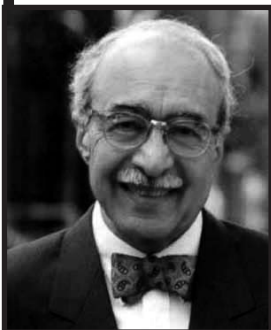
Proud grandparents Arnavaz and Adi Vakharia (maternal), Thrity and Hoshi Buhariwalla (paternal), family members and friends from all over the Globe, witnessed the ceremony on the 69th Floor of the City Club in downtown Dallas which offered a magnificent view of the surroundings by daylight and by nightfall.

We wish ZAAL, CYRUS and HORMUZ a prosperous, progressive and peaceful Zarathushti life.

Reported by Firdosh Mehta, Weatherford, Texas.

IRAN HERITAGE, PERSIAN GULF AND IRAN ALLIANCE AWARDS TO DR FARHANG MEHR AND DR RICHARD FRYE

Dr. Farhang Mehr



Farhang Mehr means the culture of love which reflects his love of our culture and education. Born in Tehran, he received his bachelor's degree from Tehran University in law and engineering, and a Master's degree in economics from the London School of Economics and a doctorate of law from Southampton University. Dr. Mehr was chancellor of Shiraz University for many years prior to becoming the head of the finance department (*Modir Kol Vezarateh Darayee*), the highest position a Zarathushti could obtain under the constitution of the former Pahlavi administration. Dr. Mehr held various government positions; the highest being deputy prime minister under the administration of Mr. Hoveyda. In addition to government positions, he taught at several universities both in Iran and abroad.

Those of us who know Dr. Mehr consider him an honest, disciplined, and relentlessly hard-working person (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Farhang_Mehr)

In The News

Dr. Richard N. Frye



In 1953, Mr. Ali Akbar Dehkhoda gave Professor Frye the title of *"Irandoost."* For over six decades Professor Frye has contributed to Iranology and the history and culture of Iran. His work has set the standard of excellence in Iranian Studies. In his will, Professor Frye has asked to be buried next to the Zayandeh river in Isfahan. This request was approved by the Iranian president in 2007.

The honorees will receive gifts made in Iran to demonstrate appreciation for their hard work and for their dedication to our community. With their life-time efforts, we have been able to raise awareness in the international press about our rights and our heritage.

Dr. Frye's curriculum vitae is accessible on the website <http://www.richardfrye.org/>

Source www.KavehFarrokhi.com

DR NIKAN H. KHATIBI "Top 40 Under 40"

Dr. Nikan H. Khatibi graduated from the University of California, Irvine with a Bachelor in Science in 2004 followed by a Masters in Business Administration in 2005 and Medical Degree in 2009. He is now a certified medical physician currently completing his residency training in anesthesiology at Loma Linda University Medical Center in Southern California. During his career, Dr. Khatibi has made medical research one of his top priorities. In college, he worked on antioxidant treatments for diabetic-induced rats at the UCI Dept of Nephrology. In medical school, he took interest in genetics and investigated the role of Complement Factor-H mutations on age-related macular degeneration at the UCI Dept of Ophthalmology. This research earned him the Joseph M. and Eula C. Lawrence Scholarship and Award at ARVO in 2007, which is the top ophthalmic conference in the country. And finally in 2009, Dr. Khatibi joined the Zhang Neurosciences Lab at Loma Linda University Medical Center where he is currently investigating the role of volatile anesthetics as a post-treatment option for treating patients victimized by

stroke. He was recently awarded top honors (1st place) at the Western Anesthesia Regional Conference in 2010.

In his spare time, Dr. Khatibi loves to give back to the community – volunteering in many organizations including, but not limited to, the Chamber of Commerce, Lions Club, and UCI Alumni Association.

In the future, Dr. Khatibi would like to continue his public service by taking on a position as a member of the United States Congress.

Nikan Khatibi was the editor of the Youthfully speaking section of the FEZANA JOURNAL. From the FALL issue he will be writing a regular column on Health Issues

www.DrNikanKhatibi.com
www.NextGenNow.org





In The News



FAROHAR ON TOTEM POLE. HOW DID IT GET THERE?

The City of Ottawa in Ontario is the capital of Canada and many displays of Canadian art is found throughout the city such as this totem pole on display near the Byward Market. Reaching great heights, this totem pole was hand carved by First Nations people who put in many hours working on this masterpiece. Totem pole carving has been handed down through generations which preserves the history and honors the First Nations people. Tourists to Ottawa, can enjoy the aboriginal art displayed around the city and explore some of these traditions for themselves.

"The project for this particular totem pole was started 15 years ago by a friend of mine Jeff Mierins (Head of School of Art at the time) who was trying to raise money and profile of school. Only cultural groups, and embassies were involved in this project. The totem pole was set up to represent multicultural Canada.. That is what the totem pole was created for, to represent the nations of the world. It was transported from British Columbia (BC) and the initial carving representing the first nations and the symbol of French

and English were carved in BC. Other national symbols of countries around the world were carved in Ottawa. Although all the symbols on the Totem pole are representing nations, I was able to request and get our symbol approved. As far as the money contribution to the project, I asked my Zarathushti friends and family in Ottawa. I received many cheques from Zarathushtis notably Farshid Bakhtiari (President of the Iranian Zoroastrian Association in New York at the time) who raised almost half the funding from our American friends. I have to refer to my records for accuracy but approximately there was a \$1200 donation made to the school for this project on our behalf.

Overall I am happy and now the pole is a landmark and has aged well for the past 15 years.

P.S. Funny story, interestingly, in unveiling the totem pole, the Mayor of Ottawa introduced the symbols from each country and mistakenly indicated that the Farohar was the symbol/emblem of "Zoroastria" as though it was a country.

Mehrdad Azadeh, Ottawa, Canada

In The News



Dasturji Khurshed Dastur Kaikobad Dastur, one of the two Udwada Iranshah Dasturs, and his wife, Havovi, came to North America to visit with their family and friends. Their first stop was on April 28th in Sarasota, FL, with Jo Ann and Ervad Soli P. Dastur. While in Florida, Jo Ann and Soli arranged for them to meet the ZATAMBAY group in Tampa at Anahita and Hoshedar Tamboli's home, the ZAF group in Miami at Nellie and Ervad Darabshah Unwala's home, the Orlando CFG Group at the Wingate Hotel of Dinyar Mehta. Of course some days were spent in the Walt Disney World!

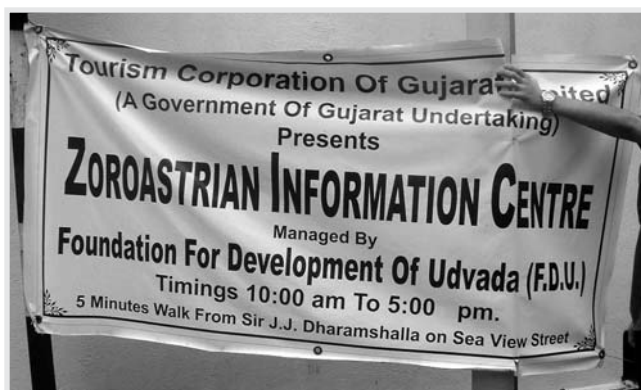
From Florida, they visited New York and were requested to perform a Jashan at the ZAGNY Dar-e-Meher. Virginia and Washington DC were their next stops, with a tour of White House. Next stop was Boston and ZAGBA had an informal get together with them. Finally, they visited Toronto where ZSO and OZCF had a get together as well as a Jashan in ZSO Dar-e-Meher on Zarthosht-no-Diso and a get together in OZCF Dar-e-Meher. They returned to Mumbai on May 31st via New York. *(photo above Dasturji Khurshed with Ervad Pervez Patel of ZAGNY)*

At most of the visits, Dasturji gave a short presentation on the history of Iranshah, as well as the extensive renovation of the Iranshah Atash Behram building which was completed last year. He presented a PowerPoint slide show of the renovation of the Iranshah Atash Behram.

He also gave a brief presentation on the Foundation For the Development of Udwada (FDU), its goals and achievements. One major project of FDU was the Zoroastrian Information Center (ZIC) permanently housed in an old Hotel. It gives a very good overview of our Zoroastrian Religion, history of Iranshah and Udwada, our ceremonies and rituals, our cultural heritage like Saris and Jhablas, etc., and our illustrious Zoroastrian stalwarts. (See FEZANA JOURNAL Vol 22, No 3, pgs 26-29 and pgs 56-57) A brochure of ZIC was presented with some photos of ZIC in a PowerPoint Presentation. With the help of

Yazdi Tantra in Mumbai, a PDF version of the ZIC brochure was shown as well as some clips of the 5 videos of ZIC taken by Yazdi Tantra. Both the brochure and videos are available on line at: <http://zoroastrians.net/2010/03/11/udvada-museum/>

His main emphasis was to let us all know that he is championing the cause of obtaining a Heritage Village Status for Udwada with the Government of Gujarat and further with the Government of India. He lamented that many old homes are being sold, torn down and converted into multi-story apartments. Also, he would want to have Udwada and Iranshah declared as a heritage village (not to be confused with the UNESCO World Heritage Site) so that urbanization will not be allowed. Such a status would help to stop the soil erosion of the shore by sea, as well as pollution of water wells. With multi storey structures planned all around the Iranshah and a complete absence of sewage and sanitation system, soil and water pollution are the biggest hazards to the surrounding areas of Iranshah. Already 2 wells within the Iranshah compound are polluted due to such intrusion. Udwada Iranshah is managed by the nine Iranshah families and it is the only Atash Behram where our age old "tarikats" are being followed and these "tarikats" require well water for all our ceremonies within the Iranshah compound. He requested all NA Zoroastrian organizations to write him a letter of concerns like these which can then be forwarded to the appropriate authorities. We hope that FEZANA and its associations and all Zoroastrian Groups take up this plea.



He further mentioned that now there is an online facility to donate to Iranshah funds at the website: <http://www.iranshahudwada.org/>

Report by Ervad Soli Dastur

Credit for ZAGNY photo to Arzan Wadia of Parsi Khabar

In The News

A DREAM REALIZED --- BOMI DAMKEVALA, OF CHICAGO, ORDAINED A MOBEDYAR

On Sunday April 4, 2010 at the Arbab Guiv Dare Mehr in Chicago, in the presence of 13 mobeds from across the USA and Canada, and over 85 people in the audience, Bomi Damkevala was ordained a mobedyar, Around 10 am. Ervad Pesi Vazifdar, his mentor in this program, gave "nahn" to Bomi, then



accompanied by 13 mobeds, they went to the prayer room for the first part of the day's ceremonies which included the ablution of the Afringan pedestal, Atash Niyaesh and Doa Nam Setayeshne. Later Bomi led the jashan ceremony as the "zaotar". Bomi was presented with a plaque by ZAC president Hosi Mehta to commemorate this auspicious occasion. This was followed by a gourmet lunch of traditional dishes,

Bomi Damekwala is the seventh Mobedyar to be ordained in North America under the NAMC Mobedyar Program and the first in Chicago. This program prepares him to perform all outer liturgical ceremonies such as Afringan, Farokshi, Satum, Jashan, all funeral rites including Geh Sarana, Uthamna, and to sit in at Navjotes and weddings as a non-officiating priest.

Bomi Damkevala is the past president of the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago and is now ready to serve the religious and spiritual needs of the community. Congratulations Bomi.

Photo top Mobedyar Bomi reciting the Atash Neyaesh, Photo below Mobedyar Bomi



in the first row centre surrounded by visiting priests from across North America, attending the NAMC, AGM.

Photos courtesy Ervad Soli Dastur Source ZAC newsletter left Mobedyar Bomi reciting the Atash Neyaesh, Photo on right Mobedyar Bomi in the first row centre surrounded by visiting priests from across North America, attending the NAMC, AGM.

Sooni Taraporewala and Ronnie Screwala win National awards

At the 56th National Awards ceremony in India, Sooni Taraporewala won the award for the Best Film on family values for her movie 'Little Zizou' and Ronnie Screwala for his production of the movies 'Fashion', 'Oye Lucky, Lucky Oye', 'A Wednesday', and 'Jodhaa Akbar' all won awards in different categories. The national awards were given in the presence of the President of India.

Source India Journal, April 2, 2010

In The News

Change of leadership at the Parsi Zoroastrian Association of South East Asia, Singapore

On March 21, 2010 a new committee was elected for 2010-2011



President: Dilnawaz Zaveri

Vice-President: Russi Ghadiali

Treasurer: Freddy Bavaadam

Secretary: Jasmine Cooper Dastoor

Committee Members: Dr. Pesi Chacha, Shenaz Dabu, Cyrus Daruwala, Jimmy Doctor, Armin Dotivala, Minaz R. Kanga, Homiyar Vasania.

From left to right

Cyrus Daruwala, Pesi Chacha, Homiyar Vasania, Jimmy Doctor, Freddy Bavaadam, Dilnawaz Zaveri, (president) Armin Dotivala, Minaz Kanga, Russi Ghadiali, Shenaz Dabu, Jasmine Cooper Dastoor

ZAREEN KARANI ARAOZ APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF LEXICON GLOBAL BUSINESS SCHOOL, PUNE



We are pleased to announce that WZCC Director for Global and External Relations, Dr. Zareen Karani Araz, has been invited to be the Director of the Lexicon Global Business School in Pune, India. Lexicon has an MBA program, AICTE accredited and affiliated to Pune University, and a proposed Post

Graduate Diploma in Management. The Business school is looking for a variety of faculty and language teachers for this unique program that will be educating global managers. We encourage qualified and interested individuals to apply. They are looking for faculty with a passion for excellence, global experience, energy to work and develop an innovative program and educators with creative teaching methods, and practical experience with industry. Please send a copy of your cover letter and resume to gerry.lime@lexicon.edu.in

Zareen is committed to making this an outstanding global management program, and is seeking a team of educators to work together to build and grow these programs in Pune, and eventually at other campuses. The School will have an Advisory Board of internationally respected corporate and academic leaders, and will connect with universities and corporations globally. Zareen can be reached at zareen@lime.lexicon.edu.in

In The News

Khushnuma Bhesania of Keck Graduate Institute (KGI) of Applied Sciences, CA, is the New President of the Student Government.

Keck Graduate Institute has a newly-elected president of student government, Khushnuma Bhesania (MBS '11) who plans to bring an enterprising spirit to her new leadership role in order to help connect students with faculty, administrators and industry leaders and create positive change. "I am hoping to be the facilitator so that voices on both sides can be heard," she says. "Students have to be proactive and the school will support us."

Khushnuma Bhesania, an international student and native of Vadodara, India, is KGI's first female president. She campaigned on a work ethic inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's famous quote, "Be the change you want to see in the world." She takes office on May 15th, for a one-year term. Among her priorities: Building a dialogue between the administration and students on matters of curriculum; exploring additional networking opportunities involving students and Advisory Council members; and cementing KGI brand awareness from coast to coast

"She believes in the importance and power of individuals taking action rather than just not caring or expecting someone else to do the work," says Sarah Arlien (MBS '10), the second-year class' ethics and judicial chair who helped manage the election.

Bhesania won a close election by leveraging her prior work experience in industry for Quintiles Transnational Corp., where she monitored clinical trials in schizophrenia, diabetes and oncology for pharmaceutical companies, and customized global training programs throughout Southeast Asia. Fluent in three languages, she first became involved in politics as the "assistant head girl" at her private high school on India's west coast. In a controversial move, her state

changed its rules for university qualifying exams, and Bhesania organized meetings between students and faculty to take a formal position on the issue.



Khushnuma Bhesania (MBS '11)

After receiving a merit scholarship and graduating with her Masters of Biochemistry from Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda in India, Bhesania spent four years navigating the corporate world. She then decided to pursue a Master of Bioscience degree at KGI to learn the skills necessary to move into a project management or business development role. Since joining the KGI community, Bhesania has worked privately to bridge communication gaps between students, faculty and staff.

"In her spare time- "what spare time?"- Bhesania enjoys sunbathing at the beach (she attempted surfing once). She expects to stay

busy next fall, collaborating with more than a dozen student leaders across multiple programs.

At the end of the day, whether it is student government or an organization, you're still dealing with people," she notes. "Communication and transparency are key."

Congratulations Khushnuma

Source: Margie Fishman, KGI, Claremont, CA

In The News

Rustom Cyrus Khavarian releases his first music album "Changing Voices" on iTunes and Amazon MP3.

Rustom Cyrus Khavarian, an upcoming Business Marketing graduate at California State University Fullerton, has released his first music album "Changing Voices" on iTunes and Amazon MP3. He has been teaching improvisational acting at the Orange County High School of the Arts since 2008 and performs long-form improv comedy regularly at various stages in Los Angeles with his team "Good Knievel." In recent years, he has been working as a VIP Host/Tour Guide at the Disneyland Resort and as a successful commercial actor. His national commercial work includes projects for: AT&T, Comcast, NFL Network, Red Baron, Jimmy Johns, and The Beatles Rockband, as well as numerous other companies. He grew up singing/touring professionally as a soloist and with various choirs in operas, major productions, and sporting events throughout the United States and Canada. Rustom recently started singing and writing again with Matz. Rustom is an aspiring actor and singer in the Zoroastrian community and has been performing under the stage name "Rustom Cyrus." He is very excited about the new album and hopes everyone still enjoys blasting 90s Pop/R&B as loud as he does.



