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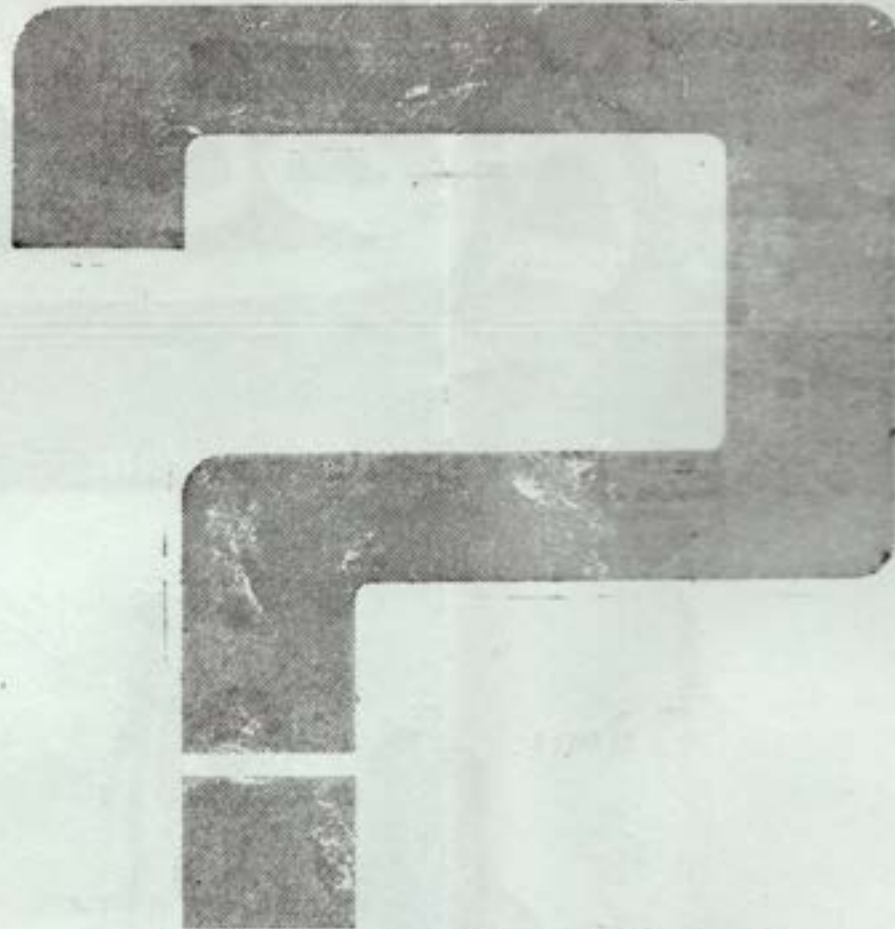
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EDITORIAL

Two gentlemen appeared in the Court. "Were they drunk?"
asked the Magistrate. "No ! Your Honour ! They were intoxicated ;
they came to the pond and waited for three hours for green signal".

Our two gentlemen Mr. Manek Mistry and Ervad Dr. Karkha-
nawala were found intoxicated with the urge for amelioration of the
condition of our priest class. They came to their hurdle and waited for
three years.

The original Greek word **TOXON** meant an arrow and not
poison. Later on people dipped the arrow in poison and shot it at the
enemy. Then the word assumed a new form **TOXIKON** and acquired
a new meaning poison. Our two enthusiasts have stot the original
thing, the arrow and made a mark. After years of waiting and planning
a scheme for Amelioration of our Priest Class has come. It is now for
the community for its own good to make it a real success. In it I
envisage much more than ceremony and adequate payment. With the
uplift of the priest class, sure as days follow nights, will come vivifica-
tion and restoration of old values throughout the community. A
society that stands upon doling out pittance to its priests lacks the
guiding authority of priests over laymen and measures the decline
of religion and its followers. Only with the priest in the vanguard will
the community write its diary ahead of the time and reach it to fulfil-
ment. There is power in faith that annuls "the disappointed recoil of
the soul". For further news about the scheme read the article "Spring-
time."

To make the significance of religion understandable and
meaningful I have included in this issue the enlightening lecture by
Swami Ranganathananda. It is here reproduced in condensed form.
The gist of it is that religion and science are both quests for truth and

fulfilment. "A series of judgments, revised without ceasing, goes to make up the incontestable progress of science" (Duclaux). Fixity of ideas and outlook tend to make religion rigid, non-receptive and divisive and the reasons are explained therein. Self-fulfilment as Culture and Religion is shown as a stronger and quicker force in growth than heredity, which is also a force but a slow acting one leading to conservatism. The world is on the threshold of a great change and we as a microscopic minority will not escape its impact. The move to improve and preserve our priest class will help to preserve what is worthwhile preserving in us and improve whatever we shall conserve. That is the purpose of Parsiana as "A New Medium for Old Wisdom" as mentioned on its cover page.

The English word TOXON means an arrow and is derived from the Greek word toxos, which means an archer. The word TOXON is also the source of the word TOXIC, which means poisonous. The word TOXON is also the source of the word TOXICITY, which means the quality of being poisonous. The word TOXON is also the source of the word TOXICANT, which means a substance that is poisonous.



Culture, Science, and Religion*

by

Swami Ranganathananda

Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta.

I have often wondered how religion and culture could become divisive factors in inter-human relationships. They have functioned as unifying forces in society up to a certain stage, after which they have become rigid and exclusive. Such rigid and exclusive religions and cultures have often engaged in mutual conflicts, often fierce.

In the light of the scientific enlightenment and broad humanism of the modern age, all such inter-religious and inter-cultural conflicts, whether of the past or of the present, appear utterly meaningless. They proceed from a waning interest in truth and human well-being and a waxing interest in prejudices and narrow group interests. Conflicts of thought do occur in science and are indispensable to its progress. But they are kept at low emotional temperatures under the constant pressure of a love of truth and a passion for its search and discovery; and this search and discovery involve rational scrutiny of facts and verification of hypotheses. Something of this scientific approach is slowly penetrating the fields of religion and culture. The modern development of the comparative study of religions and cultures does not aim at, or result in, the amalgamation of cultures and religions or their destruc-

tion, but the introduction of sanity in inter-religious relations and the evolution of a mankind-awareness through creative cross-fertilization of cultures and religions.

