

# "PORNOGRAPHIC" TRANSLATION OF GATHA HA 53-7 BY PROF. HUMBACH.

## DON'T BLAME HIM, BLAME OURSELVES FOR PUTTING THE WESTERN STUDIES ON HIGH PEDASTAL.

### Their Gathic Translations - a Riddle Wrapped In a Grammatical Mystery Inside a Linguistic Enigma!

Our brother scribe "Deen Parast" has, in its Nov.Dec - 1997 Issue, come out with a first page article headed as "**Blasphemy in the Name of Zarathushtra**". It expresses a shock and distress at the pronographical translation of Gatha Ha 53-7 rendered by Humbach, a German scholar of many academic honours. The article reproduces the translation, a plane reading of which is surely capable of shocking the modesty and sensibility of a common Parsi. The Gathic passage is translated as referring to the 'penis', its "yoking at the bottom of the (female) thighs" and "slipping back and down", and this act is described as of "the most faithful one"; and further adorned by a warning that "(if) you abandon this sacrament, then woe will be your last word". Outrageous ! Isn't it? Deen Parast laments in its subheading of the article: "Will the Parsi community ever wake up from its Spiritual Slumber?"

But just hold on and ponder. As the question itself suggests, the slumber is self imposed ..... by heavy doses of sleeping pills. The first dose was gulped down when we, the Parsis, gave unduly exaggerated importance to the Western studies of our Religion, in the last century. The very foundations of these studies were anything but Religion. The mechanical laws of Newton, the Godless evolution of Darwin, the sex saturated psychology of Freud, the licentious sexual behaviour, and the arrogant fad of the supremacy of the human intellect, all led the Westerners far away from God and Religion. After all what is Religion? It is the divine declaration of God's existence and the commandments of life to be lived by the humans as prescribed by God's Prophets and Mystics. But what is the thinking of the Western scholars? Let me call the most disillusioned scholar who was extremely well versed in these scholastic studies, the **late Dr. I.J.S.**

#### **Taraporewala:**

"Western Scholars today teach us that religious thought has been born in ignorance and that early religious have been "gropings in the dark".

They have called the early religion of Iran and India mere "babblings of Infant humanity". In their opinion religion advances and becomes purer and higher with the advancement of material culture and scientific discovery. The truth as regards religious thought is the exact opposite. **However wide and deep the material and the scientific knowledge of today may be, still in true spiritual knowledge and in the matter of "the Secret of the Self" the majority of our modern teachers are but Infants.** They can scarcely comprehend the radiance of the inner Illumination and Divine Intuition with which our Rishis and Prophets have approached these fundamental truths of Life". (Page 6, "The Songs of Zarathushtra" by I.J.S. Taraporewala).

So the very postulates on which these studies of religion are built up are, by definition, irreligious. They have an almost atheistic air of a pretentiously superior ego. They call themselves "critical scholars" and take great pride in finding out the mistakes' and 'faults' of the Manthra composers, and their compositions. The situation is like a child trying to find fault in a huge high flying 747 aircraft with the help of a small toy aeroplane in its hands.

#### **WHAT IS A PARADIGM?**

When the Parsi Religion was dragged in this bottomless pit, a hell was let loose. Certain paradigms were accepted as truths. (Paradigm means a belief taken to be true at one time but later found to be false. During its truth-days everybody presumes it to be an absolute truth, infallible and unimpeachable, and works on it to "prove" it more and more. All arguments and even facts going against it are branded as unscientific. However the pressure of the contrary facts and materials reaches a point when the paradigm breaks, and a new theory emerges, which also after a time breaks. This phenomenon goes on occurring in physical sciences. Thomas Kuhn, a historian-philosopher of Science pointed this out in 1976 in his "Structure of Scientific Revolution," and caused an uproar in the whole scientific community).

One of the paradigms of the Western studies of the Parsi Religion is eloquently set out in the above words of Dr. Taraporewala. That one led to another, namely that the Gatha alone are the only genuine Zoroastrianism; the rest of the Avesta is 'later', wrong and even fraudulent - (courtesy Ilya Gershevitch, whom we will meet later). I will not enter into the philological, etymological, linguistical, historical and geographical evidence leading to this fragmentation of our Religion. All that I say for the present is that judged on the standard of the rules of evidence in the fields of science, law and common sense all this ".....cal" evidence is altogether inadequate to indicate or imply, much less prove, this fragmentation. This paradigm is not broken even after 100 years.

## **GENUINE BUT NOT AT ALL CERTAIN!**

But in the present context, another vital question arises. Having known from these high-brow professors that the Gatha alone constitute the genuine Zoroastrianism, we ask, "Very well, our lofty sires! We presume what you say. What is then the message of the Gatha?" This innocent question opens a Pandora's box. Any such exalted Professor, if he is sincere enough, will stammer at your question; because there are dozens of translations of the Gatha, which are not only divergent, but conflicting and antagonistic to each other! Any student in search of truth will ask, "You say Gatha alone is right and when I ask what do they contain, you are at sixes and seven with each other as to the very meanings of the Gathic words. Do you call this scientific? **How do I accept the Gatha as the only genuine message of my Prophet when you are violently uncertain about their very meanings? What sort of study is this? How can you call it "scientific?"**

Just look how another of those very scholars, Mary Boyce, describes the tragedy while writing about the Gatha :

"What is unusual in the case of Zoroastrianism is the wide diversity of opinion **as to what their prophet originally taught**, let alone how this should be understood to-day; **and the blame for this confusion lies largely with the West and the ruthless self-confidence of nineteenth-century scholars and missionaries** ..... Many Zoroastrians, in a literary age, long for a simple, noble, lucid scripture on which to base a **unified** faith, and this **is a longing, which seems doomed to remain unfulfilled**, because of the immense antiquity of their tradition".

-Much obliged-, as we lawyers say when a witness makes a fruitful admission. What Mary Boyce says is that not only we do not know what the Gatha teaches but we will never know! Our craving to know "is doomed to remain unfulfilled!" That means all this tom tom about the Gatha has no sense. **Every scholar worth the name would make a "new" translation, like the old Parsi Irani's tea shops in Bombay.** If there is a Kyani Restaurant already, the other will name it "New Kyani Restaurant", and advertise a 'new' pudding "you will never get elsewhere". There are dozens of "new" translations, emerging from a desire to obtain University honours or satisfy one's ego; one offers a sweet honey cake and another a chilly pancake in the same passage.

My apologies to this scholasticism, (in which I have dabbled since decades). But I am only presenting the facts. I am just wondering, with my life-long acquaintance with modern science, and law (which is my bread, butter and a little jam), how can it be scientific to say that such and such a thing is genuine, adopt it, shun all others and then say we are not at all certain about what that thing is; it has a dozen meanings not merely supplementary or divergent but at several places antagonistic to each other?

For instance, to some scholars Ha 51-12 talks of homosexuality while to a few it talks of salvation. Taraporewala reads reincarnation in 51-12 read with 49-11 others are violently against it. The word "Aodarashcha" in 51-12 means "abdominal part" to Mills, "cold" to Moulton, "destroys" to Harlez! Spiegel and Kangaji omit this word in their translations. Look at the following translations of third line of 51-12 :

Kanga : "They (both) with their impious strength indeed annoy Him (Zarathushtra)."

Moulton : "and when there came to him also (Zarathushtra's) two steeds shivering with cold".

You would wonder at the annoyance of the Prophet in one, and the coming of two shivering steeds to Him in the other, and what on earth is the message in the line! I shall not bother my readers with further illustrations of this bewildering plight of the Gathic translations. I would just mention a few passages : Ha 28-10. 29-1, 31-3 (the banner of conversion fanatics), 49-11, ..... **There is the whole spectrum: difference, divergence, variation, discrepancy, conflict, contradiction and antagonism spread all over the translations.**

In this scenario, now arrives the climax: Humbach's translation of 53-7, which does sound pornographical. This is a very apt illustration of the twists and tortures imposed upon the Holy Gatha by "the ruthless self

confidence" of the west, (as Mary Boyce puts it). But you have not to blame Humbach. He adopts the same methodology as all the translators have adopted; and we Parsis having elevated the Western studies to a pompous height cannot now complain if the last product is garnished with a little pornography. Brother scribe, Deen Parast, has gone wrong in attributing sadistic pleasure to Prof. Humbach. He is too good to derive such 'pleasure'. All that he has done is to apply the rules of the scholastic game to the passage and has arrived at a result in accordance with his own understanding. It is unjust to attribute motives to him.

**But the most amusing part of the story is that he has now changed the translation**, it is said, under the joint authorship of himself and one P.R. Ichaporia. The changed version now does not refer to penis or to the sexual act at all. The "yoking at the bottom of the (female) thighs" is substituted by "keeping off disease from the depth of his body".

"Slipping back and down" is reincarnated to "the deceitful one's going back and down".

**Now, this is the real climax of the western method. The same translator can change the translation from chalk to cheese or bread to brick, if need be; the need here being the furore amongst the Parsis.**

This is an excellent pointer to the whole system, methodology and mechanics of the western studies. So vulnerable are these holy scriptures in the hands of the scholars of the system that they can be contorted, distorted and bent to any meaning of the professor's choice, which, in turn, is based upon his own individual inclinations, prejudices, guess-works and conjectures. You can find anything from the Gatha. Name it and a professor can well oblige. Reincarnation? Conversion? Intellectual Supremacy? Psychology? Seance? Vegetarianism? Heterosex? Homosex? Choose your meaning and then twist the words through some grammatical jargon, shift the context and syntax, add a good dose of speculation; and garnish the whole preparation with pompously scholastic words, and your dish is ready for consumption. An excellent palatable performance!

