

SURVIVAL – WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Whenever we talk of the survival of a Community, two points are implied. The first is that the Community has a culture and way of life distinct from the other groups of humanity. The second is that it exists since a long time as a distinct class or denomination of humans, who have consistently adopted that way of life. Its offsprings are required to be born within the community through its own members and to be brought up and nurtured in its own principles and practices of life.

The Community so nurtured has a life-field of its own and its own lines of force. A kind of subtle formulation surrounds it. No matter how far away its members are from each other, the life-field is present wherever on earth a single member lives. The field induces him or her to adhere to the Community's way of living, provided he or she is born of the parents within the Community and has not deliberately and intentionally dropped out of the field or is subjected or exposed to alien elements, through birth or marriage or nurture. The avoidance of both the mix-ups, genetic as well as cultural, is the very foundation of survival. Any dilution in any of the two generates the germs of extinction, which, after an initial slow-paced simmering, multiply with frightful acceleration and kill the organism.

That is the lesson emanating from the history of several communities which no longer exist and that is the doom now approaching the Parsi Community.

WHAT IS PARSI LIFE?

How is it different from the other groups of humanity? It is different only in its Dhanshak or Lagansara Fish Sauce or Seys Soparo or the so-called Parsi humour or Parsi Gujarati with its 'badam derakh'? Are these the components of the great Parsi heritage which prompted us to leave our then thousands of years old mother-land and arrive in this Bharata, the holy soil of 'Yogis and Rishis'?

And would the affixing of a 'Parsi' census stamp on anybody and everyday through some farcical mockery of a so-called Navjote be adequate and effective to avoid the doom?

Mere Parsi Census Stamp?

As the great Phiroze Masani wrote, "*Nature requires truth or intrinsic value of everything and not mere show of things*". *The intrinsic value of Parsism lies in its distinctive religious and spiritual Institutions and the Community's conviction that they are founded on the Truth existing in Nature.* Sudreh Kushti, Manthra prayers, the Holy Atash-Kadehs, Yasna ceremonies, Dokhm-e-Nashini form the bedrock of Parsi survival. Each of these has an inherent spiritual strength of its own. All of them have an inherent connection with the great Moral Code prescribed by Asho Zarathushtra and composed in Manthric language by Dastoor Aderbad Maraspend in 'Patet' and 'Doa Nam Setayeshney' prayers. And 'boonak-pasbani', the preservation of the racial gene, is the life and soul of these divine Institutions and Moral Code.

THAT is *the holistic package of the Parsi life.* Its foundation is the Religion of Zarathushtra. The social life of the Parsi Community is inseparable from its Religious life. All the religious Institutions are required to be embedded in the day to day life of a Parsi. Then and then only the weakening life-field of the Community will be revitalised; its fading resonance will again vibrate strongly; and its collective mind will wake up again with the earnest craving for survival.

Darkness at noon - Collapse of Common Sense

For more than twelve long decades we exerted strenuously to preserve, protect and live by our Institutions. However, in the last few decades of the last century, the tornado of the Western materialistic thought struck us. In the name of the rational reasoning, ample excuses were provided to shun the spiritual

disciplines of our Religion. Today a most bizarre situation has arisen. *In the Western world itself the edifice of the 19th century thinking is shaken to the core and several of its founding pillars have crumbled. Physics, the royal science of matter, has declared the collapse of common sense; it is knocking the door of mysticism but is denied the entry. The science of the mind has entered into mysterious regions.*

The science of life is shaken and bewildered; nobody knows exactly what is life. CartesianDarwinian paradigms are being battered. The Western world is awakened aghast at the destructive and deadly fruits of the so-called rational reasoning of the 19th century. The alleged supremacy of the Western intellect has fallen to the ground. All the same and rational thinking now points a forceful finger to the truth that *the non-saintly intellect is incapable of having even a faint glimpse into the Reality of Nature.* Intellect itself has declared its incapability to arrive at the truth and the dire need for Faith - Faith in the spiritual, mystical and divine. Without it there is darkness at noon.

And yet a few vociferous "scholarly" Parsis continue to provide, deliberately or ignorantly, excuses to avoid the religious Institutions; they rely on the same notions, paradigms and illusions which are now shattered since the thirties. Their information and arguments are three-fourths of a century out of date. Their thinking has become stale. The common Parsi has inherent faith in the Institutions but is baffled at this 'scholarly' cloud created by the self-interested persons, wherein now the alleged "high priests" have added a black fog of their own confusion and cowardice.

The humble Journal PARSİ PUKAR is intended mainly to provide to you, our dear readers, such materials and data from Religion and modern science, as would induce you to think out, on your own, the truth behind our Institutions and inspire FAITH in you. We will give you some idea about the divine content of Sudreh-Kushti, Manthra prayers, Rituals, Atash Baheram and Agiary, Dokhma, Moral Code, Boonak-Pasbani and all other lofty components of our great Religion, and guide you with all humility and sincerity, to practise them in day to day life. We will furnish you convincing materials against the onslaught of the unfaithful. Our earnest request to you is to take intelligent interest in what we offer you, and think independently, impartially, objectively.

(Parsi Pukar – AUGUST 1995 Vol. 1; No.2)