

publication of the world zoroastrian organisation

HAMAZOR

4
issue 2007



Jeroo Roy - Artist with a cause





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Cowasjee's Nose, p 40

COVER

"Child Labour in Carpet Weaving Factories", painted by Jeroo Roy, UK.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Courtesy of individuals whose articles appear in the magazine or as mentioned

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From the Editor



Toxy Cowasjee, 2A Mary Road, Bath Island, Karachi 75580, Pakistan

Although most of us Parsis associate this time of the year with Christmas, after having grown up in a culture strongly steeped with British overtones, we need to remind ourselves that in fact it is the festival of Yalda that we should be thinking of - the ancient Persian celebration of the longest night, this year on December 22nd.

The reason the Persians have always celebrated this mid winter solstice (like other Zoroastrian festivals that celebrate the cycle of nature) is because after the longest night, the prospect of spring and therefore Nowruz becomes more tangible and is within sight once more. So the Iranians stay up all night, bring out as many fruits as they can that they have carefully saved from the summer such as water melons,

pomegranates and grapes and enjoy the company of friends and family.

But then a celebration in the middle of winter is by no means exclusive to the Zoroastrians. It is easy to understand that people in the northern hemisphere having been plunged into darkness for some months, would wish to have something to lighten the monotony of the days and a festival provides the excuse for a bit of merrymaking.

Even now in North West Pakistan the Kalasha (who managed to preserve their own way of life despite the pressures of the surrounding peoples to change them) celebrate each mid winter solstice by processing out of their respective villages in a long line, each person carrying a burning pinewood torch and chanting as they descend to a communal dance ground. The torches are all joined together into several large bonfires and the community spend the whole night dancing, with men dressed up as women for added spice.

The Romans celebrated the Saturnalia around the mid winter solstice and because it was a festival where class differences dissolved, and slaves and masters often reversed roles, a good time was had by all, with the emphasis on eating, drinking and being merry. Gifts were exchanged and family visits were made. Houses were decorated with wreaths and greenery. The religious significance became secondary to the fun.

Does that sound like Christmas? There is good reason for that since after the Roman emperors became Christian, they merely turned the already existing festival into a Christian celebration. And of course thanks to the influence of Mithraism through the Roman soldiers coming into contact with the widespread and popular cult of the Eastern provinces which they brought to Rome, the Saturnalia had been replaced by the celebration of the birth of Mithra, (Natalis Solis Invicti = Rebirth of the Victorious Sun) with the religious elements becoming more emphasised, hence the rites of Christmas.

And then there are the other festivals that are based on the lunar calendar but nevertheless they tend to occur around the same time – this year Islamic Eid ul Azha is on December 21st, while the Jewish festival of Hannukah and the Buddhist festival known as Bodhi Day were in early December. Divali the festival of light also occurs in winter.

All these winter festivals make the point that all people need to find a way to relieve the monotony of winter which brings in its wake a shortage of local foods, a shortage of light and of sun. Just as we all crave for light and warmth which the return of the sun brings as we turn back towards the spring, we all share a common humanity. We should perhaps concentrate on that and try to find our common ground rather than the issues which separate us.

The WZO board joins me in wishing our members and the community a happy and peaceful 2008.

Acknowledgement: Shahin Bekhradnia for the information given for the Editorial.

265 years of the Iranshah at Udvada

Reported by Noshir Dadrawalla

Sunday, 28th October 2007 was truly a historic and memorable day for more than 3,500 Parsi and Irani Zoroastrians who had the opportunity to pray before the Holy Iranshah Fire and participate in the festivities.



33 buses from Mumbai, seven from Navsari, three from Surat, two from Pune and one from Ahmedabad rolled into Udvada town on Sunday morning. Many others had travelled by private vehicles and train from far off

destinations. It was probably the largest gathering of Parsis in this otherwise small and serene town in South Gujarat.

The happiness and glow of devotion that one could see on thousands of young and old faces was a sight to behold. Everything was meticulously planned and executed - from organized queues for paying homage

to Iranshah to travel, food and other logistics. The volunteer force and the adage - 'Parsi Thy Name is Charity' showcased its best profile.

According to traditional accounts Iranshah was first consecrated at Sanjan in 721 AD. Thereafter due to various upheavals of history, the Holy Fire had to be moved to various locations including the Bahrot Hills, Vandsa, Navsari, Surat, Valsad and finally at Udvada 265 years ago. The amazing co-incidence is that even 265 years ago when Iranshah

was brought to Udvada for enthronement, the date was Sunday, 28th October 1742.



Dasturji Khurshed Kekobad Dastur (High Priest) flanked by other mobedsahebs of Udvada

On Sunday, 28th October 2007 a Jashan led by Dasturji Khurshed Kekobad Dastoor was performed at the Atash Behram. Thereafter, Parsis congregated at the Sir D M Petit compound opposite Hotel Mek for the rest of the celebrations.

Dasturji Khurshed led the Hum Bandagi after which the students of the Bai Avabai Petit School led by Yasmin Charna and under the able baton of Marzban Mehta sang *monajats* (devotional songs) and *khushali na geet* (songs for auspicious occasions) that made the audience clap and foot-tap away all through. The songs were not only appropriate for the occasion but showcased Parsi culture and values as they rightly should be.

Noshir H Dadrawala who played master of ceremonies pointed out that according to the Pahlavi Dinkard, every Zoroastrian is required to cultivate five virtues which include 'Truth'; 'Charity' (as demonstrated by virtually scores of generous Parsis who exclusively funded and supported the event); 'Skill' (as proved by the talented choir of the girls of the Bai Avabai Petit School); 'Endeavour' (as demonstrated by the organizers of the event) and finally, 'Giving encouragement to others in performing good deeds'.

Homai and Rohinton Engineer were thanked profusely for their stellar role in interacting with various government authorities and providing their unstinted support in every possible manner. Noshir



Dasturji Khurshed Dastur (High Priest) addressing the congregation.

Anklesaria and Ervad Navroze B Kanga were also thanked for obtaining exemption of entry tax for buses at Gujarat border and obtaining various permissions for the function from the CEC Gandhinagar.

Dasturji Dr Peshotan H Mirza's message was also read out and it was heartening to see that the function had the blessings and support of both the High Priests of Udvada as also the Udvada Samast Anjuman.

In his welcome address Dasturji Khurshed gave glimpses of the history of Iranshah and the difficulties that the Sanjana mobeds endured for centuries to keep Iranshah safe from marauding invaders.

Dasturji said that respecting the code of conduct for elections and the laws of the land, the formal inauguration of the Zoroastrian Information Centre had to be postponed. He apologized to the congregation and said that the Information Centre will soon be inaugurated and the commemorative brochure and the silver coins will also be released at the appropriate time, with due pomp and ceremony.

He also assured the congregation that he had the whole hearted support of Parsis and all local residents of Udvada to improve the infrastructure and the overall development of this sacred place of pilgrimage.

Chairman of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet, Mr Minoo Shroff said that Parsis are held in high esteem by other communities and it is unfortunate that as a community we wash our dirty linen in public and make a laughing stock of ourselves in certain newspapers.

Trustee of the Surat Parsi Punchayet, Jamshed Dotivala prayed for the unity and prosperity of the community while past President of the Surat Parsi Pragati Mandal, Rusi Besania, spoke about the glorious past and the valour and generosity of eminent Parsis past and present.

Osta Noshirwan Khurshed Daboo of Ahmedabad spoke about the glory of

Iranshah and the trials and tribulations faced by Zoroastrians after the fall of the Sasanid Empire in Iran.



L to R: Mrs Mithoo Jesia & Mrs Bachi Tamboly welcoming Sir & Lady Jamsetji Jejeebhoy

Guest of Honour, Dr Mehroo D Bengalee gave a detailed overview of the work of the National Commission for Minorities and said that as a Member of this Commission she has

already taken up a number of issues concerning the Parsi community. She bemoaned the fact that the project report on the birthrate of Parsis is extremely low. She also spoke about her interest and support in restoration of Udvada village and said that no one should oppose programmes or projects initiated for the welfare and development of Udvada.

Homai N Modi gave the formal vote of thanks and the programme concluded with a gusty rendition of *Chaye hame Zarthoshty* and the Indian National Anthem.

Maneck Toddywala boldly stood up to the challenge of catering to more than 3,500 Parsis. ■■■■



Noshir H Dadrawala has authored books, done research papers, given talks and conducted seminars at national and international level. He is also a trustee of various foundations/councils. Professionally he is an Executive Secretary at the Centre for Advancement of Philanthropy. His research projects have been for John Hopkins and Harvard Universities as well as for the London School of Economics. He has also travelled extensively and earned fellowship/membership of international bodies. He is also an editor of a few publications.



Girls of Bai Avabai Petit school singing devotional songs

Sanatorium at Sanjan

Dinshaw Tamboly, Managing Trustee of WZO Trust Funds, India, informs ...

The Sanatorium at Sanjan is the result of a munificent donation received by the WZO Trust Funds from the generous Trustees of Bai Maneckbai P B Jeejeebhoy Deed of Settlement Fund. The Sanatorium became operational on 23rd September 2001 and has over the years become a popular retreat for community members.

The WZO Trust Funds Bai Maneckbai P B Jeejeebhoy Sanatorium at Sanjan is a palatial bungalow, having comfortable rooms radiating with understated elegance, a huge front yard where a beautiful garden, the like of which is rarely seen, is always in full bloom, a backyard that has a planned mango orchard, coconut tress growing along the boundary, palm trees and many others all combine in harmony to create an ambience without parallel. The pollution free environment complements the trees, the flowers and the fauna.

The very name of Sanjan conjures up nostalgia and sentiment in the heart of every Zoroastrian, for it was on the shores of Sanjan in Gujarat that we Zoroastrians received sanctuary when our ancestors landed 1377 years ago to preserve our faith. That we Zoroastrians, proud and patriotic citizens of Mother India were given not only sanctuary over thirteen centuries ago, but permitted to retain and follow our faith in an era when it was not an easy task to retain a religious identity not followed by the rulers of the day, is indicative of the warmth and enthusiasm with which visitors to Sanjan have been greeted since time immemorial.

Sanjan is steeped in history.

Did you know that according to tradition, the holy Iranshah fire was created at Sanjan?

The 'alat' for the consecration was brought on foot by Zoroastrian clergy from four Atash Behrams of Iran.



Did you know that Iranshah was consecrated on collection of 16 different fires, including one from lightning brought down by the strength of mantras and rituals performed by Dasturji Naryosang Dhaval?

Did you know that Iranshah was resident at Sanjan for 669 years and thereafter to protect it from external threats in turbulent times was shifted to the Bahrot Caves for 12 years and thereafter to Vansda Forest for 14 years?

Holy Iranshah was then taken to Navsari (313 years), Surat (3 years), Navsari again (5 years), thereon to Valsad (1 year) and finally enthroned at Udvada 265 years earlier on October 28, 1742, where it reigns in all its majesty & glory.

Did you know that one of the oldest 'dakhmas', was professionally excavated at Sanjan in 2002 by the World Zarthushti Cultural Foundation with the support of the Archeological Survey of India?

Whilst the structure can be dated to the 11th century, the bones found have been dated by Oxford University to the period 1410 – 1450 AD.

As an aside, we are sure you do not know that WZO London assisted the World Zarthushti Cultural Foundation by part sponsoring the dating process at Oxford University - but now you do know.

The Sanjan Memorial Column standing next door to the sanatorium is a community symbol that generates awe in our hearts and reminds us of the farsightedness of our revered ancestors, the fruits of which we as a community enjoy till date.

Yes, Sanjan is full of surprises.

We too have a surprise of our own. We combine history with the beauty of nature and blend them with comfortable living and sumptuous meals. IRs250 per person, per day, in this day and age is the pleasant surprise with which we greet our guests. Come, visit Sanjan ... have a great holiday.



20th Anniversary of the North West Zoroastrian Community

Report by Shahnava Mehta & Eruch Cavasji

It has been mentioned many times already but for the rest of the Zoroastrians the world over let it be said, through *Hamazor*, a small group of Parsis and Iranians in Manchester, scattered far away from the hub of London, decided twenty years ago to form a "family of friends" interested in fostering the flame of Zoroastrianism. Thus was born the North West Zoroastrian Community – NWZC in UK. This year we celebrate our 20th anniversary.

After nearly a year of planning, the anniversary was celebrated in great style on Saturday 29 September, 2007. With the help of a few young people the Heaton Mersey Community Hall in Stockport, Merseyside, was festooned with balloons, ribbons and floral decorations and looked spectacular. The evening began with the Chairperson Zarin Avari and her committee putting on a grand display of togetherness. A souvenir magazine, professionally edited by one of the founding members of NWZC, Burjor Avari, full of anecdotes and articles of interest contributed by members and friends, was also launched during the evening.

The occasion was graced by the presence of the Chairman of the London-based World Zoroastrian Organisation and the President of Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe. Members and friends came from places across the North from Liverpool to Leeds, along with a contingent from the Midlands; and one member specially flew in from Italy.

The proceedings were opened with a lovely 'monajat' by Meher Dastor, followed by a short talk by each of the two main speakers. Paurush Jilla of ZTFE presented an overview of the new Zoroastrian Centre in London and expressed his wish to see the residents from the North West community

arrange a visit to the new premises in the near future.



WZO Chairman,
Sammy Bhiwandiwalla

Sammy Bhiwandiwalla of WZO congratulated the founding fathers, three of whom were present on the day for their confidence and passion for starting the organisation some 20 years ago. On behalf of WZO he also offered the NWZC and the West Midlands community funding towards arranging a joint weekend seminar with two

international speakers, as WZO's token of appreciation for keeping the flame of Zoroastrianism burning bright in the regions for our co-religionists. Both Paurush and Sammy thanked the Chairperson Zarin Avari and the committee for their warm invitation and wished them well into the future.



Deirius Dastor

Two members of the Executive Committee, Deirius Dastor and Maneck Mehta, also gave a brief overview of the NWZC. Fond memories were relived, while frank and critical comments were also made. Everyone however, looked forward to a prosperous future for the community.

After the seriousness of the first hour all those present caught up with old friends or chatted with new faces in the crowd. People relaxed and mingled, before a sumptuous meal was provided for all to enjoy.

The evening with its cosy and warm surroundings was brought to a close by



Chairperson Zarin Avari



ZTFE President,
Paurush Jilla

Indian and western music, two melodious songs by Shahnavaaz Mehta, a promising opera singer and the Youth Officer of NWZC, and the presentation of a birthday cake to Amy Chichgar, one of the great veterans of our community, on her 80th birthday. ■■■■



*celebrating
Twenty
years*





WZO's Gala Dinner - Dance

The World Zoroastrian Organisation held its annual Gala Dinner-Dance at the Copthorne Effingham Park Resort in aid of the Zoroastrian farmers in Gujarat on Saturday 17th November 2007. As in the previous years, it was a glittering event, attended by over 200 Zoroastrians and non-Zoroastrians who come to have a wonderful time as well as to donate generously to a deserving cause. Each year, this event raises thousands of pounds for WZO's Gujarat Farmers' Fund.

The charity ball is a black tie event, and the ladies were looking absolutely exquisite in their ball gowns or saris. The guests were treated to an excellent 4-course dinner with fine wines; were entertained by two magicians performing at each of the tables and the guests danced to the music of the Beached Boys (yes, a Beach Boys tribute band). In between the courses and entertainment, there were games and auctions helping to boost the much needed funds for the Gujarat Farmers. The whole evening was humorously held together by the ever popular, Master of Ceremonies, Barry Williams.

WZO chose this event to thank the Trustees of the Dennis William Richards Will Trust, Mr Alex Burns and Ms Jill Ruhomutally, for their generous donation of £400,000 to WZO charities and to 13 other charities. WZO's President, Darayus S Motivala, made a short 'thank you' speech *[which follows]* to some of WZO's special friends and surprised Alex and Jill by inviting them to the floor where they were each presented with a singular hand-written scroll recording WZO's sincere thanks for their magnanimous donation.

WZO's Chairman, Sammy Bhiwandiwalla, read one of the scrolls to the audience before presenting them to Alex and Jill. Sammy's wife, Ursula, presented flowers and chocolates to Alex Burns and his wife, Valerie, and also to Jill Ruhomutally and her partner, Dr Nader Mahaer. Sammy commented that he could not think of a more befitting occasion to publicly thank Alex Burns and Jill Ruhomutally.

The evening came to a close in the early hours of Sunday morning and was enjoyed by all

those present, a number of whom have been coming since its inception, some 16 years ago. WZO would like to thank Rumi and Hilda Sethna for their hard work in ensuring its success, once again. We also take this opportunity to thank all the sponsors and guests to this event for their generosity.

Do make a note in your diary for next year's Gala Dinner-Dance which will be on Saturday, 22nd November at the Gatwick Hilton.



Address by WZO's President, Darayus S Motivala



"Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen. Thank you for coming today and supporting WZO which is greatly appreciated by my fellow board members and me. I want to take this opportunity to introduce you to some very special friends of WZO.

"First of all, may I introduce to you Behram and Rena Baxter, all the way from San Diego, USA. Behram and Rena have been great friends of WZO and, a few years ago, financed the building of the second Senior Citizens Home in Navsari.¹ I do hope that you enjoyed the wine on your table as this was sponsored by them for this evening's event. This is truly appreciated by us. Thank you, Behram and Rena, thank you for coming today and thank you for your very kind generosity.

"Next, may I introduce you to Mr Alex Burns and Ms Jill Ruhomutally. Alex and Jill, as

trustees of the Dennis William Richards Will Trust, were looking for potential beneficiaries who in their opinion, would do most to improve the lives of the underprivileged in India. Alex approached his long time friend Rohinton Irani for assistance in this matter. Rohinton introduced Alex and Jill to Mr Sammy Bhiwandiwalla, our Chairman. At the end of last year, Alex, Jill and Rohinton identified a number of potential beneficiaries including WZO. In January of this year, Alex and Rohinton went on a fact finding trip to Navsari and the surrounding areas, which was arranged by Dinshaw and Bachi Tamboly of WZO, India.² So impressed were the pair by the dedication and professionalism of the Tambolys that the trustees decided to allocate £180k of the £400k available in the Will Trust to seven WZO charity projects. Their confidence in WZO was so great that they also entrusted WZO with the distribution of the remaining £220k to their 13 selected Charity institutions in India.³ Thank you for your confidence in us.

“The WZO projects and funds which benefited from this generous donation included the Women and Childrens’ Fund, the Self-employment schemes, the Senior Citizens centre and WZO was able to build 25 basic bricks and mortar homes for the poor Zoroastrian farmers in Gujarat. The non-WZO charities that benefited from this generous donation included the Masina



L to R: Dr Nader Mahaer , Jill Ruhomutally (Trustee), Alex Burns (Trustee), and Valerie Burns



L to R: Khorshed and Mahinger Sodhi with Rohinton and Pervize Irani

Hospital in Mumbai, the Jai Vakeel Day School & residential home for the mentally challenged children, the Sneha Sagar Society which aims to keep the under-privileged children off the streets of Mumbai, and the Cheshire Home for the physically challenged.