Become a fan of Rustom Cyrus on Facebook! <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Rustom-Cyrus/51929483325>

Stream "Changing Voices" for free on Myspace: <http://www.myspace.com/rustomcyrusmusic>

"Changing Voices" on iTunes: <http://itunes.apple.com/us/album/changing-voices-ep/id369956887>

"Changing Voices" on Amazon MP3: http://www.amazon.com/Changing-Voices/dp/B003JR09Y8/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=dmusic&qid=1273532576&sr=8-1

THE OLYMPIAN VOLUNTEER JOURNEY

Bella Tata

Throughout my life - which has been a pretty busy one - I have always enjoyed sports and music and thought that one of the things I would like to do would be to be present at the Olympic Games. My thoughts were on the summer games, as those were the sports I was most familiar with whilst growing up and even now. When we knew that Vancouver/Whistler in beautiful British Columbia, Canada, had won the bid for the



2010 Olympic and Para Olympic Games, my sister, Zarine Dastur, and I put in our applications to volunteer as soon as the call was made. And...we were selected. I am sure many other Zarathushtis also volunteered, depending on their work schedules, and I am grateful to my employer for letting me take vacation time to volunteer. (Photo from left Zarine Dastur and Bella Tata)

The hard work and vision of John Furlong, CEO of VANOC, the Organizing Committee organization for the Games, come first and foremost in my mind when reporting on my volunteering. VANOC went about methodically doing the

In The News

different things they had to, professionally and energetically. Volunteers from all over the country, and other countries as well, were selected, interviewed, trained to some degree, and given schedules to follow. Able (in most cases) supervisors were found to lead the different teams, and I was very lucky to be recruited by the International Client Services group, with my work only at the Vancouver International Airport. Long shifts did not affect us; the spirit was willing and so was the body. Meeting and greeting visitors at the gates, taking them through the special immigration lines, then through accreditation, getting their baggage and then sending them to their hotels in VANOC cars, was my job. I have met so many interesting people and learned so much. However, my best experience was getting acquainted with my group of volunteers. My sister, Zarine, worked at the two main host hotels in downtown Vancouver, and had a mixed kind of experience. She met more dignitaries than I did, for longer periods, including Princess Anne, Jacques Rogge, the IOC President, and others, whereas my meetings with the people I received were of a shorter duration.

We volunteers were given beautiful outfits, and were known as the Blue Jackets or Smurfs.

The Opening and Closing Ceremonies for both the Olympic and Para Olympic Games were marvellous - half the world must have watched these.

Vancouver has never been what it was, and will likely never be again. The streets were filled with happy people, who enjoyed being together, singing the anthem and cheering for Canadian athletes as though their cheers would edge them to gold. Canada had the most number of gold medals and stood third in both the Olympic and Paralympic Games. I could go on and on, but FEZANA Journal will not let me ramble due to space limitations. I will close this with my heart full of joy at having been a part of this great event, and thanking all Canadians for their participation on the streets, in their homes and in their hearts. Keep the flame burning!



Kayhan Irani, take a Big Bow! Screenwriter wins NY Emmy Award

On April 19, 2010, acclaimed playwright and social justice artist Kayhan Irani won a prestigious NY Emmy Award for her first TV series, "We are New York." In an ecstatic email to friends and family, Irani wrote: "I am SO thrilled, so proud, and so happy to see a TV show by, for, and about NY's immigrants get the attention it deserves." Irani won in the category "Best Writing for Television" for helping develop the script of the popular TV series over the last two years. As the writer, director, performer, and facilitator of "We are New York", Irani covers different stories of immigrants living in New York City; she captures how people work together to solve problems and create better lives for themselves. "We Are New York" is a groundbreaking innovation supported by the NYC Mayor's Office of Adult Education and the City University of New York, Office of Academic Affairs. The show aspires to assist immigrants learning colloquial English and features non-native speakers speaking at a comfortable pace. Since the end of June 2009, "We are New York" has aired once a week on Channel 25, NYC TV. To watch episodes or get more involved with

"We Are New York", please visit www.nyc.gov/LearnEnglish.

As a performer and writer, Irani's pieces spotlight important issues in contemporary society. She has toured nationally and internationally performing her renowned one-woman show, "We've Come Undone", which conveys stories of immigrant women post-9/11. Irani has also co-edited a volume of essays entitled, "Telling Stories to Change the World: Global Voices on the Power of Stories to Build Community and make Social Justice Claims", about projects around the world that use storytelling as a way of creating social justice. "We are all searching for something: understanding, love, inspiration, validation," reflects Irani on her website. "Life is a pursuit for illumination, the truth from our experiences." Reported by Deena Guzder

In The News

AVA YAZAD PARABH 2010



from left: Zarine Kersi Commissariat, Keynote speaker
Ervad Nadir A. Modi, Vada Dasturji Saheb of Udvada,
Dastur Khurshed Dastur Kekobad Dastur, Kersi
Limathwalla and Zarir Bhathena".

Zarathushtis celebrate many festivals, referred to as "Parabhs", throughout the year. One such festival is the Avagan, the festival of water divinity Avan Ardivisur Anahita, celebrated on roj Avan in the month of Avan. On this day devout Zarathushtis offer their gratitude to Avan Yazad – singly or in congregation. They invoke Avan Yazad near natural sources of water like a well, river or sea, by praying the Avan Yasht or Avan Nyaish. Avan Yazad blesses the devotees with good health. She especially blesses young mothers and mothers-to-be with healthy progeny, with good pre and post-natal health.

The Ava Ardevisur Parabh function, which started on a small scale decades ago, is now being celebrated on a gigantic scale, solely due to the magnificent efforts of eight (Late Ervad Naval Rustomji Unwala having expired a day before the Parabh) committed and dedicated individuals. Although Zarathushtis all over the world celebrate the Parab, our Mumbai Zarathushtis take the lead.

March 26, 2010 Vada Dasturji of Udvada, Dastur Khurshed Dastur Kekobad Dastur along with 20 other mobeds led the Jashan Ceremony followed by Humbandagi in the combined voices of over 800 devotees present at the Radio Club pier. for the parabh celebrations

Opening his speech, Dasturji Saheb stated that our community is forward in almost everything, yet it is not progressing at the rate it should have. The educated females of our community - who can influence their children to reach greater heights - are unable to teach them the basics of our religion, customs and our Parsipanu. The faith exists but there is a lack of inclination. We are unable to impart religious knowledge though we give them lessons in Karate, Dancing, Music, Art etc. They are sent to Agiaries, Atashbehras but they do not know much of Zarathushtra and Ahura Mazda. Dasturji Saheb

stressed the need of imparting religious knowledge to our youngsters, to tell them our history, our culture and our future.

He again lamented the fact that even after explaining the need of not polluting the sea and wells, consecutively for the last three years, Zoroastrians still continue to throw flowers, coconuts, dal, polies etc. into the sea and wells thus adding to the already existing pollution. Instead, he suggested, we should pray to Ava Yazad and do the Kusti and try to invoke her blessings, which will not pass unheeded. He hoped that he will not witness such pollution again, next year.

He was followed by Ervad Nadir Modi, the key note speaker for the evening, who was introduced by the Master of Ceremonies Mrs. Zarine Commissariat. Ervad Modi took us on a journey through times when there was a sizeable Parsi population till the present time when there is a danger of the community facing extinction.

He started by saying that there cannot be a communal survival without cultural identity. There cannot be a religion without the community and there cannot be a community without religion. Religions have faded with the extinction of the community.

The reason for the dwindling Parsi population in India is mostly immigration to foreign countries. Those who go abroad seldom return. In course of generations the Parsipanu evaporates. There are hardly any Agiaries or learned traditional priests to guide them, and often, the religion is erroneously practiced and malpractices creep in.

Another reason is the type of lifestyle, like late marriages, no marriages; celibacy (30%), etc. This is due to the ingrained approach that marriages have to take place within the community. Further there are poor opportunities for boys and girls to meet each other. Hence the Bombay Parsi Panchayat has stepped in and has offered an opportunity to young males and females, upto the age of 40 years, to meet each other once a month.

Further, late marriages may result in infertility. Here also the Bombay Parsi Panchayat has stepped in to offer free medical aid to infertile couples and has started a programme to tackle the issue, under the guidance of Dr. Anahita Pundole. This BPP initiative has met with good response and results.

A vote of thanks was given by Mr. Rusi Bhumgara to all those who had contributed towards the resounding success of this function specially to Vada Dasturji Saheb, and the Panthaky Saheb and mobeds from Sethna Agiary for performing the Jashan.

*By Cyrus Patel,
(photo credits : Mr. P.K.Tavaria)*

In The News

Dr Noshir M Shroff awarded the Padma Bhushan by the President of India Shrimati Pratibha Patil at a special ceremony during a function at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on April 7, 2010.

Dr. Noshir M. Shroff is a medical director of Shroff Eye Centre and Honorary Consultant and Advisor (Anterior Segment) at Dr. Shroff's Charity Eye Hospital, Daryaganj, New Delhi. This hospital was founded in 1914 by his grandfather Dr S.P. Shroff as one of the first charitable eye hospitals in Northern India and which continues to provide quality eye care especially to the weaker sections of society, using the latest technology and equipment. It also has centers in remote areas in Rajasthan, Haryana and UP and is working closely with ORBIS International and with MIT, USA (Project Prakash). Dr Noshir Shroff is also involved with charitable medical centers in Zamrudpur village (DCWA) and Srinivasपुरi (SAVERA). In 2008-2009 around 135,000 patients were treated at these three organizations and around 10,000 surgeries were performed out of which more than 50% were totally free or highly subsidized.

With a graduate degree from Maulana Azad Medical College, (1973) and a post-graduate degree from Delhi University (1978) Dr Noshir Shroff went on to become a pioneer in the field of intraocular lens implant surgery with his first implant surgery in 1982 when this surgery was in its infancy. Against all odds he persisted in this work and perfected the techniques and now has over 30,000 implant surgeries to his credit.

Dr. Shroff was one of the first in the country to start Phacoemulsification, in 1992 and became a pioneer amongst the keratorefractive surgeons, and since the last 14 years has performed over 5000 refractive surgical procedures including, PRK, LASIK, LASEK, Epi-LASIK and Intralase (Bladeless Lasik surgery).

Dr. Shroff takes great interest not only in improving techniques and protocols of ophthalmic practices but even in the actual design of the instruments for better performance. Some of his ideas have led to innovations which have facilitated cataract surgery. A special drip controlling device to aid in Immersion A-scan Biometry was designed by him which provides the user a practical methodology to get accurate eye measurements for intraocular lens power calculations.

Dr Noshir Shroff has been the president of Delhi Ophthalmological Society of India, the Secretary General of 2nd International Congress of Intraocular Implant Society – India, New Delhi (1992) and Member Executive Committee Intraocular Lens Implant and Refractive Society, India (1990-1998). He was awarded by the Delhi Ophthalmological Society, the Dr. Krishna Sohan Singh Trophy for Best Clinical Talk in 1983-84 and 1986-87. He has been invited to deliver various Orations at the annual conference including the Dr. P.N. Sinha Oration, at Gaya and the Dr C. Shekhar Grover Oration at Dehradun. He has delivered numerous key

note addresses and presentations at National and International conferences and published papers in journals and contributed chapters in Ophthalmic Texts.



Dr Noshir Minoo Shroff, Receiving the Padma Bhushan from the President of India on April 7, 2010

In 1997, he received the Nargis Adi Gandhi Memorial Award for Professional Competence from the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India and the Bharat Jyoti Award by the India International Friendship Society

Dr Noshir Shroff has been Honorary Ophthalmic Surgeon to the President of India, and has been privileged to treat His Holiness, the Dalai Lama.



Mrs Anu Aga of Thermax receiving the Padma Shri from the President of India on March 31, 2010 (see FEZANA JOURNAL Spring 2010 Vol 24 Vol 1 page)

Cyrus Rustom Todiwala of Café Spice Namaste, London, was invested with the Order of the British Empire (OBE) by HRH Prince Charles on April 23, 2010. By HRH Prince Charles. He had been on the Queen's honor list for 2010

In The News

Sarosh Homi Kapadia Appointed Chief Justice of India

Supreme Court Justice Sarosh Homi Kapadia B.A. (Hons.), LL.B. the senior most judge of the Supreme Court, was sworn in as the 38th Chief Justice of India by President Pratibha Patil. Justice Kapadia assumed office on May 1, 2010, taking over from Justice K.G. Balakrishnan, India's first Dalit chief justice.

Justice Sarosh Homi Kapadia, born on 29th September 1947, enrolled as an Advocate on 10th September 1974. After practicing in the Bombay High Court, both on the Original Side and Appellate Side, he was appointed an Additional Judge of the Bombay High Court on 8th October 1991, a Permanent Judge of the Bombay High Court on 23rd March 1993, and as a Judge of the Special Court (Trial of Offences Relating to Transactions in Securities) Act, 1992 on 15th October 1999. He was elevated to the Bench of the Supreme Court of India on December 2003. He was associated with a historical judgment in which a five-judge constitutional bench had held that the law put in the Ninth Schedule was open for judicial review.



He has keen interest in Economics, Public Finance, Theoretical Physics and Hindu and Buddhist Philosophies. Justice Kapadia will hold this post till September 2012 when he is due to retire. (F.N.).

Replying to a congratulatory message from Supreme Court Judge V R Krishna Iyer on May 3, Justice Kapadia said "I come from a poor family. I started my career as a class IV employee and the only asset I possess is integrity. Even as a judge of the Supreme Court, I have used my knowledge of accounts and economics for the welfare of the downtrodden including tribals and workmen. I hope to fulfill my obligation to the Constitution in the matter of achieving the goal of inclusive growth",

Congratulations Justice Kapadia, the community applauds you.

Yenghe Hatam

***Those men and women both do we adore, Whose every act of worship is alive
With "Asha", the eternal law of life; Who are in the sight of Mazda Ahura
As best and noblest mortals recognized; - These are the truest Leaders of
Mankind.***

(Free Translation by Dr Irach J.S. Taraporewala)



NAUROOZ CELEBRATIONS---- WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE ?-

For the last few years, FEZANA JOURNAL has spearheaded efforts to encourage the celebration of NauRoos all across North America in a spirit of Hamazori. Rustom Kevala, past president of FEZANA had said, "...by celebrating NauRoos together we are showing our pride in our enlightened heritage and common spirituality". We encouraged Zarathushtis all over the world to celebrate March 21 with prayer meetings, jashans, and festivities, to make it an all inclusive universal event by creating awareness of this beautiful tradition with friends, families, co-workers, colleagues, neighbors and local /regional government officials.

And the Zarathushti world, from Australia to Zanzibar, responded enthusiastically and sent reports and photographs of their celebrations and their beautiful Haft-sheen tables. These were published in *FEZANA JOURNAL* 2008, Vol 22, No 2 (pages 50-67) and 2009 Vol 23 No 2 (pages 9-71). Recognition was received from the White House, with a Haft-sheen table in 2008 and a special message by the President of USA in 2009 and in 2010. This year we went further. **The United Nations General Assembly recognized the International Day of Nowruz, a spring festival of Persian origin and UNESCO declared it "An Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity"**. The Iranian New year has truly gone global as Prof Davood N. Rahni notes in www.irandokht.com.

These efforts have brought about a paradigm shift in the psyche of the Parsi Zarathushtis. March 21 which was considered to be the day "to drink Falooda and eat Kalingar (watermelon)," has taken on a whole new meaning, understanding the significance of the Haft Sheen Sofreh..Celebrating the New Year on the spring equinox has brought Zarathushtis from Iran and Parsis closer together.

We thank all who submitted photographs and accounts of their celebrations in 2010. They were all beautiful but we will not be publishing them this year. Today, we bring you the behind the scenes story of NowRuz being declared "an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity" and press coverage for NowRuz from around the world.

To make this an annual exciting festival which binds us all together what should we be planning to showcase for NowRuz in 2011 and beyond? Suggestions will be welcomed

Dolly Dastoor, Editor-in-chief, FEZANA JOURNAL

Navroze: An Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity The story behind its adoption by UNESCO

Dr. Shernaz Cama

Ever since the forces of globalization and social transformation swept the world, imposing a mono-cultural norm, UNESCO has encouraged communities to identify, document, protect and revitalize their heritage; defined as "the totality of tradition-based creations of a cultural community". Language, music and dance, games and sports, rituals, practices concerning the universe, orally handed down handicrafts, and cultural spaces are among the many forms of intangible heritage. It embodies the way in which knowledge and skills remain in a community, being passed on by elders to a new generation.

In November 2001, UNESCO adopted the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, by encouraging, recognizing and protecting the intangible





heritage in the same way as natural and cultural treasures of Tangible heritage are protected by the World Heritage List.

HISTORY OF THE NAVROZE CANDIDATURE:

In 2001, the first Nowruz symposium was held by the Iranian Cultural Heritage Organization, Anthropology Research Centre, with a publication which covered the festival's huge geographic spread in the territories belonging to the old Iranian world. These extended from the western border of China to Turkey and Mesopotamia.

In July 2004, several nations in this region came together at a Coordination Meeting of the Countries Celebrating Navroze with the Parsis of India to create international awareness about this festival.

A seminar was organized by the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO and the Iranian Cultural Heritage and Tourism Department, Tehran. Dr. Shernaz Cama, Director, UNESCO Parzor presented a paper 'The Indian Celebration of Navroze'.

The late Dr. Meherbanu Bakhtiary represented Parzor at the meetings in Tehran, where she strongly reminded the delegates at the Seminar on 19th August 2004 about the Zarathushti roots of the festival. The Seminar decided that each nation create a short film clip to show the celebration, as well as create photographic montages of the celebration in each region. Dr. Bakhtiary urged the Pakistan National Commission of UNESCO to bring in the Parsis of Pakistan, particularly those in Karachi and Lahore. Mobed Dr. Kurosh Niknam, of Tehran helped Dr. Bakhtiary forward the Zarathushti view points to the Government of Iran.

Iran was appointed as the presenter of the Candidature on behalf of the Iranian National UNESCO Commission and the Iranian Cultural Heritage and Tourism Organization.

Parzor, on behalf of the Government of India, created a file with a detailed article, CD, maps of Parsi settlements and bibliography. The Kashmiri and Bahai celebration of Navroze was also explained. It highlighted the Zarathushti concern for the environment. Dastur Firouzgary of Iran provided a beautiful CD of the chants and prayers to the elements including the Khorshed Niyayesh, the Meher Niyayesh, the Maha Bakhtar Niyayesh, the Atash Niyayesh and the Ardivisur Niyayesh in praise of the Sun, the Moon, the Fire and the Waters. The legends of King Jamshed were recounted as were the intercultural links with the festivals of India such as Holi and Basant Panchami.

Following this meeting, Parzor came to know through the alertness and interest of Meherbanu Bakhtiary that all mention of the Zarathushti roots of Navroze had been omitted and a rather inaccurate picture of the festival sent to UNESCO headquarters in Paris, France. The official report later stated: 'Norouz dossier has been turned down by UNESCO due to its incomprehensiveness and the international organization demanded Iran, as the country in charge of Norouz registration, on behalf of the other 9 countries which share this tradition, to present more documents and resubmit the file'.

