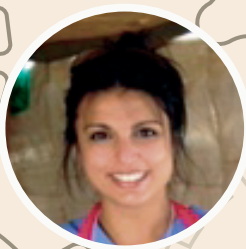


JOURNAL

Mehr–Avan–Adar 1388 AY (Fasli) • Ardebehesht–Khordad–Tir 1389 AY (Shenshai) • Khordad–Tir–Amرداد 1389 AY (Kadimi)

GAME CHANGERS

**Zarathushti Youth Advancing Humanity
Through Cooperation and Leadership**



PUBLICATION OF THE FEDERATION OF ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF NORTH AMERICA

Copyright ©2019 Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America



*With Best Compliments
From
The Incorporated Trustees
Of the
Zoroastrian Charity Funds
of
Hong Kong, Canton & Macao*

Contents



FEZANA Journal

Vol 33, No 3 ISSN 1068-2376

Editor in Chief: Dolly Dastoor
edltor(@)fezana.org

Graphic & Layout:
Feroza Fitch
ffitch(@)lexicongraphics.com

Shahrokh Khanizadeh
www.khanizadeh.info

Technical Assistant:
Coomie Gazdar

Consultant Editor:
Lylah M. Alphonse
lmalphonse(@)gmail.com

Language Editor:
Douglas Lange
Deenaz Coachbuilder

Cover Design:
Feroza Fitch
ffitch(@)lexicongraphics.com

Publications Chair:
Behram Pastakia
bpastakia(@)aol.com

Marketing Manager:
Nawaz Merchant
nawaz@fezana.org

Copy Editors:
Yasmin Pavri
Vahishta Canteenwalla
Nazneen Khambatta

Subscription Managers:
Arnavaz Sethna
Kershaw Khumbatta

Asst Subscription Manager
Farnaz Sidhwa

2 EDITORIAL

DOLLY DASTOOR

3 MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

HOMI GANDHI

4 FEZANA UPDATES

8 GAME CHANGERS: YOUTHFUL VOICES



- ◆ Guest Editorial: Anne khademian
- ◆ Guest Editorial: Nawaz Merchant
- ◆ Perception Is Not Reality
- ◆ 7th World Z Congress LA
- ◆ Z Games
- ◆ UN and CSW

30 RELIGION AND ACTION



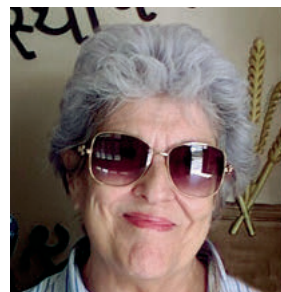
- ◆ Is It Ever Ok To Lie – Essay Competition
- ◆ The Affirming Value of Rituals
- ◆ Language as A Bridge
- ◆ A Call to Awaken
- ◆ We Did It Our Way
- ◆ Being Part of A Global Community
- ◆ Faith, Music, Art

55 YOUTH ARE CHANGING OUR PERSPECTIVE

- ◆ Reflections on Z Youth
- ◆ What Do We Do Next?
- ◆ Interview with Brigadier Ervad Behram and Zenobia Panthaki



62 PERSONAL PROFILE: TOXY COWASJI



64 BETWEEN THE COVERS

68 MILESTONES

70 MATRIMONIALS

70 OBITUARIES

71 LIST OF ASSOCIATIONS

**COMING SOON: Winter 2019
HUMANITARIAN ACTIVITIES**
Guest Editor: Sanaya Master

ERRATA FOR FEZANA JOURNAL SUMMER 2019 VOL 33, NO 2

We regret that the names of the three photographers, Percy Katrak, Yezdi Engineer and Percy Behramshah were not acknowledged for the photos used in special Bhandara Atash Kadeh issue. Please accept our sincere apologies.
Editor, FEZANA Journal

Opinions expressed in the FEZANA Journal do not necessarily reflect the views of FEZANA or members of the editorial board. All submissions to the FEZANA JOURNAL become the property of the publication and may be reproduced in any form. Published at Regal Press, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada.

(USPS 021-495) published quarterly by FEZANA 8615 Meadowbrook Dr., Burr Ridge, IL 60527. Periodical postage rate is paid at Oakbrook, IL 60523 and at additional mailing offices. Annual subscription US \$35 (US and Canada) and \$80 (air) for other countries; details on subscription form. POSTMASTER: send changes to Fezana Journal, 8615 Meadowbrook Drive, Burr Ridge, IL 60527.



ZARATHUSHTI YOUTH: GAME CHANGERS

It was a pleasure to put together this issue on “Game Changers” and marvel at the achievement of the growing third generation. The seventh World Zoroastrian Congress brought young people, male and female, entrepreneurs, professionals, mobeds, under one roof to share their stories and experiences.

For a long time we have heard a background noise of how the millennials are not pulling their weight. What will happen after the older generation fades away? Will the associations and the religious community also fade away?

When you read the editorials of the two incredible guest editors Nawaz Merchant from ZAGNY and Anne Khademian, President of ZAMWI and reflect on the achievements of these young people, you will be amazed at the things they have conceived of and how they have achieved their dreams. Dreams that my generation could not even imagine! Their vision of service is different from that of our own.

The first generation of immigrants tried to build the community, with social support for each other and also with bricks and mortar. The second and third generation do not see that need, as we have already created a community for them. We have given them the foundation of the tenets of the religion and they are actualizing them in communities around the world and building prosperous global fellowship. While appreciating all their efforts to change the world, I would caution them not to forget their own community and come forward to help and participate to build stronger bonds and ties with their contemporaries. Be the “Game Changers” for your own community to make the fabric of the Zoroastrian community strong.

In this issue Artemis Javanshir, Co-Chair of the FEZANA Education, Conference and Scholarship (Religious Education) Committee organized an Essay/Short Story Contest, sponsored by the California Zoroastrian Centre and supported by Chehre Nama and the FEZANA Journal. Three winning essays on “Is it ever OK to lie” are published in this issue.

You will also read about the Z Youth camp, “An incubator of future Z leaders,” organized by Zoroastrian Association of Houston where 93 young people from across the country came to participate, have fun and seal bonds of friendship. And the best part was that the camp activities were planned by 20-25 year olds under the supervision of Camp Co-ordinator Ervad Kayo Sidhwa.



Game Changers Bezan and Kyras Irani of Vancouver, BC, with the editor at the North American Zoroastrian Congress in LA.

FEZANA Journal requested Kersi Shroff to write a tribute to Toxy Cowasjee on her retirement as Editor of HAMAZOR, a publication of the World Zoroastrian Organization dealing with Zoroastrian issues. The North American Zoroastrian community is pleased to pay a special tribute to Toxy for her magnificent contributions to the worldwide community from 2002-2019. The retirement of Toxy Cowasji leaves a void for Zoroastrian communities worldwide. Goodluck Toxy in your next adventure.

Among our three book reviews in this issue you will also read about the poignant story of a grand-daughter’s struggle to understand Alzheimer, the disease which affected her grandfather and the toll it took on the whole family. Another children’s book by Hovi Shroff explains the disease in simple practical terms for children.

I hope the start of the Shehenshahi New Year 1388 will bring peace and stability to our families and to our countries.

Dolly Dastoor Ph.D.

PRACTICING ZOROASTRIANISM THROUGH HVARASHTA



Over millennia, Zarathushtis have made significant contributions, not just to the communities they lived in, but to the world. We all take pride in this. We are proud of the fact that hard work, integrity, philanthropy, goodness are all qualities associated with Zarathushtis, in Iran, in India, in the Western diaspora, and in other parts of the world wherever Zarathushtis have made their home.

People often wonder whether future generations of our community will continue to carry on the legacies of the giants who went before them and bring prestige and honor to our community. In fact today's youth are much aware of the state of our world and the future they will inherit. Their concerns are existential in a way that goes beyond just our community. They have the qualities that led to the success of our illustrious predecessors and hold dear those Zarathushti values that are bound to change the world for the better.

Socrates said, "The secret of change is to focus all of your energy not on fighting the old, but on building the new." Our youth seem to know this secret. They are shaping their world on their own terms. Their practice of Zoroastrianism goes beyond rituals. They live the religion by bringing its values into various aspects of their daily life. Some of them are profiled in this issue. For each one featured here, there are many more still coming up behind them, full of ideals and fueled by passion.

To all of these young men and women I say, the world needs you! Give your community and your children, a reason to be proud of your accomplishments, just as you teach them to hold our past in high esteem. I know this is a tall order, but do not let it intimidate you. Wherever you are in your journey, start there. Start with whatever you've got. Start here, today, with thoughts of Asha to guide you: Practice Zoroastrianism by being "artisan(s) of the common good". Be agents of positive change. Disrupt creatively the mode of "business as usual" because it is not what the world needs. Become the influencers within our community and beyond. Engage in political activism and social work. Take on the mantle of leadership without fear and fulfill, in a righteous manner, the work of causes you hold dear. Become media savvy and use our swift and engaging modes of communication to move people in positions of power to make morally sound, compassionate decisions that will renew the world for future generations.

Of the three tenets of our faith, Hvarashta is very significant; actions have to be performed for perfect results. Let your Hvarashta take our community and our world towards a brighter future. That, too, is practicing Zoroastrianism.

May Ahura Mazda bless your efforts to serve his creation through your life's work.

Atha jamyât yâtha âfrînâmi.

Homi D. Gandhi
President FEZANA

APARTMENT FOR RENT IN MUMBAI

Why stay in expensive hotels in Mumbai - when you can stay in this recently renovated, 1 Bedroom, living/dining room, kitchen & bathroom apartment in a PARSI COLONY in PAREL, MUMBAI!

This apartment is for SHORT TERM RENTALS only (minimum 1 week), is for PARSIS ONLY & is offered at \$50 per night! It will sleep 3 adults comfortably (1 on Lv Rm sofa)

It is located in a very well maintained Parsi Colony - A. H. Wadia Baug - in the Parel / Lalbaug area, equidistant between South Mumbai & Bandra & northern suburbs. It is also close to the expanding Lower Parel area with its boutique shops & restaurants!

The apartment has AC in the living & bedrooms, a fully equipped kitchen and bathroom with shower & washing machine. Strictly - No pets and No smoking!!

For bookings and further details please contact: - DAISY and CAWAS ANTIA TEL : - 410-879-4614 E MAIL : cawasma@gmail.com

5TH ANNUAL KAMRAN SEMINAR IN WASHINGTON, DC

by Dr. Anne M. Khademian

“The history of Zoroastrianism from the late Sasanian period to the present is very well documented, but it is not always easy to understand how to use the sources that we have. The result of this is that much historical work on Zoroastrianism does not take into account and does not speak to the concerns of the living communities in Iran, India, and all over the world. In this seminar, we will try to do something about that, and in several steps follow Zoroastrianism wherever it went right up to the present.” Professor Albert de Jong

The 5th Annual Kamran Seminar was held on July 20, 2019 in the Kamran Dar-e Mehr outside Washington, DC. The annual event, hosted by ZAMWI, and sponsored by the nonprofit, Arash the Archer, Inc., featured Professor Albert de Jong as the Kamran Seminar Fellow. His talk, “Zoroastrianism on the Move: From Ancient Iran to Present Day Iran, India and the Diaspora,” drew 130 attendees from across the Zoroastrian community, academia, the interfaith community in Washington, DC, and neighbors to the Kamran Center in Boyds’, MD.

A Professor of the Study of Religion in the University of Leiden, the Netherlands, and affiliated with the Leiden University Centre for the Study of Religion, de Jong studies history of religions, a focus on Zoroastrianism and the religious history of Iran and Central Asia, from antiquity to the present.

Professor deJong’s lecture on Saturday morning was followed by a Q and A with the audience, guided by ZAMWI founder, Kersi Shroff. Following lunch and networking, a performance of the poem, Arash the Archer written by Sivash Kasrai was performed by Ervad Kurush Dastur, ZAMWI’s full-

time mobed, and Jamshid Parsinejad, Vice President of the ZAMWI Board of Trustees, and accompanied by Mehrji Madan, an accomplished musician and film producer. The poem in Persian and English, arranged by Yasna and Gordiya Khademian honored the premise of the organization, Arash the Archer, Inc. Just as Arash pulls back his arrow to secure the future of Ancient Iran in the poem, the mission of Arash the Archer, Inc. builds on the premise that ***we learn from the past to think forward***. This takeaway from ancient Iranian mythology highlights peaceful conflict resolution between warring countries with the ultimate self-sacrifice by a man of conviction, rather than physical strength.

The traditional round table discussion featured two members of the ZAMWI community and a member of the Arash the Archer board, as well as featured guest Prof. de Jong. Panel members included Dr. Sousan Abadian-Harvard Ph.D., speaker and author, and recently a Franklin Fellow at the U.S. State Department’s Office of International Religious Freedom, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor; Kersi Shroff, founding member of ZAMWI, an Attorney at Law, former Division Chief in the Law Library of Congress of the US federal government, scholar of Zoroastrianism in Central Asia, and a volunteer legal expert for ZAMWI. The panel was moderated by Dr. Ariel Ahram, Professor with Virginia Tech’s School of Public and International Affairs, scholar of security studies and global governance with specialization in the Middle East, Wilson Center Fellow, and prolific author.

Each year the Kamran Seminar focuses on independent scholarship and research related to Ancient Iran and Zoroastrian history and culture. It is inspired by a key premise of the Gathas: everyone has a responsibility to seek the truth, to ask critical questions, and to continuously examine our thoughts, words and deeds in light of fairness and equity, and in light of evidence, discussion and reflection. Ushta





Left to right: Mehraban Manoochehri, Ervad Kurush Dastur, Professor Albert de Jong, Ariel Ahram, Zarir Khademian, and Anne Khademian



The mission of the new nonprofit, **Arash the Archer, Inc.**, is two-fold: Firstly, it supports new and ongoing research on Ancient Iran and the history and culture of Zoroastrianism.

Research on Ancient Iran includes the broad landscape impacted by Iranian culture or the Zoroastrian religion from Western China to Greece and Rome, and from the Caucasus to Egypt, prior to the fall of the Sassanian Empire. Iranian and Zoroastrian culture has also been impacted by the vast surrounding landscape of the ancient world, in return. This mutually constitutive set of forces are key to our understanding of Ancient Iran and the history and culture of Zoroastrianism. The second priority is to disseminate scholarship on these topics to a broad Zoroastrian audience and to a general audience at local, national and international levels. The foundation of that mission is the annual Kamran Seminar. Morvarid Behziz, Mehraban Manoochehri, Ariel Ahram, Ph.D., Zarir Khademian, MD, Ph.D., and Anne Khademian, Ph.D., serve on the Board of Directors of Arash the Archer, Inc.

(happiness) results from the exercise of Vohu Manna—the good mind in pursuit of Asha, the truth. This focus on the pursuit of truth and personal responsibility for our choices and actions parallels Western liberal philosophy and the evolution of the scientific method. Whether or not the words of Zoroaster were the inspiration for the Enlightenment and liberal thought, the embrace of critical thinking in the quest for truth at the heart of the Zoroastrian faith motivates us to think forward. In this spirit, the Kamran Seminar focuses on independent scholarship, research, and critical dialogue regarding Ancient Iran, Zoroastrian beliefs, history, and culture, with the goal of contributing to a robust conversation. The seminar aims to explore and inspire our knowledge of the past so we can foster an informed and enlightened future.

ZAH Z-CAMP 2019: AN INCUBATOR OF FUTURE ZARATHUSHTI LEADERS!

by Kayo Sidhwa, (Camp Co-Ordinator, Houston)

In response to the call for developing Zarathushti leaders for tomorrow, ZAH developed the “Z-Camp” to bring together Zarathushti youth (boys and girls aged 5-18) in a laid-back, but structured summer camp where they could interact with their peers and learn contemporary life skills taught by subject matter experts. Based on its early success in 2016, ZAH started to promote the program nationally within FEZANA. This year, FEZANA agreed to highlight the ZAH Z-Camp as a model and, during 2019 and 2020, work with local organizations to launch regional North American Zarathushti Kids Camps. Ultimately, the goal is to hone the ZAH Z-Camp



PHOTO: PERCY KATRAK



PHOTO: PERCY KATRAK

program and scale it into a North America-wide camp held every four years.

The 2019 Z-Camp was held over the July 26-28 weekend and hosted at the Zarathushti Heritage and Cultural Center (ZHCC) in Houston. More than 93 future leaders under 25 came from Greater Houston, Dallas, Frisco, Plano, Kirkland, Austin, Columbus, Lewisville, Los Angeles, and Seattle. Planning is an essential skill in the modern world, so a team of 20-25-year-old youths took charge and successfully planned, organized, and executed the program of over 20 sessions and

activities, most of which were conducted and judged by young (25-40-year-old) experts in their respective professions. Each camper was charged \$30 and a strict “No Cell, No Soda” policy was enforced.

This was also the first time we held the midnight Ushahen Geh BOI ceremony at our new Atash Kadeh conducted by five young Mobeds of ZAH.

At 7 pm on a hot Friday evening, the Z-Camp team made a final review of their checklists and readied themselves for the first arrivals: campers from Seattle and LA had just landed and the Dallas contingent was on their final approach. Dinner was served and everyone dove into the kid-friendly pasta, salad, garlic bread, and cardiac-friendly, yummy mutton biryani. In no time only bones remained. After dinner, attendees gobbled up lagan-nu-custard and mousse. At 11 pm, our young Ervads took the campers to the Atash Kadeh for an informative tour. Tiredness slowly overcame the campers who retired at 1 am.

Registration the next day was followed by the Z-Camp assembling for a benediction, housekeeping announcements, and a moment of silence for our beloved Noshir Medhora. Attendees were divided into four highly competitive teams: Swanky Sexy Sudrehs, Blue Flamingoz, Pisho means Belaari, and Anti Parsi Parsi Club for the first activity, a team building exercise. Next

came Houston Police Department’s “The Active Shooter” presentation, sadly relevant for our kids in the current scary world. Campers were taught some safety and self-defense techniques.

After a sumptuous Mexican lunch, WZCC’s Houston Chapter conducted a marketing skills session that taught the campers some great techniques and methods on how to market a product. Concurrently, the kids’ group had an introduction to the Silk Road and around-the-world projects.

It was time for the much awaited ZAH Iron Chef session which started with an informative session on “The Perfect Sunday Brunch.” Later, the teams were divided into age groups and sent to their cooking stations to complete their assigned tasks. A “Market Place” with various ingredients, condiments, and spices was available to our culinary contestants.

After the session ended, a “What’s next?” session was conducted followed by a session where each team had to write a two-minute elevator pitch on “How do you envision Zarathushti life in the Modern World?” Each team authored a unique and fascinating pitch that held the audience’s attention.

No sooner had the session ended than all the kids were on the ZHCC grounds competing against one another during a high energy sports session. The kids had great fun at “splash time.” Dinner included delicious chicken curry chawal with shrimp potatoes, tea and some desserts. Next campers delivered their marketing presentations and skits. Judges and audience were amazed by the kids’ creativity and innovation in the short amount of time.

Soon after, an ambience like the Paak Iranshah Atashbehram was created at our Atash Kadeh by switching off all the lights and lighting tea lights all over the Atashgah. The unusual Ushahen Geh BOI ceremony performed by our young Mobeds created a surreal experience for all the kids and adults in a serene holy atmosphere.

Sunday, July 28th started with the kids grooving to a Zumba exercise session followed by indoor sports in parallel with the task of creating a “zipline,” an impossible engineering session

where the kids came up with outstanding ideas. After lunch an impromptu fashion show entertained all. Finally, prizes were awarded and it was time to say goodbye.

Thanks to everyone who participated and made this year’s Z-Camp a resounding success!

We always endeavor to devise activities and sessions to help kids acquire new skills and prepare them to face life’s challenges. Feedback from the campers and other participants indicate this year’s Z-Camp was a resounding success. They made some new friends and lifelong relationships. Finally, we offer a grateful and heartfelt THANK YOU to all the donors, youth and adult volunteers, presenters, judges, panelists, parents, and our campers for without whom this camp would not have been possible. See y’all back in 2020!

SECOND ANNUAL WZCC GAHANBAR ORGANIZED IN COLLABORATION WITH IZA AND ZAGNY

As our Zarathushti diaspora in North America continues to evolve, the Annual Gahanbar at the Dar E Mehr in New York drew 270 attendees. On this occasion, two women mobedyars (Teshtar Irani and Khurshid Mehta) joined head priest Erv Pervez Patel in New York and mobeds to pray the Afrin e Gahanbar. They were acknowledged for their service and calling to serve the spiritual needs of the tri state community of Connecticut, New Jersey and New York. It was so uplifting to see all the Zarathushtis from Iran and parsis praying (YAZAAD), participating (SAAZAD), sharing a meal (KHURAD) and donating (DAHAAD) together. Food was prepared jointly by community members and was delicious!

Back row, left to right: 1) Ervad Porus Khambatta 2) Ervad Jimmy Hormazdiyar 3) Ervad Noshir Hormazdiyar 4) Ervad Xerxes Antia 5) Ervad Karl Khambatta 6) Ervad Rohinton Dadina. Front row: 1) Mobedyar Khurshid Mehta 2) Mobedyar Teshtar Irani 3) Ervad Pervez Patel 4) Ervad Cyrus Dadina.



GAME CHANGERS



Present (Not Absent) in a Powerful Way

Guest Editorial by Anne Khademian, Ph.D.

The questions are familiar to every Zoroastrian community in North America. “Where are the youth?” “Why are the numbers down in Avesta Class attendance?” “What will our future be if the youth don’t show up?” “We give them every opportunity, why don’t they take on the responsibilities of our community?” The answers, too, are familiar. “They are too busy with school, AP classes, sports, and college prep!” “They have too many demands on their time that we didn’t have as kids, life is different.” “It’s the parents, if the parents don’t make a commitment to come to the Dar-e

Mehr, the kids won’t attend. It all starts at home.”

In my 16 years volunteering as an Avesta Class teacher, music performance coordinator, events organizer, and a Board member, I have witnessed the youth in our community attend Avesta Classes; sing at Nowruz, Mehregan, and the Interfaith Council Concert; dance, joke and celebrate at multiple occasions; divide up into sides for the tug-o-war and pair off for the three legged race at the annual picnic; and stand proudly before the community for their Sedreh Pushee or Navjote. I have seen the numbers in our Avesta Classes and

the numbers of youth attending our events ebb and flow, with numbers at a current low. But I have also seen these same youth join a university research team in the remote forests of the Central African Republic to save the elephants. They organize annual fundraising drives to raise \$20,000 for the American Cancer Society and \$8000 for our association. They lead collection drives in support of people experiencing homelessness, and organize holiday support for veterans. The planning and installation of gardens and benches at a local Dar-e Mehr was led by a Zoroastrian and aspiring Eagle Scout. They spearhead a network of radiology professionals

bringing urgently needed technology and skills to hospitals across the globe. They organize and lead a youth orchestra, and install a sound system for our temple. They step up to find venues, conduct data analysis, recruit volunteers, and plan for the Z Games, join the capital campaign fundraising committee, and more.

At the recent World Zoroastrian Chamber of Commerce AGM in Florida, I met young entrepreneurs bringing emergency care to communities on the East Coast, and developing affordable and effective insurance coverage; I met researchers working on biomedical solutions, scholars advancing entrepreneurship with a moral and ethical core, and social activists. Watching the video coverage of the 7th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress I saw a mobediyar sharing her story and fostering leadership by promoting inner confidence; scientists and architects dedicating their careers to finding sustainable solutions to counter climate change; women exploring the generational disconnect of a Zoroastrianism defined by historic patterns and location and today's community defined by migration patterns and a vast range of cultural experiences; young people embracing their history as a source of strength to be game changers in today's world.

What I see is a generation of rising leaders who are living the core beliefs of Zoroastrianism, driven by a commitment to good deeds, and motivated by a desire to do good in the world. We may not see them at the Dar-e Mehr as often as we would like, we may not see them at Avesta Classes, and we may not see them stepping up to organize the Nowruz event, but they are present in the world on a scale that brings joy and hope.

The distinction may be generational. Families immigrated to North

America, Europe, Australia, and more focused on getting settled, starting new lives, and taking care of parents and children. Our associations and communities and dar-e mehrs, ceremonies and rituals have been a source of support and energy. Perhaps the generation on deck is building on this community foundation to live in the present in

What I see is a generation of rising leaders who are living the core beliefs of Zoroastrianism, driven by a commitment to good deeds, and motivated by a desire to do good in the world.

a very direct and forward leaning manner. They may not always know how to explain or have the opportunity to explain their day to day choices to be a vegetarian, to bike and walk rather than drive, or the compelling urge to help in a community shelter, to serve as a physician, or to work in a refugee camp. The pressing question of the older generation is rarely curiosity about why they serve and sacrifice, but rather, why they are not present at the dar-e mehr, the Sunday classes, or the AGMs and Congresses? What matters, however, is that we can see them present, not absent, in a very big way in the world.

In this issue you will hear from a young full time mobed defining his role in the spiritual leadership of a

diverse community. You will read about a member of the Z Games organizing committee reflecting on the role of sports in building community. A couple raising their children by navigating two cultural and religious experiences share their story. And you will read about a cyclist riding to raise money for cancer research, a college student encouraging us to drop the racialized character of Haji Firooz and find a new more representative symbol of the New Year and our faith, and many more beautiful and very present voices.

Our faith must be present in today's world. What will we do to make our neighborhoods and communities better places for everyone? What will we do to combat climate change? How will we support a more equitable and fair world? Listen and watch our youth, they are showing us the way.



■ A member of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington, Inc. (ZAMWI) for 16 years, **ANNE KHADEMIAN** has taught Avesta Class, organized musical performances, coordinated events, organized the Kamran Seminar with her husband Zarir and a great team, and now serves as president of the ZAMWI Board of Trustees. She is a professor and presidential fellow, working with the office of the president of Virginia Tech on strategic initiatives for the university.



Why Do We Need Faith in Our Lives?

Guest Editorial by Nawaz Merchant

comments from 7WZYC share the global perspective of our youth. These youth as well as others like Anahita Dua, Neville Dusaj and Burzin Balsara have very different ways to make the world a better place. These articles may change your beliefs about our youth!

In seeking out these youth voices, I wanted to share what I've learned about faith. When I was expecting my second son, I blacked out and my car crashed head-on into another. As the Subaru commercials say, "we lived," both my baby and I.

Faith is an odd thing, you don't know that you have it, until it's tested. That



Across the board, religion is experiencing a decline in North America. In a national Gallup Poll, 75% of respondents said religion as a whole is losing its influence on American

life. Yet research also shows that today's youth are experiencing unprecedented levels of anxiety. In 2016 (latest statistics) the American College Health Association found that 62 percent of undergraduates reported "overwhelming anxiety" during the previous year. This is a significant increase in anxiety, up from 50 percent in 2011.

What can we do about this? Anne Khademian and I teamed up to ask our Zarathushti youth about their experience in the modern world, their hopes, dreams and fears. What do they care about? What do they want to change? Lylah Alphonse's insightful perspective and the

... Today's youth are experiencing unprecedented levels of anxiety. In 2016 (latest statistics) the American College Health Association found that 62 percent of undergraduates reported "overwhelming anxiety" during the previous year. This is a significant increase in anxiety, up from 50 percent in 2011.

cold December day, lying on the grass with multiple fractures, I said my kusti prayers, just hoping really, that it would, somehow, be okay.

