

MYSTICISM IN THE GATHA

by K. Navroz Dastoor

INTRODUCTION

Parsi Religion manifestly mystical - A holistic package of spiritual disciplines - Western misnomer of fragmentation - Baffling uncertainties of Western Gathic translations - Ilm-e-Khshnoom, the mystical deciphering of the Gatha - Dr. Faramroze Chiniwalla's Khshnoomic translation Philology and grammar not adequate without 'taviil - Max Muller's bewilderment on Eastern Scriptures: so noble and so nonsensical.!

Parsi Zarthoshti Religion is a Living Religion, since thousands of years. It has its own amazing history. It had its own mighty empires and dynasties. The way of life taught by the Zarthoshti Din was stringently followed by the mighty Parsi Kings, many of whom had attained a high spiritual and divine stature. Their anxiety was not merely to look to the worldly welfare of their subjects; they had established royal organisations to ensure that every subject in their kingdoms had ample facilities, amenities and opportunities to live by the tenets and prescriptions of the Din, and lead a life marching on the Path of Ahura Mazda. These prescriptions were not just moral and ethical; they also consisted of certain spiritual exertions, like Sudreh-Kushti, Manthra-Prayers, adoration and worship of the holy Fires, Yasna ('Kriya-Kam' as we call it), and several other components.

When the last of the Parsi King, Yazdepard Shaheriar, fell in the first half of the 8th century, it became difficult for the Parsis of Iran to continue their way of life and the spiritual exertions associated with it. A small group of the Parsis led by and highly advanced Ashavans (i.e. those who are way advanced on their spiritual Path towards Ahura Mazda) arrived in India, the soil of the Saints, Sages, Sufis, Rishis, Buddhas, Seers, where alone the Religious prescriptions could be (and can be) freely lived by, without any obstacle or persecution. For 1300 long years, we, the Parsis, endeavoured (and still do) to live by the Zarthoshti life.

Such a long living Religion is to be seen as a composite unit with all its components interwoven with each other. There is no scope for any fragmentation, like the one which wildly guesses that the commands of the Prophet Zarathushtra were diluted and even violated by a fictitious being, the "later priest", so called by the studies of our Din originated in the West. The divine disciplines like Sudreh-Kushti, Manthra, Atash, Dokhma, Yasna, are equally important as the moral and ethical code prescribed in the Din. In fact, they are the equipments for generating the energy and strength to infuse and adhere to the moral laws and rules, which ordinary non-saintly humans like us are naturally inclined to violate.

Max Muller's Fiction

The Western disease of fragmentation is extended not only to the Parsi way of life, but also to our Holy Scriptures. Somewhere during the last decades of the 19th century, the Western studies declared with great grandiosity that their "science" of philology demanded that the Gatha alone could be regarded as the authentic utterance of Zarathushtra; the rest of the Avesta was of much later period, and was therefore not the genuine Zarathushtrian Scriptures. Curiously the same "science" declared with no less flamboyance that even the Gatha were not written by Zarathushtra; they came much later than Him, and are "not older than the first century". The 'great' savant Max Muller said this and had also theorised as a bonus gift to us that "sacred books represent almost always a secondary growth," meaning thereby that no Prophet writes any Scriptures; they come much after Him! Say this to a Muslim specifically about the Holy Quran and see what happens! And mark the words "almost always"!

Is it correct to say that the Gatha alone is the genuine Zoroastrianism and all the non-Gathic Avesta are to be discarded, if not as trash and tosh, as "unzoroastrian"?

All the thousands of years of Parsi history and tradition and all the internal evidence of the Parsi life are entirely contrary to and inconsistent with this proposition, which is good only as a "scholarly" excuse to discard the spiritual disciplines and exertions divinely ordained for a Parsi.

But assuming that the Gatha is genuine Zoroastrianism, we ask: are you sure about their message? Are the Gatha duly, properly, and consistently translated, interpreted and understood? If the Gatha constitute the genuine teachings of the Din, have we got a clear, consistent, coherent, dependable, lucid translation, which we can affirm as the genuine message of our Asho Zarathushtra? The answer is: No; not from the Western and West oriented translations.

There are as many translations as there are translators; and their number on a very conservative estimate is not less than 45! And the most bewildering and baffling situation is that *at* numerous places these translations are in violent variance with each other. The western scholars who adopt Avesta and Oriental languages and studies as their line are tempted to give "new" translations. This 'new' is not just confined to minor variations as is the case with say Shrimad Bhagavad Gita or the Holy Quran-e-Shariff. The variations in the Gatha translations are amazingly confounding and confusing. For years, Bartholomae's foundations for translating the Gatha held the field. Then Humbach, Schmidt, Insler and their new crop declared Bartholomae's foundations to be inadequate and incorrect. Amongst themselves, Humbach and Insler differ in their own foundations. The former talks *of* ritualistic "mysticism", the latter pooh-poohs this and sticks to moral side based on Vedic Sanskrit, with Jewish Prophets sprinkled in between. Boyce declares that the Pahlavi tradition and treatises must be taken into account, but highbrow scholars have the habit *of* painting Pahlavi writers as ignoramuses. In the result, one group of translators sees homosex in Gatha 51-12, whilst the other group, Salvation in the same stanza! *At* quite a few places, one word is assigned two exactly opposite meanings. Well! If Gatha alone is genuine, can any genuineness be so much bristling with gross uncertainties? Can an authenticity be so much discordant, and incoherent? Can an alleged scientific scholasticism be so much unscientific?

Then what is the way out for us, the poor Parsis, who crave to know the divine Message *of* their Prophet?

There is one source. **That is IIm-e-Khshnoom.**

I shall not delve here from where IIm-e-Khshnoom has arrived amongst the Parsis of India and how its harbinger, the late Ustad Saheb Baheramshah Shroff (1858-1927) brought it. There is a big book *of* 770 pages wherein more than 36 witnesses *of* integrity and eminence have testified about his immensely deep knowledge *of* the Zarathushtrian Mysticism and its source. His chief disciples, the erudite Ervad Phiroze Masani; the man *of* marathon writings, Dr. Faramroze Chiniwalla; and his brother Jehangir Chiniwalla, who propagated Khshnoom through a weekly Parsi Avaz for 27 long years, were the main writers *of* IIm-e-Khshnoom. In particular Dr. Faramroze Chiniwalla has written numerous volumes, books, booklets and articles covering more than 25000 pages and translated all the Avesta scriptures. A large part *of* these translations are published. They are all in Gujarati, which is the mother language *of* the Parsis in India and abroad.

In 1939, his 180 pages book on Ha 28, the first Ha *of* Gatha Ahoonvad, came out. It was a wonderful work containing (i) word-to-word translation *of* each *of* the 12 stanzas (ii) a commentary, rendering the mystical contents *of* each line and each word, (iii) the Pahlavi translated version being the traditional translation *of* and interpretation *of* the Gatha and explanations thereon and (iv) the three Pahlavi versions *of* the Gatha contained in Volume 9 "Dinkard" (Dastoor's Sanjanas' volumes 17,18,19), a wonderful Pahlavi work depicting inter alia the traditional Parsi way *of* life and culture as prevalent in Iran.

Dr Chiniwalla's work on Ha 29 was published in 1940, followed by Ha 30 in 1941. His Spentomad, Vohukhshathra and Vahishtoist were published in 1984, 1989 and 1978 respectively, i.e. after his death on 6.8.1962. These books are in the same style as Ha's 28, 29 and 30. Recently Ha 31 saw the light *of* the day. Ha's 32, 33, 34 are next on the list. The whole *of* Ushtavad Gatha is just waiting.

In addition to these works on the Gatha, Dr. Chiniwalla has written a book on Yazashney Ceremony under the title "Yazashney ni Buland Kriya", wherein a summary version of each of the 72 Ha's of the Holy Scripture 'Yazashney' is set out. The Five Gatha's constitute 17 of these 72 Ha's and therefore have a place in the book. Here, there is no word-to-word translation of each stanza but the essence of its mystical content is tersely but beautifully set out.

In this series of articles your humble servant proposes to take his truth-seeking readers in this mystical garden of the Gatha, through the beautiful path of IIm-e-Khshnoom. The garden has infinite dimensions, beyond our infinitesimal intellectual equipment. We can delve only half a step inside the garden and behold only half an inch of the strip running through and disappearing at some far end. Yet that half an inch will give enough heart-throbs to my devotional readers.

