

"PARSI AVAZ" WEEKLY THE SECOND STREAM OF KSHNOOMIC JOURNALISM

THE STREAM THAT BECAME A POWERFUL WATERFALL FOR 27 YEARS.

By : Dosubaba

Parsi Avaz was the second Journal of Ilm-e-Khshnoom started on 6th July 1947. The first one was "Frashogard" started in June 1911 and closed in 1943 due to the untimely death of its great editor, Phiroz Masani. Parsi Avaz was a WEEKLY which was closed on 30.6.1974, because of the death of its colourful editor Jehangir Chiniwala on 13.10.1973. Both were established with the noble aim of keeping the flame of the Faith of the Community ever burning, with the divine light of Ilm-e-Khshnoom, the gift bestowed on the Parsis by the holy Abeds of Demavand through Baheramshah Navroji Shroff of Surat, and also counteracting the so-called "reforming movement" (in fact deforming) which was involved in the Satanic act of uprooting the very foundations of the Parsi Faith.

In the last issue (Vol. 9 - No.1 July-August-September 2003) a short account of the marathon performance of "Frashogard" was published. We follow it now by the heroic achievements of Parsi Avaz and its dauntless editor Jehangir Chiniwalla.

In 1947, Jehangir was already an eminent figure in the Parsi Public life. Even during the life time of Baheramshahji, he was an effective speaker of Ilm-e-Khshnoom and singer of Firdosi's Shah-Nameh on the stage. He was ordained to do so by Baheramshahji himself. Upto the early forties, the faith of the Community was on a solid rock. Any event, or even the talk of mixed marriages and conversion used to create a furore in the Community. Parsis had unflinching faith in the spiritual Institutions of the Zarthoshti Din. "Boonak Paasbaani" - the purity of the racial gene was the banner. When, in 1942, the notorious "Bansda Navjotes" (alleged to be) were performed by one Framroz Bode in association with Burjorji F. Baharucha, there was a furious uproar in the whole of the community. At that time Jame Jamshed was the champion of the faithful and the orthodox. The community was divided in two factions one, the large "orthodox" and the other the tiny "reformist". These two words, apart from their dictionary meanings, had, amongst the Parsis, these definitions: The Orthodox meant (and still mean) those who had staunch and steadfast faith in all the spiritual and divine Institutions of the Zarthoshti Din, including Boonak Paasbaani, for the preservation and protection of each of which, we the Parsis are in India. The "Reformist" meant that small minority class who wanted to "reform" the religion by throwing away those Institutions like Manthra Vani, Kriyakaam, Dokhma, even the Fire Temples and Sudreh Kushti, and also by accepting foreign blood and genes through mixed marriages and full blooded non-Parsis through conversion. These 'reformists' were the pioneers of the present day extinction threats. The word "reformists" was dropped later and was replaced by "liberals". Have we not today become an endangered species because of those "deformists" and "libertines"?

The Parsis of and upto the forties were too wise, knowledgeable, and intelligent not to sense the onslaught of the extinction forces. In fact and truth, the then "reformist movement" was generated from the desire of some rich and affluent Parsis to marry "Madem's", a euphemism then in use for the European extremely white-skinned girls and women. The fulfillment of this desire required, of necessity, the discarding of the spiritual Institutions of the Din, which are basically founded on Boonak Paasbaani, the Purity of the racial gene. Some "Dastooris" and "Scholars" were induced to "butterify" or "Polsonise", (the then popular word used for flatterers) the affluent sethia's by declaring in pompous and pretentious scholarly jargon that all those spiritual Institutions were mumbumbo and nonsense. The community then well knew that these were the pretexts and excuses for Madem-marrying. There were plenty of orthodox scholars, who controverted effectively this onslaught. If you look at Jame Jamshed of 1941-42 and before, you will see as a historical fact how we the Parsis were fantastically devoted to our Din and its Institutions. We had that ardour and fervour for 1200 long years!

BUT the Time had to take its toll. From 1944-45, the Parsis began to be indifferent and lethargic towards their great Din. The reformist class started taking advantage of this situation. Jame Jamshed, the holder of the orthodox banner began to change its colour. It involved itself in political turns and twists. Now that the Frashogard was closed, there was no journal to explain the tenets teachings of the Din. Jame was seen by

the sharp-eyed Orthodox as preparing to have a complete somersault. It was found to invite the faithless (the other word for the "reformist") in the management as well as editorial sides.

The sharp-eyed Jehangir Chiniwalla saw this. There was a time in thirties when Jehangir had a strong role in the conduct of the then Jame Jamshed to nurture orthodoxy and fight the faithless. Many a times he had dictated the leading editorial articles, some times even on telephone. But now those days were gone. Jame introduced what was politically termed as "open forum". This was an open tactful invitation to the faithless to write in Jame. The matter was slowly going from bad to worse. Some other new daily or weekly newspaper or news magazine was the need of the hour. But it was Himalayan task. It was not easy to compete with Jame. But here was a soldier of many a previous births. At an auspicious moment Jehangir decided on a weekly to shake up the Community, to rekindle the faith of the Parsis through Ilm-e-Khshnoom and to resist courageously and valiantly the faithless and their trickeries.

