

SHORT SYNOPSIS OF MODERN SCIENTIFIC THOUGHT QUA THE PARSI RELIGION.

Have Prof. Kaikhosrov Irani of America Really "Served" the Parsi Religion?

by K. N. Dastoor

We Parsis are a good natured lot. Many of us love to express our appreciation and esteem for somebody who has achieved something more than the ordinary. In the process, sometimes, there is an eruption of exaggeration.

One such exercise in hyperbole took place recently amongst a bunch of good Parsis in America. On 6th July 1996 a function was held in Sanfransisco to honour Prof. Kaikhosrov Irani with a "Life time Achievement Award". Reports have appeared in Fezana Journal Vol. IX, No.3, Fall 1996, and in Mumbai Samachar of 11.8.1996. Mr. Dinshah Joshi read or spoke about Prof. Irani in glowing terms. He was equated with Plato and Socrates. The whole world turns to the Prof for "scholarly knowledge and wisdom of our faith". With his "foresight and wisdom" he has "steered the community away from pitfalls. "He is perhaps the only scholarly voice of reason and moderation among Zoroastrians".

With great respect to Mr. Joshi, and Prof. Irani, this Version is too dazzling to be within the ambit of truth.

Before I proceed, let me clarify that I do not have any ill feelings towards Prof Irani or anybody. I write this, in the interest of the Community, to bring to the notice of the Parsis certain facts and materials from the annals of the truth. I request my readers to absorb the materials, ponder on them and proceed further. I assure you an intellectual enrichment.

I keep myself in touch with Prof Irani's writings. I had a few occasions to hear him, the noteworthy being his paper at the 1993 Gatha Colloquium in London and a television interview in Canada. I have seen him answering questions. I had a few minutes personal conversation with him in London. I have found that Prof Irani has no philosophy of his own. What he describes as "Gathic Philosophy" sounds like a philosophy of a primitive thinker, which is on a much lower level than the philosophies of say Plato, Kant, Bergson. Some allegedly simple propositions are advanced in the name of the Gatha, which can well be termed as a mumbo jumbo of intellectual confusion. Gatha Ha 28-1 and 30-2 are the main, if not the only pillars on which Prof Irani's philosophical edifice is founded. The surprising part of this alleged Gathic philosophy is the gross inconsistency in the versions of the very two passages, as put forward by Prof Irani himself. The mind is "good" yet confused and contaminated; the intellect can arrive at the truth but it falters - a profound confusion indeed. But I will not deal with this in details, here. There is a more surprising element, which requires to be pointed out.

Prof Irani is not a formal university scholar of Avesta-Pahlavi. His subject is the history of Science or the Philosophy of Science or the history of philosophy of science.

It does not matter if he has no formal degree in Oriental Studies. Often, the Western Philological degrees are a disqualification for understanding Eastern Religions. This is very aptly illustrated by Max Muller's dilemma: how it is that the Sacred Books of the East contain along with "so much fresh, natural, simple, beautiful and true", "so much that is not only unmeaning, artificial and silly but even hideous and repellent" (S.B.E. Vol.1-xii). But here, what is more relevant and very strange is that Prof. Irani is vocationally, academically and scholastically connected with the historical currents of modern science and its philosophy i.e. its effect on the Western thought. We would expect that one who is well-versed in this fine subject would place our Religion, its doctrines and Institutions in the light of the latest developments in the thought-fields of modern science and its different branches like Physics, Astrophysics, Biology, Genetics, Psychology, and Psychic Research. But that is not to be for Prof. Irani. Instead, from the viewpoint of his own subject, his psyche reflects four interconnected elements, which lead him to gross inconsistencies:

The Four High-brow Virtues of Prof. Irani

1. His views on the Parsi Religion are manifestly based upon the Western scientific thought, which was prevalent in the 19th Century, and ignore the mystical currents which started flowing in science from about 1930, and have, in this last decade of our century, gathered considerable momentum.
2. The history of modern science reveals two springs of thought, atheistic and mystical. The situation that has developed today is that any explorer in any Eastern Religion is required to belong to one or the other of the two streams, which are mutually exclusive. He cannot belong to both. 19th century science discarded God, developed a satanic ego and called Religion and its spiritual practices as superstitions. 20th century science distinctly points towards (i) the existence of an intellectual barrier which obstructs the search for Reality, and (ii) the mystical regions within man and in the external world.