My mother says, "Build good habits. When there's a fire, it's too late to dig a well." That's one of her homilies, like "a stitch in time saves nine." After my navjote, Dad made a practice of saying prayers together at night with my brother, sister and I. It was a tiresome ritual, I admit, but daily repetition wore deep grooves in our minds and we memorized those prayers well. Being Kadmi, we said the entire Sarosh Baj, which is far longer than the Shehenshahi version of three short prayers: Kemna Mazda ("Who will come to my aid?"), Ahura Mazda Khodai ("Great Almighty") and Jasa Me Avenghe Mazda ("I am a Zoroastrian"). Lying in the Emergency Room attached to a

baby monitor, watching for signs of fetal distress which would trigger an emergency C-Section, I had plenty of time to recite those prayers.

Why do we need faith? Because "Into each life, a little rain must fall." Each of us will reach a time when we cannot control events, when things go awry, when we feel alone and afraid. Perhaps we see an uncertain future, worry how we will find that first job, save enough, or manage a loved one's illness. Youngsters worry about college, making friends, finding their way in life. They worry that the present generation will mess things up so badly it cannot be retrieved. In twelve years climate change can reach the point of no return. What if we cross that catastrophic point without taking action, what then? Parents worry about their child's safety, how they will manage among strangers in another state or country. And everyone worries about aging. Will I be able to manage alone? Will I have a good death?

So how can we NOT let fear consume today, but instead, do what we can, and enjoy each moment? How can we do our best, and assign the rest as someone else's responsibility? Having a personal faith does not mean those worries disappear, but instead lets us trust that when we whisper in our minds, "Are you there?", in the silence there is an answer, it will work out. Even if things get worse, this practice and knowledge keeps one together, keeps us tethered to the now. It allows us to connect to others, to seek out help, to complete our task and get through it.

With the help of good doctors, efficient nurses, my darling parents, my husband, and many dear friends, I got through the accident and its aftermath—months in a wheelchair. Best of all, my baby was unharmed

and today I can walk. So why do we need faith? Because no one walks alone, and it is helpful to acknowledge it, and say, "Dada-ji, thank you".

Whatever challenges our youth face, I want them to know they are not alone. Dada-ji, Ahura Mazda, Mr. God, whatever you call Him, He is with them always, and so are we.



■ Writing as Nev March, **NAWAZ MERCHANT** is the author of a detective novel based on a real crime in 1891 Colonial Bombay, *The Rajabai Tower Mystery* (due to be published in 2020). After retiring from a career in data science, she won the 2019 Mystery Writers of America/Minotaur award for *Best First Crime Novel*. She lives in New Jersey with her husband and two sons.

Perception Is Not Reality

by Parisa Khosravi

As a journalist for three decades, my joy and passion was to give voice to the voiceless. I directed the coverage of countless historic events for CNN such as the Fall of East Block, the Genocide in Rwanda, 9/11, the Tsunamis in Southeast Asia and Japan, traveled the world over, met with leaders and officials, Popes and presidents and every day people. I covered breaking news in some of the most dangerous and remote parts of the world as a routine. Missing a story was not an option. Yet at home I had a much bigger challenge and no matter what I did, I was not having much of an impact.

Before he was three, my sweet little boy, Payam had been diagnosed on the autism spectrum. We did endless hours of different types of lessons and therapies, but without a way to express himself we had no sense of his cognitive level and understanding.

Then three years ago, at the age of fourteen we tried Payam learned to communicate by pointing to an alphabet board. He has now built up his fine motor skills and communicates by typing on a keyboard.

After all these years, I am just starting to get to know my son as he expresses himself letter by letter and spells out fearless and deep thoughts. He is wise and compassionate beyond his years!

For so long my perception of Payam was not his reality. For all those years he was quietly observing everyone and everything around him, and yet had no way of letting us know how much he understood.

The Power of Finding Your Voice:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n-AE1CIEZEA&t=655s>





Now, he is the relentless one, wanting to help others and give voice to the voiceless and advocate for his peers or as he calls them: **"THE OTHER SILENT CHAMPIONS."**

After addressing the United Nations earlier this year, Payam wrote: **"PROMOTING LETTER BOARDING IS PROMOTING INDIVIDUAL HUMAN RIGHTS."** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jh3sTXEnA_4

Payam wants to change perceptions about autism and also has a much greater message for all of us. He wrote: **"TEACHING ACCEPTANCE IS MY LIFE'S WORK."**

Our lives are full of challenges and opportunities. Sometimes challenges turn into opportunities, and sometimes those opportunities become our biggest challenges. I consider these gifts which help one grow and evolve as a person.

Soon after Payam's diagnosis, as I was watching him play in our backyard, it just came to me. Not, "why me" not, "why my son"? Instead I thought: WOW, me! Payam has chosen me to be his mom, and I will get to experience life with a very special son.

As we go through life, we have no idea what's down the road for any of us. We will deal with some big

tests. Try not to take these challenges personally or become a victim to them.

When faced with adversity, I don't say "why me"? Because frankly why not me, why anyone?

As hard as some of life's challenges may be, I try to look at them as an opportunity to grow, to become stronger, more compassionate and empathetic towards others. It might not change the outcome, but certainly the attitude we have while going through a tough challenge will change that experience for us and those around us.

People are not born leaders, we become leaders, by how we respond and handle ourselves in the valleys of life and during the difficult times, and by choosing to apply the lessons that life has taught us.

I feel all those years and that incredible career was there to prepare me for my real work. To be able to put all that I have learned and experienced to work and ensure that my son's and his peers' voices are heard.

Payam's name actually means "message" in Farsi. He uses the keyboard to share his good thoughts by spelling out his good words and advocating for good deeds.

At the age of 15 he wrote: **"UNNECESSARY JUDGMENTS BECAUSE OF EACH PERSONS UNIQUE DIFFERENCES. PEOPLE NEED TO RECOGNIZE HOW THEIR ATTITUDES ARE NEGATIVELY IMPACTING OUR GROWTH FOR HUMANITY AS A WHOLE."**

In a world where social media, superficial material goods and appearances seem to preoccupy so many and build our perceptions of others, we need to reflect and think about what is real and truly important. Don't let perceptions to shape your view of the world. Allow

compassion and empathy for others to open your heart and mind.

"THERE MUST BE FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES IN OUR BELIEF IN ALL OF HUMANITY," he believes.

When he was asked about his symbol of hope and joy, he wrote: **"MY SYMBOL OF HOPE WOULD BE THE SHOOTING STAR BECAUSE IT IS FASCINATING TO SEE AND ALTHOUGH THEY SEEM RARE, IN REALITY THEY ARE ONLY HIDDEN AMONG MANY OTHERS. THOSE WHO ARE CAPABLE OF TAKING TIME TO LOOK FOR THIS WILL BE PLEASANTLY SURPRISED. THE PEOPLE WHO APPERCIATE ME, HAVE THE PATIENCE TO WAIT AND WATCH FOR MY BEAUTY TO SHINE THROUGH."** Payam

We'll never know what is inside someone until we give them a chance.

REMEMBER, PERCEPTION IS NOT REALITY.



■ **PARISA KHOSRAVI** is a multi Emmy, Peabody, Edward R. Murrow and DuPont award winning veteran journalist and executive. She speaks on the topic of compassionate leadership to audiences across private and public sectors. As first ever ambassador for CNN Worldwide, Parisa directed historic coverage of countless award-winning news stories. Parisa left CNN in 2015. Her perspective has evolved throughout the years as an immigrant, a journalist and a mother. She is an advocate for those on the autism spectrum and the non-speaking community.

What Do Youth Care About?

7WZYC SURVEY BY ROKSANA AND ANA VERAHRAMI, FARAH AND FRIYA RANDELIA

Our youth today are truly global in their thinking—becoming vegan, volunteering, or joining UN conferences on climate or status of women. This issue of FEZANA showcases their beliefs, achievements, questions, what defines them, and what holds them together. What can we learn from their more global sense of community?

We asked four of these game changers, Roksana and Ana Verahrami, and Farah and Friya Randelia, to be on-the-scene reporters at the recent 7th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress in Los Angeles, to engage conference participants and record their responses to two questions:

What is most important for you as a Zoroastrian? What's the most pressing priority for our community?"

Their words, quoted across these two pages, speak for themselves.

"For me, being Zoroastrian is maintaining that unique identity of standing out, being helpful and being the best version of oneself while staying true to one's religious beliefs and traditions."

—SHEHERZAD PAVRI

"Well, we need to face the facts. I was telling some people on a panel that we need to come to terms with our past so we can really build a future. All Zoroastrians need to ... stop trying to come up with all of these methodologies of Cyrus and instead try to build a better world themselves, here."

"The most pressing priority-staying united in times of turmoil and spreading joy through good work instead of pulling down one another."

"Women's equality and more female roles and acknowledgement and integration of females and female priestesses. Change 'the-men-can-and-women-can't' marry outside; either all, or no one can. The way it is now is sexist."

"Priority for our community at this point should be having the youth, especially outside of Iran and India to be more actively involved in our society, while at the same time the previous generation accepting the fact that they need to be able to trust, believe and relinquish their power to the youth with respect and harness their positive and forward thinking energy ... but at the same time the youth look up to their mentor's from their previous generation when guidance is required."

—AUBTIN YAZDGARDIAN

"Being more welcoming of converts. It should be okay to marry out and for people to convert. We're dying out."

"The environment."

"The most important thing for me as a Z is to make sure that each of us have good values and that we stick by them and don't compromise them depending on a circumstance."

—KAYRAS IRANI

"Being a good person in and out."

"How to increase the engagement within the community, not just the youths. Focusing more on people rather than beliefs."

"Keeping freedom within the religion."

"What's important to me as a Zoroastrian is that the youth understand the religion and the ethos of who we are, what we stand for, and what it means to be a Zoroastrian by spirit. What it means to lead with service, what it means to contribute to society"

—SANAYA MASTER

"Spread awareness about our religion."

"Grow our community and expand ... the Zoroastrian Youth Congress is a good start."

"Freedom"

"To me, as a Zoroastrian, everything I do is driven toward being an educator. To be a Zarthushti means learning, acquiring knowledge, acquiring wisdom, and it's not enough for you to keep that wisdom to yourself, it's your responsibility to share that, so I am an educator.... I try to take it upon myself to learn about my faith on my own and engage with youth around the world as well as with Zarthushtis around the world understanding their different perspectives and how all these experiences and how that leads to our changing global identity.... Religious education is something I find particularly pressing...There is a dysfunction between the way Zoroastrianism is very beautifully laid out in text and the way it is practiced Good thoughts, good words, and good deeds that's six words that they use to sum up an entire religion, but are you practicing that throughout your life every day? Are you nice to the waitress that comes to your table to serve you, are you polite to the people working under you, how are you engaging with your peers, are you driving them to be a better person?"

—FARZIN AVARI MARIETTA

"I'm still a little dicey on the whole conversion thing ... I feel we probably should take baby steps and try to include other people. Like I'm all for it, I just don't know how the whole community would feel about it ... I've heard so many people say, 'your religion is so interesting, can I be part of it?' I have to be like, no unfortunately, these are the conditions and the rules. What I believe, the whole conversion thing is not based upon the culture, it's when we landed in Gudrat, the King had these conditions that allowed us to stay in Gudrat. You can't convert anyone else into the religion, you can't marry other people outside of your faith, and you couldn't carry our weapons so I think that's how the sudreh and kusti came about, they are the symbols, the sudreh is our shield and the kusti is our sword..."

—FRIYANA MIRZA

"I believe our religion should be an open minded and accepting religion, especially in today's society where people feel their religion or culture is not that important to them and they prioritize other things above religion, which I think is not the best. I think a Congress like this is perfect especially learning about our religion and putting it into practice, bringing it into our society and today's world where we are living, and how to improve our religion. ... For me an issue is conversion, our religion needs to be more accepting of people. We have a few converts, as you would say, but we need to be more accepting so more people can join as it is on the decline. ... We can't be having this otherwise we will become extinct. Our religion is quite

powerful so we should be able to include more people."

—JEHANN DARUWALLA

"Would love to see our religion international, important, and vibrant."

"What's important to me as a Zoroastrian, I would say is making sure that the religion and culture both flourish. I would love to see before I die, one million new Zoroastrians, whether that's from birth or conversion. Nothing would make sure that the religion survives like a solid million people for sure."

—PABLO VASQUEZ



■ **FRIYA RANDELIA** is a recent graduate of Rutgers University-New Brunswick in New Jersey. She will soon start her career at Deloitte in the New York Forensic Advisory practice. She is passionate about making positive change in her community and inspiring others to get involved. She hopes to expand her understanding of the religion by engaging with other Zoroastrian youth and learning from their experiences.

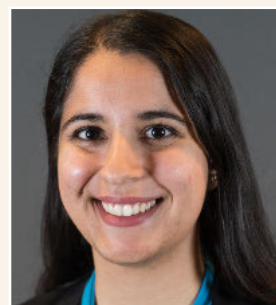


■ **ROKSANA VERAHRAMI** is currently a B.A. candidate in Economics and International Affairs, with a concentration in International Development at the George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs. She has previously worked with the Save Darfur movement, through an internship with the Darfur Women's Action group where she got hands-on experience working with genocide-affected communities and refugees. She is currently interning at Women in International Security.



■ **ANA VERAHRAMI** has a B.S. from Cornell University and is a Zoroastrian Return to Roots Fellow, a Zoroastrian Youth Without Borders Fellow, and serves as a delegate for the FEZANA UN NGO

committee. She is currently working as a research assistant and science communicator for the Elephant Listening Project (ELP), a conservation research group at Cornell. In her spare time, she enjoys going on hikes with her dog, Oscar, and is an avid wildlife photographer.



■ **FARAH RANDELIA** is a recent graduate of Rutgers University-New Brunswick in New Jersey. In October, she will start working at Accenture as a Consulting Analyst. She is very excited for this opportunity, and cannot wait to see what the future holds! Growing up as a Zoroastrian, going to the monthly religious classes was one of her favorite activities. She hopes that future generations have the same motivation to keep these traditions alive, and continue to embrace the Zoroastrian spirit.

YOUTHFUL VOICES



WZYC

THE CONGRESS FROM A TO Z

by Nazneen Engineer and Nadia Jam

The 7th installation of the quadrennial World Youth Zoroastrian Congress (WZYC) took place between July 1-6 2019 as 390 Zoroastrians between the ages of 18 to 35 from India, Iran, Pakistan, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, United States, United Kingdom, Singapore, Hong Kong, Dubai, and even Kenya, gathered at the Pacific Palms Resort in California to celebrate an ancient faith in the modern world.

With a view to the future of the community- its leaders and advocates- this Congress shed light on the incredible people within the small but mighty Zoroastrian populace. Panelists and speakers

who are business leaders, academics, community advocates and young Zoroastrian priests, engaged and enlightened their audiences by showcasing their expertise to ignite a passion for Zoroastrianism, promote community service, and encourage action on pressing global issues such as climate change and LGBTQ+ rights.

The Congress highlighted that a 3,500-year-old faith maintains the capacity to tackle modern-day issues and challenges. The focus on women—their stories and perspectives as leaders in their fields and within their local Zoroastrian communities was inspiring. Having a day dedicated to the World

Zoroastrian Chamber of Commerce (WZCC), a stroke of genius by the organisers, included the first-ever Zoroastrian Shark Tank, a speed networking event and motivating speeches by successful entrepreneurs.

Some first-time Congress attendees commented that they had learnt more about their religion, history and culture in 6 days than in their whole lives. Whilst delegates worked hard in the day, as with previous Congresses, the spotlight shifted to socializing in the evenings. For Shania Irani, the Congress struck a great balance as she “got to meet so many different people and have fun while gaining a lot of knowledge about Zoroastrianism”.



Clockwise from top: Group of attendees, Pacific Palms Resort main hall, day 1, Jashan ceremony performed by 9 mobeds and 1 female mobediyar.

Each day of the 7th WZYC embodied a general theme and presented corresponding informative events that are briefly outlined and summarized below.

DAY 1: OPENING DAY

The Congress kicked off with an auspicious *jashan* ceremony performed by 9 *mobeds* and one female *mobediyar*. After an entertaining opening ceremony of Iranian dancing and music, Dr. Mickey Mehta of Mumbai, India

delivered the keynote address where he related the trifacta ethos of *humata, hukhta, hvarshta* to the practice of wellbeing and healing. Next was an interactive session to build “consciousness of righteousness” with Meher Amalsad, the founding chair of the North American and World Zoroastrian Youth Congresses. He moderated a panel of Congress organiser veterans who spoke about their experiences. The Congress came full circle as it returned to sunny California 25

years after the first Congress in Westminster, California.

After a delicious Persian meal of delicately spiced kebabs, fragrant saffron rice and flavourful fesenjoon, something many tasted for the first time, came the climate crisis panel, moderated by Karl Desai and spirited talks by young Zoroastrians deeply passionate about the environment. They tackled the question, “if and how Zoroastrianism can solve climate change”. Simultaneously a talk on

“The Future God: An Introduction to Zoroastrianism” by Arman Ariane, the President of the California Zoroastrian Centre, discussed the centrality of Asha and the future of Zoroastrianism. It was described by first-time participant, Nikita Surty of Nairobi, Kenya, as a favourite of the whole Congress.

A long queue formed as soon as the taco truck and dosa stall were set up. This was the perfect opportunity to meet and greet new people. Stickers with the Zoroastrian LGBTQ+-Straight Alliance logo were handed out to spur the official Queer Meet and Greet. People continued to socialise as the Freddie Mercury biopic, “Bohemian Rhapsody”, played in the main hall to wrap up an eventful first day!

most of global mobility to invest emotionally and intellectually in the wider Zoroastrian diaspora. This was followed by presentations given by three RTR volunteers who strive to reconnect people to their roots and revive their sense of belonging.

After a short break, a pioneering women-only panel took place on “Global Stories: How Women Will Modernize The World’s Oldest Religion”. Six dynamic and engaging young Zoroastrian women spoke candidly about their experiences within the community, their hopes and dreams for the future of the community, and how important it is for the youth—especially young women and men who are allies of women—to make their mark and fill in leadership roles within their

Thereafter delegates left for Santa Monica pier and beach and Hollywood Boulevard where everyone had an amazing time on the beach, sight-sightseeing, and making new friends.

DAY 3: WZCC

The day for the World Zoroastrian Chamber of Commerce (WZCC) began with President and CEO of Sidense, Xerxes Wania, speaking about “The Reality of Starting Your Own Business” and the crucial things to watch out for when starting a company, based on his own serial entrepreneurial accomplishments. It was followed by Google’s Cyrus Mistry sharing his “7 Secrets to Leadership and Innovation” with a comedic edge that extended into an informative and entertaining Q&A session. Many delegates were surprised at Mistry’s message: choosing life over work (as he had been singularly focused on work since his youth) as he encouraged youth to choose a workplace that shared their own values. It was a refreshing take on what it means to be both successful and fulfilled.

In preparation for the hotly anticipated “Speed Networking WZYC Style” event, Tanaz Mody gave the delegates tips on how to get the most out of it. Promoted by young business leader, Jehan Kotwal, the speed networking event carefully fostered interpersonal relationships which are essential variables in the formula of success. Each table of 7-10 youth and a youth facilitator was shuffled every ten minutes in order to forge many professional bonds. Journalists formed a rapport with media coordinators, computer science majors were linked with app innovators, teachers connected with psychologists, and of course, students discovered mentors.

DAY 2: PRESERVATION OF IDENTITY

Day 2 kicked off with a thoughtful talk by King’s College Ph.D. candidate, Rosheen Kabraji, on the concept of home and belonging for a global Zoroastrian community. As co-founder of the Return to Roots (RTR) programme, which takes young Zoroastrians from around the world to places of Parsi and Zoroastrian significance in India for two jam-packed weeks, she highlighted the RTR fellows’ own learning and bonding experiences. She encouraged young Zoroastrians to use technology and make the



respective local communities. For many, this panel epitomised the future of the global Zoroastrian community as women step up to take the community forward.





“The Boss Ladies: Women in Business & Entrepreneurship” panel pointed out that women disproportionately feel the need to prove their worth in the workplace. The featured “boss ladies” used that push to stoically attest their value through hard work, confidence, and resilience. The empowering panel was the highlight of the day for some, including Zruvan Chotia who said, “It gave me an overwhelming sense of respect for all women who brought me to where I am, both professionally and personally. Moving forward, this talk made me beg the question of why I don’t have a female member on my business team, as they could certainly play a managerial role much better than myself and bring forward more out of the box/creative ideas that just don’t fly when surrounded by men.”

Continuing with impressive boss ladies, corporate lawyer turned yogurt and whey entrepreneur, Homa Dashktaki captivated the delegates with her journey of sheer doggedness as she set up her own company “The White

Moustache”, and reminded many of the importance of family and heritage. The day culminated with the first-ever Zoroastrian Shark Tank, convened by Rashna Sanjana. It was a stellar way to draw the career and entrepreneurship themed day to a close. For the very first time in history, five Zoroastrian entrepreneurs pitched their business endeavours to a panel of five investors who offered advice and/or negotiated deals; Cyrus Mistry, Xerxes Wania, Alayar Dabestani, Feroze Bendara, and Khosro Mehrfar.

A crowd favourite was the nascent Dhansak & Co., the first Zoroastrian street wear brand, founded by Tanya Hoshi and Anaheez Karbhari from Toronto, Canada who engaged the youth in a fun and quirky way. They received two offers of investment but settled on Xerxes Wadia, who was eager to sample the merchandise himself as well as mentor the dynamic duo to boldly launch, manage, and scale the company that is “by Zoroastrians for Zoroastrians”. The delegates were enthralled during

Dhansak & Co. is the first Zoroastrian streetwear brand. The clothing brand includes premium quality, limited-edition t-shirts, hats and phone cases created by young Toronto-based Zoroastrians Tanya Hoshi and Anaheez Karbhari, featuring Zoroastrian images and cultural references.

Dhansak & Co. was created by Zoroastrians for Zoroastrians, to challenge the idea that we are diminishing and instead make ourselves more visible in popular culture. Showing Zoroastrian culture through the lens of modern streetwear—a style associated with an unapologetic, powerful boldness—Dhansak & Co. is for the Zoroastrian who wants to wear their identity on their sleeve and start conversations about their faith and community within the diaspora. Tanya and Anaheez hope that their brand makes Zoroastrians proud of their culture and connects them with each other. Their business venture has created a spark in the community just one week after launching, and already the two entrepreneurs have found themselves flooded with orders and messages from Zoroastrians around the world showing excitement for the brand and what it stands for.

You can purchase the designs at www.dhansakco.com and follow them on Facebook and Instagram. Have any design ideas? Feel free to contact Anaheez and Tanya at dhansakco@gmail.com.

the presentations, supporting each and every entrepreneur.

The evening's festivities with a comedy show featuring the world renowned Iranian-American Max Amini went late into the night as DJ Al juggled beats and made live mash-ups of Persian, top 40 and throwback tracks.

DAY 4: RELIGION

Day 4 focused on religion—its history and significance in people's lives. Mobed Shahzadi discussed the 20 aspects of Zoroastrianism that people should, but may not, know. London-based mobed, Jimmy Madon took the

delegates through the significance of the kusti ritual and spoke eloquently about the importance of truth and wisdom for the current generation to practice the faith. A panel of two young women filmmakers discussed the power of film to connect global Zoroastrians. They shared their stories of feeling disconnected from the community and how making films about the community and the people within it brought them a sense of belonging which inspired them both to visit India to continue portraying their community and people. In "Zoroastrians in Media", Zoroastrian actors Nazneen Contractor and Behzad Dabu,

and MPAC's Sue Obeidi spoke candidly about the need to improve representation in the media, including their own personal efforts to raise awareness of Zoroastrianism in Hollywood.

Throughout the day concurrent talks took place in a second hall. Mobediyar Mahshad Khosraviani spoke passionately about her desire to become a mobediyar and her vision for the Zoroastrian religion. She spoke freely, without referring to her notes, and invited on stage three Zoroastrian converts who were attending the Congress. London resident Rayo Patel's said, "it was incredible to hear Mahshad's journey

Clockwise from upper left: Panelists of "The Power of Film to Connect Zoroastrians around the World", from left to right: Simran Jahani, Roxanne Unwalla, and Tanya Hoshi; Mobediyar Mahshad Khosraviani; Panelists of "Zoroastrians in Media", from left to right, Perzan Irani, MC coordinator for the Congress, Bitra Kavooosi, Nazneen Contractor, Sue Obeidi, Behzad Dabu.





Group of North American youth posing before boarding the cruise ship.

and the obstacles she is facing. Her knowledge on the religion was inspirational and she has set a new precedent for female mobeds across the world”.

It would have been difficult for anyone following Mahshad, but “Boss Lady” Pearl Mistry did a fantastic job as she took the delegates through a comprehensive path to engage and involve the youth in the community. Lastly, Dr. Nazneen Engineer, a postdoctoral researcher at the SOAS Shapoorji Pallonji Institute of Zoroastrian Studies in London, gave the delegates a brief history lesson on the formation of the Parsi identity as she spoke about the Mazagon Navjotes of 1882 and their impact through to the present day.

At the end of an information-filled day, delegates celebrated the 4th of July on the waters of Marina del Rey. There they were treated to a breathtaking firework show which was the longest many may have ever experienced! The bursts of vivid light preceded a night of music, mingling, dining and dancing on the three story cruise ship.

DAY 5: SOCIAL JUSTICE & ADVOCACY

A faith that takes pride in its humanitarian and philanthropic contributions called for a day revolving around social justice and advocacy. Before the main event, Tinaz Karbhari spoke about the Iranshah Initiative which is raising funds for the financial security of the Iranshah in Udvada, Gujarat. Dasturji Khurshed Dastur, who was in India at the time, answered delegates’ questions through video conferencing. This was followed with the panel ‘The Role and Position of Mobeds in a Fast-Changing World’ which furnished a platform for respected religious leaders to discuss the meaning of the Avestan prayers and how religion echoes in daily life. Singer Meher Pavri recited a few passages from the Gathas to an awe-struck audience. In a fascinating Q&A, the audience asked unfiltered questions about inconsistencies in scripture and practice, the acceptance of interfaith marriage and conversion, and how to reconcile discrepancies in the religion’s varying factions.

After the panel, the stage was

set up for the “QueerZ: Being LGBTQ+ and Zoroastrian” panel, another breakthrough subject in the community. Moderator Fereshteh Bulsara steered the friendly yet vulnerable conversation with fellow panelists, Nadia Jam and Nasha Katrak, to elucidate the difference between gender and sex, how they knew and accepted they were part of the LGBTQ+ spectrum, how one can be an ally and create safe spaces, and what the stance of homosexuality is in Zoroastrian scriptures. They dedicated a commendable amount of time to Q&A’s. Before the live portion began, they addressed the most “liked” questions that were posed anonymously in an online Q&A and polling platform. Mobed Tehemton Mirza graciously answered a few of them with eloquence, clarity and progressivism, to quote, “So what if you’re gay or bi-sexual, you are first and foremost a human being... If there are two people in love, who are we to stop them?”. The next panel was about ‘Zoroastrians and Advocacy’, which brought up the Avestan concept of Frashokereti, meaning to make perfect, as a way to demonstrate the duty for Zoroastrians to be



Panel on Zoroastrians and Advocacy: (left to right) Arta Khosravi, Niousha Farhangi, Pablo Vazquez, Nigel Shroff, Parshan Khosravi.

more active in the causes they believe in, especially when it comes to protecting the rights of racial, sexual, religious, and immigrant minorities since Zoroastrians are a community of refugees themselves. In the light of giving back, “Joys and Pitfalls of Community Service” was a superb panel that encouraged and empowered its audience to get involved in local and national Zoroastrian organizations as elected leaders.