I shall now take my reader further in the jungle of the Western methodology through this very passage : Ha 53-7; how Prof. Humbach has arrived at his translation; how easily he has changed it; and then what is the solution to this Gathic riddle wrapped in a grammatical mystery inside a linguistic enigma. (Apologies to Churchill).

**- K. Navroz Dastoor**

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# THE CLOSED SYSTEM OF THE WESTERN STUDIES OF THE PARSI RELIGION.

DONT BE UNFAIR TO PROF. HUMBACH, AN ERUDITE PRODUCT OF THE SYSTEM.

FULL MANY A GEMS OF SULMAN RASHIDI - SITUATIONS HAVE COME AND GONE!

The Western studies of the Parsi Religion originated three centuries back in Europe. It was the time when the mystical sciences and practising saints were going underground. The world was to be understood only through the five senses and the common sense of the non-saintly humans. The air started becoming heavily laden with the "scientific" arrogance.

The European study of the Parsi holy scriptures could not escape this onslaught. It was collecting a lot of high-brow conjectures and wild guess-works as also indignities and even insults towards our religion.

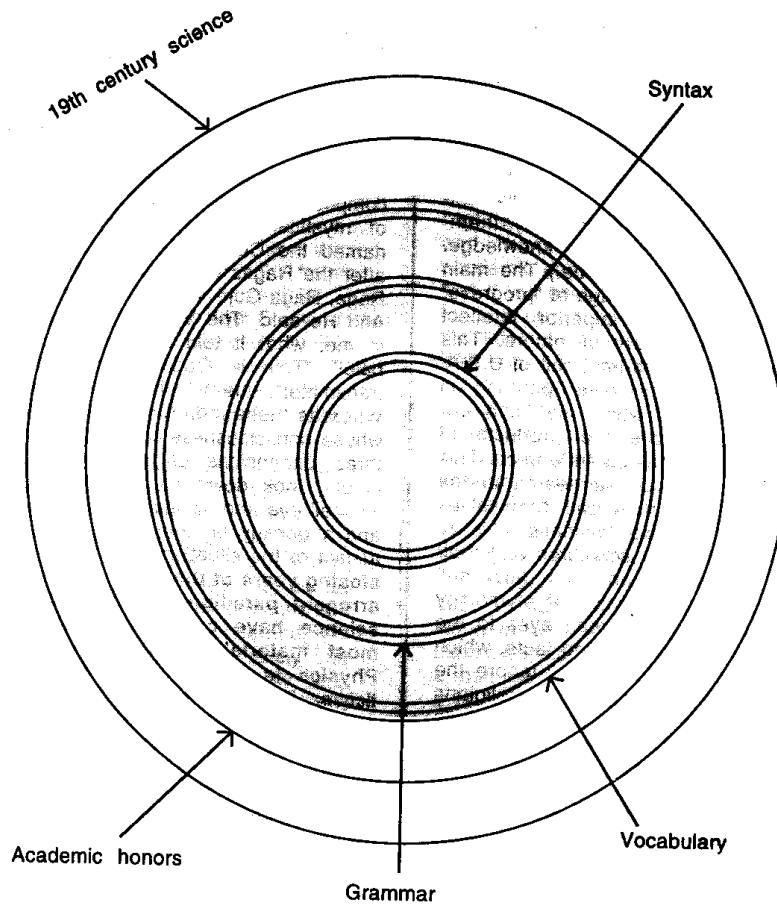
## FRAGMENTATION MANIA

One of the paradigms the European studies developed was the fragmentation of what they thought to be the Zoroastrian doctrines. The Gatha were the original thought of Zoroaster. The non-Gathic Avesta was not only 'later' but contrary and even fraudulent to the original thought. The first generation of the 19th century scholars had painstakingly collated all Avesta which were preserved by the Mobeds, Dasturs and Priests since millenniums. Those older scholars translated the non-Gathic Avesta and Pahalvi and Pazend writings with the same zeal as the Gatha, which was (and is) in fact a part of a marathon Scripture Yazashney. However, as the fragmentation mania solidified, more scholars concentrated on the Gatha and it became a fashion amongst them to come out with the new, newer and newest Gathic translations, each of which was bewilderingly different, divergent and even contrasting to the others. Something like a pattern and a system developed on how, within a circle of set parameters, to differ with each other (sometimes violently).

## A SMALL LIST OF PAST BLASPHEMIES

Prof Humbach's translation of Gatha Ha 53-7 is just a product of that system. To charge him of deriving sadistic pleasure and to raise a hue and cry after being so much lured by the Western Studies since two centuries, is unfair and unjust to the venerable 77 years old Professor of many academic honours within the system. The situation, comparable with Sulman Rushdil's Satanic Verses, have arisen much more frequently since 1900's; for instance, when **Max Muller called our Prophet "a purely mythical name"** (Chips from a German Workshop Vol11-page474-Longmans, 1914) or when **Nyberg called Zoroaster a kind of Shaman or a Mongol sorcerer who intoxicated himself with hemp fumes**"; or when Mary Boyce wrote that the word "**Khaetvodath**" in "Jasa-Mey Avanghahey Mazda", a part of our daily Kushti prayer, **was an interpolation, because it meant "next of kin marriages" being an alleged custom of cohabitation with mothers or daughters or sisters**, vide the "authority" of Herodotus and Xanthos, the Greeks; ("Zoroastrians" by Mary Boyce p.53, which has a photograph of a ritual performing priest [may even be a 'high-priest'] on the cover); or when Bartholomae wrote that non-Gathic Avesta was diametrically opposed to the original thought of Zoroaster and contained what was "rejected and even combated" by Him - ("Indo Iranian Studies in the honour of Dastur Darab Sanjana" - page 3 – Kegan Paul - 1925); or when Ilya Gerchivich wrote to the effect that **the so called later non Gathic Avesta writers propagated the non-Zoroastrian doctrines in the form of a dialogue between Ahura Mazda and Zoroaster to induce fraudulent authenticity to their false teachings**. Compared to all this, prof Humbach's 53-7 is nothing so blasphemous. If in a Gatha dealing with marriage, sex is referred to rather picturesquely, what is wrong? Do not the two go together? The point is that we were wrong right from the start in pedestalising the western scholars and now to raise a cry against a bit of what we think (wrongly) as pornography sounds a bit hollow. Let us then delve into the system of which Prof. Humbach's translation of 53-7 is a highly evolved product.

It is a closed system surrounded by 5 main circles, as shown in the figure. We may call them walls within walls. Let me first outline the general concept of the figure.



The first outermost circle represents the scientific paradigms of the 19th century. All other circles are within this wall. This means, there is no room for anything going beyond common sense as normally understood. Any mystical truth or doctrine is taboo.

The second orbital wall is the scholars' craving for academic honours. It is more a search for University distinctions than truth.

Each of the third, fourth and fifth circles is made up of three sub-circles. The main congregations are Vocabulary, Grammar and Syntax. The three subcircles of each congregation represent Sanskrit, Pahalvi and Tradition, described as "the foundations". What is meant to be conveyed is that there are three limbs to a translation: Vocabulary, Grammar and Syntax and each of them has their origin or base in Sanskrit, Pahalvi and Tradition in varying degrees. Some scholars would rely mainly on Sanskrit roots and grammar, some on Pahalvi and some on tradition. Let us now elaborate on all the eleven circles.

### "THE INFIDEL HALF CENTURY"

The outermost circle consists of the scientific paradigms, which flourished in the 19th century. Dr. I.J.S. Taraporewala has aptly described the scholarly psyche on page 6 of his book "The Songs of Zarathushtra". He points out that Western scholars treat Religion as "babblings of infant humanity" and "gropings in the dark"; in fact they themselves are infants in true spiritual knowledge. (Full quotation, in the last issue.) The main paradigm is that ours is an age of "progress" and we have by our superior intellect understood the machinery of nature. This is the main thrust of Jafri-Irani cult of U.S.A. Ours is a mechanical universe operating on certain laws, most of which we have understood. Religions are the products of primitive thinking. God is on sufferance. This arrogance has so much permeated in the system that the scholars call themselves "critical scholars" whose business it is to find faults with the holy scriptures and their composers by relying on their own self manufactured psuedo science of etymology and grammar. They close their eyes to the spiritual

and mystical truths and facts, which often jump up before them They ignore the truth that the holy scriptures of all Religions have mystical meanings, often on the face of them. **There is a donkey standing in the midst of an ocean called Zareh Vourukash in Yazashney - Ha 42. There is somebody who asks for a reward of ten pregnant mares and one camel. They say the Prophet Zarathushtra Himself begs for these animals.** (Yaz. Gatha Ha 44-18). (I 'heard a very learned and very funny discussion on this in a seminar very scholastically named. "Gatha Colloquium" (London 5-11-1993 to 7-11-1993). In a Vedic hymn a Rishi asks 'Agni' for "a horse-form cow-in-front gift". For the Western Scholars these are to be secretly or openly laughed away.