There can be no Religion without mysticism. Mystical means something beyond the intellectual veil surrounding us. There is a level, a screen, beyond which our non-saintly intellect cannot go. That such a screen exists has now been established by the most modern science. All the 400 years of scientific exertions have now gloomily ended at a hard stony barrier, which is found to be impenetrable. Empirical science, which thought that its method of observation, experiment, inference, logic and mathematics was revealing the secrets of Nature, has come to a grinding halt. Physics has stopped its electron accelerators and thus called it a day in any further exploration of matter. Life is not as simple as Darwin and his fanatic followers like Richard Dawkins thought. The human brain still continues persistently to be the darkest continent. Scientific progress

and development have proved to be a fatal cancerous growth on the mother earth and on man's psyche. The egoistic thought that the scientific mind of man will understand all Nature and will soon arrive at a "Theory of Everything", say, from Hitler to mother's love or from the atom to big-bang has proved the grandest of all the grand illusions of the 20th century. Science has dashed against a solid heavy door. There seems to be a key hole but there is no key available. A peep in the hole with one eye closed faintly indicates that something extraordinary is going on behind. Instead of thinking out how to find the key, many scientists are trying to stuff the keyhole. "There cannot be anything beyond", they say, because the faint flashes actually seen through the hole shatter all their preconceived ideas, notions and paradigms, and disturb their equilibrium of egoistic self confidence.

There is a key and that is Mysticism. Let it be repeated that there can be no Religion without mysticism. The very first Truth revealed by all Religions that God exists, is manifestly mystical. All Prophets, Ashavans, Saints, Seers, Sufis, Rishis and Sages are all mystics. They have experienced God and teach the non-saintly humans the ways and means to experience Him.

Therefore a Prophet is not literary or philosophical writer of a book. He is not an essayist or poet. His Holy Scripture is the word of God transmuted in the spoken languages of the humans. Every word in it is divine. It has a mystical message to give to the humans. The Prophet's word is not therefore to be translated through the humanly invented rules of philology, etymology, grammar and composition. All the Religions of the world declare in no uncertain terms that a Holy Scripture has levels of meanings. To read it and understand it, special key of "Tavil" is required. Tavil means a set of special rules to decipher the inner meanings of a scripture. 'Water' in a scripture may mean normal water of our experience, but it can have a deeper meaning, message and significance. It can refer to the "waters" existing beyond the ambit of human experience and intellect; it may be referring to certain mystical energies and forces operating in God's Creation or within the human personality. So also the word "cow" (Gava) or "Dawn" (Hoshbam) or 'Fire' (Athra). This is way beyond the human rules of languages.

What we Parsis therefore require is the deciphering of our Holy Scriptures, whether the Gatha or Yazashney or Visperad or Vendidad or Khordeh Avesta. Ilm-e-Khshnoom has fulfilled this dire need, provided that you have eyes to see, courage to digest the truth and go wherever it leads, without caring for your preconceived notions. The search of truth requires the virtue of steadying one's eyes on the truth and the courage of avowing the truth.

A point to be carefully noted is that the Khshnoomic translations do not disregard the rules of grammar and etymology formulated by the Western Orientalists. On the contrary they are often followed with greater rigor than the Western and West oriented Parsi translators, who often are tempted to twist the grammar and syntax to justify their own preconceived paradigms and even prejudices. They first set a theory based on some scanty data and then try to stick to it at any cost. For instance, having drawn the notion that the (so called) non-Gathic spirit is in variance or even in violation of the Gathic spirit, they would twist the meanings of one or the other or both of the Gathic and non-Gathic texts. One can as well first formulate the theory that the non-Gathic Avesta elaborates, expands and explains the Gathic concepts and then try to harmonise the two. The erudite teacher and scholar the late Baheramgore Anklesaria did this and sounded much more reasonable than his Western counterparts. It perhaps depends on how a particular scholar is brought up by his mother or in his childhood. We see lawyers often relying on what is known as the principle of harmonious construction, whenever there is an apparent conflict between two provisions of the law. Unfortunately, the Western scholarship are brought up in the 'scientific' field of fragmentation which loves to arrive at the truth of a thing by breaking it into smaller and smaller fragments, which leads them further and further away from the truth. The fiasco of the ultimate particle of matter - God particle as the Nobel-Prize winner-Physicist Lederman called it - is a case in point.

The Eastern Sages were and are at pains to point out that the whole is much greater than the sum of its parts and fragmenting the whole in parts results in the thing losing its own higher dimensions. Is not fragmentation a method of killing?

The point is that the Khshnoomic translations try to stick to the rules of grammar wherever they lead and it is found that the translations so arrived at not only support and substantiate the mystical expositions presented by Ilm-e-Khshnoom about the cosmogenesis (Srushti Rachna), the Man on Earth and numerous other subjects but at several places prove them and even arrive at them. This is the unique feature of these translations, which is to be actually experienced to appreciate and tasted to enjoy its sweetness. Here there are no preconceived paradigms and prejudices flowing from the guess works of a scholarly psyche or the ambition to have University degrees and honours. Here is a vast mystical Science the subject matter of which ranges from a speck of dust to God, from Physics to the highest divine experience and consciousness; and the Khshnoomic translations, following the rules of grammar and etymology, authenticate them, verify them, even establish them.

The difficulty is that all these translations rendered by Dr. Faramroze Chiniwalla are in Gujarati. That is

the reason why the beauty and sublimity of the Zarathushtrian Daena are not brought to the notice of the world. The Western studies have failed to appreciate the spiritual and mystical message of the Parsi Religion, because they are based on the so called "Scientific" paradigms of the 19th century, most of which have been shattered in this century.

The Eastern mysticism with which the Avesta Scriptures energetically vibrate, is, alas, a close book for the Western Orientalist. Look at Max Muller, supposed to be a great savant. He states, in the first place, that Zarathushtra was a "purely mythical name." Then he proceeds with due pomp to propound that a Prophet never writes a scripture and Gatha are much later than Zoroaster. At another place, he expresses his bewilderment why in the Eastern Holy Books so much noble and beautiful is mixed up with so much nonsensical and repellent! The Eastern answer is simple: you have no idea about the rules of deciphering a Holy Scripture; you are bound in your own "chain" of the alleged rational thinking; you go on history, geography, philology and etymology, as, you think, you have found out. You have not the slightest idea what prompted Guru Nanak to say, "The Voice of the Lord came to me; what He told me I shall tell you oh LaLo!" You read the conceit of "a later priest" in the words "Aat Mraot Ahurahey Mazdao". You present a fresh green garden as a dry parched desert.

I appeal to whoever reads this series to be objective and truth-seeking. Go wherever the truth leads you. Here is a pleasant journey towards the Truth. God be with you.

(Introduction concluded)

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MYSTICISM IN THE GATHA

Is The Non-Gathic Avesta Hostile Towards the Gatha?

by K. Navroz Dastoor

The misguided Western paradigm of the later priests violating the word and spirit of Gatha - Gathic translations, a gigantic exercise in huge uncertainty - Fragmentation approach of 19th century Western Thought - Parsi Religion, its worst victim - Chameleonic ways of the philological sciences - Intense non-Gathic devotion to the Gatha - Yazashney Ha 55.

The western studies of the Paris Religion have ushered in several sticky paradigms. The relevant for our present purpose are: That the Gatha alone constitute the genuine Zoroastrianism; that the non-Gathic scriptures and the non-Gathic traditions, which are the very bedrock of the age-old Parsi life, defiantly differ from the contents of the Gatha, not merely in word but also in spirit; that those non-Gathic writings and traditions were authored and fabricated by "the Later Priest", an imaginary figure of "later" periods; and that it was that crafty figure, who brought back all that Zoroaster not only discarded but even combated, and that too, sometimes, in the form of imaginary dialogues between Ahuramazda and Zoroaster, an act of huge fraud!

These paradigms are unscientific and irrational. They are unscientific because the same western studies have presented numerous highly divergent translations of the Gatha, a gigantic exercise in uncertainty. A science is required *to* have some semblance of certainty. In Physics, even the uncertainty observed in Nature is expressed in a mathematical equation and named as Principle of Uncertainty. In the studies of the Gatha, the uncertainty has no principle, no formula, no foundation. Every new Gathic scholar declares that the foundations of his predecessors and even contemporaries are false, if not spurious! What is then the "genuine Zoroastrianism" of the Gatha and what is the original genuine message of Zoroaster? And if the very genuineness of the Gathic translations is, like the Churchillian definition of Russia, "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma", how can the non-Gathic scriptures be asserted *to* be non-genuine? How can you measure a straight line with a wavy rod? Entirely irrational! or "you crazy?"

Athiestic Thought, the Criterion to Judge Religion!