The genetic or biological inheritance of man represents something fixed and largely unalterable; **biologists treat it as the force for conservatism in man.** His cultural inheritance, on the other hand, is resilient and creative.

Culture, according to Sir Julian Huxley, is self-duplicating mind, just as the living cell is self-duplicating matter. The emergence of the latter was the first major breakthrough in evolution, initiating its biological or organic phase. The emergence of the former registered, through the agency of man's capacity for thought and speech communication, the second major breakthrough in evolution, initiating its spiritual or psychosocial phase. Referring to the significance of this second phase, Sir Julian Huxley says in his lecture on 'The Evolutionary Vision' (Evolution After Darwin, Vol. III, p. 251):

'Man's evolution is not biological but psychosocial; it operates by the mechanism of cultural tradition, which involves the cumulative self-reproduction and self-variation of mental activities and their

Address delivered as Chief Guest at the Twenty-third Foundation Day of the Iran Society, 12, Kyd Street, Calcutta on Sunday, the 27th August, 1967.

products. Accordingly, major steps in the phase of evolution are achieved by breakthroughs to new dominant patterns of mental organization, of knowledge, ideas, and beliefs—ideological instead of physiological or biological organization.'

Two false identifications have done immense harm to human society and to the spiritual growth of man. The first is the identification of race and culture and the second is the identification of creed and culture.

Culture is not inherited through the germ plasm but acquired from the psychosocial environment. This truth finds striking emphasis in twentieth-century biology (Evolution After Darwin, Vol. 3, p. 208):

'The unique ability of human beings to produce culture is due to their special ability of symbolization, which produces both language and the probably related ability to abstract, to superadd concepts to percepts. These faculties allow knowledge and ideas to be communicated, stored, and accumulated. The consequence is that culture, like speech, is always acquired by learning. It is not congenital. This is a great advantage, allowing much more rapid adaptation to environment and more rapid evolutionary advance.

'In man, biological evolution through gene shuffling, selection, and mutation can go on simultaneously with cultural evolution and they are both operative. But the cultural evolution has become much the more effective and dominant and faster in action.

'Cultural evolution is different from biological evolution, in that aspects of culture—ideas, techniques, institutions

can be almost indefinitely combined and hybridized, regardless of the dissimilarities between the cultures that produced them.'

Organic evolution operates in habitually inter-breeding groups.

The new evolution operates in what may be called habitually inter-thinking groups.

Factors that have helped to broaden modern man's understanding of his cultural heritage, have also helped to broaden modern man's comprehension of his religious heritage. Religion is one of the noblest if not the noblest, products of culture; and like culture, it has also exhibited throughout history benevolent as well as malevolent aspects; and for the same reasons. Religion, as the science and art of man's spiritual growth and development, has done more to advance human culture and give man a sense of fulfilment than any other discipline. But when it has become dominated by non-religious motives, it has destroyed human happiness and stunted the human personality. Functioning as closed systems, religions in the past have met each other mostly in collisions. This is in for a radical change in the modern age. Thanks to the pervasive influence of modern science with its enlightenment and the broad humanism it has engendered, the great world religions are slowly releasing themselves from their exclusive and intolerant attitudes and entering into fruitful dialogues with each other and with modern science.

Quality is a value, concept and values are not physical but spiritual. In the protesting words of Bertrand Russell (Impact of Science on Society, p. 77):

'The Machine as an object of adoration is the modern form of Satan, and its worship is the modern diabolism.

'... Whatever else may be mechanical values are not, and this is something which no political philosopher must forget.'

Increase of quality is the way to advance human evolution; and human evolution must lead to human fulfilment. Stressing the importance of this concept of fulfilment for human evolution, Julian Huxley says (Evolution After Darwin, Vol. I, p. 20):

'In the light of our present knowledge man's most comprehensive aim is seen not as mere survival, not as numerical increase not as increased complexity of organization or increased control over his environment, but as greater fulfilment—the fuller realization of more possibilities by the human species collectively and more of its component members individually.'

And pleading for a scientific study of the meaning and scope of this concept of fulfilment, Huxley concludes (ibid., p. 21):

'Once greater fulfilment is recognized as man's ultimate or dominant aim, we shall need a science of human possibilities to help guide the long course of psychosocial evolution that lies ahead.'

'Religion, correctly understood, is this 'science of human possibilities' referred to by Huxley. Religion is essentially a spiritual discipline and realization leading to the qualitative improvement of human life. This has been its central theme and function throughout history except when it had been dominated by non-religious forces. It has been the nursery of man's moral life and the inspirer of much of his artistic heritage. It has tamed his animal impul-

ses, raised him to heights of self-effacing altruism and service, and made him reach out to the human and universal. The true mystics and saints of all religions, barring those on whom such honour had been thrust for political and other extraneous considerations, are lovable and adorable group representing the advance of human evolution to the summit of what Julian Huxley calls fulfilment. They also blazon by their lives and realizations the science of human possibilities referred to by Huxley.

Culture and religion are two values which move the emotions of man powerfully. Science, similarly, affects his intellect and thought. The harmonious co-operation of these three disciplines, which has already commenced in a small way in recent times, is the most hopeful sign which this second half of the twentieth century offers to modern man beset with the successes and failures of his highly technical civilization.