### MAX-MULLERIAN "FROM INSULT TO AGONY"

One of them, the great Max Muller expressed his wonder "how the Sacred Books of the East should, by the side of so much that is fresh, natural, simple, beautiful and true contain so much that is not only unmeaning, artificial and silly, **but even hideous and repellant**". He said, he felt "quite unable to account" why there was in the Upanishads, the holy scriptures of the great Hindu Dharma, **"a vast amount of what we can only call meaningless jargon"**. (S.B.E. Vol I, (xii); XV, xx). Poor fellow, nurtured in the 19th century scientific paradigms, he was completely oblivious to the truth that the holy scriptures are not of ordinary human origin. They are Mantric compositions with not one but several levels of mystical meanings. Why Guru Nanak named the Chapters in His Granth Saheb after the Ragas of Hindustani music like Sri Raga, Raga Gujri, Raga Tilang, is a mystery. And He said "The Voice of my lord poured in me; what it told me I shall tell you O Lalo!" "This is God's word, I am only a transmitter", the Prophets and Rishis say. Whereas these mortal men called "scholars" whose consciousness cannot go beyond the three dimensions of length, breadth and height, look down on the Mantras with a 'critical' eye and wonder why should a camel and a donkey be there! The most dubious aspect of the situation is that **to-day in the closing years of the 20th century all those arrogant paradigms of the 19th century science have crumbled to pieces. The most material branch of science viz. Physics is knocking the door of mysticism.** Empirical science has come to an end and has entered the hazy realm of guesses and speculations. **Even a speck of dust defies human understanding.** Yet the Western studies of the Parsi Scriptures is rotting in the same mire of the 19th century insolence towards Religion, Mysticism and Spiritual Truths.

### GIMMICS OF THE ACADEMICIA

The second circle inside the first one is **the scholars' craving for academic honors and university degrees.** They study our Scriptures not to enlighten us (or any body else) on the spiritual knowledge or the way of life revealed or taught therein. The main (almost sole) aim is to earn an academic distinction of doing something "new". In the field of empirical sciences, it is not easy to get a Ph.D; one has to work hard in the laboratory and on the table with existing facts and sometimes mathematical equations, to arrive at some new discovery or invention. But not with such subjects as the translation of an old holy Scripture or its interpretation. There, all that you require is some speculations and surmises different from your predecessors. If the language of the scripture is antique and not alive, the scope is ample. The Gatha offers tremendous field in this direction. The academic exercise can be done by 100 people and each will have a 'new' translation. The older generation of Bartholomae, Darmesteter, Geldner, Guthrie, Haug, Justi, Mills, Moulton is no more. The new generation of Humbach, Gullemin, Hinz, Lommel, Insler have arrived. The following words of scholar of this fraternity: Hans -Peter-Schmidt from his article, "Old and New Perspectives in the Study of the Gathas" in Indo Iranian Journal, 21 (1979) 83-115 very succinctly picturises the situation. The article is in the nature of a review of Insler's translation of the Gatha published in 1975.

"For more than half a century Gathic studies were under the spell of an 'authoritative' translation, that of Bartholomae (1905). It is true that his views on matters of interpretation were not unanimously accepted, but as far as the basic grammatical, syntactic and semantic matters are concerned, his translation was challenged rarely and then only in details. Accordingly, little progress was achieved **until Humbach (1959) showed how unsound the foundations of Bartholomae's translation were in many respects.** By systematically searching for internal parallels in the Gathas themselves, the later Avesta and the Veda he was able to put the literal translation on a much firmer basis. If his work had less resonance and impact than it deserves, this is due to a certain lack of sense of content. Thus it had little influence on the subsequent translation of Hinz (1961), and practically none on that of Lommel (1971).

It is only with Insler's work that Humbach's pioneering effort is taken up and pushed further."

The old brother Schmidt says that **it was Humbach who in 1959 showed that the foundations of all**

**the older translations were unsound in many respects.** All the previous translations were not on as firm a basis as Humbach's. Yet the later translators Hinz and Lommel were not affected by his firmer base. It was Insler who pushed it further.

#### **NEW LAMPS FOR OLD AD INFINITUM!**

Having thus virtually dismissed the previous translations, and commended Insler's 'pushing further' Humbach's 'pioneering effort', Schmidt further on **in this article itself highlights the differences between Insler and Humbach themselves!** That is the academic game going on. And it is obvious that it will never end. There is ample scope for any upcoming scholar to find fault with the latest foundations. The 'new' will grow 'old' soon. Already cracks are being shown in Humbach-Insler (HI) foundations. The paradigm game continues. HI will be displaced by some FIsome day. The players of this game have not to bother about what they are doing with the holy Manthric Book of the Parsi Religion. It is the Parsis who should bother and atleast stop looking to this white scholarship with awe.

The same Prof. Humbach with his 'new' 1959 foundations has given a 'new' translation of 53-7. And after remaining on the Gathic-translations' fluid book for three and a half decades, it is suddenly changed - it is said - jointly with one P.R. Ichapurriaa who has a marketing management business doctorate. He must be a good salesman to sell to Prof. Humbach the idea of changing the translation of 53-7. Because the new changed translation seems to shake a little some of the "new" foundation of Humbach himself and bring in some of the old Bartholomae foundations. I remember, some discussion was held at the 1993 London Gatha colloquium on the word 'penis' in 53-7 when the said P.R. Ichapurriaa had shown some elation at the word and Prof Ilya Gershevitch was all jubilation for it. Having learnt the meaning once, he now insists that 'Azush' means 'penis' and Humbach has wrongly changed it!

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# THE GATHIC TRANSLATIONS – A MAZE WITH ELEVEN CIRCLES

## PROF. HAMBACH'S FIRST TRANSLATION OF HA 53-7, A GRAND SPECIMEN.

The outermost circle, within which the whole of the Western studies of the Parsi Religion is based, consists of the scientific paradigms of the 19th century. We, the humans, have progressed from the primitive jungle tribal man to the present (now past) most advanced scientific culture. Our intellect is supreme. We have understood most of the laws of the great Godless machinery of the world we live in. That world of matter and life has come into existence by a series of accidents and chances. Life was a journey from one celled creature to the billions-celled formidable thinking man. "A pond of amoebae was converted to an academy of scientists". (Bernard shaw said this.) All religions arose out of primitive fear and primitive thinking. The Parsi Religion was one of them. Mystical truths were taboo. Nothing was 'secret' to science.

The second circle within the first is the urge for academic honours. Go on playing the academic game. Find out the new, newer and newest theories and 'foundations'. Subject a holy Scripture to all kinds of twists and tortures and go on "evolving" your ideas. Don't worry if chalk is changed to cheese, or bread to brick, or intense devotion to God to powerful homosexual passion. Don't bother even if we call a Prophet, living in the heart of a small community, a mythical figure or even a fume intoxicated sorcerer. That community is not only too lethargic to mind such insults but welcomes us! They send their Dasturs to our Universities to learn our abracadabra, and put up our photographs in their scholarly libraries and call us in their coffee-break-oriented seminars.

The two circles have within them three further inner circles, each of which is a congregation of three sub-circles. (The figure in the last issue.)

The three main circles are vocabulary, grammar and syntax, each of which has its foundations in three subcircles : Sanskrit, Pahalvi and Tradition.

**Vocabulary** means, meaning of words. The Western studies have developed a pseudo science of 'etymology', dealing with roots, sources and development or evolution of languages and words. ("Development" here does not necessarily mean from good to better; it can mean deterioration or corruption of words. The Western studies love to find "corruptions" in our Manthra Scriptures.)

This pseudo science of etymology has seemingly well-set rules. A student begins with them; but as he delves deeper, the rules begin to go haywire. The same word is given meanings, so divergent that the student stands aghast. What is the 'real' meaning? he may shout in exasperation. (Gradually he is acclimatised to the situation and later he himself may start giving his own "new" meanings and proudly add to the confusion.)

These diversions arise because the scholars adopt different foundations (as they call it). They are the three subcircles, Sanskrit, Pahalvi and Tradition. The three intermingle in varying degrees depending on the personal preference of a scholar.

Let us have a very brief account of the three foundations. **The first foundation, Sanskrit**, has as its axiom: the key to Avesta is the Veda; they are the two echoes of one and the same voice. A band of scholars followed the method of translating Gathic words on the basis of Vedic Sanskrit.

**The second foundation, Pahalvi**, was the spoken language of Sassanian times. Many Pahalvi writings have come down to us. But their present day reading is extremely difficult. The script contains only 12 primary letters. This means one word can be read in several different ways. There is a Pahalvi translation of the Gatha. Some say it is not a translation but a version. However, the first western translations of Avesta including the Gatha were founded on Pahalvi writings. In fact, but for the Pahalvi, the Western studies would not have had its take off. Yet, they began to ignore and even discard Pahalvi writings. Some went to the extent of saying that they were far away from the alleged original thought of Zoraster. The present day fashion is to be more Vedic than Pahalvi.