The Western Studies of the Parsi Religion reached its climax in the 19th century. The western thought then was basically athiestic. Science was the criterion *to* understand reality. Religion originated from primitive superstition. God was a not needed hypothesis. The Western human intellect thought that it had almost landed on "The Truth". The method of arriving at the "truth" has been named "reductionism" or "fragmentation". Any object of study, be it a piece of matter or a social event or an ecological inquiry or a cultural phenomenon, or a probe in Religion is *to* be reduced *to* its component parts. The whole is no *more* than the sum of its parts. Therefore, the scientific investigation of a thing consists in breaking it into parts, and assigning measurements and properties *to* each part. Understand thus every part and you arrive at "the reality" of the whole. It was like cutting down an animal and killing it *to* find out how and why it behaved as it did when alive!

This method when applied to Religion led to several wild notions as to how one particular Religion prevalent in one particular group of humanity differed or even controverted the other. The study of Religion as one subject based on the seemingly divergent beliefs of different Religions and arriving at their *common* teachings was very rare in the West. Madam Blavatsky, Swami Vivekanand, Swami Yoganand, Hazrat Inayat Khan, Dalai Lama Sogyal Rinpoche and other Eastern mystics were required to shake up the West. If all the Prophets and saints and seers had only one source of knowledge viz God, why not try to find out a common Message from them instead of throwing pompous scholasticism as to how they are divergent from each other? If some teachings in Guru Nanak's Japuji Sahib - the Morning Prayer - are very much similar to those in the Parsi Prayer of Hoshbam, these scholars would offer some imaginary guess works, like Nanak Shah passed through the Parsis of Surat and was therefore "influenced" by Hoshbam; but that at other places Shikhism is very different from Parsism. No Scholar would say that all of them are God's Messengers and therefore they say the same thing in different words and that the apparent difference could be harmoniously interpreted.

This fragmenting method is applied not only to different Religions but to the different texts or periods of the same Religion. And the Parsi Religion is its worst victim. In their readings of the Gatha, these scholars find "ideas" contrary to those in the non-Gathic Scriptures; although nobody is certain about the contents of the Gatha. What a mess!

The Parsi Religion, its history and culture and its way of life as lived by the Parsis since ages clearly show that it is one compact whole with different constituents which are inseparably connected to each other. It is a package and none of the elements in the package can be segregated from the whole. The Seven elements - Sudreh-Kushti, Manthra Prayers, Atash, Kriyakam (rituals), Dokhma, Meher-Patet the stringent moral code, and Boonakpasbani (the preservation of the racial gene) do formulate one whole, each element depending on all the other six. It is a palace of these seven pillars, the removal of even one of which would bring down the whole palace. It is like a necklace of seven pearls where each is seen in all and all in each.

There cannot therefore be any fragmentation or divergence in the Holy Scriptures of the Parsis. It is the materialistic western eye that sees such variations and contradictions. In truth, there is none. Our inability to decipher them and arrive at the unity cannot be an excuse to discard the truth which otherwise stares straight in our eyes.

Let us examine more closely this wooly paradigm viz. that the Gatha alone is genuine Zoroastrianism and that the "later priests" went against the "teachings" of the Gatha and brought back, through the non-Gathic scriptures, what was discarded by Zoroaster. The inquiry raises two issues:

(i) How are the gatha treated, referred to and dealt with in the non-Gathic Scriptures? Are they spoken of in a hostile spirit of controversy and combat, or are they venerated with an intensely profound fervour of awe and esteem?

(ii) How do the Parsis treat and reckon the Gatha since ages? Do they think of the Gatha as just some poetry or do they regard the Gatha as not only the Manthric Prayers but also as Yazatas, the Divine Rays of Ahura's Light, to be actually invited in the Kriyakam and Yasna (rituals and ceremonies)?

Before going into the answers to these questions, let me clear out one point. The paradigm that the Gathic Avesta and the non-Gathic Avesta are different in point of time is equally hazy and not proven. The paradigm is stated to have been arrived at on the basis of the alleged sciences of philology, etymology and linguistics. They propound certain rules to show how a spoken language changes its words, expression, meanings, grammar and syntax as the time passes. But these rules are based on guessworks, speculations, and conjectures almost amounting to wild fancies. These rules are so flexible and pliable that two entirely contrary theories can be arrived at on the same set of rules. This is obvious because there cannot be any empirical or observable evidence for the veracity or validity of those rules. Why has the word "gay" changed its meaning from "merry and carefree" to a homosexual person does not depend on any rules of philology or allied sciences. It depends on the fancy of the times and people, and the thought waves passing at a particular period. It is highly unscientific and heavily dangerous to rely on such hazy rules in the matters so vital as a Religion. The scholarly situation is so fluid that it is not difficult to theorise on the basis of the same philological science that the Gathic and non-Gathic Avesta are not separated by periods of time. It is equally not difficult to theorise on the basis of the same "sciences" that they are separated not by time but that they belong to the same period but different places. It is not impossible to theorise even that they belonged to the same time and the same territory or even that they are from the same author; like, Macaulay's historical poems and Indian Penal Code.

In delving into the answers to the two questions posed above, let us assume that the two Avesta Gathic and non-Gathic are separated by time, place and authorship. This is just an act of assuming, without admitting, and is intended not to accept this separation theory, but to see where it leads to, even if it is assumed to be true, just for the sake of argument.

The purport of the aforesaid two questions is: How are the Gatha treated in the non-Gathic Scriptures as also in the age-long tradition and way of the Parsi life? Is it with hostility or veneration? If the latter, then the paradigm of the alleged later priests violating the spirit of the Gatha falls to the ground.

The fact is that in the non-Gathic scriptures the Gatha are treated with such profound adoration, reverence and devotion that it would be insane to think even for a moment that their authors were hostile towards the word and the spirit of the Gatha. The late erudite scholar Baheramgore Anklesaria was at pains

to point out that the non-Gathic scriptures elaborated and explained the doctrines set out in the Gatha and that it was "an immature judgment" to believe that the non Gathic Scriptures were nothing but a revival of pre Gathic religion which the Prophet is stated to have discarded. This notion, Baheramgore wrote, arose out of the stark ignorance of the Parsi traditions embedded in the Pahalvi writings.

Now let us explore the treatment the non-Gathic Scriptures and Texts have given to the Gatha.

The very first feature that strikes us is that the Gatha themselves are the seventeen of the seventy-two Ha's of Yazashney. The seventeen are knitted in the marathon scripture, Yazashney, as shown in the following table:

Gatha	Ha nos. in Yazashney	Total Ha's
Ahoonvad	Ha 28 to 34	7
Ushtuvad	Ha 43 to 46	4
Spentomad	Ha 47 to 50	4
Vohukhshathra	Ha 51	1
Vahishtoisht	Ha 53	1

		17

Volumewise, the Gatha is little less than one fourth of the whole Yazashney. If all the 72 Ha's cover say 200 pages, the 17 Ha's of the Gatha would occupy about 50 pages and their place is somewhere in the middle of the Book.

So, look at those crafty "later priests" who were supposed to be hostile towards the letter and spirit of the Gatha, giving them a prominent middle place in the large ritual Scripture, Yazashney! The middle is the supporting foundation of any structure.

But the Yazashney does not stop at that. At several places, certain stanzas from the Gatha Ha's are repeated. For instance, stanza no.15 in Ha 34, which is the last Ha of Ahoonvad Gatha, occurs in Ha 27. That Ha 27 also contains stanzas 11, 12, 13, 14 of Ha 33. Two stanzas nos. 7 and 22 of Vohukhshathra Gatha (Ha 51) are repeated in Ha 65. Stanza no.1 of Ha 43 (the first Ha of Ushtuvad Gatha) is repeated in Ha 71.

The whole of Ha 47 which is the first Ha of Spentomad Gatha occurs as Ha 18, i.e. much before the start of the Gatha from Ha 28. The whole of the same Ha 47 is repeated as a part of Ha 68.

Throughout Yazashney, the Gatha are venerated as Yazat's, the rays of divine Light pouring from Ahura. They are described as divinely conscious entities in charge of the journey of the whole of the mankind on the Path of Ahura, through different Religions ('Daenaao'). One full Ha 55 (which is not a part of the Gatha) is devoted to the Gatha, declaring that they lift the human consciousness to the divine height - the Mountain - of Ahura; that they provide the 'mino'i' (spiritual) food and garments leading the whole creation towards "Khaetvodath," the meeting of the souls on the Path of Perfection; that they alchemise the evil in man to good.

Ha 55 also says that the Manthric Gatha are structured according to the laws of Staota Yasna, which are the First Primary Vibrations of the Creation.