The positive sciences deal with the world revealed by the senses or by instruments helpful to the senses. And the science of religion deals with the supersensual world. The claim of dogmatic religions to unravel the mystery of what they called the 'super-natural' brought them into conflict with advancing science which sought to unravel the mystery of the 'natural.' Scientific religion, especially as developed in India, never upheld such an irreconcilable opposition as between a natural and a supernatural order and hence never gave rise to any conflict between science and religion. Reality is one; what the senses reveal of its nature is stu-

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died by the positive sciences; and what lies beyond the sense level may be termed super-sensual but not supernatural, and may be form a valid field of study by a science equipped with methods and techniques relevant to that special field. This latter is the scope of the science of religion according to Indian thought. In the words of Swami Vivekananda (The Complete Works, Vol. III, Eight Edition, p. 253):

'Beyond (waking) consciousness is where the bold search; (waking) consciousness is bound by the sense. Beyond that, beyond the senses, men must go, in order to arrive at truths of the spiritual world, and there are even now persons who succeed in going beyond the bounds of the senses. These are called rsis (sages), because they come face to face with spiritual truths'.

Pleading for a scientific approach to this great subject of religion, Vivekananda says (ibid., Vol. vi, Sixth Edition, p. 81):

'Experience is the only source of knowledge. In the world, religion is the only science where there is no surety, because it is not taught as a science of experience. This should not be. There is always, however, a small group of men who teach religion from experience. They are called mystics, and these mystics in every religion speak the same tongue and teach the same truth.

'This is the real science of religion. As mathematics in every part of the world does not differ, so the mystics do not differ. They are all similarly constituted and similarly situated. Their experience is the same; and this becomes law.'

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And pointing out the difference in the fields of investigation between positive sciences and the science of religion, Vivekananda says (ibid.):

'Religion deals with the truths of the metaphysical world just as chemistry and the other natural sciences deal with the truth of the physical world. The book one must read to learn chemistry is the book of nature. The book from which to learn religion is your own mind and heart. The sage is often ignorant of physical science because he reads the wrong book—the book within; and the scientist is too often ignorant of religion, because he too reads the wrong book—the book without.'

Twentieth-century science is becoming increasingly confronted with the challenge of this 'book within' at the farthest limit of its impressive study of the 'book without.'

Existence of "the within" in man can no longer be evaded, because it is the object of a direct intuition and the substance of all knowledge.'

Religion as the study of the within of nature is a continuation of and complement to the study of the without of nature which is positive science.

Each of these two types of cultures, great in its own respective field, is yet, as is being increasingly recognized today, partial and imperfect. As remarked by Aldous Huxley, modern civilization produces the intelligent fool while ancient civilization produces the wise fool; but what the world needs is the production of intelligent wise men and women. The modern world is reaching out to the achievement of a culture capable of leading man, individually and collectively, to total fulfilment. Such a culture needs the ministra-

tions of both positive science and the science of religion. And if increase of quality is the touchstone of human evolution, the role of the latter is going to be of more fundamental importance than that of the former. Quality in human life is the product of the free discipline and control and sublimation of the energies of his emotions and will; this is the province of religion, the science of the inner life. In the words of Einstein, science can denature plutonium but it cannot denature evil in the heart of man. It is becoming increasingly recognized that positive science can create only conditions for human happiness and fulfilment but cannot ensure that he is happy or fulfilled. Excess of such conditions may actually result in greater unfulfilment. This obviously is the tragedy of man in the modern age. Speaking on the subject of 'The Evolutionary Vision', Julian Huxley says (Evolution After Darwin, Vol. III, p. 259):

'Once we truly believe ... that man's destiny is to make possible greater fulfilment for more human beings and fuller achievements by human societies, utility in the customary sense becomes subordinate. Quantity of material production is, of course, necessary as the basis for the satisfaction of elementary human needs — but only upto a certain degree. More than a certain number of calories or cock-tails or T.V. sets or washing machines per person is not merely unnecessary, but bad. Quantity of material production is a means to a further end, not an end in itself.'

This vision and hope find eloquent expression in the testament of Robert A. Millikan, the noted astrophysicist, in the concluding chapter of his autobiography:

'It seems to me that the two great pillars upon which all human well-being and human progress rest, are, first, the spirit of religion, and second, the spirit of science

— or knowledge. Neither can attain its largest effectiveness without support from the other. To promote the latter, we have universities and research institutions. But the supreme opportunity for everyone with no exception lies in the first.'

India and Iran, as also Pakistan and Afghanistan, constitute a complex of contiguous cultures and peoples whose hoary history reveals common origins, much cultural inter-penetrations, and substantial spiritual give and take. These are fundamental affinities between these groups of peoples.

Scientifically approached, culture and religion, as we see can never foster exclusiveness and intolerance. The great mystics of this regional complex, Hindu, Zoroastrian, and Islamic, were intensely universal and human in their attitudes and teachings. To them religion was a science based on experience. They and their message often came into conflict with those to whom religion was a bundle of creed and dogma, finished and final. Creeds and dogmas buttressed by political and state power, have been reactionary forces and have always stunted and distorted the personality of man.

This is the type of education that the peoples of these four nations need today to usher them truly into the modern age. And I am glad to find that the Iran Society of Calcutta is devotedly engaged precisely to this noble field with respect to two of the nations of the region, to liberate man from all obscurantism and its reactionary forces.

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Redemption of the Earth "GETI-KHARID"

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"To be free from Evil Thoughts is the Best Gift of God".

There is such a thing called "Geti Kharid" — redemption of the Earth. These words in translation give us the idea of buying (Kharid) of this Earth (Geti).

We buy parts of this Earth with our riches. But "Geti Kharid" does not refer to such a purchase. "Geti Kharid" is a life-long ceremony, which one has to go through to gain permanent happiness of one's own soul — soul's uplift. This ceremony therefore aims at spiritual and not material welfare.