**The third foundation is Tradition.** It means the tradition which was and is being actually followed by the Parsis. The past following is reflected in Pahalvi writings. In fact, for most of the western scholars, tradition and Pahalvi are synonymous. Only a few have tried to get materials from the Parsi life actually lived in India; but there too the 19th century paradigms are not dropped. The spiritual and mystical aspects are conspicuously absent. **It is no exaggeration to say that the Western studies have so far proved itself entirely incapable of grasping the mystical truths embedded in our holy Scriptures including the Gatha. A thousand explorations in the huge volumes of these studies will not bring you an answer to the question: why is Ahoonvad Gatha chanted before the dead body of a Parsi, immediately before taking it to the Dokhma; and why are Havanim bells rung while chanting Gatha Ha 31-11 to 22 in the**



## **Yazashney ceremony; and what are the secret truths embedded in the question in Gatha 44-18 "How shall I be capable of receiving Thy award of ten pregnant mares and one camel?"**

The second main circle is **grammar**. Here, of the three foundations, Sanskrit, Pahlavi and Tradition, the first Sanskrit is predominant. They say that Avesta grammar seems to have been lost, and therefore, they made up an Avesta grammar based on Sanskrit, lamenting that there was no "Panini" in Avesta. Panini was the great grammarian of Sanskrit, who, according to one view, lived a few centuries before Christ. (But the Western Scholars are not aware that Panini systematized Sanskrit in 4000 "sutras" which were based upon the science of subtle non-physical vibrations, which is called "Staota Yasna" in Avesta, and that Panini's commentator, Patanjali, implied that Panini had composed the sutras in a state of trance ("samadhi"), a phenomenon infinitely far from the mental horizon of any Western scholar.)

The rules of this grammar, on their apparent tenor seem to be firm. But their application is as fluid as in the case of vocabulary. For instance, a word is often broken into parts and a rule of grammar is applied to a part, which gives a different meaning from the one which can be arrived at by not breaking the word. In short, the uncertainty factor is very much in operation here too.

The third main circle, **syntax**, is the most intriguing. Which word should go with which other, is the anxiety. Let me give a crude example. Read this sentence: "Jimi river Armin went mountain not left." How would you decipher the sense? Does it mean: Jimi went to river and Armin did not, because she was left at the mountain? Or was it Armin who went to the river? Who went? Who was left? Who, where? You can think out several possible meanings. That is the play of syntax. Think of the scope such a situation can offer to have dozens of very divergent meanings of one passage. A scholar will have his syntax according to his personal preference.

With these nine circles within the first two outermost circles, the scholars play their academic game. One scholar would emphasize one out of the three foundations and use the other two to support his meaning and interpretation of a passage. If the other two indicate a meaning contrary to what he desires to give, he ignores them or discards them or even criticises them. There is no particular reason to do so except that he prefers the meaning he has given. It thus becomes a matter of personal preference of each scholar. Preference is a powerful psychological phenomenon. It depends on numerous factors. The scholar may have a special theory or conjecture or speculation, for which he seeks support from the meaning of the word. It may even depend upon how he has been brought up by his parents or, as a physical scientist pointed out, the state of his digestion at the relevant time. He adopts a particular position and does not want to disturb it. He resists all theories going against his own.

### **IN THE JUNGLE OF 53-7.**

Having now gone around the eleven circles of the closed system, let us now turn to Gatha 53-7 and the scholarly tortures it has been subjected to.

We know, the scholars are numerous. We cannot meet each of them. I confine myself to a few of them and divide them into two very broad classes, so far as 53-7 is concerned. According to one class, the emphasis is on the words "Magahya" and "Mageym" occurring in the passage. The words relate to 'Magi', and according to Bartholomae and Taraporewala, they mean some kind of Brotherhood. The passage is stated to refer to some great or eminent act and task of the Magi, the saviour and contrasts it with untruth or deceit. But we will not go into the details of this class of translations. The other class is more relevant in the present context. The subject matter of the passage, according to this class of translations, is the carnal sexual passion, wicked lust, its control, admonition to the marrying couples, and a great reward awaiting them. Now if this be the theme, a reference to the sexual organs may not be out of place. There are two words in the passage said to be referring to the sexual organ: "Azush" and "Hakhtayao". The meanings assigned to Azush are:

- Kangaji : Greed (or Wicked lust)
- Poonegar : Passion
- Mills : Lustful desire (or) distorting venereal passion.
- Spiegel : Demon of Lust.
- Humbach : (Pre-furore meaning) penis.  
(Post-furore meaning) disease.

(The scholars of the other class namely, Bartholomae; Taraporewala, Moulton, Guthrie have given the meaning 'zeal;' Insler, "fervour".)

Humach's first meaning is novel and has created undue furore. It is undue, because the other word "Hakhtayao" has the direct meaning: "female sexual organ"! It is so used and meant in Vendidad, Pargarad 8, 58-59 and 9-21. Some scholars have given the meaning "thighs". (poonegar, Barth. Mills, Humbach). That, poonegar himself says, is an euphemism. In Vendidad pargarad 8, the word is used, not in any moral or figurative sense, but right in the anatomical sense. The passages 40 to 71 describe the running of Druj-e-

Nasu, the force of subtle pollution through the various parts of the body from head to toe and refer to the private parts of male and female specifically in paras 58-59.

Mills gives "Boonoi Hakhtayao" the meaning: "in the root of two thighs". He draws attention to Rig Veda X, 86, 16, where occur the words: "न सेशो यस्य रभ्यते न्तरा सङ्गुथ्या कृपत सेदीशो यस्य रोमशं निषेदुषो विजृम्भते ....."

After quoting these words, Mills writes:

"(I much regret allusion to indecencies).

'Sensual desire seated in the heart and in the sexual organ' is indicated" –

*Gathas by Mills page 615.*

In the translation by Ralph T.H. Griffith : "The Hymns of the Rig Veda," he omits the translation of the above Shloka 16 and also the Shloka 17 and states in the footnote:

"I pass over stanzas 16 and 17, which I cannot translate into decent English."

*(Page 509, 3rd Ed 1926).*

The days of Mills and Griffith were decent non-pornographical days. Mills apologises for indecency qua 53-7 and Griffith omits the translation of Rig Veda X-86-16 both on the ground of decency. But the present times bristle with pornography. Look at any newspaper, any film magazine or internet. Compared to them, Humach's first translation can hardly be termed pornographical. All it refers to is 'penis' and 'the bottom of the female thighs.' What has actually happened is that the translated words are arranged in such a syntax that the passage reads as if describing the actual sexual act. The words, "para cha mraochans aoracha" in the second line of 53-7 can well be translated as "moving before and behind" (Bahermgore Anklesaria); or "higher and lower" (Inslar); or "former and backward" (Harlez). Prof. Humbach in his anxiety to describe the act has given the meaning "slippings back and down".

I think it is high time, I must apologise profusely for crossing the line of decency. But I cannot help it. Parsis must know such tortuous treatments of their holy books. All this is not meant as an offence to, or a defence of, the venerable Prof. Humach; it is meant as an eye opener for we the Parsis who run after this westerly winded scholarship. Keep it at a reasonable distance and apply IIm-e-Khshnoom..... I am coming to that.

- K. Navroz Dastoor

***(Parsi Pukar – MARCH 1998 Vol. 3; No.9)***

## **DR. FRAMROZE CHINIWALLA'S KHSHNOOMIC TRANSLATION OF THE HOLY GATHA.**

### **ITS EXERTIONS AND ECSTASY.**

We have seen, through the fiasco of Gatha 53-7 what a mess the western studies of our Religion is in. Religion, for them is more of a philological and etymological exercise and a craving for academic honours than a quest for truth.

We have seen how these studies are wrapped in the scientific paradigms of the 19th century and how they are therefore far far away from the spiritual and mystical truths, which are the most essential ingredients of any Religion.

We have seen how the Gathic confusion is being increasingly worse confounded as some new 'scholars' arrive with their 'newer' translations.

We have seen how a scholar does not hesitate to twist and torture our holy scriptures to suit his personal preferences and fancies and to have academic honours. From Max Muller to Insler and beyond, the holy Gatha are treated with high-brow scholasticism, where in 1914 **Max Muller, relying on Darmesteter, said, "we have no longer any right to call Zoroaster the author, still less the writer of the Avesta, not even of its most ancient parts, the so called Gathas"** - (hiccups for Jafri-Irani Gatha-Alone-Cult); and Insler in 1975 suggested 'changes' in the text of Gatha to satisfy his own grammatical scholasticism, including (for instance) **the omission of the word "mazda" in Gatha 28-9** (page 26 of his book on the Gatha). (Try this with our Muslim friends: remove "Allah" from such and such a verse of the holy Quran, and see what happens.... Remember Sulman Rashidi?)

We have seen what an impossible task it is to try to understand the "original" message of Zoroaster purported to be embedded in the Gatha, on the fluid foundations of the western studies. Insler declared in the very first sentence of his said 1975 book that the Gatha is "a text bound with seven seals", and "a book of riddles" for "anyone struggling with these lyrics".

What then must we do? Should we stop bothering about this dense jungle of the Gathic studies and just have faith that the Avesta is the divine Word like the holy Scriptures of all other Religions and stop at that? Or should we try to search for a key to decipher the seven seals? If we are to adopt the latter course, then where do we get the key?