On 17.3.1947 Jehangir circulated a letter amongst the scholars, Dastooris, eminent persons and common Parsis. He wrote:

"Since last few decades, a small class of the Community, which calls itself "reformist" and of the "modern thinking", is raising an opposition towards the age-long religious Faith and social fabric of the Community. Almost all the newspapers of the Community had fallen into the hands of such so called reformist class, which claims to be belonging to the "new thoughts".

The owners and the administrators of the present day leading Parsi newspapers are strongly supporting the propoganda of those persons, who are revolting against the religious faith of the Parsis and their long continuing social constitution, and today no newspaper exists which has an honest, impartial and completely orthodox policy. The orthodox leaders and the orthodox majority of the Community are displeased and distressed at such policy of these newspapers, and therefore a feeling has emerged in the Community that the Comm greatly needs a new newspaper which has an independent, honest and true orthodox policy."

And that was Parsi Avaz - true, independent, honest, courageous, selfless, an institution and a personality by itself, a Rathestaar - warrior fighting against the conspiracy of Satan, a Vastrayosh - a farmer tilling the ground of the Faith of the community, a Hutoksh - scattering, with great humility, the flowers of devotion, love, the spiritual and mystical Knowledge-Ilm and Wisdom-'Daanesh' of the Din.

Parsi Avaz has left a huge record, spread over 27 years, of the history of the faith and religious psyche of the Parsis. It depicts the history of the struggle of the orthodox and the faithful against the Satanic waves of materialism, faithlessness, lethargy towards the Din and mixing up of the racial gene and the threatened dissolution of the Community into the vast ocean of humanity.

More important was the huge amount of the Ilm and Daanesh - the mystical Knowledge and Wisdom jam-packed in 1400 issues of Parsi Avaz. Today the faithful Parsis crave for its files. Luckily several people have preserved the files. The Dini Avaz and Parsi Pukar Committees have tried to store them at safe places. They are the huge fountains of the genuine, authentic Knowledge of the Din gifted to us by the white spiritual Forces and Energies of Spenamin, which are incessantly working for the preservation the Parsi Comm, waiting for the advent of the coming Saoshyants, who shall lead the humanity of the globe on the path towards Ahuramazda, Ishvar, Allah, God. Awakening the Parsis towards such Faith and Knowledge, and injecting devotion in their hearts and minds was the main task of Parsi Avaz. That was why Parsi Avaz was dedicated to Ustad Saheb Baheramshah Shroff, the harbinger of Khshnoom. Please read on the third cover page of this Issue, Jehangirji's words of that dedication. Please read on pages 15 and 20 Jehangir's words proclaiming the policies of Parsi Avaz. Any Parsi who wants to throb his heart in love and devotion to Ahuramazda, Asho Zarathushtra, Ashvans and Aabeds, can shower on his or her heart the huge fountains, nay powerful waterfalls, of the contents of this blessed magazines, Frashogard and Parsi Avaz.

* * * * *

Jehangir was not a rich man to afford the luxury of running a weekly. Yet, what was the subscription? Rs.12 per year!! A paltry sum of Rs. 12 for 52 issues!! Initially Parsi Avaz was partly financed by one Irani Zarthoshti - Jamshed Moriaabaadi. He was the father-in-law of Jehangir. He gave a sum of Rs.20,000 towards the expenses of running the weekly. This was not a small sum in 1947. The subscriptions started

pouring in, even much before the first issue of 6.7.1947 came out.

But suddenly, after about a year, a financial crisis seemed to erupt. Some misappropriations came to light on the management side. But Jehangir did not falter. He took the finance in his full control, kept a minimum staff and went ahead in his arduous task.

In 1949, a happy incident occurred in the life of Parsi Avaz. Jehangir used to say that he had a premonitory message from some higher forces (Daste Gaib) that he would soon get one or two active young boys to help him. Somewhere in 1947-48, when he was in Navsari for a lecture, Ervad Saheb Erachshah Karkaria introduced him to one Keki Navroz Dastoor who was then a Science student in M.T.B. College Surat. There flashed some hidden click between the two. The then 50 years old and 20 years old were to become life-long friends - a paternal friendship, a partnership - in - Din. That Keki Dastoor is now Kaikhushru Dastoor, the editor of this Parsi Pukar. (We will refer to him hereafter as KND - or KN)

KND arrived in Bombay in June 1949 on Homaji's Baj-day. He was already a B.Sc., and had done his first LL.B in Sarvajanic Law College, Surat. He had taken admission in Government Law College, Mumbai in II LL.B class. He stayed in the then calm and serene atmosphere of Jeebhoy Dadabhoy Agiary, near Afghan Church, Colaba. The previous-lives-friendship between Jehangir and KND flowered fast. KND was introduced to Dr. Framroz Chiniwalla by Jehangir, while walking on D.N. Road!