Can all this lead any person in his senses to think that the non-Gathic Avesta is hostile towards the Gatha and that they violate the word and the spirit of the Gatha? Only the egomania of pompous scholasticism can generate such cloud of confusion and only the escapist Parsis would applaud it. ...

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MYSTICISM IN THE GATHA

The Five Gathas Are Yazatic Entities with Assigned "Minoi" Functions. The Parsi Calendar and the names of Yazats Given to the Days.

by K. Navroz Dastoor

The normal belief amongst Parsis is that the Gatha is a holy Book "written" by Zarathushtra. But it is much more than that. The Five Gatha's do form part of a holy Avesta Scripture, the Yazashney. However in Yazashney itself as well as in other Manthra Scriptures and in traditional religious writings, they are referred to with special reverence. Some Manthra passages used for them are the same or similar to those used for the 'Yazata's.

The first axiom about the Gatha is: **The five Gatha's are five Yazatic Channels, performing certain 'minoi' functions in Nature.** ('Minoi' here means spiritual or non-physical or divine.)

Let us first be clear about what is Yazata or Yazatic Channel.

A peculiar feature of our Parsi life is that our calendar identifies the dates not by numbers but by the names of Yazats. Each of the thirty days of a month has the name of a Yazata; so also the names of the twelve months of a year.

Our daily Khordeh Avesta Prayers include 5 'Niyash's and 23 'Yashta's, each of which is named after one particular Yazata, like Meher Niyash or Avaan Niyash, or Sarosh Yashta or Beheram Yashta or Avaan Yashta. Their Manthric structures have a set pattern and they have some passages in common. For instance each has the passages beginning with Khshnaoetra Ahurahey Mazdaao..., Pa Name-e-Yazdaan... in the beginning; Fravaraaney Mazdaysno... somewhere in the middle or later beginning; Roj Nek Naam... and Daadaar-e-Gehaan... at the end. The numbers of Ashem Vohoo and Yathaa Ahoo Vairyo have also a common pattern.

Each Niyash or Yashta is the invocation of a particular Yazata or Yazatic Channel streaming out or cascading all throughout in Ahura's Creation. To have an idea about them, we can imagine Ahura as a source of Divine Light, like a torch or a search-light, and Yazata's as the RAYS of Light emanating from Him, the source. They are generated in Him and spread out from Him. Each Yazata has a 'minoi' (i.e. divine or spiritual) function in Nature.

We also see that our calendar is a part of our Manthra Prayers, since each Niyash or Yashta has a passage "Roj Nek Naam, Roj Paak Naam, Roj-e-Mubarak (so and so), Mah-e-Mubarak (so and so) ...where we say that today, this particular Yazatic day in this particular Yazatic month, I have prayed this Niyash or Yashta of a particular Yazata.

When we recite this passage, we speak the names of the Roj or the Mah with a special word attached to it.

For the first Roj Ahuramazda : 'Daadaar' Ahuramazda.

For the 2nd Roj Bahman : Bahman Ahmeshaspend.

The 3rd to 6th: Ardibehshta, Shanerever, Sfindarmard, Khordad, Amerdad, are also suffixed by the word "Ameshaspend".

Daepader (8th), Daepmaher (15th), Daepdin (23rd) are suffixed by the word "Daadaar".

From Ader to Gosh (9th to 14th Roj), each is suffixed by the word "Yazat".

Meher, Sarosh, Rashne, (16th to 18th), Baheram (20th), Govad (22nd), Din (24th), Ashtad (26th), Jamiyad (28th) are also suffixed by the word 'Yazat'.

Fravardin (19th) is prefixed by the word "Farrokh".

Ram (21st), Ashishvangh (25th), Asmaan (27th), Marespand (29th), Aneraan (30th) are prefixed by the word "Mino".

We see here 5 classes of the 'Roj's: (i) Ameshaspend (ii) Yazata, (iii) Daadaar (shortly termed as Dae), (iv) Mino and (v) Farrokh.

These five themselves constitute 5 classes of 'Yazata's. Yazata is a collective term of 5 classes in which one class is also called Yazat. The main itself, and one of its class have the same name. All the 30 are collectively called "Yazata's, and fourteen of them viz 9th to 14th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 20th 22nd, 24th, 26th, and 28th are also **individually** called Yazata.

The 12 "mah" i.e. months have also the names of 'Yazata's. The first month is Farvardin which itself is a class with a prefix Farokh. 2nd and 3rd months: Ardibeheshta and Khordad have Ameshaspend as the suffix, 4th is Tir Yazata, 5th is Amerdad Ameshaspend, 6th is Sherevar Ameshaspend; 7th, 8th and 9th viz. Meher, Avan and Ader are suffixed as 'Yazat'; and 11th and 12th Bahaman and Asfandarmard belong to the class of Ameshaspend.

Now, a step further. Five '**Gatha's are also the names of the five days at the end of the year** - Ahoonvad, Ushtuvad, Spentomad, Vohukhshathra and Vahishtoisht. We pronounce their names in the "Roj-nek-naam" passage on those five days. Do the 'Gatha's, then also constitute a class of Yazata? The answer is 'yes'. If all the 30 days of a month are 'Yazat's, the "Gatha's also should be 'Yazat's.

There are enough indications in Avesta that 'Gatha's are also 'Yazat's and Yazatic Channels of Ahura's divine Light.

We have seen that 'Yazata's are the rays or Channels of Divine Light emanating from its Divine Source, who is Ahura. The Iranian and Parsi traditions, tenets, practices and writings are all vibrating with the existence of 'Yazata's. They are declared to be and worshipped as conscious Divine Beings who have particular Minoi functions assigned to them; and who are associated with some thing or object of our experience in our life on earth. Thus, for instance, water is associated with Avan Yazat; earth, with Asfandarmard Ameshaspend; fire-Atash-with Adar Yazat; air, with Mino Ram and Govad Yazat; trees, with Amerdad Ameshaspend; sun, with Khorshed Yazat; Sun's light rays with Meher Yazat; Moon with Mah Yazat. We offer our prayers to a particular Yazat by reciting the Niyash or Yashta of that Yazat in presence of the thing or object or creation over which that particular Yazat has dominance or jurisdiction. We recite Atash Niyash before the holy Atash of Atash-Baheram or Adran or Dadgah; Avan Niyash or Avan Yashta before a well or river or sea; Khorshed and Maher Niyash, before the Sun.

Our rites and Kriyakaam are all stubbornly founded on the Prayers to be offered or addressed to 'Yazat's. In Afringaan, certain 'Yazat's are invoked by reciting their particular Kardeh. The marathon Pav-Mahel ceremonies like Vendidad, Nirangdin, Yazashney are all dedicated and offered to several 'Yazata's.

The Western "studies" of our Religion brought in a bogey that Zoroaster taught about one God only and the "worship" of Yazats was brought up by later priests, contrary to His teachings. This one proposition just by itself is sufficient to disqualify those Western Studies from dabbling with our Daena. What do they know of the Parsi life prevalent since thousands of years? Religion is not a university exercise; it is the life to be lived; and we have lived since centuries and centuries with the Truth and Reality of the existence of 'Yazat's interwoven with our life. Our Manthra Prayers, our Kriyakaam, our Navjot, Navar, Maratab, Bareshnoom, Holy Fires; our devotion; and spiritual exertions and experiences; our birth, marriage, death-all revolve around the existence of Yazatas.

This Western taboo of one God and many Gods has its root in 19th century materialism and pomposity of the so called intellectual and "critical" scholars, who are n light-years away from any spirituality, faith and devotion, which are the sine-qua-non of any Religion worth the name. If the Truth revealed in our Daena is that Ahura is a conscious Source of Divine Light and Yazats are the conscious rays of His Light emanating from Him, spreading throughout His Creation and performing certain minoi, non-physical and physical functions, what is wrong and insulting in that Truth? They say, to talk of many Gods is insulting in a Religion, teaching one God. But these concepts of one, two, three when applied to God brings a non-saintly intellect to a grinding halt. The Truth about God cannot be arrived at by throwing intellectual arguments. It is a matter of EXPERIENCE and that too not of the mind but of the heart. For the West and all studies originating from it, heart is merely a pumping machine. For all Eastern Religions and Mysticisms, the heart is the dwelling of God, and the door of the heart is to be opened to SEE Him. And to open the heart, the knock of devotion and faith is required, not the egoistic, 'scholarly' and 'critical' summer saults thought out in a university library with the sole intent of getting degrees, awards and prizes.

The Truth of the existence of Yazats as the divine emanations of Ahura is so much interwoven in the Parsi life that our days and months are named after them. Each day 'numbered' in the name of a Yazat, brings in the greater shower of the divine currents and blessings of that particular Yazat of the day.