**THAT KEY is ILM-E-KHSHNOOM. The translations of the late Dr. Framroze Chiniwalla, the authorised doyne of ILM-e-khshnoom can take you nearer to the infinite ocean of spiritual truths contained in the Gatha.** I propose to illustrate this through the passage: Gatha Ha 53-7, of which Prof. Humbach has given an alleged pornographical translation, and later changed it to a non-pornographical one jointly with one P. Ichapurriaa, an unsteady non-entity in the scholarly world. But before setting out Dr. Chiniwalla's Khshnoomic translation of 53-7, this humble writer will give my truth-seeking readers an idea about the foundations and methodology adopted in all Khshnoomic translations of the Avesta Scriptures and the difficulties in understanding them.

The first difficulty encountered in the uphill task of absorbing the Khshnoomic translations is that they are all in Gujerati. You require a reasonably good command on Gujerati language, because all the translations, commentaries and 'taviil' (deciphering keys) rendered by Dr. Chiniwalla are in Gujerati.

Further, his methodology is extensive. **He does rely-please note - on the Western philology and etymology. He makes the full use of their pseudo-science, and its foundations, viz. grammar, syntax,**

**and vocabulary.** His emphasis, however, is on the mystical truths revealed by Khshnoom.

By 'mystical truths' is meant that major part of the Nature which is beyond the cognitive faculties of non-saintly humans like us. We experience the world around us by our five senses. We observe it, become conscious of it and think on it. We thus try to understand how it operates. But Nature does not come to an end where our senses cease to register it and our science comes to its wits end in exploring it. There are expansive non-material and divine worlds which are beyond all our senses, sciences and consciousness. Religion deals with such events, existences and beings; science does not and can not. Any person trying to understand Religion must have a mystical frame of mind. In other words, he or she must be acutely conscious of the fact that there are mystical regions beyond our consciousness, and the laws of Nature we experience are the manifestations of higher divine laws and truths, which are unknown and unknowable to us. He is therefore required to have some idea about the mysticisms of the different Religions as also other branches of mysticisms, which are seemingly out of the realm of Religion (though ultimately rooted in one or the other of the Religions) - like Gurdjieff Meherbaba, Kabir, Bahauulla, Azer Kaivan, Lao Tsu. Father Bede Griffith's "Universal Wisdom", "A Journey Through the Sacred Wisdom of the World", will be a good beginning for anyone trying to enter into the realms of religious mysticisms.

One of the most wonderful books which can shake you up and set you amazed and bewildered at the hidden mystical side of Nature is "**Autobiography of a Yogi**" by **Swami Param Hansa Yoganand** (Self Realisation Fellowship). From 1947 till date millions of copies of this book are sold. It has been translated in dozens of languages. It is available in bookshops at any time since last half a century!

I recommend this book not to make you a Hindu Yogi but to introduce you to the vast regions of the mystical events, existences and beings, so that you may appreciate your own Zarthoshti Din far better than through the pompous scholasticism of the West.

It will also be of great benefit if a truth seeker trying to understand the mystical truths acquaints himself or herself with the books of those professional scientists - particularly physicists and biologists, who have observed the tinges of Eastern mysticisms in modern science, like David Bohm, Rupert Sheldrake, Ilya Prigogine, Fritjof Capra, Karl Pribram. An excellent introduction to this mystical side of modern science will be found in "**Looking Glass Universe**", "**The Emerging Science of Wholeness**" by **John Briggs and F. David Peat** (Touchstone 1986). "**Catching the Light**", "**The Entwined History of Light and Mind**" by Arthur Zajonc, Professor of Physics in Amherst University (Oxford 1995) is an extraordinarily amazing book flowing from the pen of a professional physicist. Its subject matter is Light – from physical to mystical, and ranges from electron to Ahuramazda.

I am sorry for the diversion; but my intention is to convey to my truth-seeking readers that the **study of the Gatha is not at all an easy task. We are looking into the spiritual truths embodied in the whole of Ahura's Creation. "Drink deep, or drink not the perennial spring". When you are out to drink deep into this perennial spring of the Gathic Truths through a God-given key of IIm-e-khshnoom, you are required to cultivate a background and train your psyche to absorb them.**

## **ONE COHERENT WHOLE**

Another distinguishing feature of the Khshnoomic translation is that it is not fragmentary, in the sense that it is very much contrary to the hazy and ill-founded paradigm of the Western Scholars that Gathic doctrines are opposite to the non-Gathic Avesta and that what Asho Zarathushtra rejected was brought back by "later" priests. Right from the day the late Baheramshah Shroff (1858-1927) opened the treasure of Khshnoom before the formidable scholars like Khurshedji Cama, Khodabux Poonegar, Sohrab Bulsara, Dr. Manekji Davar and the truth seekers like Jehangirji Vimadalal, Khurshedji Suntoke, Jamshed Mehta and several others, it was clear that Khshnoom discarded the fragmentation of the Avesta in Gathic and later i.e. non-Gathic. **The Zarthoshti Din, with all its holy Scriptures viz. Vendidad, Yazashney (which include the Gatha),**

**Vispered, Khordeh Avesta is one consistent whole, one coherent set of eternal truths, one congruous system of high moral practices, one harmonious current of devotion.** The holy Manthric Scriptures, their Paharvi translations, interpretations and commentaries and the religious traditions on which the Parsi Life is founded and the rituals and spiritual Institutions are based, constitute one grand palace of the Parsi Religion. There is no conflict amongst any of them. Everything emanates from one divine source and flows like a melodious spring. There is nothing like three different and conflicting fragments of Parsi Religion and Parsi life, as "Zarathushtrianism", "Zarathushtricism" and "Zoroastrianism", as one Ilya Gershevitch pompously placed before the scholarly world of the Westerners. Sitting thousands of miles away in a materialistic surrounding, these scholars are blissfully unaware of the divine power of our Manthra Prayers and Spiritual institutions. Let them play their academic games, but why should we Parsis run after them as if they are the guides of our souls?

A life long study of Dr. Chiniwalla's translations revealed to this humble writer that it is possible to derive and arrive at the Khshnoomic Truths from the Gatha through the Western route i.e. from the pseudo science of linguistics and philology, provided that the researcher has a mystical background and is prepared to have a tremendously exerting journey in the pleasant garden of Eastern mysticisms and the thorny Jungle of modern Western science, which is knocking the door of mysticism. The easier course, however, is to accept the Khshnoomic Truths first as hypothesis through the linguistic pseudo science and the Tavit, and then see where it leads to. Dr. Chiniwalla's translations provide this route. If you tread on the route, you will find to your amazement that this is the real genuine master-key to understand the pearls of sublime truths buried in the infinite ocean of the Gatha and all the Avesta we have. When you see the divine Truths revealed before your eyes with the help of the Western linguistics and the Khshnoomic Tavit, your heart will dance with joy; that joy is one of the many joys Khshnoom can bring in your life.

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***(Parsi Pukar APRIL 1998 Vol. 3; No. 10)***

## THE SPIRITUAL ASPECTS OF SEX, MARRIAGE AND “KHAETVODATH” WOVEN IN THE GATHA VAHISHTOISHTA.

### MARRIAGE, A RELIGIOUS SACREMENT TO CONTROL AND CHANNELISE THE SEXUAL URGE.

Let me now place before you, my reader, the general narration of some of the truths set out in Vahishtoishtha Gatha Ha 53. Please bear in mind that this is a narration of MYSTICAL truths; that is, they emanate from the layers of Truth lying beyond the intellectual barrier of our experience. That such barriers do exist is now established by modern science, not by observation (which is ruled out by the very definition) but through its disability to penetrate the barrier. There are several illuminating books pointing out to the existence of the barrier and the halt of science at its doorstep. I name here only two. Their titles alone will give you some idea about their subject matters. 1) “Fire in the Mind”; sub-title: “Science, Faith, And the Search for Order”, by George Johnson (Borzoi Book, Alfred A Knopf Inc – 1995). 2) “The End of Science”; sub-title: “Facing the Limits of Knowledge in the Twilight of the Scientific Age”, by John Horgan (Helix – 1996).

### THE FRAGMENTS OF THE SOUL

Let us start with a relatively simple truth. Every human being on this earth has a body. The body is the container of what we call “Ruvan”. Ruvan roughly means, soul or spirit or atma, which, as all Religions and all Mysticism declare, is imprisoned or caged in the body. When death arrives, the Ruvan quits the body and enters the “next world”, which lies beyond our usual world of experience.

What is Ruvan? It is a very very tiny fragment of Ahura Himself. It separated from Him in a remote unknown past of the past (called “Para” in Gatha 30-2), and had undergone a long journey from the divine world of Ahura’s Light (“Hasti”) to the non-physical world (“Nisti”) and from there to the physical world i.e. the earth of our experience (“Geti”).

The reason why the Ruvan was made to undergo this journey was to alchemise an element of evil attached to it. How did this happen is not for us to understand at this stage.

As the Ruvan arrives on the non-physical and physical worlds, it is fragmented into smaller units. A human being has certain fragments of his Ruvan scattered in the world; a part of it is caged in a human of the opposite sex; another small part is in the animal kingdom; a still smaller part is in the vegetable kingdom and still smaller in the mineral kingdom.

The aim of life of every human on the earth is his or her spiritual evolution i.e., to travel on the path of God towards God. That path is prescribed by Religion. Different Religions are ordained for different groups of humanity according to their physical, mental and spiritual constitutions.