KND was well-groomed for the task he was destined to perform then and now. He was born and brought up in a pious family of Mobeds at Navsari. His grandfather Ervad Dinshah was the 14th direct descendant of the famous Dastoorji Meherjirana, who was called by Shah Akbar to learn about the Parsi Din. Ervad Dinshah was a highly Tarikatbaaz Mobed. He was the designated Deputy (Naayab) Dastoor of the Dastoori "Gaadi" of Meherjirana. KND's father Navroz was a Pucca Pav-Mahel Mobed having performed about 90 Nirangdin's and hundreds of Vendidaads and Yazasheney's. His uncle Ervad Rustom (Baapaaji) was a Professor of Avesta-Pahalvi in the Bombay University. He was one of the then profound scholar - trio of the Pahalvi language. The other two were Beheramgor Anklesaria and Bomanji Dhahabar. The whole family was nurtured in Manthra Prayers and Tarikats. KND's Navar-Maraatab was strenuously supervised by the three stalwart Mobeds of the family.

Baapaaji was one of those scholars who were highly impressed by IIm-e-Khshnoom after hearing Ustad Saheb Baheramshah Shroff. KND, in his childhood, was hearing about Ustad Saheb very often. There was a first class library on all Religions, Western Studies and IIm-e-Khshnoom in their home.

The story of Ustad Saheb was first told to KND by his famous teacher Dosabhai Desai. He and KND had a life long friendship. They spent hours and hours in discussing Khshnoom.

When KND was in M. T. B. College at Surat, he was destined to meet one Soli Contractor, a disciple-in-Khshnoom of Bomanshah Hakim, the inner circle man of Baheramshah Shroff's Anjuman. Whatever KND had read and learned about Khshnoom in his home library and from Baapaaji and Dosabhai now appeared before him in practical terms through Soli Contractor, who talked to him a lot about Bomanshah Hakim, the miracles in his life and his teachings and guidance on Manthra Prayers.

By that time KND had read out many portions from Dr. Framroze Chiniwalla's Nikeez and as a college student of Science, he was greatly impressed by Framroze's treatment on the Khshnoomic Physics of Anaasar in Chapter 2 of Nikeez I. He was already immersed in Khshnoom at the then age of 22 years.

KND helped Jehangir with great zeal and energy. He wrote sumptuously in Parsi Avaz, on Parsi Politics and Journalism, on Science and on a variety of Khshnoomic subjects until the last day of Parsi Avaz's life. He stood by Jehangir during all his difficult Karmic cycles. He conducted Parsi Avaz in Jehangir's absence whenever the occasion arose. Parsi Avaz was closed down on 30.6.1974 after Jehangir's death on 13.10.1973. KND lamented in the last issue the vacuum that would be due to the closure, but expressed a hope to the readers: "we may meet again; I feel that in my bones..." In 1976 KND did float **Dini Avaz** which was later taken over by the late Curset Patel, and now by Gustad Forbes, the son of a disciple of Ustad Saheb. KND is still with us here in the magazine in your hands.

The prediction given to Jehangir was that he would get "one or two boys" to help him. Was there any other "boy"? Yes, there was. His name is Siavux Shaheriarji Madon. He lives in Navsari. He could have been much more helpful to Jehangir had he been in Bombay; yet he went on writing numerous articles in Parsi Avaz, which were of great help to Jehangir and KND.

Jehangir died at 10 a.m. on 13.10.1973. A couple of hours before he had completed an Article on Dokhm-e-Nashini for his "Parsi Avaz". He wrote his name below the Article... Within an hour or two, his Rathestar Ruvan left this Geti, the earth.....

गोइती "युनी?" वैया डे युन इजम षुश
युन इज लमी दरम ओ भीइजम षुश
ता इथं यु आतशत वदीदम यु सेपन्द
भीसुजम व भीसुजम व भीसुजम, षुश

You said, "how are you?" Come, come, that I am as jubilant as a day,
Like the day, I go on tearing apart and sewing back, jubilant (at that),
Until I saw your face like fire burning as if wild rue (incense),
I burn-out, burn out and burn out, jubilant (at that).

My task is to burn out in the service of Din, jubilantly, delightfully! Like a day I shine; night does come but I shine again. In what I do, I always see Thy face burning like an incensed torch, and that inspires me to burn out myself rejoicingly, joyfully, exultantly.

In the above poem of Rumi, we hear the song of Parsi Avaz and its great editor Jehangir Chiniwalla.

(Parsi Pukar Oct.-Nov.-Dec. 2003 - Vol. 9; No. 2)

THE KHSHNOOMIC NIAGARA OF PARSI AVAZ.