"Thank you Rohinton, for thinking of WZO and making these valuable introductions. Rohinton and his wife, Pervize have been true friends of WZO not only on this occasion but they have also hosted the last three barbeques which have raised almost £30k for our well-needed funds.⁴

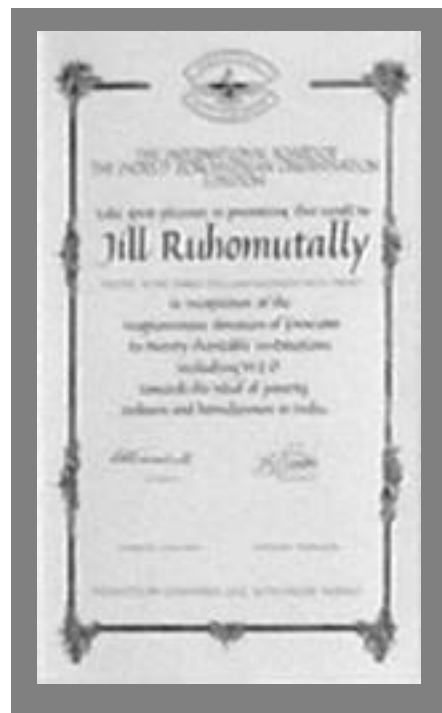
"Alex and Jill, we are so pleased that you have come today to this annual Grand Charity Ball, as it gives us a great opportunity to honour you both in the way we have done in the past for some of our other special friends. We would like to present each of you with a special hand-written scroll which records our sincere thanks to you for your magnanimous donation. Could you please come and join me on centre stage. May I also ask our Chairman, Sammy and his lovely wife, Ursula, to bring the scrolls and present them to Alex and Jill."

[Sammy read the scrolls to the audience and then presented them to Alex and Jill.]

"The International Board of the World Zoroastrian Organisation, London, takes great pleasure in presenting this scroll to Alex Burns / Jill Ruhomutally, trustee of the Dennis William Richards Will Trust in recognition of the magnanimous donation of £400k to 20 charitable institutions including WZO towards the relief of poverty, sickness and homelessness in India."



Presentation of the two scrolls to Alex Burns and Jill Ruhomutally, Trustees



"There is one further couple who require our immense thanks and gratitude for years of tireless and selfless service to WZO and to the community. They are of course our past Chairman Rumi Sethna and his lovely wife, Hilda. This is the 16th Gala Charity Ball organised by them. You have to hand it to

Rumi, when he takes money of you today, he does it in style.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you for your patience in the last few minutes, thank you for supporting WZO once again and thank you for your confidence in WZO. I will now hand you back to our genial, our larger than life, our old favourite Master of Ceremonies, Barry Williams."

Note:

1. Hamazor Issue 4/2005, pp10-11
2. Hamazor Issue 1/2007, pp 5-7
3. Ibid. pp 34-35
4. Hamazor Issue 3/2007, p 9; Issue 3/2006, p 60; Issue 3/2005, pp 6-7



WZO strengthens its International Board

At its AGM in September this year, WZO members elected three new members to the International Board and Dr Jehan Bagli was appointed Vice-President of WZO.

The three new members have been working with WZO's International Board for some time and are now rightly taking part in its affairs as full Board members. They are Mr Darius Mistry of New Zealand, Mrs Armaity R Engineer and Ms Soonu Engineer of UK.


Mr Sammy Bhiwandiwalla, WZO's Chairman, commented, "I am very grateful to them for their past assistance and am certain that they will play a significant part in shaping the future of WZO. I welcome them to the International Board and look forward to working with them."

Mr Darius Mistry has been working with WZO for a few years and was instrumental, with Ms Farah Unwalla, in starting WZO New Zealand and obtaining charitable status there. Darius came from India many years ago and runs his own IT company in Auckland.

Mrs Armaity R Engineer has worked with WZO for a couple of years and has assisted WZO in the UK with a number of social events. No surprise then that she has been elected as one of the three Social Secretaries in the UK. Armaity works for a catering establishment that serves a number of the major hotels in the Southeast of England. Through her many contacts in this area, she has been successful in getting sponsorships and support for WZO's charity drives and functions.

Ms Soonu Engineer has been working in the background with Mr Sammy Bhiwandiwalla to raise WZO's profile, both in the Zoroastrian and non-Zoroastrian communities. She is a freelance trainer and consultant in organisational development, working with a wide range of public bodies.

Dr Jehan Bagli has been a Board member of WZO for many years. Jehan is the current President of the North American Mobed Council and is very much involved with his local Zoroastrian association, the Zoroastrian Organisation of Ontario, and with FEZANA. Jehan is an ordained Zoroastrian priest through both Navar and Murtab ceremonies. Jehan retired as a Distinguished Research Fellow of Wyeth / Ayerst Pharmaceuticals Research and is currently a Research Consultant.

Dr Jehan Bagli has a hard act to follow as he succeeds Mr Keki Bhote as Vice-President of WZO. Keki has made an invaluable contribution in shaping WZO, particularly in North America. Keki, a quiet unassuming family man, ensured that WZO achieved charitable status in the USA and is a frequent speaker on Zoroastrian topics. Sammy Bhiwandiwalla, acknowledging Keki's continuing role in WZO, stated, "Keki, while relinquishing his position of WZO Vice-President, continues to remain a valuable Board Member of WZO and of course continues as President of WZO (US) Region thereby helping to fulfil the organisation's charitable activities." 

Joint FEZANA / WZO Team's Update on

Baby Ushta Confectioner Medical Appeal

A further report after the initial information given in the last issue of Hamazor, pp 50-51



October 10, 2007

Where and how do we even begin to thank all the donors for coming together so well as a community to help Ushta Confectioner with her medical bills and her medical treatment?

Ushta as you know is a 4.5 year old girl suffering from burns she received when she fell backwards into a large vat of hot milk in a Mumbai shop. She sustained burns on 65% of her body, many of these 3rd degree burns. Ushta received excellent emergency treatment at the Masina Hospital in Mumbai, where she received initial skin grafts and was brought into a stable condition by Drs Keshwani and Mullan.

FEZANA and WZO, at the request of Ushta's parents, Zarir and Hootoksi Confectioner, initiated a fund raising drive for the medical treatment and subsequently, once again upon the request of Ushta's parents made the necessary arrangements to transfer Ushta to Shriners Burn Hospital in Boston. Today, thanks to the generosity of donors and the good wishes and prayers of well wishers, Ushta is in Boston, USA receiving best possible medical care at the Shriners Hospital for Children.

Since being admitted to Shriners Hospital for Children, one surgery has been successfully performed on Ushta. Another surgery is scheduled for next week. The goal at Boston so far, per the head nurse there, has been to provide Ushta good nutrition, to help her get stronger so that her body may more easily help heal the new skin grafts. The nurse also goes on to say that both Ushta and her mom are adjusting well and that Ushta is becoming a favourite among her caregivers.

Although it is still too soon for the medical team in Boston to say when Ushta will

recover fully, the very encouraging news is that Ushta has now been moved to Acute Care, which means she is "no longer the sickest child in ICU."

The Zoroastrian Association of The Greater Boston Area (ZAGBA) has come together fantastically to provide support both to Ushta and her mother. They have a visiting schedule by which various members visit the hospital. They have learned that Ushta's favourite foods include fish, chicken, egg, veggies, dahi-ni-kadhi, rotlis and tomato flavoured potato chips and they are happy to take her favourite meals to the hospital.

We thank all donors once again for their generous donations. We would like to inform all concerned **at this time there is no longer a need for any more financial contributions.**

The surplus of monies in India will be held until Ushta's return, just in case the funds may be needed. If they remain unused WZO will contact the appropriate donors for fund options. The monies in USA will be held until Ushta departs for India. Although your donations leave us extremely well placed financially in USA, if there is an emergency and if we need additional funds we will most certainly let you know. To the best of our knowledge and involvement, all the bills in India have been paid in full. All her care related to burns, while she is admitted to the hospital in Boston, USA is also taken care of. Where we *may* need to step in is for expenses once she is discharged; and there will be expenses related to Ushta and her mother's return to India. We seem well placed to handle those for now.

We are aware that Ushta's father has put in an appeal for funds to go directly to him.

Again, we tell you that to the best of our knowledge, all Ushta's expenses have been taken care of and absolutely **no more funds seem to be needed at this time**. We are only in a position to account for funds that have been donated directly through our organizations; unfortunately we are unable to answer any questions in reference to donations you may have sent directly to Zarir, Ushta's father.

Thank You! Thank You! Thank You! We just cannot say this enough to you! It has been fabulous to see our community come together so well, for the well-being of this little girl.

May Ahura Mazda, bless us all and may we always find our way together to help one another!

The Joint FEZANA / WZO Team

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Dinshaw Tamboly: beedee@vsnl.com

20 November 2007

"We as FEZANA Welfare/Critical Assistance are sharing with you below an update sent to us from the President of the Zoroastrian Association of the Greater Boston Area (ZAGBA).

We want to let you know that Ushta has been discharged from the hospital in Boston and has only about two weeks of physical therapy left in America. She is already walking a little on her own. We have been informed that most of her wounds have healed and that the remaining ones are coming along well.

The doctors and nurses have been very pleased with her progress and her physical therapist is also very upbeat about the advances she has made.

We thank you all for your continued support; the financial aid you have provided has indeed helped us serve Ushta both in India and in America. We ask you to please share this update with your friends as Ushta has received the support of the global Zarathushti community and we would like them to know about her progress as well.

We will continue to keep you updated as things move along."



UN commissions the restoration of 5000 year old Persian harp informs CAIS on 1 Nov 2007

The United Nations has commissioned the restoration of an ancient Iranian string instrument, a Persian harp, in the city of Qazvin. "The Persian harp dates back to 3000 BC and is going to be restored after seven years of historical research," Seifollah Shokri, the craftsman in charge of the restoration said. "The instrument was first identified by a research team from Chicago University, while excavating an ancient hill in the southern province of Khuzestan, which bore the image of the world's oldest music orchestra," he added. "The project will be finished by the year 2009, and the restored harp will be unveiled at the first International Civil Planning Olympiad in Persepolis," announced Shokri. The four-thousand-year-old "Song of the Creation" will

also be performed during the Olympiad. This song, which was found on an ancient cuneiform plaque, has been transcribed into modern musical notation. The harp (called 'Chang' in Persian) flourished in Persia in many forms since its introduction in about 3000 BC. The original version was an arched harp, which was replaced around 1900 BC by angular harps with vertical or horizontal sound boxes.



Sasanian floor mosaic from Bishapur, depicting a Persian harp

Zarathushti Entrepreneurship - East Coast Notes

Reported by Natalie Vania

With resplendent autumn colours in view, the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce (WZCC) conducted a dynamic weekend of activity on the East Coast this October 27 and 28. It was a joint meeting: The weekend included a Kick-off for the WZCC-Boston Chapter and the New York's Chapter Fall Meeting. Tri-state organizers included Edul Daver, CEO of AccuPowder International, Arnaz Maneckshana, a financial consultant with AXA Advisors, LLC, Dr Zareen Karani Araoz, President of Managing Across Cultures and her Boston team of skilled volunteers. Boston volunteers included Secretary Dilnavaz Shroff, Cyrus Mehta, Mehernosh Shroff, and others.

A large group of New York Chapter visitors joined the Boston Chapter, an inspiration of Zareen and Edul. The group included youth members, Zubin Cateenwalla, his wife Ushta, and her sister Usheen Davar, National Health Director-Ad Sales, Meredith Interactive, and, Hasina and Dinshaw Master of Master Miles Co. Sheroo and Vispi Kanga, Principal of Cosmet-Pharm Consultants LLC, Cyrus Bhote, Chief Accountant at TCS, Rustam and Phiroze Lalkaka, Roshan Mountvala, Principal of Mahwah Florists, and Natalie Vania with her husband Rusi Gandhi, a WZCC World Director. The Boston Youth Group, led by Daryush Mehta, met with NY Youth.

New York visitors enjoyed tea at the Sommerfield Hyatt and proceeded to Saturday evening's main event, a Panel Meeting and dinner hosted by ZAGBA. Evening activity took place at MIT, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. A powerful line-up of speakers discussed the topic of "Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Technology". Speakers included:

Bomy Boyce, President, WZCC; Firdaus Bhatena, CEO, Relacore; Prof Isaac Delapena, Director, MIT Sloan Nokia

Laboratory; the Mody Family, Print Aspects; Rustom Lalkaka, President, Business and Technology Development Strategies LLC; and Dr Cyrus Mehta, CEO, Cytel.

Zareen, whose business, Managing Across Cultures, operates through four continents, chaired the session. She introduced several Panelists. Arnaz, the New York Chapter Chair, gave the Boston Chapter New York's good wishes and worked tirelessly in organizing the weekend.

Bomy Boyce, WZCC President gave a masterful presentation unlike any previous WZCC speech. Going back to India's independence and the upheaval of partition, Bomy gave an enlightening view of the Parsi experience. His message centered on the vital task of uniting Zoroastrian people worldwide: Had the Zoroastrian's of the time of Independence been more fully united, their fifty-year experience would be vastly different and more fortunate.

The Youth especially need to hear the stories of prevailing in times of global transition. Bomy explained that throughout institutions such as the Life Insurance Corporation of India, the Central Bank, and the Bank of India, "thousands upon thousands" of Parsis were dismissed from employment overnight. Despite the astounding contribution of Parsi's to their society, only five to ten percent were ever re-employed. The new birth of Zoroastrians in the West evidence sure entrepreneurial vigor and a way to use remarkable intellectual and cultural strengths. Bomy is especially interested in bringing success-proved endeavors from overseas into North American markets through "Business Matrix" connections.

Edul Daver explained entrepreneurship with the familiar idea of "the pursuit of opportunity beyond the resources currently available". He harkened us to Schumpeter's

1934 "Theory of Economic Development" in which continual revolution takes place.

"Undertakings" occur and thereby, the one who "undertakes", ie. the entrepreneur, moves things forward.

Firdaus Bhatena, an MIT Alumni and CEO of Relacore, spoke of his experience in successfully launching four high-tech startups. His slide-show "Demystifying Startups: Do I Really Know Something that You Don't?!" gave audience members the "true or false" insights of a real initiator who was "been there" when a company goes from an initial idea to a real business.

Among insights, Firdaus explained the criterion for the best investor: The best investor will support you "when your back is up against the wall". Firdaus credited his investors, both for their firmness and their support. Another valuable insight pointed to research claiming that successful entrepreneurs wishing "to give back" have this incentive despite their tax burden. Firdaus's perspective that entrepreneurial life does not require sacrifice of family life, but instead protection of it, is again a valuable data-point from real-life experience.

Rusi Gandhi, founder of the WZCC-NY Chapter and principal of Rusi Gandhi Realty, spoke on the importance of building the Boston Chapter through strong member participation. Rusi, a WZCC World Director, collected twenty-five member applications and pledges for Zareen.

Prof Isaac Delapena runs the MIT Sloan Nokia Laboratory and informed WZCC about tremendous opportunity as the world adopts mobile technologies. At the cutting-edge of high-technology development, Nokia is committed to open innovation models and the use of mobile technologies. Devices will surprise us in the convergence of functions and their development, but the growth in mobility is astronomical: Across the world, cell-phone use exponentially outstrips the use of laptops. Issac received an excellent introduction to Zoroastrians at the Kick-off and this eventually helps the

Zoroastrian Youth who approaches his laboratory.

Mehernosh Mody, with his founder-parents Kavas and Beroze, of Print Aspects, gave the audience a deep look at their brave steps in building the family business. Although trained as a bio-chemist and working in a hospital, Kavas believed deeply in himself and wished to reach for the sky. Mehernosh also acquired a science degree, and as with his friend Firdaus, wished his independence and capacity to help his family.

With his own business, Mehernosh can work with those he trusts. He can be both realistic and optimistic while avoiding irrational exuberance. Audience members learned that machines in the printing world cost six-figure sums, and develop today fast enough to rotate in and out of businesses in a two to five year timeframe. Mehernosh is very grateful for an excellent choice as his wife joined the business. Her technical and artistic skill is strategically helpful to Print Aspects.

Rustam Lalkaka has business incubation experience as do few other professionals in the entire world. To mention just a little of his incredible endeavors, he started the first business incubator in 1987 in China. He began his career in India with Dastoor and Company. With research internationalized, Rustam also went in an international direction, as have four and one-half million Americans of Indian descent. He has operated major divisions at the United Nations in their Science and Technology initiatives.

One cannot talk with Rustam long without hearing amazing and fine things. There is always the need to re-invent, he believes and we learned that Rustam was vital in the 1950 invention at Stanford of the world's first titanium sponge. He reminded us of Darwin's observation that survival of the fittest is not to the strongest or most intelligent, but to that which is most responsive to change.

please turn to p 55 

Mancherji Edalji Joshi Memorial Trust - Food Scheme

As outdated copies of the appeal were being circulated by email, I requested the Trust to send the latest news on their Food Scheme. Hamazor has carried this worthy appeal in previous issues. - Ed

“

It is extremely heartening to see that in this age of crass commercialization and ridden with self interest there are still people out there who not only notice the plight of the less fortunate but, more than that are willing to take a stand towards improving their lot.

In this world, very often, the efforts of an individual are not significant enough to make a difference. But collectively, it is possible for a group to do much more than the sum of the individual parts.

Thanks to that of benevolent individuals and donors we are able to tend to their daily meals. But the demand is much in excess of the Funds generated and hence this appeal. Your generous contribution helps us in reaching out to our poor brethren.

While I do realize that most donors to the Food Scheme do not ask us to give an account of our activities, we feel obliged to give you an overview of the same if for no other reason than to give an idea of how your funds are utilized. Below is a summary of what we have been able to achieve in feeding these poor.

36 old and infirm Zoroastrians who have no one to turn to: IRs43,200/- per month.

8 sons of chasniwalas studying in Mumbai colleges and staying at the Manekji Sett Agiary Hostel: IRs9,200/- per month.

17 poor Parsi students of the J B Vachha School for Parsi girls: IRs47,000/- per annum.

Subsidised lunch - Mondays to Fridays

30 Khandia, Nassesaleas, Bungli Staff (all Parsis, breakfast only): IRs9,900/- per month.

20 Food Grains and Provisions (These are given to people who are able to cook for their family but are in very low income group): IRs20,000/- per month.

Total expenditure per year Rs10,34,600/-.

When we started we were covering only about 21 old Zoroastrians by giving them two meals a day. Today, we have been able to add more than a hundred new individuals and families from different groups to cover their particular needs.

Experience however tells me that anything new always gets a great initial response, but with the passage of time, unfortunately, the response tends to wane and when that happens, the drying up of funds, forces us to curtail and restrict extending the benefit of our Food Scheme to some of the needy beneficiaries of the same.

I would also appreciate if you could please pass on details of the scheme to other likeminded Zoroastrians or alternatively let us have their reference so that we may contact them directly.

I shall be happy to answer any queries that anybody may have with regards to this scheme. In this connection please feel free to contact me directly by phone (24149571/9820982623). Alternatively you could contact us by e-mail at food_aid@mejmt.org

”

All cheques towards the Food Scheme should be drawn in favour of the Mancherji E Joshi Memorial Trust.