Prof Irani presents a curious sight of trying to belong to both the streams at the same time. To discard the Religious disciplines and Institutions, he relies on arguments, which discard even the existence of God: that means, he cannot talk of Religion at all!

3. Prof. Irani is a glaring illustration of the orthodox rigidity, which often prevails in the world of science and which is displayed even by senior scientists. It has been observed that the pioneer discoveries were made by the scientists before they attained the age of 30 years. After that age, many are so much stuck with their old academic paradigms that their creativity becomes clouded with their preconceived notions and they refuse to look at the radical changes happening around them. Prof Irani is not a scientist as such; he is the historian of the scientific thought and is therefore more susceptible to this orthodox rigidity. While actually passing through history, a historian may be too engulfed with the past to notice the flow of the present. That is the strange phenomenon of Prof Irani.
4. There is another, a little amusing feature of Prof Irani's psyche. He thinks he is a modern man, who deals with an ancient Religion with the intellectual, scientific and progressive equipage of the modern times. In fact, his purported modernity which sprang from decades old paradigms has become ancient. Its stuffing is knocked out since half a century. Modernity is a continuous process of growing older every day, and in science, with a tremendous speed. Prof. Irani's modernity is a stuck antiquity blissfully or deliberately or pretentiously unaware of the revolutionary changes fast occurring in the field of science and scientific thought, and their corrosive effect on his antique views. **It is no exaggeration to say that every paradigm, on which Prof Irani and his satellites and colleagues have founded their views on the Parsi religion, its Holy Scriptures and doctrines, and its spiritual disciplines and Institutions, like Sudreh Kushti, Manthra Atash, Kriyakam (loosely called rituals), is shattered to pieces by the same scientific thought that originated them. If they do not take notice of this, well, they are not in search of truth and therefore mislead those who are thirsty for the knowledge of Religion.**

A Short Journey in Science

I present here a very short synopsis of the history of the Western scientific thought. This is not merely to elaborate the four ingredients of Prof Irani's psyche: It is also intended to provide my objective readers with such materials from the field of science as are relevant for understanding our Religion and its mystical and spiritual Institutions.

Modern Science began as an investigation and an inquiry in the machinery working behind the world of the human experience. Man experiences the world around him with his five senses, observes it, experiments on it, applies his mind-tools of logic and mathematics and arrives at the laws which seemingly govern the machinery. In short, science was in search of reality and truth in Nature. The famous Royal Society of London formed in 1660 described its aim as "Improvement of Natural Knowledge". On 28th April 1686, Newton presented his famous "Principia" to the Royal Society. He declared that nature worked on certain mechanical laws of motion and gravitation operating in absolute space and in absolute time. The laws were equally applicable on the earth below and the heavens above. Although Newton himself believed in an "eternal and infinite, omnipotent and omniscient" God and gave a highly religious description of Him, Newton's followers soon began to discard God. At the end of the 18th century, Laplace declared "Je nai pas besoin de cette hypothese" "we do not need this hypothesis", when asked by Napolean about God. In his "System of the

World"- (1796) Laplace wrote to the effect that the planetary system was too natural and mechanistic phenomenon to need any God or sun or any thing at all to create it.

The Atom and Life

The 19th century arrived and the atheistic stream became more and more forceful. Matter was the main ingredient of the universe. It was made up of small ultimate particles called atoms. The congregation of atoms followed the godless mechanical laws.

Life was again a special congregation of molecules which were made up of atoms. The huge variety of animals did pose a problem against the mechanistic paradigm. But arrived Darwin with his "Origin of species" in 1859 and God was obliterated from the field of life too. Life had originated from matter and evolved through various forms, not through any design by a bearded 'Somebodady' up in the sky, but by mechanical laws called natural selection and survival of the fittest. Not only God but Godliness was also torpedoed because it is the natural law to kill your neighbour if your survival is to be preserved and to entice away his wife or mistress as the case may be. (Any way now-a-days there is no distinction).

