

AN EXTRACT FROM FRAMROZE CHINIWALLA'S "ESSENTIAL ORIGINS of ZOROASTRIANISM"

ON THE FOUNTAIN SOURCE OF THE ZARATHUSHTRIAN MYSTICAL TRUTHS.

(Editorial Note: On the English calendar, 20th April is the birth day of our Nikiz-teacher the late Framroze Sorabji Chiniwalla (20-4-1881 to 6-8-1962). He was one of the front ranking disciples of the late Baheramshah Navroji Shroff (about whose authenticity a series of articles – "What is Ilm-e-Khshnoom and Why?" is being written in this humble Parsi Pukar). Dr. F. S. Chiniwalla, an ophthalmic surgeon of repute in his practising days, was a living encyclopedia of not only the Parsi Religion, but all other known Religions. Your humble editor was in close contact with him for several years, and have no words to narrate his vast knowledge and saintly life. The late Kaikhushru Choksi who, with Ervad Phiroze Masani, had the good fortune of drawing out the late Ustad Saheb Baheramshah Shroff from Surat to Bombay, used to call Framroze Chiniwalla just 'Fram'. 'Fra' is the word in "Frasho-kereti (Frashogard)", "Feresho", "Fravaraane", "Frashmim", "Fraadar and several other scriptural words and has the basic meanings of freshness, green-ness, bliss, eternal peace and spiritual evolution and progress; and "Ram" is the base of "Ramashni" the joy; the delight; the rejoicing, singing Channel of Ram Yazat, who is the Yazat of Khastra - all the electrified attractions of devotion and love going round in the whole creation. Dr. Framroze was a power house of love, devotion and mystical knowledge, a real 'Fram' of Roz-e-Roshan.

This humble Parsi Pukar has, as its main foundation, the writings of Dr. Framroz Chiniwalla and whatever little your humble editor could learn from him. Those are marathon Gujarati writings spread over more than 25000 pages of print. Dr. Saheb (as he is called by Khshnoom devotees) did not write in English; because his main aim was to propagate Ilm-e-Khshnoom and thereby generate faith amongst the Parsis, and not to obtain academic honours. Gujarati was (past tense?) the mother language of the Parsis and any mystical knowledge can be well understood in one's own language. Alas! Today along with several religious disciplines Parsis are losing their mother language too!

As against numerous books and writings in Gujarati, Dr. Saheb had published only one English book **"Essential Origins of Zoroastrianism"**. It contains several basics of Ilm-e-khshoom. Those who do not have any mystical sense or base find it confusing. Those who have, feel like dancing with joy in reading it. Some non-Parsis of the mystical set of Rosicrucians had made earnest inquiries about the book and its author, so much amazed as they were.

The following is the reproduction of the first few pages of the book. It will introduce you to some idea about the real essence of Zarthoshti Din as contrasted to the exposition by the Western methods which are "much off the mark", and about the divine source of Ilm-e-Khshnoom - **K. Navroz Dastoor.**)

PRELIMINARY USEFUL NOTES.

The original teachings of the Zoroastrian Religion as current in its Empire Days are shrouded in oblivion. **The present day exposition of the Religion as explained by the Western methods is much off the mark.** It is apparently known to the world that everything Zoroastrian, but the meagre existence of the Parsis in India is lost to the world. Though the great Zoroastrian Empire and Nations are nonexistent, the Great Zoroastrian sages called "Sahebe-Dilan" are still in existence in the mountain recesses of Persia, as Kuhe-Demavand and other peaks, having the old religion and its teachings intact with them. These sages have kept themselves secluded from the rest of the world, and are unapproachable by any human being, as they have created round about their places talismanic rings called "Karsh" in the Avestaic lore. It is said that these sages send their emissaries every three years to the outer world to purchase for themselves some necessities of life in exchange for some articles, which their own people produce. The special Zoroastrian Clan (The Saheb-Dilan), of which I am speaking, consists of about 2,000 members, in which 72 individuals, called Maghav (Magi) are of the highest rank. The rest the laity are all righteous and truthful, living in perfect obedience to their master called "Sroshavarz" and remaining engaged in prayers, and spend their prescribed time in the pursuits of agriculture and the production of the bare necessities of life as understood by them.

OUR USTAD BAHERAMSHAH SHROFF

Our late Ustad (Guru) Mr. Behramshah Navroji Shroff, a Parsi resident of Surat, was induced by them, at

the age of 18 years by some inexplicable Law of Nature, to accompany them to their talismanic residence, where he was allowed to stay with them in their bountiful influence for three years and was taught about the Religion. Mr. Shroff kept himself unknown for some years after his return from Persia and was out with his knowledge only in his last days. The knowledge of the Religion called "Khshnoom" in Avesta was taught by him, which helped to explain the religion in its highly mystic development. **The blessed word "Khshnoom" is found in the Gathas, where it is venerated as the Word of God taught to the great prophet Spitman Zarathushtra.** The subject-matter here, therefore, is presented in this new light of "Khshnoom". The Western mode of study has hardly enabled students to understand the Avestaic language which abounds in words pregnant with technical interpretations, specially adapted to the special text, much less its philosophy and other mysticism.