Mithoo Jimi Jesia

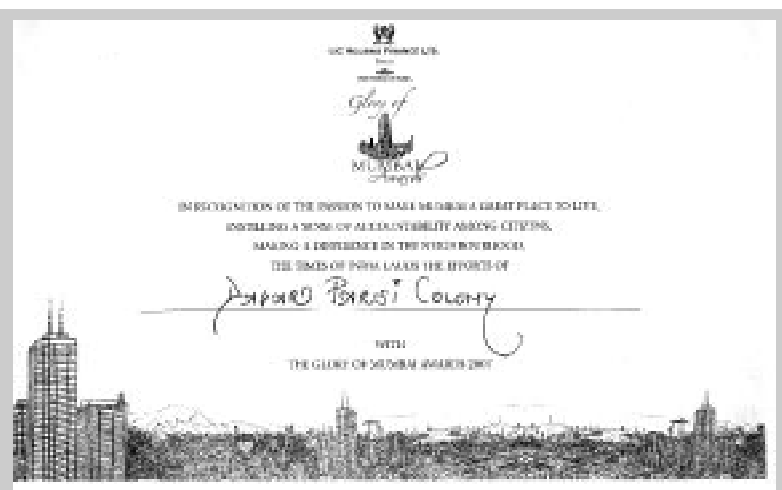
Trustee, Mancherji Edalji Joshi Memorial Trust

Address: Jesia Building, 797 Jam-e-Jamshed Road, Parsi Colony, Dadar, Mumbai 400 014, India.



Glory of Mumbai Awards presented by Times of India

Marzban Giara informed Hamazor, "the Mancherji Joshi Dadar Parsee Colony won the Times of India *Glory of Mumbai Award* for the year 2007. It was adjudged as the **BEST COLONY** in the *Environmental Management Category*."



The Awards event was held at Hotel Intercontinental on Sunday 14 October. The objective of the awards instituted by the TOI was to laud the efforts of residential societies in making Mumbai a great place to live in. This year they received more than 1,400 applications from Mumbai, Navi Mumbai and Thane. The properties were divided as: bungalows, apartments, societies, colonies and townships which are then categorized under Water Management, Security Administration, Entertainment, Community Initiatives and Environment Maintenance.

Marzban Giara in his book *Parsi Statues* has written "Mr Mancherji Edulji Joshi was the architect of the beautiful garden colony having about 10,000 Parsi residents. ...To alleviate the housing problems of the community, he founded the Parsi Central Association Cooperative Housing Society in 1920 and as a result, an ideal garden colony with schools, library, gymkhana, recreation grounds, bandstand, physical

culture house, stores, bungli, daremeher, public hall and charitable dispensary was established. This garden colony is named after him as Mancherji Joshi Dadar Parsi Colony."

§

Mr J R B Jeejeebhoy in his booklet on the history of the Dadar Parsee Colony in October 1951 wrote:

"Three hundred years (before) the locality which now comprises the Parsee Colony ... belonged to the Jesuits who were the owners. ...The vast area encircling the present Colony site was then overgrown with jungles, wild flowers and rank vegetation. Roads there were none but only small paths infested with robbers, man-eaters and poisonous reptiles. It remained in this barren state uncultivated and undeveloped for more than two centuries. ... To give a faint idea of the wilderness, I quote from the Bombay Courier of December 17, 1814 which states that a party of sepoys killed a large royal tiger measuring 9 ft from nose to tail and 4ft in height in that area three days previously. About 40 years later (1853) another tiger mauled a Parsee cart-owner and did other damage and in 1863 a third one killed several persons in the Dadar environment including a Parsee named Hormasjee Dadabhoy, aged 24. Such was then the condition of the surroundings of the site of the Parsee Colony.

"... In 1906 the Zoroastrian Building Society was formed with an authorized capital of Rs10 lacs (Rs one million). It was this and the Parsee Central Association Cooperative Housing Society which in 1919 acquired the portion of land on the Improvement Trust Area at Dadar, now known as Parsee Colony. The Dadar-Matunga Parsee Zoroastrian Association came into existence in 1925 under the able captainship of Muncherjee Joshi. Muncherjee with the active cooperation of his able assistants, clothed the wilderness of Dadar with the gorgeous mantle of gardens and beautiful structures now teeming with life and activity. ... year after year houses began to be erected by private enterprise through philanthropy of persons



Mancherji Edulji Joshi
2 August 1870
31 March 1955

like Lady Dhanbai Cowasji Jehangir, Sir Hormusjee Adenwalla and other benefactors ... for the middle and poorer classes of the community. ... 128 plots were acquired comprising 250,000 square yards and about 6,000 Parsees were accommodated in up-to-date sanitary houses.

“... He made the deserts of Dadar blossom into a living, active, healthy settlement. ... It is gratifying to note that homage was paid to his life long labours by his admirers by raising a bust of him at the entrance of the Colony.”

[information sent by Marzban Giara]



Rustam-Faramna Agiari at Parsee Colony, Dadar, Mumbai

Email dated 29 Jun 2007 - source unknown
Shared by Shahrazad Irani of Karachi, Pakistan

Rustam, was a poor youth, who had lost his father, when he was very young, and was staying with his ailing mother, in Pandey Chawl, at Karelwadi, Thakurwad, Mumbai. Due to poverty he was not properly educated. He was dark skinned, thin and very tall, and had a very shrill voice. Finding employment was a problem for him, due to all his drawbacks.

Ultimately, he approached one Dadi Thoothi, who had formed a drama company to stage dramas, to employ him as an actor. During that period, cinemas showing silent films had not yet entered Mumbai, hence, staged dramas were the attractions for entertainment. During those days, female roles on stage were performed by male actors. Due to his shrill voice, he was suitable for female roles, but his tall stature was a handicap. Nevertheless, as his luck would have it, this handicap turned out to be an asset for the drama company, because the audience automatically started laughing and clapping the moment he entered the stage.

During those days, Parsis were performing dramas in Hindi and Urdu besides Gujarati, hence their dramatic societies performed in other parts of the country too. Native Rajas,

Maharajas, Nawabs were their main patrons. Once, the Maharaja of Jaipur, invited Dadi Thoothi's drama company to perform in his palace at Jaipur.

Now it so happened that, Rustam-Faramna, besides being an actor, also served as a *babarchi* [cook] to feed his co-actors. He was an expert at preparing Parsi dishes like *Dhan-sak*, *Curry-chaval*, *Khichri-patio*.

Once, Rustam-Faramna made bold enough to offer his dish to the Maharaja and his Indian and foreign guests who had gathered to watch a drama of his company. All of them relished the Parsi dishes so much that it turned Rustam-Faramna's fortune. When his drama company prepared to leave Jaipur, to take up some other assignment, the Maharaja of Jaipur, ordered Rustam-Faramna not to leave, because he wanted to appoint him as a cook in his royal guesthouse.

All the Indian and foreign guests of the Maharaja relished the food of the guesthouse so much, that the Maharaja, started sending Rustam-Faramna to his royal guesthouse at Agra too, because most often, the guests who visited Jaipur, never failed to visit Agra, to see the Taj, and other Mughal monuments at Agra and Fatehpur-sikri.

In the good old days, Rustam-Faramna's co-actors used to tease him, by calling him Rustam-Curry-Chaval. Now with his changed fortune, he felt proud of the title awarded to him by his old colleagues.

Gradually, the Maharaja of Jaipur, helped Rustam-Faramna, in financing the opening of his independent Hotel Savoy at Agra, which catered to the rich in European style, with his favourite Parsi dishes. From then on, he moved from rags to riches. He gathered wealth, but unfortunately had no heir to hand it over.

Thus, the Dadar Parsee Colony, became fortunate enough to have its present Rustam-Faramna Agiari, in 1930.



Vulture culture

October 4th 2007 | PINJORE
From The Economist print edition

IMAGE is everything. Say "condor", and people get dewy-eyed at the thought of magnificent birds soaring over mountain tops. That such a species could be allowed to become extinct is inconceivable and, as a consequence, a big, expensive programme to save them is running in California. Say "vulture", though, and the image is of something up to its neck in carrion. Just like a condor when it is feeding, as it happens. But in the case of vultures, even in a don't-hurt-a-fly, Hindu-majority country like India, it has taken until now to try to stem what is probably the biggest avian population crash since the North American passenger pigeon went from 5 billion to zero between 1870 and 1914.

In 1990 the Indian vulture population was estimated at between 20m and 40m, divided between three species. Now it is about 10,000, and falling by 50% a year. Indeed, one species, the slender-billed vulture, numbers a mere 400. The birds are victims of a drug called diclofenac. This is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory that was developed to treat people but adopted for cattle in the 1980s. Unfortunately, it causes kidney failure in vultures and vultures eat a lot of dead cattle. Hence the establishment of the Bombay Natural History Society's vulture-breeding centre at Pinjore, in Haryana.

The centre is intended to create a secure breeding-stock of vultures that may eventually be released into a diclofenac-free wild. It consists of three giant concrete-and-wire aviaries, and is designed to house 75 pairs of each of the three stricken species. At the moment it has 124 vultures, most of them trapped as nestlings in the past two years.

Saving India's vultures from extinction is not merely a sentimental cause, for the birds have a vital role in the country's ecology. India's people share the place

with some 200m cattle and buffalo. Yet Indians (Hindu Indians, at least) tend not to eat beef. Until recently, therefore, farmers would leave carcasses where they fell or at local dumps. Within hours, the vultures would have stripped them. With no vultures, these farmers are having to burn or bury the carcasses of fallen cattle either that, or risk encouraging disease by leaving them to rot.

Another cost of the vultures' decline is that India's feral dog population is booming - bad news for a country that already has 80% of the world's cases of rabies. One carcass dump in Delhi used to sustain 10,000 vultures. In their absence, a similar number of dogs have moved in not to mention rats.

The vultures also had a third role: clearing human carrion. India (and particularly Mumbai) is home to most of the world's Parsees. The Parsees are Zoroastrians, the theological descendants of ancient Persian fire-worshippers. In Zoroastrianism, the elements are sacred and the body is corrupt. Parsees neither cremate nor bury their dead; rather, corpses are laid out on towers known as *dokhmas* for the vultures to eat. By feeding their dead to the birds of the air, the Parsees profane neither earth nor fire. In the absence of vultures, they have been reduced to rigging their towers with solar reflectors to shrivel the corpses.

Fortunately, there is reason to think that the vulture-preservation effort need not be open-ended. The manufacture of diclofenac for cattle is now banned. It is still used, as people have stocks they are unwilling (and not legally required) to throw away. But there is an acceptable vulture-safe alternative called meloxicam, so the hope is that once leftover stocks of diclofenac are exhausted, people will switch to that. Illegal production of diclofenac continues. But the ban has stimulated meloxicam manufacture and its price has fallen by half over the past year.

Even if all does go well, though, it could take 15 years for the country to become safe for wild vultures. Meanwhile, the Bombay

Natural History Society is trying to establish another three centres in India, and its counterparts in Pakistan and Nepal may add one each. One of the Indian centres, it has been suggested, could provide vultures for two giant aviaries at the Towers of Silence - the main group of *dokhmas* in Mumbai.

In March a delegation led by Minoo Shroff, the leader of Mumbai's Parsees, visited Pinjore. As he watched the vultures feed, one of Mr Shroff's companions expressed a wish that the meal was of Parsee bodies, not dead goats. But there is a problem: one Parsee corpse containing diclofenac could wipe out a whole aviary of vultures and the Parsees cannot guarantee that this would not happen. The vulture-saving ban on diclofenac does not, of course, extend to people. ■■■■

**Daily Times published in
Pakistan reported on
1 December 2007 ...**

"Commission for Minorities (NCM) has come to the rescue of the tiny Parsi community, which is worried over the disposal of their dead because of the dwindling population of vultures. (It has decided to set up a nursery for breeding vultures around Mumbai, where most Parsis reside. Dr Mehroo Dhunjisha Bengalee, a Parsi member of the NCM hailing from Mumbai, has been given the responsibility to coordinate with experts to set up the nursery. The Parsis have always had a representative in the NCM, but it is perhaps for the first time that the representative is doing something that benefits them, thanks to the issue pursued vigorously by Ms Bengalee."

Against the Classicists

by farrokh vajifdar

ancient Iran was, in its own right, a super-power of the sixth to the fourth centuries BC. The first Persian empire was founded under Cyrus the Great (ruled 559 – 529) whose name and fame extended from present-day Italy through to Chinese Turkestan. As a state religion, Zoroastrianism under Darius I and his successors likewise enjoyed immense reputation and exerted its benevolent influence upon surrounding cultures.

Our protest is against the blind acceptance of slanted Greek narratives by Classicists for whom western civilization commences with Graeco-Roman models and proceeds solely from those foundations, and that the barbarian Orient contributed little to that process.

It took an Iranologist of the calibre of W B Henning to remind us of the attitudes of the ancient Greeks towards Iran.

“From the latter part of the sixth century BC onwards Iran is not an unknown land. Its inhabitants were constantly under the eyes of foreigners, foreigners, too, who more often than not were not well disposed to the Iranians, if not downright hostile. ... Any custom that did not conform to Greek ideas was seized on to revile the powerful Persians, especially in the early period when the Greeks had good reason to fear and hate them.”¹

We certainly do not expect classicists walled up within Graeco-Roman studies or, for that matter, Hollywood, to take note of such careful correctives. For both it is imperative that the non-Hellenic world remained barbarian, and their agendas demand an overall conformity to this dogma: Greece was comprised of free men; Iran of slaves. Half-naked heroes from the West valiantly contended with over-clad cravens from the Orient. Greek democracy

was contrasted with eastern totalitarianism whose oppressive state apparatus was controlled by an effete monarch and his brutal minions.

Their idea was to uphold western culture and values whilst denying civilized standards to the ancient Iranians. Historians from George Rawlinson to Albert Olmstead, adhering in the main to classical Greek and Latin texts, emerged with occasional nods in the direction of the Orientalist students of Indo-European philology. Archaeological evidence was reassessed and reinterpreted. Despite such benign countermeasures, the older prejudiced views prevailed.

Those prejudices took hold among some students of the historian Herodotus (484 – 425 BC). This famed story-teller, himself a Persian subject, was a Greek from Halicarnassus in the Achaemenid satrapy of Ionia. There he could have personally encountered the western Magi and gleaned knowledge of their customs and beliefs. He personally never visited Persia and knew nothing of Parsa (Persepolis), the Achaemenid religious complex, and even less of Zarathushtra of whose socio-religious precepts he remained wholly ignorant.

Plato (428 – 348 BC), reckoned among the greatest thinkers of the ancient world, on the other hand, had intended to visit the Magian homeland, but the Graeco-Persian wars had prevented his purpose. He was known to have conversed with Persian visitors in Athens, for he shows a fair knowledge of Persian customs and religion. Even more than Herodotus and the versatile Xenophon, Plato was interested in Persian education.

He knew, for instance, that at age seven the Crown Prince was given horses and trained in riding and hunting. At fourteen he was

assigned four royal instructors, graded as “the wisest”, “the most just”, “the most temperate”, and “the most valorous”. The first taught the priestly lore of Zoroastres, son of Oromazdes – implying worship of the *yazdan* as well as matters dealing with kingship. The second instructed in life-long adherence to Truth. The third inculcated self-mastery; the fourth trained him in fearlessness. Together, these conform to the Zoroastrian ideal of the union of the physical and spiritual within man. Plato had realized for certain that those Greeks living under the so-called “barbarians” indeed had greatly benefited from their Persian rulers. The dualism latent in his “Theory of Forms” had been deeply imprinted with the eternal conflict of Good and Evil, Truth versus the Lie, as taught by Zoroastres and modified by his Magian successors to the west.

But for Herodotus, that inveterate story-teller, the first three Persian emperors were variously categorized. Thus “the Persians called Darius the ‘huckster’, Cambyzes the master, and Cyrus the father; for Darius made petty profit out of everything, Cambyzes was harsh and arrogant, but Cyrus was mindful and strove for their well-being”.² Despite Herodotus’ use of *kapelos* – “retailer of wares; shopkeeper” – to describe Darius’ character, fresh reappraisals have assessed the emperor Darius as “not only a great lawgiver and administrator but, according to his lights, he was an outstanding financier”.³ Also, “In fact, Darius thought big and he made things hum”!⁴

Much of our information about the Magi comes from Herodotus who reckoned them to be one of the six Median tribes.⁵ He remarks on their particular customs: burial of the remains of the dead only after excarnation by raptorial birds and wild dogs; their killing of all noxious creatures.⁶ He introduces the Cambyzes consanguinity story⁷ which deserves reassessment, for, “amongst the Persians this had never before been their custom”.

The historian reports some particular and praiseworthy Persian traits:

“But of all men the Persians most welcome foreign customs. ... Their luxurious practices are

of all kinds and all borrowed; the Greeks taught them unnatural vices. Every Persian marries many lawful wives, and keeps still more concubines”.⁸ Regarding their education: “They educate their boys from five to twenty years old, and teach them three things only: riding and archery and truth-telling”.⁹ ... “They hold lying to be the foulest of all, and next to that debt; for which they have many other reasons, but this is special, that the debtor must needs speak some falsehood”.¹⁰

Contrasting the Magian and Persian funerary customs, he states: “But this is certain, that before the Persians bury the body in earth they embalm it in wax”.¹¹ We have evidence from some royal Achaemenid tombs in attestation.

The contrast between Greek democracy and Persian dictatorship, however, bears close investigation. Democracy as an expression of rule by popular will needs drastic modification when speaking of it as an institution in classical Greece. There was no Greek nation-state, but coalitions and disbandings of city-state alliances which more often than not became suspicious of one another, schemed against each other, and then fought among themselves. Before the Persian invasion democracy was, in fact, a rare phenomenon in Greek politics. The myth of endemic democracy is shaken somewhat when we realize that it was a privilege of class as well as a privilege of sex. In a modern state democracy the destruction of privilege is implicit, as is the emancipation of women.

In ancient Greece admission to the franchise was rarely accorded. To the unprivileged class belonged not only foreigners temporarily resident (the *xenoi*) and aliens permanently domiciled (the *metoikoi*), but also those native-born inhabitants of foreign extraction. Foreign does not mean *non-Hellenic*, but includes those belonging to another state, whether Greek or barbarian. The full citizen was alone the recipient of established privileges, among which was the *isonomia*, or “equality before the law”;¹² except through a patron, the foreigner had no rights of pleading in person before a court of law.

Nor can we gloss over the institution of slavery in classical Greece. In ancient Athens, so typical of the Greek democracies, unskilled labour was entirely slave-labour; fewer slaves were used in skilled tasks. In the trading and manufacturing cities the small craftsmen worked on their own account, while the manufacturers largely employed slave labour. The moral attitude of the Greek world towards slavery was callous – slavery, having existed from time immemorial, and therefore morally and philosophically justifiable in the case of inferior races, by which was meant even those poorer Greeks from the hard-worked provincial farming groups.

On the merits of the three types of government is Herodotus' fantasy sequence¹³ where the Persian conspirators Otanes, Megabyzus, and Darius debate the democratic, oligarchic, and monarchic forms respectively. It was monarchy which prevailed, and Darius who won the Achaemenid throne!

For the Greek notion of democracy and its supplanting by despotism, we read¹⁴ Sosicles of Corinth's view of the Spartan manoeuvres: "This is like turning the universe upside-down. Earth and sky will soon be changing places ... now that you Spartans are proposing to abolish democratic government [isokratias: "rule of equals"] and turn the cities of Greece into slave-states under an autocrat".