Simultaneously to the events in the main room, interesting talks and panels were taking place in the Cherry Hill Room. First of the day was Pablo Vazquez, a SOAS University of London postgraduate student who shared his ongoing research on “Kurdish Zoroastrianism: An Overview and What We Can Learn”. Jey Mory of Florida was interested to hear how the Kurds have incorporated the philosophy into their ethnicity. Thereafter, Sanaya Master discussed the outcomes of the World Zoroastrian Youth Leaders Forum followed by a panel on the presence of the Zoroastrians at the United Nations. The panelists, Behnoosh Sethna, Ana Verahrami, Nadia Jam and Homi Gandhi spoke about their experiences at the 63rd Commission on the

Status of Women conference in New York and encouraged the audience to do their part in addressing the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals. The audience evoked high interest in attending prospective UN conferences. Following this illuminating talk, Zoroastrian representation at the UN will surely increase.

Gala Night, the final social event that was open to all, was a smash hit thanks to a stupendous DJ, live violinist and saxophonist and a colourfully mouthwatering three-course buffet that served crispy samosas, aromatic biryani, a variety of richly-flavoured curries and the classic gulab jamun. Each volunteer was thanked and handed a rose as a token of appreciation. Many delegates wore their white *duglis* and intricate *saris* to fit the theme of cultural attire. No shortage of photos captured the radiant smiles, glowing energy and impressive dance moves from that memorable evening.

DAY 6: CLOSING DAY

Despite dancing late into the night, many delegates attended the closing ceremony which began with Iranian music and dancing, followed by a summing up of the Congress by the ever-helpful Arzan

Wadia. Concluding remarks and final thank you’s were made by Chairperson Parshan Khosravi after which the torch was passed onto Chairperson of the London WZYC, Sherri Kapadia, where the 8th installation of the Congress will take place in 2023. The Congress ended with a short benediction.

As personal contacts were exchanged, they were done with an approach that valued relevant and meaningful relationships over the mere expansion of one’s network. Nikita Surty said that she “did not expect to make the friends she did and leave feeling so empowered!” For her “it was a tremendous balance of networking, socialising and educating” and she’s “looking forward to the next Congress in London!”

The Congress is not just one isolated event, a week detached from reality. It is a milestone for every Zoroastrian youth who attends and different people take away different aspects of it. For Shania Irani it was something deeper as she reflects on the week: “I never really understood the existence of religion, and I’m still learning, but this week made me realize the unity and comfort that religion brings”. For Zruvan Chothia, the most impressive aspect was “the bringing



Left: Gala Night with Adil Minocherhomjee, Hanoz Santoke, Khodarahm Partovi, Anahita Hormozdyari, Arzan Aran Sam Wadia and Roxanne Unwalla.
Right: Ervad Tehemton Mirza

together of hundreds of youth, all raised on different parts of the globe, surrounded by vast variances in cultures to congregate and realign with all of their matching CORE values.” For Nikita Surty, it was the realisation that “everyone was on a journey to find themselves” and “to not let others tell you how to believe in something”. She suggested instead “to go back to the essence of the religion/belief and if it resonates with you that’s all that matters”. For Rayo Patel, it was “the sense of community and belonging, to finally connect with people of your own religion and kind”. These wonderful testimonials are echoed over and over again.

It is hoped that these takeaways are integrated into daily routine,

used to kindle hope and optimism, and to push every delegate to be the best version of themselves. The Congress is a way to bridge gaps—of location, of language, of culture, of perceptions, and of knowledge, as Zenobia Ravji stated, “It was especially interesting for me to meet Zoroastrians from Iran and to learn about the cultural and religious nuances that separate and connect Parsis and Iranis. Additionally, some of the most unique moments at the congress was meeting and hearing the stories of those who converted to Zoroastrianism and their passion for the religion and depth of knowledge.”

Most Congress goers would agree that the educational and social events

were successful in helping them realize and harmonize the apparent diversity within our worldwide Zoroastrian community. For Delzin Banajee of Mumbai, India, a Zoroastrian Youth Congress “has always been the strongest platform to make new friends across boundaries, exchange views on community/ religion and get a sneak peak at what it is like to be a Zoroastrian in different regions of the world, and, needless to say, have mad baw fun unmatched anywhere!! They open up our hearts, minds and lives as we build stronger communities which are resilient to future upheavals, bringing us closer in spirit regardless of region, nation or contrasting viewpoints by binding us to this

Passing of the Torch: Left to right: Parshan Khosravi, Sherri Kapadia, Sanaya Khambatta.



warm, supporting, and close-knit community.”
Despite the widely felt post-Congress-blues, there is no need to wait until the next reunion in London

2023. Keeping that vibrant congress spirit alive could be achieved by actively engaging in local Zoroastrian functions, hanging out with old and new friends back home, using newly

discovered community resources, materializing ideas that were sparked during the week, and continuously showing love and support to fellow Zoroastrians!



■ **NADIA JAM** enjoys getting to the heart of people and places. During her undergraduate degree in Political Science in French Immersion at the University of Ottawa, Nadia has embarked on unique international engagement opportunities: interning

in Nepal, teaching in Greece and studying in Australia. She has a passion for language and writing and uses her abundant energy to cultivate wholesome friendships, especially when it comes to bringing Zoroastrian Society of Ontario youth together. She supports online efforts to increase visibility of Zoroastrian LGBTQ+ folks and encourages others to be inclusive in their thoughts, words and deeds.



■ **DR NAZNEEN ENGINEER** is a Postdoctoral Researcher at the SOAS Shapoorji Pallonji Institute of Zoroastrian Studies. The 2007 World Zoroastrian Youth Congress in Australia inspired her to undertake a masters and then a doctorate in Zoroastrian Studies, where she translated

a Parsi Gujarati text written in 1883 by a prominent high-priest. She has researched the wider issues of conversion and intermarriage surrounding the nineteenth century Mazagon Navjotes that took place in Bombay. After her PhD, Nazneen worked for a non-profit charitable Trust in India that ran a residential care facility for disabled adults as well as three homes for abandoned children. She supported the organisation's 'roots' programme to help people who were adopted as children search of their origins. She now is researching the pathways to ethnic and religious identity for the offspring of mixed marriages.

RIDING FOR CHARITY ERVAD BURZIN BALSARA



I am biking from Austin to Alaska for CHARITY that funds cutting-edge cancer research to give individuals a fighting chance against this debilitating

disease. Second, I ride for HOPE because I love meeting new people and ensuring those affected by cancer that I will ride for a cancer-free world. Lastly, I ride for KNOWLEDGE by advocating for the dissemination of life-saving cancer prevention information to communities along the way from Austin to Alaska.

THE Z GAMES: BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH SPORTS

by: Anush Kaovasia



■ **ANUSH KAOVASIA** is a junior bioengineering major at the University of Maryland, College Park. He decided to join the Z Games Events Committee after attending the L.A. Games. He likes to spend time with his friends, go to the gym, and go to EDM festivals. He aspires to become a neurosurgeon one day and continue living up to the principles of humata, hukhta, and huvarshata.

As the biannual Zoroastrian Games draw near, July 1st–5th 2020, let’s take a look at the special history and meaning of the Z games, and meet the organizers preparing for the 17th Z Games held in the Washington, D.C. area.

The first Z Games were organized by the Zoroastrian Sports Committee (ZSC) of FEZANA in 1988. The upcoming convening of the Games in the Washington, DC area is hosted by the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington, Inc. (ZAMWI). Beyond three decades of great athletic competition, the vision of the Z games is more expansive. Nima P. Kavelle, the current President of ZSC, says the goal is to “inspire the next generation of Z youth to carry the tradition that’s now been around for over 30 years. We are hopeful that this universal medium [of sports] will continue to bring the global Z community together for generations to come.”

In addition to serving as the current President of the ZSC, Nima also “works shoulder to shoulder with [his] committee and dozens of volunteers during the lead-up to the Z Games to help plan and execute the massive endeavor.” Behrouz Mehrkhodavandi, a long time member of the ZSC, mentor for the youth leadership and participant in the Games serves as Sports Director. A large team rounds out the ZSC committee, including special advisors Niaz Kasravi and Behnaz Dianat with ZSC leadership expertise.

What does this massive endeavor have to offer potential attendees? Why did 300 participants from 5 different countries attend it?

Starting off from just a few people in the community, the Z games grew into a worldwide social and athletic event that hundreds of people look forward to. They have turned into something special, “inspiring to see [because of] the outpouring support

year after year—be it the countless volunteers who work behind the scenes to organize the event, or the athletes who take part.”

At the upcoming 2020 Z games, athletes and spectators from Zoroastrian communities across the globe will compete in a friendly, yet somewhat serious sporting environment. Competition takes place in track and field, swimming, basketball, volleyball, table tennis, and tennis. An opening ceremony sets the tone of excitement and anticipation and at the closing ceremony, the torch is passed from one organizing team to the next. The top three competitors for each sporting event receive medals.

As Nima notes, “camaraderie, competition, as well as community to build new friendships, new bonds, and in many cases new relationships that turn into lifelong partnerships,” come through both the sporting events as well as the social events held during each and every Z Games. Daily social events organized by the host community allow participants to build friendships or enjoy each others company. Attendees at the 16th Z Games held in Los Angeles, California also watched a professional soccer game, enjoyed Disco Night and the infamous and festive Gala Night.

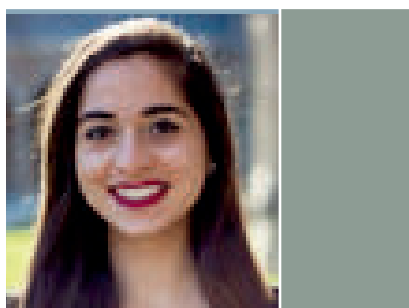
The current ZAMWI social events committee for the 17th Z Games in DC is led by four young, ambitious Zoroastrians: Anush Kaovasia, Yasna Goshtasbi, Armon Yazdanipour, and Neda Samya. They are working hard to insure everyone enjoys the social time as much as the athletic competition. The 2020 Z Games committee is chaired by Farshid Behmardi, with a large team of community volunteers working away on the venue, website, preparations, fundraising, and more. This team hopes that the 17th Z Games continue to build upon these attributes and attract even more Zoroastrians to this phenomenal event!

9 LADIES WHO ATTENDED THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

New York, March 2019

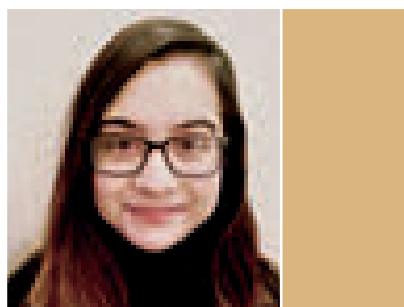


TANYA BHARDA from Toronto, Canada, has completed her undergraduate degree in Women and Gender Studies, Italian and Political Science from the University of Toronto. She is a flight attendant with Air Canada and also works at a women's shelter as a women's advocate. Tanya has also worked with different Non-Government Organizations (NGO's) in India to make a difference in the world through education of underprivileged children because she believes that, "Every Child needs Equality, not Charity."

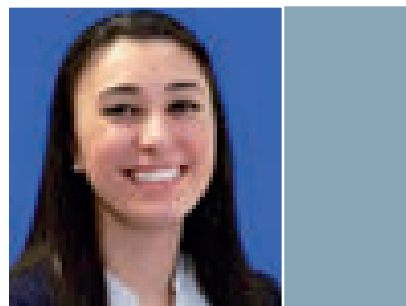


SABRINA BILIMORIA from New York, is the FEZANA Youth Representative to the United Nations. Sabrina graduated from the University of Michigan in 2017

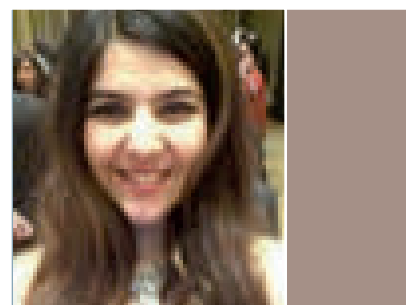
with a B.A. in International Studies and Psychology. Her studies focused on human rights, international law, and social psychology. Sabrina's honors thesis analyzed U.S. military intervention in Afghanistan and the impact of democratic reconstruction on women's rights and civic engagement. Since her graduation, she has found a passion for education, and has worked as an English as a second language tutor, a college admissions consultant, and an elementary school reading coach. She is currently an elementary school teacher and also serves on the Selection Board for Atlas Service Corps.



ROSHEEN BIRDIE currently resides in Seattle, WA, where she is attaining a Master of Public Health degree at the University of Washington School of Public Health. She is interested in using evidence-based, community-informed policies and programs to mitigate the negative health impacts of the social determinants of health.



NADIA JAM from Toronto, Canada, has a passion for learning languages and community building, which has benefited her in the national and global engagement opportunities she has seized; from working with political parties and campaigns, attending model UN conferences, working for marginalized women and survivors for an NGO in Nepal. Nadia's myriad of experiences has helped her think without borders and further recognize that addressing gender disparities requires meaningful dialogue and collaboration.



NURELLE MEHTA from Toronto, Canada, has a Bachelors Degree in Political Science and a Post Graduate Certificate in International Development Management and



currently works as a Campaign Organizer for the Liberal Party of Canada. Nurelle has been a part of the FEZANA UN NGO Team since 2013. Her interest in politics, social development and passion to serve communities at home and abroad has her returning each to the CSW each year. Nurelle's motivation to participate in the CSW is to learn from others around the globe and use that knowledge to improve the livelihood for the most vulnerable.



ADINA MISTRY from New York, is a rising freshman at Cornell University. She has been involved with the FEZANA UN-NGO Committee since the age of 12. After her first CSW conference, she volunteered for the NGO called

Pratham, in India, and since then she has made numerous presentations at the UN, Parliament of the World's Religions, and at local associations.



AFREED MISTRY from Toronto, Canada, is the FEZANA UN-NGO Committee Co-Chair. She has been actively involved with the local Toronto community, FEZANA and the Global Zoroastrian community. She was one of the Masters of Ceremonies at the 11th World Zoroastrian Congress in Perth, Australia. Afreed is also FEZANA's main representative to the United Nations and facilitates all of FEZANA's participation at the United Nations.



BEHNOOSH SETHNA

from Baltimore, has completed her bachelors in Economics and Finance from the State University of New York, Plattsburgh. She works as a trade analyst for Morgan Stanley. Growing up in Karachi, Pakistan and volunteering for different NGOs in her home town has always made her question about poverty and income inequality in different economies. Her journey to CSW was to embark on an opportunity to learn about the economic disparities.



ANAHITA VERAHRAMI

from New York, is a research assistant for the Elephant Listening Project (ELP), a conservation NGO at Cornell. Her work with ELP deals largely with conducting acoustic analyses in order to monitor and conserve the forest elephant populations of Central Africa as well as to generate a deeper understanding of how individual elephants communicate with one another. Last year, she spent a wild four months living and working in the Central African rainforest while conducting research on the forest elephants of Dzanga bai in the southern part of the Central African Republic.

UN CSW 63

SOCIAL PROTECTION, PUBLIC SERVICES AND SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE TO ADVANCE GENDER EQUALITY

by Behnoosh Sethna

The Beijing Platform for Action of 1995 set the first formal global goals for advancing women's rights. This platform covers 12 critical areas of concern: *poverty, education and training, health, violence against women, armed conflict, economy, power and decision making, institutional mechanisms, human rights, media, environment, and the girl child*. The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council established in 1946, brings together government, civil society, and the public to discuss how to transform the promises of the Platform for Action into concrete changes in individual countries. I was very fortunate to attend the 63rd CSW conference and the UN NGO reception. The theme of discussion this year was to ensure that social

protection, public services, and sustainable infrastructure meet the needs of young people and advance gender equality. Here are a few things that changed my perceptions.

TO ERADICATE POVERTY YOU MUST ADDRESS GENDER EQUALITY

As an economics student, my understanding of the cause of poverty was the lack of jobs or training skills, poor infrastructure, early marriage and lack of education. I thought that if we tackle these issues, poverty will significantly decrease. What I was missing is that the biggest eradicator of poverty is in fact gender equality.

At one of the UN general committee sessions, experts presented data analyzed by the World Bank which showed that females are far more predisposed to poverty at different ages than males and this is due to a range of factors, such as having young

children in the house, which forces them to leave the labor market, unpaid care work, and few maternity benefits.

Member states were called upon to enhance social protection systems in their countries by designing and operating these systems from a gender perspective. For example, they should provide a birth certificate to every girl child born, a requirement which will grant them access not only to vote but also to open a bank account and get a driver's license. Other action points were education grants, greater economic participation through skills training, programs for adolescent wellbeing and cash transfers.

OWNERSHIP OF LAND AND CONTROL OF ASSETS FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

In a session on indigenous populations, a journalist from Nepal com-



mented, “As water is needed for the survival of a fish, in the same way land is required for the survival of indigenous communities.” There was a lot of discontentment in how lands are being exploited. Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities in Colombia continue to face violence from paramilitary and guerrilla groups fighting for control of territories. Human rights defenders from these communities are under increased threats and violence. Aggressive developments in Nepal such as road expansion, airports and fast track roads have caused people to be displaced from their ancestral homeland.

Agriculture is another important topic when it comes to land rights. Experts report that women in Africa contribute 70 percent of Africa’s food production. They also account for nearly half of all farm labor in the world, and they ought to have rights to keep the profits derived from working on that land.

I was surprised that these issues haven’t generated more attention in the general public. To be empowered, women need access to property and economic development opportunities which too often they don’t have. Several representatives discussed measures to address the challenges faced by indigenous people such as pushing legislation, lobbying, teaching women how to be a strong spokesperson for the right to access land, and most importantly, states must talk with indigenous leaders and engage in grassroots dialogue in their native language to make meaningful contributions to promoting and protecting the rights of all indigenous groups.

THE BALANCE OF POWER

The town hall meeting I attended was the forefront of my UN trip. It provided an opportunity for civil society organizations to meet with

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres who had also served as the Prime Minister of Portugal in the 2000s. What I enjoyed about this meeting was the Secretary General’s attitude in telling people to not ask what the UN is doing for them and instead of asking people to tell him what he should do for them.

Mr. Guterres addressed that for the first time in history, the UN Senior Management Group is comprised

**The biggest
eradicator of
poverty is, in fact,
gender equality.**

of more women than men. He said, “Power is not given, it is taken and we need to push back against the resistance as most people don’t like it when power is being taken from them.” Power has been the leading cause of problems today in refugee camps, where people in authority misuse their power. People in authority need to be the real change makers. Businesses and governmental organizations should open space for the younger generation and women in order to achieve intergenerational equity.

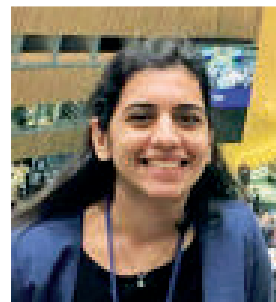
LOOKING AHEAD

I am committed to contributing to my community around me. It is important to share stories of struggle and strength, practice self-compassion and courage by showing up and engaging the world with joy. We also need to recognize that the United Nations would be nothing without the many NGOs (like FEZANA) who were present to step up and make a real difference.

At the UN I met members of an

NGO called Servas International, which opens doors to travelers all around the world. This 70 year old organization has placed 15000 households in over 100 countries. I would like to implement the same idea for our community by developing a hospitality network for travelers; Hosts register online, and would accept Zoroastrian travelers in their homes for a couple of days. The North American community is widely dispersed unlike Karachi where I grew up, with only a 2 minute walk to my Parsi friends in the colony. On a recent trip Mr. Homi Gandhi helped me connect with a parsi family living in the area where I attended a business conference. After my trip, it was interesting to learn the family values of members who share the same religion. Implementing this idea would encourage us to learn about our uniqueness while sharing a meal under one roof.

I would like to thank FEZANA for giving me and my group this wonderful opportunity to be present at the conference. I encourage both males and females to have a part in the next CSW.



■ **BEHNOOSH SETHNA**, has long term interests in economic development and policy. Her hobbies are riding her bicycle and repairing bicycles for members of her club. For many international students at her university, cycling was the only way to buy groceries or go on road trips (see bio on page 27).

RELIGION
AND
ACTION

Living Our Faith



MY CONTRIBUTION, MY WORK

by Anahita Dua

In the today's climate, the word "healthcare" brings images of politicians, bureaucracy or finances to mind. But for me, regardless of the political climate or location of the world, the word "healthcare" always evokes images of a mother pacifying her feverish crying child, an elderly man trying to put his pill box together with his arthritic fingers, or a pregnant woman trying to figure out her next step. Healthcare is about caring for the health of human beings on a day to day basis.

Ironically I came to this is a realization after finishing medical school when I began to care for my own patients. I completed general surgery residency at the Medical College of Wisconsin and then completed a fellowship in vascular surgery at Stanford. I have a masters in trauma sciences and an MBA in healthcare so I can contribute not just on the clinical front but also be able

to persuade hospital administrators to see the financial impact and support healthcare programs. This fall I will start at Massachusetts General Hospital/Harvard Medical School as an assistant professor of vascular surgery. While all these accomplishments sound great (and have given my parents from serious bragging rights at Indian parties [To be fair they funded the whole thing!]) I feel my real accomplishments (and where I feel the most pride) are based on the community service and global healthcare advancement I have had the privilege of partaking in over the years.

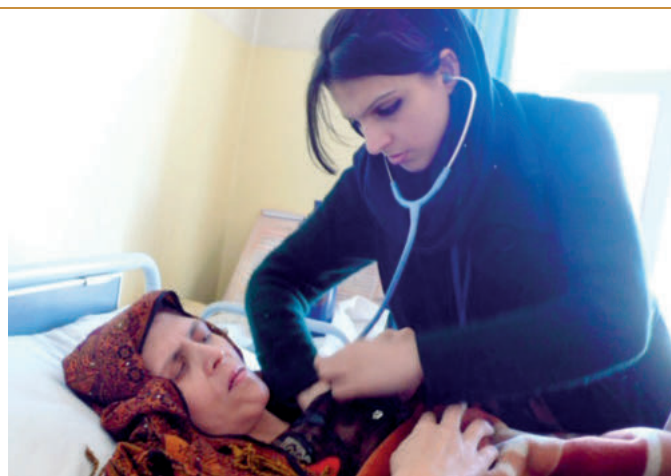
Every year, during medical school and after, I chose a country that was in need for the medical services I could offer and volunteered clinically. I went to India to work with traveling brothel doctors helping commercial sex workers and their children receive medical care, and assisted

in urological surgery repairing the genitalia of women who were subjected to brutal rape trauma at the Panzi Hospital under nobel prize winner Dr. Mukwege who conducted emergency clinics in Haiti after the earthquake.

I assisted in pediatric cardiac surgery in Palestine at a time when there were no health surgeons for children that were accessible to Palestinians, cared for pregnant women and neonatal babies in Afghanistan, and recently, served as the refugee camp doctor to hundreds of Syrian refugees fleeing to Europe as their crossed the Aegean sea. As we waited on the shores for refugee boats, we pulled refugees to shore and provided all the medical assistance we could to men, women and children.

After working with patients for over a decade I have concluded that the reason healthcare issues





are so fundamentally devastating for families is that most people take health for granted and max out their bandwidth with the basic stresses of life in work or family. It leaves them without a reserve when they or a loved one suddenly falls sick, on top of other stressors like unpaid bills or fleeing from tyranny in a foreign land. As a doctor that is where I step in, to alleviate their sickness and take on the burden of that care from the family that is vulnerable and helpless in the face of disease.

One of my most memorable patients was actually not a refugee but a young man who was volunteering at the camp who accidentally dropped a boiling pot of water on his leg in the middle of the night. He has no idea what to do, no access to healthcare (as we were in the refugee camp),

and was absolutely terrified and in pain. I went to his tent, soothed the burn, gave him medical advice and pain killers and then checked on him for the rest of the trip. It was a small thing but allowed him to take control of his health situation because he had guidance.

Now moving into the world of academic medicine as a new vascular surgeon attending in Boston I intend to keep providing this level of care not only for my patients but my colleagues and my students.

Being there for people in any capacity they need is the driving force behind both my happiness and fulfillment in life. I am married to a CEO of a data analytics company and we have a two year old daughter to whom I am imparting this same sense of duty toward humankind. What it comes down to is treating all people with dignity and decency— something I learned from my parents and then applied to my career and community service. The world today is divided and it is easy to get caught up in self preservation to the detriments of others. From an evolutionary standpoint creating an in-group and an out-group often stoked the flames of violence, bigotry and hate. Attempts to force us into thinking “those people” are an enemy (define “those” as anyone else from another department at work to another color of people to another country)

are still rampant. It is important to remember, consciously, that we humans are all the same with the same wants, motivations, needs and fallacies. It is on each of us to keep our global community together through. And it really is as simple as good thoughts, good words and good deeds.



■ **ANAHITA DUA** (MD MS MBA) is a dog loving, mother of one, wife and surgeon who just finished her vascular surgery fellowship at Stanford and is starting as an Assistant Professor of Surgery at Massachusetts General Hospital/Harvard Medical School this fall. She has authored over 100 peer reviewed publications, 4 textbooks and presented at over 70 meetings both nationally and internationally. She is married to the world's most sexy CEO who leads Thirdi, a data analytics company based in Washington DC and India. She hasn't had spare time in over a decade but if she had to guess how she would use it, it would likely involve cake and binge watching medical dramas.

WORSHIP: THOUGHTS ON THE GATHAS

by Athra Goshtasbi

Four years ago, in the summer of 2015, my older sister and I had our Sedreh Pushis together. Having gone to a Zartoshti school in Iran as a child and having studied the Gathas carefully for the past few years, our dad was in a good position to be our “teacher”. He taught us that the Gathas are the teachings of Zarathustra (Zartosht). We studied different translated verses from the Gathas, a few of which we talked about during our Sedreh Pushi.

We wanted our Sedreh Pushi ceremony to be more personalized and to reflect the way we interpret the Gathas. We wanted it to mean something to us and we wanted to learn from it. We also decided that we wanted to lead the Sedreh Pushi ourselves, with the help of our dad, which would be different from any other Sedreh Pushi we’ve ever been to or learned about.

Our Sedreh Pushi was relatively short, and consisted of my sister and I giving a small speech about what we learned, followed by us reciting the essential prayers while tying our koshtis. Our speech included several passages of the Gathas, and we explained our interpretations of them. Here are some extracts from our speech that shaped my thinking about the Gathas and the principles of Zartosht’s teachings:

“The essence of the universe is Mazda, the Great Knowledge, knowledge that creates, the creation knowledge. Mazda is accessible to all. To understand the universe and creation, and to seek guidance in



life, we must always reach Mazda so we can gain the knowledge we seek. Asha is the logical organization of physical laws that govern the entire creation in our universe, the World Order, Law of harmony of the universe, righteousness and truth.

“With knowledge gained from Mazda, we ponder upon with our Vohuman (Good mind) and choose the right path through good will and do good deeds, Khshatra, in

harmony with Asha and Mazda. Having chosen Khshatra, we reach Armaiti, which is a state of life filled with happiness and tranquility. The goal is to reach Haorvatat-Ameratat, eternal happiness and tranquility, which comes from always seeking Mazda knowledge (the knowledge that comes from Mazda), and using our good mind to choose good deeds, in harmony with Asha.”