In April 2007, the heads of UNESCO's National Commissions in ten countries sharing the Norouz tradition, got together in Tehran for a final Review of the Norouz file to be sent to UNESCO for Inscription in World Intangible Heritage list.

Following this renewed effort and the re-inclusion of the Zarathushti heritage of Norouz, **it was officially registered on the UNESCO List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity during the meeting of the United Nations: The Inter-governmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage.**

Since 2010, the United Nations General Assembly recognizes March 21 as the "International Day of Nowruz".

This is the official notification from the UN:

GENERAL ASSEMBLY RECOGNIZES 21 MARCH AS INTERNATIONAL DAY OF NOWRUZ

(See page 50 FEZANA JOURNAL Vol 24, No 1)

The declaration is now accepted globally in the Candidature File and Records that:

"Nowruz is associated with various local traditions such as the evocation of Jamshid, a mythological King of Iran and numerous tales and legends. The rites that accompany the festivity vary from place to place, ranging from leaping over streams in Iran ... leaving lit candles, songs and dances, semi sacred meals. Women play a key role in organizing



NOROOZ

Nowruz and passing on its traditions. Nowruz promotes the values of peace of solidarity between generations and within families as well as reconciliation and neighborliness, thus contributing to cultural diversity and friendship among peoples and various communities”.

Since the Achaemenid era the official year has begun with the New Day when the Sun leaves the zodiac of Pisces and enters the zodiacal sign of Aries, signifying the Spring Equinox. The Jewish festival of Purim is probably adopted from the Persian New Year. It is also a holy day for Ismailis, Alawites, Alevis, and adherents of the Bahá'í Faith.

The term Nowruz in writing, first appeared in Persian records in the second century CE, but it was also an important day during the time of the Achaemenids (c. 648-330 BCE), where kings from different nations under the Persian empire used to bring gifts to the emperor (Shahanshah) of Persia on Nowruz.

The UN Assembly called on Member States that celebrate the festival to study its history and traditions with a view to disseminating that knowledge among the international community and organizing annual commemoration events.

The Indian Candidature File contained among other documentation this short note:

Navroze is a part of the Zarathushti respect for the environment. This festival of the agricultural season became dedicated to Ahura Mazda, Lord of Wisdom and the Amesha Spenta, or Holy Immortals as part of the Gahambar, Celebrations of the Seasons.

Oral tradition and the Afringan-e-Gahambar tells us that in the first Gahambar, God created the sky, in the second water; the third, earth; the fourth, vegetation; the fifth, animals; the sixth, man. God fixed a time for remembering His creation in the Gahambars. The names of the seasonal festivals are: *Maidyozarem, mid-spring, Maidyoshahem, mid summer, Paitishahem, bringing in the grain, Ayathren, the home coming of the herds, Maidyarem, mid winter and Hamaspathmaidyem, held for the Fravashis during the Gatha days of the Zarathushti calendar. Navroze or the New Year is the largest and most holy celebration, dedicated to Spring, Fire and Righteousness.*

We hope that with this recognition all communities which celebrate Navroze will strengthen awareness of their traditions among the young, and encourage them to learn dances and music from those who remember them, so that this beautiful Spring Festival continues to bring joy all over the world.

In 2010 NauRooz festivities were held at Sadabad Place in Tehran with high ranking representatives of Iran, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Iraq, and Turkmenistan. (see page 129) The president of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon has suggested that next year the international NowRuz celebrations be held at Persepolis.

HOW SHOULD WE SPELL NAUROOZ?

Several years ago, Prof Yarshater, head of Iranica, based on his research and from evidence gathered had suggested that the spelling '**Nowruz**' be used by all of us.

Now that **UNESCO**: <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2010/ga10916.doc.htm>

and the **House of Representatives of the Congress of the USA** have also adopted this spelling http://paaia.org/galleries/default-file/HONDA_009_xml.pdf, Prof Yarshater asks whether we all should use “Nowruz” in our correspondence and web sites, etc.?

ARTICLES ON “NOWRUZ AROUND THE WORLD” FOR 2010

- 1 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NEpa8p1Y2N8>
Nowruz - A Persian Quick Overview
- 2 **Desi Dialogues: It is a new day for the city's Zoroastrians (Toronto)**
Rakshande Italia March 18, 2010 www.insidetoronto.com
- 3 **Zoroastrians keep old traditions alive in Australia**
by Neena Bhandari-Women's Feature Service
- 4 **www.wfsnews.org**
<http://newsblaze.com/story/20100318081728iwfs.nb/topstory.html>





- 5 BBC reports in Persian:
http://www.bbc.co.uk/persian/iran/2010/03/100319_I38_nowrooz_danghara.shtml
- 6 Nowruz in Iraq (Kurdistan) BBC Persian television
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/8578504.stm?ls
- 7 President Barak Obama's Nowruz message. (4.30 minutes)
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2010/03/19/president-obamas-nowruz-message>
- 8 Parsis in Bangalore gear up for the New Year by Vispy Valsan
DNA March 20, 2010
- 9 Iranians celebrate spring equinox as their new year begins
By Tara Bahrapour Washington Post Staff Writer March 21, 2010; C01
www.washingtonpost.com
- 10 Tracing Nevruz, celebration of spring, to Zoroaster Saturday, March 20, 2010
GÜL DEMYR / Niki Gamm Istanbul - Hürriyet Daily News (Turkey)
- 11 The Iranian New Year has truly gone GLOBAL
www.IranDokht.com By: Prof Davood N. Rahni

SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO DR MEHERBANU BAKHTIARY (BUSTANI)

**For championing the Zarathushti
origins of Nowruz
1935-2010**

Dr Meherbanu Bakhtiary was a remarkable woman who devoted her time and energy to spread the knowledge of the Zarathushti religion and culture in Iran and around the world. She assisted Parzor to support and defend the establishment of the Iranian Zarathushti origins of Nowruz which bore fruit with UNESCO declaring Nowruz as an Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

Born in Mumbai, Meherbanu graduated from G.S. Medical College and King Edward Memorial Hospital, with awards and gold medals. She worked as a gynecologist in England with her husband Dr Iranpur Bustani.

After the Iranian revolution she left her medical practice and devoted her time and energy to Zarathushti community affairs. She was a member of the Zarathushti Women's Association and played a role in International Relations, representing the association at UN meetings in Geneva and New York. She



was secretary of the 6th World Zoroastrian Congress, Tehran in 1996 attended the congress in London 2005 and in Dubai 2009

She played an active role in the Foreign Relations Committee for the celebration of the 3000th Anniversary of Zarathushti Culture, travelling twice to Tajikistan, as honored guest of His Excellency the President of the Republic Mr Rahmanov. In 2006 she attended the Aryan Revival Celebrations.

Dr Bakhtiary suffered from multiple myeloma but still attended the Dubai Congress to meet old friends and have a final family reunion. The letter announcing the UN recognition of Nowruz was read to her in her hospital bed. She died soon after.

Dr Bakhtiary is survived by her husband Dr Iranpur and her daughters Hooman, an electronic engineer in the US and Navaz, a barrister in London.

Our community owes her a great debt of gratitude for so bravely defending the Zarathushti origins of Nowruz at the time of the preparation of the Candidature File for UNESCO

**Submitted by Mobed Mehraban
Firouzgary, Tehran**



NOROOZ

The President of Iran celebrates Nouruz in the Sadabad Palace in Tehran on March 20, 2010,

The president of Iran played host to the presidents of Iraq, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan to celebrate Nouruz in the Sadabad Palace in Tehran on March 20, 2010. A special Haft shin table was laid out, (photo below) to commemorate the declaration of Nouruz as the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by the United Nations.

Every year on the eve of the first day of spring, millions of people in Iran, Afghanistan, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and parts of Iraq, Turkey, Pakistan, and India celebrate the beginning of a New Year, rendered as Nowruz, in Persian: "New Day." Others call it Navruz. It is a time of new beginning, peace, joy, and family -- very similar to Christmas and New Year in much of the Western world. Celebrated since the sixth century BCE, it has become an integral part of numerous peoples' culture and tradition. In February 2010, the United Nations' General Assembly recognized the "International Day of Nowruz, a spring festival of Persian origin."

This year, as so often in the last 20 years, Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, had issued a fatwa, or religious advisory. The fire festival "has no religious basis and will create a lot of damage and [moral] corruption," Khamenei's fatwa noted, asking people not to attend it. Still, tens of thousands of Iranians went out into the streets or suburbs to mark the fire festival.

A similar attempt was made in Afghanistan to ban Norouz. Seventy-five Islamic clerics and lawmakers, headed by former Kabul Governor Mullah Taj Muhammad Mujahid, issued a statement calling Norouz "un-Islamic and a tradition of fire worshippers [Zoroastrians]" and asking Afghans not to celebrate it. Those calls also went unheard, and Afghanistan celebrated Norouz as always.

Photos courtesy Amordad News Agency

Charshanbe Suri

Anjoman Mobedan Iran has declared that jumping over fire and reciting the customary words of "Zardi-e man az to va sorkhy-e to az man", meaning may you take my sadness and illness and may I get your warmth and redness, is an un-Zoroastrian practice. Zarathushtis should not pollute any of the elements of nature, among which fire is the most revered.

When this message was read on the internet, FEZANA JOURNAL approached Mobed Mehraban Firuzgary for clarification. We attach his response

Response from Mehraban Firouzgary

Respected Dolly Dastoor,

Yes, in reply to a telephonic interview, by a foreign based Radio/Tv Persian Broadcast, with a member of our Anjuman such mentions have been made and the Anjuman will stand on that, briefly due to following reasons:

- Basically neither Char Shanbe = Wednesday nor Soori = Arabic term for celebration are pure Persian or Pre Islamic terms.





NOROOZ



For us every 30 day month are divided into $2 \times 7 + 2 \times 8$ days, each period starting with Hormazd (Ahura Mazda) and the three Days (Datusho Ahura he Mazdao / at par with Ahura Mazda). These four days were the Pious days meant for more rest and for meeting one's Spiritual needs, while the following 6 or 7 days were working days named as our Religious days or "Rojs".

- The fires that are lighted for *Charshanbe Suri* celebrations are lit by using just any dirty inflammable wood or articles at hand and add to the air pollutions apart from defiling the dignity of the Fire as held during the Pre Islamic era of Iran. Neither would jumping over any Fire be considered as proper according to our culture.

- For sure the Fires of Charshanbe Suri were lit by the converted Zartoshtis or the oppressed ones to continue the Rite of lighting a fire on rooftops (Of course in proper fire holding vessels with proper dignity and apt prayers) on the eve of Nowruz which were meant for sending off the All Souls who were believed to be visiting their mortal life abodes during the five GATHA days preceding the Nowruz. I still remember the old days when any passenger embarked on a travel that person was seen off with a lighted fire and apt Prayers.

I hope the above will do, With my best regards,
Mehraban

INTERFAITH INTERALIA

Two eyes, two ears, one mouth

Cyrus Bahrassa, Forum Editor



There needs to be a willingness among people of every faith to sit with someone of a different religion and listen. I am going to be skeptical and assume you've never opened the Khordeh Avesta. Heck, you've probably never even heard of Zoroastrianism's book of common prayers. But if you flip through the pages to Ahuramazda Khodae, the prayer recited to banish the evil spirit Ahriman, you'll find a phrase calling for the defeat of Kiks and Karaps. Kiks were those who had eyes but who would not see, and Karaps were the ones with ears but who would not hear.

Strictly speaking, Kiks and Karaps were people who refused to follow the nascent teachings of Zarathushtra 3,000 years ago. I'd like to avoid the pro-Zarathushtri overtones, yet I feel the concept of non-seers and non-listeners is relevant even today, especially in the arena of religion. These days, you often hear about religion in the context of conflict, or violence or intolerance. You read the hateful words of the one most likely to open his or her single mouth and to shut his or her two eyes and ears.

I would argue that religious intolerance in the United States and across the globe is a far greater problem than it might seem. Intolerance extends from anti-Semitic comments made in Chicago to bombings in Northern Ireland and Mumbai, India. Why? My best guess would be ignorance—ignorance that has spawned disputes rather than understanding, tension rather than unity. This intolerance is something no crusade could ever fix; often the greatest enemies cannot be killed with guns or swords.

I firmly believe that religious education is the best answer. As great as the struggle to exist has been for any religious community, be it for Zoroastrians or Jews or whatever community, it will continue to be as difficult as long as intolerance (and the ignorance that breeds it) goes unchallenged. There need to be schools in Jerusalem in which Israeli and Palestinian children can learn side by side as classmates, not enemies. There need to be courses taught around the world that emphasize the common bonds among the most prevalent religions. There needs to be a willingness among people of every faith to sit with someone of a different religion and listen. Hear the new perspective, observe the areas of agreement, and, when appropriate, speak. Don't resign yourself to being a Kik or Karap.

Cyrus Bahrassa is a student at Washington University - St Louis, MO

INTERFAITH INITIATIVES IS

International Day of Non-Violence

Religions Working for Peace and Justice

On 2 October 2009, the United Nations Postal Administration (UNPA) issued a New York definitive stamp in the denomination of US\$ 1.00. The stamp image depicts an artistic rendition of Mahatma Gandhi.

The International Day of Non-Violence is marked on 2 October each year, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, leader of the Indian independence movement and pioneer of the philosophy and strategy of non-violence. According to General Assembly resolution 61/271 of 15 June 2007 (A/RES/61/271), which established the commemoration, the International Day is an occasion to "disseminate the message of non-violence, including through education and public awareness". The resolution reaffirms "the universal relevance of the principle of non-violence" and the desire "to secure a culture of peace, tolerance, understanding and non-violence".

The life and leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, who helped lead India to independence, have been the inspiration for non-violent movements for civil rights and social change across the world. Throughout his life, Gandhi remained committed to his belief in non-violence even under oppressive conditions and in the face of seemingly insurmountable challenges.

The theory behind Gandhi's actions, which included encouraging massive civil disobedience to British law as with the historic Salt March of 1930, was that "just means lead to just ends"; that is, it is irrational to try to use violence to achieve a peaceful society. He believed that Indians must not use violence or hatred in their fight for freedom from colonialism.

The principle of non-violence - also known as non-violent resistance - rejects the use of physical violence in order to achieve social or political change. Often described as "the politics of ordinary people", this form of social struggle has been adopted by mass populations all over the world in campaigns for social justice.





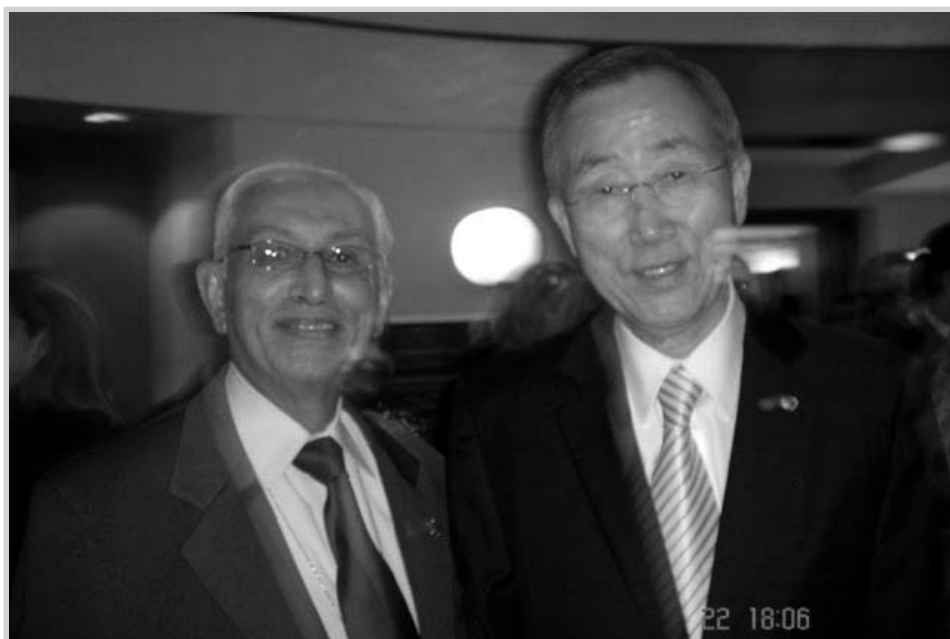
April 22, 2010 is World Autism Awareness Day and also a State of Qatar day, hence the two events were celebrated together by the Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar.

In the morning of 22nd April, a High-Level Interreligious Discussion in co-operation with the Committee of Religious NGOs and Religions for Peace entitled “*Advancing Global Multireligious Dialogue: Learnings from Doha*” was organized. A large number of diplomatic missions had sent their high level representatives to the meeting, including those from Vatican, Kazakhstan, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Indonesia, and Jordan.

In his opening remarks, *The Qatar Ambassador to the UN, Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser*, emphasized the fact that in today’s world Interfaith has become a necessity. *Dr. William F. Vendley, Secretary General, Religions for Peace*, echoed that in his response “*accepting diversity of religions and appreciation of beliefs and traditions of other faiths has become a fact of this millennium*”.

Dr. Ibrahim, Saleh K. Al –Naimi, Chair, Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue, gave a pictorial presentation of the Doha center, established in 2007. It all began as part of a conference between the religious leaders of Christianity and Islam in 2003. Jews were invited at the 2005 annual conference. There have been 7 such conferences till 2009 and the next one is to take place in Doha in October, 2010. The Center encourages interfaith dialogue and mutual respect, organizes interfaith youth camps and publishes quarterly interfaith newsletters. It encourages interfaith research and publishes research papers.

In the afternoon, a panel discussion “*The Impact of Autism on the Family*” was moderated by *Riz Khan, US*



Local News Anchor of Al Jazeera International. The panel discussion was organized by the Qatar Permanent Mission to the UN and the Qatar Al Shafallah Center for Children with Special Needs in collaboration with the UN Department of Public Information. *Dr. Sameera Al Qassimi, Director of Al Shafallah Center*, gave a pictorial presentation of the center’s activities and showed how the children of Qatar and surrounding countries are cared and sent out with a brighter future in the years ahead. Other speakers from Chile, South Africa, US and Lebanon presented the challenges addressed by the families in their respective countries.