By the end of the 19th century everything was explained, and that "hypothesis", viz. God, was explained away. For a few unexplained things, explanations were said to be round the corner. Of course the beauty of a peacock's feather or the intensity of a mother's love even in a fierce tigress or the miracles of Lord Jesus or Therese Newman could not be explained; but those were branded unscientific and superstitious. Man with his supreme intellect had now understood almost everything.

Enter - Quantum and Relativity.

Some devout Christians feel Lord Jesus's presence in the Christmas week. Chesterton said in the last sentence of his book "Orthodoxy", "There was some one thing that was too great for God to show us when he walked upon our earth; and I have sometimes fancied that it was His mirth". But Lord Jesus Christ did show his mirth 1899 years after He walked on the earth.

In the last Christmas week of the 19th century, a German scientist encountered the unseen presence of a small energy particle in his equations. His name was Max Planck and the particle was baptised as a "quantum". Within next 30 years the quantum brought in the quantum theory and its offshoot, the Principle of uncertainty; and the very foundations of solid science were shaken to the core. When between 1900 and 1930 this earthquake of the quantum theory was taking place. Einstein presented his theories of Relativity, Special in 1905 and General in 1915. These two, quantum and relativity, have thrown several fuzzy propositions in the lap of science; and have at the same time refused to reconcile with each other. What we call common sense has collapsed.

Downfall of "Common Sense"

To give a few examples, a sub atomic particles is found to behave in a way we may call magical (or better, whimsical) on our experience standards. It appears where nothing existed. It behaves solid and wavy at the same time. It is right here, but also there and every where at the same time. It seems to be aware of what is going on in the mind of the experimenting scientist. (Double slit experiment). Vacumm is stated to be jam packed with particles of "negative mass", which means if you push them to the east, they will run to the west. (Dirac). Foot-rules shrink and clocks seem to slow down at speeds approaching the speed of light. (Einstein). Time can move backwards. (Feynman) The nucleus of an atom occupies a trillionth (10^{-12}) of the atom's volume; the rest is populated by a cloud of neither-here-nor-there fuzzy electrons. Nobody knows what an electron is. A proton can contain within itself particles which are 10^{14} (1 followed by 14 zeros) times heavier. A grand collapse of common sense indeed! Such a mumbo jumbo in science? The mirth of the Lord now developed into a smile.

It was a remarkable phenomenon that every pioneer of 20th century physics, -most of them Nobel laureates be it Heisenberg, Schrondinger, Einstein, De Broglie, Jeans, Eddington or Pauli was a mystic, in the sense that all of them were forced to be aware of the most astounding fact viz. that, physics, which was the foundation of rational thinking and supremacy of intellect, **was dealing with shadows and illusions, not reality!** Schrondinger (1887-1961) pointed out that this shadowy character of Science was present since Copernicus, "**but we were not aware of it; we thought we were dealing with the world itself**". Now we find we were not and are not! Jeans revived Plato's grand simile of mankind being the chained slaves in a cave looking only at the shadows on the wall of the reality behind. Here the mystical spring gushed out in the field of modern science, and the intellect, believed to be supreme, suddenly found itself dazed at its own inadequacy and incompetence.

To add insult to the injury, in 1930 a 24 year young mathematician Kurt Godel pointed out that there can never be a final best system of mathematics. Every system will eventually run into certain simple problems that it cannot solve at all. This theory denies man the possibility of constructing a complete mathematical and logical description of reality. It is impossible to construct or understand reality by man's mind-tools of logic and mathematics. "We are barred from ultimate knowledge of Nature by the very rules of our own reasoning!".