We repeat in our prayers that "All Blessings flow to us from Ahura Mazda" — Ahura Mazda's earth bestows on us all the Blessings. They are bounties, which come to us in great abundance. In return for this we promise but give back to the earth very little. Were it not for these Blessings of the earth (Geti), our life would be short-lived and will not be supportable. The earth has given us birth and we have to give back to the earth a part of ourselves. The body we have is earthy, the things we eat are earthy, the clothes we wear are earthy, the wealth we have is earthy. We enjoy so much of the good things of life but in return give next to nothing to anyone. We work, and our gains give us material pleasure, which is not permanent. We are selfish and live for

ourselves. We want to eat, drink, wear rich clothes, enjoy and go to sleep only to rise again the next day for the next round of routine. Such is life as we see all around us. We grumble when we feel dissatisfied, though God's Blessings continue to flow to us at all moments. However, we do not care to consider the grumbings of the poor unfortunates. In life we do very little service for God.

When our life's journey is over, our Soul (Urvan) has to leave behind its material gains, with a very heavy heart, on its journey into the Minoi (Spiritual World). That is because our life is not correctly adjusted. We had made use of the earth (Geti) only to get all it could give us. We never did the "Kharid" (buying) of the bounties that the earth bestowed on us. We hardly give to the earth anything by way of sacrifice from ourselves. Our bodies were nursed nurtured and cared for, maintained and sustained all from what the earth had given us, but as we had not repaid we pass into the Minoi poor and penniless having no balance in our favour.

In the Minoi we carry with us our mind with its experiences, but these are only of our earthly gains. We made no sacrifice, and so we cannot be at peace with ourselves in the Minoi. On the one hand the earthly desires will torment us

and on the other hand the pain of having had to leave behind our material wealth may prove unbearable. Rich men buy properties with their wealth. There is a ceremony called "Geti Kharid" which we shall consider. But that takes us nowhere. Only those really do "Geti Kharid" who go all out to help their neighbours, persons in distress, in want and those who spread Ushta (Abiding Happiness) in the lives of others. Such people having obtained their blessings from the earth of Ahura Mazda, are considered as having given back to the earth a service for the blessings they had received from the earth. So they had fully redeemed the earth, with their good cheer, good heart, love and affection and service. All on earth feel the force of that kind of 'Geti Kharid'. "Happiness comes to him from whom happiness flows to others". So ૨૫૧૫ કિજતી, ૨૫૧૫ યૈખતી ને યૈતી ખરીદ are brought about only by man's own efforts. The five Gahs relate, how that kind of life of the soul can be perfected by proper apportioning of time to the duties of life. (The explanations of the five Gahs, with their complete translations are set out in 'Daily Prayers' Parts 1 and 2 of Mr. Framroz Rustomjee of Colombo).

The time spent on Earth by man has therefore to be lived strictly according to the last line of our "Yatha Ahu Vairyo" prayer. We repeat it often, but its impress on the mind is poor.

The gifts of the Good Mind cannot be bought from God.

If one tries to make the best use of his time, to save himself from the sins of the body and to exert himself to make the

lives of others happy, then he has gone a long way towards "Geti Kharid". Even the poorest can go all out for this "Shopping".

Material gains have a difficult task. They are held by the rich as God's Trustees, for those who are in want. All have to secure deliverance for their Souls. The only way open is to seek God's Glory through Geti-Kharid.

Our prayers teach us that deliverance can be secured only by way of the heart. The heart demands great sacrifices — the sacrifices of even one's life, for the sake of Truth and human Goodness. The Blessings of God's Earth (Geti) are great. Likewise the sacrifices to be offered for the earth and for those who live on it have also to be great.

The ceremony, now performed under the name of "Geti Kharid", for nine days, can teach us one great moral lesson — the glory of one's own sacrifice in wealth and service, for the buying (Kharid) of the earth (Geti).

That is "Geti Kharid", the uplift of the Soul, a soul truly redeemed.

The Ceremony of "Geti Kharid" lasts for nine days. It is performed by a pair (jor) of mobeds having their barashnoon intact. Every day for first six days they perform one Yejeshne of Mino-Navar in Havan Geh. This part of the ceremony is called **Gevro** in which either mobed takes charge of the ceremony on alternate days by himself assuming "Khoob". On the sixth day both mobeds perform Baaj separately and partake of chashni of darun of one another for becoming Ham-

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kalam (of same word and mind). On the seventh day they both perform a Baaj and a Yajeshne of Sarosh Yezat. On eighth day they perform a Baaj and a Yajeshne of Siroja. On ninth day after performing "Visparad" ceremony each moped performs a baaj separately. This ends the Geti-Kharid.

This ceremony is essentially for the living person and name is taken of the persons who orders it as a gesture of purchasing this world (earth) for the happiness of the next world.

Saddar Bundeishn says that loving friends and relatives come to greet and welcome a person who had had his Geti-Kharid ceremony on fourth day of his death to receive and guide him to heaven.



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Maonghah: (Mah) the Moon:

by

MAHYAR BYRAMJI PATEL

"In the deep, solitary still of the glimmering Moonlight, some reflective minds are gifted with a remarkable memory — whilst some are cursed with it!"

"TAT THWA PERESA, ERESH-MOI VAOCHA, AHURA: KE YA MAO UKHSHYEITI NEREFSAITI THWAT?"

"This do I ask Thee, tell me truly, O! Ahura:.....Who makes that Moon wax and wane, but Thyself?"

MAONGHAH (Mah) is the cool effulgent Moon. He is the great liberator of Souls, and presides over them as their Yazata. The seventh Yasht (which is one of the shortest of Yashts in the Avesta) and the third Nyaish, are both consecrated to him. Both these prayers are meant for special recitations on the days of the New Moon, the Full Moon, and the Waning Moon (i.e. the Chandrat, Punam and Amawasya days). The Nyaish may preferably be used as a daily invocation, and the Yasht may be recited especially on Bahman, Mohor, Gosh and Ram Roz. The twelfth day of the Parsee Calendar—MOHOR — is dedicated to him. In the Gathas, the Moon is referred to as Mah, which later on becomes Maonghah, and then finally ends up as Mohor, in the Later Avesta.