So what does all of this mean? In short, you must follow your Good Mind and choose the right path to live in harmony with righteousness, leading you to a life of happiness. Taken literally, it seems to me like an excuse to be nice, that by doing good things, you will have good fortune. However, my interpretation is that one must do good for the sake of goodness. Treat others the way you would like to be treated. Make Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds your way of life. By doing so, you will be happier in life and by doing so, you will reach the state of constant happiness and tranquility; the best reward and fortune ever.

The other thing we talked about a lot is what God means to us; whether God is the Creator of all things. In that context, we spoke of the science of Evolu-

tion, and about Mazda as the Creator vs Mazda as Knowledge and Wisdom within ourselves. My dad taught me that Zartosht teaches us that we don't need to understand the creation of the universe through God. Instead, we can use our Good Mind (Mazda, as we learned to translate it) to find the answer to any questions raised.

As someone who is very interested in science and is intrigued by scientific facts, this makes a lot of sense to me. It also makes me proud to say I'm a Zartoshti and a follower of the teachings of Zartosht, who was able to think way beyond his time, and contradict what most people believed at the time. I strive to follow his teachings so that I can be the best version of myself possible.



■ **ATHRA GOSHTASBI** was born December 21, 2002 in Washington, D.C. She lives in Chevy Chase, Maryland with her older sister, Yasna, and her parents, Jamshid Goshtasbi and Shahrzad Yazdani. Athra is a rising junior at Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School. She hopes to become a physician and help people have the best possible quality of life possible.

REINVENTING OUR TRADITIONS FOR TODAY —THE NEW HAJI

by Anaheed Mobaraki

I am a proud daughter of Zoroastrian and Persian descent who has dedicated years to civil rights work but with my pride I lug some distressing baggage, something I've only recently identified: the beloved Nowruz character we have all grown up with, Mr. Haji Firoz.

Nowruz has always been my favorite holiday, but as I stare in awe every year at a Haft Sin brimming with shirini, khorest, and most importantly, Eidi. I would find myself feeling irked by the jolly blackened face of Haji Firoz trimmed in a bright red suit. This unsettling cherry-on-top is the Haji theme song playing in the background where a distorted and unhuman voice sings in a catchy

tone, “Arbabeh khodam salamo aleykom” and other verses. This Nowruz, I decided to do some more digging into the history behind Haji Firoz and why I felt so put off by the “soot” Wikipedia claims covers his face. What I found was far more disturbing.

Haji Firoz' origins are obscure: Some believe the “soot” story, that he was a Persian servant who liked to have fun, while others had no idea why we dressed him up in blackface and made him dance around. One could find a plethora of theories online; yet, it seemed that one theory prevailed: Haji Firoz is undoubtedly black. Some articles claimed he was an African slave imported into Iran during the Qajar dynasty during

which over a million African slaves were brought to Southern Iranian shores—possibly leading to the appearance of Afro-Iranians and the growth of colorism and racism in Iran.

I knew my childhood self was in the right when an odd feeling crept in at the appearance of such an enchanted and endeared character. But why did it take me twenty years to discover the truth? Many Iranians and other celebrators of Nowruz do not question tradition. Nowruz means Haft Sin, Neshast, Amoo Nowruz and Haji Firoz. End of story. As they frame pictures of Haji on their ornate and intricate Haft Sin tables so beautifully laid out, does anyone else feel troubled by the dark face? Even

less may venture to question the origins of this character and his actual significance to the preservation of our Nowruz enjoyment and festivities.

The framed images, dolls, and paintings of the blackface Haji that adorn so many households during this time of year now disgust me. The enshrinement of a slave for his free manual labor and the television portrayal of thousands of Iranians painting their faces black and making a fool of themselves is outright racism, and it is time we come to terms with that—especially as members of a Zoroastrian

community that promotes fairness, goodness, and love. I do believe that we have made good strides in our own ZAMWI

Nowruz performances as our Haji Firoz character no longer utilizes blackface; however, it does seriously concern me to think of this history and know that every year, someone from our community willingly embodies the persona of a royalty-entertaining African slave who then proceeds to entertain us at our treasured temple.

I do not believe we should fully remove Haji Firoz and simply leave an Amoo Nowruz to provide candy and joy to all. However, there are feasible changes that could be made to rewrite his narrative as a community. While our numbers are small and dwindling, Zoroastrians are certainly more than capable of being leaders in a possible worldwide change. We are already on the right path by eliminating blackface from our personal events, and with great change comes baby steps. In order to divorce the slave past from his character, we need to recreate his story and maybe even change his name. What if we were to shift Haji

Firoz to Baba Firoz instead? A

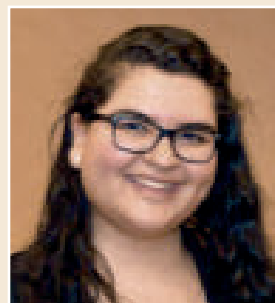
“new year, new me” sort of thing? Jokes aside, it certainly would kickstart a process that many of us have neglected.

Consider also the Haji Firoz voice in the traditional song. It sounds very distorted—is this dehumanizing effect because Haji Firoz is black and

therefore, must sound black? It may be difficult to change this as many love this song and I admit it is very catchy. Finally, could we make this new character a female? Iran has a rather sexist history and such a bold move could help draw attention to that problem. In a world still filled with hate, we should serve as role models and raise a new generation of Zoroastrians that questions, challenges, and changes problems that were once labeled as “tradition.” Too much is at stake.

REFERENCES

1. “Hajji Firuz.” In Wikipedia, April 8, 2019. https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Hajji_Firuz&oldid=891503874.
2. “The Afro-Iranian Community: Beyond Haji Firuz Blackface, the Slave Trade, & Bandari Music.” Ajam Media Collective, June 20, 2012. <https://ajammc.com/2012/06/20/the-afro-iranian-community-beyond-haji-firuz-blackface-slavery-bandari-music/>.



■ **ANAHEED MOBARAKI** is a rising junior studying Political Science at Yale University in New Haven, CT. Her favorite activity is volunteering every week to tutor incarcerated individuals at the Manson Youth Institution in CT. She is also a member of the Police Accountability Project at Yale and hopes to educate greater audiences about instances of police brutality. Being born as a Zoroastrian has pushed Anaheed to not only follow the three core pillars in her daily life, but also pursue them in the academic and professional realm.

TIME TO REMOVE BLACKFACE FROM THIS FUN TRADITION

The use of blackface offends many people. We include this picture in order to describe this tradition so that readers understand why our youth feel the need for change.

— The editors



A FOOT IN THE PAST AND ONE IN THE FUTURE IS THE ROLE OF YOUNG MOBEDS CHANGING?

by Ervad Kurush Meher Dastur

In ancient Persia, Prophet Zoroaster taught that good (Spenta Mainyu) and evil (Angra Mainyu) were opposite forces. The battle between these will go on till the end of time, but the ultimate victory of the good forces is ensured. Hence one should always be vigilant to align with forces of good.

Over the centuries since the first Zoroastrians arrived in India, the Parsis have integrated themselves into the Indian society while simultaneously maintaining or

recognize the culture they are surrounded by and duly deliver services in accordance. In India, ceremonies are performed in a rather traditional manner. However, in USA, it is a good idea for priests to conclude ceremonies with a short talk so that the laity understands why the prayers are performed and what is the significance of the recited prayers.

Being recently employed with ZAMWI (Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington Inc)

I am part of the melting pot of Zoroastrians from India, Pakistan and Iran, in particular. My responsibility as a priest is to understand the congregation, to be humble and sympathetic, patient and open in listen to their problems and seek to provide some ray of light to those groping in the dark.

These days one can access digital media easily and economically.

developing their own distinct customs and traditions (and thus ethnic identity). With time even this too has evolved as they have further migrated to varied countries and continents which in turn has given the Parsi community a rather peculiar standing as they are Indian, Pakistani, Iranian, American, South African, etcetera, in terms of national affiliation, language and history, but not typically in terms of consanguinity or ethnicity, cultural, behavioural and religious practices.

It is every priest's duty to understand what are the needs of the laity,

Social media has vast potential to reach infinite audiences, especially younger generations. Expensive and bulky equipment is no longer required—a smartphone is adequate. Young priests should try to leverage the plethora of information about the religion available on the net and try to access information from unbiased sites. Online apps are also beneficial; they can be developed for specific purposes such as the App of Parsi Calendar. Several other apps are available on every platform.

As the newly elected secretary of NAMC (North American Mobed's



Council), I feel it is imperative that Mobeds coach the next generation, as experience can never be replaced. They can hand over responsibilities in good time for the young to learn early, quickly, effectively & efficiently. Congregations today perhaps may feel disconnected, hence there is a high level of curiosity within the North American Zoroastrian population: why are certain prayers recited or what is the significance behind them? My training at DAI (Dadar Athornan Institute) has provided me with answers to many of these questions, and prepared me to hold conversations and speak regularly at various inter-faith meetings, schools & colleges on matters relating to Zoroastrianism.

Today's Community wants enlightened priests whom they can look up to. 'Enlightened' need not mean that they be merely qualified with academic degrees alone, but they should be well-versed in the fields of their speciality, namely rituals and ceremonies, their significance and role in religion, the understanding of scriptures, especially the Avesta prayers that are recited and a working knowledge of Iranian history. Young priests' should take it upon themselves to improve the image of priesthood which has degenerated progressively over the past century, to salvage it and restore the lost glory in our lofty service. For that we must collectively pursue the following:

REFINING PERSONAL

CHARACTER: A priest is a role model for members of the community. By inculcating virtues in oneself of commitment, honesty and service to people, people's discernment may be altered, as it is rightly said, "It is nice to be important but, it is more important to be nice."

BEING A FRIEND,

PHILOSOPHER & GUIDE: There was a time when a priest was looked upon as a family member. Elders considered him as one of their many children, and youngsters saw him as a person whom they could trust and confide in. A priest was like a family doctor to whom the laity would rush to in times of trouble and difficulties. If we want a return of the relationship between a priest and the laity, we must decrease the gap that has

Young priests should take it upon themselves to improve the image of priesthood which has degenerated progressively over the past century, to salvage it and restore the lost glory in our lofty service.

developed. By bringing back sincerity and devotion in the everyday rituals and ceremonies that are recited by the priests for the laity, it would feel like praying for someone you know, are connected to and care for, rather than praying before strangers. Remember, it is always a two-way street.

GET BACK OUR EMINENCE AS 'AETHRAPAITI' (TEACHERS):

People visit the doctor for health problems, lawyer for legal wrangles, but presently, Zoroastrians rarely go to their priests for religious problems. Our very title 'Ervad' (Avesta *Aethrapaiti*) implies that we were teachers in the yore. Thus, we must restore this legacy and regenerate it by at the least imparting religious

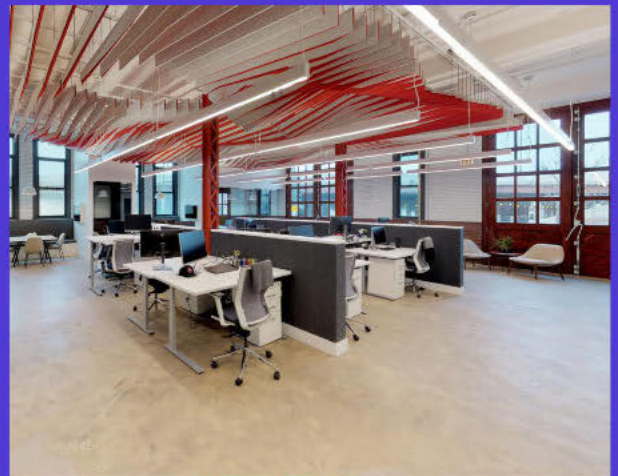
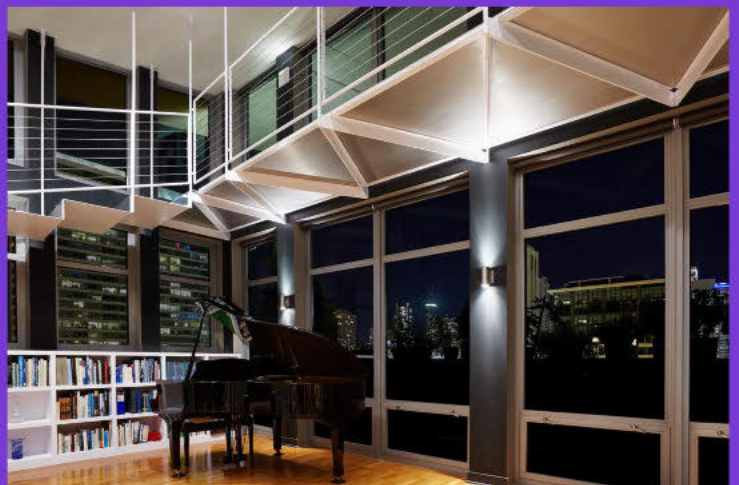
knowledge to children. Priesthood is a very special legacy which is conferred on to a fortunate few. Perhaps in years past, the community did not possibly, correctly look after our fathers and fore-fathers, but now the tide seems to have turned. The ball is now in our court and we should not let this opportunity go by. If we priests set out with the right attitude, surely, we will once again be worthy of the trust and honor of the glorious 'White Crown'.



■ **KURUSH MEHER DASTUR** is a native of Gujarat, India, who was led at an early age to motivate and inspire generations of people. He was ordained Navar Maratab at the age of 13 and has been active in the Zoroastrian faith ever since. Kurush has performed several higher liturgical ceremonies like Yasna and Vendidad since the early age of 16. He is knowledgeable in Iranian history and Zoroastrianism. He is currently working for ZAMWI as a full-time priest and represents as a vice president and Zoroastrian representative on the interfaith council. Kurush Dastur graduated from High School in 2006. He continued his education at G.N.Khalsa College where he obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Commerce in 2011. He also obtained a Master's of Science Degree in Accounting with a concentration in Taxation in 2018 from Texas, USA. He plans to take several technical certifications in cloud data. Kurush is also an avid reader and enjoys playing soccer.

RIVETNA ARCHITECTS INC

BRIGHT MINDS · IMPROVING LIVES · THROUGH THOUGHTFUL DESIGN



Working with communities, businesses and families to create great buildings
Contact At 312-341-9006 or HELLO@RIVETNA.COM

GROWING UP INTERFAITH

by Neville Dusaj

“So you’re in your 3rd year now, how many more years until you’re done?”

At this point, I can’t help but laugh before I answer.

“I dunno,” I shrug. “Maybe 4, maybe 6?”

Now, to your South Asian parents, aunties and uncles, this is a troubling answer. You’re studying to become a doctor: great, cool, high fives all around.

But you don’t know when your graduation will be? And up to 10 years of school in total? Why even bother if this isn’t adding any short-term potential value to your prospects as a future husband??

Jokes aside, it’s because of these same people who raised me and who I look up to that I’ve chosen to pursue medicine in the first place. Having not only grown up in an interfaith household, with a Zoroastrian mother and Hindu father, but also in an extended family with two Catholic aunts who are practically second mothers, it’s been a unique experience to grow up with such a blend of religions and their accompanying customs and traditions. You can find our family at the Darbe Mehr on Navroze, the temple on Diwali, and church on Christmas and Easter. Because of this interesting mix, the values that drive me day in and day out have been shaped by many influences. The most important insight I’ve gleaned, however, is what can be learned from

focusing on the common aspects of the teachings rather than their differences. At the end of it all, each religion I’ve experienced (and just about any other I’ve ever learned of) boils down to the exact same idea of doing good. Whether it’s the ideas of Humata, Hukhta, Huvarshta, or Dharma and Karma, or even the Ten

Commandments, my takeaway is just to make my best effort to do the right thing.

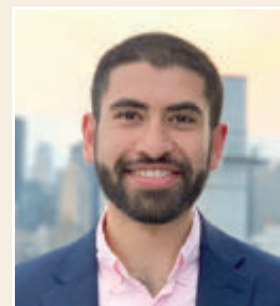
My most memorable experiences in medical school have been with the patients I’ve had the opportunity to work with, and in such a setting, it’s easy to stay consistent with these values. It’s a wonderful feeling to be able to go into work and make someone’s day better, whether it’s a treatment plan that helps alleviate the symptoms of a chronic illness, assisting in surgery to remove a tumor, or something as simple as spending some extra time with a patient to chat about their life and make them feel more at home during a long hospitalization. But this isn’t meant to be some sort of self-righteous proclamation, of course not every second of school is spent dramatically saving people’s lives, no matter what *Grey’s Anatomy* might have you think. Doing the right thing can mean so many things in different contexts. It can be as simple as being

a helpful, kind, and patient colleague and team member, as you work with fellow attendings, residents, nurses, and other healthcare professionals. Outside the hospital, it’s taking time to hang out with friends and support each other when we’re feeling stressed or overwhelmed. And, perhaps most importantly, it can be

about taking time for yourself to relax, pursue hobbies and passions outside of academics, and maintain your own health.

Ultimately, my cultural roots

made medicine an easy choice, to do good in the sense of serving others. But medical school has also fed back into my value system by helping me be a better friend and getting the most out of life.



■ **NEVILLE DUSAJ** is a 4th year student in the Weill Cornell/Rockefeller/Sloan Kettering Tri-Institutional MD-PhD Program. He is currently working on his PhD in computational cancer cell biology, with a focus on single cell analysis of tumor heterogeneity. Outside of school, you can find him skiing, cycling, and playing piano.



CALIFORNIA ZOROASTRIAN CENTRE ESSAY CONTEST

"Is It Ever Okay to Lie?"



In 2018, we organized an Essay Contest to engage and encourage youth (14-17 years old) in analyzing the teachings of Zarathushtra. This contest was open to all regardless of faith or origin. We received 15 intelligently written essays on the topic of "Is It Ever Okay to Lie?": eight from California, two from Canada, one from New Jersey, and one from New York. In addition, 3 essays were received from non-Zoroastrian youth with mature understanding of the relevant concept. All 15 entries were excellent.

Our deepest gratitude and thanks to all our participants, the teens who helped with choosing the topic, CZC-OC, CZC-LA, FEZANA, Ms. Parimarz Firoozgar for sponsoring the contest, five wonderful judges, Ms. Parmida Behmardi for designing our flyer, Mr. Parviz Manoochehri our web master, Chehreh Nama magazine and the FEZANA Journal for continuously supporting Zoroastrian youth.



ARTEMIS JAVANSHIR is the Essay/Short Story Contests organizer, member of Core Education Committee at CZC-LA, and the co-chair of FEZANA Education, Conference and Scholarship (Religious Education) Committee. She is a strong believer in the strength of our youth and in-volving community members in shaping a strong and prosperous global Zoroastrian fellowship.

FIRST WINNING ESSAY: SWEET AND SOUR LIES BY AZADEH HORMOZDIARI

A rose by any other name would smell as sweet. A lie by any other name is still a lie. However, can a sour stench of a lie at times transform into something sweet? By centering Asha as the guide within all our decisions the conclusion becomes, though lying may perceptually seem unethical, in certain scenarios it is the best use of our Vohu Manah. Simply, I will argue that lies which avoid serious harm are within the path of righteousness.

First, specific examples from both historical contexts prove, that situations exist in which lying is the only unerring choice. One historical example of great magnitude, is when in Mumbai, around 1992 tensions between Muslims and Hindus were rising to the extent of riots that left

life-long lasting harm on hundreds. The next year in 1993, 12 bomb explosions had killed 257 people and harmed 713 others—the attacks had all targeted Hindu majority areas. However, when the Chief Minister announced the attacks, he stated there had been 13 explosions, instead of the 12 real ones. He had rightfully decided to lie about and fabricate an extra explosion, which he said had hit a city of Muslim majority. By making the two opposing groups both victims, which as a result, did not allow the groups to blame each other, his lie had prevented an eruption of attacks between the Hindus and Muslims. Such attacks would have hurt and taken the lives of hundreds. Thus, this lie, although large, perfectly demonstrates how at times avoiding the truth can save lives. Some may argue telling lies weighs you down with guilt, moves you towards Druj and hurts yourself as well as those around you. All those

FUTURE CONTESTS

We are following this with two more contests: An Essay Contest for 11-14 year olds, on the topic: "In your opinion what qualifies as a good leader? Compare it to what the Gathas teaches us about being a good leader." (word format only). It is sponsored by Fatane Farid Fund and an Anonymous Supporter.

Our Short Story Contest is open to 13-18 year olds: Write a story in which a Zoroastrian relies upon the teachings of the faith to help them resolve a challenging situation or achieve a goal." (word format only).

The deadline for both contests is January 15, 2020. Please visit us at www.czc.org/essay-contest and email zessayentry@yahoo.com with any questions or suggestions.

Supported by: California Zoroastrian Center in Los Angeles (CZC-LA). Short Story Contest is sponsored by: Ms. Catherine Linka, Author of "A Clawed and Feathered Spell". Essay Contest is sponsored by: Fatane Farid Fund and an Anonymous Supporter. Winning essays and short story will be published in collaboration with Chehreh Nama Magazine and FEZANA Journal

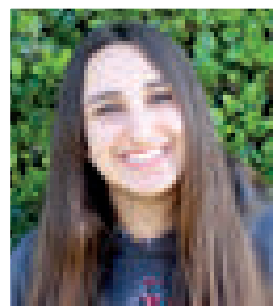
Submit to: czc.org/essay-contest or zessayentry@yahoo.com. By submitting you agree for Contest organizers to publish your essay or short story in any desired form.

things are true but become irrelevant if you only lie in scenarios where it saves others from grave danger. Consistent and unnecessary lying should be avoided at all costs, but people should not fear telling a lie when it prevents mass suffering or death, like the Chief Minister did in Mumbai.

Second, the main concepts of the Gathas agree with such a concept. The notion best in line with my thesis is that of Asha. According to the California Zoroastrian Center (CZC), Asha in its simplest meaning is “truth, order, righteousness.” While, these are not the only definitions of it, and the concept is much more complex, these three meanings for my present argument become the most relevant components. One of the three elements to Asha is truth, but if a lie maintains righteousness and order it becomes truthfully, the correct decision to make. By making a decision that prevents harm unto others as well as yourself, one is maintaining order and remaining righteous, and as a result holding up two of the three pillars of Asha. Though it is ideal and always best to maintain all three pillars of Asha, there are times when you either lie and maintain order and righteousness, or you tell the truth but lose the other two factors. Going back to the example from Mumbai, had the Minister lied, his decision would have wrecked order within the society, and caused riots between Hindus and Muslims. Such a result would have killed many and injured even more. Which proves, even if he had told the truth and followed the first pillar of Asha, his decision would mean he wasn’t following the other two. Simply, the choice would: be to tell the truth and follow one-third of Asha’s elements, or lie and follow the other two-thirds. The wiser person would err towards the latter.

The second concept from the Gatha that supports this argument is Vohu Manah. CZC further writes, that Vohu Manah is “good mind, good thinking.” At times, using our Vohu Manah may result in lying since saving others is “good thinking.” CZC then goes onto say “There is always a thought before an action. If a good action is taken, there must have been a good thought behind it.” Which flawlessly demonstrates how a good action requires good thought. The distinction between justified lies and immoral lies then becomes the thought behind them. The lies which, have negative thought and intention behind them and are meant to hurt others are those which are not justified and should be avoided. On the other hand, the lies that are meant to save others from harm and hurt are justified through our Vohu Manah. Some may disagree, by stating the Zoroastrian concept of Druj says lying is never moral. CZC continues to say Druj is “harmful lie.” This statement at first glance may suggest lying is harmful, but after taking a closer look, the key word in the statement becomes “harmful.” This portrays how a lie is only dishonorable under Druj if it is “harmful.” Subsequently, lying is warranted when it prevents harm to others—as it did in 1993.

A lie though by most names is sour, but by some names, in certain scenarios, it manages to transfigure into something sweet. When one is confronted with a situation in which they either tell the truth and bring irrevocable harm to others or lie and prevent such an atrocity, they should like the Chief Minister in Mumbai, use their Vohu Manah and pick the latter. Through doing so, they can maintain two of the three elements of Asha and the wellbeing of hundreds of others.



AZADEH HORMOZDIARI is 15 years old and in the 10th grade at Chaminade High School in Los Angeles. She has been attending Zoroastrian class studies for as long as she can remember and enjoys them greatly. Her faith and the beliefs of Zoroastrianism are something she holds near to her heart.

SECOND WINNING ESSAY: RIGHTEOUS LIES BY FARNAZ BEHDINAN

There is a reason behind every lie we tell, whether it’s for protection, helping and pleasing others, self gain, or even harmful intentions.

The question is when is it ever okay to lie? Consider the Pueblo tribe situation. In 1540, Spanish explorers sailed to the Americas seeking mountains of gold and silver. However once they reached Arizona, the Spanish were surprised to find no source of wealth. Hungry and famished, the explorers were forced to find a source of food. The ravenous travelers first encountered the Zuni tribe in Arizona and unreasonably sought access to their food supply. After much warfare, death, and suffering, the Spanish succeeded. The Zuni unwillingly submitted, giving the explorers access to their food and other resources. But the Spanish, still thirsting for gold and food, travelled to New Mexico and encountered the Pueblo tribe. These Native Americans knew the capabilities of the Spanish, and they found

an alternative to war and bloodshed. Instead of fighting a gruesome battle, forfeiting their hard-earned food, and submitting to the greedy Spanish, they lied. They told the travelers that if they continued on their trek, gold was waiting for them over the horizon. The Spanish, believing the lie, continued their expedition for wealth, and the Pueblo people saved their tribe from death and suffering.

Now this is a historical example of when lying is used for protection of self and others. Cons: the tribe risked the chance of extreme destruction if the Spanish returned for revenge. Pros: the Pueblo tribe saved their lives, their food supply, and their dignity. The Pueblo tribe knew that the Spanish were irrational, senseless people. After long thought, the Pueblo could not see another alternative other than lying: knowing that they had little chance of succeeding with ancient bows and arrows against sophisticated weapons. Therefore, as Zarathushtra once said, No one must listen to the sayings and instructions of the wicked and false persons, because such persons will lead the home, the village, the town and country to ruin and destruction. Therefore it is our duty to resist such persons and repel them with the spiritual weapons of purity and righteousness" (3118). The Pueblo, with their acts of reason, righteously dealt with unrighteous people. They repelled the Spanish, not with war, but with well intentional misdirection.

In modern society, similar to the Pueblo tribe, with every lie we have a cost and benefit analysis. To exemplify, my middle school would have lockdowns on set dates. These set sessions were not taken seriously as students could not imagine a murderer attacking our specific school in the middle of a safe neighborhood. One day, the loud speaker urgently announced "We are under a lockdown. This is not a drill." Frenzied

and horror stricken, teachers and students scrambled to lock doors, cover windows, and hide behind tables. We could hear frantic bangs on

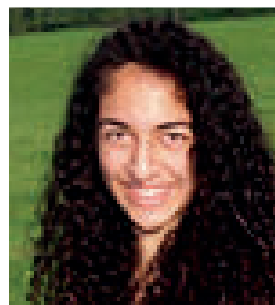
Lies with intentions of helping and protecting self and others have potential of righteousness. A right act, at the right time, for a right reason.

the doors and windows, and huddled up while praying for the worst to pass. Before we knew it the loudspeaker came on again, "this was a fake drill, you may return to your regular day." Relief spread on the entire class's expressions, but no one could ignore that sour feeling that came afterwards. The school lied to us. Their intentions were good, however. They knew that we were underprepared for a real lockdown. Cons: in future lockdowns, we would initially doubt the circumstance. Pros: the school needed to test if students and teachers were seriously prepared for these situations in case of a real lockdown. Overall, in these times of uncertainty, the benefit of lying was, in the eyes of the school, more beneficial than the cost of lying.