The mystical spring intensified. The collapse of common sense and the illusory intellectual supremacy overawed the world of science. By 'mystical' is meant the need for believing that Nature does not come to an end where our senses cease to register it and our intellect fails to grasp it. The empirical science of observation and inference through mind tools has come to an end. John Morgan, an excellent writer at "Scientific American", has, in his 1996 book "**The End of Science**" with a subtitle "Facing the Limits of knowledge in the Twilight of the Scientific Age" (Helix Books - 1996), shown how in almost every branch of empirical science, what is known as scientific method has come to an end and how even the pioneers of that method cannot help being led away into the current of guessworks, speculations and conjectures, which were once branded as unscientific. Paul Davis, a Professor of Mathematical Physics now of Natural Philosophy at the University of Adelaid, Australia in his 1992 book "**The Mind of God**" - Subtitle: "The Scientific Basis for a Rational World", has, after a review of scientific advances of the 20th century, concluded that "**a rational explanation for the world in the sense of a closed and complete system of logical truths is almost certainly impossible**", and therefore our present stance of "rational explanation" requires to be changed. **Perhaps the mystical path is the only path to understand the Ultimate, says Davis.**

This means, there are regions beyond the world of our experience and there are hidden capabilities in the mind of man beyond his so called common sense, which are required to be explored and developed through the disciplines of Religion. A number of acute scientists have thought and are thinking in terms of some thing beyond the normal consciousness of man. David Bohm offered his theory of implicate and super-implicate orders beyond the world of our experience. Rupert Sheldrake suggested the 'hypothesis' (as he modestly calls it) of non-local invisible fields. Fritzgrald Capra suggested that the riddles of western science may be solved by Eastern mysticism. Stanislav Grof has researched extensively on the various levels of consciousness in the human mind. Considerable researches are carried out with as much scientific precision as possible on paranormal phenomena like telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, out of body and near death experiences, even reincarnation. The mystical stream has gathered tremendous momentum.

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MODERN SCIENCE DECLARES: COMMON SENSE, NOT THE MEANS TO ARRIVE AT GOD'S TRUTH,

**The Theme of Gatha 30-2 : Not the Supremacy of the Intellect,
But the Attainment of the Divine Consciousness.**

Prof. K. Irani - the Case of a Stuck-up Historian of Science.

The historians of science often quote Lord Kelvin advising a student, at the end of the 19th century, that physics, the basic science of all sciences was virtually complete and had come to an end and therefore there was no scope for the student to adopt it as his subject. A sense of completion was then prevailing amongst the scientists. In a speech given in 1894 Albert Mickelson an eminent scientist said that "most of the grand underlying principles" of Physical Science had been "firmly established". The qualitative work was almost finished; what remained was the finer and finer quantitative measurements. "The future truths of Physical Science are to be looked for in the sixth place of decimals."

Within the next hundred years this glorified self-satisfaction of having come very near to the reality and truth of everything, was violently transformed into a bewildering dilemma. Here is a passage from a book written by a Professor of Mathematical Physics in 1992. The name of the author is Paul Davis; the book: **The Mind of God**; Sub-title: **The Scientific Basis for a Rational World** (Touchstone 1992) :

"But in the end a rational explanation for the world in the sense of a closed and complete system of logical truths **is almost certainly impossible**. We are barred from ultimate knowledge, from ultimate explanation, **by the very rules of reasoning that prompt us to seek such an explanation in the first place**. If we wish to progress beyond, we have to embrace a **different concept of "understanding" from that of rational explanation**. **Possibly the mystical path is a way to such an understanding**. I have never had a mystical experience myself, but I keep an open mind about the value of such experience. Maybe they provide the **only route beyond the limits** to which science and philosophy can take us, **THE ONLY POSSIBLE PATH TO THE ULTIMATE**" (Page 231-2).

This passage is written on the last two pages of the book, after a grand review of the relevant scientific, logical and mathematical theories of our century.