The day ended with a reception at Qatar Permanent Mission honoring *Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General*, for his continued support towards a better understanding of the Autism condition.(see photo above)

Reported by Homi Gandhi, FEZANA, chief representative to UN-NGO



INTERFAITH
INTERNATIONAL



The Message of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran To the 9th World Zoroastrian Congress

In the name of The ALMIGHTY GOD who instilled spirituality in life, and kindled the hearts with the light of spirituality

The historical background of the Iranian nation reveals evidences of their Liberty in Action and Monotheism. Their characteristics have been religiously and morally-driven since the presence of a Great Prophet named Zarathushtra. The Prophet who arose from Iran and with propagating spiritual rules was the founder of a civilization which left outstanding influences on the human world for many consecutive centuries.

Iran is home to people who are in pursuit of Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds, and have been initiators of making a splendid and wonderful world. The people who have searched their blessings in others pleasure and exultations, and have always lived in peace with other nations of the world.

Attempts by Social and Religious Leaders to enlighten the teachings of the Spiritual Prophets today will guard Peace, Liberty and Impartiality in the World. This congress gathering is praiseworthy and laudable because to its aim towards this very aspiration.

I hope that the 9th World Zoroastrian Congress will succeed and end in fruitful results towards achieving the Path to Peace and Righteousness, which has turned obscured and blurred in today's world due to the arrogance of the imperialists of the world. It is obvious that the Islamic Republic of Iran with reliance on the last prophet Muhammad, Peace Be Upon Him, and the pious and holy Islamic Imams and with faith in the goals of all Spiritual Prophets like Zarathushtra and Jesus Christ will always be the protector of Morality and the Propagator of Peace, Friendship and do all its Best towards achieving these goals.

Dr. Mahmood Ahmadinejad, President of the Islamic Republic of IRAN

پیام ریاست جمهوری اسلامی ایران به نهمین کنگره جهانی زرتشتیان به نام آنکه جان را فکرت آموخت چراغ دل به نور جان برافروخت

پیشینه تاریخی ملت ایران گواه این است که ایرانیان همواره ملتی موحد و آزاده بوده اند، ویژگی هایی که با حضور پیامبری بزرگ یعنی حضرت زرتشت، از دیر باز رنگ دینی و معنوی به خود گرفته است. پیامبری که از ایران برخاست و با ابلاغ موازین الهی، پایه گذار تمدنی گشت که در قرنهای متمادی تأثیرات شگرفی بر جهان بشری گذاشت.

ایران زمین، خاستگاه انسانهایی است که اندیشه نیک، گفتار نیک و کردار نیک را سرلوحه کاری خود قرار داده و با آزاداندیشی در ساختن جهانی آباد و آزاد قدم بر داشته اند. انسانهایی که خوشبختی خود را در آسایش و آرامش دیگران جستجو نموده و در طول زمان با دیگر ملل در صلح و آرامش زندگی کرده اند. روشنگری و تلاش رهبران روحانی و اجتماعی ادیان آسمانی برای گسترش تعالیم پیامبران الهی در جهان امروز، سبب نگاهبانی از صلح، آزادی و عدالت در جهان خواهد شد. این گردهمایی که با این آرمان تشکیل گردیده، قابل ارج نهادن و ستودنی است.

اینجانب امیدوارم نهمین کنگره جهانی زرتشتیان موفقیتها و دستاوردهای مهمی در برداشته باشد تا راه و مسیر حق طلبی و صلح دوستی را در جهان امروز که با زیاده خواهی های نظام سلطه جهانی مشوش و غبارآلود شده است، تقویت نماید. بدیهی است جمهوری اسلامی ایران با اقتدا به پیامبر خاتم حضرت محمد (ص) و اهل بیت عصمت و طهارت و با ایمان به آرمان همه پیامبران الهی چون مسیح و زرتشت، همواره مدافع ارزشها و مروج صلح و دوستی و همه خوبی ها خواهد بود.

دکتر محمود احمدی نژاد
رئیس جمهوری اسلامی ایران



INTERFAITH INTERNET

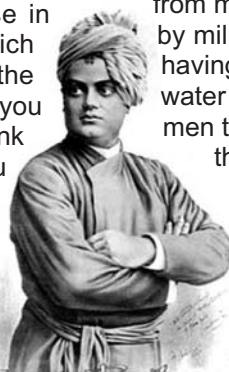
At the World's Parliament of Religions, Chicago 11th September, 1893

Religions Working for Peace and Justice

Sisters and Brothers of America,

It fills my heart with joy unspeakable to rise in response to the warm and cordial welcome which you have given us. I thank you in the name of the most ancient order of monks in the world; I thank you in the name of the mother of religions; and I thank you in the name of millions and millions of Hindu people of all classes and sects.

My thanks, also, to some of the speakers on this platform who, referring to the delegates from the Orient, have told you that these men from far-off nations may well claim the honor of bearing to different lands the idea of toleration. I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. We believe not only in universal toleration, but we accept all religions as true. I am proud to belong to a nation which has sheltered the persecuted and the refugees of all religions and all nations of the earth. I am proud to tell you that we have gathered in our bosom the purest remnant of the Israelites, who came to Southern India and took refuge with us in the very year in which their holy temple was shattered to pieces by Roman tyranny. I am proud to belong to the religion which has sheltered and is still fostering the remnant of the grand Zoroastrian nation. I will quote to you, brethren, a few



SWAMI VIVEKANANDA
The Hindoo Monk of India.

lines from a hymn which I remember to have repeated from my earliest boyhood, which is every day repeated by millions of human beings: "As the different streams having their sources in different places all mingle their water in the sea, so, O Lord, the different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee."

The present convention, which is one of the most august assemblies ever held, is in itself a vindication, a declaration to the world of the wonderful doctrine preached in the Gita: "Whosoever comes to Me, through whatsoever form, I reach him; all men are struggling through paths which in the end lead to me." Sectarianism, bigotry, and its horrible descendant, fanaticism, have long possessed this beautiful earth. They have filled the earth with violence, drenched it often and often with human blood, destroyed civilisation and sent whole nations to despair. Had it not been for these horrible demons, human society would be far more advanced than it is now. But their time is come; and I fervently hope that the bell that tolled this morning in honour of this convention may be the death-knell of all fanaticism, of all persecutions with the sword or with the pen, and of all uncharitable feelings between persons wending their way to the same goal.

"Madosoro" ceremony before a Parsi wedding in the USA, September 2009

In New Jersey (left below). A variation of the swastika with four dots is placed next to a potted plant. In the Indian subcontinent, traditionally a mango sapling symbolizing long lifew (see book review page 152) is planted by a male member of the bride's family**.

In Maryland (right above). The mother of the bride ties a white string seven times around a ceremonial coconut decorated with a red swastika using the traditional Kum-Kum paste.

Swastika pattern can also be seen in tradional parsi jewelry (photo below)



Credit for mandav-saro photos: Rayshad Golwalla

** Firoze M.Kotwal and Khojeste P. Mistree
—*Protecting the Physical World* page 351

Shehnaz N. Munshi and Sarah Stewart —
—*Observances of the Faithful* page 387

in "A Zoroastrian Tapestry" Eds: Pheroza J Godrej and Firoza Punthakey Mistree, Mapin Publishers (ISBN: 1-890206-22-9)



INTERFAITH INTERALLA

Religions Working for Peace and Justice

Understanding the Swastika: Use and abuse of a sacred symbol

This publication is designed to explain briefly the positive meaning and significance of the swastika for Buddhists, Hindus, Jains and Zoroastrians and the painful significance of the swastika for the Jewish community.

The Nazis desecrated this sacred symbol. In Europe and America, the swastika became a symbol of hate and genocide against the Jews—a symbol that is scrawled on walls by racists and anti-Semites. But for billions of the world's population in India, China, Korea, Indonesia, Thailand, and indeed in most of Asia, the swastika has remained a sacred symbol that has for millennia signified goodness and wellbeing both religious and social contexts.

As the world shrinks with globalization, people travel, migrate and more than ever before. We can no longer ignore such widely differing interpretations of a symbol that is as widely used as the swastika.



印度教供奉儀式上的供品，包括椰子、鮮花和油燈。

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Issued by:



**The Interfaith Conference of
Metropolitan Washington**
Advancing Justice, Building Community, Nurturing
Understanding

"Svastika is an ancient and greatly auspicious symbol of the Hindu tradition. It is inscribed on Hindu temples, ritual altars, entrances, and even account books. A distorted version of this sacred symbol was misappropriated by the Third Reich in Germany, and abused as an emblem under which heinous crime were perpetrated against humanity, particularly the Jewish people. The participants recognize that this symbol is, and has been sacred to Hindus for millennia, long before its misappropriation."

—Declaration of the Second Hindu/Jewish Leadership Summit,
February 2008, Jerusalem



AJC
Issued by the American Jewish Committee & the
Interfaith Conference of Metropolitan Washington



For Jews, the Nazi swastika is inextricably linked with the German National Socialist plan to rid the world of the Jewish people. The swastika was not an incidental or occasional image for the Nazis. Hitler first used it as a symbol for his National Socialist Party, but its adoption as the sole National Flag for Nazi Germany in 1935 coincided with the passage of laws which defined Jews as being of "inferior blood" and which began the process of terrorizing them. Jews lost their right to vote, their ability to marry (or, in some cases, employ) "Aryans," their capacity to work in certain professions and their access to a long list of public facilities.

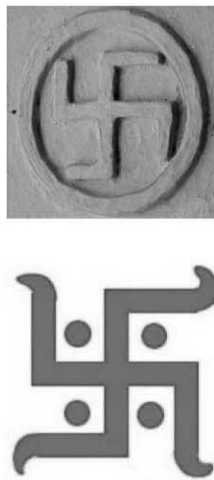
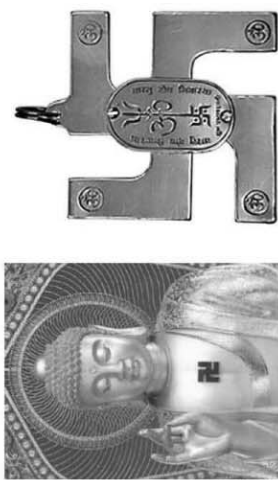
Their citizenship was revoked, they became demonized, and described in language usually reserved for vermin.

Under the symbol of the swastika, the Nazis not only waged war against the Allies, but also took to heart their other goal—to destroy Jews. The two goals were not equal: at times the Nazis had to decide whether a particular train would take armaments to the front for its soldiers, or Jews to the death camps. They chose the latter as the more important goal.

Approximately six million Jews were killed by the Nazis under the symbol of the swastika. Some of the most enduring images of this genocidal mission are of the murder of Jewish children, whether of youngsters being gagged to death, or being walked into pits holding hands with their families and neighbors, waiting their turn to be shot. The Nazis approached the killing of Jews as not only a glorious mission, but also something akin to sport. Children were viewed as "useless eaters," and of the 1 million Jewish children in Poland in 1939, only 5,000 survived. To Jews, the swastika is synonymous with the most violent and darkest of hatreds, one which even glorified killing Jewish babies.

The anti-Semitic use of the swastika did not end with the defeat of Nazi Germany. For the last six decades many hateful movements including white supremacist groups which define nonwhites as no human and Jews as the offspring of Satan – have adopted it. When Jewish graves are desecrated or houses of worship attacked, sprig-painted swastikas are frequently found and some antisrael activists are now using it to demonize Israel by claiming it is like Nazi Germany. In the Jewish experience, there is no more devastating hateful symbol than the swastika.

geno



The **swastika** (or *svastika*) has been used for thousands of years since Vedic times, in the Indus Valley civilizations, in ancient Troy and by Native Americans. The word *swastika* in Sanskrit means "that which brings good luck and wellbeing," *su* means "good" and *stika* means "is." It appears in one of the most frequently used mantras of the Rg Veda [1.89.6], the oldest scripture known to man.

The swastika is considered extremely sacred and holy by Buddhist—Hindus, Jains and Zoroastrians and remains very widely used from ancient times to the present day. The symbol is engraved on sacred objects of worship as well as on doorways of temples and homes.

It forms part of religious observances to visit a *Swastika* temple, consecrations of new homes, embarking on new ventures or any such auspicious undertaking. It is used to decorate books, vehicles and cash registers in stores and myriad other objects in daily use in many Asian countries, especially India. Because the swastika has been widely used for so long, it has been interpreted in a variety of ways by practitioners of the Eastern Religions.

Interpretations used by Hindus include:

- A solar symbol, spreading light in all directions; The four goals of human Endeavour: the line from bottom left to top right represents the pursuit of *Artha* [material security] and *Kama* [desire]. The line from bottom right to top left represents the flow from *Dharma* [right action] to *Moksha* [liberation];
- A representation of Lord Ganesha, the Remover of obstacles, the Repository of wisdom, who is invariably invoked at the start of any religious ceremony in the form of OM.

In **Buddhism**, the four arms of the swastika are interpreted to represent the four Noble Truths taught by the Buddha: there is suffering; the origin of suffering is desire; suffering can cease; the eightfold path is the way out of suffering.

Jainism, the swastika is the primary holy symbol. It is a symbol of good luck and is used by the Jain community. The swastika is the seventh Jina (Saint) the Tirthankara Suparsva. All Jain temples and holy books must contain the swastika and ceremonies typically begin and end with creating a swastika mark several times with rice around the altar. The four segments of the swastika represent the four destinies of living beings: life as a human being; as a celestial being; as a fish, bird or animal; and as living in hell.

cide.

Personal Profiles

DARIUS BAGLI- TORONTO'S HIDDEN GEM- AN INTELLECTUAL GIANT WITH A MUSICAL STREAK

By Teenaz Javat

Armed with a steno book, I awaited the arrival of Dr. Darius Bāgli in the sunny atrium of the Canadian Broadcasting Centre in downtown Toronto.

As a Senior Staff Pediatric Urologist and Associate Surgeon-in-Chief, at The Hospital for Sick Children, in Toronto, Senior Associate Scientist in Developmental & Stem Cell Biology, Professor of Surgery in the Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto and a Concert Pianist...his achievements at once overwhelmed and intimidated me.

Leading up to the interview, I was not even sure if I was able to comprehend what he did for a living. It all sounded way over the top of my head and out of my comfort zone.

I clutched even tighter at my steno book as my research had produced all of ten questions ready to fire.

Just as we settled by the coffee table I saw him put down a fuzzy little pup on to the chair. "This is Gracie," he said, "she is well-trained and will listen quietly." Bāgli was on-call over the weekend so we got started right away.

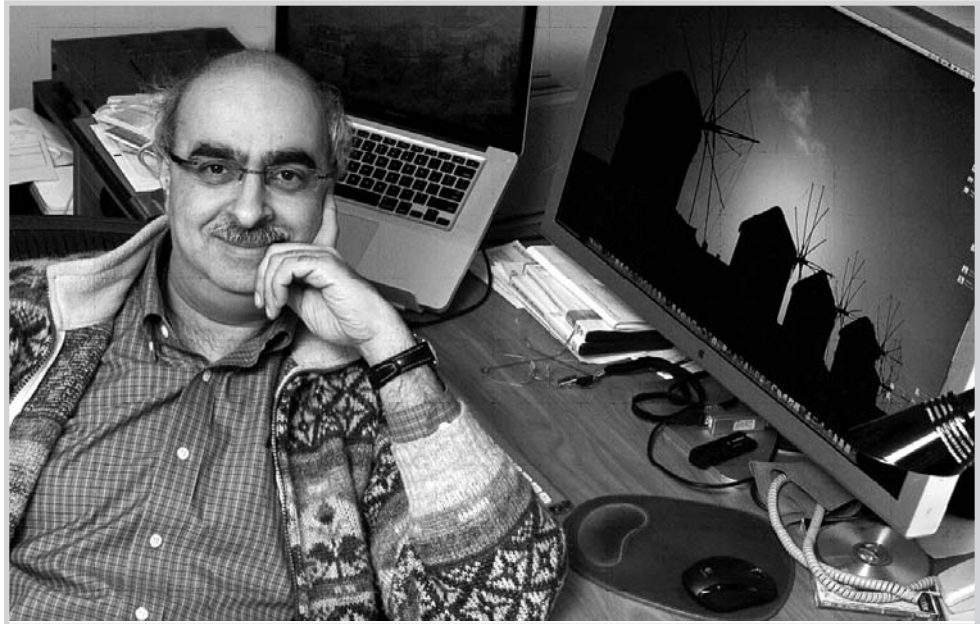
Born in the U.S. to a scientist father (Jehan) and homemaker mother (Freny), and a devoted brother to his only sibling, his late younger sister (Shiraz), he and his parents moved to Montreal when he was quite young.

Visits to his father's lab as a child and playing on a baby piano are memories he cherishes to this day.

"I had a good ear for music so my parents rented an upright piano for me and I started lessons when I was four," he says. "However, it was only in grade nine that I realized that I wanted to pursue science as a career. This decision in no way impacted my music, as I continued to take piano lessons privately for many more years."

TURNING POINT

On graduating from high school his piano teacher, the late Professor Dorothy Morton, a world-respected piano pedagogue on the Faculty of Music at Montreal's McGill University said rather matter-of-factly that it was perfectly okay with her if he pursued science, but that he would also study music. *"She had a tremendous capacity*



to nurture all our aspirations, both within music and beyond".

So Bāgli ended up with two separate undergraduate degrees in Science (Physiology) and Music (Piano-Performance) from McGill, becoming the first person at McGill to have done both simultaneously.

How does he cope with heading up a state-of-the-art research lab, a busy surgical practice, teaching at the U of T, and find time to play classical music?

"Looking back, I think I would not have had it any other way. As a physician and a scientist I have, over the years been able to marry the ultimate good of the single patient, with research which lends itself to finding the good for many. And I firmly believe that they both compliment each other. All physicians, at some place in their hearts, must be scientists."

"Research, surgery, and teaching come full circle and in my case the music I create is the icing on the cake. I take all of my roles equally seriously," says Bāgli.

Having secured Urology and Fellowship training from Harvard University (Boston) and the University of Washington (Seattle) in Pediatric Urology, it came as no surprise that Bāgli was recruited back to Canada from the US to initiate a new direction in the evolution of the Urological Division at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto.