The five Gatha's when assigned to the last five days of the year reveal the truth that they are also the conscious Yazats and Yazatic Channels, performing certain functions in the whole Creation, seen and

unseen.

But that is not the only reason to conclude that Gatha's are living Yazats. Like all Yazats the Gatha have their own "Khshnooman".

What is "Khshnooman"?

"Khshnooman" is a Manthric Avesta sentence specially applicable to a particular Yazata. Each Yazat has a special Khshnooman and in Manthra Prayers it occurs in a set pattern and in a common passage, starting with "Fravaraaney Mazdayasno Zarathushtrish..." The passage first recites the name of the Gah (or Geh), the part of the day- Haavan or Rapithwan or any of the five' Gah's, followed by the Khshnooman of the Yazata for whom the Prayer is being chanted. Thus, in Khorshed Niyais, the Khshnooman as occurring in the Fravaraaney... passage is "Havrey Khshaetahey. Amshahey Ravaey Aurvāt Aspahe"; in Meher Niyais, "Mithrahey Vouroo Gayaoitish... Ramno Khastrahey."

A little further in the Fravaraaney passage the same Khshnooman occurs but with some variations in the line. Thus, in Khorshed Niyais, the later Khshnooman is "Havre Khshatem Ameshem Raevem Aurvāt Aspem Yazmaidey" This is known as the large ('moti') Khshnooman. The former one is called small ("nani" or "nalli") Khshnooman. The large one has always the word "Yazmaidey" in it. The recitation of the Fravarane passage with the two Khshnooman's attunes the reciter with the rays of the particular Yazat. 'Yazmaide' has the word 'Yaz' in it which means "to be attuned with".

In the five Gatha Prayers, you will find the full Fravarane passage with the small and large 'Khshnooman's. The small begins with "Ahurahe Mazdao Raevato Khrenghato Ameshanam Spentanam, Gathabyo Spentabyo Ratukhshathrabyo Ashaonibyō, Ahunvaitiyao Gathayao, Ushtavaitiyao Gathayao... . The large one has 'Yazmaide' with each of the five Gathas, like, "Ahoonvaitim Gatham Ashaonim Ashahe Ratum Yazmaide... . Ushtavaitim Gatham Ashaonim Ashahe Ratum Yazmaide...

The Khshnooman of every Yazat sets out, in very terse Manthric words, the 'minoi' functions of that Yazat. The words when translated through modern linguistic sciences do not convey the functions. The words require the knowledge of "Tavil", the code which deciphers the mystical meanings of the Manthric words, and explains the particular minoi functions of the particular Yazata.

Going back to our Calendar, we have seen 5 classes of Yazata's in the names of thirty days of the month. We now add the 6th class - 'the Gatha'.

The collective name used for all classes of 'Yazata's is "Ahuraonghaho". The word occurs in Gatha 31-4 and 30-9. It indicates their divine position of being the Divine Rays of Ahura's own Light.

(Parsi Pukar – DECEMBER 1996 Vol. 2; No.6)

ZARATHUSTRA GATHA AND PAIGAMBAR ASHO ZARATHUSHTRA, DISTINCT BUT CONNECTED ENTITIES

"Yaan", the Paigambar's "Highest Inspiration".

The very foundation of the Zarthoshti Daena, its traditions and tenets, precepts and prescriptions, and the way of life and living, is the "YAZATA's.

We have seen that "Yazat" is a collective term for the divine rays emanating from the Source of minoi Light, Ahura Mazda. "Ahuraonghaho" is the generic name given to all the "Yazata"s. (The word occurs in Gatha Yazashney Ha 31-4 and 30-9.)

"Ahuraonghaho" i.e. the 'Yazata's are divided into six categories: (i) "Ameshaspend", (ii) "Yazata", (iii) "Daey", (iv) "Mino", (v) "Farrokh", (vi) "Gatha". Our calendar is based on these categories. In "Parsi Pukar" of December 1996, the category of each day named in our calendar, is mentioned.

The last five days of the Parsi year are the five "Gatha"s : Ahoonvad, Ushtuvad, Spentomad, Vohukhshathra and Vahishtoishtha. The 'Gatha's are also the Yazatic channels of Ahura's minoi Light.

One truth, which is entirely unknown to the modern studies of the Parsi Religion, is revealed by Ilm-e-Khshnoom, the mystical knowledge of the Daena. That truth is that Zarathushtra is not only the auspicious name of our Paigambar (i.e. the Minoi Messenger), who walked on the earth 9000 years ago, but is also the name of the main Gathic channel from which the five 'Gatha's emanate out. In other words, the sixth category of Ahuraonghaho 'Yazat's consists of Zarathushtra Gatha and the five Gathic channels flowing out from it.

Ilm-e-Khshnoom also reveals that the Paigambar Asho Zarathushtra's Ruvan is also an emanation from the Zarathushtra Gatha!

This is an amazing truth. It is way beyond the capacity of the western studies of the Parsi Religion. Such mystical truths are not in consonance, not only with their dry historical, geographical and philological base, but also with their west born material disposition and their narrow paradigms and prejudices. The truths revealed by the mystical sciences of all Religions extend far beyond the surface-knowledge of modern empirical sciences. In fact, the most modern empirical science has come to an end and knocks the door of mysticism. Empirical means trying to find out the machinery of Nature by observation, experiment, interference, logic and mathematics. Everyone, who thinks modern science to be the revealer of nature's truth and reality, should read a 1996 book: "The End of Science" by John Horgan (Helin). (Please see pages 10 & 11 of Parsi Pukar of November 1996, for some amazing and amusing views of most modern scientists on their own activity called science.)

But putting aside the paradigms of the Parsi Religion as understood by the western studies, is there anything in the extant Avesta Scriptures, which support the aforesaid Khshnoomic Truth that the Zarathushtra Gatha is an additional entity to Zarathushtra, the entity to Zarathushtra, the Paigambar?

Yes there is.

Yazashney Ha 8-7, which is repeated as Ha 71-7 and also occurs in our Khordeh Avesta Prayer, 'Hoshbaam', as para 7, recites under.

"Hakhshya azem-chit yo Zarathushtro
frateman nmananameha, visamcha,
Zantunameha, dakhyunameha, anghao
daenayao, anumatayaecha,
anukhtayaecha, anuvarshtayaecha yaa
Ahurish Zarathushtrish".

Ervad Phiroze Masani, a very eminent and truth-seeking scholar thoroughly versed in Western studies translates this passage as under:

"I myself who am Zarathushtra shall lead the foremost ones of the Nman, Vis, Zantu and Dakhyu,

along the line of the Thought, Word and Practice of **this Law which belongs to Zarathustra of Ahura**".
-*"Zoroastrianism, Ancient and Modern"*
page 407.

The curious part of the passage is that it reads as the words spoken by Zarathushtra in first person. "I myself who am Zarathushtra" shall lead certain "foremost ones" along the line of the sacred Law of Ahura's Zarathushtra. The first person I-Zarathustra thus refers to a third person, He-Zarathustra and says that 'I-Z' shall lead to the 'He-Z's law. "Azem chit" means "I myself", thus emphasising the first person. The two "I-Z" and "He-Z" are referred to as distinct entities. Phiroze Masani points out that the word "Zarathushtra" occurring in this passage and even in the Gatha Prayers refers either to the prophet Himself or to the "Gatha" of the same name.

Dr. Faramroze Chiniwalla also points out that **"the word Zarathushtra denotes an Eternal Immortal Power, a Yazata", as also "an Emissary of" that Yazata "Who appears in the human form on this earth,"** and that this distinction is made out in the above passage. ("*Essential Origins of Zoroastrianism*" - pages 27-28).

The Western translators, Spiegel and Mills both do retain the first person and third person, but are perplexed at the rigmarole. Spiegel is led to say in his foot-note that "Although the words (in the passage) are placed in the mouth of Zarathushtra, it is more than doubtful whether they belong to them". This is a typical western method. If the meaning of a passage does not sound sensible to these "Common-sense scholars," they would either doubt its veracity or pompously declare it as interpolation. Some of them even suggest omitting a word or two!

Mill's translation also cannot help referring to I-Z and He-Z; yet in his foot-note he says "This piece is a reproduction or close imitation of some earlier fragment. It sounds like an exhortation delivered while the Faith was still new". Frankly, I do not understand this. Do you?

"Yaan", Asho Zarathushtra's Highest Inspiration.