Maonghah is very closely associated with the animal creation, and his special epithet is 'gaochithrem', meaning 'the possessor of the seed of cattle' (Maonghem Gaochitren). It is because of this that he is also very closely associated with Vohu-

Manah, Bahman, who is the Guardian Angel of the animal world; with Drvaspa, Gosh who is a feminine deity that gives health and strength to the good cattle and other animals; and with Vayu (the Good Wind), an associate of Raman, who is the genius of the joy of life in the material world. Due to the association of Vohu-Manah (Bahman), Maonghah (Mohor), Drvaspa (Gosh), and Vayu (Raman) with the animal creation, orthodox Parsees abstain from eating meat on the days consecrated to them in the Parsee Calendar, namely, Bahman, Mohor, Gosh and Raam the four Androja days in every month.

In the Gathas, Zarathushtra clearly says that he considers the Moon to be one of the good creations of Ahura-Mazda, and that it moves about in the high heavens, along a set course alternately waxing and waning according to fixed and good laws. All the shining luminaries hurtle through the vast spaces of the firmament at tremendous speeds, and do not collide. Such is the supreme control of the Great Architect of the Universe.

Zarathushtra asserts that the Laws of Asha operate within us, we as well as in the realms that lie without us.

The Later Avesta regards the Sun and the Moon as the two eyes of Ahura-Mazda. However, the Sun acquires greater importance. It is but natural, considering the fact that the Moon shines by the reflected light of the Sun. Hence, while the Sun is poetically portrayed as riding through the heavens and earth on a magnificent golden chariot, drawn by four peerless white horses, the Moon has to remain content with being regarded merely as 'the possessor of the seed of cattle'. Apparently the Iranian mind did not consider the Moon to be of the same degree of beneficent influence and importance as the Sun, and thus the placid Queen of the Silver Night has taken the next place of importance to the Glorious King of the Golden Day.

Comparatively, very little is mentioned of the Moon, or the Yazata presiding over it, in the pages of the Later Avesta. However, the Later Avesta does mention in the text of the Mah Bakhtar Nyash, that: '..... When the light of the Moon shines brightly, through its cool moisture, the verdure of the green-coloured plants sprouts out from the earth.....'. The Moon is reverentially regarded as "MA-ONGHAHI GAOCHITHRAI" "the protector of the seed of the primeval Bull", and of the many other species of Bulls. Both, the visible as well as the invisible other side of the Moon receive our due homage. Prof. Darmesteter interprets this to mean "when we look at you, you receive our due homage and when you look

at us you receive our due homage". Prof. Harley's interpretation is "Homage unto you when we see and unto you even when we cannot see but just think of you". The composer questions how many days it takes for the Moon to wax, and then how many days to wane. And gives his own answer, that it takes a fortnight each way, equally. Then in the language and the spirit of the Gathas, he questions to find out who is the one who makes the Moon wax and wane, and supplies the answer, that it can be no other than Ahura-Mazda Himself. He calls the Moon the Lord of Righteousness.

He rejoices in espying the New Moon, and bows before it in reverence when he sees it rising in all its glory and brightness. He visualizes that the Immortal Holy Ones, the Amesha-Spentas gather the light and the warmth of the Moon, and then spread these all over upon the Good Earth created by Ahura-Mazda. This is no empty vision. As studied by modern astrophysics light of the sun is too diffuse to make anything shine. Only when light is gathered and directed that things brighten and light is seen shining, otherwise space is dark beyond a certain distance of the earth and other planets. He bows to the Moon during its different phases, such as the Full Moon, and the Waning Moon. He regards the Moon as the bestower-of-weal; full-of-radiance; rain-producing; warmth-giving; light-dispensing; a-giver-of help, strength, and welfare; full-of-strength and beneficent; the-bestower-of-verdure, prosperity, weal, health and happiness. He offers the Moon his prayers and libations, and prays for courage and victory; abundant cattle; able-bodied men that sit

in assemblies and attack and over-power the wicked opponents and the evil-minded whilst being unassailable, manifestly helpful and always pleasure-giving themselves. He calls upon the Moon to come to his aid in his capacity as 'Mah Bakhtar Mah Yazad', the great Liberator of the Soul.

Herodotus, one of the most reliable of ancient historians tells us that the Moon was the guardian divinity of the Persians, somewhat alike the Sun.

The extant Avesta does not devote much reference to the Moon, and if the Later Avesta speaks little about it, the Gathas speak even less about it. We are

not made aware why the Moon is regarded as the possessor of the seed of cattle. This makes it somewhat of an enigma to the inquiring-mind. However, what little is spoken about it refers to the Moon as a Good Creation of Ahura-Mazda, and of beneficent influence, and so, in the absence of the Sun, devoted Zarathushtrians turn their faces towards the moon at the time of prayer. The brilliant Light of the Radiant Sun illuminates us, and the cool Light of the Serene Moon makes us contemplate and reflective. Both these, lead us onwards, with their kindly Lights, to the dawn of a new Perfection !

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Review
Dignity
Wardens of
PRIESTS

SPRINGTIME

by

P. B. Warden

Springtime is the time for blossoming and flowering of gardens, transition in nature from dead slumber to keen awakening for values that flowers represent. Stability or continuity of any race depends upon the integrity and healthy growth of its priest class, who represent the sum total of the ethical values prevailing in the group. Indeed Prof. Richard Frye was right when he pithily expressed himself "No mobed, No Parsi". The initial shape given to a scheme for betterment of mobeds is a symptom of re-suscitation of our will to live.

The Parsi Panchayat has several trust moneys earmarked for religious ceremonies out of which 423 Baaj Rojger ceremonies are performed during a year.

The Trustees of Seth Mehrwanji Muncherji Cama Education Trust have donated Rs. 50,000 and another sum of Rs. 50,000 has come to the Trustees from DONOR Anonymous.

The object of both the donors is that interest on the total amount be used for betterment of the mobed class by helping the deserving ones, not on the bases of doles, but as support to their aim of elevation of their life.

Furthermore both the recent donors have given word that if the scheme is properly conducted and promotes the objective they will contribute further similar amount.