As a human advances on the path towards Ahura Mazda, the scattered fragments of his or her Ruvan are attracted towards him or her and start merging with the Ruvan. How this mysterious process functions is way beyond our understanding. All that is told to us is that the gradual merging of the fragments takes place through the food one eats, the clothes one wears and several other things, which enter our body. Every good thought, word and deed generates magnetic ripples in the world, attracting the Ruvan’s own fragments. Every evil thought, word and deed repulses them i.e. draws them away. **The good and the evil, here, are defined as and classed as good and evil by the messengers of God and not by the ordinary non-saintly humans like us.**

Before uniting with God, a human has to undergo this process of unification with his or her own fragments scattered in the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms, and thereafter with the major fragment of the opposite sex.

Looking at this truth from the other end, every human (including you, my reader), has a Ruvan in him or her, and its fragments are spread out outside him or her in (i) the animal, (ii) the vegetable, (iii) the mineral kingdoms and (iv) the opposite sex. When all the fragments are united, the human reaches the stage of “Perfection”. Haurvatat, or Khordad Ameshaspend denotes this spiritual perfection. **The word “Khaetvodath” means the attainment of this perfection.** That is why one of the attributes of the Mazdayasni Daen is “Khaetvodatham”.

This leads to the great mysterious truth that every male human has a female counterpart and vice versa. As some point of time, during the process of creation, the two had separated. They have to travel on their own paths of Karma individually. During their journey, each of them has to discharge their Karmic duties to the world. Karma means certain bondages of give and take in which every human is ensnared with other humans. This bond gradually dissolves if the human discharges his Karmic duties as ordained by Religion.

**In this divine scheme, now enters the Institution of Marriage. In every Religion, marriage is declared as a solemn sacrament.** Two aspects are involved. One is related to the powerful sexual urge every non-saintly human has. The other relates to the Karmic bonds between individual males and females. The ultimate aim is “Khaetvodath”, the union of the original male and female counterparts. But, before that stage arrives, the Karmic bonds lead each of the two away from the other, and each has to evolve at a very high level of spirituality. The final marriage i.e. the final union is far far away. It is preceded by long journeys, where the Karmic marriages take place. The journeys may be extended to several re-births. All the marriages amongst the ordinary humans like us are such Karmic marriages. They are necessary to discharge the Karmic bonds between husband and wife. The final union will come after all such bonds are dissolved. Religion prescribes the rules of married life, by following, which the bonds dissolve with great speed. **The intense love between the Karmic husband and wife is the shadow of the coming of Khaetvodath although they may not be the original counterparts.** Therefore, all Religions prescribe utmost faithfulness in marriage.

The second aspect involved in Karmic marriages is related to the powerful sexual urge a non-saintly human has. **Sex is a mysterious force operating in the spiritual evolution of the humans.** Of all the faults of the flesh, sex is the strongest. It leads men and women to unimaginable extremes. Religion ordains that the sexual urge should be controlled. The Zoroastrian Religion teaches that the most powerful force through which the Druj (i.e. the evil) operates is sex. In the great Hindu Religion, “Kaam”, the sexual desire, tops the list of the six sensual enemies of the humans. So also in all other Religions. **The control of the sexual passion is the first spiritual exercise. The way of controlling it is marriage and that is why marriage is a sacrament and is solemnized through ‘Manthra’s – Mantra’s – the words of God structured by the Prophets.**

Marriage, sex, intercourse, reproduction are highly complicated and mysterious subjects of Religion, dealing with the spiritual evolution of the humans and the whole creation. **Glimpses of the truths about these formidable subjects are woven in the Gatha Vahishtoishta – Yazashney Ha 53.** the ordinary philological translations based upon the materialistic thinking of the scholars of the West are incapable of revealing these truths. These scholastic countries are those where the religious sanctions on sex (and several other things) are violated to the utmost. Their consciousness is on such a low level as to be unable to comprehend the spiritual truths relating to sex and marriage. Their surface translators reduce the Gatha Vahishtoishta to the level of some historical and at the most some faintly moral treatise. **Only the ‘Khshnoomic tavil’ i.e. the deciphering of the spiritual meanings in the light of the mystical science of the Zarthoshti Din can unravel the real message.**

Yazashney Ha 53 is the fifth Gatha Vahishtoishta. It is the smallest of the five ‘Gathas’ with just nine passages. Let me first set out summarily the chief topic of each passage.

**Ha 53-1 :** The passage declares that the lofty spiritual mission of Asho Zarathushtra is accomplished. The Reward of eternal life (“Aahavangahevim”) is declared for those who follow Him. Even those who were resisting Him started to obey His commands.

**Ha 53-2 :** Whosoever shall infuse in his or her life the thoughts, the words, the prayers, the deeds, the works and the spiritual knowledge (Khshnoom) as taught by Asho Zarathushtra shall be guided on the Path of Ahura by the divine deputies of Asho Zarathushtra from time to time.

These two are the introductory passages declaring the success of Asho Zarathushtra’s divine mission and the existence of His divine machinery leading the common humans to Ahura.

But in what way the non-saintly human can take advantage of the divine machinery? The same question can be framed in a reverse way : **what are the forces which hinder the humans from taking advantage of the divine machinery and treading on the Path of Ahura?** The answer is in 54-6. It declares that the evil forces of the Druj within men and women are the hinderances. Their attack is like an accelerating chariot (“Raathemo.....Fraaidim”). The first duty of every human is to resist the forces of evil and be on vigilant guard against them. They bring on material attachments, which give sensual

pleasures. They lead the humans to “evil food” i.e. disastrous results and away from the state of divine peace and ecstasy.

What is the main manifestation of this internal Druj? The answer is in 53-7. it declares that **the carnal passion and the powerful sexual urge is the chief enemy. Control it through the sacred institution of marriage.** That will lead you to the high spiritual stature of ‘Magava’, who has attained Khaetvodath or is very near to it. Beware of and control this urge, which works through the mind and the sexual organ, lest you may have to repent intensely.

(We will later on, see how the application of the Khshnoomic Tavitil to the Philological translation, carves out the meaning and message.

Strophies 3, 4 and 5 of Ha 53 elaborate the divine machinery that leads to Ahura. In 53-3, **Paurichisti** is referred to. She is stated to be “the youthful daughter” (Yezivi Dugedraam”) of Asho Zarathushtra. **This is not a daughter in our limited and short-sighted earthly sense. She is one of the divine deputies of Asho Zarathushtra.** 53-4 declares that she and Jamaspa are assigned the task of leading women and men to Khaetvodath, the final union of the female and male counterparts of the Ruvan. The word “Khaetaove” occurs in 53-4.

**Ha 53-5** lays down the practical rules of life for the couples of the Karmic marriages. It refers amongst other things, to “Daenaabish Abyastaa”, **one of the meanings of which is Kusti.** It also emphasizes the faithfulness and trust between the married couples. It provides the practical lessons to discharge the Karmic bonds through marriage.

**53-8** declares the punishment, which will fall on those who are swept away in the powerful current of the sexual urge.

**53-9** declares how the spiritual guides like the Mobeds and kings (“Nareypish”) can help the non-saintly humans from being dragged into the mire of Druj.

This is how the truths about sex, marriage and Khaetvodath, and the divine machinery behind them, are condensed in the Gatha Vahishtoishta.

With this background, we are now ready to delve into the Khshnoomic meaning and message of 53-7 and to have an idea how the Western translations with their profound incapacity to understand the mystical truths reduce our Religion from sublime to ridicule, as is done by Prof. Humbach, a typical product of the Western studies.

I assure my readers that I do not mean any disrespect either to Prof. Humbach or to the Western studies.

What I am pointing out is that this incapacity arises from their so called “scientific” thinking, which started about 500 years back and reached its climax at the end of the 19th century of course, the 20<sup>th</sup> century, from its very first decade began to shake this scientific foundations and has now, at its end, brought the science to a stage of immense confusion. Yet the non-scientific community and the scholars of the subjects, which are based not on empirical or physical sciences, are still far away from this confusion. The scholars of Religion belong to this class. They are so bound by the scientific paradigms of the 19th century, that they do not have the awareness to grasp the spiritual and mystical content of any Religion. Hence this humbanchian fiasco. We have no to blame them. We can, however, try to apply the key of ‘tavitil’ to their confusing translations. This can lead to amazing results as all Khshnoomic translations show. 53-7 is a glaring illustration.

**K. Navroz Dastoor**

***(Parsi Pukar – MAY 1998 Vol. 3; No.11)***



## **THE WORDS "MAGAHYA" AND "MAGHEM" IN 53-7 - WHO IS A MAGAV?**

### **HOW THE WESTERN TWIST CONVERTS A SUBLIME TEACHING INTO ALMOST PORNOGRAPHY!**

We are on the spiritual truths regarding marriage, sex and 'Khaetvodath' as revealed in Gatha Vahishtoishtha (Yazashney Ha 53.)

Most of the common place marriages are "Karmic" i.e. they are aimed at discharging certain give and take bonds between the wife and the husband. A male or a female human may have to pass through several such Karmic marriage exercises spread over several births. Ultimate aim is to reach the union of the two original male and female fragments of the Ruvan, which were separated during the Ruvan's journey down from Ahura to the physical world. That final union is called "Khaetvodath."

