

MODERNIZATION OF THE ULTRA-MODERN ZOROASTRIAN RELIGION

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The latest craze amongst our Parsi youngsters and the self proclaimed intellectual reformists is MODERNIZATION. With the latest swing to modernize everything and anything they come across in their daily lives, they want to modernize their age old invaluable heritage, viz. their simple, elegant, pure and perfect Zoroastrian religion!!

Modernization, according to their definition, seems wholesale imitation of the worst in the Western Culture and in the prevalent Western customs and habits.

This modernization is unfortunately not only reflected in their outward dress but what is worse, in an accompanying mentality itself. They abandon their excellent religion and its rich heritage, sacrificing it at the altars of fashion and unreason.

But what does the word modern stand for? It refers to something that is used in the present day, something that is recent, something that is new and up-to-date. Yet, let us keep in mind that what is modern today and up-to-date, becomes obsolete and outworn tomorrow (F. D. Roosevelt). Only the eternal Truth is everlasting, complete and perfect. The Law of Asha laid down by our dear Dadar Ahura Mazda is the ultimate and it requires no change or modernization, ever.

Change or modernization is required only for something that is not yet perfect, which is still in an incomplete imperfect stage, but no change is required for something that is already perfect and complete and eternal. The Zoroastrian Religion is truly mazistacha, vahishtacha, sraeshtacha meaning it is the greatest, the best and the most exalted. This quixotic approach of modernizing our noble Zoroastrian religion and its most scientific practices (Tarikats) is the direct consequence of the ignorance of these self-styled intellectuals regarding modern science; this change or modernization sought by them is most illogical, unreasonable and unwanted.

Today's atomic scientist is humble for, as he probes deeper into the microscopic atom, he becomes actual aware of some superhuman ordering force! In fact, 20th century science is fast approximating our religion.

Yet what is science? Science is nothing but systematic and formulated knowledge. It is the knowledge covering general truths of the operation of general laws especially as obtained and tested through scientific methods.

And how firm are scientific truths and concepts? The so-called concepts and truths of science have never been firm because the early theories have been overthrown by more modern ones and I am sure that the existing theories will also be overthrown as new discoveries are made by Modern Science.

And these scientific concepts are, as the famous scientist, the late Dr. Albert Einstein said, free creations of the imagination to explain away certain limited observations.

Why? For Science has Limitations.

(a) Scientists are human beings and human beings are slaves of the five senses; therefore, like an escalator, science takes us there, that far, but no further and here one has to rely on religions and faith which touches the unseen realms.

(b) Fact after fact and observation after observation of modern science reveal that the explanations of Nature given by science are just surface explanations; today, science is just a grand collection of unsolved mysteries. The condition of observation is very important for arriving at scientific truth and without a proper frame of reference, 3 different observers will give 3 different scientific truths! But truth cannot have 3 different answers! However, that is science with its limitations. As religion is eternal truth, it has only one answer. Religion is inner, absolute wisdom while science remains formulated knowledge and there is a vast difference between knowledge and wisdom.

(c) Scientists influence or look for results, but the result that we got was affected by the fact that we were looking for it --- but not only do we have no way of proving that the result would have been the same if we had not been watching it& (From the Dancing Wuli Masters An Overview of the New Physics).

(d) Due to our limited senses, many truths of our religion remain nonsense to the reformists but true physicists know that nonsense is only when scientists and human beings have not yet found that point of view from which it makes sense.

Today, Extra Sensory Perception has been an extraordinary problem for the modern scientists, as it defies our limited senses and description. Telepathy and the sixth sense are known to science. All that they have to say is that people do receive accurate knowledge through sources other than the physical senses. All that they know and accept is that these things exist but the exact nature by which people gain accurate knowledge through sources other than the physical sense is unknown, and keep the modern scientists on a wild goose chase.

But remember, Nature does not come to an end where our senses and science fail to register it.

And hence, existence of anything cannot be denied simply because we can't sense it, observe it or understand it from this material point of view through the human mind.

To solve such mysteries, we require faith.

Faith in Science and Religion

It is rather difficult to define faith ; for those who do not have faith, no explanation is possible and for those who have faith, no explanation is necessary. Yet it is the force of life and the head chemist of our mind. It is a luminous opening on another world, and wisdom and human life cannot survive without faith. Faith is as essential in science as in religion.

We carry out our scientific experiments having full faith in our lab-in-charge who may be holding just a M.Sc. degree. We follow his oral or written rules and regulations and instructions with full faith in him.

(a) No matter how lengthy the qualitative, quantitative chemical analysis turns out to be, we dare not take short cuts; step by step we systematically follow the chart given to us to identify the given chemical.