The myth of superior Greek civilization crumbles when we note that its people as a whole were very unsophisticated, very impressionable, and very superstitious. They were singularly conservative of the superstitions of religion, and quite ready to kill anyone who slighted, or seemed to slight, their age-old religious beliefs. Socrates, among the greatest intellectual figures of the 5th century BC, was the teacher of doctrines which would have bettered the world and its people if interpreted aright. The Athenian masses misinterpreted them – to the undoing of their exalted teacher. Deeply pious, this

great thinker who taught that God was all-wise and all-good ruler of this world, and that the soul of man partakes of the divine, was himself convicted of impiety and charged with "corruption of the youth", and "neglect of the gods when the city worships, and practice of religious novelties". Imprisoned for a month, he was permitted visiting friends, many urging him to recant – which he steadfastly refused. He drank the hemlock prepared by those self-appointed guardians of justice and morality. Aristotle reported that his forcible death had been foretold by a visiting Magus. To the last, Socrates had lived a life of integrity and simplicity, echoing the *vidva* and *drigu* spiritual qualities of his Iranian preceptor Zarathushtra.

Historians of the calibre of George Beardoe Grundy, balancing out some extreme classicist perspectives, warned: "imaginative writers of modern times have written Greek history in such a way as to convey the impression that Athens ... was full of potential Aeschyluses and Pericleses". Of the idealized society of Thucydides, he argued, "Thucydides drew the picture of an ideal, not of an actuality".

On the "civilized" Spartans, if civilized means owning slaves and despising them as *helots* or serf class, and once annually to initiate their adolescent males by loosing them upon slaves released to be hunted down and killed – as their rite of passage into adulthood – then we reject wholesale their norms of "cultured" behaviour. To have their women-folk accorded scarcely more lenient treatment than their serfs, deprived of marital rights, regarded as sexual commodities and frequently sodomized, seems not at all to have bothered these heroicized primitives from the Peloponnese.

Lastly, the vast numerical superiority of the invading Persian armies: the Greek historian reckons their number as 5,280,000, "who drank rivers dry!", against the patriotic 7,000 Greek defenders led by the Spartan Leonidas. We will forgo its logistical implications. This puny defence force, including the immortalized 300

Spartans, supposedly held out against Xerxes' barbarian hordes!

It took the open-minded assessment of a classical scholar of Peter Kingsley's stature to restore much dislocated perspectives. His carefully worded conclusion notes "we cannot afford to minimize the significance of the continual exodus of highly intelligent and talented Greeks to Iran from the 6th century BC through to the time of Alexander the Great, in search not just of career opportunities or political asylum but also of a wiser civilization".¹⁵

[Part II will continue in the next issue of Hamazor - 1/2008]

References:

- 1 W.B. Henning, Zoroaster: Politician or Witch – doctor? (OUP, 1949, p19)
- 2 Herodotus, The Histories, III.89
- 3 A.T. Olmstead, History of the Persian Empire (Chicago, 1948, p185)
- 4 J.M. Cook, 'The rise of the Achaemenids' (in Cambridge History of Iran, II (1985) – p223
- 5 I.101; 120
- 6 I.140
- 7 III.31
- 8 I.135
- 9 I.136
- 10 I.138
- 11 I.140
- 12 III.80
- 13 III.80 – 83
- 14 V.92
- 15 'Greeks, Shamans and Magi', Studia Iranica, 23/2, 1994, pp196/7



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Yazamaide

by sam kerr

The Avestan word, 'Yazamaide', quoted innumerable times in the Avestan texts, is variously translated as 'Reverence be to', 'I revere', 'We revere'; rarely as 'Worship'.

Comparatively, the term 'reverence' is noted only a few times in the holy texts of other major faiths. In the King James Version of the holy Bible it is mentioned only 10 times and in the New International Version only 15 times. The Bible Gateway Index interprets the word 'Reverence' most times as 'fear of God', once each as 'knowledge', 'sanctuary' and 'veneration'.

The Vedic equivalent of the word is 'Yazamahē', which is quoted in the Vig Veda only eight times and its derivatives 'Yazāmaha' and 'Yazāmahai' once each. 'Yazamahē' in the Vedas has been variously translated as 'worship' and 'worship with reverence'.

Clearly, its interpretation has been overcast by a shadowy intonation. Objectively, it has, in a subtle sense, been also applied to civic and civil matters without the implication, in a reasonable manner, of the difference between divine and human. This oversight often leads to presumptions and even insistence that the Creator is on one's side in debatable social situations, thus making the appropriate situation extremely difficult to resolve. The word, in the divine sense, to my mind has no place in politics and ethics. History has revealed ample reasons why the Pope had to be given a place of his own to rule, divorced from the inescapable and irascible upheavals experienced in the Halls of State.

It has been noted in ancient civilizations that the 'tyrant' and in modern times the 'dictator' and even democratically elected (and re-elected) head of State (particularly the one who has been mandated an absolute majority) find ruling in a just

manner for the general good of the populace a matter not much to the liking of the masses. The hand-picked followers maintain the ruler high on a pedestal for the masses to behold him, hopefully, in some form of (irreverent) respect while they enact his bidding. *"Power corrupts. Absolute power corrupts absolutely,"* quoted Lord Acton, an English historian (1834 to 1902). This mindset invariably leads to an explosive formula making the group somewhat willfully blind to the plight of the masses and willfully deaf to the yearnings of the voiceless. Zarathushtra talks about the modus operandi employed by the **Gathic 'Kavis', the 'Karpans' and the 'Usigs'**. These were groups of priests and local potentates, who had planned to remain in oppressive power. Their evil intent was fuelled by conceit, intimidation and furious agitation - clearly an indulgence in a sort of group egotism and collective self-righteousness in remaining **'...willfully deaf to Mazdā's message and willfully blind to Mazdā's glory'** - Gatha Ahunavaiti (Yasna 32.15)



Having worked in the University College hospitals and the University of NSW, Sydney, Australia since 1968 as a Surgeon and lecturer, Sam Kerr has now been appointed to an Emeritus position. Initiated the formation of the Australian Zoroastrian Association in Sydney in 1969. In addition to his professional writing he has published papers on the social, cultural, historical and scriptural aspects of the religion of Zarathushtra.

Human limitations, in the scheme of things, do promote humility and virtue in the thinking person. This in turn, curbs the urge to become pompous and pretend to act God-like. In our scriptures 'Yazamaidē', in a spiritual sense, is meant really to be a form of heartfelt adoration / praise of the cardinal inner strength, a source of virtuous behaviour in a meritorious person / Yazata / Fire - clearly worthy of such bestowing. The 'reverence' may be in the form of individual prayer (Yasht/ Setayash ... etc) or a ceremony. The latter is a set of liturgy rituals enacted as meaningful solemn acts of deeply pious values performed by the priest(s) with feeling. There are, however, some who hold all forms of rituals in a derogatory frame of mind. Rituals really do certainly contribute much reverence to the solemnity of the proceeding.

It is interesting to note how the body language varies in the spiritual callings of different Faiths. Zarathushtra enacted his deep feelings with arms outstretched, his palms partly facing each other and partly

upwards towards the heavens as he beseeched Ahura Mazda for 'divine guidance'. In Gatha Spenta Mainyu (Yasna 50.8) the Prophet used the utterances most effectively (as in the photo) **'... With audible chanting emanating with ecstasy from the very depth of my being and with my hands uplifted, I beseech thee, O Mazdā ...'**

The Zoroastrians of Iran, to this day follow the same pattern, although the raising of the hands may not always be enacted above the level of the shoulders. This gesture would have evolved through millennia from the fact that prayer rituals were often performed in open air environments. The Zoroastrians of the Subcontinent, over more than 1370 years have adopted the local customs of joining their palms together, fingers outstretched in the manner of a respectful 'namastē', although there are many who have retained the gestures adopted by the Prophet. Among the Hindus and Buddhists, in addition to this gesture, it is not uncommon for a devotee to become completely prostrate, face downwards in front of the deity during an emotional frenzy of ecstasy. The Buddhists still continue to adopt this stance repeatedly as they advance slowly along their way towards the temple or place of their pilgrimage. In Buddhism there are also various finger positions described to denote certain non-verbal messages. The Christians may use the 'namastē' hand language and position themselves on bended knees, particularly when in Church. In Islam, whether in the house of worship or outside, the faithful assume the bended knee position facing Mecca and then bend the torso right down to the forehead, the hands forwards touching the earth. On raising the torso they tend to add a sweeping motion to their face with the two hands. We tend to adopt this position, too, when we pay homage to the Fire in an Ātash Kadēh. The Hebrew custom has for long been to bend the upper torso forwards and backwards with the hands raised towards the shoulders or holding their holy Book. Apparently, during Biblical times a bow of the head and prostration were also adopted as gestures of reverence. ■■■

The Yatha Ahu Vairyo Prayer

by dina mcintyre

Before we discuss the *Yatha Ahu Vairyo* prayer, I would like to give a brief explanation of Mazda and His attributes, the amesha spenta, because their meanings are relevant to the *Yatha Ahu Vairyo*.

In referring to the "God" he worships, Zarathushtra does not use the generic word for "god" in the language of his day. According to the late Professor Thieme, Zarathushtra's notion of "God" is Wisdom personified.¹ Specifically, he calls "God" most often "Mazda" which means "Wisdom", and also "Ahura" which means "Lord". And he sometimes combines these two nouns into the compound noun Mazda Ahura, which, centuries later, became the compound name Ahura Mazda. In the Gathas, Mazda has certain attributes which were later called the amesha spenta. These attributes of Mazda also appear in man.

The first is **asha**, which literally means "what fits". It has been translated as "truth", "order", and "righteousness". You well may wonder: How can one word mean so many different things? Well, Zarathushtra sees reality in terms of what he calls the existences of matter and mind (Y28.2). In the existence of matter, "what fits" is what is correct, factually accurate, hence factual truth. It includes the true order of things in our physical universe, the laws that underlie the way our physical universe functions. In the existence of mind, "what fits" is also what is correct, what's right - not a puritanical, judgmental rectitude, but one which, in the Gathas, includes such qualities as goodness, love, beneficence, solicitude, friendship, compassion, justice - all of the values that we consider to be "true" "good" and "right". So in essence, "asha" means the truth of things, or the true order of things, in the existences of both matter and mind. So when you hear the word "truth" for "asha" please remember

that it means not only factual truth, but also the truths of mind and spirit - all that is good and right.

The next amesha spenta is **vohu mano** the meaning of which, according to Professor Insler includes, a good mind (the instrument), good thinking (the process), and good thought (the product)². Needing to select one, for translation, he translates vohu mano as "good thinking". Vohu mano is the means by which we search for, and comprehend, the truth - factual truths, and also the truths of mind and spirit (asha).

The next amesha spenta is **spenta aramaiti**. Scholars who are linguists are in substantial disagreement as to the meaning of aramaiti, which they variously translate as rightmindedness;³ divine wisdom;⁴ piety or respect;⁵ faith and devotion;⁶ satisfying intention;⁷ fittingness, submission and humility;⁸ and serenity, stability, tranquility.⁹ It is clear that linguistics alone has not provided an answer for the meaning of aramaiti, although each linguist passionately believes in his translation. But a contextual analysis is helpful. The way Zarathushtra uses the word in the Gathas suggests that aramaiti means the realization (or making real) of truth (asha) with our thoughts, words and actions of truth - the proverbial good thoughts, good words and good actions which are a fundament of Zarathushtra's thought. For example, he says: "But to this world He came with the rule of good thinking and of truth, and (our) enduring [aramaiti] gave body and breath (to it)..." Y30.7.¹⁰ How do we give "body and breath" to the rule of truth and good thinking? We cannot do so with rightmindedness, or piety, or respect, or devotion or serenity alone. We can only give the rule of truth and good thinking "body and breath" - give it life - with our thoughts, words and actions. Similarly, in Y44.6 Zarathushtra says: "...Through its actions, [aramaiti] gives substance to the

truth...”, indicating that actions are included within the concept of aramaiti. And he describes a person of aramaiti as follows: “[Spenta] is a man of [aramaiti]. He is so by reason of his understanding, his words, his actions, his conception [daena]...” Y51.21, indicating that the concept of aramaiti includes all these things - understanding, words, action, vision.¹¹ There is no one English word that adequately translates aramaiti, so I leave it untranslated.

The fourth amesha spenta is **vohu xshathra**, which means good rule. In the Gathas it is often called the rule of truth and good thinking¹², and on one occasion, the rule of aramaiti.¹³ Good rule is the use of power, not for self-aggrandizement or control, but to advance the truth, and the resulting good society.

The fifth and sixth amesha spenta - often found together in the Gathas - are **haurvatat** which means completeness or perfection, and **ameretat** which literally means “non-deathness”, although it is universally translated as “immortality”. I do not think “immortality” bears the weight of a contextual analysis, but I will not get into that here.

The seventh concept, **spenta mainyu** is a benevolent spirit or way of being - a way of being that is in accord with truth (asha) - that chooses the truth¹⁴, and that derives its “spenta” quality from truth¹⁵. Insler, translates “spenta” as virtuous, more recently as benevolent, and he translates “mainyu” as spirit. Jafarey translates “mainyu” as mentality, and many Zoroastrians have come to prefer “mentality” as the correct translation for “mainyu”. But with due respect, this does not accord with the way in which Zarathushtra uses the word in the Gathas. For example: In Y30.3 Zarathushtra says: “Yes, there are two fundamental [mainyu], twins which are renowned to be in conflict. In thought and in word, in action, they are two ...” Y30.3. If the two mainyu manifest themselves in thought, word and action, then all three activities would have to be included within the concept of mainyu, not

just mentality. Similarly, in Y45.2, Zarathushtra describes a hypothetical conversation in which the spenta mainyu says to its opposite: “... Neither our thoughts nor teachings nor intentions, neither our preferences nor words, neither our actions nor conceptions [daena] nor our souls are in accord ...” Y45.2, indicating that the concept of mainyu includes all those things - ie. the full spectrum of a way of being, of which mentality or thought is only a part. I therefore take mainyu to mean “spirit” as in a “way-of-being”, like the spirit of liberty, the spirit of independence, the spirit of friendship, et cetera.

There is some dispute as to whether spenta mainyu is, historically, an amesha spenta, but the debate is not relevant for our purposes, and I include spenta mainyu within my use of the term amesha spenta. Let us turn to the Yatha Ahu Vairyo prayer.

yatha ahu vairyo
atha ratush ashat chit hacha
vangheush dazda manangho
shyaothananam angheush mazdai
xshathremcha ahurai
ayim dregubyo dadat vastarem

This prayer appears in Yasna 27 verse 13. It is called the Ahuna Vairya (or the Ahunavar) in ancient Zoroastrian texts. It is in Gathic Avestan, and in the same poetic metre as the Ahunavaiti Gatha. Many scholars believe that it was composed by Zarathushtra himself. Unfortunately, translations of this prayer vary widely. The translation I use is from that of Professor Insler of Yale University.¹⁶ The words in square brackets have been inserted by me, by way of explanation, or to show you the applicable Gathic word (but without its grammatical inflections and variations). Here is the translation.

Just as the Lord [ahu] must be chosen
So also the judgment [ratush] in accord with
truth [asha]

In consequence of (this) good thinking
[vohu mano, the comprehension and
choosing of asha]
establish the rule [xshathra]

established as pastor for the needy-dependents.

In Part 2, we will consider these three choices of the Ahuna Vairya prayer, and how they generate its talismanic powers in Hamazor Issue 1/2008.

Notes:

1 Thieme, *Reflections on the Vocabulary of Zarathushtra's Gathas*, in the *Proceedings of the First Gatha Colloquium*, (WZO 1993, published in 1998), p 201.

2 See Insler, *The Gathas of Zarathushtra*, (Brill 1975) page 118. For a more detailed discussion of the definition of vohu mano see *Harmony in Paradox: The Paradox of the Material and the Spiritual*, on www.vohuman.org, initially published in Hamazor Issue 1/2005, p81.

3 Humbach translates aramaiti as "rightmindedness", See Humbach, *The Gathas of Zarathushtra and Other Old Avestan Texts*, (Heidelberg, 1991), p 13.

4 Sethna translates aramaiti as divine wisdom, Sethna, *The Teachings of Zarathushtra*, (1978), p 17 et seq.

5 Insler translated aramaiti as "piety", in *The Gathas of Zarathushtra*, (Brill 1975), but more recently, he has expressed a preference for "respect". See Insler, *Zarathushtra's Genetic System*, which may be viewed on www.vohuman.org and initially published in Hamazor Issue 4/2004, p43.

Hanns-Peter Schmidt states: "For aramaiti and taremaiti I have substituted 'respect' and 'disrespect' for the awkward 'proper thought' and 'perverse thought' I used previously (1974). 'Respect' is less specialized than 'devotion' and 'humility' and lacks the overtones of the present day usage of 'piety' (Insler) and the negative connotations of 'conformity' ..." Hanns-Peter Schmidt, *The Form and Meaning of Yasna 33*, (American Oriental Society, 1986), p 4.

Moulton translates aramaiti as "Piety" or "Devotion", Moulton, *Early Zoroastrianism*, Lectures delivered at Oxford, 1912, AMS Press reprint, p 344.

6 Taraporewala translates aramaiti as "Faith and Devotion". Taraporewala, *The Divine Songs of Zarathushtra*, (Hukhta Foundation, reprint, 1993), p 100.

7 Thieme, rejecting such translations as 'fittingness, 'submission' and 'humility', suggests that aramaiti means an attitude "characterized by satisfying intention" and that as an attribute of Mazda, it is characterized by care/solicitude, and as an attribute of

man, by loyalty/devotion. Thieme, *Reflections on the Vocabulary of Zarathushtra's Gathas*, in *Proceedings of the First Gatha Colloquium*, (WZO 1993, published in 1998), pp 206 - 208.

8 See Thieme's discussion, *ibid*.

9 Jafarey translates the word as "serenity, stability, tranquility", Jafarey, *The Gathas, Our Guide*, (Ushta Publications, 1989), p 116.

10 All quotations from the Gathas in this paper are from the translation of Professor Insler in *The Gathas of Zarathushtra*, (Brill 1975), unless otherwise indicated, although Professor Insler may or may not agree with the inferences I draw from his translation. Round brackets () appearing in a quotation are in the original and indicate an insertion by Professor Insler, usually to aid understanding. Square brackets [] indicate an insertion by me. Such insertions by me are provided to show you applicable Gathic words (although not with their grammatical variations) or by way of explanation. A string of dots in a quotation indicates a deletion from the original. Often a verse contains many strands of thought. Deleting from a quotation those strands of thought that are not relevant to the discussion at hand enables us to focus on the strand of thought under discussion.

11 For a detailed contextual analysis of the meaning of aramaiti, see *Harmony in Paradox: The Paradox of Service and Rule*, on www.vohuman.org

12 "... the rule of truth [asha] and of good thinking [vohu mano]..." Y29.10 and Y50.3; "... the rule of good thinking and of truth..." Y30.7 and Y33.10.

13 "... Grant thou [aramaiti] your rule of good thinking ..." Y51.2.

14 "... the very virtuous spirit [mainyush spenishto] ... chose the truth ... Y30.5.