The objective to be promoted are (a) betterment of the economic condition of mobeds of a higher order, (b) who are studious, eager to increase their knowledge of our religious lore (c) willing to spread the word of Lord Zoroaster (d) remain alert and help revival of interest in Zoroastrianism within the community by setting examples of the dignity of the profession of divinity.

When such desideratum will be fulfilled is difficult to foresee but small are the beginnings of all great things and the initiation augurs well for the future of the mobed group. The community stands to get educated, proper type of mobeds who are duty-conscious and have will to serve the cause.

The credit for this initiation goes to two zealous Zoroastrians

Our energetic trustee Mr. Manek Mistry and our learned Eravad Sahib Dr. Minochehr Karkhanawalla, whose zeal and perseverance are exemplary. It is now for the community to pick up the thread and weave a well-knit order of the ministry of priesthood, who will demand respect in their own right instead of being just passed by along with the other passers-by. With a raise in the dignity of priesthood our entire community will rise with a refreshing re-shuffle of values.

The trustees of Seth Sorabji Vacchagandhi Dare-meher (Hughes Road, Bombay) have shown high cooperative spirit in offering within their premises a place to begin the scheme. The trustees of the Parsi Panchayat will have the ceremonies of 423 donors performed there under their supervision. The ceremonies will be performed by the proper type of mobeds envisaged above, whose remuneration will be adequate to maintain a social status of freedom from want to enable them to establish the dignity of the labour of love. One day not too remote from now we shall look upon the mobed with sense of pride and fondly call him મહાશય.

All ideals need backing of money. Every one must consider this aspect of the issue seriously and sincerely. Uplift of the mobeds must be considered as personal concern of every one of us and managed that way. I will not sermonise, I herely donate Rs. 101 from Parsiana account. Parsiana is not a flourishing account and often runs in arrears of payments. But that does not matter. First thing first.

From Wardern's (mysore) Pvt Ltd account I am contributing Rs. 151. From my personal account I have promised Rs

1001 to Mr. Manek Mistry when he was contemplating the scheme. That shall be delayed a few months pending finalisation of Income Tax assessments from 1963 onwards. It is no fault of mine, 23,000 cases were delayed in this section alone.

Like many other cases my hearings are finalised upto 1966. The Income Tax Office has recently installed a computer and I am awaiting chalan. Thereafter I shall fulfil my promise and dare not back out. In the last issue of Parsiana an article has appeared on Mithra and Mithra always "stands for the inviolability of the given pledge", whether the pledge is given by free choice or under duress, to friend or to a foe (p.22) "Mithra in Avasta has the force of a legal contract."

The question of betterment of our priest class has been shelved too long and all the readers of Parsiana should promise their shares in the name of Mithra (Meher Yazat). That is enough.

Please fill up the accompanying card and post it. Do not send any money to Parsiana. Recovery will be made by the Parsi Panchayat to whom all cards will be submitted by us.

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Review
to
Wardens
of
PRIESTS

SPRINGTIME

by
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The Editor, "PARSIANA"

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I feel he/she will be interested in Parsiana's above effort.

Mistry and our learned Eravad Sahib Dr. Minochehr Karkhanawalla, whose zeal and perseverance are exemplary. It is now for the community to pick up the thread and weave a well-knit order of the ministry of priesthood, who will demand respect in their own right instead of being just passed by along with the other passers-by. With a raise in the dignity of priesthood our entire community will rise with a refreshing re-shuffle of values.

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KHSHNOOM

DID ZARATHUSHTRA WRITE THE GATHAS ? — A MYTH CLEARED

by

P. N. TAVARIA

Many a writer of our Philology School avers that the Era of Zarathushtra cannot be so remote as seven or eight thousand years before the Christian Era. One argument put forward is that the language of the Gathas is a well-developed language, which is unlikely or improbable in the remote past and secondly that its language is allied to the language of the Vedas and therefore should be of the same period.

The fact is that Zarathushtra did not write the Gathas. The Gathas are the work of a succession of Rainidaran (Repairers of Religion), and probably of the last Rainidar Adarbad Marespand who lived 1600 years ago from now. This is a comparatively recent period and therefore the language of the Gathas is well-developed.

What the Prophet himself wrote were the 21 Nasks of Fshusho Manthra, which contained natural vibrations out of which all languages were derived. Thus these 21 Nasks were antecedental to languages. Words were derived out of formations of these vibrations, through the interpretations of their vibratory colours, the Staota Yasna. These Staota Yasna of he Prophet in the Fshusho Manthra of the Nasks reveal themselves only when Nasks are chanted properly and then they could be

comprehended only by souls who had developed high level of personal Asha. Such rare men were Zarathushtratemo, i.e. those most like the Prophet Zarathushtra in holiness. To such men Nature would be an open book revealing itself in a quick succession of concatenated pictures (like a Cinematograph) comprising all and Sundry from Zenith to Nadir. Zarathushtratemo could translate these vibratory colours into allegorical grammatical language according to some fixed rules. Thus Nasks were composed out of Fshusho Manthra into allegorical language of Manthra Spenta. Even these Nasks were too lofty for worldly people. They had to be further simplified.

Several Rainidaran got inspiration from Zarathushtratemo to learn Asha suitable to the times from the Institution of GAAS established by the Prophet in some holy region above. They then descended to the Earth to impart that knowledge which was enough and suitable for the period. A Rainidar was also a great seer who could foresee the type and the calibre of souls to descend on the Earth during one or two thousand years to follow. He therefore composed Avesta which could be suitable to the spiritual level of people to come, assessing the needs of the time and adjusting it to the ability and understanding likely to prevail then.

To these Avesta were added further expositions by the Rainidar (Repairer of Faith) himself. This is called Zand-Avesta

Thus from 21 Fshusho Manthra Nasks written by the Prophet Himself have come 21 Nasks of Manthra Spenta composed by the Zarathushtratemo. From these Manthra Spenta have come 21 Nasks of Khordeh Avesta by the Rainidaran which include the Gathas, and then came Zand-Avesta also by the Rainidarans. Thus it will be understood that the Gathas are not written by Zarathushtra but by he Rainidarans. Khordeh Avesta is small Avesta made compact by Rainidarans and rendered understandable for use of the people; but it is derived from the original source of allegorical writings stated above.