A Karmic marriage, though far away from the final Union, is also intended to control the powerful sexual urge every human has within him or her. It is a religious bond whereby the two resolve firstly, to have intense love for each other, secondly, to remain extremely faithful to each other till death does them part, thirdly, to give vent to the sexual urge by having controlled and loving sex with each other, and, thereby, if Ahuramazda so wills, have children. That is why marriage in all Religions is ordained as a religious sacrament. It is a spiritual exercise undertaken by the wife and the husband on their way to the ultimate Union of Khaetvodath.

Let me now introduce another element to these truths about marriage. That is, when the ultimate union is reached, there is an actual and factual merging of the original male and female counterparts, and the united Ruvan is then said to reach the stage of, (or very near to), a "**Magava**". It is a far-away stage. It is reached only when the two have attained very high, lofty and sublime level of spiritual evolution. Thus, a 'Magava' is one who has attained (or is very near to attaining), 'Khaetvodath'. His Ruvan is now united (or on the point of being united), with his original female fragment.

The word 'Magava' in its various forms is found in Avesta Holy Books. Ha 53-7 (which is the root subject matter of this series) has the words "Magahyaa" (6th word) and "Mageym" (21 st word) (There are six other references to 'Magava' or 'Magavan' in the Gatha. Yaz. 29-11, 46-14, 51-11, 51-16, 33-7, 51-15. Each of these reveals one or the other of the profound truths about the sublime status of "Magavan".)

The revelations on the present subject matter are wonderfully contained also in Vendidad 4-47. There, the distinction between a non-marrying Magava and a marrying non-Magava is set out. Magava is too far advanced on Ahura's divine path to marry. 'Magavo Fravakhshoit' conveys that 'Magava's, with their divine power (Khshathra) advance nearer and nearer to Ahura and have not to marry. The fragment of their opposite-sex-Ruvan has already merged into them. But others ("Ahamaat), who are still not on that sublime stature, have to marry. They are required compulsorily to marry, so that they may control the sexual urge, until the time they reach their original natural counterpart. Here, the word "Naairivaitey" has the direct meaning of a married person.

We are now ready to delve into the actual meaning and message of Gatha Ha 53-7, to which Prof Humbach has allegedly given a pornographical translation.

In the paragraph just before 7 i.e. in 53-6, there is a strict and serious warning. Beware of the accelerating chariot of carnal passion! It is a devastating expression of the Druj (the evil element) woven into your physical body and mind. It will create an illusion of pleasure in you; but in effect it will increase the burden of sin on your back; it will lead you to evil food (i.e. bad Karma involving one into the cycle of births and deaths) - "Dush Kherythem"; it will obstruct your journey on the path of Divine Light - ("Naasat Khathrem"); it will harass and oppress the cow of Truth in you ("Dejit Aereteyiby"); it will wreck your life of spiritual bliss - ("Aa-manhim Ahoom Mareyngduye".)

All Religions convey this message. Lord Jesus's "Save me from temptation"; Lord Mahammad's "Flee to Allah"; Lord Buddha's "Beware! Arrows of devil are flower tipped but carry fatal poison"; Lord Krishna's "It is

that carnal passion ('Kaam') which is the root cause of the shattering of all memories, all intelligence, all wisdom" - all these divine messages, sing the same Raga.

But then what do we do? You are so curious my God! You plant the sexual urge in your creatures, even make it the mechanism of reproduction, and then command: don't indulge in it! Strange are your ways, my Lord!

The practical solution of this puzzle now comes in 53-7. The message is: Yes! **There is in you a powerful attraction towards sexual union; the fierce passion is strongly stuck at the base of sexual organ** (Aajush... Hakhtayao") **and it generates powerful force in your heart** ("Zarzadishto") - **as powerful as a devotee has for God! The force will jump out like a strong rising wave** ("Parachaa Mraochaans Aoraachaa"). It is generated by the Lord of Evil ("Mainyeush Dregvato"). It will lead you astray from the path of becoming a Magav. **Therefore control it through marriage.** That was the path which a Magav took when he was like you. **If you discard this command of controlling the urge through marriage, you will end in woe, and grief will be your final utterances** ("Anghaiti Apeymem Vacho"). **But if you follow that command, you shall have the reward of the Magav** ("Mizdem Anghahat Ahyaa Magahaya") i.e. **the reward of Khaetvodath.**

Although 53-7 by itself does not have an Avesta word for marriage, the context does bring out marriage. Previous passages refer to the task of Pauroochisti and Jamaspa in leading the married couples on the path of Khaetvodath. **The word "Khaetaove" occurs in 53-4.** Further, reading Gatha 53-7 with Vendidad 4-47, it will be clear that marriage is a must to reach the stature of Magava; and a Magava has not to marry, since the Ruvan of his counterpart fragment has merged with his Ruvan. **There is therefore no sexual urge in him.** Khaetvodath is his reward; it is freedom from Druj and is therefore a speed-up towards the union with Ahuramazda Himself.

I had first intended to give here a word to word translation of the passage as rendered by Dr. Saheb Framroze Chiniwalla, with all the philological and grammatical connotations, the Pahalvi translatory version and the three commentary - versions contained in the Dinkard, and then elaborate on them, as is the style followed by him while translating all the Gatha. But that would be quite long and taxing on my readers. I have therefore set out above, the meaning, the message and the elaboration all together.

Now let us compare this divine message of 53-7 with the first translation of Prof. Humbach. It reads:

"But for (all of) you, there will be a prize for this sacrament.

The most faithful one will yoke (his) penis at the bottom of the (female) thighs, where slipping back and down, the spirit of the deceitful one has gone and (If) you abandon this sacrament then 'woe' will be your last word".

I request my dear reader not to be unduly shocked by this translation. Remember, it comes from the non-spiritual paradigms of the western thinking. That thinking is incapable of grasping the highly spiritual concepts like Khaetvodath; the separation of the fragments of Ruvan; the dissolution of Druj into Gava; the union of the separated fragments; and the final Union of the perfected Ruvan with Ahura Mazda. This is all a book of seven seals to these western scholars. (The very first para of Insler's Gathic Translation says this.) They have evolved their own grammar and are bound by their own chain of non-spiritual paradigms. They may assign a meaning to a word which may have a streak of correctness in it; **but the spiritual content, message and teaching will be completely missing.**

There is surely a reference to the sexual organ in this passage. The word "Azush" has been translated by Prof Humbach as "penis". Nothing so shocking. Some other translators had been very near to that word. They have made it a kind of transferred epithet by substituting the function of penis for the penis itself. For instance, Mills translated 'Azush' as lustful desire or distorting (convulsing) venereal passion; Poonegar, passion; Kangaji, bad passion; Spiegel, demon of lust. But then there is another word "Hakhtayao", which is a direct word for female sexual organ. It is also in Vendidad where it is meant as female sexual organ in a direct anatomical sense, Prof. Humbach however avoids this direct meaning and translates it as "(female) thighs." Again, some scholars have not hesitated to come near to the actual meaning. For instance, Poonegar translates it as thigh or thigh-bone and then says "euphamistically for female sexual organ." Mills's meaning is: "in the root of two thighs"; he is also trying to avoid indecency, but refers to Rig Veda X, 86-16 where sensual desire seated in the heart and in the sexual organ is mentioned. Bartholomae's meaning is "thigh-bone and also 'flesh and blood", Spiegel's, "possessed inward parts", Insler's, 'legs'; Guillemins', "flesh". It is

clear that they are trying to avoid indecency.

We may well ask, if one of the themes of this Gatha is marriage, what is wrong if the genital organs both male and female are referred to? Are they not inseparably connected with marriage?

So far so good. But then coming to the word "Parachaa Mraochaans Aoracha", Prof. Humbach has again fallen a prey to the Western fields of thought. The words can mean "higher and lower" (Taraporewala); "moving before and behind" (Baheramgore Anklesaria); "Sinking lower and down" (Inslar); "Cringing and cowering" (Bartholomae). But having referred to 'penis', Prof. Humbach comes straight to its function: "slipping back and down" at the bottom of the female thighs! Extremely sorry for stark immodesty, but this is to show how distortion can occur in the translation, although the meanings of words may be reasonably correct. Something is going up and down. What can it be? Yes, Azush.....

Dr. Framroze Chiniwalla points out that these words refer to the rushing out from within, the powerful urge of carnal passion through the sexual organ, and then prescribing the method of controlling the urge, marriage. Do you see how the sense of the passage goes haywire with Humbach? The lack of any understanding of the spiritual aspect can lead to such twist and torture.

Now please try to understand the theme of Humbach's translation. It refers to "a prize for sacrament" and then states that "the most faithful will yoke his penis.....". What does that mean? Is the sexual act described as a sacrament? Further it states, (If) you abandon this sacrament, then woe will be your last word". Here the word sacrament is the meaning of 'Magahya' and 'Magheym' both. Although grammatical connotations differ, Humbach has taken both the words as noun. Actually 'Magahya' should be with 'of' i.e. the reward of the Magava; and 'Magheym', with 'for', like, for the work of the 'Magava'. "I twist to suit my whim", be it grammar or syntax or meaning - that is the airy rule of this so called science.

**- K. Navroz Dastoor**

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## THE GREAT TRUTHS ABOUT SEX, MARRIAGE AND KHAETVODATH IN THE KHSHNOOMIC TRANSLATION OF 53-7.