His laboratory has long studied the microscopic environment that contributes to bladder muscle cell disease—what happens when muscle cells push and pull too much. Part of his more recent research is focused on epigenetic, which is the study of how the development of an organism unfolds.

Personal Profiles

"We are trying to understand how the expression of the gene is altered without changing sequence of the DNA. (Genes are packages of DNA. The sequence in the DNA is the code that dictates life, and replicates so that life can go on). External stresses and stimulations in a cell's environment can chemically alter DNA. Without changing the sequence, the same DNA gives rise to different results. It's like DNA is a sequence of notes on the piano and epigenetic is the different music you get by playing some of those notes and not others. I love that analogy, obviously! We are trying to use an epigenetic approach to solve the huge and common problem of treating urinary tract infection. In this case, the external stress is bacteria," explains Bägli.

To get to where he is now Bägli traces his curiosity and drive to a lucky month spent as a medical student with the great Dr. Judah Folkman, MD, at Boston Children's Hospital. *"Dr. Folkman urged us to ask questions that make a difference. He was more concerned with finding the right question rather than worrying about the answer. 'If you ask the right question, the answer will often reveal itself', he would say."*

As Bägli went on from one research project to the next, there was one constant in his life—the music he created for himself and those around him (Gracie included).

"I firmly believe that whatever you chose as a profession, from time to time you need to get away from it for a while. Getting away from music was unthinkable. In my case I wanted to be able to turn to music to rejuvenate my senses and recharge my soul. I think that everybody should be able to make some form of music, if only for themselves. It is a universal form of expression that lends itself to a higher level of consciousness," he goes on to add.

The proud owner of a 7-foot Steinway, Bägli plays for himself, is active in chamber music, and even competed in the Van Cliburn Amateur Competition in 2002, in Fort Worth, TX.

He embodies a philosophy that is both uplifting and real-world. Of all the institutions he has visited or worked at, Sick Kids is the one place that truly nurtures and creates conditions to embrace the role of both scientist and surgeon.

I came away from the interview with a song in my heart, thankful that I lived in the Greater Toronto Area, home to this great institution called Sick Kids, which has dedicated doctors like Bägli, lending their brains to research, caring for kids, and teaching the next generation of doctors.

I also wondered if I had asked him the right questions.

HER HEART BEATS FOR AFRICA.

Zahra Sethna

Teenaz Javat

Why would a web producer at the New York Times quit a permanent full-time job for a three-month stint in Yemen, a country recovering from years of civil war?

Curious to know, I get in touch with Zahra Sethna. It seems she is back from her sojourn in Yemen and looking for gainful employment in Canada.

Funny that one would leave gainful employment in probably what is perhaps the dream job of most journalists, for a short stint in one of the most underdeveloped parts of the world.

But then that is Zahra.

To know more I call her at her hotel in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

I had met Zahra Sethna and Stephen Mostad (her husband) in 2003 when I was a stay-at-home mother of two. She was delighted to learn that I used to work in Dawn-Pakistan's largest English language newspaper. In fact, she even wished she could work there some day.

I told her off, as journalist in this part of the world are privileged, as in they do not have to face the dangers we did reporting in despotic regimes across most of Asia.

Listening to her last week, made me feel that Sethna has to an extent, come full circle.

"I was brought up to be a globe trotter. My dad worked for the United Nations (UN) so along with my two older brothers, we have moved quite a lot. Going to strange places not as visitors but as residents is something I have always been comfortable with."

Born in Montreal, Canada, of Pakistani parents, Sethna went to schools across North America before graduating high school in Barbados.

"My graduating class had only 30 students, so it was a natural choice that I chose to go to a small college in upstate New York, rather than a large university"

Sethna's father was adamant that all his kids do a Masters degree. He was willing to provide the means for them to do the same.

"I always wanted to study documentary film production having worked at the Museum of TV and Radio in New York City. Keeping that as my goal, I applied to Columbia University's journalism program. I never thought that I would be chosen, but I was, and so began my journey to explore the world around me," she adds.

Although Sethna's interest lay in producing documentary films, the one-year intensive program at Columbia trained her in the rigours of broadcast journalism,

Personal Profiles

radio/TV print, writing and editing. "In addition to these skills, the program at Columbia had a component called New Media which in 1999 was 'new' in every sense of the word."

On graduating, Sethna followed her parents to Nairobi, Kenya where she lived and worked for a year making short films for TV. However, on her return to New York she joined a small company which was so ahead of its time that it folded up.

Ampex Corp's iNEXTV made movies only for the internet. This was way back in 1999 when all of North America was on a dial-up connection. They had an idea that there will be a day when people will watch TV using the internet, see video on demand, listen to radio when they want to. It was a pioneering idea, but one that did not take root ten years ago.

"Nonetheless, the experience I gained was invaluable. I learnt a little bit about HTML coding when few people thought those skills were even necessary," adds Sethna, *"I kind of stuck out like a sore thumb."*

The sore thumb had over time transformed into an enviable asset. On her return from Nairobi in 2001, Sethna easily found work as a Communication Specialist at UNICEF's Toronto office. She was in charge of the website put out by the UN—a skill few could boast then. That was short-lived as the moment she saw an opportunity to work in Africa, she grabbed it. Soon she found herself in Angola as part of the UN program aiding reconstruction of a country emerging from over 30 years of civil war.

How is it that she seamlessly moved from working in communication to reporting and journalism?

Sethna gives credit to the writing and editing courses she took at Columbia University.

"They train you hard to ultimately present yourself as a good writer and most of my jobs at UNICEF have had to do with proposal writing. It all boils down to how good a writer you are."

"One must be able to tell a good story no matter what the platform and I think I enjoy doing that. Also the experience of living and working in Africa is unmatched and I hold a special place in my heart for Africa."

From Angola, Sethna went over to Iran also with UNICEF.

There was much in store for her in terms of acceptance into the community.

Being a Zarthoshti, Sethna thought she would be considered one of 'them' but to her dismay she encountered hostility.

"A lot of Iranians were hostile towards me. They thought I was one of the few rich Iranians who fled the country during the 1979 revolution and have now come back. Where was she when the locals were undergoing



humiliation and hardships at the hands of the new regime I just could not understand this antagonism until half-way through my project when I just happened to mention that I and my parents were Zarthoshtis from Pakistan. This made a huge difference as suddenly they saw me differently. I was not one of the traitors, but an outsider who while sharing a common cultural past, was also in some way different."

Sethna who was to be in Iran for just 6-months landed up staying for over a year.

Having spent long periods away from her journalist husband Stephen Mostad, she returned home to New York. It was in late-2006 when she applied for a job at the New York Times and was accepted to work as a web producer.

"Working as a web producer, I worked on hard news, features and pretty much everything that was thrown at me. Also I worked nights, so had to be on top of all the international news which always occurred just as we retire for the day."

In December 2009 Sethna applied to work at the UNICEF in Yemen. It was much before the underwear bomber incident on Delta airlines.

"My job application was accepted and I applied for a three-month leave from the Times. But they refused citing conflict of interest so I left. Working in the field is what I enjoy and since I have the opportunity and the means to do it, I hope to continue to do the same."

The opportunity to work with women and children in the displacement camps of northern Yemen fascinated her. *"The country was coming out of a long civil conflict and it presented an opportunity for me to use my skills honed in Angola,"* she adds.

The last decade has taken Sethna across Africa and into the Middle East. Of all the places she has worked in, Africa holds a special place in her heart.

"I would go back in a heart-beat," she says, *"but for now, I am in Halifax as Stephen has got a job here and I plan to stay put for a while..."*At least for now! But for how long...one wonders!

A TRIBUTE TO THE LEADER OF LEADERS MADAM FARANGIS SHAHROKH

By: Meher Dadabhoy Amalsad
Westminster, California, US



INNOCENT-MAGNIFICENT-PROMINENT

Dedicating oneself to the service of Humankind is considered a virtue of an Ashavan.

Rawan Shaad Farangis Shahrokh (Yeganegi) has fallen within the category of the Ashavans and has secured Ahura Mazda's Blessings for a Spiritual Abode closest to
HIS LIGHT OF THE LIGHTS.

Amen

Respected Mobed Mehraban Firouzgary – The High Priest of Iran

I firmly believe that: "A Legacy is not what we leave for others but what we leave 'in' others."

Our Honorable Madam Farangis Shahrokh has left 'in us', a lasting legacy of dedication with passion and compassion. She was passionate about our community and compassionate towards humanity for which I salute her.

On February 20, 2010; along with her family members, over 500-people gathered at the California

Zoroastrian Center in Westminster, California, USA; to honor its founder and celebrate a life well spent in the service of community, society and humanity. She was very well-known among our local, regional, national and global Zarathushti leaders as well as community members.

This function was organized by her elder son Parviz Yeganegi, under the able guidance of Arbab Mehraban Bahram Zartoshty and moderated by Sousan Bakhtari. It

was graced with the presence of the President and Vice President of FEZANA, the President of the Zoroastrian Association of California, as well as, the past and present Presidents and members of the Board of Trustees and the Board of Directors of the California Zoroastrian Center. In addition, special dedications in her honor from World Zarathushti leaders were read during this function.

The function started with a prayer benediction by Mobed Bahram Shahzadi, the Head Priest of the California Zoroastrian Center; and was followed by a series of speakers who spoke eloquently in her honor. For the first time in the history of FEZANA, all six FEZANA Presidents sent a joint unified message in her memory as she was well known to all of them by virtue of being instrumental in the initiation and creation of FEZANA. A similar honor was bestowed by the World Zoroastrian Organization when its International Board passed an official resolution in her memory. This special document highlighted the salient attributes and outstanding achievements of her life.

This joint message from the FEZANA Presidents Rohinton Rivetna, Dr. Dolly Dastoor, Framroze Patel, Firdosh Mehta, Dr. Rustam Kevala and Bomi Patel; read by the FEZANA VP Rashid Mehin says: "Khanum-e Farangis Shahrokh is one of few dynamic individuals who have altered the lives of not just individuals but whole communities. Her memory shall remain etched in our minds forever. Her single act of beginning the process of bringing our North American communities together, which ultimately culminated in the formation of FEZANA, and thereby giving us our North American Zarathushti identity shall remain for time immemorial a watershed event for Zarathushtis in North America."

WZO Chairman Darayus S. Motivala in the official resolution, the gist of which states: Farangis was a formidable lady who touched the lives of people not only in Iran and the United States, but wherever she travelled. She was passionate about preserving our Zoroastrian faith, devoted towards protecting the rights of women; and instrumental in promoting our heritage and culture. Our community will truly miss a remarkable champion but her memories and legacy will last for many generations to come."

Messages were also received from Vira Santoke, the President of the Zoroastrian Association of California, Fariborz Jamshidi,

President of the Australian Zoroastrian Association of New South Wales, Noshir Dadrawalla, the Trustee of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet, Rustom Minocher Ghadiali, the President of the Parsi Zoroastrian Association of South East Asia, Singapore. Kamran Behroozi, President, The Zoroastrian Association of North Texas, Malcolm Deboo, President, Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe

Farangis Khanum was the Founding President of the Board of Trustees of the California Zoroastrian Center. Her successors, Shida Anoshiravani and Mahin Banoo Sassani; offer the following joint dedication in honor of their 30-plus years of association with her:

"We are proud to have had the honor of working closely with Farangis Khanum. Besides being a caring teacher, an incredible speaker, a powerful mentor and a knowledgeable leader, her dedication towards promoting the value of human rights was admirable. To us, she was a gem of a mother, who committed her life to nurture and structure the life of our Zarathushti community."

As a role model, her motto: "Organize to Mobilize" inspired countless women to strive and thrive not just to be of success but also to be of value, in various facets of life. The following message from The Zoroastrian Women's Organization of Iran, further intensifies this articulation when it states: "Ravanshad Farangis Shahrokh was an all time outstanding pioneer, who extended the courtesy of providing high level jobs to the Iranian Women Society and our Zoroastrian Women in particular. As the founder, her ambition, aspiration and lofty purpose towards enhancing the status of Iranian women will be cherished forever."

Forging lasting relationships was a built-in gift of Farangis Khanum. As a token of appreciation Dariush Irani a family friend for about 50-years. made a moving presentation by stating that

"Banoo Farangis' whole life was a dedication to hard work and achievement. Born with the double disadvantage of being a woman and a Zarthushti in contemporary Iran, she devoted her whole life to the amelioration of both minorities. Furthering the tradition of her illustrious father Arbab Kaykhosrow Shahrokh, she was an extremely successful organizer and leaves a legacy of Zoroastrian infrastructure that has proven very beneficial to all Zarthushtis. Her work in woman's handicraft was a substantive boon to the Iranian economy and her success in raising the status of women as serious contributors to their nation's wellbeing are, achievements that will be relegated to history."

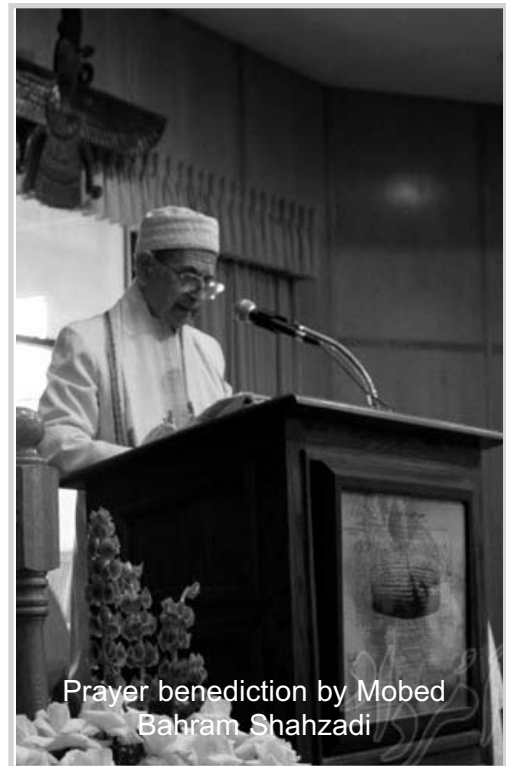
A similar grand Porseh was organized in Tehran by her younger son Kambiz Yeganegi, attended by about 1000 community members, including the MP of Iran Dr. Esfandiar Ekhtiyari, and Respected Mobed Mehraban Firouzgary – the High Priest of Iran along with prominent leaders of the Tehran Zartoshti Anjoman.

For the past 25-years, my family has had the distinctive privilege of knowing FARANGIS KHANUM as a lady of dignity & integrity, and as a person who was filled with passion for education with compassion for future generation, and love for humanity. This 'Mother of Iranian Handicraft' was a firm believer of the axiom "Science is Organized knowledge, Wisdom is organized life", and used it to alter the lives of families, societies and communities for which I salute her.

So today, as we honor the legacy of a life well spent, I want to emphasize that those who live in the hearts of others are not gone. It is because when someone we love becomes a memory, that memory becomes a treasure.

OUR FARANGIS KHANUM has left for all of us, a treasure of LOVE that is truly beyond any measure.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF AMORDAD PUBLICATION IN TEHRAN, IRAN



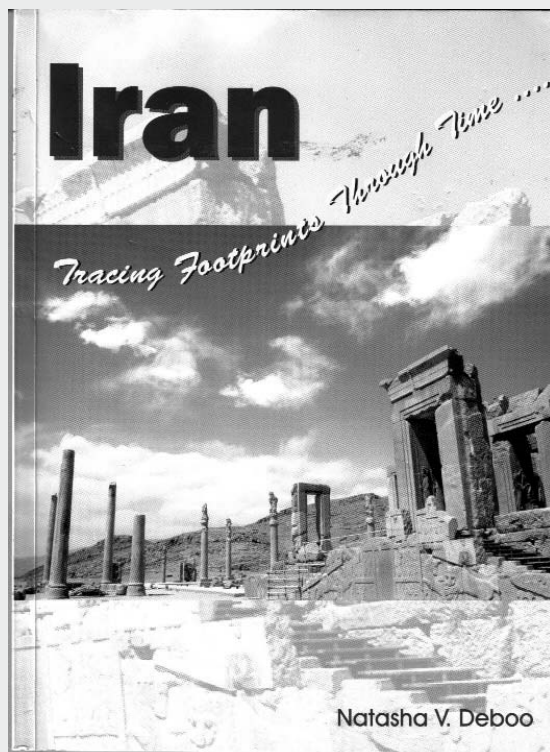
PHOTOS COURTESY OF AMORDAD PUBLICATION IN TEHRAN, IRAN



FOUNDERS OF THE CALIFORNIA ZOROASTRIAN CENTER, WESTMINSTER, CA USA

Standing Left to Right: Ardeshir Rostam Farhangi, Dariush Kaikhosro Irani, Dr. Rostam Sarfeh,
Mehraban Bahram Zartoshty, Furrokh Nariman Dastur, Aspandiar Engineer

Sitting: Farangis Kaykhosrow Shahrokh



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19 year old Natasha V.
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book “tracing footprints
through time”, Cost \$10
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M I L E S T O N E S

FEBRUARY 15, to May 15, 2010

BIRTHS

Lilly Choksey, a girl, to Zubin and Nicole Choksey, sister to Leslie, and granddaughter to Meher and Kersi Choksey and Gertrude Phillip on October 16, 2009.

Noah Schoepp, a boy, to Sheena and Darren Schoepp, grandson to Soli and Khorshed Dastur in Vancouver, B.C on December 26, 2009.

Neville Thomas Beesley, a boy, to Zenobia Homavazir and Blair Beesley, brother to Anaita, grandson to Dara and Mehroo Homavazir, great grandson to Freny Degamwalla and nephew to Armaity Homavazir in Toronto, ONT on January 8, 2010.

Leia Mehta, a girl, to Kashmera and Naushad Metha in San Jose, CA on January 23, 2010.

Zar Pavri, a boy, to Azarmeen and Rezwan Pavri, brother to Farah and Tahm in Redwood City, CA on January 25, 2010.

Zeenia Choksi, a girl, to Dilnaz Shroff and Cyrus Choksi, granddaughter to Rohinton and Sanobar Shroff (Richmond, BC) and Gulu and late Fali Choksi (Mumbai, India) in Toronto, ONT on February 5, 2010.

Ziva Todiwalla, a girl, to Pervin and Khushroo Todiwalla in Fremont, CA on February 7, 2010.