Because the Gathas are metrical with accents and syllables the philology school ascribes them to the Prophet as His own,

and it is a fashion to look upon the vast literature apart from the Gathas as redundant and unauthoritative and brand it as Later Avesta.

In fact the Gathas deal with and relate to the immortal worlds, so their language, vibrations and style are all superior. The Yasna-Haptanghaiti relates to the ultra-physical worlds. The Yasht literature are the veritable spiritual prescriptions for the spiritual ills of the sinful mortals of this material world. Thus understood the language of the extant Gathas has no bearing on the Era of Zarathushtra because it is written by the last Rainidar and not by Zarathushtra himself. No Prophet has actually written anything himself. Their utterances are recast by their followers, retaining the original language, style and purport faithfully. The whole range of avastan literature is equally important and equally useful.

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(સ્થાપી ૧૮૬૦)

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Some Thoughts from 'Ashem Vahu'

by

M. J. BALSARA

In this prayer "Ashoi" is taken as purity in "thought, words and deeds" and human behaviour based thereon. It therefore is the "key to happiness", which (happiness) every individual strives to attain consciously or unconsciously. Happiness is a state of mind. It can be longlasting or momentary happiness.

Human beings continuously strive to reach some such state of happiness. By searching out the object and studying the method of attainment of happiness pursued by individual one can ascertain, to which groups one's efforts are directed.

Everlasting happiness is associated with righteous behaviour between an individual and his fellow beings. Personal happiness is the state of mind in the process of spreading happiness. Because the individual is spreading it he in turn gets surrounded by it. Happiness can thus spread into wider circles. It is like scent from a rose, we sense it, enjoy it but at the same time there is every possibility that the rose enjoys it too.

Momentary happiness is like bottled scent, which is restricted from spreading. The individual due to the weakness of his human nature tries to enjoy it all for himself and the idea of sharing happiness does not occur to him as necessary so long as he attains this type of happiness. In such cases the lower human nature predominates the higher, and the sense of the emptiness creeps into life.

In the "Ashem Vohu" prayer it could be taken to mean, that "Ashoi (Rasti, Righteousness) is a gift to man from God because its basic element is associated with "Divine Intelligence" leading to happiness which could be attained only when a man's behaviour in daily life is righteous.

It is better to try to attain righteousness by living righteously and not by precepts

because the preacher may not in his daily life come up to the standard of his sermons. The practice of righteousness is solely the responsibility of an individual and he must make every effort to practise it. It is here that the real test comes and man falters because of the dominance of lower self over higher self. The lower self is in favour of earthly gains because they are easy to see feel and even touch. Man has to suffer the loss or enjoy the fruits.

Attainment of everlasting happiness is a product of life time of effort in putting "Ashoi" into daily life. Individual on his part has to make efforts in this direction. The lives of our prophet Zoroaster and the prophets of the other religions of the world were living examples of consistent practice of righteousness and they have attained eternal happiness as God wanted it to be so. To earthly individuals like us it is also a hint from God, as a key to unlock the door to the garden of eternal happiness, through the path of "Rasti" or remain outside it (garden) by trying to enter it by short cuts.

In the last para of prayer "Hoshbam", we come across the concepts of the practice of "Ashoi". "Asha ahista, Asha Sharesta, (a) daresam thava (b) Paeri thava jamyem, (c) hamem thava hakhem." Oh Lord, only with the help of the practice of righteousness (a) we can get a glimpse of thee (b) we can reach the precincts of thy kingdom (c) we can raise our spiritual standards to be fit, for Thy eternal friendship.

In short God wants us to be righteous and we too desire to attain righteousness but most people will share the experience that there is many a slip between the cup and the lip. So, at least, let us all be good, and not be good for nothing.

India Needs a Revolution in Education

by

AKBAR F. DOCTOR

Education is not only an ornament for the individual but the best investment for the defence and progress of a nation. True education is an exemplary teaching in the art of honest, healthy and happy living and not merely the coaching of languages and subjects. Illiteracy and poverty which stream through the lifeblood of our country can only be eradicated by scientific education imparted to our children in English — the language of international value. Hindi or the mother tongue must also be given a prominent position. But as I see it, our present educational policy is neither rational nor national in character; it neither suits our traditions nor our interests. Today, education in most of our institutions is deplorably a matter of memory-training with heavy indigestible courses that do not at all fully equip the student for the future. Our universities too, care little for the quality of education. They lay too much emphasis on the theoretical ignoring the practical and the moral. The recent grave student unrest and indiscipline all over the country is obviously due to the mechanical and soulless system of our guidance. It is indeed a meaningless education that teaches only physics but neglects the ethics, which builds character and personality.

I firmly believe and stress that India's responsibility of nation-building rests largely on the shoulders of the young and the destiny of our nation can only be shaped in their class rooms. The present deterioration in our educational standard at all levels is mainly due to the lack of carefulness on the part of our leaders and

teachers, and the lack of seriousness on the part of our parents and students. Narrowmindedness, nepotism and negligence must be purged if a groundwork for our educational reconstruction has to be laid now. It will be a great national calamity, if our welfare government and the responsible people now fail to realise the urgency of having improvement in the pattern of instructional courses throughout the country.

The future of India will be bright only when our educational system is right. If our schools and colleges are to be the temples of learning in the true sense, then a climate must soon be created to instil in our students a reverence for knowledge, a moral earnestness and a sense of purpose. Our educational policy must be such which aims at modernising India without destroying her healthy roots. To promote such education, only those educationists ought to be given administrative powers whose minds are completely free from political prejudice and who have the love of humanity and of the nation at heart. It is time our educationists gave more attention to vocational studies that suit our nation in such a manner that most of the people get chances to learn as well as earn according to their individual aptitudes. To materialise this, our major budget must be devoted for the betterment of our teachers' status and for the education of the masses on a war-footing. This secure, I am sure, the other problems will solve themselves.