15 "... the spirit [mainyu] virtuous [spenta] through truth ..." Y28.1, see also: "... For such a person, virtuous [spento] through truth ... is ... Thy ally in spirit [mainyu] Wise One." Y44.2.

16 See Insler, *The Ahuna Vairya Prayer*, as it appears in *Hommages et Opera Minora Monumentum H.S.Nyberg*, Acta Iranica, (Brill, 1975), p 409 et seq., 419 - 420.

17 Y19.10, as translated by Mills, in *Sacred Books of the East*, (Motilal Banarsidas reprint) ("SBE" hereinafter), Volume 31, p 262 — 263.

18 The *Bundahishn*, as translated by E. W. West, in SBE Volume 5, Chapter 1, verse 22, p 8 - 9.

19 See the examples collected in Humbach, *The Gathas of Zarathushtra and Other Old Avestan Texts*, (Heidelberg, 1991), p 105 - 106.

The Zoroastrian Association of Houston -

by magdalena rustomji

The Fifth Annual Library Gala

“Zoroastrianism helped shaped our world that is with us still.” - Paul Kriwaczek

The Zoroastrian Association of Houston (ZAH) held its Fifth Annual Library Gala on October nineteenth and October twenty-first at the Zarathushti Heritage & Cultural Center in Houston, Texas. The special guest for the event was the illustrious writer, producer, film-maker, and explorer of places and times, Paul Kriwaczek. Mr Kriwaczek was presented a ZAH Library Lecture Series award in appreciation of his contribution to the increased awareness of the Zoroastrian religion, and his efforts in creating a dialogue about the influence the Zoroastrian religion had and continues to have in the world.

Paul Kriwaczek was born in Vienna and, with his parents escaped the Nazis in 1939, fleeing first to Switzerland and then to England where he grew up and where he still lives with his wife, Jeannette. He graduated from London Hospital Medical College. For several years, he worked and travelled in the Middle East, Central Asia and Africa. He then joined BBC as a programme producer and film-maker. Mr Kriwaczek has a twenty-five year career in writing, producing, and directing drama, music, science and documentary programmes. He has written three books, *Documentary for the Small Screen*, *Yiddish Civilisation: The Rise and Fall of a Forgotten Nation*, and *In Search of Zarathustra*. His writing credits also include screen plays and short stories. His documentary, *The Last Exodus* won gold at the New York festival.

On October nineteenth, Paul Kriwaczek enchanted the audience of about hundred people with stories about his travels. As a young man, he was traveling in a VW van, with a destination in mind, but stopping along the way. Since then he has travelled far and wide, learning that always, there has been a reason for the journey, always there have been discoveries. And always, the countries he has visited have evoked strong feelings and connections. On that very first



Signing of books by Mr Kriwaczek

trip, there was something going on that he did not understand. At that time, he was only vaguely familiar with the Prophet Zarathushtra, however, something happened in that journey which he came to understand, in later years, as the force that led him, *In Search for Zarathustra*.

“Not only ours, but indeed every age has, in its own way, recognized the wisdom of Zarathustra’s message.” *In Search of Zarathustra*.

Mr Kriwaczek’s third journey to Iran was for the purpose of research for his book. This journey, he says, was a “voyage of personal discovery to explore the many guises in which the teachings of the first and greatest

The Works of Paul Kriwaczek

Plays:

The Silver Thali (stage)
Bengal Tiger (stage)
In Harajuku (radio)
The Simurg (stage)
One Week in the Life of Moïshe Rabinovitch (radio)
Singh 171 (TV)
Sufi Laughter (radio)
Fred Barker Goes to China (TV)
The Young Offender (TV-Japan Prize Nomination)

Short Stories:

In the Mountains
An Odessa Tale
The Portrait
Dad's Mujahedin
Ghost
Have You Laid Tefillin Today?

Screenplays:

The Well
The Pedalo Incident
Yalta
Henryk's Messiah

sage of ancient times lived on after his earthly life was over". He discovered that Iranians are just as proud of what they were before they were Muslims as they are passionate about their Islamic faith. In his travels he met many

people who would like to revert to the Zoroastrian religion, who are yearning for Zoroastrian roots. And, beneath the layers, he felt an undercurrent of Zoroastrianism; he found all kinds of observances that are Zoroastrian. The Zoroastrian influence is everywhere and it is in the psyche of the people. There was, he said, a "hidden stratum of belief, something understood" but never spoken and that *something*, he believes, is the spirit of Zarathushtra, still powerful, and still alive.

Zarathushtra's Message – Its Past and Present Power

"Every writer, journalist or film-maker, every creative artist or scientist, every worker, business person or professional, indeed every individual can feel personally addressed by the perception that truth supports what is good, positive and creative, while falsehood leads to what is bad, negative and destructive." In Search of Zarathustra

On October twenty first, the guest speaker addressed about one hundred twenty-five persons from the Zoroastrian community and from the greater Houston community, for the Library Gala featured lecture, and he began by saying that he has a keen interest in the way religions have evolved. The Zoroastrian religion, he believes, has proven to be a modest, self-effacing faith but a most unique one. It is unique because it is greatly valued by those outside of the



Paul Kriwaczek addressing his audience using the podium donated by the Library Committee and a plaque placed to honour Librarian, Aban Rustomji

faith and treated with great respect by other religions and cultures. It was respected by teachers of ethics and by the greatest minds of ancient times, including Herodotus, Plato, Voltaire, and Pythagoras. And it is also unique because it holds the concept that there is real value in the measure of things a person has done. †Mr Kriwaczek mentions that in ancient Iran, those who encountered Zoroastrians noted there was *"something about the way Zoroastrian followers*

behaved, spoke, and thought."

He discussed the great impact that Zoroastrianism has had on the Jewish faith, as well as on Christianity. The West was *"Zoroastrianized"* in ideas and in philosophies. Zoroastrianism is credited, for example, as first to consider human rights. The Cyrus Cylinder, which is on display at the United Nations, is inscribed with the very first declaration of human rights.

The Zoroastrian religion has influenced world thought with some of the concepts which are now widely known:

Life after death
Resurrection of body
Judgment after death
The coming of a Zoshyant (savior)
Concept of Light, enlightenment
Sun based calendar
Equality
Women's Rights
Heaven and hell
Existence of angels, guardian spirits
Free will
Doing good, fighting evil
Human Rights
Ethics, values, moral philosophy

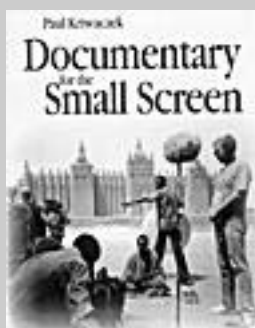
Mr Kriwaczek also discussed the Sasanian Empire and the revival of the Zoroastrian religion under that empire. During this time, the sacred texts were collected but there was a kind of rigid orthodoxy, heresy and doctrinal tyranny. However, the ordinary people held on to the true Zoroastrian beliefs. True Zoroastrianism is of free will;

it opposes evil and is against warfare. It is against the mistreatment of women, cruelty, and against tyranny and abuse of power.

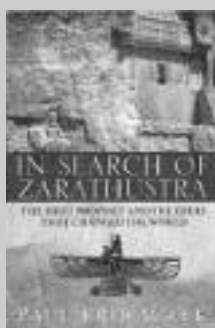
Paul Kriwaczek spoke about the various festivals in Iran with an interesting observation about the Festival of Ashura. He believes that this festival is a real defining event with a deeper meaning; that perhaps it represents a deep mourning and true sorrow for the history of Iran, for the loss of religion and loss of the past, along with a yearning for the message of Zarathushtra.

Certainly, the Fifth Annual Library Gala was inspirational and uplifting. Paul Kriwaczek gave us an appreciation of the influence our religion has had in ethics, in philosophy, and for the relevance that it continues to have in modern times. The challenge before us is to so internalize our Zarthushti way of life that perhaps once again, people will say of us there is *"something about the way Zoroastrian followers behave, speak, and think."*

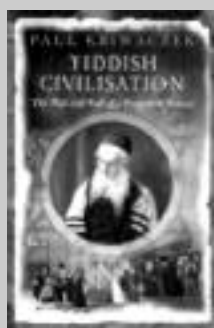
"The message of Zarathustra has never been forgotten." Paul Kriwaczek



Published 1997



Published 2002



Published 2005



Magdalena Rustomji was born in San Luis Potosi, Mexico and immigrated to Texas as a young child. For over 20 years she has been a licensed professional counselor (psychotherapist) working with "recent arrival" immigrant high school students, in group and individual sessions. Magdalena's other interests include gardening, poetry and the cinema. She is the coordinator of an annual Writing Festival for immigrant high school students that celebrates Poetry Month and has also written a poetry module for use in Group work with adolescents.

Iranian temple under excavations



a joint Iranian-Polish team has started excavations at the site of the Azar Barzin Mehr fire temple in Sabzevar, northeastern Iran.

Iran's Archaeology Research Center and a team from Warsaw University are studying the temple, a quadric-arch.

Archeologists will work to figure out the plan and elevations of the building as well as the cultural elements of the area.

Early studies led to the discovery of a dual-purpose space built in the heights near the temple and used as an ablution room.

The group is also studying the firebox and the main hall, in which worshippers circumambulated the sacred fire.

Azar-Barzin Mehr is one of the three important Zoroastrian fire temples belonging to the Sasanid era and was used by farmers and villagers. ...

[source: www.presstv.ir/detail.aspx?id=27903§ionid=351020105]



Tata Family was honoured with Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy

Parsi Zoroastrian, Shayan Italia reaches Top Ten of Music Chart in Britain

The Parsi pioneered Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology made it to Time magazine's "Heroes of Environment" list

Maneck Bhujwala, USA, informed in the ZNA Digest No 474, the news carried by the India Journal Weekly of October 26, 2007. The following is an excerpt.

The Tatas, one of India's leading industrialist families, have been honoured with the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy that is considered the 'Nobel Prize of Philanthropy' at Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania.

Ratan Tata, Chairman of Tata Sons, accepted the medal on behalf of the family in the presence of former President of India, A P J Abdul Kalam. The Tata family is one of the four recipients of the honour given every two years since 2001 in memory of Andrew Carnegie, an American industrialist and philanthropist. It is given to those 'who have dedicated their private wealth to the public good and who have sustained impressive careers as philanthropists.' The award's citation said the Tata family gives away eight to fourteen percent of the net profits from its company each year to science, medicine, social services, performing arts and education. Funding from them has also established pioneering institutions in social sciences as well as cancer research and treatment. The family's philosophy of 'constructive philanthropy' has played a role in changing the traditional concept of charity throughout India, the award citation noted.

a young Indian has made a dazzling debut in the international music market, whizzing to the top ten of Britain's popular TV Airplay Music Chart even before his album is officially launched. Hyderabad-born Shayan Italia's 'Reflection' is fourth on the list, ... The 28-

year-old musician held an exclusive live performance for a select gathering at the famous Mint Leaf Restaurant here October 10 night where Lord Karan Bilimoria described him as a budding music superstar. 'He will be the third greatest Zoroastrian musician after Zubin Mehta and Freddie Mercury,' Lord Bilimoria said.

A superb vocalist, Shayan also writes his own songs. Many music experts interpret his album as a mixture of light rock, funk, soft jazz, disco, pop and anything in between. Shayan says his music 'incorporates the three best elements of Indian music into his work - poetic lyrics, simple yet powerful music arrangements and crystal clear vocals.' ...

Born and brought up in Hyderabad, the baby-faced musician came to London in 1999 after tragically losing both his parents at a young age. Shayan with the little savings he had, got on a plane and came to London in an attempt to crack the hardest music market in the world. Upon entering the UK Shayan sought loans from various banks and educated himself over two years, attaining two well recognized post-graduate degrees in the process - a Bachelor's degree in Audio Engineering and a Master's degree in Music Business Management. During that time Shayan became the first person in history to auction a portion of his life's earnings in music on EBay. He raised 9,000 pounds in seven days. If that wasn't enough, he then went on to raise one million dollars through private investors to

fund his debut album. He has even got the biggest major - Universal - on board to distribute the record nationally through the UK. He has also signed a worldwide digital distribution deal to have the album distributed online in over 25 countries.

Drawing inspiration from real life scenarios, Shayan has effortlessly created a catalogue of over 150 songs since 1998 and his second and third albums have already been written. He will have the distinction of being the first Zoroastrian to ever release a mainstream music album on international waters since Freddie Mercury did over 25 years ago.

domestic wind power firm Suzlon Energy chief Tulsi Tanti, along with Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology's D P Dholal, have made it to a list of global environment champions prepared by the Time magazine ... The magazine has described Dholal as one scaling 'the shrinking glaciers of the Himalayas to track the globe's warming in real time.'

Dholal, a glaciologist at Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology which studies the Himalayan glaciers, makes use of bamboo sticks to measure the rise and fall of glacial mass. His work is all the more important since Himalayan glaciers have been studied by less scientists compared to that of glaciers in Alps, the Rockies and the Arctic, points out the report. 'You don't have to be an environmentalist to be a hero of the environment. The threats that face the planet are so varied - from widespread species extinction to dwindling natural resources - that we'll need front-line activists and boardroom tycoons in equal measure,' says the magazine. (PTI)."



Shayan writes:

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that I, will be performing live on November 23rd at 7:30pm at The Soho Revue Bar, London.

If you haven't been to The Soho Revue Bar, then you've probably missed the best of the best perform. Everyone's played there from James Blunt to Tom Baxter, Coldplay to Norah Jones and the list goes on ... (To be honest I haven't a clue why I've been given this amazing opportunity to perform there as I'm nowhere in the league as these amazing artists!!!)

This year The Soho Revue Bar was voted "Live Venue of the Year" in the UK and critics describe the sound and atmosphere as very "high end" and simply "astounding".

Zar Amrolia

- a profile

Zar Amrolia was educated at St Paul's school. Though he had great talent for classical languages (Greek & Latin) he chose to pursue science. At 17 he went to the Imperial College London to study Physics and graduated with his Bachelor's degree at 20. He then went to Christ Church College, Oxford and obtained his Master's in Mathematics the following year, and continued to do a PhD in Particle Physics. He was extremely popular at Oxford and became graduate President at his college. Zar received his doctorate in July 1989. His mathematical abilities and leadership skills were recognised by "head-hunters" from the city and was recruited initially by Morgan Stanley Bank and then Credit Suisse. At both these banks he turned around failing derivative groups to make them amongst the most profitable in the

sector. In 1995 Zar joined Deutsche Bank as Managing Director (Global Currencies & Commodities). His 'Midas touch' was recognised by the Investment Bank Goldman Sachs where he was Global Head of FX Sales & E-Commerce. He rejoined Deutsche Bank as Managing Director (Global Head of FX Sales). Successful in this field for three consecutive years with 19.3% of world market the bank was awarded Global award.

Besides his work, Zar is a dedicated family man with his wife Caroline and three children. He maintains a passionate interest in Zoroastrianism and ancient Persian History (and his Sunday Dhansak). Last year

he did a part-time course in A k k a d i a n language.



Deutsche Bank's Foreign Exchange Business has been awarded the prestigious Euromoney award for having the largest market share in the FX market for the third year running. The FX market is the worlds largest financial market with over \$2 trillion of daily business. The FX business at Deutsche Bank is run by Zarthustra Amrolia.

Dorabjee Pestonjee Cama – Grand Treasurer of the United Grand Lodge of England (1886 – 87)

by roeinton khambatta

Dorabjee Pestonjee Cama was elected Grand Treasurer of the United Grand Lodge of England in 1886 thereby having the unique distinction of being the first Parsi and the first Asian to hold active Grand Rank in the Grand Lodge. Freemasonry had existed in England as a formal body since the early 18th century. When the two English Grand Lodges – the Antients and the Premier Grand Lodge united in 1813, the United Grand Lodge of England was formed.

With the spread of the Empire, Freemasonry arrived in the furthest corners of the world, either under English, Scottish or Irish Grand Lodges. The Lodges formed in India were restricted mainly to Europeans. However, owing to the persistent endeavour of another Parsi, Maneckji Cursetji, Lodge Rising Star of Western India was consecrated in Bombay in 1843, under the Grand Lodge of Scotland. Muslims, Parsis and Sikhs continued to be initiated and soon, Hindus followed.

As the intercourse



Dorabjee Pestonjee Cama - Grand Treasurer. Copyright and reproduced by permission of the United Grand Lodge of England

between Parsis in Western India and the British improved, various values came to be appreciated further. The greatest of these was Higher Education as available at the Elphinstone College in Bombay. Seekers of knowledge like Dadabhai Naoroji and Khurshedji Cama took full advantage of these facilities. Indeed, the children of Dossabhai and Khurshedji Cama were attending school in Liverpool studying "classics" under the famous Dr Ernst.

Khurshedji Rustomji (K R) Cama was initiated in Lodge Rising Star of Western India and

he took active interest in Freemasonry wherever his business took him – in Calcutta, Singapore or China. Now K R Cama and his uncle, Mancherji Hormusji Cama arrived in Liverpool to commence their “cotton” business in this city. At Elphinstone College in Bombay, K R Cama had come under the spell of “Orientalist” teachers. Now in England, encouraged by Mountstuart Elphinstone himself, he decided to leave the field of commerce, and to enter the portals of Oriental learning. To replace him and Dadabhai Naoroji (who left to form his own business firm in England), another Cama relative – Pestonji Hormusji Cama came to England, and Cama & Co was established in Liverpool. (It was Pestonji who went on to found the Cama Hospital for Women in Bombay). Pestonji’s son was Dorabjee, born in Bombay in 1833. Married to his cousin Bhikaijee (not the famous nationalist, but his and her cousin), they had no children. Now, Dorabjee joined his father in London.

Dorabjee Cama had been initiated in Freemasonry in 1869 in Lodge Courage with Humanity No 392 (Scottish Constitution) in Calcutta. On arriving in London, he was invited to join the very prestigious Marquis of Dalhousie Lodge No 1159 in London (where Dadabhai Naoroji was the first Secretary). After he had served as Master, Dorabjee was invited to join other very select Lodges as well.

The aristocrat members of the Marquis of Dalhousie Lodge were so impressed by Dorabjee, that they constituted Cama Lodge No 2105, with Dorabjee Cama as the Founding Master. Originally, this Lodge met between April and October each year, at Hampton Court. River trips and open-air summer banquets with their ladies, were the rules; and, Dorabjee and his wife Bhikaijee took their full part in these activities with the high aristocracy of England. Dorabjee had now progressed through many Provincial ranks in Middlesex.

The United Grand Lodge of England proclaims an honorific office – that of Grand Treasurer. Apart from the Grand Master who

is elected by Grand Lodge members on an annual basis, this office of Grand Treasurer is the only other office where an individual Mason is elected by Grand Lodge. (All the remaining officers are appointed by the Grand Master). Between 1813 and 1870, there had been only four Grand Treasurers (an average holding of office for 16 years at a time). In 1883, Col Creaton had held the office for three years; and, many members felt that a different Mason should be elected every year. In March 1885, three names were proposed – the winner polled 749 votes, whilst Dorabjee Cama received only 89 votes. However, in 1886, Dorabjee Cama was elected Grand Treasurer, polling 599 votes against his opponent’s 150. He had become the first Parsi, the first Indian, the first Asian, the first non-British-born to achieve high rank in Masonry – not by appointment, nor as “grace & favour”, but by the admiration and respect of his fellow-members. He was most regular in the performance of all his duties not only in his year of office, but for many years afterwards. He continued to be active in many other Orders in Freemasonry.