Meher Wadia, a girl, to Persis and Percy Wadia in Sunnyvale, CA on February 7, 2010.

Kashmira Gazdar, a girl, to Diana and Roy Gazdar, sister to Natasha, granddaughter to Bomi and Bachi Damkewala (Naperville, IL) and Dhun and Sam Gazdar (Mississauga, ONT), great niece to Kakaji Khurshed and great granddaughter to Noshir Jamsetjee (Naperville, IL) in Mississauga, ONT on February 13, 2010.

Cyrus Contractor, a boy, to Behram and Dinaz Contractor (Dallas, TX) on February 15, 2010.

Zara Kekobad, a girl, to Dilshad and Jamshid Kekobad, granddaughter

to Meher and Kersi Choksey (Lombard, IL) and Jerroo and Behram Kekobad (Mumbai, India) in Santa Clara, CA on February 17, 2010.

Simone Todywala, a girl to Lyla and Sam Todywala, sister to Zane and Stefan, in Miami, FL. on February 19, 2010. (photo below).



Nathan Nadir Irani, a boy, to Tanya and Nadir Irani, grandson to Mehra and Zubin Hansotia (Mississauga, ONT) and Mehli and late Yasmin Irani (Karachi, Pakistan), great grandson to Edul Khambatta (Vancouver, BC) in Toronto, ONT on March 8, 2010.

Katy Daruwala, a girl, to Khushnaaz and Zubin Daruwala, sister to Ava, granddaughter to Mahrugh and Bejan Irani (Aurora, IL) and Arnavaz and Hoshi Daruwala (FL) on March 22, 2010.

Kyra Choksi, a girl, to Homiyar and Roshni Choksi, sister to Benaisha in Richmond, VA on March 24, 2010.

Izelle Damania Bhatnagar, a girl to Tarana and Saurabh Bhatnagar, in San Diego, California, on March 24th, 2010 (photo below).



Kayan Shouta Bozorgi, a boy to Cyrus and Misato Bozorgi, grandson to Rustom and Dilnavaz Bozorgi and Katsu and Hiromi Hori, nephew to Anahita Khory and Natasha Bozorgi, in Toronto, March 26, 2010.

Iyanah Anahita Khory, a girl to Anahita and Cyrus Khory, sister to Anaiya, grand daughter to Fredoon and Pervin Khory and Rustom and Dilnavaz Bozorgi, great granddaughter to Sherroo Mistry and Katayoon Khosravi, born in Toronto April 12, 2010.

Ariana Farrah Cooper, a girl to Farrah and Neville Cooper, granddaughter to Farida and Dara Bhesania and Aniheeta and Kersi Cooper, great granddaughter to Khorshed Sethna (Mumbai) and Freny and Firoz Mehta (Mumbai), niece to Armeen, Xerxes, Karen, Cyrus and Shireen, in Markham, Ontario on April 19, 2010.

Jedd Pese Gandhi a boy, to Shazneen and Hanoz, brother to Shayaan on Friday, in Santa Monica, CA, April 23, 2010. (photo below)



Cyrus Kerawalla, a boy to Geeta and Burges Kerawalla, grandson to Godrej & Ruby Kerawalla of Union City, CA and nephew to Rushna (nee Kerawalla)& Ardeshtir Sidhwa of Cave Creek, AZ at Walnut Creek, CA, April 29, 2010.

WEDDINGS

Zersis Minocher (Miami, FL) to Anahita Edulkaka in Mumbai, India on December 3, 2009.

Tanaz Irani to Gustad Mody, son of Keki and Diane Mody (New York) in Orlando, FL on January 2, 2010.

Eric Chavda, son of Aban Chavda (New York) to Debra Clark on January 16.

Sherazad Mehta, son of Khurshid Mehta (New York) to Mrinalini in India on January 16, 2010.

Shyla Batiwalla, daughter of Zarine and Neville Batiwalla (Hillsborough, CA) to Danoosh Kapadia, son of Noshir and Havovi Kapadia (Mumbai, India) in Mumbai, India on February 4, 2010.

Farrah Elavia, daughter of Zarina and Jamshed Elavia (Houston, TX) to Himesh Gandhi, son of Mr. and Mrs. Mukund Gandhi on March 6, 2010.

DEATHS

Manijeh DeVitre, 76, wife of Ardeshir DeVitre, mother of Karmin Kulkarni (Salt Lake City, UT), Hector DeVitre (St.Louis, MO), grandmother of Anjali, Jehan, Zubin in Salt Lake City, UT on February 26, 2009.

Amy Kavarana, mother of Percy (Imroze) Kavarana (New York), sister of Phiroze (Dhun) Shroff in Mumbai, India on October 4, 2009.

Burjor Engineer, 93, father of Khurshid Mehta (New York) in Mumbai, India in November 2009.

Temul Dinshaw Byramji (T.D), husband of Perviz Byramji, father of Zavar (Roshan) Byramjee (Oakville, ONT), Zarin (Farrokh) Bharucha (India), Farrokh (Jasmin) Byramjee (England), and Godafreed (Lalji) Hirani (Nairobi), grandfather of Sharon, Nina, Dinshaw, Kayzad, Tanaz, Enayah, Zal, Jasmine and Yeisha on December 25, 2009.

Daraius (Dara) Hormuz Irani, husband of Dilnavaz Irani, father of Farzana Kaizad Irani, Aban

Hoshang Irani and Didar Roozbeh Dodhi; grandfather of Zubin Dodhi, Rayomand Irani, Xeromy Irani, Ava Dodhi and Zoe Irani; brother of Noshir (Florene) Irani (London); and sister Nergish Ardeshir Irani (Pune, India) in Champaign, IL on December 29, 2009.

Dinu Pardiwala, wife of Khurshed Pardiwala, mother of Rashna (Adil) Pooniwala and Farrah (Farokh) Jijina and grandmother of Cyrus in Mumbai on December 31, 2009.

Mithoo Keki Pastakia, wife of Keki Pastakia, mother of Havovi Bharda (Mississauga, ONT), Navaz Kshirsagar (Mumbai, India) and Porus Pastakia (Mississauga, ONT) in Mumbai, India on January 5, 2010.

Ardeshir DeVitre, 87, husband of Manijeh DeVitre, mother of Karmeen Kulkarni (Salt Lake City, UT), Hector DeVitre (St.Louis, MO), grandfather of Anjali, Jehan, Zubin in Salt Lake City, UT on January 8, 2010.

Villoo Surkari, 97, wife of late Nusserwanji Surkari, mother of Eruch (Katy), Nergesh Yoe (Toronto, ONT), Gool Printer (Toronto, ONT), Zarine Colabawalla (Boston, MA), Pervez Surkari (Houston, TX), and Ghaver Surkari (London, England); grandmother of Farizad Arren (Toronto, ONT), Sarosh Printer (CA), Sohrab Colabawalla (Boston, MA), Xerxes and Zubin Surkari (Toronto, ONT) in London, England on January 26, 2010.

Gulnar Agboat, wife of Percy Agboat, mother of Christina and late baby Annie, daughter of late Noshir and Havovi Engineer, sister of Shernaz Chin and Roxiane Engineer in Pickering, ONT on February 4, 2010.

Jamshed (Jumbo) Irani, husband of Niloofer Irani, father of Cyrus and Elsa and son-in-law of Perwin Irani in Mississauga, ONT on February 9, 2010.

Farangis Kaikhosrow Shahrokh Yeganegi, 94, mother of Parviz (Pari) Yeganegi and Kombeze Yeganegi (CA), in Chatsworth, CA on February 11, 2010.

Mani Keki Divecha, 86, mother of Neville Divecha (Houston, TX) in Mumbai, India on February 16, 2010.

Jamshed (Jimmy) Messman, husband of Gool Messman, father of Farzain and Farahaza Darius Irani (Mississauga, ONT) in Karachi, Pakistan on February 18, 2010.

Cyrus Printer, son of Sarosh and Benaifer Printer, brother of Carl, grandson of Dinshaw and Gool Printer (Toronto, ONT) in Murrieta, CA on February 18, 2010.

Shahrokh Mirzarian, husband of Shirin Mirzarian, father of Mehrdad Mirzarian, Mahtab Shahrivini m, Manoocher Khosraviani, Bahram Shahrivini, and Simin Mirzarian in Seattle, WA on February 22, 2010.

Dr. Meherbanoo (Bakhtiariy) Bustani, 75, wife of Dr. Iranpur Bustani (Tehran, Iran), mother of Hooman Bustani (Farmington, MA) and Navaz Bustani (London, UK) in Tehran, Iran on March 4, 2010.

Rayomand Firoze Master, 59, husband of Farida (Kanga), son of Thrity and Firoze Master (San Mateo, CA), father of Shaun and Sherry, brother of Pearly and Lilian, cousin of Sarosh Kaikobad (Houston, TX) in Lexington, KY on March 6, 2010.

Dina Keki Punthakee, mother of Dinshaw (Narsys) and Geroo (Lionel) Russell, grandmother to Zubin and Xerxes in Hamilton, ONT on March 8, 2010.

Fereydoon Mehrayin, 83, husband of Shirin Khani, father of Minoo, Kourosh, and Mandana Mehrayin and grandfather of Rayoumand Namdarian, Vista Namdarian, Kamron Mehrayin, and Kian Mehrayin in Los Angeles, Ca, April 18, 2009.

Hooman Mehrbaba, husband of Sima Bastani-Yazdanipour, in San Jose, CA. on Friday, April 23rd 2010.

Kaiyomerz Vakil, husband of Gool, father of Dhun (Sarosh) Contractor, in Toronto, on April 24, 2010.

Ervad Kersi Bhedwar, 79, husband of Roshan, father of Kurush (Karen),

Jasmine (Neville) grandfather of Shirin, Shiraz, Kaila, Kayvan, brother of Ervad Rustom Bhedwar, (London, England), Hutoxi (Mumbai) in Montreal. April 26, 2010.

Rohinton Minwalla, husband of Zenia, father of Ardeshtir and Jamshed, grandfather of Armaiti and Zarine, in Brampton, Ont, on April 29, 2010.

Rohinton Bamboat, husband of Parvin Bamboat, father of Teenaz and Hormazd, in Southern California on April 30, 2010

NAVJOT CEREMONY

Sherazade Irani, daughter of Behram and Kashmira Irani, granddaughter of Purviz Batliwala; on September 26, 2009. in Canoga Park, CA. The navjote ceremony was performed by Ervad Zarir Bhandara and Ervad Xersis Bhandara

Yazad Sidhwa, son of Kayomarz and Farzana Sidhwa (Houston, TX) in Mumbai, India on January 9, 2010.

Sahil, Suhana and Sachin Patel, children of Tim and Ritu Patel of Walnut Creek, CA, grandchildren of Dr. Jiji and Silloo Patel at the San Jose Dar-e-Mehr on March 6, 2010.

Zaal, Cyrus, Hormuz, sons of Keshvar and Kali Buhariwalla of Dallas, on May 15, 2010 (see page 113)

AHURA	BAAL	CHAL
CHAR	GAAY	HAATH
HUMATA	KUSTI	LAL
MASTI	NAAK	NAVROZE
SES	SUDREH	TATA
ZARATHUSTRA		

created by Tanaz Naterwala, Michigan, age 12

Looking for a Soul Mate?

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<http://matrimonial.zoroastrianism.com>

www.TheParsiMatch.com

www.shaadi.com,

Mrs. Gool Banaji, Parel, Mumbai,
goolpesi@gmail.com, tel: 91-22-2416 6120.

Please send all submissions for "Milestones" to

Mahrukh Motafram, 2390 Chanticleer Drive,

Brookfield, WI 53045. Tel 262-821-5296

mahrukhm83@gmail.com

NOTE

If no year is specified it implies

"within the past 12 months"

IN MEMORIAM

KERSI BHEDWAR

Dearest Kersi

When you walked
Into a crowded room

You immediately
Dispelled the Gloom

As well the doom

God Bless you

Kersi dear

For always being

A source of cheer

As you have lightened

Many a load

As you traveled

Along life's road

To serve the Zoroastrian community

You were always very keen

Humble & dedicated

You've always been

Would like to say

A Big Thank You

As the Zoroastrian Community

Wouldn't done it without you

To the entire

Bhedwar family

May Ahura Mazda

Be there to comfort

And guide you

Wrap His arms around you

As well sweet Kersi's Soul

Will always be present

To protect you.

May his sweet soul rest in eternal
peace

Please kindly accept our deepest
sympathies

And since condolences

Bamji family, Ottawa

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

Female, 32, attractive, fair, 5' 7", MBA in Finance, studying for PhD in Finance and Banking, and teaching in a leading University in Karachi. Hobbies include stamp collecting, tapestry, reading, movies ... Looking for well-settled, well educated, caring and understanding gentleman. Willing to settle abroad. Contact shahpur@cyber.net.pk, tel: 92-21 3221 6486. [F10-07].

Female, 24, attractive, fair, 5' 5", BBA, Montessori trained teacher / director, studying for MBA in Human Resource Management. Very social, enjoys reading, movies, TV, from well-placed family in Karachi. Interested in meeting well-educated, well settled, tall, outgoing person. Willing to settle abroad. Contact shahpur@cyber.net.pk, tel: 92-21 3221 6486. [F10-08].

Male, 31, PhD in Chemical Engineering based in Houston, TX. Outgoing, enjoys traveling, music and movies. Interested in meeting good natured, well educated and cultured life partner. Prefer a girl under 30, who is fair and under 5' 5" in height. Must be 'non-Manglik'. Contact 832-725 3430. [M10-09].

Female, 34, attractive, healthcare professional living in Canada. Looking for an attractive, mature, educated Parsi gentleman. If interested, please e.mail at spentaarmaity@gmail.com. [F10-10].

Male, 29, tall, good-looking, commerce graduate, diplomas in Business Management (Mumbai), Hospitality & Tourism (Kuala Lumpur) and Informatics Computers (Singapore). Currently working for an international airline. Brother in USA and sister in Canada. Contact munchm2@yahoo.co.in. [M10-14].

Female, 29, fun-loving professional living in Canada, who loves travelling, spending time with family and friends, enjoys dancing and working out. Looking for a bright, well settled professional with a good sense of humor and a zest for life. Contact qtqtpy@yahoo.com. [f10-16].

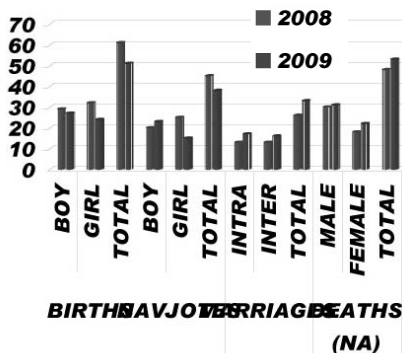
Male, 26, Bachelor of Computer Eng (Mumbai), MBA in Finance (Tennessee) currently working in Nashville, TN. Contact 615-715 0888, or havir_n@yahoo.co.in. [M10-18].

Male, 24, BA (Communications) and Masters (Human Resources) from Oakland University, MI. Born in USA, currently working in insurance company in Michigan. Interested in meeting educated girl, must be willing to settle in USA. Contact 313-882 6444, zarvanp@aol.com. [M10-19].

Female, 27, 5'7", attractive, homely, fun loving, intellectual girl with good family values and professionally well settled in New York, invites matrimonial correspondence from Parsi/ Irani Zoroastrian men with good family background, who are outgoing, fun loving, independent, responsible and professionally well placed. Contact nycdsh@gmail.com. [F10-20]

Female, early 40s, petite, B.Com. in Finance, working in Mumbai, visiting Canada/US shortly, seeking caring life partner. Contact frianna7@hotmail.com or call friend in Toronto at 905-886 7382. [F10-21].