### CREDITABLE SWITCH - OVER OF PROF. HUMACH FROM "RATIONALISTIC" TO SPIRITUAL.

We have now arrived at the end of our journey in the stormy river of Gatha 53-7. The main thrust, as my reader must have by now judged, is that although the western translations do touch the correct meaning of words, their materialistic background keep them far away from the spiritual and mystical content, with which our holy scriptures vibrate vehemently; and that the Khshnoomic translations are the only source which can, without violating the rules of grammar, etymology and syntax, present the mystical content, effectively and amazingly. What is required is the breaking of the Westerly materialistic paradigms and developing a frame of mind, an awareness, a consciousness which can absorb the spiritual truths, as revealed in all Religions and now just tangentially touched by the most modern science. Look at 53-7. A most sublime and transcendent truth about marriage, sex and Khaetvodath revealed in that passage is reduced just to a description of the sexual act. Prof. Humbach in his translation does refer to 'sacrament' ('Magayaa') and prize ('Mizdem') but the message oozing from it is that if you don't perform the up down movement of the penis, woe will be your plight!

Let me make it clear that I am not here blaspheming or ridiculing the western studies. My teacher uncle Bapaji (Rustomji Dastoor Meherjirana) had adequately nurtured me in the good points of the western studies and their scholars. The crux is that with all their strenuous exertions, they are just not framed and made up to delve into mysticism, which is sine-qua-non of any Religion. They are, therefore, not to be blamed. **The blame lies with us, the Parsis that we gave them unduly exaggerated importance and in the process killed all the mystical aspects of our Religion.** We forgot that the western studies and their method is like trying to find out from a dead corpse, the frame of its mind when it was alive! And when, in our way, came a divine source Iim-e-Khshnoom, which can open up a treasure of divine truths and teachings, we almost ignored it. Iim-e-Khshnoom was blessed on the Parsi community at the beginning of the 19th century, to prepare itself against the devilish onslaught which has, at the end of the century, now enwrapped the whole of the humanity on this globe. Alas! Not many Parsis realised the devotional shower of this blessing, and now the talk of the impending extinction of the Parsis, is high in the air. Yet there are Parsis, in India and abroad, who have infused Khshnoom in their daily life and psyche. They are the community's only hope.

I took the opportunity of pointing out all this here through a comparative treatment of Gatha 53-7 as translated by Prof. Humbach, an erudite scholar on the one hand, and Dr. Framroze Chiniwalla, the doyen of Khshnoom, on the other.

I also say, most sincerely, that I do not intend to show any disrespect to Prof. Humbach. He was nurtured that way. He could not help it. If a bird's wings are trimmed away, it cannot fly, however beautiful it may look. All the Western Scholars are made that way. **Prof. Humbach has a brilliant career in his own line. He is a savant in Greek, latin and old Germanic historical linguistics and philology, and the old and middle Iranian dialects.** He has worked authentically in ancient inscriptions including "Pahalvi - Chinese tomb inscription from Xian." This has led him to discover Zoroastrian influences in hitherto unknown regions of the past. The brochure circulated at a Conference on Gathas held in Corydon (Near London) in November 1993 contains an account of his brilliant achievements in his own academic field.

There is however, something stated there which is very very significant and shows that Prof. Humbach is developing a mystical inclination. Read this:

"In Die Gathas des Zarathushtra (1959 written in German) Humbach introduced modern philological standards into the study of these holiest texts of the Zoroastrians. **At that time his aim still was purely rationalistic**, but since his Bombay lecture, "A Western approach to Zarathushtra" (1982) he has more and more taken into account **the spiritual aspects of the Gathas.**"

The very first point that strikes us is that his 1959 translation of the Gathas was rationalistic, but later he is evolving towards their spiritual aspects. There is no doubt that the above quoted words are from the Professor himself. Bio-data of a speaker in such seminars is written by the speaker himself; and none of the organisers of such seminars can have time and inclination to find out an evolution in the psyche of a speaker. So, what does Prof. Humbach mean by the word "rationalistic" as opposed to "spiritual?"

It is obvious that this meaning of the word 'rationalistic' is the same as it was at the end of 19th century. "Rational" meant: that which is discovered or found by (the then) modern science and its methods of observation - experiment - logic - mathematics. That was the only way to arrive at the truth; and the truth so arrived was devoid of any spiritual or mystical mumbo-jumbo, almost Godless. So, his 1959 translation was non spiritual and non-mystic. That is why perhaps his first 53-7 sounded pornographical. From 1982, he says, he has switched over "more and more" to "spiritual aspects." I was curious and all attention to know the learned Professor's journey from rationalism to spiritualism, when he rose to speak at the above Conference at 12-25 on Saturday, 6th November 1993. I give a short account of some striking points he made out, from my notes taken as he was speaking. What he said was all contrary – almost hostile-to what was said and was to be said in the Conference (Colloquium, as they called it), and to what was and is being said about Gatha all throughout the history of the western studies, and even what he himself had said at some places in his own 1959 translation!

**Access to Gatha is not at all simple; it is much more difficult, he said.** Its present translations are based on **presupposed content and anticipated interpretation. He reminded that Gathas were the nucleus of rituals.** (In Yazashney of 72 chapters, they are between Chapters 28 to 53 - almost at the centre.) **Gatha are written for the purpose of mystic rituals. Zarathushtra describes Himself as Zaota, the head priest.** (Here Prof. Humbach referred to Visperad 3-1, where the Zaota Ahravan as the 'Joti,' the chief performing priest, calls seven other priests Havanan, Atravakhshi, Frabeyretar.....) **The Prof. said, the whole Gatha is an address to liturgy and therefore their language is cryptic and esoteric. The style is not suited for ordinary people; it is "archaic mysticism" formulated in poetry,** where it is important to decide whether a particular line contains some "substantial information" or a poetic licence. **There are "deliberate ambiguities" in almost all stanzas.** The questions asked in the Gatha have inherent mystical replies which are most difficult to decipher. **Do not infuse 19th and 20th century ideas in the Gatha; remember the Gatha is a poetry of archaic mysticism, the meanings of which are not capable to reach our grasp.** Two glaring indications of this are 'sacrifice' and "microcosmic anticipation of macrocosmic event." He referred to "Draono" in 33-8 and "Khereyth" in 34-11. (Khshnoomic translation of 33-8 refers to "Draono" as (Daroon) used in our Baj ritual.) Throughout his paper Prof. Humbach was referring to particular passages, like 44-18, 31-20, 30-11, 30-3, 45-2, 49-11, 44-11, 46-12, 29-1, 51-9, 29-2, 51-9, 44-18, 33-8, 34-11.

**No doubt Prof. Humbach has arrived at the proposition that Gatha is not ordinary poetry capable of being comprehended by the ordinary people. It is a ritualistic treatise full of archaic mysticism.** The professor tries to reach it, but admittedly struggles because of the inherent obstacles. **This is a real paradigm - break;** but as usual it has caused a silent flutter in the existing paradigms accumulated from the 19th century. **The Gatha-Alone-Cult can have a serious jolt by Prof. Humbach's truth-seeking researches.** This is mysticism, not 'simple' good thought, word, deed. Even that triplet has a mystic current running within it.

The mysticism of the Gatha can be reached only through IIm-e-Khshnoom. **Prof. Humbach deserves great credit when he shows that the dry non-mystical translations based on "anticipatory interpretations." and pre-built bias and prejudices take us far away from the esoteric essence of the Gatha.** The translation of 53-7 made by Prof. Humbach in 1959 was based on his then "rationalistic"

background. Now that he has admittedly switched over to the spiritual aspects, he may look at the Khshnoomic translations with great interest and perhaps awe.

So, my dear reader, we conclude our journey of 53-7, from alleged pornography to Khaetvodath. The Truths we have learnt are: Every human soul has its fragment in another human soul of the opposite sex; the goal is the union of the two, which is a high spiritual stage of a Magav. Until that stage is reached the humans have to control the powerful sexual urge through marriage. Marriage is therefore a religious sacrament. The present day marriages are **karmic marriages** with different persons, **ultimately leading to the final aim of Khaetvodath, the prize of the Magi** ("Mizadem Anghahat Ahyaa Magayaa"). If you do not control your sexual urge through a faithful marriage and go astray, woe shall be your plight. That is the message of 53-7. "Be faithful to your marriage partner" sounds quite simple, but the mystical machinery behind this simple moral rule is Khaetvodath, the ultimate union of the original counterparts, the prize of the Magav. Therefore beware of the force of sexual urge rushing out from the sexual organ; adopt the divine prescription of marriage.

May you, my reader, march quickly towards the prize of the Magav by following the Commands of the Great Field-Marshal, Ahuramazda, declared through His Ahu and Ratu, Asho Zarathushtra and all other Prophets, Avatars and Saints.... Amen!

*(Concluded)*

**- K. Navroz**

**{An Apology:** If during my treatment of Ha 53-7, I have been in anyway rude or impolite to Prof. Humbach or the Western scholars, I do sincerely apologise to them. And if I have crossed the barrier of decency in dealing with the subject matter of sex as contained in 53-7, I crave my readers' forgiveness.

**- K. Navroz Dastoor.}**

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