However, he found time and energy to be one of the founders of the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe with Dadabhai Naoroji, Muncherji Bhowmagree and a few others.

An ancient manuscript was discovered which turned out to be an “Old Charge”. The owning family put a price on it. Dorabjee Cama paid the price and secured this manuscript for the Quatuor Coronati Lodge – the premier lodge of Masonic Research in the world, with a membership restricted to 40 (and, where the author of this paper has had the great honour of being Master). This manuscript was named the “Cama Manuscript”. The Q C Lodge has placed it on deposit at the Library and Museum of Freemasonry in London, and has been a matter of study by Masonic scholars from all over the world.

Dorabjee Cama died on 23 November 1910 and lies buried at Brookwood Cemetery in Surrey. There his remains lie in his beloved Britain, in a grave prominently marked with

Masonic symbols. (the grave of my great-grandfather, Cowasjee Variawa in Brookwood, is also so marked). He left behind a grieving family and friends. The magazine, *The Freemason* in its issue of 26 November 1910, pp342, said:

"... Bro Cama's candidature (for Grand Treasurer) was so exceedingly popular that he was elected by an overwhelming majority ... it is clear that Grand Lodge, when they elected our worthy Brother to the Grand Treasureship, made a splendid choice."

Acknowledgement

1. The preparation of this paper owes a great deal to the research of Susan Snell, Archivist and Records Manager of the Library & Museum of Freemasonry. Susan has been most generous in allowing me to access her work.
2. Much of the research into the ramifications of the Cama family has been done by Peter Aitkenhead (of the Library & Museum), who has been equally generous to me.
3. I am grateful to Diane Clements (Director) and Martin Cherry (Librarian) for allowing me to research this subject in the Library.
4. The photograph of Dorabjee Cama in the regalia of Grand Treasurer, taken by the Royal photographer, Walesy of 164 Regent Street, London, is copyright and reproduced by permission of the United Grand Lodge of England.

References

1. Relevant Proceedings of the Communications of the United Grand Lodge of England.
2. Various issues of the "Freemasonic Quarterly Review" and "The Freemason".



Roelinton Khambatta is a cardiologist (though partly retired) and with a good deal of spare time, indulges in writing vignettes about people's lives. For 25 years he worked in London.

Having graduated from the Grant Medical College in Bombay (1946), and being brought up in the happy atmosphere of Karachi, and the wisdom of Dasturji Maneckji Nusserwanjee Dhalla,

he has, he feels a good appreciation of the Parsi Community.

History Professor Earns Grant to Explore Traditional & Contemporary Notions of Islamic Houris

Assistant Professor of History Nerina Rustomji, PhD, has won a \$30,000 fellowship grant from the ACLS (American Council of Learned Societies) to launch a one-year project that will explore historic and contemporary notions of the *houris*, the female companion awarded to a Muslim male upon his entry into paradise, according to Islamic tradition.

Rustomji's project also earned a grant from the American Center of Oriental Research, a branch of the American Council of Overseas Research. This grant will allow her to extend her project through next summer while researching in Amman, Jordan.

An expert of Islamic societies, Rustomji is on leave this academic year to work on her project, which is a direct extension of her recently written book, *The Garden and the Fire: Heaven and Hell in Islamic Culture*, which she hopes to publish next year.

The ACLS is a leading organization set forth to advance the fields of the humanities and social science. According to the group's website, Rustomji was one of 65 fellows selected this year from a pool of 1016 applicants.

The fellowship will allow Rustomji to "to investigate the place of female companionship in paradise," she says. "Within Islamic tradition there's a place for wives, and there is another category for houris, who I call 'pure' female companions."

Rustomji says that there are many misconceptions about the houris, particularly in America and Europe, and often promulgated by the media. One of the false claims her study will attempt to refute is that the houris can be directly interpreted as "virgin."

"There's a debate within the global Islamic world about what 'virginity' means," says Rustomji, noting that several Muslim writers don't limit the term to its sexual connotations. "Many think the term is more about honour and purity."

Rustomji says that another commonly espoused falsehood is that Muslim men must engage in Jihad in order to have access to houris in the afterlife.

Rustomji's project will delve deeply into the political arena and attempt to explain why a religious phenomenon such as the houri has drawn catcalls from various critics who associate it only with violence. She references the 2005 Danish cartoons that so famously came under fire for lampooning its Islamic prophet Mohammad. (One of the cartoons took an unflattering poke at houris.)

"There's a strong polemic within Europe and America, and I want to look at the political angle of how people understand this trope of a female as a way of understanding Islam," says Rustomji. "There's no one coherent understanding of what the houri is. The way in which people explain it reveals more about their politics than it does about Islam."

The debate over interpretations of the houri extends to Islamic cultures as well. Rustomji says that some texts seem to suggest that the houri is a celestial transformation of a man's earthly wife, while others distinguish houri and wife as two separate beings. Even the Koran is ambiguous, she notes.

Rustomji, who is fluent in Arabic and has researched manuscript collections in London, Paris and Syria, says she is "driven" by primary sources such as the Koran, Koranic commentaries and mystical, scatological and colonialist texts. "They are all so alive," she enthuses, noting that today's globalized world has made the study of historical Islamic texts imperative among scholars.

"The field of Islamic history is really new in some ways," she says. "There's a whole field

out there waiting for professors and students to discover. That's what makes it so exciting. And many of the things you study in medieval Islamic history really do have a resonance in contemporary times, especially in today's political environment."

Rustomji received her doctorate at Columbia University and is a member of the Middle East Studies Association. She teaches an assortment of undergraduate-level Middle Eastern history courses.

[courtesy - http://stjohns.edu/academics/pr_aca_071005d.stj]



34-year old Nerina is married to Shehriyar Antia and lives in New York, USA. She grew up in Quetta and her interest in the Middle East stems from the early days of attending and speaking at WZO's First Gatha Colloquium held in UK, in 1993.

In his newest film, *Iran: Seven Faces of a Civilization*, award winning documentary film-maker Farzin Rezaeian traces the evolution of Iranian culture across 7,000 years. Dr Rezaeian masterfully pieces together this image of Iranian culture with the contributions of over 70 world-renowned scholars.

Briefly about Farzin Rezaeian: He is an award-winning documentarian and educational film producer and director. He studies sociology, political science and communications at the University of Illinois at Chicago. For the past twenty years, he has researched and written for many educational and documentary films that he has produced or directed. *Persepolis Recreated* which was reviewed in Hamazor Issue 4/04 pp28-29, was his last documentary.

Kersi Meher-Homji of St Ives, NSW, is quoted in the Manashni, November 2007, newsletter of AZA, Australia: "We know that Luciano Pavarotti was an avid football fan," Kersi writes, "but a cricketer? He was passionately fond of cricket according to Sir George Trotter. Touring Italy with the 'British On Tour' team in the 1860s, he met Luciano when playing against an Italian cricket team. When English batsman Trevor Askwith played and missed, Luciano, fielding at slip, appealed loud and long for LBW. He sang the word 'Howzaa!' in operatic fashion for sooooo long that the umpire changed his mind and lifted his finger."

Cowasjee's Nose

by sam kerr

I came across this fascinating article 'A nose by any other name' by Stephanie Pain in a magazine, *New Scientist*. I have quoted only relevant parts of the history and added my own medical comments.

A Zoroastrian named Cowasjee, a transport merchant while carting supplies for the British East India Company in 1792 was captured by men of the great Tippoo Sultan, ruler of Mysore in southern India. Tippoo had been giving a rough time to the Company, which was manoeuvring to acquire Mysore. As punishment for aiding the enemy Cowasjee had one of his hands and his nose cut off before being sent back to the British.

A letter in the *Gentleman's Magazine* dated 9 October 1794, written by "B L", a British army surgeon in India, described how Cowasjee had a replacement nose created

from a flap of skin cut from his forehead and grafted onto the stump of the old one by an Indian Surgeon. It was a brilliantly simple piece of surgery. Reported B L "An appropriate nose to suit Cowasjee's face was

created as a template from wax and laid on Cowasjee's forehead. Then, an exact area of the skin measured from the wax specimen, to create a skin flap was raised from his forehead, based on a strip of skin or pedicle still firmly attached to the forehead above and between the eyes (see diagram). After paring all the scar tissue from the remains of the old nose the surgeon twisted the flap over the stump, and inserted the



edges into a series of neat incisions. The new nose was secured with slips of cloth soaked in a plant extract that tried to form a sort of cement. The pedicle allowed blood to flow into the flap to nourish it until the graft had taken after some

days, at which point the pedicle skin was snipped off. The artificial nose was secure and looked nearly as well as the natural one." Four years later, writer and traveller, Thomas Pennant reported in *The View of Hindoostan* that Cowasjee's nose was bearing up well. He wrote, "It could sneeze smartly, distinguish good from bad smells, bear the most provoking lug, or being well blown without danger of falling into the handkerchief". Joseph Carpue, a London society surgeon, after reading the articles had been pondering the possibilities of embarking on the surgery. All he had to do was to find someone willing to be his first patient.

Noselessness, in India was, indeed, common. Nasal amputation was a time-honoured form of punishment for thieves/ criminals/ adulterers intended to humiliate them and to deter others. The noseless were shunned by society. It is still very common for a parent to admonish a child by saying, "You should have your nose cut off" instead of saying, "You should be ashamed." In Europe the disfigurement was assumed to be a punishment for the unfortunate person's sins. In late 18th-century Europe nasal amputation was rare. Occasionally a man might have his nose sliced off in battle or during a duel, but diseases like cancer, syphilis, leprosy were the more common destroyers of noses.

This early form of reconstructive surgery, in fact, had been practiced and perfected in India from time immemorial. The pressing need for new noses had led inevitably to the development of a highly effective technique for replacing them. Building new noses this way had been common practice in India since around 600 BC. The great Indian surgeon, Sushruta (c 600 BC) reconstructed noses and documented instructions for repairing noses using a flap of skin from the cheek. He illustrated his technique stepwise in drawn diagrams showing the method of raising forehead skin pedicle flaps. His skin pedicles were on one side of the forehead (not in the midline, as above) to obtain maximum nourishment from the temporal artery (which can be felt pulsating

about two cms. lateral to the eyebrow) is being practiced by modern Reconstructive Surgeons. His method of sterilizing surgical instruments by boiling them in water was used in modern times as late as my early surgical days, at least in the minor operations rooms. It was after the advent of the disease, 'HIV Aids' the use of pressure sterilizers became obligatory in all operating rooms.

Skills developed in India spread to ancient Greece and Rome, where many gladiators were grateful for the new noses. The Byzantine Emperor Justin II (ruled AD 567-578. The name, Justinian II and the date, AD 695 given in the article are incorrect) had his nose amputated during a battle in Mesopotamia against the great Khusru I - Anoushi Ravan e Adil's army (ruled AD 531-579). Justin had tried to sneak into Sasanian Airan through the backdoor - the Straits of Eritrea (to this day a strategic part of Africa closest to Asia). Khusru allowed Justin's army to struggle through the hostile Arabian Desert before apprehending the Byzantine army head-on in their tired state. (see my 'The Sasanian Dynasty' on 'Avesta Server' link of the FEZANA website). It took Justin nine years before he could get himself a new nose and make a comeback later.

The practice of replacement noses came to Europe in the 5th-century Sicily, where a family of barbers had a sideline in nasal reconstruction (to see more of the history of plastic surgery visit the 'Science of Surgery Gallery' at the Hunterian Museum, London). In the late 16th century another Italian, Gaspare Tagliacozzi wrote a book outlining his version of the Italian 'nose job'. He grafted pedicle skin from the inner arm, a procedure that required patients to have one arm strapped to their face for months. This practice quickly died out when the church disapproved of it and there were malicious, but unfounded, rumours that a Tagliacozzi nose had a tendency, to drop off.

Carpue had such confidence in the Indian (Sushruta) technique of raising the lateral

skin flap he had begun to teach it to his students - even though he had yet to try it out himself. He may have expected a great rush for new noses but he was disappointed. He waited patiently, and in September 1814, after a wait of almost 20 years, a Captain Williamson finally came along.

Reference:

Pain Stephanie, *A nose by any other name*, *New Scientist*, Magazine issue 2566, Vol 191, pp 50 - 51, 26 August 2006.

Sam Kerr's profile appears on p 26.



Glaucoma

by mahnaz naveed shah

Glaucoma is the second leading cause of blindness worldwide and is caused by several different eye diseases which in most but all cases produce elevated pressures in the eye. Over time, this causes damage to the optic nerve, the cable through which all information is relayed from the eye to the brain and results in progressive and irreversible damage to the visual field defined as the area in which a person can see. Uncontrolled glaucoma results in progressive restriction of visual field and eventually in blindness.

The eye produces a fluid called aqueous humor which is essential for the transport of oxygen and nutrients within the eye. This fluid constantly exits the eye. An imbalance between the production and drainage of aqueous leads to glaucoma. Glaucoma can arise at any age but is more commonly seen in individuals forty years and older.

The most common type is open angle glaucoma in which eye pressure rises gradually allowing the eye time to adapt to higher pressures. It is often painless and individuals may not notice they are losing their field of vision until much later in the disease. Normal intraocular pressure ranges from about 11 to 21 mmHg. However some individuals may develop damage to the nerve at pressures well

within this "normal" range. Such patients suffer from a variant of glaucoma called "normotensive glaucoma". The risk of developing glaucoma in those who have a family history of the disease is increased manifold, however, lack of a family history does not entirely eliminate risk. Inter marriages within families who have a strong history of glaucoma further increase the risk. Diabetes and nearsightedness also increase the likelihood of the disease as do some types of medication particularly the prolonged use of steroids.

Another common type of glaucoma is acute angle closure glaucoma in which the pressure may rise within hours. This rapid change does not allow the eye to adapt and the patient experiences eye pain and headaches involving the brow area. Disturbance in vision described as haloes or colored rings around lights may also be seen. Pain can be severe with nausea and vomiting. Individuals may experience a series of less severe, self resolving attacks prior to a major attack. Acute glaucoma is an emergency requiring urgent medical, laser and in some cases surgical intervention to prevent irreversible loss in vision which can occur within hours.

Rarely children can also be born with glaucoma, or develop it early in life. Signs that a child may have glaucoma are larger

than average eye size, cloudiness or haze of the cornea or front portion of the eye leading to a bluish grey hue to the eye, constant tearing or unusual sensitivity to the light. These symptoms may be present in one or both eyes. Such children must be evaluated and treated urgently with surgery to prevent permanent loss in vision.

Injury to the eye, inflammation or complex surgery to the eyes can also result in glaucoma. The diagnosis again rests on clinical examination. All patients forty and above and especially those who have a family history of glaucoma, gradual decrease in sight, a history of injury to the eye, diabetes, severe near or far sightedness or any of the signs and symptoms described above should be examined by an eye specialist. Early diagnosis is crucial in the preservation of vision.

The diagnosis of all types of glaucoma depends on a thorough clinical examination of the eye. Tests such as visual field examinations and nerve fiber analyzers also assist doctors in the diagnosis, treatment and follow up of the disease.

There are three primary means of treatment in glaucoma. Eye drops or pills, laser and finally more invasive surgery to create means for additional drainage of fluid from the eye. Whether one or a combination of these is needed varies between patients. The important point is that glaucoma can be controlled which leads to an arrest in damage to the optic nerve and therefore results in preservation of vision. It must be remembered that vision in a glaucoma patient who is appropriately treated can be safeguarded for life.



Dr Mahnaz Naveed Shah received her undergraduate degree from Rice University and her Doctorate in Medicine from Baylor College of Medicine, both at Houston, Texas, completing her internship at the same hospital. She completed her residency training at the Cullen Eye Institute-Baylor College of Medicine and subsequently a sub-specialty fellowship in Medical and Surgical Glaucoma. She has been practicing at the Aga Khan University Hospital in Karachi since December 2002 as Assistant



Prof Tehemton Erach Udwadia

by firoze patel

Professor Tehemton Erach Udwadia, perhaps the most decorated of all Indian Zoroastrian doctors, with a line of degrees to boast, started his schooling at St Mary's High School, Bombay. He then joined Wilson's College, and went on to Seth G S Medical College, Bombay, from where he completed his MBBS in 1956. He acquired the postgraduate qualifications of MS and FCPS from the University of Bombay and the College of Physicians and Surgeons, India, respectively in 1960. Not satisfied, he earned his FRCS degrees from both, the Royal Colleges of Surgeons of Edinburgh and England in 1963. He was also conferred with a FACS, FICS (Hon), FAMS, and FARSI (Hon). Needless to say, he was awarded many academic distinctions right from his school days to his post graduation.

Tehemton's academic accolades were a prelude to the great advances he achieved in Indian surgery. This dynamic, innovative and great surgeon was the first to introduce laparoscopic surgery and Minimal Access Surgery in India in 1972 and the first to perform laparoscopic surgery in the developing world. To date he has conducted 48 workshops all over India, with more in Nepal, Mexico, Brazil, China, Myanmar, Bangladesh and other developing countries. His motto was to ensure that the benefits of surgical advance be made available to all people, in all places, irrespective of their socio-economic status.

A teacher par excellence, he has been Professor of Surgery, Grant Medical College & J J Hospital, Bombay 1963-1994. Following retirement, he was made life time Emeritus Professor of Surgery in these institutions. He is a Visiting Professor to various Universities in India and abroad and has the honour of being an Examiner in Surgery for the Universities of Bombay, Gujarat, Madras, Osmania, Baroda, Nagarjuna and Banaras, All India Institute of



Dr Firoze Rustom Patel completed his schooling at Karachi, went on to study at the D J Sind Government Science College and later joined the Sind Medical College, graduating with the MBBS degree from the University of Karachi in 1979. He then proceeded abroad and completed the MMS degree from the National University of Ireland in 1990. Since then he is in General Practice at Karachi.

Medical Sciences (New Delhi), Postgraduate Institute of Chandigarh, Tribhuvan University (Nepal) and The National Board of Examinations, India. He is also an examiner for MCh examination in Gastroenterology and Proctology, University of Madras. This illustrious son of India has the distinction of being an Examiner in Surgery, final FRCS examination and a Member of the Council of Examiners of The Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh. Tehemton is a faculty member of over 60 workshops on Diagnostic Laparoscopy and Surgical Endoscopy in India, Singapore, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Kenya, Spain, Russia, Georgia, Hong Kong, Mexico, Egypt, Japan, China, Myanmar and Bangladesh.

Professor Tehemton has to his credit 180 Keynote Addresses, Plenary Speeches and paper

presentations in various National and International Conferences since 1960. He has presented papers at many National and International Conferences over the last 45 years. He has to his credit 76 publications in National and International Journals covering almost the entire field of surgery. He is also the author of two medical books and a contributing author in seventeen books on Surgery.