COMPARATIVE DEMOPGRAPHIC STATISTICS FOR 2008 AND 2009



	BIRTHS			NAVJOTES			MARRIAGES			DEATHS (NA)		
	BOY	GIRL	TOTAL	BOY	GIRL	TOTAL	INTRA	INTER	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
2008	29	32	61	20	25	45	13	13	26	30	18	48
2009	27	24	51	23	15	38	17	16	33	31	22	53

نداشته وبا زحمت و کوشش فراوان ان را بدست آوردند گروههای جدید که بکشورهای مختلف مهاجرت مینمایند باید سه اصل گفتار و کردار و اندیشه نیک را هدف اصلی زندگی خود نمایند بخاطر داشته باشید که جامعه نقش مهمی را در زندگی آنها بازی میکند در آینده جامعه احتیاج به کمک و همکاری و همیاری آنها دارد زندگی دارای مراحل مختلفی است و بایستی یاد بگیریم که چگونه انرژی خودمان را متمرکز نمایم تا بتوانیم این مراحل دشوار را پشت سر گذاردهو

به فرزندان خود بیاموزید که درستکاری و راستی را پیشه خود نمایند و بایستی بدانند که با دروغگوئی بهیچ عنوان موفق نخواهند شد بانها بیاموزید که آینده در اختیار انهامیباشد با دانش و درستکاری حتما میتوانند موفقیت را باغوش بگیرند من باور دارم که گروههای جدیدی که از ایران به ممالک مختلف مهاجرت مینمایند چون در ان کشور ریمی بر سر کار میباشد که فقط دغلکاری و دروغگوئی را بمردم اموخته است لذا آنها هم ان را قسمتی از زندگی خود میدانند بنابراین جز با درستکاری و راستگوئی هیچ عمل دیگر باعث پیشرفت نخواهد شدبه امید موفقیت فراوان برای همگی درست اندیشان و درست کاران شاد و تندرست زیوید

Zoroastrian Word Search

L	S	H	B	J	T	I	G	S	G	O	A	H	Z	U
J	E	U	K	A	A	G	T	Q	Z	R	L	T	W	M
M	S	M	T	X	A	Q	U	S	T	Z	Q	A	D	T
H	K	A	L	X	M	L	H	S	U	K	A	A	N	G
B	P	T	M	A	C	C	U	S	L	K	I	H	P	H
D	K	A	S	F	L	H	D	U	E	U	V	L	F	X
V	O	T	Q	S	T	T	E	V	B	X	D	Y	C	F
O	I	C	S	A	P	D	R	A	R	U	H	A	F	C
G	U	Z	R	U	Y	O	N	Y	R	C	H	A	R	N
K	D	A	R	A	D	Q	P	C	R	A	K	Y	O	I
X	Z	N	W	S	E	R	Z	C	L	N	P	I	H	J
A	N	S	H	V	P	L	E	A	G	D	M	H	P	G
N	A	V	R	O	Z	E	H	H	A	P	N	I	X	I
A	J	P	C	H	X	C	H	N	A	U	L	X	B	C
X	K	G	T	S	X	B	T	O	Y	C	P	X	X	B

created by Tanaz Naterwala, Michigan , age 12

Answer: page 156

زمانیکه ما زرتشتیان ایرانی و کلا عده ای از ایرانیان بعثت تفاوت‌های عقیدتی از کشور و زادگاه خود رانده و بکشورهای دیگر سفر کردیم همگی بحالت خود گم کردن درامدیم در آن زمانها کشور ایران بسرعت بسوی ترقی و پیشرفت میرفت و مردم از رفاه نسبی برخوردار بودند و کمتر کسی ب فکر جابجائی از میهن عزیز خودمان بود اما متاسفانه هر کدام از ما بدلائل تفاوت‌های عقیدتی با رژیم ناچار فرار را بر قرار ترجیح دادیم بیشتر این فرار مغزها و ثروت‌های انسانی حدود سی سال پیش از کشور اریائی ما شروع شد و این گروه اداب و رسوم و انسا نیت و راستگوئی باخود بکشور میهمان بارمغان آوردند این گروه با خرد و زحمت فراوان کوشش نمودند تا زندگی خود و فامیل را در این کشور سامان بخشند ندانستن زبان و آگاهی نداشتن به فرهنگ کشور میهمان و نداشتن مهارت و مدرک تحصیلی کشور میهمان و هزاران مشکلات دیگر که اگر قدرت جوانی و تنفر از تفاوت‌های عقیدتی نبودامکان موفقیت برای این گروه امکان ناپذیر بود و این گروه مهاجر که سی سال پیش از ثروت و زحمات خودگذشته و با دست خالی به کشورهای دیگر مهاجرت نمودیم

فراریان رانده شدانسانهایی بودند که سخت کارکردن و درستکاری را یاد گرفته و این جزئی از زندگی آنان شده بود این گروه بسیار سخت کار کرده و کوشش نمودند تا خانواده را نگهدارند و فرزندان خود را با مهربانی و ارزشهای خانوادگی بزرگ نموده و به جامعه تحویل دهند این گروه فراری از کشور عزیزمان ایران خود موفق بودند زیرا با زحمات زیاد زندگی مرفهی برای فرزندان خود تهیه

نمودندو همچنین فرزندان را زیر پر و بال خود گرفته و اگر ملاحظه کنید براحتی میتوان اظهار نمودفرزندان این نسل فراری نودو نه در صد از انها موفق موفق هستند بعد از گذشت زمان

عدهای از نسل جدید تصمیم گرفتندکه دیگر مایل نیستند در کشور اریائی ایران بمانندو تصمیم به مهاجرت و ایجاد زندگی جدید در کشورهای دیگر مخصوصا امریکا نمودند نمیدانم به نظر من ودوستانم که مدت زیادی است که با افراد مختلف مصاحبه نموده ایم همگی بر یک عقیده هستیم که بین

این نسل جدید که تصمیم به مهاجرت گرفته با نسلی که سی سال پیش تصمیم به فرار گرفته بود تفاوت وجود دارد تفاوت‌هایی که بسیار چشم گیر و ازار دهنده برای ما نسل گذشته شده زمانی که نسل گذشته به کشورهای دیگر عزیمت نمودند درستکاری و کمک همیاری ساختن زندگی بهتر برای فرزندان را به ارمغان آوردند وبهیچ عنوان از کشور میهمان کمکی نخواستندوثروت خود را پنهان نکرده تا بتوانند از مزایای کشور میهمان سو استفاده نمایند پدران و مادران مانند شیر زنان وشیر مردان دو شیفت کار کردند تا بتوانند زندگی فرزندان خود را تا مین نمایند تا انها بتوانند بهتر دانش بیاموزند ودر آینده موفق شوند چنانکه میبینید همانطور شد باور دارم که نسل گذشته که به کشورهای دیگر عزیمت نمودندوظیفه دارند راه را به گروه جدید نشان دهند موظفیم تا انجا که برایمان امکان دارد با گروه جدید مهاجرین همکاری وهمیاری نماییم کسانی که سی سال پیش به این کشور مها جرت کردند زندگی مرفه و راحت امروزی خود را

Dinshaw K. Tamboly

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April 27, 2010

Editor, FEZANA Journal
3765, Av Malo,
Brossard, Quebec,
Canada J4Y 1B4.

FEZANA Journal; 2010 Spring Issue.

The 2010 spring issue of FEZANA Journal was received a few days earlier. Whilst the 2009 Fall issue focussing on the youth was magnificent, the present issue encompassing priesthood and scriptures is nothing short of spectacular. Bravo to all those who got together and contributed towards compiling and creating this masterpiece of an issue.

After going through the issue, what emerges very distinctly is the divergence in the role played by priests in India as compared to those in North America.

In India, with its overabundance of consecrated places of worship, the focus of the priests is on conducting rituals rather than learning and disseminating religious knowledge. Inadequacy of religious knowledge amongst most of the priests in India has led to loss of respect from the laity. It is a tragedy of our times that there are just a handful of priests who are erudite and have the ability to share their religious prowess with the laity.

On the other hand, it is obvious from the contents of the FEZANA Journal that for individuals officiating as priests on the North American continent, bereft of a single consecrated place of worship, priesthood is a 'calling' that emerges from within; their focus is not only to tend to the spiritual needs of the community, but equally to study and learn about our faith and thereafter disseminate their knowledge to others, including the laity.

It is a fact that for any community to survive, a strong religious foundation is necessary. At the same time for any religion to survive, an enlightened clergy is a necessity. Looking to the present and future spiritual needs of the community, what is essential is the development of an educated, intelligent, knowledgeable and articulate class of priests.

From the Indian perspective, it remains extremely vital to not only encourage young athornans to embrace mobedi as a full time profession by making it economically viable, but more importantly to inculcate in them the essential requisites that one generally expects from the clergy. With these objectives in mind, WZO Trust Funds, of which I am privileged to be the Chair & Athornan Mandal at Mumbai, both institutions striving towards achieving the same goals, collaborated in 1996, to jointly address this very important issue and launched a project to create such a cadre of priests.

With forty nine (49) young full time priests presently enrolled in this joint Athornan Mandal – WZO Trust Funds initiative, we consider our ongoing efforts to be moderately successful.

It is estimated that there are around 134 full time priests serving in Mumbai and another 112 all over India. A big chunk of these 246 priests are well into their

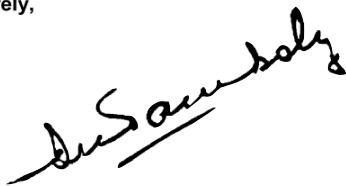
twilight years, and with demand outstripping supply, the outlook for India does appear to be grim.

Happily, the position in North America is not anywhere as dismal as it is in India, as priesthood in North America is predominantly not a career driven vocation motivated by economic considerations, but is a calling. Moreover, the mindset of the clergy in North America appears to be pragmatic and free from dogma, religious diktats and levels of intolerance that have, in India, in recent years begun to wax rather than to wane.

It is certainly a joyful feeling to realise that the Zoroastrian Diaspora in North America is positioned to grow from strength to strength, blessed as they are with a dynamic youth and an enlightened and open minded clergy.

Hama-Zor-Bad-Hama-Asho Bad. (May we be united in strength, may we be united in righteousness).

Very Sincerely,



Dinshaw K Tamboly

Ushtaviati Gatha

at fravaxshyâ anghêush ahyâ
vahishtem ashât hacâ mazdâ
vaêdâ yê îm dât
patarêm vanghêush varezayañtô
mananghō
at hôi duggedâ hushyaothanâ
ârmaitish
nôit diwzhaidyâi vîspâ-hishas
ahurô.

I shall tell you now of what is best
in this life;

That is to act in consonance with
the Spirit of

Truth, the holy Asha,

Thereby realizing Mazda who
created him,

Mazda, the father of Vohu-Mana,
the ever active Good Mind,

Mazda, the father of Armaity, of
benevolence and zeal;

The all seeing Lord whom none
can deceive.

Yasna 45.4

Translation by Dinshaw J. Irani

Editor's note:

The spring 2010 issue of FEZANA Journal Vol. 24, No.1

**PRIESTHOOD AND SCRIPTURES --
Zoroastrian Odyssey to Preservation**

*is available on www.fezana.org as a
public service.*

Reviewed by: Sarosh J. H. Manekshaw

The Zoroastrian Myth of Migration from Iran and the Settlement in the Indian Diaspora:

Text, Translation and Analysis of the 16th Century Qesse-ye Sanjan 'The Story of Sonja'

By Alan Williams

Publisher Brill. 250 pages
\$123.00 ISBN 978 90 04 17698 0

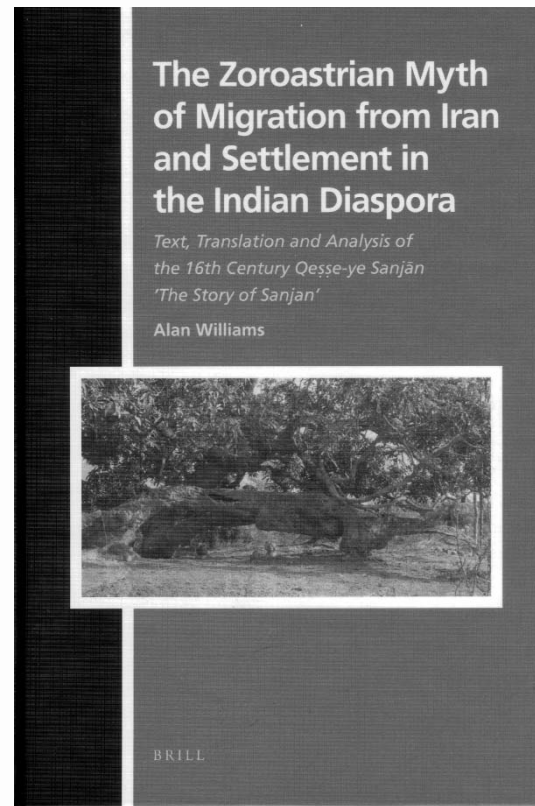
BOOKS
&
ARTS

The Qesse-ye Sanjan is the story of the migration of the Iranian Zoroastrians, starting in the 7th Century, after the conquest of Iran by the Arabs, and their settling and establishing themselves in India. The poem was written by a Sanjana priest named Bahman Kay Qobad and based on a story told to him by a "wise dastur." It was composed in Persian, in verse, and completed on December 2, 1599 C.E.

Alan Williams, a professor of Iranian Studies and Comparative Religions at the University of Manchester, published his work on this poem with five purposes in mind: "(1) to produce a new edition of the Persian text of the Qesse-ye Sanjan (hereafter QS) from the best and oldest manuscripts; (2) to offer a new, literal translation into English blank verse parallel to the transcribed, Romanized Persian text; (3) to provide a detailed commentary on the text; (4) to discuss the narrative structure of the text, and (5) to discuss the mythological and religious dimensions of what is a foundational document of Parsi Zoroastrian culture."

The QS consists of 432 couplets and tells a story of despair and determination, of adversity and turmoil, of trust and piety, of explanations and promises, of refuge and settlement, of loyalty and heroism, of war and destruction, of faith and charity, and of sanctuary and peace.

Prof. Williams' book includes a reproduction of the QS Manuscript (in Persian script) contained in the S. H. Hodiwala Manuscript at the Library of the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute, Mumbai. It also includes his translation into English, in essentially the same meter as the original Persian verse, and is placed side-by-side with the transliterated Persian text. This makes it easy to refer to the original Persian while reading the translation. Complementing the translation is a most helpful Commentary which gives an explanation of various



passages in the original. These two chapters form the core of Prof. William's book and read together, they provide the reader a clearer understanding into the narrative with which we Parsis are so familiar.

The highlights of the narrative are the migration of the Iranian Zoroastrians from Khorashan to Kuhestan where they stayed for 100 years. The group then traveled to Hormuz, where they stayed for another 15 years. From Hormuz they set sail for India and landed on the island of Diu, staying there for 19 years before embarking on a sea voyage to Gujarat. It was during this voyage that they ran in to a horrific storm, and prayed fervently to Ahura Mazda for protection. They promised that if they were granted safe passage they would establish an Atash Behram. The storm immediately abated and they safely landed on the shores of Gujarat. There they requested sanctuary from Jadi Rana the local ruler. But before he agreed, Jadi Rana first asked the Zoroastrians to explain the tenets of their religion and their customs. When satisfied that the Zoroastrians

would not pose a threat to him, Jadi Rana laid out certain conditions that the Zoroastrians must follow and when these were agreed to, he granted them asylum along with a parcel of land that the Zoroastrians named Sanjan, after the town in Iran from which they had originally come. It was in Sanjan that they immediately consecrated an Atash Behram, and named the holy fire Iran Shah.

Over the next 500 years, these Zoroastrians – now known as the Parsis – prospered and slowly started to move and settle in other towns around Gujarat. Seven hundred years after their landing in Sanjan, the then local ruler was attacked by Islamic forces. Some 1,400 Parsi troops rallied to the side of the Hindu rajah, but after an initial victory, they were badly routed by the Muslim army, with all the Parsi troops slaughtered, and the town of Sanjan sacked.

The Parsis of Sanjan fled to the hills of Baharot and took along with them their sacred fire – the Iran Shah – for safe keeping. The Iran Shah was kept in Baharot for 12 years and then moved to Bansdah for another 14 years. It was then that a Parsi, named Changa Asa, donated funds for building the Atash Behram in Navsari and the Iran Shah was moved from Bansdah and installed in the new building in Navsari with much pomp and celebration, all this paid for by Changa Asa.

One of the regrettable parts of early Parsi history is the dearth of factual data. The QS tells us of the early history of the migration and settlement in India. But it is of later vintage – some 900 years after the Iranian Zoroastrians first left Iran. As a result, the authenticity and historicity of the QS and the events and dates mentioned in it have been open to question and debate amongst the scholars, with some calling it, in the most polite manner, a “myth,” while another even went so far as to call it “A Palpable Falsehood.” To compound this confusion, various scholars have come up with vastly divergent chronologies for the key events in the QS.

These various chronologies have been listed and discussed by Prof. Williams in the Chapter titled: A Mirror or a Clock? In addition, he discusses some of the controversies regarding whether the QS should be considered as historical or simply as a myth. But, wisely, in this reviewer's opinion, he does not express his own views on this subject. For to do so would have opened his work to criticism by opponents of his views, and that would have detracted from the key part of this book – his

excellent translation and commentary on the QS.

Despite the controversies over whether the QS is historical or a myth, it has become a part of our folklore and a story of pride to us Parsis. It provides us with the only narrative that helps us establish, in part, our unique identity in India, as well as our transformation from originally Iranian Zoroastrians to Parsis.

Prof. Williams' easy-to-read translation and commentary, as well as an unbiased analysis of the various controversial discussions on the historicity of the text, has provided us with a deeper insight into the QS – a work that has become the foundational document for Parsis. For his contribution to a better understanding of our culture and identity, we Parsis should be grateful.

While the contents of the book are all positive, the only regret this reviewer has is that the high cost of the book will make it unaffordable to a large number of Parsis. The book is currently over \$100 on Amazon.com. It is hoped that the price will drop significantly in the next few months, so that more of us can purchase and study it.

Sarosh Manekshaw, is an active member of the Zoroastrian Association of Houston and has served as guest editor of the FEZANA Journal, for “Date and Time of Zarathushtra,” and “Treasures from the Avesta: Our Daily Prayers.” He has actively participated in interfaith activities; spoken to church groups; presented papers at several Zarathushti conferences including the NAMC seminar in April 2009 in Houston .

About the cover: Library of Congress

Cataloging-in-Publication Data

The “Walking Mango Tree” at Sanjan is, according to local legend a very ancient sacred tree said to have been planted by the Parsis, when they first landed at Sanjan. It is believed that the tree has “walked “ several kilometers from the seashore to where it is presently situated. The tree still bears small red mangoes. Indeed it may have been planted by Zarathushtis as a pious vaaf (“bequest”) or yad-bud “memorial”, for trees are sacred in Zarathushti tradition, as representatives of the amahraspand Amurdad, “Immortality” and were often planted around fire temples

Photograph by Ruksana Nanji Ph.D.

Reviewed by Dr Hildegard Brack Ph.D.
Psychologist.

The Forgotten Art of Healing and other Essays

By Farokh Erach Udwadia

Oxford University Press, New Delhi 2009 pages 184

Rs 695; ISBN 10:019-806174-9

The central theme of Dr. Udwadia's book is the art of healing. In addition, he addresses subjects, such as, landmarks in modern medicine, art and medicine, the story of anaesthesia, religion and medicine as well as euthanasia, a very topical and contentious issue. In addition to a convocation address at the Benaras Hindu University, he presents his perspective on contemporary medicine and looks ahead to the medicine in the future.

The author points out that the previously high regard attributed to the medical profession has suffered considerably in spite of breathtaking advances in the field of science, medicine and medical technology. Why? He believes that the individual with a health problem is being forgotten and with it the art of healing in these times when strong emphasis is put on using technical equipment in medical investigations. Making a case for teaching and learning at the bedside, he puts emphasis on asking questions, on listening and on examining, also on paying attention to the emotional and mental state of the patient and on establishing a relationship in the process of taking a comprehensive history. The physician arrives at a diagnosis, based on his/her own knowledge, the information collected from the patient and findings from a complete physical examination, followed by relevant investigations to corroborate it. Dr. Udwadia points to the importance of sound clinical judgment, well developed sensibility and perceptiveness, combined with wisdom and compassion. The physician has a holistic perspective and looks at the person with caring that implies empathy, showing concern and assisting in the process of restoring the person's health. For Dr. Udwadia, combining medicine as an art and a science promises to yield best results for the individual's recovery.