Going back to the main theme, the sixth category of Ahuraonghaho - 'Yazat's is Zarathushtra Gatha, which has two emanations. One consists of the Yazatic Channels of the five 'Gatha's - Ahoonvad to Vahishtoisht, and the other is advent of Asho Zarathushtra in the human form as the emissary of the Z-Gatha. Asho Zarathushtra receives, through the Z-Gatha and the five Gathic channels, the highest "Inspiration" from Ahura Mazda. This "Inspiration" is named in the minoi science as "Yaan". That is why the very first passage of the Manthric Prayer of the Gatha starts with an introductory stanza:

"Yaanim mano, Yaanim Vacho, Yaanim Shyothnem Ashaono Zarathushtrahey....."

It means: The thought (i.e. the Consciousness), the word (the Manthra) and the Work (the divine Mission) of Asho Zarathushtra are the Recipients of 'Yaan'.

The word 'Yaan' is variedly translated. Worthy of being rewarded (Poonegar); worth following i.e. ideal (Taraporewala); bounty-giving or God directed or Inspired (Kanga); strengthening blessing (Mills); bringing blessing (Bartholomae). Pahalvi translators have, in their translations, retained the word Yaan without translating it. They have taken it as a technical word. It is quite natural to think that the Pahlvi writers were nurtured in Avesta and were aware of the technical meanings of the words as prevalent in their times. Dr. Faramroze Chiniwalla points out that the word mans: **Highest Inspiration arising out of Zarathushtra's attunement with Ahura;** and therefore it also denotes the fruits of such Inspiration viz. the gift, the blessings, and the award of Ahura, which were showered on Him for the spiritual upliftment of the creation including the humans of the earth.

This Highest Inspiration poured on Him by Ahura through the Zarathushtra Gatha and the Yazatic Channels of the five 'Gatha's Ahoonvad to Vahishtoisht.

I beg to stop here and earnestly request my readers to absorb the grand truths narrated above.

(Parsi Pukar – FEBRUARY 1997 Vol. 2; No.8)

Mysticism in the Gatha

ASHO ZARATHUSHTRA'S "GAAS", THE TRANSMITTING STATION OF YAZATIC BLESSINGS

The following Truths are so far presented here.

1. Ahura is the source of the Light Divine. He emanates from Him the Rays of His light. These rays or beams or channels of Ahura's light are collectively called "Ahuraongha-ho" They are divided into six categories viz. Ameshaspend, Yazat, Daey, Mino, Farrokh, Gatha - as we prefix or suffix their names in the passage "Roj Nek Naam..." occurring in every Niyash and every Yasht. The term Yazat is also used for all the six categories collectively in place of Ahuranghaho. In what follows, we shall use the word Yazat or Yazatic in that collective sense.

2. There are five Gatha's as the five Yazatic channels, headed by Zarathustra Gatha. We can picture Zarathustra Gatha as one of the six channels of Ahura's Light, and the five 'Gatha's as sub channels emanating from Z-Gatha. See Figure 1, on page 5.

3. The word Zarathustra has two notations. One is the Z -Gahta and the other is the Paigamber Asho Zarathustra, who comes out from the Z-Gatha and adopts a human form. The distinction is supported by the passage in Hoshbaam Prayer: "Hakhshya Azemchit... (which also occurs in Yazashney Ha 8 and Ha 71).

4. Asho Zarathustra, the Prophet, is thus Himself a Yazata in human form and receives the "Highest Inspiration", "Yaan" from Ahura, through Z -Gahta. It is therefore said in the preamble of the first Gatha Ahoonvad that the Thought, the Word and the Work of Asho Zarathustra are the recipients of "Yaan", Ahura's highest award.

We now proceed further.

As a result of receiving Ahura's Yaan, Asho Zarathustra established a divine power station in the non-physical world called "Nisti". We shall call it Z-Power station.

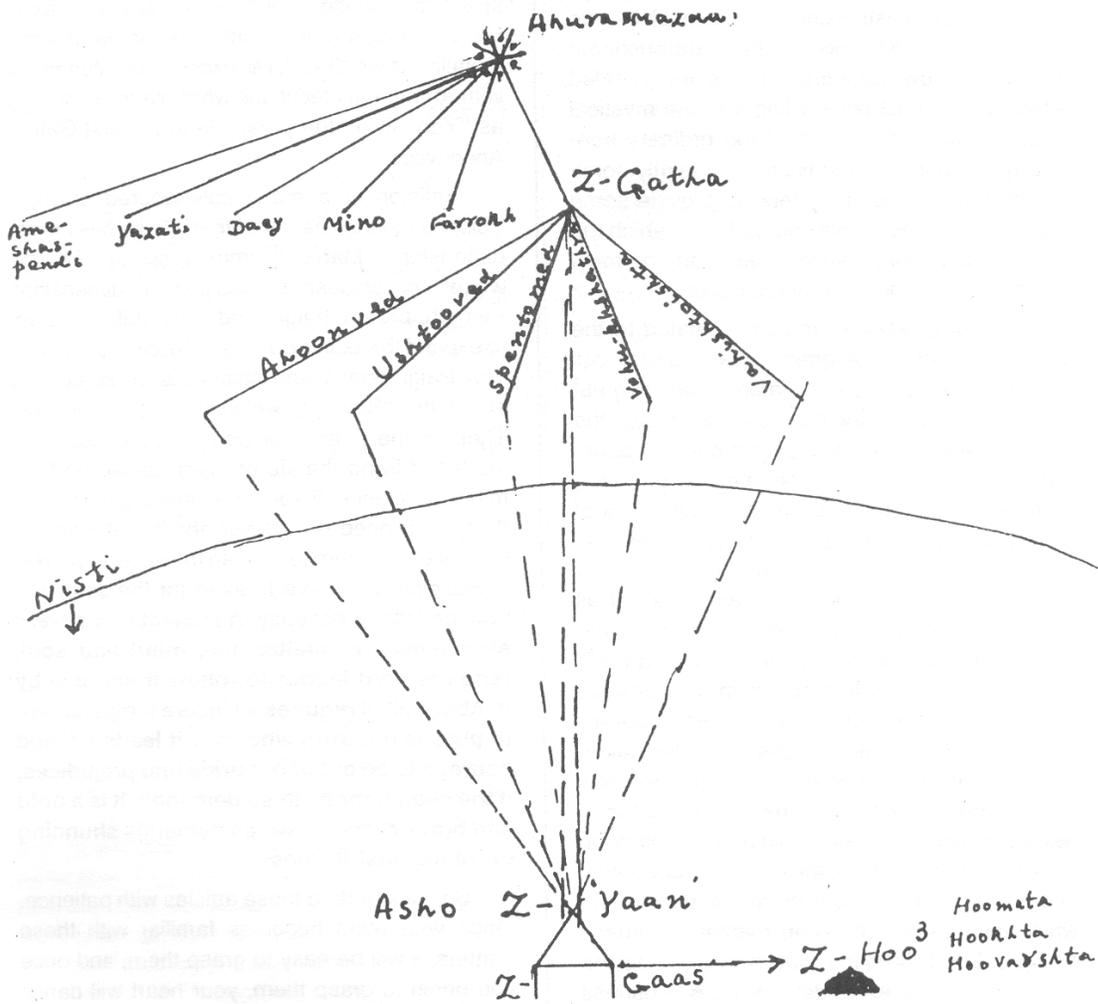
Let us divert a little to the mystical geography of Ahura's Universe - better called his "Creation".

There are two main continents of the creation: Hasti and Nisti. Hasti is the region of Yazatic Light; Nisti is mainly made up of subtle non-physical matter or say ultra-matter. Nisti has seven planes called "Dakhyu"s. We get their names in Meher Niyash as "Aivi, Antarey, Aa, Upairi, Adairi, Pairi" and "Aipi". All are composed of subtle ultra-matter extending in many more than the three dimensions of our earthly experience. Our earth is situated somewhere between the 6th, Pairi, and the 7th, Aipi 'Dakhyu's and is apparently made up of about 92 kinds of natural elements (or atoms). The earth and man on earth have special spiritual position assigned to them by Ahura Mazda.

Going back to Asho Zarathustra, His Z-Power station is on the plane of Upairi Dakhyu. It focuses and stores within it the Yazatic currents of Ahura's light and sends them down to earth and man. The technical name of the power station is "Gaas" of Avizeh-Veh-Din".

The Gaas was Asho Zarathustra's main seat. He did not have any material form whenever he was there. Roughly speaking it was the form of Yazatic light. He took up a human form whenever he had to come down to earth. His body, then, was not composed of ordinary matter. It was like condensation of the Yazatic light in the shape of a human, made up of extremely subtle matter - a transition between the divine light and ultra physical matter.