While it may seem that lying is justified in some situations, we cannot allow them to overpower the truth. Imagine living in a society built on lies and deceit. These societies are like active volcanoes eager to erupt. The pressure keeps building as the government, schools, stores, neighbors, friends, and family, are constantly in denial of one another, with trust fading away. Until finally, the society erupts. Flaming, fiery lava destroying everything in its path; proving that corruption is inevitable, just as an eruption is inevitable. In these societies lies, crime, loss of faith, and

an unsettling, insecure environment. Trust and honesty are essential traits of our Zoroastrian faith because they maintain peace and balance; preventing a corrupt and broken community built on lies.

How does this all connect to Zoroastrianism? In Zarathustra's definition a liar is a person who falsifies the truth for control, power, greed, and selfishness, leading to society's destruction. In our modern world, any person who falsifies the truth or even withholds the truth is seen as a liar. Zartosht argues that in order to follow the path of righteousness, we need to consult our good mind, evaluating each situation through our experiences. In the Pueblo tribe and lockdown examples, both lied after evaluating the situation with good thought and care. However in a society corrupted with deception, lying becomes second nature. People disregard their ability to use their good thoughts and their judgement is clouded with Angra Mainyu. Lies should thus only be allowed in necessary times when truth can harm more than a lie. Lies with intentions of helping and protecting self and others have potential of righteousness. A right act, at the right time, for a right reason.



■ **FARNAZ BEHDINAN** was born in Tehran, Iran in 2001 and moved to California at age 3. She currently attends El Camino Real Charter High School as a Junior. She has a passion for music, travel, arts, reading, and creative writing. She enjoys participating in the CZC-LA classes and loves connecting with her Zoroastrian community.

THIRD WINNING ESSAY: THE TRUTH OF LYING BY MANTRA ROOINTAN

From a young age, our parents have always told us to never lie. We are taught to tell the truth and avoid bad habits of lying. Lying breaks trust between people and can ruin relationships with friends and loved ones. Many believe that telling white lies or lies with the intention to avoid hurting people's feelings, are acceptable. However, they are not a better alternative. Lying is never fine but realistically, it is inevitable and unavoidable. With that being said, there are multiple reasons why lies should not be told. Many lies seem to be harmless but have negative results in the future. When one examines the teachings of Zarathustra, we realize how Asha plays into the topic of lying.

In today's society, lying has become a common nature. Many people lie to find comfort and avoid hardships instead of confronting a problem. People intentionally lie when the truth makes them uncomfortable or scared. We lie because of the fear of being judged and embarrassed. In today's society, many feel obligated to lie when being pressured to live up to an expectation or standard. The fear of ruining their self-image forces them to lie about certain things.

Lying may seem like the best option in the moment but realistically, it will most likely cause more complications in the future. For instance, you break your mom's favorite vase on accident. Being afraid of the punishments that may come, you lie about the situation claiming that your sibling broke it. As time passes, your guilt weighs you down. You finally tell the truth to your parents and get grounded for a week. This punishment is worse than how it would have been if the lie had not been told in the first place. Using our Vohu Manah, or good thinking,

we use our own judgment to decide when it is absolutely necessary to lie. This moral compass along with progressive mentality, otherwise known as Spenta Mainyu, will lead us to Asha. In the Gathas, we use Asha, which is the law of the universe or righteousness, to make the right decisions. We need to follow the path of Asha to lead us to happiness. As human beings, we have the power to make our own decisions and life choices. Lying creates more obstacles and issues throughout our journey to find inner peace. With all this considered, there are some circumstances where lying is fine.

When one examines the teachings of Zarathustra, we realize how Asha plays into the topic of lying.

In fact, lying is necessary in certain situations. Deception that does not have a selfish intention is alright. One instance when lying is okay is if the truth puts us or others in danger. If a family member or loved one would physically be harmed if the truth is exposed, then lying would be fine. One example of this would be if a kidnapper asks the location of your family member. Additionally, lies with neutral outcomes are acceptable since there is no selfish intention. Lying to a friend to plan a surprise birthday party is an example of that. While all this may be true, the best alternative to lying is not to answer at all. If something personal is asked, the respectful response should be that you are not comfortable with answering the question. There is no need to lie.

To conclude, lying is definitely not okay but in reality, it is bound to occur. Nonetheless, we should not

abuse this power that we hold. If the thought of lying comes to mind, we need to fight the temptations and the internal battle against those bad thoughts. The consequences of lying should be considered before the act is done. This principle has been discussed in the Gathas by which we are encouraged to defeat Angra and Aka, or bad intentions that cause regression. By choosing Va-ho and Spenta instead, we can find happiness and be in a state of Haurvatat. If we follow Asha and do the right thing, we will get good results. Lying ruins our pride and dignity. We can, however, begin to improve ourselves and the world by being more honest during interactions. We have to use our own judgment to make the right choices on when it is okay to lie. All individuals have the freedom to make decisions based on what they believe is right. We are not obligated to lie because of pressure brought on by society's expectations. The best thing we can do is to be ourselves and not care about being judged by others. No one is perfect but we can strive to improve ourselves and become better individuals.



■ My name is **MANTRA ROOINTAN** and I am 15 years old. I am proud and dedicated to my culture and faith as a Zoroastrian. Being a Persian Zoroastrian, has been an important part of my life. I was honored to be selected as a winner as the essay competition gave me the opportunity to express my ideas and thoughts about my beliefs.

THE AFFIRMING VALUE OF RITUALS

by Mobediyar Mahshad Khosraviani

I'm sometimes asked "what's your religious belief?" The bafflement shadowing my rejoinder, "I'm a Zoroastrian", casts a metaphorical wide fishing net: A person's religious belief can encompass their personal philosophies, cultural background, values, and a large part of their identity. That look of bewilderment is sometimes all I get. This happens frequently through most of our lives as Zoroastrians. It never ceases to amaze me that this occurs despite the impact the faith has had throughout history; a religion that at one point numbered in the millions and which now has fallen into near obscurity.

As a Zoroastrian priestess, I feel it's my imperative duty to focus on equality and inspire others to become competent in the Zoroastrian religion to prevent it from diminishing.

Some ways we can reverse the decline is by educating and allowing conversions to those who want to join the faith, and also accepting the children of mixed marriages. Unfortunately, there is stiff opposition to such thinking as many feel that it would dilute the faith or damage the religion. Such beliefs are unfounded and cannot be justified. They are based around themes and ideas that are not part of Zoroastrian Gathic message; thus, have been incredibly detrimental to the faith since it does not adapt, and will result in an eventual religious extinction.

Millennia ago, Zoroastrianism itself spread through conversions. There are historical records of conversions that occurred throughout the different Persian Empires. The



insular and rather exclusionary thinking that several Zoroastrians hold today damages the true message of Zarathustra, which is to elevate the goodness in all. To follow customs from thousands of years before this time and expecting them to fit into this life experience is akin to hammering a square peg into a round hole, with the result of frustration, confusion, and apostasy.

Our environment is vastly different from the one our ancestors lived, and yet it is our obligation to alter this route to benefit our religion for the sake of future generations. I believe that our wise community can find a way to allow ardent newcomers into the faith and to aid those seeking companionship outside the religion,

all while preserving the original message of Zarathustra. For this, a radical revamping of social, cultural and spiritual thinking has to occur.

My generation fights a constant battle for self-identity and social acceptance where we are challenged to preserve and present our religion, to be social but not form a union with a non-Zoroastrian individual—an arduous task when inserted in a multicultural environment.

To put simply, the word "religion" translates to "din" in Farsi that originates from the word "day-nou" that means "kherad" in Farsi or "thoughts" in English. Therefore, according to Zarathustra for one to be considered a religious person, their thoughts should have a positive impact on their words and thereby their deeds. Zarathustra said that one does not need to be a Zoroastrian to be accepted; we are each first born as human beings.

Zoroastrianism's main message is one of upholding the righteous path and of Asha. So an atheist can be a Zoroastrian by dedicating his life to truth and goodness. In many ways, people who look for truth and strive to help others are far better people than people who may call themselves religious, but follow the ways of Ahriman through deceit and lies. The way of Asha, of goodness and order, truth and justice, can be practiced by anyone in any society. It does not necessarily need special incantations or modes of prayer, or rituals and religious figureheads. For every good thought, good word and good deed we do, we are helping Ahura Mazda and each other grow and prosper as a society and civilization. We have the choice to do so, since there is no

To follow customs
from thousands of
years before this time
and expecting them
to fit into this life
experience is akin to
hammering a square
peg into a round hole,
with the result of
frustration, confusion,
and apostasy.

compulsion. This gives us the concept of free will; within this concept of free will we can choose to follow righteousness over deceit.

As Mother Teresa once said, “if I look at the mass I will never act, if I look at one, I will; the more who die, the less we care.” And so the more that leave the faith the less we tend to care; but if we care for one at a time and open our arms for those wishing to join/convert, we will have a better chance at preserving this beautiful religion. It is not I, nor you, who can make a difference. It is only when you and I join together to form “we”, that a solid and healthy change is attainable.

■ **MAHSHAD** is active in the Irani and Parsi Communities in Toronto. Prior to her ordainment as a Mobedyar she taught Avesta classes, prepared children for their Navjote, wrote articles for ZSO and Huffington Post, and was a guest speaker on Radio Asha. Mahshad trained and qualified for ordainment as a Mobedyar at the age of 20, making her the youngest female Zoroastrian Mobedyar in Iran,



and one of the first in North America. Taking a page from Zoroastrian Texts of Aerpatistan and Nirangistan, she made the participation of women in Zoroastrian priestly activity a reality. She is currently the Secretary for WZO Canada.

Mahshad has conducted religious functions around the globe, including Italy, UK, America, Iran, Australia and Germany. She also presented at the 7th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress in Los Angeles.

“Journalism is the first rough draft of history”

Quote attributed to numerous commentators

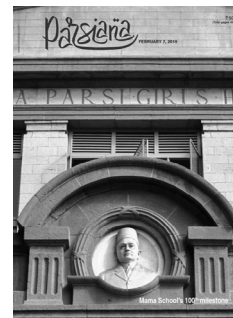
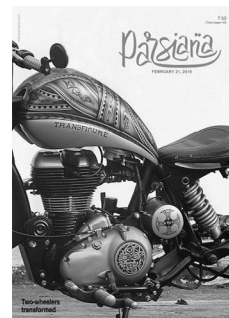
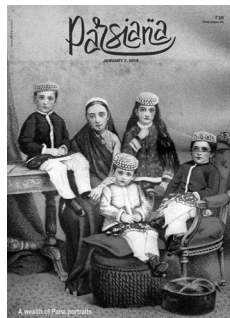
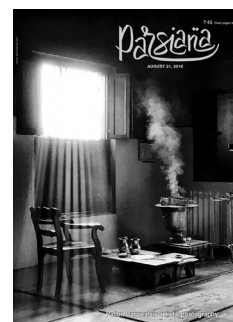
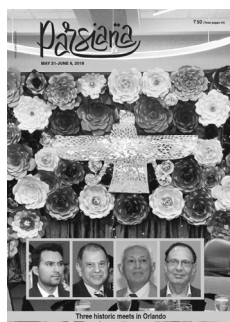
Twenty-four times in a year Parsiana focuses on all aspects of the international Zoroastrian community. We are the global English link medium for all Parsis, Iranis and Zoroastrians. If you wish to keep abreast of community events and personalities and witness history in the making, subscribe to Parsiana.

Subscribe online for our print or online edition through our website parsiana.com.

A one year **online** subscription for 24 copies is US \$14, for two years US \$24 and for three years US \$36.

The **print** edition rate for one year is US \$80; two years US \$155 and three years US \$230.

Alternatively request someone in India to pay or gift a subscription in Indian rupees (for one year Rs 5,000; for two years Rs 10,000; for three years Rs 15,000).



Parsiana Publications Pvt Ltd, K. K. (Navsari) Chambers, ground floor, 39B, A. K. Nayak Marg, Fort, Bombay 400001
Phones: +91 22 22074335 / 22074347 E-mail: info@parsiana.com parsiana1@gmail.com Website: www.parsiana.com



LANGUAGE AS A BRIDGE

by Artemis Javanshir, Persian language class teacher

In 1980, I joined my family in Los Angeles, California to find refuge from the educational disturbances and governmental instability in Iran, with hopes of returning home. Besides dealing with the challenges of an unfamiliar language and culture, this was during the American hostage crisis. Unkind words in school halls and threats of after-school fights made this a less than friendly environment. Although there were those who spoke warmly, the language barrier prevented any chance of an easy friendship. Those of us who needed help with the English language were assigned to an ESL (English as a second language) class. I feel fortunate to have had Mrs. Hildreth Simmons as my teacher, who not only taught us English but whole heartedly introduced us to the American culture. Today I realize the importance of the gift she gave

us. It would be hard to fit into a new community through language alone without a cultural understanding.

Now I am a second language teacher at our local Zoroastrian center. I have been teaching Farsi to our wonderful youth for about four years. For a time our classes seem to have been dying out but with the Core Education Committee's support, we built our classes from one class with 2 students and one teacher to four classes, 25 students and 6 teachers.

Trying to build a bridge through language in order to help our youth connect to Iranian culture, history, and family has its complexities. Considering that our students are mainly first generation Iranian/Americans born in the United States, they fall into three general groups. The first group are those who speak Farsi at home. They learn to read and write

Farsi very quickly and connect and enjoy learning about Iranian culture.

The second group understands but are not as fluent in communicating. They do not connect or learn as easily as the first group, however, they enjoy the cultural bond. The third group do not speak Farsi and have a small vocabulary. These students find it more difficult to learn Farsi and do not readily associate with Iranian culture, while the first group can effortlessly build and maintain a sustainable bridge with family, Iranian heritage, and Farsi speaking community.

The responsibility of transferring language lies greatly on parents. In the US we live busy lives and it takes effort to consistently speak and expect our children to answer us in Farsi. Many students have parents who follow through with the above task. Some parents lack fluency in

English, so it becomes essential for children to answer them in Farsi. As a Farsi teacher, I encourage parents to speak and ask their children to communicate in Farsi. It is such an important and yet easy gift we can give our children.

I can't help but recall an article written by Ms. Roya Behmardian titled "Sing Along Songs" in the 189 Chehreh Nama edition. Roya's parents listened to Iranian music since Roya was a child and today as an adult she finds herself connecting to the same songs and at times sings along with them. It demonstrates the importance that a consistent presence of language plays in transferring culture within a family to future generations. When children learn to speak, read and write in Farsi, they can connect to Iranian culture through simple poems or stories. Moreover, since the text is in the original language, the innate meaning is more readily transferred. It opens

up a new world to our youth and makes them more diverse individuals.

While learning any language is beneficial, when that language connects us to our heritage, it becomes doubly rewarding.

Our children's culture is a complex one. They are somewhat familiar with Iranian or Parsi cultures and yet they speak English with each another, enjoy hamburger and fries, and listen to popular music. Looking at the diversity and potential of our Zoroastrian community in the US, the importance of using English to teach Zarathushtra's message and speaking in English at our centers seems more critical than ever. Our youth need to build multiple bridges in order to keep diverse and rewarding connections; English language as a bridge brings all Zoroastrians together. By being fluent in both Farsi and English, our Iranian/American youths can build multiple bridges to connect with

their culturally diverse community and keep unity with all Zoroastrians



■ **ARTEMIS JAVANSHIR** is on the Core Education Committee at California Zoroastrian Center in Los Angeles (CZC-LA) and co-chair of FEZANA Religious Committee. She teaches Farsi in addition to Persian history and its connection to Zarathushtra's teachings to 4th-6th graders at CZC-LA. She encourages parents to teach their children any language that they are fluent in. She believes the gift of language is one of the most valuable gifts we can give our children.

KERSHAW K. KHUMBATTA, P.C. Certified Public Accountants

Business and Individual Tax Planning,
Accounting and Tax Preparations,
Federal and State Payroll Processing & Tax Audits,

Kershaw K. Khumbatta, CPA
Nazneen K. Khumbatta, Office Manager.

1455 HIGHWAY 6 SOUTH
Sugar Land, Texas 77478

Tel: 281-313-8006
Fax: 281-313-8036

cpa@khumbattapc.com

A CALL TO AWAKEN

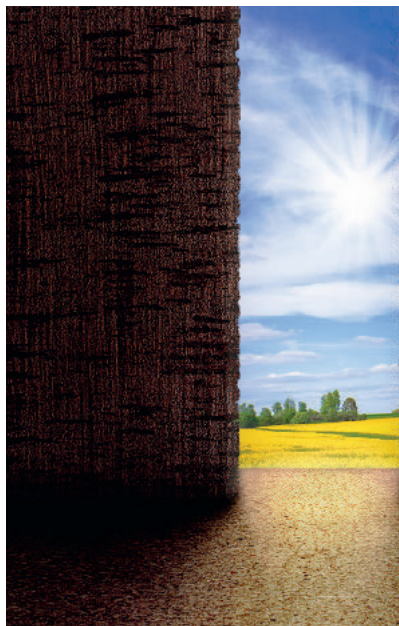
—by *Sousan Abadian*

I have been asked to write about “the crisis of displacement” among Zoroastrians. While still at Harvard, the research I conducted among indigenous and aboriginal communities following centuries of displacement, war, conquest, and colonization gave me insight into the potential impact that thousands of years of collective traumas have had on Zoroastrians and the various interpretations of the faith.

Of course, the effects of trauma and displacement are not all disastrous: Just as the highest quality swords are formed and annealed by repeatedly heating and folding the metal in on itself in order to strengthen it, we too have been forged in fire, potentially more capable now than ever, of cutting through illusion and untruth.

Like extreme heat, what breaks us down can also become a doorway to breakthroughs. Displacement might be a dangerous crisis, but it can also serve as a vast opportunity. For example, an unintended consequence of the tragic fall of Tibet that forced the Dalai Lama from his mountain enclave was that the world now has access to his valuable teachings. Similarly, the displacement of Zoroastrians has the potential to bring the original wisdom and insight of Zoroastrianism to greater numbers. Having greater contact with people in the West has provided the Zoroastrian community with an opportunity for self-reflection, the weeding out of what no longer serves, a return to original or first principles, and more generally, for cultural-religious renewal.

It is as though Zoroastrianism has been awaiting this epoch of enlightenment and this generation—



your generation—to flower once again. Perhaps, it has lain dormant; the seeds have been scattered and have finally found fertile ground to flourish.

Among the many wonderful ahead-of-its-time original teachings of this prescient faith, the proper honoring of the feminine, revaluing earthly/bodily existence, the imperative of environmental stewardship stand out. But also, from its inception, this faith has recognized the innate dignity and nobility of humanity, has emphasized freedom (of choice, of conscience/belief), and the importance of attaining personal sovereignty.^[1] But these original teachings and insights are exactly what the experience of longstanding trauma can and has eroded. We are being called to awaken from the trance of trauma, its illusions and distortions, and to awaken to our creator capacities.

Awakening to Our Magnificence: First Principles

■ **Innate nobility:** Ahura Mazda

was not a distant or angry “God” but seen as a Beloved. In the Zoroastrian faith, we humans are born in original blessing, as fragments of this “Divinity,” and as such, endowed with innate nobility and dignity. Moreover, we are recognized as Creator Beings, creating (deliberately or unconsciously) through the choices we make—choices in our thoughts, our words, and the actions we take. As we learn to open to Consciousness, live in awareness that we have choice and refine our choices toward Asha, we heal and restore ourselves and our world.

■ **Freedom:** As “fragments of the Divine,” our faith teaches that we are endowed with the freedom to choose, even what we believe. Zarathushtra honors our freedom to access the wisdom within to make our choices, find our answers, to learn. Teachers, religious and otherwise, can be helpful, but no intermediary is meant to stand between us and Us, our Higher Awareness or what we call the Divine. We were taught to access inner wisdom and knowing by leaning inward, through engagement with the natural world, prayer, ceremony, meditation, contemplating “on the fire.” Zarathushtra of course recognized that one has to be free in order to be a true believer—that to believe anything under pressure, coercion, or fear is mere manipulation. In contrast, most of humanity throughout time has been subjected to manipulation of one form or another in order to conform and “to believe.”

■ **Personal sovereignty:** To become free from these internal and external manipulations (which include emotional debris and

reactivity, toxic beliefs and narratives, societal and familial pressures) is the path of personal sovereignty.

Awakening from the Trance of Trauma

These original teachings of our faith can make us resilient and help us withstand the damage of trauma. However these and other “first principles” can become distorted from severe collective trauma. For example, when people feel victimized as a result of traumatic experiences, they can lose their sense of innate worth and nobility. They may come to feel diminished and “less than” (pitiful, sinful); or conversely, they can become inflated and feel “better than” others, believing falsely that others lack innate worth. In other words, the experience of trauma can entrap people in false identification as victims, and for some, justification for acting out as perpetrators.

Trauma can also erode people’s creative capacities or interfere with their freedom to choose. Traumatic experiences can condition people into a form of learned helplessness, the belief that they have little choice in their thoughts, feelings, and actions, let alone to shape the world around them. They focus on blame, not on agency. Traumatized people are often caught in a pessimistic and mistrustful haze about a conspiratorial world that wants to prey on them. Trauma interferes with personal sovereignty as people can become slaves to their fears.

When whole groups are affected by traumas over long periods, their collective narratives—the stories told and passed down in communities, as well as how religious texts are interpreted going forward—can become distorted. For example, original texts that, at one time, were meant to impart an understanding of innate human dignity, creative

capacity, agency, and sovereignty, in subsequent generations and through an interpretive lens distorted by trauma, can instead emphasize victimization and disempowerment, and for some, false empowerment—a sense of aggrieved entitlement to seek revenge and hit back.

One example of how severe collective traumas have distorted religious texts is how the early teachings of Saoshyant—of each of us striving toward

**As we learn to open
to Consciousness,
live in awareness
that we have choice
and refine our
choices toward
Asha, we heal and
restore ourselves
and our world.**

becoming more of our Master selves who bring benefit to the world—was transformed into seeking some single “savior” outside ourselves. As opposed to viewing ourselves as the helpless victim in need of saving, Zarathushtra’s original teachings call us to remember our true grandeur, that we are indeed the Ones we have waited for.

It’s time we heed the call to awaken from trauma’s grip, and renew ourselves, our faith, and our world. Fortunately, Zarathushtra’s original teachings are not only compatible with but provide a foundation for healing the effects of trauma, a topic to explore on another occasion.

[1] What I mean by sovereignty is different than mainstream understanding. In our

present day, the term “sovereignty” has been much misused in the same ways that notions of race (Aryan and otherwise) have.



■ DR. SOUSAN ABADIAN

holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University, an M.P.A. in International Development from Harvard’s Kennedy School, and an M.A. in the Anthropology of Social Change and Development, also from Harvard University. Her research on responses to historical atrocities and healing the effects of collective trauma has been described by Nobel laureate in economics Amartya Sen as “pioneering” and “highly original.”

She has served as a Franklin Fellow at the U.S. State Department in the Office of International Religious Freedom, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. Her portfolio included rights of religious minorities in the Middle East and South Asia, gender, preventing violent extremism, conflict mitigation, atrocity prevention, and cultural heritage protection. Dr. Abadian now consults, delivers talks, facilitates leadership trainings and coaches international audiences from the business and nonprofit worlds, government as well as religious leaders, indigenous and women’s groups, conflict resolution experts and civil society actors. She taught Adaptive Leadership as an Associate at Cambridge Leadership Associates, served as a Fellow at M.I.T.’s Dalai Lama Center for Ethics & Transformative Values and at the Harvard Center for Public Leadership.

When asked to describe the path we took to raise our kids in a culturally mixed environment, what came to our mind was the song 'I did it my way' by Frank Sinatra and the phrase 'It takes a village' (an African phrase that means that an entire community of people must interact with the children for those children to experience and grow in a safe and healthy environment). Our

from understanding and learning of other faiths if their curiosity led them to it. We are fortunate that our children are well on this path. Yet, looking back, we recognize that our ability, as young parents to chart such a path, would not have been as smooth and as rich (in cultural and social experiences) without our involvement with the ZAMWI community. It truly did 'take a village'.

identify themselves as Zoroastrians.

Our children regularly attend the Avesta class that meets twice each month; truly a blessing for our family. We know that because our children have enjoyed attending these classes and making friends. Their religious and cultural education was experiential, rich in Indo-Persian heritage and customs; an experience we could not have provided if we had to do

WE DID IT 'OUR WAY' BUT IT 'TOOK A VILLAGE'

by Zenobia F. Taraporewala and David C. Campbell

journey as parents, an Indian-born Parsee mother from a priestly family, and an American-born Catholic father, began when we were truly blessed with two healthy children. We understood that our children would have to adapt to a widely different cultural and religious environment (in the home and the community at large) than either one of us grew up in. We were anxious, not entirely certain of our path (of parenthood) and anticipated a wild ride. We had few examples to follow, so, we did it our way!

Tacitly, we knew we wanted to create a loving, authentic, open-minded home for our children to thrive in; one where our children would seek knowledge, appreciate art, music and beauty, and seek ways to create it themselves. We wanted them to imbibe the values we grew up with; to be respectful, kind, truthful, empathetic, grateful, charitable and appreciative of the world and nature around us. We mutually agreed, then, the principles of Zoroastrianism aligned well with the path we hoped our children would follow. We also decided we would not keep them

Before writing about our journey as parents, we asked our children to describe our ZAMWI community - in one word. The first word that came to our son's mind was 'familial', our daughter whole-heartedly agreed. That warmed our hearts. This does not surprise us, as the ZAMWI community has always welcomed us with open arms, like our own family would, joyously, unconditionally and without reserve. Every ZAMWI event feels like a large family gathering- lots of laughter, hugs, and fun.

In ZAMWI, our family is one of many where one parent is not born into a Zoroastrian family. Children from such mixed families are enthusiastically included in all events whether it be a religious ceremony like jashan, navjote, muktad prayers or more festive events like Gambhar and Navroze celebrations, with no hint of discrimination or prejudice (an environment that I know is desired by many mixed Parsee couples in parts of India and Pakistan). Our children have thrived in this gracious ZAMWI community, learned of the Zoroastrian faith and Parsee/Persian culture and proudly

Before writing about our journey as parents, we asked our children to describe our ZAMWI community—in one word. The first word that came to our son's mind was 'familial' ...

it ourselves. As parents we have been continually amazed when our daughter enjoyed learning to write the Avesta script from a dedicated volunteer parent-teacher, when our son vividly described the Shahnameh (after learning about it from an engaging volunteer parent-teacher who shared with him the comic book 'Rostam: Tales from the Shahnameh'), and when our daughter came home knowing why and how we worship water on Ava



Then and now: Dinaz and Feroz Campbell

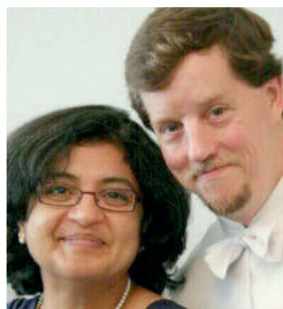
mahino Ava roj, referred by Parsees

as ‘Avan nu Parab’, excitedly telling us how much she enjoyed eating the dar ni pori made by an amazingly generous parent-teacher, to name a few examples. The short talk preceding the class given by our community priests Mobed Brigadier Behram Panthaki and Mobediyar Dr. Hormuzd Katki, is always the discussion topic on the ride back home. Such guidance was invaluable through the years.