Received through Mr. Rustom
Sakhlat (Calcutta)

A REJOINDER

Dasturji Khurshid Daboo's eight justifications for the existence of the ceremonies as printed on page 17 of October 1967 issue of PARSIANA, are far from convincing to the modern youth. The eight points referred to above are (1) There is life after death. (2) Ceremonies are voluntary. (3) Rites are performed universally throughout ages. (4) Mobeds do not sponge on them. They get even less than 25% of the expenses. (5) Ceremonies not intended to interfere with divine justice but are only for solace. (6) Ceremonies are expressions of love continuing after death and that (7) "On some fond breast the parted soul relies". (8) Expense is nominal compared to wastage in untoward show and other habits of the community.

With a little philosophical background he (the modern youth) could understand the existence of the spiritual world apart from the material world, and could also believe that our souls return from where they came after the material body is burnt, buried or disposed off by the ele-

ments. To say that after death, the soul becomes "a new entrant into a strange world" and that ceremonies are for consoling them, seems to be an argument in the reverse. In fact the soul returns to its heavenly abode from where it came at the time of birth, and the ceremonies for the dead act as a consolation more for the living than for the dear departed. If the soul needs any consolation as "a new entrant into a strange world", it is rather at the time of birth of a child, than at the time of death — but no ceremonies are performed at the time of birth as at the time of death for consoling the soul!

Will any scholar shed some light on this subject for the benefit of the growing generation who are drifting away from the ceremonials, not because the ceremonials are not beneficial but they do not understand them.

Yours faithfully,

K. S. Talati, B.A., LL.B., Advocate
268, R. A. Lines
Ingle Road, Karachi

KAIKOBAD

First King of Kaiyanian Dynasty

King Kaikobad descended from Minochehr, the grandson of King Faridun of Peshdadian Dynasty. His mother Rawshanak was the daughter of Farhad, a son of King Jamshid.

It is said that he was abandoned along the shores of a river. Zaab, the 10th of the 11 kings of Peshdadian Dynasty picked him up and kept in the place. If this version of Bundahishn be correct the other version of Firdausi that Kershap, the eleventh and the last Peshdadian king sent for him and that the assignment of searching him out and bringing him was given to Rustom, the great warrior, becomes incongruous. If he was in around the palace where was the need for search? Be that as it may, we shall follow Firdausi's version. According to it Kaikobad was deeply engrossed in meditation on Alburz mountain when Rustom came for him. Some European writers state that for many years Kaikobad was absorbed in formulating laws for betterment of human society and uplift of man's soul. He was as it were prepared in advance by virtue of his natural intelligence, diligence and love for justice for the status of Royalty, to which he did not aspire but did reach. His dictum was that "a King's every law was (should be) the emblem of his greatness", and true to it He surpassed even Minochehr in justice. The night previous

to the arrival of Rustom, Kaikobad had dreamt that two birds put a crown on his head. He was naturally of cheerful temperament and after that dream he descended from the mountain and arranged a feast. Rustom when he arrived saw him in gaiety. Kaikobad was gay enjoying beautiful, sweet-voiced Rameshgars (Producers of Rameshni, innocent delight) singing around him.

Conditions in Iran were pretty bad due to constant loot and plunder by Turanians. People therefore wanted a descendant of Peshdadians to take over as a ruler. Kaikobad was persuaded by Rustom to accept the throne, which he did only after he was convinced that Kershasp had died. He was initially crowned on the spot. Then all went marching towards the then capital of Iran. Rustom, Mehrab, Gushtehar, Karen and Keshvad were the army leaders marching ahead with Kaviani Zunda (Kaviani Banner) first unfurled years ago by Kaveh (the blacksmith) in revolt against Zohak.

Akbas, Visayeh and Garshivaj led the Turanian army. Garshivaj (also known as Kasrevaj of bad name and still hated as one mean and cruel) was a brother of Afrashiab. Both Afrashiab, the hated, and Kasrevaj, the cruel were overpowered and bound together across the waist and were carried to the prison, but on the way the

strap snapped and both escaped. Truce treaty was signed and Jihoon River was agreed for demarkation. Rustom disapproved of truce. Subsequently Kaikobad had to fight battles after battles across the Amucheh (Oxus) river to keep Turanians at bay.

Kaikobad came to the throne fifty years after the last Peshdadian King. Though a descendant of Faridun and Minochehr he was not a Peshdadian. He belonged to Kavi family and Kai was used as a prefix to their names to denote their Dynasty. Kai means strong, powerful (with ethical force in their character), enjoying some lofty status arising from the elevating influence of Saturn, which is their guiding star. The priests of these families were of the higher order of Dasturs and were known as Kavi. Ved names several Kavi Dastors and describes Kavi as men with foresight, forethought and fore-knowledge (pre-science) and therefore capable of foretelling future events and conditions to come. Firdausi says that Kaikobad had

predicted his coming to throne. According to Zarathushtanama the ancestors of Zarathushtra were also Kavi.

In Avasta Kaikobad is called Kavi Kawat and his Fravashi is remembered under that name in Fravardin Yasht para 132. Jamyad Yasht para 71 states that Afrashiab was craving for the Noor—Light—Aura—Splendour of Iranians but that inner illumination was denied to him. This splendour of the inner light and open lustre which was specifically of the Iranians went to Kaikobad, which he and his successors held as the renowned Kyan Khoreh.

Firdausi (probably under his poetic licence) has exaggerated the length of his reign to 120 years. Bundahishn limits it to 15. Some other writers state that he reigned for 43 years. He built Hamdan city. Period of his reign is around 2944 B.C.

Prophets Elias, Joshua, Samuel and Ezekiel flourished in his reign of freedom and plenty.

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