Variety of Subjects In It Indexed by Dasturji Meherjirana.

163 Articles on the Limitations and Deficiencies of West-oriented Studies of the Din, by Dr. Framroz Chiniwalla.

by Dosubaba.

Parsi Avaz weekly was born in the first week of July 1947 and was closed in the last week of June 1974, about 9 months after the death of its founder Jehangir Chiniwalla. During the long period of 27 years, it acquired a distinct personality of its own. A very able and well known astrologer Krishnaswami had prepared a horoscope of this person - Parsi Avaz, probably taking the time of its birth as the moment when its first issue came out of the printing press and saw the light of the day. He was a close friend and teacher of Jehangir in astrology.

Jehangir himself was very well versed in astrology. He was the Vice President of the Bombay Astrological Society which was established on 5th December 1892. It was merged into Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in 1992, as one of its prominent divisions, named Jyotish Bharati.

Krishnaswami's horoscope of 'the child' Parsi Avaz, had a fantastic reading. This 'child' is tough and tenacious with extraordinary courage and daring. 'He' would not hesitate to call a spade, a spade, and would strike terror in the hearts of his adversaries. With all these qualities of an intellectual soldier, 'he' would be a loving spiritual teacher and guide, and would light the flame of faith and devotion in many a dark hearts. As the years would run by, he would become thinner in physique, but stronger in his intellectual rigor and devotional fervour.

All this turned out to be amazingly true. Parsi Avaz fought many battles of public life and did cause fear in faithless of the community. At the same time, it went on providing devotional food which became more and more relishing to the spiritually hungry.

It is impossible to give a even a bird's eye view of just the subject-matters published during the 52 x 27 weeks of Parsi Avaz's life. Dasturji Saheb Meherjirana of Navsari has made an Index of just the title headings of the topics. It is divided into two parts. One consists of the articles written by Dr. Framroze Chiniwalla and the other, of the rest, written by Jehangir and numerous other writers.

The first part of the Index viz. Dr. Framroze's articles runs into six typed fullscape pages setting out the title headings of 1583 articles, spread over all throughout in Parsi Avaz between 1947 to 1974, and showing the volume nos., the issue nos. and page numbers of each. If each article is taken of an average length of two pages of Parsi Avaz, it will occupy 8 pages of a book of 8" by 6." 1583 articles in Parsi Avaz will be then $1583 \times 8 = 12664$ pages of book; you can't have such big book. You will have to divide it into at least 12 books. The formula: 1 page of Parsi Avaz = 4 pages of a book (1 P=4B) is taken from "Aapni aa Geyti," a book of Dr. Chiniwalla which was first published page to page in Parsi Avaz and then transmitted in a book. These articles on "Aapni aa Geyti," are not taken into Dasturji Meherjirana's Index.

The subjects treated in these 1583 articles can be divided in four main Divisions.

Division I. Articles on the history and content of the Zoroastrian Studies which emanated in Europe from about 1700 A. D. (starting with Thomas Hyde), and developed during the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, and show how their doubts, difficulties, differences guess works, conjectures variances, confusions and inconsistencies can be resolved by and through Ilm-e-Khshnoom.

Division II: Articles on the spiritual and mystical Science of Zarthoshti Din, and its practical application in the day-to-day life. In these articles all the seven components of which our Din is constituted are dealt with. They are (i) Sudreh Kushti, (ii) Manthra Prayers, (iii) Meher-Patet- the Moral and Ethical code to be observed every moment of our daily life, (iv) Yasna-Rituals, Ceremonies, Kinetics, (v) 'Atash, Kadeh's the Houses of Divine Fire- Dadgah, Adran, Baheram; (vi) Dokhme-Nashini, and (vii) last but not the least Boonak- Pasbani- the preservation and protection of the Racial Gene.

Division III: Articles on the history of Iran, right from Goyomard to the present day, and also future glimpses. These have as its foundation the Time Cycle of 81000 years called Zarvan-e-Daregho

Khadaat. There are **624** articles on the subject.

Division IV : The history of the Parsis and their present day plight in India.

Division V: Other Miscellaneous subjects.

* * * * *

Let us now enter into the Division I - the Western studies and IIm-e-Khshnoom. It consists of 5 series of Articles. (Note: The titles given below are translated in English)

Series 1: The Title : "**The study of Zarthosti Religion. Religious Writings Cannot Be comprehended Through Philology Alone**"

40 Articles - Parsi Avaz - Vol. 1, 2, 3 (1947-48-49-50)

Series 2 : The Title : "**The European Study of the Extant Dilapidated Religious Scriptures according to Philology.**"

Eleven Articles - Parsi Avaz Vol.26- (1972-73)

Series 3: The Title : "**On the Antiquity of the Pahalvi Language.**"

14 Articles - Parsi Avaz - Vols. 3 and 4 (1949-50-51)

Series 4 -: The Title : **The Book written by Prof. Zehner of Oxford. The knowledge Given therein Does Not Give justice to Din.**

95 Articles - Parsi Avaz- Vols. 11 to 16 (1957-58 to 1962-63).

Series 5 : The New light on the Gatha by the Poet Kharbardar.