Moreover, our children have been influenced by stellar volunteers in the community; seeing them take the initiative year-after-year, leading, committing and selflessly contributing time and effort at community events. Being part of such a wholesome community sets a wonderful example to our children (and to all young Zarathostis) to do their part no matter how small, to contribute and give back,

to build a community they want for themselves and their future families. Our children are empowered when they are asked to be active and lead efforts within and outside the ZAMWI community and thereby realize the impact they can have on society. They have benefited greatly from such opportunities; something we could not have anticipated many years ago as young parents.

How often have we heard the phrase from immigrant families “... raising kids in USA has its challenges”? Our answer to that is “Yes, it is challenging, especially when you follow a religion unheard of by many, but it is a lot easier if you are part of a bigger family, your community, because it does indeed take a village (to raise a child)”.



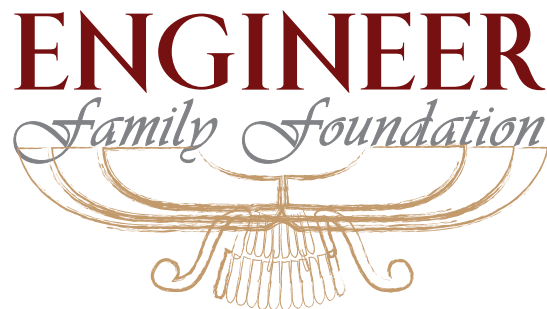
■ **ZENOBIA F. TARAPOREWALA AND DAVID C. CAMPBELL** Born in Mumbai, Zenobia Taraporewala is the daughter of Mehroo and Feroz Taraporewala and grew up in the Godrej Colony in Vikhroli, Mumbai. She has a Ph.D in Molecular and Cell Biology from the University of Maryland, and currently works at the FDA as the Team Lead and Regulatory Reviewer of Cell and Gene Therapy Products. David Campbell was born in Pennsylvania, the youngest of three children of Joseph and Mary Campbell and grew up in Elkton, Maryland. He has a Masters degree in Information Systems Management from the University of Maryland and works as a Consultant/Program Manager in Cybersecurity. Zenobia and David are parents to highschoolers Feroz, a 17-year old rising senior, and Dinaz, a 14-year old rising freshman. They have been active ZAMWI members for about 20 years.

Impacting Lives Positively One at a Time

Engineer Family Foundation (EFF) is a philanthropy minded charity institution that aims to make a difference in the lives of talented and aspiring individuals and those in need of assistance for basic human needs like food, clothing and shelter.

Our charity invites applications from students aspiring for education, pursuing work related technical diploma's and seeking excellence in the fields of sports and fine arts.

We also accept applications from individuals in need of assistance to access basic needs like food, clothing and shelter.



www.engineerfamilyfoundation.org

ZOROASTRIANISM AND BEING PART OF A GLOBAL COMMUNITY

by *Lylah M. Alphonse*

The influence global issues have on our youth doesn't mean they think less of their Zoroastrian heritage.

I was born in the 1970s to a Parsi mother from India and a Roman Catholic father from Haiti. My grandmother—the first Parsi woman to serve in India's parliament—worked hard to find dastooors who would agree to officiate at my Navjote, which was held in Hyderabad when I was barely 7 years old.

In the decades since then, I've felt embraced by the liberal and moderate Zoroastrian community and rejected by the conservative Parsi communities in India in equal measure. As a result I'm proud of my Zoroastrian heritage, but I'm not particularly active in any Zoroastrian community. My children are also of mixed heritage, and while I'm raising them to think good thoughts, speak good words and do good deeds—the very backbone of Zoroastrianism—the community they identify with is a global one, not a religious one.

The identities of the rising generations are shaped by events, questions and issues that Generation X, Baby Boomers and The Greatest Generation never had to consider when they were young: mass shootings and gun violence in schools, the depletion of fossil fuels and the promise of so-called green energy, access to health care, the

While we older folks may worry about juggling different identities and roles, our youth simply consider it all to be facets of a single identity that they celebrate.

#MeToo movement, gender equality and LGBTQ issues, climate change on a scale so large that 50- and 100-year weather events have become regular occurrences. They see the issues their parents and grandparents struggled with—equality for women, racial prejudices, immigration, poverty, civil rights—and see not problems that have been solved, but room for improvement.

So, instead of seeking their place in an existing community based on their religion or heritage, the youth coalesce around the issues that are most important to them, finding “their people” as they learn about and fight for their causes.

Thanks to technology, their community can be truly global. Their connections are maintained not by blue aerograms and expensive long-distance trunk calls, but instantly by Facetime and Skype and WhatsApp, by images and ideas shared on social media and

plans made via texting and SMS.

That doesn't mean there's no place for Zoroastrian pride in their multi-ethnic, multicultural, multi-faceted lives. The global communities that Millennials and Generation Z belong to, do not necessarily replace the Zoroastrian community into which they were born. While we older folks may worry about juggling different identities and roles, our youth simply consider it all to be facets of a single identity that they celebrate.

A lot depends on where they live, of course, and what the Zoroastrian community will accept. There was no promise made over a spoonful of sugar outside of India! Zoroastrians in North America don't have to adhere to discriminatory laws designed to minimize their power as they do in Iran. Today's youth are free to operate as equals among others from many faiths and walks of life, choosing where they want to belong. It's a lesson older generations—including mine—would do well to learn, so that tribalism doesn't trump the Zoroastrian ideal of independent thought.



■ **LYLAH M. ALPHONSE** is the managing editor for government rankings and news at *U.S. News & World Report*, and the author of “*Triumph Over Discrimination: The Life Story of Dr. Farhang Mehr*.” Find her online at <http://www.LylahMAlphonse.com> or follow her on Twitter @WriteEditRepeat or Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/lylahmalphonse>.

ART & FAITH

MUSIC, ART, PERFORMANCE AND CREATING OUR FUTURE

by Artin Aidun



■ **ARTIN MEHRDAD AIDUN** is a musician and Cybersecurity practitioner—focusing on violin performance and Ethical Hacking. He received his Bachelor of Science from the University of Maryland in Computer Networks & Cybersecurity graduating cum laude. Currently, he works for Trustwave Government Solutions and previously worked for defense contractors Forcepoint and Raytheon. In his spare time, Artin competes in Cybersecurity competitions and enjoys participating in Capture The Flag (CTF) challenges such as Hack The Box.

I was only four years old when I began to play the violin and fell in love with music. I dove into every aspect of it, listened to every genre, performed whenever I could and threw together compositions if inspiration hit. Music became an integral part of my life and what I turned to in times of joy and sorrow, to ease my frustrations or seek motivation. I honed my abilities throughout my grade school years which presented me with many opportunities. I had the privilege to play in the American Youth Symphonic Orchestra and serve as the Concert Master of the James Madison University Chamber Orchestra. Although my professional career path has taken me into the field of cybersecurity, I make it a priority to keep music in my life.

My Zoroastrian community provided me with a way to keep music in my life. I have volunteered both as a performer and musical coordinator at various ZAMWI events. For a time I was also the conductor/composer of a youth ensemble named the Avesta Players. We performed classical music as well as Iranian folk pieces. It took a lot of coordination, dedication and practice but I was pleased to see a high commitment level from all the wonderful youth involved. It was delightful to see these young performers grow in their musical abilities and take the opportunity to perform in front of an audience. These volunteer roles allowed me to spread my love of music with our community and share with them the joy of live musical performance.

Music and religion are also intrinsically tied, although the connection may be different for each individual. I view music, religion, and faith-based activities as a method of being present in the moment and as a means of which to achieve a sense of tranquility. When listening to music, and more so when performing in an ensemble, I often feel calmness

and tranquility rushing over me. This is the same way I feel when a Mobed prays over a fire and I can smell the burning of sandalwood as the sound of prayer washes over me. It is captivating and entrancing. It is this feeling that I wish to impart through the gift of music—both those

I view music, religion, and faith-based activities as a method of being present in the moment and as a means of which to achieve a sense of tranquility.

participating and those observing. In being more present, your thoughts and actions have more clarity. Being able to achieve this is paramount to thinking critically and contributing to your community. Through music I find that I experience a similar feeling as with faith-based activities.

Looking towards the future, I believe music will always be linked to Zoroastrianism, although in a different way for each person. For some it could be through volunteer work, coordinating events that showcase musical performances, performing for their religious community, or as an individual attending and supporting these efforts. For others, music is more private, a way to meditate and achieve tranquility and connect to a more spiritual level. At different times in my life, religion and music have been tied together in all these ways. I believe that music will always have a role in Zoroastrianism.



Youth Are Changing Our Perspective

INTERVIEW WITH SOLI DASTUR by Anne Khademian

Ervad Soli Dastur is one of the most beloved and well known mobeds in North America. A mentor to young priests and mobediyars, he is an inspiring and motivational leader, bridging generations and cultures with his innovative lessons and presentations. FEZANA reached out to talk with him

at his home in Florida about young Zoroastrians and the future of our religion.

Born as the last of 11 children in the small village of Tarapur, India to a priestly family from Udwada, Soli studied at the M. F. Cama Athornan Institute boarding school to complete his priestly studies as well as his high school education. During

these nine years in boarding school, Soli completed all the requirements for becoming Navar and Martab and was initiated as a priest in the Holy Iranshah Atash Behram in Udwada. He also passed the final examination of Saamel required by priests from Udwada to be able to perform all inner and outer liturgies.

Soli is now fully retired and lives with his wife of 53 years, Jo Ann, in Bradenton, Florida. For many years he has performed religious ceremonies all over Florida and the USA. He is also an avid tennis player and “dabbles with the computer” in his free time.

Central to the challenges facing Zoroastrian youths today, Ervad

lectures, and other activities in the Zoroastrian community, then the young ones follow suit.” Recognizing that his experience growing up was very different from the youth in North America, today, Ervad Dastur pointed out that he “was brought up in India in an orthodox religious family, and the Dar-e-Mehr was just a short walk from home.”

“together with Z Associations, to come up with new ways of using advanced technology to present our religion to these young ones so that they are interested in our religion; otherwise, I am not too optimistic for our religion in the future.”

Ervad Dastur has experimented with other forms of innovation as well. During a recent Annual General Meeting for FEZANA, Ervad Dastur sang the Zoroastrian Brotherhood of Mankind prayer, Aa Airyemaa Ishyo (Yasna 54.1), to the tune of Beethoven’s “Ode To Joy”. Professor Daryush Mehta, an accomplished concert clarinet player, performed

Interest in our religion begins at home. If parents and grandparents are religious, the young ones in the family will also be religious.

Dastur focused on the expectations and pressures for students in high school and college, and the limited time for the study and practice of our religion. “Students today face a tremendous higher education load in both high school and college. They don’t have time. If they want to be a straight A student, they don’t have time for anything else.”

Beyond the classroom, today’s youth are expected to participate in extracurricular activities like sports, music, and clubs, and more in order to attend a good college. When it comes to attending religious classes, lectures and ceremonies, young people often choose their school activities over their religion. In contrast to his own experience as a college student, Ervad Dastur noted, “while in university, I was certain that after I completed my studies, I would get a good job. For the young ones of today, however, there is no guarantee of a good job after higher education. This is a tremendous challenge for our youth.”

Interest in our religion, however, begins at home. “If parents and grandparents are religious,” he pointed out, “the young ones in the family will also be religious. If parents do not attend religious classes,

There is a vast difference between growing up in North America, versus India or Iran. Perhaps this has created a generational split in terms of interest in the religion. Referencing the popular Tele Classes and emails that Ervad Dastur leads, he observed that, “Initially, when I was giving Tele Classes, I was very happy to see 35—60 people attending. But when I looked at the ages of people attending the Classes, I was saddened to note that hardly any young ones were attending. When I discussed this with some of our experienced teachers, they informed me that that was the regular trend.”

“While North American Z associations are doing a great job with religious education for our youth,” Ervad Dastur noted, “their religious activities are drastically affected once students go to college.” The challenge for religious leaders today is to find new ways to reach our youth through technology. “I am finding out every day that if I do not get involved with cell phones, text messages, social activities in Facebook, etc., I will not be able to keep up with our young ones, let alone teach them religion.” Seeing this, Ervad Dastur challenged the North American Mobed Council,

I am finding out everyday that if I do not get involved with cell phones, text messages, social activities in Facebook, etc., I will not be able to keep up with our young ones, let alone teach them the religion.

“Ode to Joy” to provide the melody. The collaboration was a gift to all, recorded and shared broadly for all to enjoy on YouTube. Ervad Dastur hopes such innovation can reach and engage a young audience to learn more about their Zoroastrian faith.

Ervad Dastur inspires Zoroastrians across the diaspora. His dedication to communicating and inspiring younger Zoroastrians to understand and practice the faith is vital for our culture and community into the future.

WHAT DO WE DO NEXT?

by *Mahrukh Motafram*

Like many others before me, my journey began as a young adult in my early twenties landing on the shores of this beautiful place of my dreams. Since then living in North America has been an amazing experience, especially learning to appreciate the true essence of our religion. To be able to live in a way that embodies the principles of good, to be in sync with your thoughts, words and deeds is a way of life that has transformed my life.

In North America we often use the word Zoroastrian to explain who we are. Our children learn this word even before understanding who

and unique traditions. In fact our Zoroastrian religion plays a minor role compared to the strong ties we embrace from our country of birth. So how do we come together, how do we overcome these cultural differences that exist like the language, food, customs, traditions which are embedded in the fabric of our life?

On a smaller scale, residing in the gorgeous Pacific Northwest for the past 7 years, the stage was set with Zoroastrians from Iran and Parsees from India to come together under the umbrella of the Zoroastrian Society of Washington State. A

It is both challenging and rewarding to find common ground, no matter how small that piece is, to begin our journey with. Many of us are willing to make the effort to accept each other, celebrate our differences together and embrace each other's cultures and traditions to create a harmonious community.

In particular, our young demographic, parents with small children are keen on working together on building a community center or an Atash Kadeh. It is a strong need that is growing in our community, and a path worth pursuing. It is a beginning, and it



Community singing Khan Ashem Vohu, May 2019

Parsees are. We find ourselves in a unique situation getting acquainted with Zoroastrians from all over the world who are not Parsees, especially Zoroastrians from Iran who are culturally different from us. We all want to establish our Zoroastrian identity, each of us bringing our own deep-rooted sets of rich culture

young, blooming and tech-savvy Zoroastrian community resides in this beautiful state surrounded by mountains and water. It is evident that it will take more than our creed of "good thoughts, good words, good deeds" to bridge this divide that we find ourselves in the state of Washington, and in North America.

may take some time. However, with trust and with perseverance it can bring about a united Zoroastrian community.

Four young adults from our association attended at the 7th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress this July. I joined them not as a

participant but as the FEZANA Congress Committee Co-Chair. For a week I listened to these Zoroastrian young adults from all over the globe come together to talk about issues impacting their lives and what they plan to do to make the world a better place. How actively they questioned the status quo of religious doctrine with a panel of mobeds! A panel of accomplished women spoke on empowering women in leadership roles. The first ever “Zoroastrian Shark Tank” strove to revive the Zoroastrian entrepreneurial spirit. They discussed current issues like climate change, refugee migration, political legislations and advocacy projects. Socializing too was on the agenda each day, having a fun time networking.

These young adults are living our religion the way it should be practiced, starting with a good thought, speaking good words and

doing good deeds in the community and in the country they reside. They understand and speak the same English language, enjoy all types of food, dance to all genres of music, and they were all there because they value their faith. It was extremely encouraging to hear and see them conduct themselves in a manner that

would make any parent proud! Our faith is in good hands.

It is my hope, as we come together in peace and harmony for the common good where we can create our own identity here in North America that will enable us to preserve our beautiful faith for Zoroastrians from all over the world.



■ **MAHRUKH MOTAFRAM** resides in Sammamish, WA with her husband Feroze and son Jamsheed. She is currently Co-Chair for FEZANA Congress Committee and FEZANA Journal Milestones editor (since 1998). She has been active with FEZANA since 1990, with positions such as FEZANA Strategic Planning Chair and FEZANA Strategic Planning Implementation Working group (2010-2018). She was Vice President of FEZANA in 2003. Mahrukh also supports her community of residence where she is President, Assistance League of the Eastside, an all-volunteer nonprofit organization dedicated to helping families affected by poverty, homelessness, assault and domestic violence. She enjoys traveling with her family and loves to entertain family and friends in the beautiful Pacific Northwest.

Vispi and Percis Daruwala

Premium Zillow and Trulia agents | Prominent in all New



OPTION 1: List your house with us for 1.5% and if we locate the buyer too—you pay only 3% commission at closing.

OPTION 2: List your house at 1.5% if you buy your next home thru us (conditions apply).

Services include:

- ◆ Professional CMA
- ◆ Staging advice
- ◆ Listed on top 3 MLS systems + hundreds of real estate websites
- ◆ Open Houses and Yard signs
- ◆ Color Brochures and professional photos
- ◆ Your listing on TV channel PHL17
- ◆ Virtual 360 tour on YouTube
- ◆ Get exposure on upto 1004 websites including Trulia, Realtor.com and Zillow



REALTY MARK CENTRAL

163 Cranbury Road, Suite 100 ♦ Princeton Junction NJ 08550 Tel: (609) 716-8400 ♦ Cell: 732-642-7290/ 732-447-3194 ♦ EHOMESNJ@gmail.com ♦ www.EHOMESNJ.com

AN INTERVIEW WITH BRIGADIER ERVAD BEHRAM PANTHAKI AND ZENOBIA PANTHAKI

by Anne Khademian

Since their arrival to Washington, DC in 1994, Brigadier Ervad Behram Panthaki and Zenobia Panthaki have held a special place in the Zoroastrian community of the region.

Ervad Behram Panthaki has provided spiritual leadership as the head priest for ZAMWI for over 25 years. The only priest from Baltimore in the north to Richmond in the south, he serves our diverse community with the wisdom of common ground and tireless dedication to mission. Before coming to Washington, DC, his 30-year military career in India included service with the Gorkha Rifles, several command and staff appointments, teaching assignments in the Army War College and Defence Services Staff College, and as Aide-de-Camp to Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, Chief of the Indian Army.

Zenobia Panthaki initially worked for IBM India but left her job to be a full-time homemaker for their young family. She accompanied her husband on his several military appointments and was active with the 'Welfare Centers' that look after the education and health of soldiers' families. When Behram was posted to Army HQ in New Delhi, she joined the World Bank's country office and then transferred to their HQ in Washington DC. She retired after 28 years of service and now consults for the Bank in the area of Resource Management.

Behram and Zenobia sat down with us for a wide-ranging talk about



their three-week visit to Iran in 2018, the significance of this trip in their own lives, the broader importance of Iran to the Zoroastrian diaspora's heritage, and the future of the Zoroastrian faith among our youth. This interview was inspired in part by the enthusiasm among members from Iran and members from India and Pakistan, for the presentation Behram and Zenobia gave during a Lunch and Learn session, documenting their journey. The following excerpts are from that conversation.

Behram and Zenobia, many thanks for speaking with me. Let's start with your Lunch and Learn presentation last fall. Why did you give that presentation on your trip to Iran? But first, what motivated you to visit Iran?

Behram Panthaki: I studied Iranian history in school, and had seen photographs of the reliefs of Naqsh-e Rostam, Persepolis. I always hoped that life would offer me an opportunity to one day stand in front of these ancient monuments. The trip was a fulfillment of my life's ambition.

Zenobia Panthaki: Growing up I did not have the exposure Behram had to Iranian history... however, when we can find time to visit other countries then why not Iran, which is where our roots lie? I was keen to see where my ancestors came from, the places they lived in, the houses, the terrain, and to ponder what could have been the dire situation that drove them from their homeland. We know the general

storyline of Arab persecution, but the story of each family is something we have lost. That's what I wanted to connect to, to imagine, to try and feel what they might have felt when they were leaving. I also wanted to experience what it must have been to be Zoroastrian and stay in a hostile environment. What must it have been to be Zoroastrian and stay? Iranian and Parsi Zoroastrians come from the same heritage. Yes, so many centuries

overwhelmed us. For many of them it was a 'journey back home'—a journey they cannot make for various reasons. The most touching moment was when a young lady told us that on our slide of Esfahan she saw the very street on which she had lived! We hope our slide show created a greater bonding between us, Parsis and Iranians.

More than a year after your visit, what do you think are some of the obstacles

Iranian and Parsi Zoroastrians come from the same heritage. Yes, so many centuries of living apart may have caused us to follow the faith in different ways, but the essence is the same ... Now is the time to celebrate and come together as the same people.

of living apart may have caused us to follow the faith in different ways, but the essence is the same. We were the ones who left as refugees but what happened to the ones who stayed? ... They were the ones who actually bore the brunt of persecution, lived through torment, insult and hardships, so let's appreciate them for that. Now is the time to celebrate and come together as the same people.

Iran is so modern and progressive, quite contrary to the impression created by the West, that we wanted to document our experience and share it with those who have not visited the land of our ancestors. We also wanted to highlight the progressiveness of the Zoroastrian community in the remote parts of Yazd—the fire is preserved with such devotion and often tended to by women in the absence of any male member. It is worth asking, do the prevalent norms matter? When faced with existential issues it's either acceptance of change or obliteration. We were a bit worried as to how our Iranian members would accept our slide show, but their emotions

to coming together. Why do you think "difference" is sometimes more prominent?

Zenobia: The main difference lies in what the communities experienced in Iran versus India; persecution versus acceptance and tolerance. Both succeeded, both did well, but one had to battle much harder as the deck was stacked against them. After going to Iran, I feel that one of the biggest things missing in our Zoroastrian tradition is the documentation of how our people survived. The Jews they will never allow the story of the Holocaust to fade away. By comparison, we faced persecution for centuries but we shy away from relating this to our children. They need to know what their ancestors went through and how they survived, that too without bitterness, so they can value their faith and the freedom they have today to practice it.

Behram: When we came to India between the 8th and 10th centuries, the focus was on survival of the individual and the faith. After the community

settled down, questions regarding religious practice arose. That is when Parsi Zoroastrians wrote to Iranian priests through emissaries, who brought back answers and explanations that are documented as 'Revayats'. Sadly, they did not discuss history or culture.

Zenobia: As the community in India prospered under British rule, a few philanthropists advocated on behalf of their fellow Zoroastrians in Iran. They provided financial assistance for amelioration, set up schools for Zoroastrian children and even used their clout with the British to intercede with the Iranian government for more honorable

Zenobia and I come from the same faith, but I don't know what she prays, and she doesn't know what I pray.... Prayer is a very individual communication with your creator. That is what we should always pass down to our children, rigidity will turn them away.

treatment of our people. The two groups faced different circumstances, but we handled the situation with the same grit and determination because of our common values and we need to celebrate our success as one people.

As ZAMWI works to complete our prayer room, questions about the practice of our faith are emerging. Throughout the past two decades, Behram has supported our religious



Kamran dar-e Mehr, Metropolitan Washington, DC

education and accommodated our differences in many ways. Now with a prayer room, we will have a dedicated space for our spiritual life. How might we navigate this, find a path forward for our children?

Behram: I grew up in Poona (now Pune) where there were 3 large agyaris (Atash Kadehs) in what at that time was a small city. Most Parsis lived near one of them and it was standard practice to go to the agyari on your way to work or some time during the day. How and what you prayed was a personal choice and that is the best part of our faith—it's not prescriptive. Zenobia and I come from the same faith, but I don't know what she prays, and she doesn't know what I pray.... Prayer is a very individual communication with your creator. That is what we should always pass down to our children, rigidity will turn them away.

Zenobia: On the other hand, I grew up in Delhi which had a very small Parsi population and no agyari (Atash Kadeh) till 1961. Most Parsis lived miles away, so the only time you visited the agyari was on festive occasions (it was located by the Hall for social functions), or if there was a navjote, a wedding or a death. I came from a very liberal family where all the elders recited only their Kushti

prayers. On occasion my mother and grandmother would sit with the Khordeh Avesta to pray. Delhi was just not overtly religious and extremely multi-cultural.

How you practice the faith, how you chose to pray and what you pray is very individual. No one could have framed that better than our dear Jim Lovelace, husband of Rubina Patel, during an adult education class at ZAMWI. He said every religion has philosophy at one end of the spectrum and ritual at the other, and each of us is at a different point of that spectrum. Husband and wife, two children brought up in the same house are not ever at the same point. What's more, each of us also moves along that spectrum. A particularly vexing problem can take us back to the fuzzy warmth and nostalgia of ritual, whereas when life is rolling along we explore philosophical dialogue. To coexist in peace, we should respect where each person is on that spectrum.

In closing, what is your message for our youth today? What do you want to tell young people reading this issue about the role of faith?

Behram: Over a period of time, one should not forget one's roots. Today's young adults are less attracted or less focused on the religion. Because of

the highly competitive environment they live in, their energy centers on career security and development and on their children's education. That is but natural. However, community and religion will serve them well as an anchor and as a support group. They need to be involved to the extent possible. In this, the North American mobeds could play a role in being less conservative and rigid in thought and practice. If necessary, ceremonies need to be modified to conform with today's environment. Maybe we could start by asking our youth what they are looking for. What could we do to draw greater participation in religious and social activities?

Zenobia: After many centuries of separation, the Iranian and Parsi Zoroastrians came together on this continent. It was not an easy merger and the first few decades saw an exacerbation of the differences, but coming generations will see themselves as American Parsis, not Indian, not Pakistani, not Iranian! Looking forward, we could be joined by Kurdish and Yezidi Zarthostis who will bring another unknown mix to the boiling pot. As long as we all follow the basic tenets of the religion, unite as one, remain supportive of each other, the future will be bright and we will sally forth with glory in the best tradition of our ancestors.

FEZANA Journal requested Kersi Shroff to write a tribute to Toxy Cowasjee on her retirement as Editor of a sister journal HAMAZOR dealing with Zoroastrian issues. The North American Zoroastrian community is pleased to pay a special tribute to Toxy for her magnificent contributions to the worldwide community. This article was written before the first issue of Hamazor was published under a new editor.

The worldview of issues of interest to Zoroastrian communities, delivered through the pages of Hamazor, stands disrupted by the sudden retirement of its Editor, Toxy [Hutoxy] Cowasjee. From her perch in Pakistan's small Zoroastrian community, Toxy has managed to spread an outsize and influential footprint through her editorials and her ability to attract contributions from authors of all hues and views. The

the "important question of the women who marry non-Zoroastrians and still wish to remain within the faith" (Issue 2/2003); and, reporting on a Mumbai High Court judgement in the 'Renegade Priests Case' that "the Bombay Parsi Panchayat (BPP) cannot arrogate powers to themselves in a mistaken belief that they are custodians of the religion." (Issue 2/2011).