The students of Ilm-e-Khusnoom will find a technical narration of Asho Zarathustra's human form in Dr. Faramroz Chiniwalla's First Neekiz-e-Vehdin, where an astonishing account of the ultimate composition of the matter on earth is set out. This was written in 1932, much before the modern physics was lost in the clouds of elementary particles, and yet there are some truths revealed in Dr. Chiniwalla's treatment, which seem to formulate a bridge between the Zarathustrian Mysticism and the most modern theories and speculations prevalent in the world of physics in



GATHA, YAZATIC CHANNELS

this last decade of the 20th century. The scenario is that the empirical science has come to an end and the search for truth is no longer amenable to the usual scientific method of observation-experiment-inference-verification. Science has now entered the arena of unverifiable guessworks and surmises. In other words, it is knocking the door mysticism. Of course, the door will not be opened unless the scientists alchemise themselves into saints. Here, in Khshnoom - the Zarathushtrain Mysticism - however, certain truths are revealed which can at least point a finger to the mystical regions beyond the reach of the ordinary non-saintly humans. They indicate very faintly some mystical facts which may tend to provide some explanation to the perplexing riddles in which the sciences of matter, universe, life, man and mind find themselves hopelessly entangled.

The composition of matter is related to the components of life. A grain of sand and a cell of life have something in common. What the great Religions have taught the humans is that the whole creation is like successive condensation, stage by stage, of the divine (Yazatic or Minoi) Light of Ahura. From Ahuramazda to a speck of dust, that Light takes up successive forms and formulations. The matter of our experience is a much lower form. In between, are covered all forms of subtle matter and life, as also mind and consciousness. Therefore what we find as a world external to our own self and our own internal world both have a common under current, namely Ahura's Light in different stages of condensation. Therefore an unseen world does exist and has various regions; and man has in him unseen regions in varying stages of spiritual development. As a human so develops, the Light of Ahura within him or her, gradually loses its condensation. The whole composition physical, mental, spiritual - changes. The cells change; the mind expands, the range of senses expands; the consciousness expands.

Asho Zarathustra was not an evolving soul like us. He was a direct descent from Ahura. He was specially, differently and exceptionally made. Yazashney (Gatha) Ha 29 says so. The Zarathustra Nameh in Pahalvi Dinkard says so. The 'Yasht's, viz. Farwardin, Tir, Ashi, Khordad, Gosh, Din, Jamyad, Hom - say so. (His Khoreh, Fravahar and Gohar-e-Tanu were brought down by very special methods. Read the story of Asho Zarathustra in the Children's Corner of this humble Parsi Pukar).

* * *

The above treatment will give you some idea of the Yazatic stature of Asho Zarathushtra; the special and subtle composition of His human form; His emanation from Zarathustra Gatha; the formulation of the 'Gaas'; His exceptional attunement with Ahura reflected in the word 'Yaan', occurring as "Yannim" in the preamble to the first Gatha-Ahoonved.

Religion is a many splendoured science. Science means search for truth. Truth has infinite dimensions. Man's "common sense" i.e. his wakeful consciousness, has just four dimensions - length, breath, height and 'time'. Life is meant to expand this consciousness. Religion is the way. The Paigamber's and saints tell us something about the "Beyond" within us and outside us. Theirs is the science of God. And they teach us the art of living the life on earth based on their mystical science. If you have unshakable faith in them, you need not bother about that science; but once you claim to take an intellectual interest in Religion, you have to exert for the search of truth and that is not easy. **A subject that covers all sciences of matter, life, mind and soul, requires hard labour to follow it and live by it. Above all, it requires a sincere temperament to pursue the truth wherever it leads us, and courage to be out of our pride and prejudices, if the search for truth so demands. It is a bold and brave exercise, which demands shunning of intellectual laziness.**

So, please read these articles with patience. Once your mind becomes familiar with these matters, it will be easy to grasp them, and once you begin to grasp them, your heart will dance with inexplicable joy and bliss, and your view of life and your mode of taking life will be radically altered; you will face life and its ups and downs bravely and smilingly. That is what "Khushnoom" means and is meant for. And above all, you will march toward Ahura.....

(Parsi Pukar – MARCH 1997 Vol. 2; No.9)

MYSTICISM IN THE GATHA

THE FIVE GATHA ARE THEMSELVES YAZATA'S.

GATHA PRAYERS ARE THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE YAZATIC LIGHT INTO SPOKEN WORDS.

by K. Navroz Dastoor

Seventeen out of seventy two 'Ha's (Chapters) of Yazashney (our marathon Scripture) are the "five Gatha".

A holy Scripture is not ordinary literature. It is a Manthric composition. The term 'Mantra' or 'Manthra' has several definitions and descriptions. One is : **the transformation of the Yazatic Light into words, which can be vocalised by the humans.** Let me elaborate.

'Yazata's are the divine Rays of Light radiating down from the main sphere of Light, Ahura.

Light is a vibration. Physical Light of our earthly experience consists of unseen vibrations of energy, and behaves like a wave motion as well as energy particles. It has a finite speed - 1,86,000 miles per second; huge, yet finite i.e. having a limit. Further every particle of our light has a finite amount of energy.

But Nature has many lights. There is a full range of light from the physical to Yazatic. They can have varying speeds and varying energies reaching Infinity.

Yazatic Light emanates from Ahura. It pours, down the creation. 'Yazat's can be understood as the carriers of Ahura's Light. In the divine Science of Zarthoshti Daena, 'Yazat's are classified in groups, like Seven 'Ameshaspend's, 33 'Yazat's, 'Mino, 'Farrokh', 'Dae', GATHA. They are the basis of our calendar. Days and months are named after them. The last five days of the year are named as the five Gatha. The five Gatha are thus the Rays, the Channels of Yazatic Light.

In the previous issues of this humble Parsi Pukar, several references, evidencing that the Gatha are the Yazatic channels, were set out. It was also pointed out that these five channels were actually the subchannels of one parent channel of the **ZARATHUSHTRA GATHA**. This channel emanated the five, namely Ahoonvad, Ushtuvad, Spentomad, Vohukhshathra, Vahishtoisht. The Light of these five divine channels entered the consciousness of Paigamber Asho Zarathushtra, who was the human formulation of the main Yazatic channel of Zarathushtra Gatha. Thus the Prophet Zarathushtra was the human manifestation of the Yazatic Light of the Z-Gatha, and that is why Paigamber Zarathushtra is referred to as Yazata in Avesta. The late K. R. Camaji has, in his Gujerati book on the Life of Zarathushtra, given 24 Avestic references revealing this truth, directly and indirectly.

The mystical distinction between Z-Gatha and Paigamber Asho Z, has been revealed in the passage: "Hakhshya Azem-chit Zarathushtrish" in Yazashney Ha 8-7, repeated in Ha 71-7 and 'Hoshbaam' prayer, para 7; as also through the preamble to the Gatha : "Yaanim Mano Geurvaain". (Please do see pages 7 and 8 of Parsi Pukar of February 1997 (Vol. 2/8) for these two references).

* * * * *

Having seen that the Gatha are the channels of Yazatic Light, we ask: what are, then, these five Gatha, which are woven as 17 'Ha's in the 72, constituting the Yazashney Scripture, and which we particularly recite on the five Gatha days?

As already indicated above, the Gatha as Avesta text or writing, is the transformation of the Yazatic Light Channels into words, which a human can utter. (This applies to all our holy Manthra Scriptures as also those of all other Religions.)

How do we speak? Our vocal chord and our tongue vibrate. Before this, when the thought to speak arises in our mind, the brain cells also vibrate. Speech is therefore a matter of vibrations.

But remember, the whole creation is a matter of infinite kinds of vibrations. The creation began with the first vibration which is named as "**Staota Yasna**". It then multiplied to infinite number of vibrations and

thereby the whole creation, with its divine, non-physical and physical worlds, came into existence. Staota Yasna is therefore the prime foundation of the creation. The Laws by which the Staota Yasna generates the creation are thus the fundamental, primary Laws. These Laws not only formulate the creation, but also lead it back to Ahura.

The divine Agencies, which operate the Laws of Staota Yasna are the Yazats, Ahura's Light-Rays. They themselves are a special class of vibrations.