3 Articles - Parsi Avaz- Vol 26 (1974).

Let us now delve into the five series one by one, comprising the I Division. In the first two series. Framroze Chiniwalla has traced the history of the Western Studies in a thoroughly objective manner, and showed how and where it went wrong particularly due to the application of the 19th century materialistic and scientific thinking to our Religion. He has dealt with the set paradigms of these studies and their doubts and confusions in a highly rational way and shown how IIm-e-Khshnoom can throw a tremendous light on the Scriptures, writings and Institutions of the Zarthoshti Din and the way of life which we Parsis follow in India since more than a thousand years; and how the guesses, conjectures, perplexities, divergencies and inconsistencies of the western studies can be resolved and disentangled through IIm-e-Khshnoom.

The West oriented Parsi scholars and Dastoors have ignored Khshnoom more due to their egoistic than truth-seeking psyche. **Some of them rush to criticise Khshnoom without reading a single page from its marathon writings.** Some are inherently immune towards the mystical, spiritual or esoteric thinking which is the sine-qua-non of any Religion. Some are too intellectually lazy to exert and explore mystical matters, whether by reading or by actual practice. Then of course there are vested interests, which deliberately bang the door shut, on the face of Truth.

Dr. Framroze was a gifted and inspired mystic with an intellectual rigor - a medical doctor and saintly man. There is no doubt that his Masters, whoever be they, were actively helping him in his studies, spiritual as well as intellectual. Those who have studied his writings closely, are amazed at his deep knowledge of the western studies, its grammar, philology etymology and scientific approach, and his learned and scholarly arguments and materials. He seems to have thoroughly and deeply read everything the Western Scholars have written and expounded. This, the first series of his articles in Division I, in Parsi Avaz demonstrate this astoundingly.

It will be very instructive to understand, in Dr. Framroze's own words, his main theme on the perplexing riddles of philological studies of the West and the solutions presented by Khshnoom. While introducing the series, "The Zarthosti Religions Studies" in the very second issue of Parsi Avaz of 13-7-1947 (Vol. I, Issue no.2), he wrote:

Since some decades many strifes and conflicts are going on in the Parsi Community regarding religious guidance. It is the ill luck of the Parsi Community that **the complete writings of the Zarthosti Din has not been saved.** Whatever religious writings are saved in the Irani languages like Avesta, Pahalvi and Pazend, they are very difficult to comprehend. Whatever Avesta writings are saved with us, they are composed of the Manthra-vaani related to the holy Kriya's (kinetics, rites and ceremonies), and Prayers. The difference between the method of studies of Avesta writings, which is vogue today, and the method

followed in previous Iran is as wide as between the sky and the earth.

Due to its ill luck the community has fallen on such evil day after the fall of the Empire, that whatever grammar of Avesta was there in the land of Iran, the Comm has not got it in its perfect state. Avesta Grammar we have to-day has been devised by the western savants with their attainable proficiency, with the help of their knowledge of philology.

The other languages relating to religious writings are Paharvi and Pazend. Paharvi is extremely difficult to decipher, and the laws for deciphering it and its related original complete grammar are not available to the present day scholars. The mode of deciphering Paharvi and its grammar have been formulated in a crippled way by the Western Pandits through their knowledge of philology. Pazend is also a very difficult language to understand and its original grammar is not saved with us.

So, the unfortunate plight of the Zarthosti Study is that on the one hand, we do not have all the complete writings of our Religion, and on the other hand, we do not have full equipments like grammar etc. in its original complete form to decipher them.

The Zarathosti religious study has thus fallen into the hands of the philological savants, in these bungled circumstances. **We are and shall ever be grateful to certain savants of the Western Philology, who have rendered great services to the Zarthosti Din and Parsi Comm. It is however predominantly necessary to present before the Parsi world the limitations and deficiencies of the Zarthosti studies made through the school of philology.** Today all the Zarthosti scholars are the products of the philological school, and some of such Parsi scholars, having a revolting psyche and material view point so babble and gabble that to expose the hollowness of their gibberish is a service to the Community. In spite of being fully aware of the limitations and deficiencies of the philological studies, some scholars having material and non-spiritual view points are so self-boasting as if they have understood Zarthosti Religion from one end to the other. To give an idea that such a boast is thoroughly hollow and baseless, **it is necessary to make the Parsi Comm aware of the history of how the philological study began and how the very learned leading philologists have expressed varying opinions at different times.**

With this aim in mind, we have thought it our duty to present a short account of the history of our present-day religious studies."