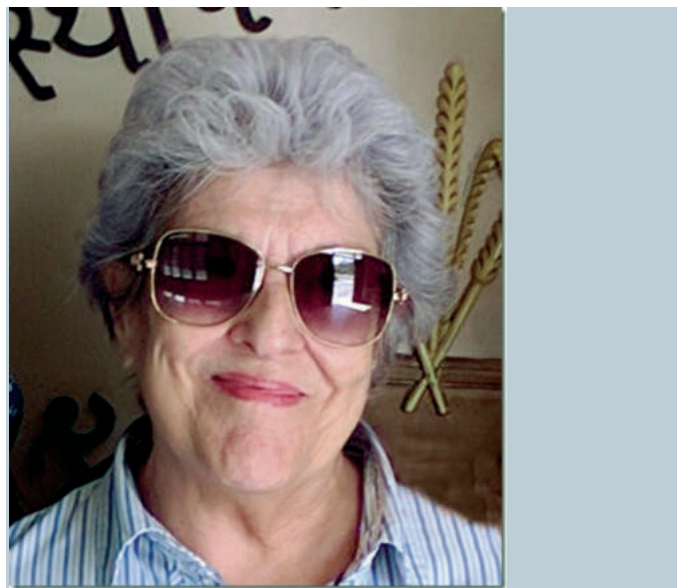
In her final editorial, she acknowledged the free hand she had received from all four WZO Chairmen, Rumi Sethna, Sammy Bhiwandiwalla, Darayus Motivala and, Shahpur Captain, "to do as I please to produce the Hamazor ... without any suggestion." In turn, the readers of Hamazor, too, had much to be thankful for Toxy reigning supreme in her hamazori domain. As aptly stated by Shahin Bekhradnia, WZO Jt. Hon. Sec. & Religious Coordinator, Toxy "has been vocal in expressing her views on important

THE RETIREMENT OF TOXY COWASJI, EDITOR OF HAMAZOR, LEAVES A VOID FOR ZOROASTRIAN COMMUNITIES WORLDWIDE

World Zoroastrian Organization (WZO), under whose banner the publication is issued, has a challenge ahead to find a worthy replacement.

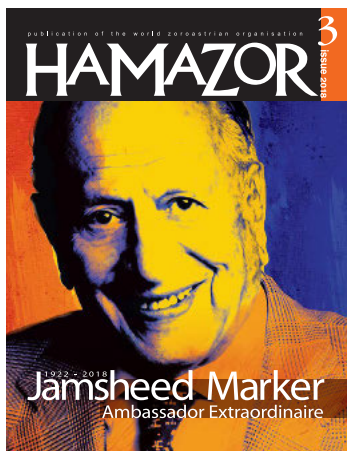
Starting in 2002, Toxy single-handedly produced the quarterly publication, with help only from a professional graphic designer of the cover, and for the printing and mailing processes. As stated by WZO President, Sammy Bhiwandiwalla, "from concept to layout, to proof reading, to getting it camera ready on a CD, to sending to the printer—the whole process took about 10 weeks." The printing and distribution were done from Pakistan, except for the copies distributed in India. For each issue, 4500 copies were distributed, and to date Toxy has produced 62 publications. The final release of Hamazor under her editorship, Issue I/2019, was distributed earlier in the year.

Over so many years, under the plain masthead of "From the Editor", Toxy was forceful and persistent in spearheading issues, such as, to "address the problem NOW" of the declining numbers of Zoroastrians, especially in India." (Issue 4/2004) and "the debacle at the Udvada Utsav" (Issue 1/2016). Along the way, she touched on all major matters—"a wake up call" for Parsis of India to move forward in their thinking (Issue, 3/2018); UNESCO's designation of 2003 as the year for Zarathushtra (Issue 3/2003); an "edict" issued by the six High Priests" and



matters of principle which affect our Zoroastrian community."

The long list of contributors of articles to Hamazor, published in the last issue, attests to the wide range of topics covered. Nor did she spare authors, calling "for new writers to come forward and share their thoughts, views, and/or research findings" and "be part of hamazori, instead



of always saying “I have no time” when asked to contribute an article.” (Issue 1/2006).

A young disciple, Farishta Dinshaw, who was inspired by Toxy to achieve great progress in her writings, “sees her as a mentor who grew into a friend... She is a person who sees potential in a piece

of coal and polishes it till it’s a diamond. In her ongoing quest for perfection, she would push me to go the extra 10 miles and not accept any half-hearted responses. She pushed me ... to write, not just articles for “Hamazor”, but other projects as well. If not for her, there would be no “Discovering Ashavan” [a novella ... about Zarathushtra’s teen years], no “Princess Booblita Comes to Town” [a natak to raise funds for Gujarat farmers], no “Mashyani’s Daughters [a book compiling the achievements of Parsi women] ... She is an extraordinary role model. Her energy and enthusiasm to dive into new projects and learn to swim along the way, her commitment to doing the right thing in the face of challenges, her incredible give-back-to-the-community spirit.”

Shahin Bekhradnia speaks of Toxy as being “very well connected and seems to know everyone within our community which explains why Hamazor covered so many interesting topics. She has been well respected and popular because each issue has carried something for everyone’s taste.”

The production side of Hamazor, however, was not always smooth sailing. In recent years, the publication became a serious financial burden for WZO. Toxy stepped into the breach and successfully canvassed individuals and trust funds to support the financing of the publication. She also embraced the digital age by producing a PDF version that was sent to WZO members who opted to receive it online. Toxy opined to readers that “you have the guarantee of receiving the Hamazor on the same day it arrives from the printer... [and] you won’t be disappointed and the complaints for non-receipt due to postage, will thankfully be gone.” (Issue 3/2014). According to Sammy Bhiwandiwalla, “This bold step helped to reduce printing and postage costs considerably.”

Toxy made Hamazor into an open-minded publication, covering every aspect possible, though with a Zoroastrian connection of the writer or the subject matter. As a result, WZO’s membership grew considerably and many non-Zoroastrian academics subscribed to the issue, as well as several libraries of repute in India, UK and US. Sammy

Bhiwandiwalla’s encomium to Hamazor strikes a fully deserving note: “Today it is an internationally sought-after publication bravely reporting on the contentious issues that plague our diminishing community, broadening horizons and challenging the misconceptions of our religious beliefs and practices, replacing blind faith and dogma by education and understanding.”

Some of Toxy’s other multifaceted contributions must also be recorded. As the President of the Karachi Zarhosti Banu Mandal, 1994–2001, Toxy initiated numerous community-oriented projects and issued a monthly newsletter “What’s On.” She was also the first and only woman president of the Karachi Parsi institute, 2004–2006, a male dominated gymkhana and sports institution established in 1893. She is presently the Vice-Chairman of the BVS Parsi High School in Karachi, founded over 160 years ago by Seth Shahpurji Soparivala, her great-great-grandfather. The school was initially established for Parsis, but after Independence it serves all the communities

“Today [Hamazor] is an internationally sought-after publication bravely reporting on the contentious issues that plague our diminishing community, broadening horizons and challenging the misconceptions of our religious beliefs and practices, replacing blind faith and dogma by education and understanding.”

in Pakistan. She has also compiled other publications, including “Manna of the Angels”, the first of its kind coffee table book on Parsi cuisine, which has run into three editions.

In the end, it should be said that Toxy’s editorship has set a high bar for the person who will take over editing and producing Hamazor. Toxy surely will be greatly missed and well-remembered for her vision and dedication.



■ **KERSI B. SHROFF** is an International Board Member of WZO and a contributor to Hamazor and the Fezana Journal.



Between the Covers

LANDSCAPES OF WRITING BY BAPSI SIDHWA

*Pages 159,
Published by
Peter Lang in
Interdisciplinary
studies in
diaspora*

*Available at
Amazon \$72.80
(Kindle) \$74.50
(hard Cover)*

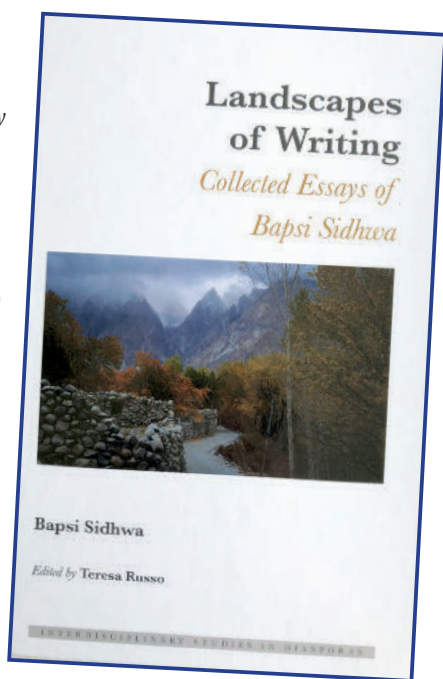
*Reviewed
by Nawaz
Merchant*

It is unusual that a book of essays is burdened with five preambles.

This one is. Halfway through the author's preface, I understood exactly what I was reading. It is more than a collection of writings made throughout Bapsi Sidhwa's lifetime. It is her autobiography, her anthem, her philosophy of life, with something that writers call voice—that intimate sense of person, a way of seeing the world that defines us. Editor Teresa Russo's extensive introduction extends this further by placing Sidhwa's novels in the context of existing literature and contributions by south Asian writers. Plaudits for her writing, though complimentary, soon become embarrassingly effusive. For any reader of Sidhwa's novels, this is an under-the-hood peek at her creative processes and the events that influenced them. Charming snippets and anecdotes outline the ideas that generated each novel.

Snippets from her books illuminate her craft, as in her essay on linguistics. To follow Sidhwa's commentary on Pakistani writers is like taking a graduate level class in postcolonial writing and realizing the magnitude of one's educational and knowledge gaps, gaps one never knew existed until then. It was difficult to resist the urge to highlight authors' names for follow up! So, it was with delight that I found mentions of Kim by Rudyard Kipling and Greg Mortenson's *Three Cups of Tea* and learned how they influenced Sidhwa.

Her descriptions of Lahore evoke the smell of kebabs, the dusk of narrow streets, and great government buildings—an unmistakable sense of place, reminiscent of her stories. Her essay on how television came to Pakistan reveals layers; the



cultural unification from an ostensibly unimportant event, a broadcast of *Pakiza* by India's Amritsar TV station. Life in Lahore, 20 miles away and hungry for Indian culture, paused as traffic came to a halt and its residents watched the poignant love story. Her talent for characterization is not restricted to Pakistan—immigrants to the west will chuckle at her foibles in “a two-way culture chock” while Parsees giggle at the epicurean adventures in a (doodh na) “Puff of Air.”

For writers, this book does what Stephen King's *On Writing* does, it distills aspects of the craft into understandable units,

Each religious, racial or national group wears a very strange set of blinkers that allows them to see the “other” as contemptible, if not downright evil, and sees itself as righteous and noble. . . The writer must engage the reader's emotions and show the common thread of humanity that links us all.

such as the complexity of using different languages, their tonalities, and charms. Sidhwa offers more insight, “The Parsee characters in my books think and act differently from Muslim, Hindu, or Christian characters not only because of the differences in customs or culture, but because of the language they speak, and the idiom they favor, predisposes them to certain choices.” One finds much food for thought here. Ruminating on the role of a writer, Sidhwa says, “Each religious, racial or national group wears a very strange set of blinkers that allows them to see the “other” as contemptible, if not downright evil, and sees itself as righteous and noble. A writer can breach these blinkers through a skillfully told story. I use a lot of humor to air unpleasant truths. The writer must engage the reader's emotions and show the common thread of humanity that links us all.”

Sidhwa's book expounds on her activism via essays that unveil the underlying political machinations of the Indian subcontinent. Politics is actively discussed in South Asian families, argued, and propounded at the dinner table, so it is no surprise that Sidhwa takes a bold stance on the Kashmir issue or the tension fraught Indo-Pak border. While

she shares her regard for the high peaks and snow bound villages, her horror at their treatment of women is mixed with understanding and sympathy for their desperate poverty. Reading her essays, one cannot help absorbing her deep caring for all those who did not have the privileged upbringing she did.

In her essays on the tenuous relationship between neighbors India and Pakistan, and the radicalization of Afghanistan and Pakistan, Sidhwa does not pull her punches. Although one can detect an understandable loyalty to Pakistan, she points out political maneuvering in outspoken terms. As an activist she has pushed for peace in South Asia, for women's rights and for tolerance. Her essay, Minorities and the Muse, describes the Pakistani legislation (the Haddood Ordinance) that was once used to imprison women for improper behavior, often on the word of a single male family member, a legal weapon to keep women under men's control! As a writer, she skillfully uses her craft to give us a visceral reaction to the injustices to which we have become inured.

In addition to a childhood filled with reading, Sidhwa credits her brother Minoo Bhandara for her achievements as a writer. In a touching tribute, she says Minoo had "An innate sensibility to my writing. He was the bedrock of whatever little confidence I have."

A genuine citizen of the world, she writes, "I have been, at various times, a citizen of Pakistan and India, and now I am American. As one for whom national borders are becoming blurred and matters of citizenship disconcertingly fluid, I feel I belong to these countries simultaneously rather than sequentially: and whatever happens in them resonates for me as a writer." Here Sidhwa outlines her goal: to provide a baton for other South Asian writers to grasp. She urges them to use their craft to deeply and fully engage readers with stories that build empathy and respect for each other.

■ **NAWAZ MERCHANT** is the award winning author of a soon to be published historical novel, *The Rajabai Tower Mystery*.

WILL MY GRANDPA REMEMBER ME? A CHILDREN'S GUIDE TO ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE BY HOVI SHROFF PH.D

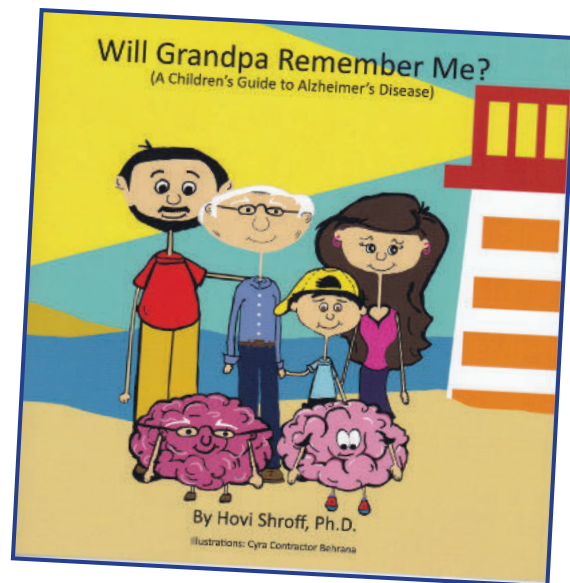
With illustrations by Cyra Contractor Behrana

Pages 36 Cost \$19.95 Available on Amazon

Published in USA March 2019

Reviewed by Dolly Dastoor Ph.D, Asst Prof, psychiatry, McGill University, Montreal

Hovi Shroff, a licensed Mental Health Counselor specializing in Trauma and Dementia related disorders has published a new paperback book for parents to talk to their children dealing with memory loss of grandparents . It is well illustrated for children by Cyra Contractor Behrana.



There are challenges of explaining to young children of why the grandparent keeps asking the same question, why they cannot play with them as they used to before, why do they look so angry some days, why do they not remember their names? Explaining this to the child , in addition providing caregiving to their parent, can be overwhelming. This difficult topic is presented in a very sensitive, gentle way that makes reading for children and adults a fun exercise. By comparing the growing brain of Duke, the child in the book to grandpa's aging brain, concepts of dementia symptoms are lucidly explained. Empathy and caregiving are also explained, as Hovi Shroff outlines a list of positive "magic sentences", to use when talking with grandpa.

This is an interesting book for families with young children, to help them explain and cope with difficult situations at home.

*Published in USA October
2018 pgs 165*

*Available on Amazon as
paperback and E-book*

ISBN 10:1724472682

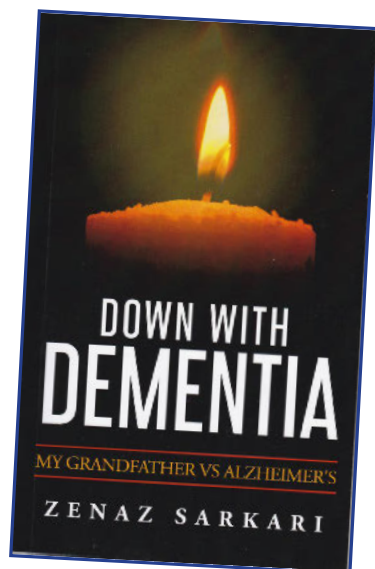
*Reviewed by Dolly Dastoor
Ph.D, Asst Prof, Psychiatry,
McGill University*

The author Zenaz Sarkari, a high school senior who lives in California has written a very poignant and intensely personal story narrating the eight-year experiences her family lived through supporting and caring for both her grandfathers who were diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease.

She ably describes various stages her family went through from total unawareness, realization, learning about the disease and then to caring for their beloved fathers and grandfathers. She describes very compassionately the difficulty in accepting the diagnoses, almost a disbelief, the gradual acceptance, then learning to adapt and providing the daily care needed. In seven chapters she describes her beloved grandfather as the vibrant personality he was before the disease was diagnosed, giving the reader a chance to visualize the devastation this disease causes in changing the person into someone "you once knew".

She then goes on to discuss the few early changes in the disease process that were misinterpreted as normal aging. Even their own GP whom was consulted, attributed them to old age. A few months later when the symptoms became more worrisome the family visited a neurologist, who after several tests made a tentative diagnoses of AD. An MRI was requested but the family did not follow through, which in hindsight was a mistake as they had no baseline to compare the progress of the disease. The third neurologist the family visited gave a differential diagnoses of Fronto-temporal dementia. At this point it did not really matter what the technical diagnoses was, as "papa" was deteriorating and his care was becoming too much for his 70+ year old wife to manage alone at home. Their only son and family lived 600 miles away, and though visited as often as he could, the burden of care and responsibility was with his wife. After some attempts to keep him at home with a full time caregiver, he eventually had to be placed in a seniors supervised resident. He lived there for eleven months and died abruptly with a diagnoses on his death certificate of "cardiac arrest as a result of Alzheimer's".

Zenaz relates the trajectory of the disease through conversations with her father, describing their learning curve, finding practical solutions to every new problem that arose in the management of his behavioural problems, his wandering out



of the house one afternoon, of being unable to open the door of the bathroom and panicking, becoming paranoid about his money, failing to recognize his son, and eventually being unable to remember the name of his wife, all very traumatic episodes for the family. The episode of returning to the Senior centre after the celebration at home on his 83rd birthday was very well and poignantly described. She also provided practical suggestions to families viz have an identification information on his person in case the person wanders out and gets lost, to let your friends and neighbours know of the situation so that they can help in an emergency.

This 17 year old young author wanted to pursue questions such as, how can we prevent AD? How can we detect or diagnose AD, how can we treat it, what role does genetics play. To gain further understanding of the nervous system and the human brain she has taken part in the Stanford University's Clinical Anatomy and Neurosciences programs and completed a study on intracranial brain hemorrhage. This is an indication of her passion and enthusiasm for the field of neurology. She is a recipient of the 2018 Brown University Book Award.

This well written book has a lot of compassion, honest reflection and refreshing useful insights and details of what to expect and to deal with. It is recommended for families who are struggling with their loved one at any stage of the disease to enhance their understanding of what to expect as the disease progresses.

**Retirees, see what the 3 established
55+ Communities in the Tampa Bay area
of Florida offer by visiting the link below.**

<http://www.YasminTheRealtor.com>

Call me today!
to find a suitable home for you

Yasmin Kevala
Senior Real Estate Specialist
Sparkman Realty Inc.

813-380-0064
yasminhomes@tampabay.rr.com



(Hard bound, 293 Pages, with attractive colour jacket, Rs. 500/-)

The book is available at: Amazon / Flipkart / zerodegreepublishing.com (online) with free home delivery: (<https://zerodegreepublishing.com/books/authors/ohthose-parsis-berjis-desai-pre-book>) and the copy will be home delivered.

Also available at: 704—Dalamal House, Jamnalal Bajaj Marg, Nariman Point, Mumbai—400021; Parsiana bookshop at K.K. (Navsari) Chambers, Ground Floor, (Opp. Cathedral School entrance), Mumbai—400001.

PARSIS ARE FROM A DIFFERENT PLANET

'Every great age has its epic and its bard.

The rapidly dwindling Parsis have got no less, in the form of Berjis Desai.

He caricatures without ridiculing; he maligns, without malice!'

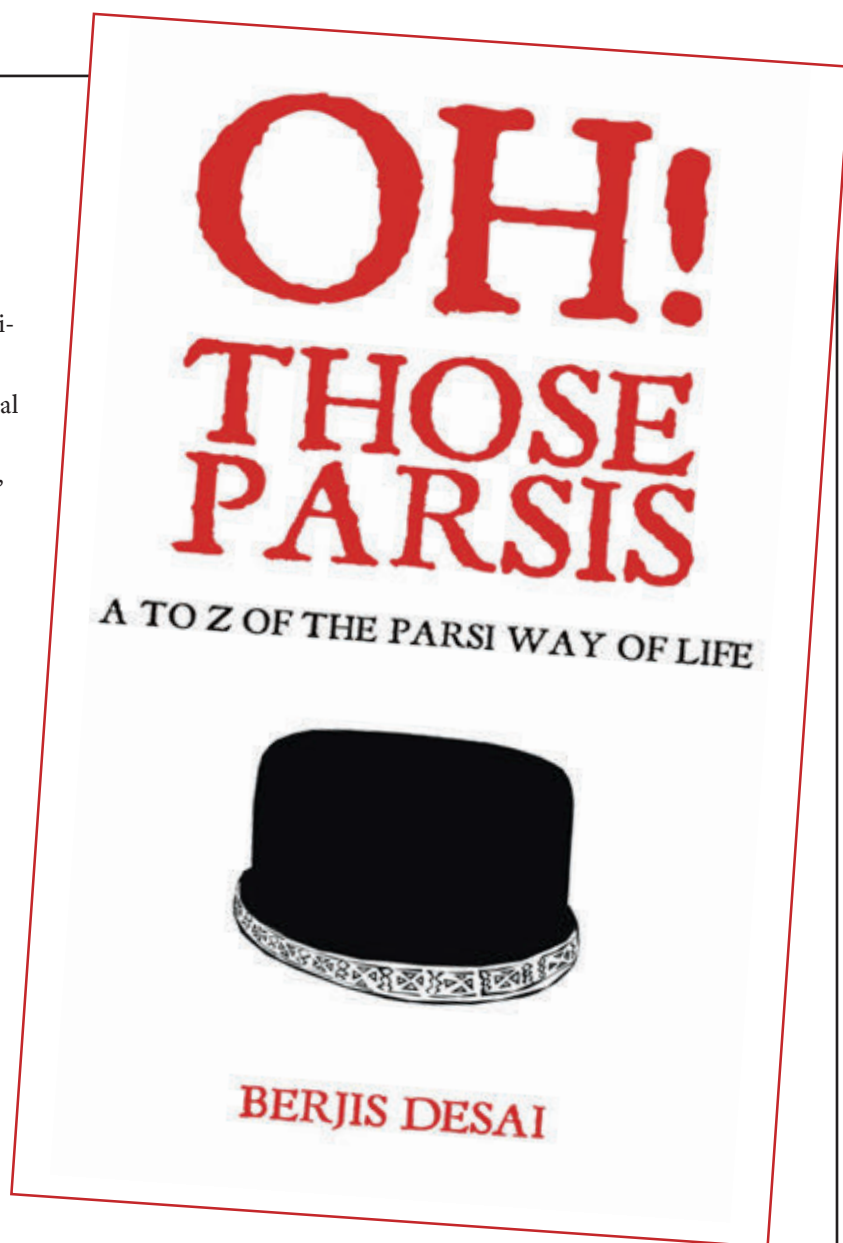
DARIUS KHAMBATA

Senior Counsel; Former Advocate General, Maharashtra

In this A to Z on Parsis, read about:

- ☞ How Parsis convert the dirtiest swear words into terms of endearment.
- ☞ Pesi, who got the Pope himself to intercede, to reduce the volume of bells rung at St. Joseph's Church, Dadar;
- ☞ The wealthy dowager, who engaged eminent physicians to make night calls to inject her ailing dolls;
- ☞ India's foremost radiologist, who regaled theatre audiences, with his operatic rendition of 'Melo Lengho' (dirty pyjama);
- ☞ Cowsie, the friendly ghost, who adored children;
- ☞ The Parsi 'lagan-nu-bhonu' where deliciousness always triumphs over dirtiness;
- ☞ The Parsi Kicker-healers who instantaneously cured slip disc, for free;
- ☞ Maku Macbeth's OCD which compelled her to change her undergarments five times a day;
- ☞ The inside story of famous Parsi murderers;
- ☞ Men, who believe, why have a wife, when you have your Mummy;
- ☞ Parsi mediums communicating with the dead to obtain indigestion remedies;
- ☞ Secret recipes of Parsi rural cuisine to make the palate orgasmic;

**IRREVERENTLY RIBALD INFURIATINGLY FUNNY!
RELISH THE WORLD OF INDIA'S CUTEST COMMUNITY**





BIRTHS

Arman Ardeshtir Yazdgerdian, a boy, to Ardeshtir and Tanaaz Yazdgerdian, brother to Aarzu, grandson to Rustam and Firoozeh, nephew to Aurash, great grandson to Banoo Attaie and late Morvarid Kolah on April 15, 2019. (ZSBC).

Kira Dodge, a girl, to Darius and Iris Dodge, granddaughter to Khorshed Dodge (Novato, CA) on June 3, 2019. (ZANC)

NAVJOTES

Serena and Ethan Elavia, daughter and son of Zinnia and Eric Elavia, in Chicago, on July 5, 2019. (ZAMC)

Farah Mirza Rogers daughter of Khurshid Mirza and Jeffrey Rogers, granddaughter of Putli and late Ervad Noshir Mirza and John and Janet Rogers. navjote performed by Ervad Farzad Mirza and Mobedyar Khushroo Mirza, in Colorado Springs on July 12, 2019. (photo below).



WEDDINGS

Natasha Tarapor, daughter of Mehru and Naushad Tarapor (Abu Dhabi) to **Gareth Williams**, son of Nigel and Ann Williams (England) in Abu Dhabi on March 15, 2019. (ZSBC)

Neville Khajotia, son of Cyrus and Mahrukh Khajotia to **Sanaya Muncherji**, daughter of Sarosh and Friyan Muncherji in Langley, BC on May 11, 2019.

Tanya Mavalvala, daughter of Mayling and Farhad Mavalvala (Toronto, ONT) to **Nikhil Satish**, son of Sindhu and Mysore G. Satish in Toronto, ONT on July 27, 2019.

DEATHS

Dinyar Hansotia, brother of Arnavaz (Rohin) Talati (ZAC-LA), uncle of Nazneen Shroff in Mumbai, India on February 24, 2019. (ZAC-LA)

Khoosnam Cawas Commissariat, 54, wife of Cawas Commissariat, mother of Avan, Cyrus, daughter of Roda and late Aspi Mistry, sister of Percy Mistry in Marysville, WA on March 2, 2019.

Rostam Bastanipour, 85, husband of late Shrinigol, father of Kourosh, Fereshteh, Shahin, Shahnaz, Farnaz, father-in-law of late Iraj, Feraydoon, Fariborz, Daryoush, Armiti, grandfather of Parmis, Parmida, Shaudi, Shauhin, Ryka, Parsa, Aundia, Bardia, great grandfather of Audrina in Abbotsford, BC on March 31, 2019.

Amy Shapoor Subedar, 82, mother of Dilnavaz Vistasp Shroff in India on April 21, 2019. (ZAC-LA)

Homi Nariman Bulsara, 83, father of Afrid Farhad Bhadha in India on April 23, 2019. (ZAC-LA)

Aspi Bhikhaji Elavia, 86, father of Bucky Rayo Bhadha in India on April 25, 2019.

Roda Jal Sarkari, wife of late Jal Sarkari in Mumbai, India on May 22, 2019. (ZSO)

Diana Sarosh Irani, wife of late Sarosh Irani, mother of Maheen Merzban Commissariat, Shermin Darayus Divecha, grandmother of Vardanis, Nasha, Zoish Divecha, great grandmother of Sophie Divecha in Toronto, ONT on May 26, 2019.