(b) While working in a microbiology lab, one has to strictly follow lengthy cleanliness procedures without any alterations. Though microbes are unseen by the naked eye, they are responsible for a number of diseases and being aware of that fact, we work in the lab following all the sterility procedures laid down by our lab-in-charge.

(c) The same holds true while working with radioactivity. It has no colour, odour or taste for our 5 senses to register it, but this clear liquid, when placed in the proper counter, shows its presence.

And so, working with radioactivity, we follow the oral rules and regulations to the nth degree.

When we follow our lab-in-charge or our health physicist with faith, then why, why do we only challenge our religious practices (tarikats) laid down by our Zarathushtra Saheb who is our material world-in-charge and one of the greatest scientists this world has ever come across?

Science is partitive. It is channeled down to a number of its branches. Scientists are scholars only in their own branches. Albert Einstein's formula of $E=mc^2$ was great and the principle of immunization demonstrated by Louis Pasteur was also great, but there has not been a single scientist with simultaneous discoveries in the various branches of science. Except one scientist and that is our Zarathushtra Saheb. Our prophet is not only the greatest Ecologist but also the greatest Microbiologist, Atomic and Nuclear Physicist and Health Physicist. He is the only scientists with simultaneous discoveries in each and every existing branch of science. He is the best known scientist of the modern era as his knowledge is a sub-set of the wisdom which he derived directly from the ultimate intelligence, viz., from Dadar Ahura Mazda. With the help of this complete Wisdom, our prophet has established rules and regulations for each and every Tarikat rituals to be carried out during our lifetime in this material world, our Earth, and at death, after our material life comes to an end, leading our soul to the spiritual world, helping us to be one with the ultimate force.

Does the Zoroastrian religion need to be modernized?

(a) Today, there is a growing concern in various countries for prevention of pollution of air, water and land. This has led to, tremendous development in the field of Ecology, yet the proponents of ecology have a lot to learn from our supremely scientific religion. No ecologist has preached with the same degree of rigidity and strictness as is done in our religion in keeping the environment pure and clean. The Holy Vendidad will act as an encyclopedia for the modern ecologist.

No ecologist has yet bothered to go beyond the pollution of the physical environment but our tarikats are meant to prevent pollution of not only the physical environment but of the total environment including the mental and spiritual e.g., (Padyab kusti, Nahan, Bareshnum followed by our Farajiyat daily prayers).

How much more modern can we get?

(b) While the modern ecologist may just be beginning to concern himself with the physical purity and cleanliness which, as yet, are highly primitive by the standards prescribed in our religion, modern medicine in the last few decades has become increasingly conscious of psychosomatic diseases.

This was after medicine recognized the profound effect of thoughts on the physical well being and health of an individual a fact which is commonplace in the Zoroastrian religion for over 8500 years. (Yasna 30.7). In fact throughout our Holy Gathas we come across modern psychosomatic medicine, e.g. (1) We have to first accept and recognize that there exist 2 forces in Nature Spenta and Angra and their functions are absolutely opposite to each other (Y. 30: 3,4,5,6; 45.2).

(2) After recognizing the positive and negative forces, we are warned against the negative emotions (Y 32: 2,8,5,13) of pride, falsehood, the bad actions of bitterness and hatred, lustful desires, corruption and dissatisfaction, our bad thoughts leading to negative emotions of tension, anger and anxiety and our bad words or abuse.

(3) After recognizing these negative emotions, we are taught to act, speak and think politely keeping all the above negative emotions, actions and words at arm's length. (Yasna 33:5, 31.9, 34.9, 43:1, 3,16, 51:4 etc.) All through, he teaches us the importance of Vohu Mano, the Good Mind, on our immediate environment and health (Y 28, 43:2, 43:3, 51:7, 45:10, 46:73, 46.2 etc.)

In 45:10, 34:11, we are told that peace of mind leads to bodily strength and health. In 51:2, 33:10, it is stated that where there is peace of mind, there is bound to be good health.

In 43:16 we are asked to carry out good work or actions through Vohu Mano so that Vohu Mano will lead to good words and good actions and automatically internal happiness will follow.

For everything begins with an idea and man can create nothing which he does not first conceive in thought.

And so, a good thought is bound to lead to a good word and a good action. What simple yet superb logic! (Vispa Humata Prayer).

How much modern can we get?

(c) The self proclaimed modernizers shudder that a dead body should be isolated as early as possible; that if anybody touched it after a certain interval of time, the person should undergo a purificatory bath lest he contaminate the society (modern science recognizes quarantine procedures); that the corpse be disposed off by the method of Dokhmenashini (which is) the most scientifically based hygienic, quick, efficient method of disposing the dead causing no pollution of air, water or land).

How much modern can we get?

For disposal of waste materials, the following principles are used by science.

1st Scientific principle

Recognition of the source of contamination Vendidad F-7 states:- Druj attacks the body immediately on death&.