And thus begins this wonderful series right from the second issue of Parsi Avaz and continued for forty weeks. What a treasure of materials, data, facts, information and scholarly equipments collected from the Western school itself! The very first article refers to one of the greatest savants of Western Studies - **Karl Geldner**, gives him glowing tributes and quotes his words to the effect that **understanding Avesta is so extremely difficult and requires so many conditions that only the coming Soshyos will be able comply with the stringent requirements.**

It was for the first time that the philological school was presented to the Community with its profound limitations and perplexing deficiencies and yet with deep respect for its savants, scholars and professors. Dr. Framroz Chiniwalla places before us the entangled and broken pieces of the Western studies and then converts them into a beautiful Kaleidoscopic pattern by casting the divine beams of Khshnoom on them.

(Parsi Pukar Jan.-Feb.-Mar. 2004 - Vol. 9; No. 3)

DEFICIENCIES OF WESTERN STUDIES ARE IMPOSSIBLE TO BE CURED TILL THE ARRIVAL OF SOSHYOS, SAYS KARL GELDNER.

A Parsi, Pestonji is walking on the road. He tries to keep his chest inflated and stature upright. It seems to be an effort to maintain a haughty air around him. He has a proud "Wiser-than-than" look. A keen passer-by would, however, gauge that his pride is hollow; he has a streak of doubt and confusion lurking in his eyes; but he tries to brush them aside by an "I can't be wrong" flash. At times he suddenly loses his proud confidence: something within him shouts "What do you know, you fool?" He struggles to ignore and erase out that shout; for a few moments his stature stoops forward. But he thinks he has conquered the diffidence and switches back to the haughty air.

Pestonji was clad in a well tailored suit. His right hand was in the pocket. There he had some small pebbles like we see on sandy sea shores. His fingers were constantly playing with the pebbles, a childhood habit perhaps.

He saw his Gujjoo friend Jayantibhai on the road coming towards him. They met. Exchange of pleasantries. And Jayantibhai could not help asking.

"Hey Pesi! what is in your pocket you are fiddling with?"

"Nothing Jani, some small stone pebbles. Just an old habit", said Pestonji and took out some.

Jayantibhai looked at them. His eyes expanded to their extreme in utter amazement. He blurted out a cry of astounded surprise. He was a jeweller.

"Pesi!" he shouted, "these are not pebbles, these are raw diamonds! Do you know you are a millionaire....?"

I am not telling the story any further..... But that is the plight of mostly all Parsis. They have diamonds and they don't know! They have their Zarthoshti Din which is a mine of infinite diamonds - infinite in quantity and in lustre! yet they walk on haughtily as if they have all the knowledge and wisdom of the world! talking all kinds of nonsenses like our Religion is so simple and so beautiful and teaches fine virtues like tolerance and to eat drink and be merry in life and in Gahambar's. Zarthoshti Din! Beautiful? Yes! But Beauties are never "Simple". (That is why the beauty parlours boom.) A tree is surely beautiful but not at all simple. All kinds of curious dances are vibrating within every branch, every leaf and every particle of the tree and nobody knows how and WHY. The tree breathes; the gases it breathes have a divine dance between their molecules, and water in the tree and the rays of the sun falling on it.

The scientists call this dance in their dry prosaic way as "Photosynthesis" and sugar factories. But they don't know and understand the process. They don't know why sugar is sweet. They don't know, as the Saints know that the sweetness of sugar is equated with love of God and the singing of birds, and the lips of "Maashooq", the Lover, the personification of God, and the words of Mystical poetry.

Virtues in Zartnoshti Din? That is not just a tongue – babble: "Manashni, Gavashni, Kunashni." These Good thoughts words and Deeds" are classified in seven virtues, each of which is an "Ameshaspend," that is, the ray, the channel of Ahura's Divine Light and Energy which is a living conscious Divine Entity. But who knows? And who cares?

The ignorance of we, the Parsis in the matters of our Din is a pathetic and heart-breaking phenomenon. The root of our threatened extinction lies here. We are not those Parsis, who were described to Jaadi-Rana. We are fast losing our faith in our spiritual and mystical Institutions, and the Satanic forces are taking full advantage of the situation.

The blame for this lies at several places and points; but one of the chief causes of the decay in our faith is the advent of the Western studies of our Din and the unhealthy response and reliance of we, the Pasis on those studies. It is obvious that the West is not equipped to study and experience spirituality. That is not the West's fault. 500 years back their thinking started taking a sharp turn towards materialism and Godlessness. By the time the founder of the Western studies, Anqetil Dupero, arrived in India on 24 the February 1755, the ideas of mechanical universe without a divine design and intervention, were gathering momentum. This culminated, in the 19th century, in what is termed as Newtonian- Cartesean-Darwinian paradigm, which can

be paraphrased simply as throwing away of God and humanness- Eshvar ane Ensaniat.