HIGH IMPORTANCE OF PAHALVI

Really speaking, there is nothing like Avestaic literature with the Parsis, except some Pahlavi writings, which are a sealed book, as the decipherment of the words is difficult, and the language with the technical mystic connotations and denotations is hard to understand. Some students of the Avestic literature entertain a belief that the Pahlavi versions of the Avestan Nasks are of later growth. Dr. West, the best Pahlavi Scholar of the West, has more than once in the Sacred Books of the East Series edited by Prof. Max Muller reiterated the idea that the **Pahlavi versions and explanations of the Avestan Nasks existed from the advent of the revered prophet Zoroaster, and were specially preserved in the Daz or fortified strong-holds of the Royal Treasury of King Vishtasp.** In fact the Pahlavi Versions of the Avesta Texts, if elucidated with the Key of Khshnoom of the Gathas, help the student to understand the Avesta in a far better and rather proper way than the imaginary speculative theories applied by the Avesta students according to their own present-day ideas of life.

The following are only two of such views held by Dr. West about the richness of the Pahlavi Versions of the Avesta, from which it is also seen that the Pahlavi contains even more of the lost Avestic texts for the better understanding of the ruinous condition of the grand edifice of the 21 Nasks :

"We may fairly claim that **a tradition of interpretation of the Avesta has existed from the first, and that we have portions of it in this mass of comment before us.**"

"The Avesta texts relating to the facts about Zoroaster and his marvelous achievements have been for the most part lost, whereas their Pahlavi versions remain for us."

NOT LITERATURE BUT MANTHRIC PRESCRIPTIONS

The Gathas and the rest of the Avesta cannot be called literature in the strict sense of the word. They do not form an essay reading with a sustained sense intelligible to us by our present method. The religious specialities, called Khordeh Avesta, Vandidad, Yesna etc., are religious prescriptions, which are to be utilised for the redemption of the soul-the different returns inserted in each appear to the uneducated eye as diverse and strangely put together, one having nothing to do with another, tempting the hasty to seal them as an aftermath. Just as Doctors write prescriptions which are only intelligible to the medical men and are to be used by the laity with perfect faith and confidence without any why and wherefore, the rationale of which can be known from Material Medica and sciences affiliated to the Medica, in the **same way the Avestaic religious specialities are talismanic prescriptions to be used as such,** the Materia Medica and other sciences which explain those prescriptions forming the Avestaic literature in its true sense being quite different and requiring special studies.

The sciences, philosophies and theologies-the actual Zoroastrian literature as such - have been called Farhangs, and the expositions have been called Nikiz. Of all these Farhangs, Staot Yasna is the most prominent. Mr. Behramsha N. Shroff, our Ustad Saheb, was not inclined to explain all these in detail for reasons of his own. He however gave us some bare outlines of the Nikiz, explaining the essential origins of the religion, which are being written in books called Nikiz books. Two such volumes are already out in the Gujarati language, and the rest are awaiting publication, which will require some time. It is in this pure original Zoroastrian line as depicted by the Saheb-Dilans the great sages and adepts, that **the present account is written, which has nothing to do with the present day notions about the Zoroastrian Religion, which are mere speculations, irrelevant and inconsistent with the original expositions and ideas of the Zoroastrian Law.**

THE HEAD AND THE HEART

(It is the great truth that) the human understanding, however acute, is quite incompetent-nay merely

meagre-to understand Nature, and that **the religious leaders have been inspired men, having been gifted with the knowledge of the heart, which helped them to see 'Nature in her actual working far more extensively than the knowledge of the head and its rationalism. Head-learning is a mere receptacle of water, which remains stagnant compared with the knowledge of the heart, which is an ocean unfathomable, which owes its origin to the Great Unseen. Nature and her secrets cannot be divulged satisfactorily by the knowledge of the head.** Hence there is an urgent necessity for the knowledge of the heart. It is therefore that the great sages first of all get their disciples to develop the brain powers and then the heart powers. The knowledge that can be grabbed by the brain powers is easily attained. But the secrets of Nature cannot be perceived through the developed brain agency. In order to give insight into Nature's secrets, the disciple is elevated spiritually by Manthras and other ways and is so prepared as to SEE the Nature's working with the elevated vision in what is called 'Sezda', a visualised spiritual cinematography. What is SEEN is grabbed in the developed heart and can be communicated to the brain and translated into speech in a moderate way. Our Ustad Saheb Mr. Behramsha Shroff was thus elevated in both the brain and heart powers and was taught about the religion in all its aspects and mysticism.

THE TOP RANKING SCHOLAR PHIROZE MASANI ON ILM-E-KHSHNOOM :

The following is the English Translation of a passage from "the foreword" written by Ervad Phiroze Masani to Framroze Chiniwalla's Khshnoom-Nikiz-e-Vehdin. Vol. II.

"So long as the vast map and treasure of Zarathoshti IIm-e-Khshnoom will not be assimilated in the brain during or before the study of Avesta-Pahalvi, it will not be possible to understand what the Avesta-Pahalvi writings convey. The time has come when some topics and treatises of IIm-e-Khshnoom should be written in English and sent to the savants of Europe and America, so that the studies of Avesta Pahalvi may be adorned and revolutionary changes may be effected therein. It is significant that when the philological studies of Avesta began, the wise Parsis and Dasturs resisted against the studies. They were quite aware that the whole of Avesta and Pahalvi are full of mysteries and secrets, and the study of mere translations is not adequate. This conviction of theirs is proved by the Avesta Studies of the last half a century. The views of those who have based their studies of Avesta Pahalvi on mere dry translations, are weak, faithless and dislodging the heart in the matters of Din; this can be surely seen by those who have come in contact with such persons or read their writings."

- Ervad Phiroze Masani

(Parsi Pukar FEBRUARY 1998 Vol. 3; No. 8)