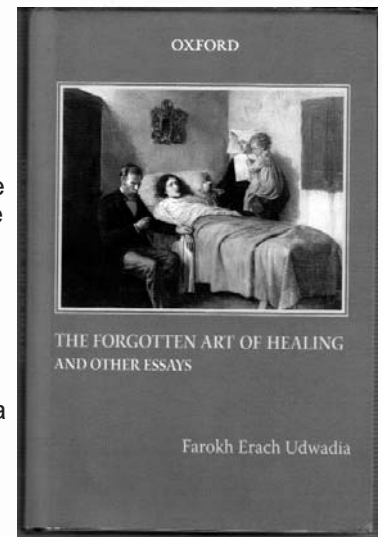
In his convocation address at Banaras Hindu University in 2004, Dr. Udwadia indicates that "Medicine is the study of Man" and suggests for students to expose themselves to art, culture, literature, history and philosophy in order to broaden their understanding of human nature. For him, the important attributes of a good physician are competence, humanity, honesty, integrity, charity, humility, judgment and equanimity, not to forget admitting one's mistakes. He reminds the students that "young and old, we are all undergraduates in the school of experience."

Dr. Udwadia tackles also euthanasia, an issue with scholars on opposite sides of the debate. He refers to euthanasia dating back to antiquity. Romans asked a close person for assistance to commit suicide, or soldiers regarded killing a fatally wounded comrade in battle as their compassionate duty. The different types of euthanasia are outlined.

The intentional killing of competent patients who express their free wish to die because of their pain and suffering is regarded as voluntary euthanasia. Involuntary euthanasia is also called merci-killing, e.g. when the life of a severely handicapped person is cut short to prevent prolonged pain and suffering without his/her involvement in the decision. Refraining from keeping a terminally ill patient alive and withdrawing or withholding treatment is regarded as passive euthanasia. However, there are scenarios where people express their wish in an advanced directive to let the natural process of dying take its course while providing comfort care to alleviate suffering. There is also medically assisted suicide when a patient who expresses his intention of wanting to die asks the physician to provide the necessary means. The author promotes palliative care for those with terminal illness and describes the goal of palliative care as best possible quality of life for the patient and his family. He points to improvements in pain control and quotes UK judge Delvin's judgement that "the proper medical treatment that is administered and that has an incidental effect in determining the exact moment of death, is not the cause of death in any sensible use of the term."

In his essay on landmarks in modern medicine, Dr. Udwadia describes the discoveries of penicillin, cortisone as well as the structure of DNA. He explains the close links between medicine and the different domains of art, pointing to the visual representation of the early history of man, to healing practices in different cultures but also to literature and poetry that address illness and numerous famous artists that excelled because of or in spite of their illness. He emphasizes the therapeutic value of artistic expression and gives music the highest rank amongst the different disciplines. He cites numerous artists, and examples are illustrated in the book.

The story of anaesthesia describes the long and arduous path to finding means for pain relief and eventually being able to sedate patients enough that



surgery could be performed while they were asleep, a path which was spiked with intrigue and politics. The first person who successfully performed surgeries with ether was denied the credit because he did not report his findings to his colleagues at the time.

Another essay describes the significant influence of religion from the early times of the first civilizations through the centuries on the evolution of medicine.

In "contemporary medicine", the author bemoans that care, compassion and empathy have been replaced by machines and technical devices and led to a decline in ethics. Medicine has become depersonalized, physicians are highly specialized and focus only on their area of expertise, medicine has become a business, and ethics declined with changing values.

While Dr. Udwardia acknowledges the potential and value of new technologies, he emphasizes a return to a philosophy of humanity and the importance of prevention. In his last essay on "medicine in the future," he outlines challenges that lie ahead, such as dealing with what he calls "new epidemics" of cancer, hypertension, diabetes, coronary heart disease, cerebrovascular disease in an increasingly ageing population and warns of potentially disastrous consequences genetic engineering may have for mankind.

In this book, Dr. Udwardia promotes a combination of the art of medicine with science. For him, core values include focusing on the person who is ill and providing compassionate care. "The forgotten art of healing" is a very interesting reading, recommended for all medical students and those who are interested in medicine.

Dr. Hildegard Brack, Ph. D., is a psychologist specializing in geriatric patient centered care, at Moe Levin Centre, Douglas Mental Health University Institute, McGill University, Montreal, Canada

North Vancouver's Lonsdale Neighbourhood

Author: Shervin Shahriari,
Arcadia Publishing 2009, Pages: 128,
ISBN: 9780738572116, \$21.99

Book Review by Narges Nirumvala

North Vancouver's Lonsdale Neighbourhood by author Shervin Shahriari gives us a glimpse into a small microcosm of the North American pioneering way of life. Part of the Historic Canada series from Arcadia Publishing, it brings the history of this region to life through the use of over 200 vintage photographs. Most of these photographs are furnished by the North Vancouver Museum and Archives Commission where the author served as a member from 2003 to 2007 and as chair from 2008 to 2009. North Vancouver is located north of the Burrard Inlet (a narrow body of water) directly across from Vancouver in British Columbia, Canada. Today Lonsdale Avenue is one of its main arteries. In addition to this, he has also been a resident of North Vancouver for over 25 years making him eminently qualified to research and write such a book.

The book has seven chapters from 'Pioneers' to 'Infrastructure and Parks' to 'Business Activity'. Each photograph has been carefully selected to capture a moment in time now long past. Words alone would not be able to convey the range of human experience that the

author is able to evoke within these pages. To unleash the magic in this book delve deeply into its pages and take the time to absorb the unique details of each image. A cursory glance is not enough. You have to actually read the photographs as you would text in any other book.

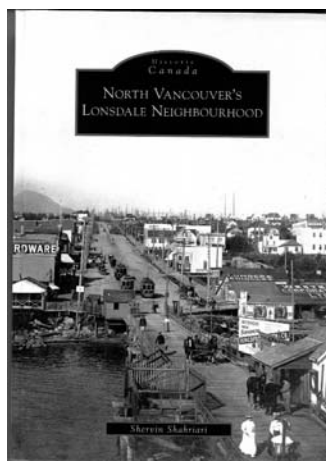
Let's take an example from early in chapter one 'Early Residents and Pioneers' Shahriari begins with the earliest known settlers to the area, the Coast Salish people. One page with two photographs stands out. The first image shows members of the Squamish Nation (historically the Squamish Nation are descendants of the Coast Salish peoples) in western dress, as part of a brass band standing

outside a catholic church. The author also tells us that "Between 1898 and 1959, cultural traditions that had been passed on from one generation to another for hundreds of years were restricted by the existence of St. Paul's Indian Residential School north of the reserve." The next image again shows members of the Squamish Nation, but this time in full cultural regalia, their stance proud and defiant. It is this juxtaposition of cultural values and realities that really draws the reader in and makes one think.

Another stark contrast comes later in chapter six 'Tents, Houses, Hotels, and High-Rises'. One photograph is c. 1913 and shows the St. Alice Hotel which was built around the same time, with its beautiful brick facade, a true

heritage building. Then fast forward to the adjacent image, taken recently of the Observatory, a sleek and modern 30-storey high-rise built on the old St. Alice Hotel site. The age old battle of old vs. new, tradition vs. modernity eloquently represented with just two photographs.

Although the book does have a well written Introduction; one area where the book could be improved, perhaps in future



editions (this is the first edition) would be the inclusion of brief introductions at the beginning of each chapter to give the reader a better idea of the issues and photographic selection.

The last chapter 'Living in the Neighbourhood' is the least cohesive section of the book, with images ranging from a clown to high school class mates and young athletes to Iranian settlers baking Sangak bread. Given the range of different cultures and countries that the settlers came from, perhaps a chapter entitled 'Cultural Backgrounds' would have been more appropriate.

Chapter three 'Business Activity' catalogues the evolution of business activity and industry in this neighbourhood. The photos in this chapter are arranged in rough chronological order. The earlier photographs depict the reliance on natural resources, specifically logging, which the author identifies as 'North Vancouver's first industry'. From there we move on to The Express, 'North Vancouver's first newspaper' with its

antiquated printing equipment. The next few photographs go on to show that the same block that housed The Express was also home to the John Archibald McMillan Grocers, which could have been North Vancouver's first store.

Through his skilful use of photographs and descriptive analysis, Shahriari takes us back to a more arduous way of life. As the author A. L. Rowse said in his classic book 'The Use of History' "Bound as our lives are to the tyranny of time, it is through what we know of history that we are delivered from our bonds and escape - into time." This book is just that, an opportunity to escape into another time and place, giving our own lives perspective.

All content ©2010 Narges Nirumvala

Narges Nirumvala, BSc is a freelance writer, blogger and professional speaker. She has appeared on radio and television and her writing has been published /circulated to 106 countries. Narges can be reached at <http://www.NargesNirumvala.com>.

Variations of the Salib –e-Shikeste (The Broken Cross and Karolia Pattern (see book review of Rastin Mehri page 156)



Astodan at Naqsh-e-Rustom (illustrated also on page 186 of the book) – Note the repetitive sign of the cross cut in the rockface from Achaemenian times in Iran. The book illustrates the swastika in various shapes evolving over the centuries. A six figured variation is found on buildings (page 240).

THE KAROLIA MYTH

The eight figured pattern found in Parsi embroidery, and other patterns such as those made by chalk/ rangoli is based on oral history and signifies protection. It is called "Karolia" meaning spider.

When the Zarathushtis were escaping the Arabs they were crossing a desert. They realized the Arabs were closing in on them and crawled into a well for shelter. They could however be seen from the top. A little spider realizing their problem quickly wove a web across the mouth of the well. The Arabs came to the well for water, saw the web, felt it was empty and disused because of the web and left without looking too closely. Thus the spider became one of the animal



Karolia pattern.

Source: Shernaz Cama, PARZOR, New Delhi, India

protectors of the Zarathushtis. She is remembered in oral history and honoured through the

Editor's Note: The Karolia Pattern is a variation of the swastika symbolizing the sun (see: *Zoroastrian Themes on Early Medieval and Sogdian Ossuaries* By Frantz Grenet illustrating a stamped ossuary with two priests in ritual costume with padans worshipping before a sacred fire, with the upper register depicting the eight figured pattern. Terracotta, 52.0x24.0x75.0 cm Samarkand Mulla-Kurgan, 7th century. Collection: Smarakand Museum, Samarkand, Uzbekistan

In: "A Zoroastrian Tapestry, Art, Religion and Culture, 2002, Eds: Pheroza J. Godrej and Firoza Punthakey Mistree, Mapin Publishing, Ahmedabad, India, ISBN: 1-890206-22-9)

The Mysterious Sign:

Solar Circle or the Circle of Mehr

By Dr. N. Bakhturtaash

Winter 1992

Fravahar Press, pp 396; paper back 2,500 Tumans, Hard cover 3,000 Tumans

ISBN 964-6320-22-8

Limited quantities left in Tehran

The Mysterious Sign is a thorough and exhaustive examination of the origin, history and application of the symbol of cross and swastika, with a special focus on Iran. The author provides a detailed account of various hypotheses of the origin of the symbol (23-73) together with its usage by different ancient cultures, including those in the Middle East, Asia Minor, India, North American Indians and China (75-136).

Chapter three is dedicated entirely to the use of the symbol cross in ancient Iran (138-205). It emphasizes to the reader that the Iranian plateau was probably where the symbol first appeared before it was introduced to various cultures in India and subsequently the Far East.

The focus of the **fourth chapter** is on the development and emergence of the symbol as a Christian motif and symbol par excellence. The author provides a brief but an intriguing account of the history of the Holy Cross, the conquest of Jerusalem by the Sasanid Persian army in 614 ACE, and the capture of the Holy Cross, which even then was the most sacred object in Christendom. This event marked the beginning of the wars with Byzantine Empire in the seventh century – culminating in the defeat of the Persian Emperor Khosro II in 629 ACE, and the return of the Holy Cross to the Byzantine Empire. This event is commemorated today by the Christians worldwide by the sacred *Feast of the Holy Cross* (213-18), and is known as "*Hupsosis tou Timiou Staurou*" in Greek which is literally, "*Raising Aloft of the Precious Cross*"; and "*Exaltatio Sanctae Crucis*" in Latin meaning: the "*Triumph of the Holy Cross*".

Chapter five (221-285) examines the usage of the symbolism in Islamic decorative motifs, specifically in Iran; on stuccos, tiles, reliefs and on ceramic/pottery.

BOOKS

ARTS



The sixth chapter provides an overview of the usage of the symbol in contemporary art objects and motifs – including its usage in public buildings in Tehran – together with their meaning and significance. Also the author provides a brief overview of the usage of the broken-cross, the swastika, by the Nazis but without intentional guilt-assuaging tones extant in most scholarly discussion on the symbol in the West (317-30). (See page 152 for variations on the Cross).

The final chapter (313-31) provides a useful examination of selected articles on the topic published in various books and journals, predominantly in Persian.

FEZANA is grateful to Mobed Mehraban Firouzgary; the late Dr Meherbanoo Bakhtiary (see obituary page 128) from Tehran, Iran and her daughter Navaz Bustani, of London, England, for donation and transfer of four copies of the book for use by the Zarathushtis of North America

FEZANA is grateful to Mobed Mehraban Firouzgary; the late Dr Meherbanoo Bakhtiary (see obituary page 128) from Tehran, Iran and her daughter Navaz Bustani, of London, England, for donation and transfer of four copies of the book for use by the Zarathushtis of North America

BUSINESS

Dr. Nariman Behraves, the Internationally Illustrious Economist

Professor Yezdi H. Godiwalla



Dr. Nariman Behraves is an internationally illustrious economist overseeing over 200 specialists and professionals who work in North America and Europe for covering economic, financial and political developments in over 180 countries. He and his professional team gather data and information, evaluate and analyze the data for determining potential economic and financial trends, and, political developments for strategic decision making at the highest levels. For the depth of his insights, he is widely respected and the media highly values his analytical insights and opinions. His peers and the markets have continuously acknowledged his being perspicuous.

He is outstanding in that he is recognized, well regarded and is highly sought after by important media sources for his economic analyses and forecasting. He, together with his team, provides valuable testimony to the public through various media sources. These media sources include the most reputed names and reflect diverse types. In 2004 USA Today ranked his team as the Number 1 for economic forecasting. For major currency exchange rates forecasting, a Reuters's 2004 survey ranked his team as the best. The Wall Street Journal recognized him as the only US based forecaster for ranking within the top six in the two consecutive years of 2003 and 2004. His accuracy is not per chance but it is borne out of consistent, systematic, well corroborated analyses.

He is the Chief Economist and Executive Vice President for Global Insight (former DRI-WEFA), directing the entire forecasting process of Global Insight, and is responsible for developing economic outlook and also risk analysis for US, Europe, Japan, and the emerging market countries.

To continue with the laurels of his credibility as an economic, political and financial analyst and forecaster, his analysis and views are frequently cited in well known media sources. These include The Financial Times, The Wall Street Journal, Investor's Business Daily, Forbes, Business Week, Fortune, and US New and World Report. He is a frequent guest on BBC World Business Report, NBC Nightly News, CNN Headline News, The News Hour with Jim Lehrer of Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), Your World with Neil Cavuto (Fox News Network), CNBC's Closing Bell, Bloomberg's TV's World Financial Report, and All Things Considered on National Public Radio (of US). He has hosted the Public Broadcasting Services' television series, "Inside the Global Economy". One wonders about his celebrity status as an erudite and respected person of very high stature. He is internationally illustrious.

Dr Behraves has published numerous articles in periodicals as European Affairs and Credit Week, has co-authored two books, *Economics USA*, and *Microcomputers*, and *Corporate Planning and Decision Support Systems*. and is a contributing author to a recently published scenario analysis book, *Learning From the Future*.

His academic preparation is from top-notch academic institutions, a BSc from MIT, and, MA and Ph.D. from University of Pennsylvania. After the completion of his studies, he has worked at the Congressional Budget Office and the Federal Reserve, as the Chief Economist at the Standard and Poor's, was the President of Oxford Economics, USA. His career has a superb span and he travels widely in US, Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America. He is fluent in several languages. having lived in US, Europe and the Middle East. He has embraced much of the world and much of the world has acknowledged him for his reliable brilliance.

Professor Yezdi H. Godiwalla

University of Wisconsin-Whitewater



WZCC TORONTO AND NEW YORK WZCC CHAPTERS ENJOY THE FIRST SKYPE-IN JOINT COLLABORATION



On Feb. 18, 2010 the Toronto and New York Chapters of WZCC experimented in a joint session conducted through Skype. Xerxes Wania and Sam Meer of the WZCC-Toronto Chapter conceived the idea and approached the NY Chapter-Chair, Natalie H. Vania-Gandhi. The Joint Session also enjoyed the engaged participation of Yazdi Tantra in Mumbai.



Discussion centered on *"Impressions from the Dubai Congress"*. Afreed Mistry, a YLEP award winner, reviewed many initiatives. Natalie and Yazdi spoke about conveying the tremendous opportunity WZCC presents. WZCC-Toronto introduced the concept of using the Skype forum to highlight entrepreneurs in expanding their markets and horizons.

WZCC-NY FINANCIAL PLANNING FOR HEALTH CARE: PROTECTING YOUR HEALTH IN ECONOMIC UPS AND DOWNS



We were in a blinding winter snow storm on Feb 25 on America's east coast as the USA President convened a health care summit with Congressional members. WZCC-NY could hardly be more timely. in its Winter Quarterly meeting on Sunday, Feb 21. Dedicated members convened. ... In one of WZCC's most engaged discussions, Mr. Jamshed R. Ghadiali provided many avenues into the USA's health care economics. ...



Startling facts kept coming from Jamshed. ... Purchasing long term care insurance at younger ages rather than waiting can save a family huge sums in monthly or annual premiums ... a younger chapter member at the meeting resolved to investigate in light of informative guidance. ... Mr. Jamshed R. Ghadiali, MBA, CLU(r), ChFC(r), has enjoyed a career of twenty years in financial services. At MetLife he provides assistance to families and business owners. His products and services include life, disability and long term care insurance, annuities, certificate of deposits, money market funds, mortgages, strategies and products for education, retirement, wealth, and estate planning.



How do we manage in a time of change and contention? What is the future of our health care? Despite the known and unknown unknowns, all WZCC-NY Chapter members can reflect thoughtfully together on these profound matters in the midst of our unceasing snowstorms.

Source: e.mail cpmunioication forn WZCC New York chapter





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