In the British days, the Parsis were enamoured by the white of the West (subject of course to some glaring exceptions like Dadabhoy Navroji, Bhicaiji Cama and Others). So the Western Studies were greatly honoured and tried to be imbibed in the Din. The result was disastrous. A group called reformists or liberals or progressives shot out. They tried their best to kill the faith of the Parsis. **The Bombay Parsi Panchayat** strenuously opposed them and Jame Jamshed daily carried on powerful crusades against them till about the middle of the 20th century. **They have now joined hands to encourage those faithless and malign the faithful. 'Jame' daily had closed down and the weekly as at present is Tamb-Dhon – Tamb-Dhon.**

This did not happen to other Religions. The Hindu, Islam, and Jews, were not swayed away by the Satanic sweep. They knew and were and are very much conscious of the incapacity and incapability of the Western religious studies to understand spirituality and spiritual experiences. But alas! we the Parsis had no capacity to be out of the western material clutches.

As our readers are well aware Ilm-e-Khshnoom arrived in the first decade of the 20th century. The hollowness of the western studies was brought to the psyche of the Community by the then stalwarts Phiroze Masani and Chiniwalla brothers. Phiroze himself was a star scholar of western studies and he succeeded to a great extent in his Himalayan task. When Parsi Avaz arrived, Dr. Framroze Chiniwalla started his series of Articles on the western studies, right from the 2nd issue. (13.7.1947).

In this humble Parsi Pukar's issue of Jan., Feb., Mar. 2004 (Vol a-3) we have seen how Dr. Framroze began his campaign against the western studies. This is his first of the five series on the subject; Its title – Zarthoshti Dharamabhyas. Mai philology ne Marafat thi dharma sahitya samji shakai nahi." **"The Study of Zarthoshti Religion. Religious Writings Cannot Be Comprehended Through Philology Alone".**

In that Issue of Parsi Pukar, some extracts from Framroze's Introduction to the series are given. The points he urged are:

(i) we have only a very small part of our sacred writings.

(ii) we do not have full and complete equipments for the study of Avesta.

(iii) The philological savants of the West have done great service in the field of our sacred writings, but their study have serious limitations and deficiencies.

(iv) The Western Studies have no solid foundations. Their history is filled of varying opinions. The sole reliance on them has led many a Parsi scholars to utter faithlessness in the spiritual institutions and disciplines of Din.

(v) It is therefore necessary to acquaint the Parsi Community with the history and content of the Western Studies.

Dr. Chiniwalla begins his series with views and opinions of Dr. Karl Geldner (17.9.1853/9.2.1929) of Germany. He was an erudite savant, and pioneer of the Western Studies. He had gone very deep in his philological and historical researches of the Avesta Scriptures and Pahalvi writings, as also comparative studies of other relevant languages like Sanskrit. In 1904, an article was published in a Book: "Avesta, Pahalvi and Ancient Persian Studies. In the Honour of the Late Shams-UI-Ulma Dastur Peshotanji Beheramji Sanjana M. A., Ph. D". Those were the days when such Volumes were published in honour of erudite scholars who themselves had done some monumental work in the field of the oriental studies. Various eminent scholars used to contribute to such Volumes.

The very first article in the said Dastur Peshotanji Sanjana Memorial Volume is an English translation of an 82 pages long German article written by Karl Geldner. The title of the article was "Avesta Literature". The translator was D. Makichan. Geldner gives a very brief history of the word Avesta and Avesta Language followed by the topics: "idea, Contents and Analysis of the Awesta", "The manuscripts of the Awesta", "The Present Awesta and the Awesta under the Sasanids," "Elements and Character of the Awesta," "The Gathas", "History and Origin of the Awesta", "The History of the Awesta Research," and **"Aids to Awesta Research and Its method"**. The most instructive and enlightening of all is the last section. It contains an excellent account of the Western Researches, the methods applied by them and most importantly the Himalayan difficulties, perplexities and dilemma facing the arduous task of translating and interpreting the Awesta Writings. From the very inception of the Western Awesta studies, different camps sprang out in Europe each advocating a different method and contending that the other camps were wrong. The main wrangle amongst these wranglers was what should be made the standard criterion of the Awesta translations and contents -

Pahalvi, Pazend, old Persian or Sanskrit. Of these Pahalvi and Sanskrit were the main contenders. "The term" (Pahalvi) "is generally applied to the language of Iran during the Parthian" (248 B.C. to 3rd Century A.D) and "Sassanian" (226-641 A.D) "periods, and of the Zoroastrians in Iran up to the end of the 9th century," so says Dasturji Hormazdiyar Mirza in his "Outlines of Parsi Hisotry" (1974- page 282). Pahalvi itself is a language of seven "hafteykhaan's". Dasturji Mirza says succinctly, "Pahalvi is written in a script of Armanian origin, and in the ideogrammatical system of writing. This Pahalvi Script is defective; it contains only 12 primary letters; and hence most of these letters are polyphonous - one letter having more than one phonetic value". (ibid). This is comparable to C. A. T being read as d-o-g. (Amara khshnoom Fadaiona kanma : "Ahurmazd" ae Shabdne "Anhuma" tareke vanchi shakai chae.) Further, Dasturji Mirza says, "written Pahalvi is to some extent different from spoken Pahalvi". This is comparable to "viz" being read as "namely"!