Rashni Mehta, daughter of Kayomarsh and Nergish Mehta, sister of Roxana (Nevin), Zenobia (Ethan), Farhad (Brandi), aunt of Morgan, Kaylee, Kaizad, Aiden, Aliza, Zarina, Zachary, Zayna, niece of Yazdi Billimoria, Hosi and Kim Mehta, cousin of Shawn (Sam), Sheroy (Sarah), Shazad, in Chicago, on May 26, 2019. (ZAMC)

Khorshid Mondegarian, mother of Parveen Mehraban Irani, Rustom Mondegarian, Tahmasb Mondegarian, Parviz Mondegarian in Houston, on June 16, 2019. (Manashni)

Piruzi Eruch Dinshaw, daughter of late Eruch and late Armaity Dinshaw, sister of Esfandiyar Dinshaw (Des Moines, Iowa) in Karachi, Pakistan on June 9, 2019.

Shirin Khosraviani (Moradpour), wife of Mehran Moradpour, mother of Khodamorad, Khashayar in Santa Cruz, CA on June 21, 2019. (CZC-LA)

Jerbanoo Mistry, 90, mother of Amy Ghadially, Jamshed Mistry in Mississauga, ONT on June 29, 2019.

Vispi Guard, husband of Kailee, brother of Yezdi (Farida), brother of Jasmine Jasavala (Farshogar), son of Bapsy Guard, grandson of Coomie Bhathena in Ontario, on June 30, 2019. (OZCF)

Tehmi Vakil, wife of Denny Vakil, mother of Olga; grandmother of Denny, Richard, David, Sergio, Lisa, great grandmother of Christian, Cruz, sister of Nergish Pervez Birdi, late Dadi Divecha, sister-in-law of Freny Divecha (Karachi, Pakistan) on July 4, 2019. (ZSO)

Sam Nowrozji Haveliwala, husband of late Mani Haveliwala, father of Sheroy, Yazdi, Behroze, late Marzban, father-in-law of Yasmin, Neena, Burgise, grandfather of Kevin, Fram, Natalya, Zal, Naomi in Karachi, Pakistan on July 6, 2019. (Manashni)

Freny Homi Patel, 88, wife of Homi Patel (West Vancouver, BC), mother of Pervez (Jeroo), grandmother of Gulnar, Rukshana (Percy), great grandmother of Rachel and Philip in Mumbai (India) on July 8, 2019.

Mehroo B. Dastur, wife of late Behram Dastur, mother of Farid Dastur (Vancouver, BC) and Xerxes Dastur in Karachi, Pakistan on July 10, 2019.

Gordafriid Kolah, wife of late Noshir Kolah, mother of Darayus, Dilnavaz, Behram, grandmother of Ramona, Emma in Mumbai, India on July 12, 2019. (Manashni)

Noshir Kaiki Medhora, husband of Yasmin Medhora, father of Neville Medhora and Ashdin Medhora, brother of Dinyar Medhora (India) in Houston, TX on July 13, 2019.

Loveji Patel, 85, Boxing Champion-Western India Champion, winner of Joe Louis Belt, Joe Louis Trophy, countless cups, belts and trophies, selected to represent India at the Olympics. Husband of Gulnar Patel, father of Jasmine (Urmaze Waterwalla) Patel, Neville (Melissa) Patel, grandfather of Sanaz Waterwalla, Cash and River Patel in Mesa, AZ on July 14, 2019.

Jehanara (Jin) Shroff, sister of late Hira Jamshed Patel (UK), Zenobia Shroff (Karachi, Pakistan), cousin of Zarin Hoshang Shroff (Karachi/USA), aunt of Katy Jamshed Shroff (Karachi), Taanaz, Deenaz, Minoo Shroff (Vienna), Arbez Patel and Homee Shroff (AZ, USA), Darius Shroff (Dallas, TX) in Karachi, Pakistan on July 15, 2019.

Shireen Sethna, 84, mother of Khursheed Sethna, Ervad Farhad Sethna (London, England) in Mississauga, ONT on July 16, 2019.

Mehraban Khodadad Dehmeri, 81, husband of Pervin Dehmeri, father of Shahnaz, Darius, Dilnavaz, Rukshana, grandfather of Behzad, Farzad, Tanushka, Khairaz, Shaun, Freya, Zara, father-in-law of Rohinton, Nozer, Eruch, Pratima in Markham ONT on July 18, 2019.

Bakhtawar Patel, mother of Hosi (Benifer), Phiroze (Jackie), grandmother of Farokh, Rustom, Samantha on July 19, 2019. (OZCF).

Freny Madon (nee Sethna), 85, wife of Shavak, mother of Cyrus (Shilpa), Dan (Janice); grandmother of Natasha, Maxwell, Shaleena, Farah, Rayna, Mila; sister of Nargis,

Noshir (Banu), Rumi (Hilda), late Roshan, sister-in-law of late Russi, late Adil in Toronto, ONT on July 27, 2019. (ZSO)

Freddy Vatcha, husband of Stephanie, son of Tehmtan and Roshan Vatcha, brother of Anahita (Alain), Mehernosh (Susan), nephew of Khushroo Vatcha, uncle of Benjamin and Samuel in Montreal, QUE on July 30, 2019.

Nergiz Ratanshaw Birdy, wife of Raj Gupta, sister of Mehru, Freny, aunt of Tina Rustomjee (Mumbai, India), Neville Rustomjee (Colorado) in Toronto, ONT on August 7, 2019.

Rostam Kadkhoda, 88, husband of late Esteghamat, father of Kikhosrow, Mehrbanoo Kadkhoda, father-in-law of Ardeshtir Mayan, Shirin Jangi, grandfather of Parvin Mayan, Jazmine, Cyrus Kadkhoda in North Vancouver, BC on August 12, 2019.

Perin Pardiwala (nee Dastoor), wife of Soli Pardiwala, daughter of Shirin and Nariman Dastoor, mother of Zenobia (Harry), Shehnaz (Joe), Tanaz, grandmother of Aiden, Rachel, Lilah, Daniel, sister of Phiroze (Dolly) Dastoor, Noshir (Sarosh) Dastoor, Sheroo (Minoo) Bhathena, Kety (Freddy) Mirza, sister-in-law of Godrej Pardiwala in Toronto, ONT on August 14, 2019 (OZCF).

Daulet Dorabji Shroff, daughter of late Dorabji Edulji Shroff and late Bachamai Dorabji Shroff, sister of late Goolu Sethna, late Soli Shroff, late Tehmurasp Shroff, late Cavas Shroff, late Beji Shroff, late Shahpur Shroff, sister-in-law of Freny Shroff in Karachi, Pakistan on August 15, 2019.

Rohinton Irani, husband of Norma Irani (Niagara Falls, ONT), father of Feroze and Xerxes in Niagara, ONT on August 16, 2019. (OZCF)

Homayoon Khosravi Kadkhodayan in Mt View, CA on August 21, 2019.

Freny Talati, mother of Kashmira (Rumi) Jamsetjee, in Chicago on August 23, 2019.

Bahram Goshtasb Khosraviani, father of Mehraban, Hooshang Khosraviani. (PZO)

Shahnaz Bakhtiari Ostowari, mother of Ramin and Kathrine Ostowari, Jessica and Cyrus Irani, (CZC)

Mehrparvin Kermani, mother of Shahram and Mitra Azarkeyvan, Shahla and Rostam Hemati, Shahradd Azarkeyvan. (CZC)

Darush Kasravi, father of Arash, Armita, Kourosh, Abti in Iran. (CZC-Orange County)

**PLEASE SEND ALL SUBMISSIONS FOR
MILESTONES TO MAHARUKH MOTAFRAM
TEL 425-961-0298 MAHRUKHHM83@GMAIL.COM**

OBITUARY PERIN PARDIWALA MAY 29, 1936-AUGUST 14, 2019



Perin Pardiwala was born on May 29, 1936 in Bombay, India to Shirin and Nariman Dastoor. She was the 2nd oldest of 5 children; Phiroz, Perin, Noshir, Sheroo and Kety. She found her love of caring for people at an early age, and she went to JJ Hospital, Mumbai, to study nursing where she made many lifelong friends.

When Soli Pardiwala visited from Uganda, Africa, their two families arranged for Perin and Soli to meet. They instantly connected and their courtship was short. They would stroll Shivaji Park sharing their hopes and dreams.

She married at 24 and set sail for Kampala, Uganda to start her new adventure. There they had a beautiful life. She worked at Nakasero Hospital as their first non-English supervisor, then an OR nurse at Mulago Hospital, and finally supervising at Nile Nursing Home working with the elderly. Saturday afternoons were spent with their Parsee friends meeting at the Speak Hotel for drinks served with free Jugu and Kebab.

Zenobia and Shehnaz, two of their daughters, were born in Uganda. Due to a military coup in Uganda, the family emigrated to Canada in 1970. Tanaz, their youngest daughter, was born in Toronto. Perin found a job as a nursing supervisor with the Municipality of Metro Nursing Homes where she continued to work for 25 years. She loved her job.

Their home was always open to everyone and they taught the importance of family. Perin and Soli were in their 60th year of marriage. They had a life of great adventure and travel, had 3 daughters and 4 grandchildren, Aiden, Rachel, Lilah and Daniel, who she loved very much. She said she had a wonderful life! She died August 14, 2019 surrounded by family and friends.

OBITUARY NOSHIR MEDHORA DEC. 19, 1949-JULY 13, 2019



A beloved member of Zoroastrian Association of Houston (ZAH)

Noshir Kaiki Medhora

(December 19, 1949 - July 13, 2019) was a beloved member of the Zoroastrian

Association of Houston (ZAH) for over 40 years. He is survived by his wife Yasmin, his sons Neville and Ashdin, his brother Dinyar (Mumbai) and many friends and family. Noshir and Yasmin were very involved in all ZAH activities. His smile and ability to make total strangers feel welcome will be sorely missed by the community. Noshir was a licensed pilot and died in a flying accident.

FEZANA JOURNAL OFFERS MOST SINCERE CONDOLENCES TO YASMIN, NEVILLE AND ASHDIN AND TO THE ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF HOUSTON.

MATRIMONIALS

FEZANA Journal will coordinate initial contacts between interested parties. We do not assume any responsibility for verifying credentials. Contact Roshan Rivetna at roshanrivetna@gmail.com.

Male, 58, 5' 10" Business associate degree. Working in retail management in Oklahoma. Brought up in USA. Contact joeparsi@gmail.com, +1 631-645 7588. [M18.37]

Male, 26, 5' 7" M.S. Mechanical Engineering, Working as Product Engineer in Indiana. Interested in sports, music, fitness, traveling, social service, National level table tennis player. Contact Varachhawala.arzan@gmail.com. [M18.59]

Female 35, 5'5" B.Com. (Commerce) Graduate, IATA/ UFTA (Montreal), 12+ years experience in travel industry-Int'l. & Domestic airline offices, MNC travel organization & reputed travel organizations. Presently, General Manager in a reputed travel organization. Possesses good personality, smart, loyal, cheerful, understanding, caring, tolerant, dedicated & with good

family values. Career oriented but also loves family. Interested in educated, well-settled, loyal, family oriented boys in USA, Canada, UK, Australia. Elder sister married and settled with family in Florida, USA. Contact suitablematch83@yahoo.com. [F19.11]

Male 37, 5' 7" B.Sc. MBA (Pune University), working in reputed IT company in Pune, as Sr. Consultant on SAP projects. Travels to Europe for work. Contact Farshos83@rediffmail.com, +91 989 057 812. [M19.17]

Female, 42, 5' 3" L.L.M. Managing her own successful law practice in Delhi. Contact Nazneen at nazvan@hotmail.com. [F19.26].

Female, 31, 5' 2" fair, good looking, graduate in hospitality and finance (Switzerland and London), independent event planning business in Mumbai. Bubbly, enthusiastic and fun loving, from affluent, philanthropic family. Willing to settle abroad. Interested in meeting a well-placed life partner with similar interests. Contact arinmaster@hotmail.com. [F19.27]

FEDERATION OF ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF NORTH AMERICA

FEZANA Office: 8615 Meadowbrook Dr., Burr Ridge, IL 60527 • Administrator: Zenobia Damania admin@fezana.org Tel: 630-468-2705

Registered address: 5750 South Jackson Street, Hinsdale, IL 60521 USA • www.fezana.org

FEZANA OFFICERS

President: Homi D Gandhi, 12411 W Fielding Circle, Apt 1502 Playa Vista CA 90094. Tel: 201-410-8963, homidgandhi@gmail.com

Vice-President: Arzan Sam Wadia, 195 Willoughby Avenue, #1113, Brooklyn NY 11205, USA. Tel: +1 917 548 3747, arzan@wadias.in

Treasurer: Rooky Fitter, P.O.Box 266, Sun Set Beach, CA 90742. Tel: 1-714-580-4692, treasurer@fezana.org

Secretary: Percy Master, 11414 English Rose Trl, Missouri City, TX 77459. Tel: 281-778-0506, PercyMMaster@gmail.com

Asst. Secretary: Xerxes Commissariat., 9 Fairside, Irvine, CA 92614. Tel: 949-278-2344, Xc1207@hotmail.com

FEZANA MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

Zoroastrian Association of Alberta, (ZAA): President: Marzi Mehta, zaacalgary@gmail.com
http://www.zaab.ca, ZAA Rep Pervin Daruwalla, prtrickey@gmail.com

Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia (ZSBC): Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr, 6900 Halifax St., Burnaby, BC V5B 2R5, Tel: 604-420-3500, President: Dineyar Buhariwala, dineyar@gmail.com

Ontario Zoroastrian Community Foundation (OZCF): 1187 Burnhamthorpe Road, East, Oakville, ON L6H 7B3, President: Neville Patrawqalla, president@ozcf.com

Zoroastrian Society of Ontario (ZSO): Mehraban Guiv Darbe Mehr, 3590 Bayview Avenue, Willowdale, ON M2M 3S6. Tel: 416-225-7771, President: Mashya Amroliwalla president@zso.org
Tel: 416-302-4101

Zoroastrian Association of Quebec (ZAO): President: Zareen Austin, P.O. Box 26735, Beaconsfield, QUE H9W 6G7. Tel: 514-505-3087, z_creations@hotmail.com; Rep Farhad Fereydoon zad farhad.fereydoon zad@hotmail.com

California Zoroastrian Center (CZC): 8952 Hazard Avenue, Westminster, CA 92683. Tel: 714-893-4737, info@czc.org
President: Arman Ariane; armanariane@gmail.com; Rep Fereshteh Yazdani Khatibi; bano33@aol.com

Traditional Mazdayasni Zoroastrian Anjuman (TMZA): President: Tahamton Aresh Rep Vira Suntoke bvhm.santake@verizon.net; Tel: 714-963-1301

Zarthushti Anjuman of Northern California (ZANC): President: Bomi Patel, 4296 Mountcastle Way, San Jose, CA 95136, Tel: 408-264-4395, bbtes9@gmail.com

Zoroastrian Association of California (ZAC) President Hutoxi Contractor 1260 Cliff Dr. Laguna Beach CA 92651. Tel: 412-445-1533, huty.contractor@gmail.com

Persian Zoroastrian Organization (California) (PZO): 10468 Crothers Road, San Jose, CA 95127. Tel: 408-471 8969, President: Saman Niknam sniknam@gmail.com, Tel: 707-439-3849

Sacramento Zoroastrian Association (SACZA) President: Nahid Afshari, 10528 Armstrong Ave, Mather CA 95655 Tel: 916-521-2188; board@sacza.org ; www.sacza.org. Fezana Rep Darius Captain dariuscaptain@gmail.com; Tel: 916-791-1249

Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington Inc. (ZAMWI) (District of Columbia and Washington DC suburbs): President Anne Khademan, president@zamwi.org; Tel: 301-718-2668. Rep: Shehernaz Verahrami, Tel: 301-355-8460, sverahrami@yahoo.com

Zoroastrian Association of Florida (ZAF): President Jimmy Dubash, 3546 South Ocean Blvd. PH 920 South Palm Beach, FL 33480. Tel: (561)429-8393; jmdubash@hotmail.com; zaf@zafonline.org; www.zafonline.org

Atlanta Zarathushti Association (Georgia) (AZA): Rep: Narika Corbett; President: Farzan Bharucha, F.bharucha@hotmail.com; Tel: 404-253-0038

Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago (Illinois) (ZAC-Chi): Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr, 8615 Meadowbrook Drive, Burr Ridge, IL 60527, Tel: 630-789-1983, President: Afshan Barshan, afshanbarshan@gmail.com

Zoroastrian Association of Kansas (ZAK): President: Dr Farrah Zaery, Nfao12@yahoo.com; Rep: Dr Daryoush Jahanian; djahanian@gmail.com

Zoroastrian Association of Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana (ZAKOI): President: Bakhtavar Desai
Tel: 513-829-7818, bfdesai@aol.com
www.zakoi.org

Zoroastrian Association of Greater Boston Area (Massachusetts) (ZAGBA): President: Zubin Talavia, 81, Sherman Street, Belmont, MA 02478
Tel: 978-857-5946, zubin@talavia.net

Zoroastrian Association of Michigan (ZAOM) President: Ardeshir Irani airani2@yahoo.com
Tel: 248-553-0938 zaom.org

Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania, New Jersey & Delaware (ZAPANJ): President: Zane Byramji, 7, Manchester Court, Berwyn, PA 19312. Tel: 215-564-0477. zane_b@hotmail.com

Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York (NY City Area) (ZAGNY): 106 Pomona Road, Suffern, NY 10901, Tel: 845-362-2104, President Astad Clubwala Tel: 973-238-0630, President@zagny.org

Iranian Zoroastrian Association (New York City Area) (IZA): 106 Pomona Road, Suffern, NY 10901, Tel: 845-362-2104. President: Shirin Khosravi, Tel: 212-757-1679, sherrykiamane@hotmail.com

Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania (ZAPA): President: Farahad Cama, 284 Casa Drive Pittsburgh PA 15241. Tel: 724-941-3665 fcama101@gmail.com; Rep Sarosh Sepai. Tel: 724-234-2228

Zoroastrian Association of North Texas (Texas) (ZANT): President Jamshed Jamadar, president.zant@gmail.com

Zoroastrian Association of Houston (Texas) (ZAH): 8787 West Airport Blvd, Houston, TX 77071 President: Nozer Dungor nozerd@hotmail.com Tel: 832-758-8331

Zoroastrian Society of Washington State (ZSWS): President: Dariush Shahgoshtasbi, D_shahgoshtasbi@yahoo.com; www.zsws.org
Rep: Mahrukh Motafram mahrukhm83@gmail.com

FEZANA CORRESPONDING MEMBERS

Arizona Zoroastrian Association, President Arash Tavane, Tel: 865-257-3117, arash@cimalawgroup.com

Zoroastrian Association of Atlantic Canada (ZAAC): President Firdaus Bhatena, bhatena@gmail.com

Zoroastrians of London Ontario Rep: Zahin Khatow, 788 Oak Crossing Road, London, ONT N6H 5V9, zahinkhatow@gmail.com

Zoroastrian Association of Arizona (ZAAZ): President: Jamsheed Mehta Tel: 602-243-1311, jamsheed@yahoo.com

San Diego Zoroastrian Community: Chair: Hoshang Khambatta, Tel: 858-450-0190, khambatta@sbcglobal.net

Central Florida Zoroastrian Community: Chair: Sarvar Demehri, Tel: 407-509-6918, 1sarvar@gmail.com

Zarathushti Association of Tampa Bay (ZATAMBAY): Chair: Soli Dastur, Tel: 941-351-2240, dastur@comcast.net

Zarathushti Association of New Orleans: (ZANO): Chair: Rohinton & Armin Tarapore, Tel: 504-443-1929, rktarapore@cox.net

Minnesota Zoroastrian Community: Chair: Jehangir Rudina, Tel: 952-898-2980, jerudina@aol.com

St. Louis Zoroastrian Community: Chair: Persis and Minoo Mehta, Tel: 314-569-1828, pmhelix@yahoo.com

Cleveland Zoroastrian Community: Chair: Kamal Mehta, Tel: 440-944-1181, knmkeri@aol.com

Zoroastrian Contact in Austin Texas: Ketty & Aspi Wadia, Tel: 512-263-3131, kettuwadia@gmail.com

Zoroastrian Association of Virginia: Chair: Rumi Mehta, Tel: 804-245-0377, rm804va@gmail.com

Zoroastrian Association of Rocky Mountain (Colorado) (ZARM) President Neville Rustonjee
Neville_rust@hotmail.com

FEZANA JOURNAL Order Form

FEZANA Journal depends on your subscriptions, donations, advertisements, or sponsorships for its printing and distribution costs and community programs. All FEZANA Journal's staff and management are volunteers and receive no remuneration. All rates are in US Dollars (USD). Please note that FEZANA Journal has a no refund policy.

CONTACT INFORMATION*

Name				
Company				
Street Address				
City	State/Province		ZIP/Postal Code	
Phone				
email Address				

* If your address has changed, please email Arnavaz Sethna at ahsethna@yahoo.com (call 1-281-499-1832)

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Subscriptions **Renewal** **New** **Gift***

CHECK ONE BOX	1 year	2 years	3 years
DIGITAL COPY (world-wide)	<input type="checkbox"/> USD 25	<input type="checkbox"/> USD 50	<input type="checkbox"/> USD 69
PRINT COPY via First-class mail in North America	<input type="checkbox"/> USD 35	<input type="checkbox"/> USD 70	<input type="checkbox"/> USD 99
PRINT COPY via air-mail (International)	<input type="checkbox"/> USD 80	<input type="checkbox"/> USD 160	<input type="checkbox"/> USD 240
Single issue (choose one)	<input type="checkbox"/> North America address: USD 15 includes mailing cost		<input type="checkbox"/> Single issue, airmail International USD 25
Specify the issue requested:			

* If gift subscription add **GIFTEE NAME/ADDRESS:**

PAYMENT INFORMATION

 USD Check payable to FEZANA and enclose with a completed Order Form.

 Credit Card ONLINE at www.FEZANA.org OR complete the details below

Name on card	
Card number	
Expiration date	

Advertising Opportunities

All Fees in USD	Full Page	1/2 Page	1/4 Page	1/8 Page	Inside Front	Inside Back	Outside Back
Per Issue	<u> </u> 200	<u> </u> 100	<u> </u> 50	<u> </u> 30	<u> </u> 350	<u> </u> 300	<u> </u> 500
Four Quarterly Issues	<u> </u> 800	<u> </u> 400	<u> </u> 200	<u> </u> 120	<u> </u> 1,400	<u> </u> 1,200	<u> </u> 2,000

Advertising Contact: Dolly Dastoor (1-450-656-2036) or dollydastoor@sympatico.ca

Sponsorship Opportunities

 Issue sponsorships are available for USD 6,000. Sponsorships may be from a single entity or from a consortium of sponsors. Sponsors will receive prominent acknowledgements in the Journal.

Sponsorship Contact: Dolly Dastoor (1-450-656-2036) or dollydastoor@sympatico.ca

A multi-year subscription will ensure uninterrupted delivery and reduces administrative overhead. Thank you. (Please mail this form to: Kershaw Khumbatta, 1455 Highway 6 South, Sugarland, TX 77478 or FAX it to 1-281-313-8036, after 6PM Central Time.)



**UNITED STATES
POSTAL SERVICE®**

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)

1. Publication Title FEZANA Journal		2. Publication Number 1 0 6 8 - 2 3 7 6		3. Filing Date 09/30/2018	
4. Issue Frequency QUARTERLY		5. Number of Issues Published Annually FOUR		6. Annual Subscription Price \$35.00	
7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Not printer) (Street, city, county, state, and ZIP+4®) 8615 MEADOWBROOK DR., BURR RIDGE, IL 60527				Contact Person ZENOBIA DAMANIA Telephone (Include area code) 630-697-8947	

8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher (Not printer)

8615 MEADOWBROOK DR., BURR RIDGE, IL 60527

9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor (Do not leave blank)

Publisher (Name and complete mailing address)

FEZANA, 8615 MEADOWBROOK DR., BURR RIDGE, IL 60527

Editor (Name and complete mailing address)

DOLLY DASTOOR, 3765 MALO, BROUSSARD, QC J4Y 1B4 CANADA

Managing Editor (Name and complete mailing address)

NONE

10. Owner (Do not leave blank. If the publication is owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give the names and addresses of the individual owners. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as those of each individual owner. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, give its name and address.)

Full Name	Complete Mailing Address
FEZANA	8615 MEADOWBROOK DRIVE, BURR RIDGE, IL 60527

11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities. If none, check box ☒ None

Full Name	Complete Mailing Address

12. Tax Status (For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at nonprofit rates) (Check one)

The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes:

☒ Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months

☐ Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months (Publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement)

13. Publication Title FEZANA JOURNAL		14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below	
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation USA, Australia, Canada, France, Hong Kong, India, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Singapore, Tajikistan, Thailand, United Kingdom		Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies (<i>Net press run</i>)		559	550
b. Paid Circulation (<i>By Mail and Outside the Mail</i>)	(1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	353	349
	(2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (<i>Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies</i>)	0	0
	(3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS®	71	64
	(4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail®)	28	28
c. Total Paid Distribution [Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4)]		452	441
d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (<i>By Mail and Outside the Mail</i>)	(1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies included on PS Form 3541	43	43
	(2) Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541	0	0
	(3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail)	33	29
	(4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (<i>Carriers or other means</i>)	0	0
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3) and (4))		76	72
f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15e)		528	513
g. Copies not Distributed (<i>See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page #3)</i>)		31	37
h. Total (Sum of 15f and g)			
i. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15f times 100)			

* If you are claiming electronic copies, go to line 16 on page 3. If you are not claiming electronic copies, skip to line 17 on page 3.



**UNITED STATES
POSTAL SERVICE®**

**Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation
(All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)**

16. Electronic Copy Circulation	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Paid Electronic Copies	65	59
b. Total Paid Print Copies (Line 15c) + Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a)	517	500
c. Total Print Distribution (Line 15f) + Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a)	593	572
d. Percent Paid (Both Print & Electronic Copies) (16b divided by 16c × 100)	87.18%	87.41%

☐ I certify that 50% of all my distributed copies (electronic and print) are paid above a nominal price.

17. Publication of Statement of Ownership

☐ If the publication is a general publication, publication of this statement is required. Will be printed in the _____ issue of this publication.

☐ Publication not required.

18. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner

Sally Dorton

Date

08/21/19

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

Union Press

Providing Perfect Printing Solutions

Sir H. C. Dinshaw Bldg., 16, Horniman Circle, 13, Homji Street, Fort, Mumbai - 400 001.



+ 91 22 2266 0357

+ 91 22 2266 5526

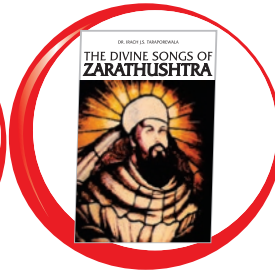


info@unionpress.co.in

iranshaw@gmail.com

- ❖ Khordeh Avesta & Prayer Books
- ❖ Parsi Calendars, Booklet Calendars, English Calendars.
- ❖ Traditional Invitation Cards with Laser Cut Designs and Embossed Designs for Weddings and Navjote and all other occasions on variety of metallic and textured papers. Customised cards also made according to your specifications. Digitalised Printing and Offset printing of cards also available.
- ❖ All kinds of Corporate Stationeries, Monthly Magazines, Newsletters, Brochures, Coffee Table Books....

*The Parsi
oldest Printing Press
continuing the
tradition of printing
Prayer Books and
Calendars*



We take orders online on info@unionpress.com / iranshaw@gmail.com



www.unionpress.co.in



www.pegasus-products.com



www.coverlon.com