VIBRATION TO VIBRATION

The humans, during their short journey on this earth, are required to attune themselves with the 'Yazata's and their vibratory channels. This takes them nearer to their aim of alchemising the evil (Druj) within them to the Good (Gava) and going nearer to God. The attunement with the 'Yazata's can be attained through the Manthra Compositions. These are composed in words, which, when recited, set your tongue, vocal chord, your brain cells and the whole of your personality (physical, non-physical and divine), to certain vibrations. These vibrations then join and attune your whole being, your whole personality, with a particular Yazata. The vibrations generated within you are brought in unison with the vibrations of the Yazata. **The very recitation of the Manthra has this effect.** In other words, as you recite the Manthras, the speech vibrations and all your other consequential vibrations go in consonance with the Yazatic vibrations and attune you with a particular Yazat. All our 'Niyash's and 'Yashta's are founded and composed on this truth.

This means, the Manthra Prayers are composed according to certain Laws of the divine Science of vibrations. **Those laws are also called "Staota Yasna".**

Thus, Staota Yasna means the vibratory Laws of (i) Creation and Evolution and (ii) Manthra Compositions.

Going back to the Gatha prayers, they are so worded as to attune you with the Yazatic channels of the five Gatha. That is why it is said that the Gatha prayers are the transformation of the Yazatic Light of the Gatha Yazats into words which can be vocalised by the human tongue.

YAZASHNEY HA 55

All the above truths are contained in Yazashney Ha 55. (This Ha does not form part of the five Gatha.) It sets out (i) the Yazatic stature of the Gatha channels, (ii) their function in the evolutionary journey of the humans towards Ahuramazda, (iii) the nature of the Manthra compositions which are recited as the five Gatha - 17 'Ha's of Yazashney - in our prayers as also in Kriyakaam, i.e. ritual kinetics, (iv) the structuring of the Manthra compositions of the Gatha on the foundation of the Laws of Staota Yasna and (v) the effect of reciting the Manthra prayers within man and out in Nature. A wonderful treat indeed!

The very first sentence of Ha 55 is a mighty prayer. It says, all that we have viz. this physical body, non-physical body and the divine body (all consisting of Gaetha, Tanu, Azda; Ushtaan, Keherp, Tevishi; Baod, Urvan, Fravashi), we dedicate, as gifts from us, to the Gatha, which lead us to our minoi progress ("Spentabyo"), and which hold the divine Authority and Power from Ahuramazada ("Ratukhshathraabyo"), and which emanate Asha i.e. Ahura's Truth, Beauty, Law and Order ("Ashaoniby").

Here, the nine components of the human personality are directly referred to; and it is prayed that may we dedicate all that to the Gatha.

Further on, the 1st para of Ha 55 proclaims the divine attributes of the Yazatic channels of the Gatha and the part they play in taking the humans and the whole creation back to Ahura.

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MYSTICISM IN THE GATHA

THE CONTENTS OF THE GATHA IN GENERAL.

THE REAL MESSAGE OF THE GATHA HAS NOT REACHED THE PRESENT-DAY HUMANS!

by K. Navroz Dastoor

The following points are, so far, made out:

1. The five Gatha are the Yazatic Channels of Ahura's Light, whose first source is Ahura Himself and the second source is the Zarathushtra Gatha. [Yazashney Ha 55, (Gatha) Ha 28, Ha 8-7, 71-7 (Hoshbaam prayer, 7), Sarosh Yashta Vadi - K.3]
2. The five scriptural Gatha form part of the marathon Scripture, Yazashney, having 72 Ha's, of which 17 Ha's (Ha 28 to 34, 43 to 46, 47 to 50, 51, 53) constitute the Gatha.
3. They are Manthric compositions, i.e. the transmission of the Yazatic Channels into spoken words, based on the laws of Staota Yasna, and can attune the chanter with the channels.

We are now ready to delve a little into the contents of the scriptural Gatha.

First, the following general points are to be born in mind.

Each of the five Gatha has a central theme around which several Truths are woven. Each theme and each Truth has three phases: the Scientific (Gnyan), the Practical (Karma), and the Devotional (Bhakti).

The scientific (Gnyan) phase deals with the mystical knowledge (Ilm, Khshnoom, Sengaha, Razeng). It conveys to a limited extent, some of the facts, events and phenomena occurring in Nature. They are mostly mystical i.e. occurring and existing beyond the intellectual barrier of a non-saintly human being. They relate to the origin and aim of Ahura Mazda's Creation and its goal. A reflection of these mystical phenomena in the world of ordinary human experience and day-to-day life on this earth, is also depicted in the five Gatha. Since the five Gatha are a Holy Manthric Scripture and not an ordinary piece of worldly literature, their foundation is bound and indentured to be mystical. It cannot, in the very nature of things, be otherwise.

The second phase, relating to practical life (Karma) in the five Gatha, prescribes and lays down the rules and code of conduct (do's and don'ts), which a human being is ordained and commanded to carry out and implement during his or her short voyage through this earth. The foundation of the rules and the code are the Truths revealed by the Mystical Science in the first phase. Moral code is not a mere social necessity. Its basis is manifestly mystical, spiritual, minoi. That is why the Prophets and Men of God command and do not give a choice. They declare that the ordinary non-saintly humans are, by their very disposition, inclined to choose the evil. "Shun what we define as evil," is the message, loud and clear, of all the Messengers of God. The Moral Code is a part of the spiritual exercise and exertions - the tarikat or procedure for the spiritual evolution of Man.

The third, the Devotional phase in the five Gatha is the heart-throb of Love and Devotion - Love towards the entire Creation; and Devotion, an intense attraction and craving towards Ahura Mazda, Asho Zarathushtra, His Daena (which is assigned to us by birth in this life). As we look around, we see God's beauty, which infuses and inspires devotion in us, be it a gorgeous mountain or a cool spring or a mother nursing a child or a song of God or the word of a Saint.

It must be firmly born in mind, that the Gatha being Manthra Compositions have not one, but several, levels of meanings. The Gatha are Revelations emanating from Ahura Mazda, through Asho Zarathushtra, for the humans. The humans, with their sinners and saints, do not have a uniform spiritual level. Some may be far advanced on the Path of Truth ("Erezoosh Patho") - the Path leading towards Ahura Mazda; some may not be so advanced; some may have just arrived at the entrance; some may be still wandering in the jungle of confusion, away from the Path. For different levels, Gatha have different revelations to display. It is as if the Gatha know who is trying to study and understand them and the motive behind the study. Some study them just to get a University degree; some, to be immersed in the sea of devotion, some to be a "critical scholar;" some, to learn the way of life so as to advance on the Path; some, as a mere academic exercise; and some, as the serious matter of one's Religion to be lived by every second. As is the intent, so is the content; as is the intention, so is the revelation.

The levels of the meanings also depend on the time and place of the recitation and the person reciting. The same passage when chanted as a mantra prayer by us, the ordinary non-saintly humans, has a different meaning than when it is chanted by an Ashavan, the advanced saint. The recitation of the five Gatha in Yazashney ceremony has an altogether different level of meaning. The chanting of the Ahoonvad Gatha before lifting up a dead body has quite a different message to the dead and living both.

Gatha are not the personal prayers of Asho Zarathushtra addressed to Ahuramazda. In very few stanzas the first person (I, me, my) refers to Asho Zarathushtra Himself. First person refers mostly to the person, non-saintly or Ashavan, who is chanting the Gatha. For instance, in Ha 44, the questions are not asked by Asho Zarathushtra. He not only knows all the answers but has actually seen all the operations and mysteries of Nature. The message of the Ha is that we the mortals have to ask these questions and get their answers through our own exertions as ordained by Daena. That is why, there does not appear to be any answer to the questions asked in Ha 44.

The Western philological translations are still wandering in the jungle of accelerating confusion. Their translations are full of wild guesses, surmises, speculations, conjectures, presumptions and stuck-on-paradigms. That is why there are numerous, widely divergent translations. Every scholar worth the name rushes to translate the Gatha in his own "new" way and adds to the confusion. Theirs is the lowest level or a bunch of the lowest levels.

The Khshnoomic translations do not wholly depend upon the scholar-made grammar and philology nor are they the factories of wild guesses, like the scholastic translations, each of which depend more on the personal psyche and preconceived notions of the translator. The foundations of Khshnoomic translations rendered in Gujarati by the late Faramroze Chiniwalla, is Tavail, i.e. the key to decipher the inner mystical levels. They do draw, to a certain extent, upon the western grammar and linguistics. But the application of Tavail reveals the technical and mystical meanings inherent in the Gathic words, which are based on the first scientific (Gnyan) phase. Therefore, without the Khshnoomic translations, this Manthric Scripture of the Parsis is the victim of the ever accelerating confusion of the western and west-oriented scholars. Its genuine message is not appreciated by the scholarly world nurtured in the western material thought of the 19th century, and is not revealed to the present day humanity, which is bewildered and frightened at the poisonous fruits of the 400 years old activity called "modern science".

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