Now with these almost insurmountable obstacles to read Pahalvi, how can we make it a key to understand Avesta? The deciphering key is much more complicated than the lock to be deciphered. (Comparable to: remedy is worse than the disease). So one School of scholarship dismissed Pahalvi as an ignorant ungrammatical babble. But how can you do that? The other School shouted; you cant dismiss Pahalvi only because you find it extremely difficult. Pahalvi was nearer to Avesta than our guesswork notions. Geldner in his alone article expresses this beautifully.

"A correct method of Avesta interpretation must aim at uniting these tendencies represented by Roth and Daremesteter respectively and at reconciling their contradictions. The traditional interpretation is not to be condemned in the lump because of the defects from which it suffers, nor are its mistakes to be accepted on simple trust. **The Avesta must be explained as an Iranian religious book, and not from the vague stand point of Indo-German linguistics. A thorough study of Pahalvi is indispensable. Pahalvi literature is a true aid to the knowledge of the Avesta.** Above all, we must endeavour to distinguish the cases in which **a firm tradition was still in existence** from those in which the scholast, by combination or etymological analysis endeavours to regain the lost or **dimly guessed meaning of the words.**

Who is better? You who are as far away from the Iranian Religion and traditions as the earth from the furthest galaxy, that 'you' or those who **lived IN them** for millenniums. You began in the 18th century; they were on earth for more than 10000 years.

An interesting phenomenon that occurred was that the insurmountable obstacles to follow Pahalvi led quite a large number of scholars to ignore (if not dismiss) Pahalvi and stick to Sanskrit. It was found that Avesta had a close affinity to Sanskrit and that the Comparative Philology had proved that they were sisters. A grammar was evolved for Avesta based on the Sanskrit grammar. Geldner accepts this unhesitatingly but points out that "the Iranian often took its own separate path in the evolution of meanings of words, and that quite the opposite of Sanskrit, and all etymology or comparison with Sanskrit must give way before clear facts or testimonies in the Iranian field". (ibid page 81)

One glaring example is that of the word 'Daeva In Avesta it conveys evil forrces; in Sanskrit divine forces. Straight opposites! This has led to several conjectures, which are startling and even unreasonable on the existing facts. Geldner has given several examples where the Iranian and the Sanskrit etymologies are contrary or divergent to each other.

In short, translating and interpreting Avesta is like trying to reach Everest in thin cotton clothes without any food parcel. To arrive even at faintly reasonable conclusions requires several conditions to be fulfilled, and Geldner has no hesitation to declare that **those conditions are impossible to be satisfied.** He has enumerated several of them, and at the end of his article he declares in sad but beautiful words:

"It will perhaps be difficult for any single interpreter to satisfy all the conditions above specified. Pahalvi assumes a complete acquaintance with modern persian and a knowledge of semitic languages. Avesta philology sits as it were between two stools. **The coming Soshyos, who will really explain the whole Avesta to us must unite in himself all these requirements. If Anquetil's prophecy holds true, we must, however, wait a long time for him".**

Aahh! what a way of putting forth a difficult truth! And what a genius Framroze Chiniwalla is to begin his series by picking out the above words of no less a savant than Karl Geldner from a remote corner of Western literature on the subject. The above words were published by Geldner in 1904, but are true to the core till today. Framroze has quoted them in 1947. Those heavy obstacles not only persist but are aggravated. The Gathas, which some profound scholars, and some hollows like (GAC of U. S. A (who boasts themselves as

"disciples" of the late Dr. Dhalla,) declare to be "the only Zoroastrian thought", are now more entangled maze of variant and even contradictory translations, interpretations, and commentaries than it was in 1904 And that is why Framroze says in his first article:

"In the Western studies of our religious writings, the large pitfalls, distances, and this kind of defects, will never be cured, howsoever further the study of philology advances".

That is now established. It will be a long time before Soshyos arrives to cure the defects, says Geldner. Soshyos has not arrived. But do I make a humble statement, after half a century of deep study, thought and experience that **Ilm-e-Khshnoom has arrived?** The picture of the Din and its 1/20th writings left with us is so consistent and so revealing that you can't help accepting it, if you make a thorough, objective and unprejudiced study of the existing writings of Ilm-e-Khshnoom.

(to be continued)

(Parsi Pukar Jul.-Aug.-Sep. 2004 - Vol. 10; No. 1)