Awards have always poured in for this great surgeon from different forums. The Royal College of Surgeons made him the Hunterian Professor for 1984-1985. The Association of Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland made him the Surgikos Lecturer of 1988. He was made the Sir James Ross Lecturer for 1992 by The Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh. An Award for Excellence was presented to him by the Indian Association of Gastrointestinal Surgeons for pioneering and ensuring spread of Laparoscopic Surgery in Developing Countries (1998). The Millennium Award was conferred on him by the American Gastrointestinal Endoscopic Surgeons for his Karl Storz Lecture, "One

World-One People-One Surgery" (2000). The President of India awarded him the Dr B C Roy National Award for developing the Specialty of Laproscopic Surgery in India (2000). The Indian Association of Gastrointestinal Endo-Surgeons honoured him with a Lifetime Achievement Award in 2004. Apart from these Professor Udwadia has received many Orations during his lifetime. To add

icing to the cake, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II conferred on this great doctor the Order of Knighthood of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 2006. It was in the fitness of things that the Government of India awarded her illustrious son with the Padmashree Award in 2006. This was accompanied by a special Gold Medal and citation from Dr Abdul Kalam, The President of India.



Prof Udwadia receiving the OBE



Receiving the Padmashree Award from Dr Abdul Kalam

Future Stars of the City

Alex Aldridge highlighted ten lawyers worth watching, all under 35 years of age, working in London, UK, on 15 October 2007, Times on Line, http://business.timesonline.co.uk/tol/business/law/corporate_law/article2665860.ece

Vica Irani, a Parsi Zoroastrian, is one of the select ten. Ed

“Quite simply the best up and coming associate I’ve ever seen.” That’s how Russell Carmedy, Jones Day’s partner-in-charge in London, describes Vica Irani, a mergers and acquisitions and securities specialist. Irani joined Jones Day in 1998 as a trainee straight from the College of Law, eschewing a gap year, after previously completing a law degree at Bristol University. Praised for her commercial nous and people skills in addition to her brain, Irani has risen rapidly through the ranks. The lead lawyer for New York-based private equity firm J F Lehman & Co, whom she has advised on a number of acquisitions and disposals, Irani also regularly advises on IPOs. Recently, she acted as part of the team that represented Inion Oy, the first Finnish company to ever list in London. She is currently advising Nomura, the financial services group, on two potential strategic investments.”



The Russian Connection

by shahin bekhradnia

Those familiar with Iranian pre-Islamic history or ancient Greek history will know that the Sakas (or Scythians as the Greeks called them) were a nomadic horseman tribe of Iranian peoples whose territories were perforce vast given that they were nomadic and moved around with their animals. They are considered to be one of the sub-groups that came from an earlier group of Indo-Europeans.

It is also accepted that no-one can honestly pinpoint the homeland of the early Aryan peoples who eventually moved into what is today Iran and India. However it is thought that the movement of the early Aryan peoples into Iran came from the North which makes sense as there are no mountain barriers at least over the North Eastern side of the country.

Meanwhile there is archaeological evidence in today’s Russia which would suggest that the early Aryans may have initially had at least temporary residences in Western Siberia and Kazakhstan, and some of them would have been more lasting settlements associated with those who came to Iran and already knew the arts of agriculture and animal rearing.

While there is a lot of debate surrounding this very early period known as the Andronovo culture (see the Wikipedia internet entry for an introduction), frozen graves and excavated tombs have yielded artefacts such as chariots, fabrics etc suggesting a culture of some sophistication. One such place in Russia associated with this is called Arkaim (to the south of the Ural mountains) and archaeologists in Russia have attached some importance to the discovery of this site. The site was even visited by President Putin which shows that at least the Russians are showing an interest in their ancient Aryan past. The search engines of the internet will reveal 10 pages of references to this place but to give the flavour of what Arkaim represents here is a quote from the Pravda website:

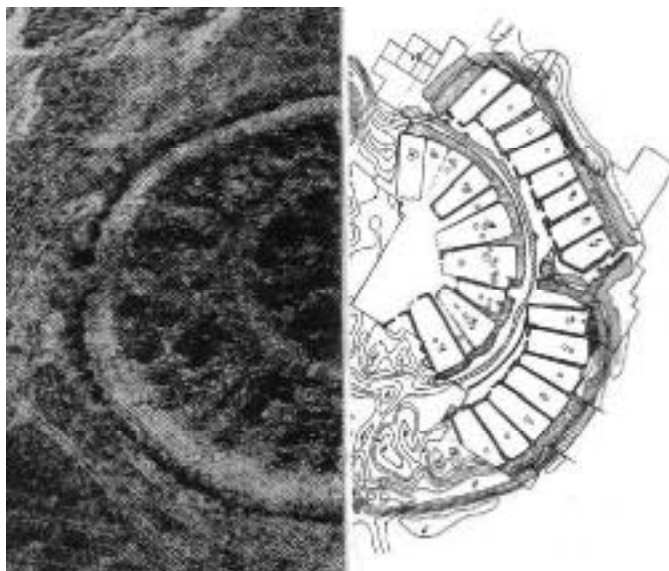
“Archaeological excavations showed that the people, who inhabited Arkaim, represented one of the most ancient Indo-European civilizations, particularly the branch, which is referred to as the Aryan culture. Arkaim turned out to be not only a town, but also a temple and an astronomic observatory. A flight above Arkaim on board a helicopter gives you an incredible impression. The huge concentric circles on the valley are clearly visible. The town and its outskirts are all enclosed in the circles. We still do not know, what point the gigantic circles have, whether they were made for defensive, scientific, educational, or ritual purposes. Some researchers say that the circles were actually used as the runway for an ancient spaceport,” Vadim Chernobrovsky said. Researchers discovered that the ancient town was equipped with the storm sewage system, which helped Arkaim’s residents avoid floods. The people were protected against fires as well: timbered floorings and houses themselves were imbued with fireproof substance. It was a rather strong compound, the remnants of which can still be found in the ruins of the town. Each house was outfitted with “all modern conveniences,” as they would say nowadays. There was a well, an oven and dome-like food storage in every house. The well was branching out into two underground trenches: one of them was directed to the oven and the other one ended in the food storage. The trenches were used to supply chilly air to the oven and to the food storage. The cool air from the trenches was also creating a very powerful traction force in the Aryan oven, which made it possible to smelt bronze there. The central square in Arkaim was the only object of square shape in the town. Judging upon traces of bonfires that were placed in a specific order on the square, the place was used as a site for certain rituals.

Arkaim was built according to a previously projected plan as a single complicated complex, which also had an acute orientation on astronomic objects. While archaeologists are meticulously brushing dust off ancient stones trying to recreate the lifestyle of Arkaim’s residents, ufologists study mysterious phenomena, which they register in the town: inexplicable fluctuations of voltage, magnetic field tension, temperatures and so on. Natalia Leskova”

It is therefore not that surprising that President Putin should be fully aware of the legacy of



Bird's eye view of the city of Arkaim



A section as a photograph and plan of Arkaim

Aryan culture in Russia and it is also not a coincidence that Russian (an Indo European language) is in many ways very closely related to modern Persian (Farsi) in terms of word roots demonstrated by two quick examples – the word for God is Bog – compared with the old Persian Baga (and indeed Sanskrit text **Bhagavad Gita**) or the word for woman or wife is Zhena compared with the word Zan in Farsi or Zyuna in Dari (mainly preserved today by Yazd's Zoroastrian population).

Putin's recent visit to Iran in October 2007 therefore allowed him the perfect opportunity to demonstrate his knowledge of Russia's past ancient connections with Iran's past quoted above, nor was he slow in referring to other common ground. This of course related to

the expanse of the three ancient Iranian empires (Achaemenid, Parthian and Sasanian) all of which stretched right into the heart of Central Asia via Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan which from the mid-1920's until 1992 were fully integrated republics of the Soviet Union. Of course Azarbaijan (the land of Azar/Atar = Fire) should also be mentioned in this context and it is noteworthy that even before the Soviet Era, some educated Russians such as the theosophist Mme Blavatsky were fully aware of the relationship of the presence of natural gas and the location of our fire temples which she considered to be inspiring and about which she wrote an article in 1879 (see www.blavatsky.net/blavatsky/arts/PersianZoroastrianismAndRussianVandalism).

Because of the sensitive issue of Iran's current nuclear programme and the cooperation between Russia and Iran over this, Putin gave an extensive interview to the Iranian Radio News Agency and also to the state TV service, the entirety of which can be found via an internet trawl. The relevant parts are quoted below and reveal that the president of Russia is fully conversant with the fact that Iran enjoyed a rich and influential culture before the advent of Islam:

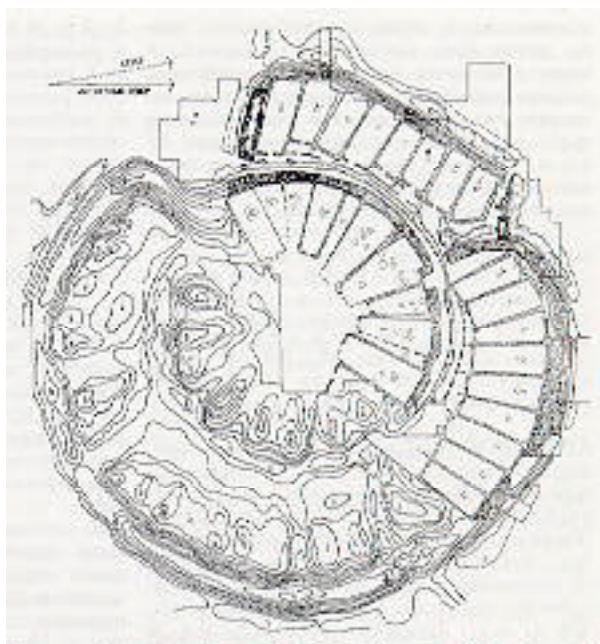
Questioner (Abbass Ali Haji Parvane): If you permit, I would like to ask a personal question. So far, all the questions have been about politics, and I would like to ask a question that is not related to politics.

Over these last few years you have succeeded in taking important steps that have changed Russia's position in the world, and here in Iran you are received well and are a popular figure. Iranians would like to hear about the President of Russia

from the President himself. We know here that you still keep up your sports activities, and we also know that you are interested in Persian literature, especially in the poetry of Omar Khayam. In this respect, could you please tell us what role sport plays in your working life, how you fit it in to your life, and what kind of influence does it have? And

also, could you tell us what you think of Omar Khayam's poetry?

Vladimir Putin: I will start with the second question. I do not consider myself an expert on Persian literature, to my great regret. I have only fragmentary knowledge of Persian literature, but what I have read and heard has always interested me greatly. The same goes for Iranian history. This is part of the world's history. Iran is a world power. Its territory originally stretched from the Middle East to



The complete plan of Arkaim

India. Even part of the former Soviet Union was part of ancient Iran's territory. Iran is the home of early religions, of Zoroastrianism, and some specialists think that this was the source from which Judaism, Christianity and Islam would later spring. But now there is evidence suggesting that Zoroastrianism first emerged on Russian soil - in the southern Urals - and that population migrations took this religious culture to other places, including to Iran.

What I want to say is that the history of our countries and the interaction between our cultures goes much deeper and has much deeper roots than specialists sometimes think. This is the guarantee that we will always find a way of solving any problems that arise, because we understand each other.

As for Omar Khayam, I simply love his work, I like his poetry. I know that not everywhere in the Muslim world do people like his work as much as I do, but that does not make his poetry any worse."

Now here Putin may have taken matters a little further than the evidence allows, for there is no suggestion that at the time of Arkaim Zoroastrianism was being practised and indeed the only evidence to help us get the topography of the home of Zoroaster are the few geographic references and the language of the Gathas. As an East Iranian language, more similar to the languages of the Pamir mountains in Tajikistan and with a reasonable parallel in toponyms, it is unlikely that the Southern Urals were the birthplace of our prophet.

The Hermitage in St Petersburg has been home to most of the ancient artefacts from the pre-Islamic past found in lands of the former Persian Empires (particularly Marv, Samarqand, Bokhara and Panjikand), and the keeper of the priceless collection of the murals and exquisite silverware there was until his recent death, Boris Marshak. Boris, whose tomb is located at the site of his excavations in Panjikand spanning 50 years wrote extensively about the origins of the collection. Putin, himself from St Petersburg must have undoubtedly seen the collections and become aware of the lofty culture that was the product of a Zoroastrian ethos.

If Putin has learnt about Zoroastrianism because of his exalted position, many others have embraced the religion in Russia after discovering its respectful philosophy and morality. Russians of some intellect have been particularly receptive to this religion.

Thus we need to keep our minds open to the fact that our religious heritage was not and is not limited to the confines of the Indian sub-continent as some of our co-religionists seem to think if we were to judge by their belief that the terms Zoroastrian and Parsi are co-terminous. While it may be true that all Parsis are Zoroastrian, it does not follow that all Zoroastrians are Parsis, and therefore those who are not do not understand nor wish to practice Parsi Panu. Other Zoroastrians such as those from Iran have as much if not more historical justification to claim their right to practise and believe somewhat differently. All of us however should celebrate the fact that

the once great Iranian Empires have left so many eloquent sites, monuments and artefacts as well as inscriptions and textual references to the superior moral and philosophical climate in which they once flourished. And we should not be deprecating nor scathing about the desire of once-Zoroastrian peoples to return to their roots. Why should they not?



Illustrations are courtesy of Jamshid Zartoshti, Belarus, sent to the Editor for Hamazor Issue 3/2003 p 126.



Shahin Bekhradnia, grand-daughter of a renowned Yazdi priest/poet did her undergraduate studies at Oxford university in modern languages and then anthropology, focusing on 20th century Iranian Zoroastrian identity. She has published and lectured on Zoroastrian matters

regularly. In her day to day life, she teaches, interprets for the immigration appellate, is a legal consultant for a tour operator, and sits as a magistrate. She set up the Pourchista Foundation in Yazd to teach skills to young Zoroastrians so that they can earn a living.

Parthian bridge demolished in Iran

Iran's Ministry of Road & Transportation has demolished a 2200-year-old Parthian era bridge in Masjed Soleiman, despite opposition as mentioned on www.presstv.ir on 6 December, to build a new one.

The Negin Bridge was one of the few Parthian structures to have survived in Khuzestan Province. Iran's Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization had prohibited any construction activity within 700 meters of the bridge in 2005, which was later reduced to 100 meters in 2006.



Jeroo Roy - Art with a purpose

Jeroo Roy is a Parsi from Mumbai. She first studied art at the JJ School of Art at Bombay and continued at the London College of Printing. She went on to work as a designer on part-work magazines and as an illustrator of children's books, two of which were both written and illustrated by her.

In 1982, Jeroo became involved in the building trade. This meant that the painting aspect of her life was put on hold, whilst she took on the demanding task of establishing herself as a female contractor in what was a tough world to break into.

In December '00, at the height of her building career, she retired from the trade to get back to painting. She displayed her work in a group exhibition *Indian Painters in the UK and India* in September 2001 and the following year had a very successful one-person show at the Nehru Centre in central London. In 2003, she exhibited at a group show at Bharati Vidhya Bhuvan and in March '05, two of her paintings were part of a group show at Cork Street Gallery, organised by Visual Art.

2004 - the year of the Girl Child in India

In January of 2004, Jeroo met three women's groups in Kolkata, all of whom were involved in helping emotionally and physically battered women. She was shown mountains of case files and photographs. That moment was an important turning point for Jeroo, as it was when "*she did not choose the subject, but the subject chose her.*" It got under her skin and she knew that with the one talent she has – painting, she would henceforth do her best to bring awareness to others regarding the plight of millions of women and children everywhere, as 'violence' knows no boundaries.

In April of that year, Jeroo had a one person show at the Light Gallery, titled '*When More Is Less*'. The issues painted were about dowry related deaths, torture and suicides,

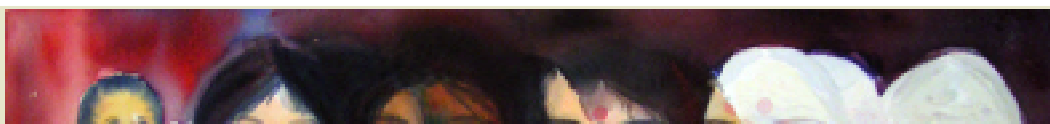
female infanticide and foeticide, FGM (female genital mutilation), selling of the girl child for prostitution, and honour related violence.

This exhibition was very successful from the awareness point of view and continued at the Nehru Centre in September, with added new paintings, titled '*What Honour, Whose Honour*'. Here she was interviewed by BBC radio and also did a BBC Online article titled '*Prick the viewer's nerves*'. This article got the attention of the New Scotland Yard/ Home Office, and Jeroo was invited to exhibit her paintings at their conference on HRV (Honour Related Violence); in October, she was invited by Kvinnoforum, to exhibit at their International conference on HR in Stockholm.

In February of the following year, she exhibited relevant paintings for the Metropolitan Police/ Home Office Conference on '*Forced Marriages*', and in March, exhibited at their International Conference on HBV (Honour Based Violence) at the Victoria Plaza Park Hotel. She has been invited to exhibit her works at two events of Amnesty International, one at the Oxo Tower South Bank, and at their headquarters in London.

Articles about her work have been printed in magazines and newspapers, both here in the UK, Europe and in India.

In 2005, she was approached by Zerbano Gifford of the Asha Foundation, to paint portraits of 208 women for the book jacket of her recently published book – *Confessions to a serial womaniser, secrets of the world's inspirational women* [see Hamazor Issue 3/07]. The book launch took place on 20th September of this year at the National Portrait Gallery, where a large frame 9' x 4' consisting portraits of 208 women was on display the whole week. The whole event was very successful and much acclaimed. Thereafter this frame was displayed at various galleries till early



"Born, bought, broken & groomed" is about the girl child sold into prostitution



"Child labour at quarry and building sites"

Above: "Outsider". Below L: "Window Dressing". Below C: "How many more?" Below R: Illustration for children's book "Peacock Garden"



November and from end December to May 2008 will be travelling worldwide to accompany Zerbanoo's book signing.

At present, Jeroo is working on a series of paintings titled *Working Children* and *Children under Siege*. With regard to her paintings related to *Violence against Women and the Girl Child*, she would like to work with the younger generation to create awareness, as today's little girls and boys, will be tomorrow's young women and men.

Jeroo says, "After realizing the effect my paintings on 'violence towards women and children' had on the viewers, and when three women privately approached me to thank me for having made these atrocities public and not having kept them behind closed doors, as it gave them the courage to be more positive about their own lives and long needed changes. This made me realize I was doing something very positive and I have been determined to have a 'travelling exhibition' in various Indian cities. Earlier this year when I travelled to Mumbai, Ahemdabad, Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore and Pune, my work was well received by the gallery owners. Now I am trying to arrange funding for this project.

"One could say that many of these atrocities don't pertain to the Parsis. True, and though I am born as a Parsi, I consider myself firstly as an Indian and secondly as a Parsi.

"Any interested readers can see my paintings in colour on my website www.jerooroy.com and get in touch with me if they wish to get me involved in any projects regarding 'violence against women and children' and 'child labour'. This is very important for me." ■■■■

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

It originated in 1960 when three Mirabel sisters from the Dominican Republic were violently assassinated for their political activism. The sisters, known as the "Unforgettable Butterflies", became a symbol of the crisis of violence against women in Latin America. November 25th was the date that was chosen to commemorate their lives and promote global recognition of gender violence and has been observed in Latin America since the 1980's.