(Druj as force of evil or as putrefaction of flesh)

2nd Scientific Principle

Isolation and containment of the source of contamination.

Once the dead body is isolated after the Sachkar ceremony, the drawing of Kash (magnetic line of force) is carried out by iron nails and prayers (we know that for containment of magnetic lines of force, iron is required).

3rd Scientific Principle

Eradication of the source of contamination with maximum efficiency and minimum spread.

For maximum efficiency, the X, R-ultra rays of sunlight is used and for minimum spread, the vultures who show a rapid disposal without spread come to our rescue.

It is a pity that these reformists are so behind the best in really modern science. For as Dr. Rev. L. H. Mills has said: Some of the later passages in the Zend Avesta regarding purification and which might seem to some of us most grotesque, were hardly superfluties, for they showed a sanitation for us to follow rather than condemn.

(d) We always refer to our consecrated fire as Atash Padshah. This Fire is taken as a living vibrant King. We communicate with it, charge our spiritual batteries while saying our prayers in front of the Atash Padshah.

And there is no insanity in that, for modern science talks about photons being conscious.

How much modern can we get?

(e) A disturbance of any kind in Nature can be seen, noticed or can remain unseen, unnoticed and yet exist.

A TV picture gets distorted or blurred when a kitchen mixie is operated. This is accepted as a disturbance as it is registered by one of our five limited senses.

But spillage or leakage of radioactivity goes un-noticed by our limited five senses. The radioactivity exists in the atmosphere if and when there is a leakage capable of causing many health hazards to the public. So something which is not registered by our five senses can and will still exist in Nature.

Women during their menses were segregated and were forbidden to come close to pious men and the fire. Like the leakage of radioactivity, our five senses do not find any atmospheric defilement in this but modern science knows that women in their menses have a disturbed personal environment which is proved with the help of Kirlian photography.

During the days when a woman is in her menses they have found a toxin circulating in their body fluid, namely menotoxin, which has inhibitory effects on freshly cut flowers, on the growth of roots and stems of living seedlings!

How much modern can we get?

(f) According to the Zoroastrian science, man is divided into 9 parts: three physical, three ultra physical and three spiritual parts.

Today, 20th century science is baffled by the working of the brain and thought forces and the nervous system in general. This is the 3rd physical part of our body which we know as Azda in Zoroastrian Science. Will Science ever be able to explain about the ultra-physical and spiritual parts of our body?

How much modern can we get?

(g) Have you heard about the Sperm Bank? In Vendidad F.2, Ahura Mazda instructed Jamshed Padshah to make a cave and to take along with him into the cave the seed (tokham) of all men/women, cattle, trees, grains, etc., which are best, biggest and most beautiful.

Identical suggestions and practices are currently being advocated in the United States for the purpose of rehabilitating the world after an all out nuclear war.

How much modern can we get?

(h) The Sun is considered as the prime source of vital life force and the greatest purifying or sterilizing agent. (Khorshed Nyaesh).

Today Science knows that for production of Vitamin D in human beings and sugar in plants, sunlight is absolutely necessary.

That Solar cooker, Solar cars, Solar batteries, use sun solar energy for their working.

That pharmaceuticals are sterilized by gamma rays.

How much modern can we get?

Space does not permit us to continue but always remember that the different branches of science are subsets of our grand Religion and so, whatever will be found or discovered by Science will always be present in our Zoroastrian Science.

The duty of a scientist is to search for truth and Religion is Truth. There is no conflict between Science and Religion.

In fact, Science may include in its field of knowledge, the starry world and the world beyond it. Philosophy may try to find some universal principle which is at the root of all things, but Religion inevitably concentrates on humanity which illuminates our reason, inspires our wisdom, stimulates our love and intelligence.

Religion has taught medical science that there is a dimension to human personality that cannot be explained on the basis of scientific evidence, yet has a great deal to do with man's behaviour; that sound religious faith can be a powerful factor in the rehabilitation of the whole man, supporting him in crises, giving meaning and purpose to his life. (Reader's Digest - May 67).

Let us not see religion as just a compilation of doctrines and dogmas. Religion is a way of life deliberately and dedicatedly cultivated with a true understanding of nature and man's role therein.

It is the purpose of Religion that while binding the spiritual nature of man to the supreme intellectual and primordial thinker the Creator, it offers him the best way of life and conduct, helps him to establish and accommodate himself in his environment and urges him to use his God-given faculty to think and reason, thereby advancing himself and the society to the noblest and happiest existence. And no life ever grows great until it is focused, dedicated and disciplined by one's religion.

So let us lead our lives with full faith in our **most scientific and ever modern Zoroastrian religion** and with full faith, let us practice all its tarikats which are best for us to follow rather than modernize or condemn.