In December 1999, the 54th session of the United Nations Assembly adopted Resolution 54/34 declaring November 25th be International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

Two million girls between the ages of 5 and 15 are trafficked, sold or coerced into prostitution each year all over the world – information sent by Dolly Dastoor, Editor FEZANA Journal

"Pregnant woman's agony"



Above: "Mother & Child". Below: "Too many Religions"

99 going on 100

by marzban giara

Longevity is in the genes of the Parsis but few live to be a 100. Fewer still retain good health and are active at an advanced age. One such rare individual is Ervad Jal Savakshah Pestonji Kuka who celebrated his 99th birthday on 9th October 2007. He was born at Tehmulji's Parsi Lying-in Hospital, Mumbai, did his schooling at Sir J J School from class IV to Matriculation and thereafter for seven years studied at Dadar Athornan Boarding Madressa where he enrolled in the first batch of students. Jal Kuka was ordained as a navar-maratab at the Modi Atashbehram, Surat.

His family members thought he would not marry but met his wife to be, Piroja (Piloo) Hormusji Mistry, in 1965 whilst holidaying in Kashmir and married her some 13 years later at the age of 57.

Ervad Kuka served as a priest at the prayer hall at Shanghai from 1931 to 1946 for 15 years. From 1946 to 1962 he served as a storekeeper at Taj Mahal Hotel at Apollo Bunder and in 1963 he was invited to Hong Kong to serve as a priest for 17 years, retiring in 1980.

In 1991 he was elected to the Anjuman committee with the highest number of votes from Dadar. His hobbies are reading and travelling. Both husband and wife have travelled extensively in Asia, Europe, Canada, Africa, USA and Australia and love being outdoors.



Being popular with all at Hong Kong and though retired, he and his wife were invited for the inauguration of their new Zoroastrian building. On 9th October 2007 the Parsi Zoroastrians at Hong Kong celebrated his 99th birthday by arranging a dinner function.

Ervad Kuka is a man of few words and a good listener. Thrifty by nature, he believes in simple living and high thinking. He is a philanthropist who regularly contributes for noble causes.

When asked about the secret of his long and useful life, he modestly replied: "simplicity, regular habits, walking." His wife added: "He never overeats."

May Ahura Mazda bless Ervad Jal Kuka with good health and may his example encourage our community members to lead a simple, useful, healthy industrious life.



Marzban Jamshedji Giara is author, publisher and distributor of books on Zoroastrian religion and Parsi history. He has authored the first-ever illustrated Global Directory of Zoroastrian Fire Temples, The Zoroastrian Pilgrim's Guide, Parsi Statues and a dozen other books. His father ingrained in him the idea, "Son, be a creator and not a spectator in life. We must give back to society more than what we have received from it."


Grandmother celebrates 100th birthday by becoming world's oldest paraglider

source: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk> 31st October 2007

On the other side of the world, a centenarian celebrates with aplomb. "British grandmother Peggy McAlpine celebrated her 100th birthday by becoming the world's oldest paraglider. Peggy floated into the record books just three years after moving to 'start a new life' in Cyprus. She had already bungee-jumped with members of the Royal Parachute Regiment as an 80-year-old 'youngster.' But cracking open a bottle of champagne after a safe landing, Peggy was already planning her next adventure.

"Fortified by a breakfast of cornflakes, she floated gently back to earth after taking off from a 2,500ft peak in a craggy Cyprus mountain range with spectacular views over the Mediterranean. 'It was the most wonderful, pleasant experience and I'm ready to do it again anytime,' said Peggy, who has four grandchildren and two great grandchildren. Strapped into the front seat of a tandem paraglider with experienced pilot Ozgur Gokazan, 34, at the helm, Peggy deemed it 'far superior' to her bungee jump.

"Peggy, who is partially sighted, broke the record held by a 95-year-old Dane. The oldest Briton to paraglide before yesterday's flight was Reg Rose-Innes, 91, from Beddingham, who flew above the Devil's Dyke in Sussex last December for 20 minutes at a height of 800ft.

"Two volunteers monitored Peggy's 15-minute flight for the Guinness Book of Records." 



Be fitted for the flight on the left, and flying tandem with the experienced paraglider on the right



Sanobar Pardiwalla – Bollywood's youngest stuntwoman

Indrani Rajkhowa Banerjee wrote an article in the Times of India, from which excerpts and information have been used after acquiring permission from both parties.

20-year old Sanobar Pardiwalla flirts with death every single working moment and she loves it. She happens to be Bollywood's youngest stuntwoman. She says, she has played double for almost every top heroine in the industry and mentions in particular the bike stunt she did for Aishwarya Rai. "Normally when I do stunts for actors, they don't bother about my well-being. Ash is an exception. I was supposed to ride a bike for her at very high speed and a couple of other risky shots. Ash made it a point to check on me after every shot."

'Speed gives her the thrills. "I find peace when I am free falling from a height of 80 feet! I close my eyes; I feel alive. Then I feel thankful to God and the whole universe," this is what she has to say of a stunt she did for a luxury car ad where she jumped 80 feet from a chopper flying at 80 km per hour into a car driving at the same speed as the chopper. "Its all about timing and concentration." says Sanobar'

When Banerjee asked Sanobar, doesn't death scare her? "In my profession, right communication, right reflexes and right timing are all that matters. I concentrate hard on the shot, and not on danger and death. It works for me that way," she says.

'One death-defying plunge she remembers is the one where she had to jump off a 20-storey building. "those who were at the shoot kept saying it was risky, but I was not at all jittery. One little error of judgment

could have sent me crashing face down. But thank God, everything went smoothly," she recalls.'



Courtesy, Times of India

Sanobar is trained in 'gymnastics, martial arts, paragliding, bike stunts, skydiving, driving, bungee jumping and swimming. Armed with these skills, Sanobar makes impossible stunts look like child's play. "I've lost count of the number of films and commercials I've appeared in. Some moments, however, remain close to my heart."



The tragedy of life is not that it ends so soon but that we wait too long to begin it.

- W M Lewis

Continued from p 17

And, Dr Cyrus Mehta, Cytel's CEO, explained that his company improves efficiency for medical clinical trials. With seventy-five employees, the company excels at the statistical design and data monitoring of clinical trials. About thirty employees are in Cambridge and about forty-five employees are in Pune. The efficiency gain his company provides gets exciting with the notion of adaptive trials.

In adaptive trials, incoming data affects the remaining structure of the trial itself. As we go forward on the bio-tech frontier, this kind of testing can only grow with our new metrics, new data collection methods and new analyses. Cyrus explained that in business one must constantly re-define strategy.

Attendees and volunteers included Farokh and Gool Patel of Pegasus Products, Inc, and others. Niloufer Daver was credited with the magnificent WZCC banner, and Sherroo provided fine picnic food for the trip. Zareen's son, Farokh, her daughter-in-law, Rashna, and her husband, Alberto, assisted with industry and kindness throughout the weekend.

Boston area residents, Prof Firoze Jungalwalla, the Mistry's and the Aroaz's, graciously hosted New York visitors. The Boston Chapter thanks the NY Chapter, ZAGBA, individuals such as Yasmin Bhungara, and others for their assistance. Sunday activities included visits by the WZCC-New York Chapter to the historic town of Rockport, Massachusetts, Halibut State Park, and Woodman's in Essex. A Picture Album of the event is posted at <http://picasaweb.google.com/nvania/BostonTripWZCC>.

Copyright, Natalie Vania,
November 2007



Natalie Vania is the Research Director for FSO Knowledge Xchange and the wife of Rusi Gandhi.



Farita - Best Female Solo Artist 2007

For the second year running, Farita, is the winner of Best Female Solo Artist Australia in the International Music Aid Awards 2007.

Over 16,000 votes were cast in 29 participating countries in the competition judged by music industry peers. Music Aid International was originally formed in 1998 to support children in need. Since 2007, it has also become committed in helping combat the current climate crisis.



For more details visit www.musicaid.org
[Hamazor Issue 2/2007 pp 60-62 carried an exclusive interview with Farita]



Raiomond Mirza - composer, writer

U K-based, Canada-raised music composer Raiomond Mirza just finished work on his first Bollywood film, *Manorma - Six Feet Under*. At the end of September, Raiomond was in Mumbai for the premier of this film.

The music review of *Manorama - Six Feet Under* at Smashhites.com says "... New composer Raiomond Mirza makes his first dent in the marquee with intimidating spine-chilling soundtrack *Dhokha*. ... Both composers (Jayesh Gandhi and Raiomond Mirza) have shown their skills with great zest and all numbers have materialized to perfection in this crime thriller. ..."

"...Fresh composer Raiomond Mirza delivers a penchant background soundtrack. ... Raiomond Mirza has Sufi surprise in melancholically arranged and delectably emoted soundtrack *Dhundla Jo Sama Bandha...*" says cafe pixie.com

Raiomond is also an ethnomusicologist, whose dissertation was on the musicology of Zoroastrian prayer in India and Iran.

[Hamazor carried *The House of Song*, a 3-part series in Issues 3/05, 4/05 & 1/06]



CHAL

Report from Toxy Cowasjee

- Ongoing assistance given to the survivors of the Pak Earthquake

CHAL literally means to walk – and this is being accomplished for the amputees who suffered during the earthquake of October 2005 in Northern Pakistan. CHAL is a network of existing rehab institutes and professionals desirous of helping rehabilitate the physically challenged persons in the earthquake affected areas. It is anchored in Murshid Hospital and Health Care Centre, an existing registered NGO serving the under-privileged persons. This has helped avoid duplication and waste.

One of CHAL's initiatives in collaboration with its network partners is to ensure that the children have mobility enabling them to become active contributors instead of remaining passive receivers and to be included in all activities instead of being pushed into isolation.

Besides fitting the children who are under 10 years of age, if donors wish, they see that these children benefit from education and monitor their progress till the age of 16 years. 30 children are already sponsored and have pledges of another 20 children to complete their schooling including receiving prosthesis as they outgrow their present ones. *Feed the Children*, UK, are supporting some of these children. CHAL have employed a project coordinator who is herself a polio victim and in a wheel chair, who goes regularly to check on the progress and welfare of the children who are being assisted.

By chance, I came across CHAL at the end of September and after meeting Mr Haamid Jaffer who is a Board Director of Murshid Hospital & Health Care Centre, and being more than satisfied with what they are achieving; on WZOs behalf from the funds held by me for the betterment of the earthquake survivors, donated a sum of Rs300,000 on 4 October 2007.

This contribution will assist nine children, four girls and five boys, with functional artificial



Siraj Khan - 8 years

Munavor - 6 years



limbs of good quality. Order of prosthetic components has been placed by PIPOS (Pakistan Institute of Prosthetic & Orthotic Sciences) with the German supplier, Otto Bock. On arrival of these components, PIPOS will do the limb fitting by mid January 2008. The actual limbs are made in Pakistan to keep the price manageable and the components are reused once the children outgrow their limbs for the next set of younger individuals.

'Our' children who are being fitted are: Adnan who is 5 years old, Munavor and Naveed both 6, Dilnaz – 7, Rabia Gul and Siraj Khan – 8, Mohsan Iqbal – 9, Naureen – 11, and Sonia Bibi – 12. Seven of these children are being fitted with a transtibial prosthesis, one with a transfemoral prosthesis and one with a knee disarticulation prosthesis. A few of the above mentioned children already have prosthesis but the new limbs with components under order will give the kids greater flexibility of movement with confidence, being lighter yet stronger thus resistant to 'childplay' and mountainous terrain wear and tear.

As you have been informed in the past I do have funds donated by you, but till such time the two projects in hand with the OAKDF are complete, no ongoing commitment can be given to CHAL much as I would love to.

Children are the future of any nation and if we can assist these young amputees through CHAL for the completion of further upgrading of their prosthesis and education, we will have achieved. I am informed that if we carry on assisting the nine children mentioned above it will be approximately a further Rs67,000 per child, which hopefully we may manage for at least three.

If any person/group would wish to 'adopt' a child from inception, that is, component parts, prosthesis throughout the growing stage and education, the sum is Rs100,000 or US\$1,640. A regular update will be received from CHAL for 'their' child. You may contact me on toxy39@attglobal.net or by mail at 2A Mary Road, Bath Island, Karachi 75530, Pakistan, if you wish, and this donation will be kept specifically for the amputee children.



Mohsan Iqbal - 9 years



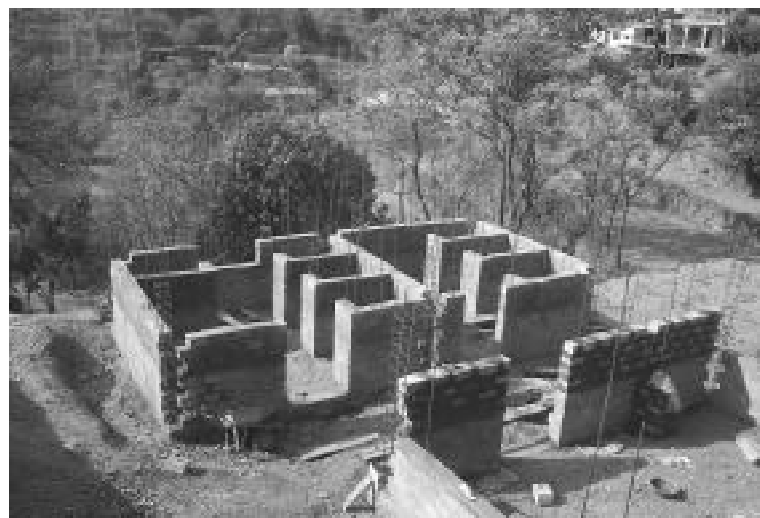
Sonia Bibi - 12 years

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An update of the two ongoing projects with OAKDF

At Siria where the WFS is being built:

Work is progressing, a bit slow as labour has been a problem but at least it has come out of the ground and is presently at lintel level.



The water supply in Sirla, however, has been a problem. The handpump installed by OAKDF has run dry and they are having to relocate it. The contractor thus, does have an excuse. Work will have to be suspended until March (once the snow falls) and OAKDF have now informed the completion date will have to be moved to June.

This is a further disappointment as far as the Women Friendly Space (WFS) project undertaken by WZO is concerned.

Khorikhetar, Union Council Nammal, District Abbottabad, where piped water is being laid:

Work on the source development which includes tanks has been completed in village Majhot. The main pipeline of 16,000 RFT has been installed, and the storage tank has been built near the hamlet, Bari. The remaining work (about 10%) includes installation of the distribution network, which is in progress. This work refers to the water supply to Khorikhetar which is underway and progressing very well. The community is highly mobilised and is moving full speed ahead. They want to finish the distribution system, which is what your donation has financed, within the next 30 days, which is early January '08.



Water Source Development (collection and water filtering tanks) at Majhot for onward distribution to Khorikhetar



Author and lecturer, Leo Buscaglia, once talked about a contest he was asked to judge. The purpose of the contest was to find the most caring child.

The winner was:

A four-year-old child, whose next door neighbor was an elderly gentleman, who had recently lost his wife. Upon seeing the man cry, the little boy went into the old gentleman's yard, climbed on to his lap, and just sat there.

When his mother asked him what he had said to the neighbour, the little boy just said, "Nothing, I just helped him cry."



The World Zoroastrian Organisation

135 Tennison Road, South Norwood, London SE25 5NF

Registration No 1510380 Cardiff, England

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Incorporated 1980

APPLICATION FORM FOR MEMBERSHIP

The Joint Honorary Secretaries
The World Zoroastrian Organisation

_____ 20 _____

Dear Sirs,

As I desire to become Grand Patron / Patron / Life Member / Ordinary Member / Student (delete as appropriate), I request you to submit this application to your Committee.

I confirm that I am (Tick as appropriate):

- (a) person born into and confirmed into the Zoroastrian faith
- (b) non-Zoroastrian spouse married to a Zoroastrian
- (c) a child of marriage as described in (b) above

I note that the annual subscription for Ordinary Membership is payable on 1st January of each year. In case of arrears, I understand that my membership will be terminated after three months of sending the reminder.

Yours truly,

Signature

Block Capitals please FULL NAME _____

PROFESSION/OCCUPATION _____

IF STUDENT DATE OF BIRTH _____ E-MAIL _____

ADDRESS IN COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE _____

TEL: RES _____ OFF _____ MOBILE _____

Proposed by _____ **Seconded by** _____

Note: The Proposer and Seconder must be WZO members. For subscription fees please check overleaf.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date	Amount Received	Date of Membership	Register of Members	Mailing List

It may be more convenient for you to apply for or renew your membership of WZO through our website, www.w-z-o.org, and paying by a Credit or Debit card.

Membership Fees

For Indian residents

Grand Patron	Rs10,000	Patron	Rs5,000	Permanent Assoc Member	£ 150
Ordinary Assoc Member	£10 pa	Life Member	Rs2,500	Student	Gratis
Ordinary Member	Rs450 for 3 years				till 21 years of age

Please send application form to: The World Zoroastrian Organisation (India) to Union Press, 13 Homji St, Fort, Mumbai 400 001. Tel: (022) 2660357 or 2665526

For UK residents & other countries

Grand Patron	£ 500	Patron	£ 250	Permanent Assoc Member	£ 150
Ordinary Assoc Member	£10 pa	Life Member	£ 100	Ordinary Member for 3 yrs	£ 30
Student	Gratis till 25 years of age				

Please send application form and cheque payable in Sterling to WZO, London to:

Mrs Khurshid Kapadia, 217 Pickhurst Rise, West Wickham, Kent BR4 0AQ. Tel +44 020 8777 5778

For USA residents

Permanent Assoc Member	\$ 225	Ordinary Assoc Member	\$ 25 pa
Life Member	\$ 150	Ordinary Member for 3 yrs	\$45
Student	Gratis till 25 years of age		

Please send application form and cheque payable in US Dollars as "WZO US Region" to:

Mr Keki Bhote, 493 Woodlawn Ave., Glencoe, Illinois 60022. Tel: (847) 835 1984

For Canadian residents

Permanent Assoc Member	C\$ 325	Ordinary Assoc Member	C\$ 30 pa
Life Member	C\$ 200	Ordinary Member for 3 yrs	C\$ 60
Student	Gratis till 25 years of age		

Please send application form and cheque payable in Candian Dollars as "OZCF, WZO Fees" to:

Mr Marzi Byramji, Regal Press, 3265 Wharton Way, Unit, Mississauga, Ontario L4X 2X9. Tel: (905) 238 8005

For Pakistani residents

Grand Patron	Rs10,000	Patron	Rs5,000	Permanent Assoc Member	£ 150
Ordinary Assoc Member	£10 pa	Life Member	Rs2,500	Student	Gratis till 25 years of age

Please send application form and cheque payable in Pak Rupees as "WZO" to:

Mrs Toxy Cowasjee, 2 A Mary Road, Bath Island, Karachi 75530. Tel: (021) 5867088

For New Zealand residents

Grand Patron	NZ\$1,500	Patron	NZ\$750	Life Member	NZ\$300
Ordinary for 3 yrs	NZ\$90	Student	Gratis till 25 years of age		

Please send application form with your cheque payable in NZ Dollars as "WZO, New Zealand", to:

Mr Darius Mistry, 134A Paritai Drive, Orakei, Auckland 1005. Tel: 64 9 5291993

“But to this world he came with
the rule of good thinking and of truth, and (our)
enduring gave body and breath (to it)...”

yasna 30.7

Insler translation