This means that the supremacy of human intellect is a grand myth. The human mind of our experience is blocked and clogged by its own rules of reasoning. Common sense is not the criterion to arrive at the truth. The process of human thought is incapable of reaching the reality. Nobody can say, "Ponder and find out" or "Follow your own mind or thought or intellect" in any matter including the matter of understanding Religion and living by it. That method of pondering and shaking hands with truth has miserably failed in understanding even a speck of dust. Four centuries of the most toilsome drudgery of the human mind, called modern science, to come near to the truth of even the physical matter of day to day experience has ended in a grand fiasco. How can the glorified human brain which has failed to understand a grain of rice can ever attain the Truth about God? Therefore, Prof. Paul Davis says, Science has failed, common sense has collapsed, so try mysticism.....

THIS MEANS THAT ZOROASTER WAS WRONG IN ALLEGEDLY SAYING "PONDER AND ARRIVE AT THE TRUTH", IN GATHA HA 30-2, which is Prof. Irani's and his satellites' grand glorifying, pillar of the so called Gathic Philosophy!

BUT DID ASHO ZARATHUSHTRA REALLY SAY SO?

The answer is a THUMPING NO!

But before we delve into the divine message of Gatha 30-2, let me tell you a very significant, very interesting and very amusing dialogue which took place in a workshop of science. (A workshop means a meeting of some people belonging to the same or similar line of thought or work, where specialists speak and experts opine on the relevant 'areas') This workshop was held on **May 24-26, 1994** at Santa Fe Institute. The title i.e. subject matter was "**The Limits to Scientific Knowledge**". (What a theme?) An excellent and entertaining report of the workshop is given by John Horgan, a senior writer at "Scientific American", (an authoritative magazine of science) in his book "**The End of Science**" (Helix - 1996). Many profound propositions were advanced, many witticisms were uttered and much humour was sprinkled. Like: Gregory Chaitin, a mathematician and computer scientist at IBM saying, "Physicists know that every equation is a lie",

or that a proposition may depend on how many bagels the propounder has eaten. Or Rolt Landauer, a physicist at IBM saying that even the diarrhea of the Chief analyst of a large mutual fund can have profound effect on the economy. Or Ralph Gomory, again an IBM researcher, saying that all our knowledge of ancient Persian wars is derived from Herodotus, but how do we know whether he was an accurate reporter or not biased or not making things up? Comory said this as an example of his proposition that our educational system places too much emphasis on what is known and too little on what is unknown or even unknowable; this results in an over-confidently distorted view of the reality.

But Otto Rossler, a German biochemist, and chaos theorist (the discoverer of a mathematical monster called Rossler attractor) took the cake. He propounded **two primary limits to knowledge: inaccessibility and distortion**. How can we be sure of, say, the origin of universe, which is so far away from us both in space and time? Is that not inaccessible in the very nature of things? Distortion, the other limit, is the worse. **The world can deceive us into thinking we understand it when actually we do not.**

As the discussions proceeded, somebody asked Rossler, "Do you think we may be able to alter our brains in order to gain more knowledge?" Rossler replied, "**There is one way. To become insane.**"

So, here in a scientific seminar held in the last decade of the 20th century almost exactly 100 years after the boast of knowing everything - the limits and incapability of the intellect to find out the truth was questioned with a bang. The intellect is bound in its own chain of limitations; it deceives; it distorts; the thought process of the non-saintly humans is deceptive and distorted. How can it arrive at the truth?

Davies says, perhaps mysticism is the only way. Rossler says, insanity is the only way!

So, Zoroaster was scientifically wrong when He allegedly said in Gatha 30-2 "ponder and arrive at the truth" - the flagstaff of Prof. Irani and his satellites. But it is not the Prophet who is wrong; it is the 19th century egomania of the supremacy of the intellect that has gone wrong and now proved wrong! And Prof. Irani as the historian of science should have been the first to point out this fiasco, which started from the third decade of this century, and developed into a bewildering monster as the decades rolled by. After a long and most exerting journey, the intellect itself has expressed its ignorance, and incapability to march on the Path of Truth. "I have laboured very hard, but I have failed. I have dashed with the wall of mysticism. I know there are lots of things going on behind but on my part I am unable to fathom." That is the cry of intellect through the most modern science, which renders Prof. Irani's views on Parsi Religion obsolete and antiquated and sorry to say thoroughly unreliable.

All the Eastern mystics, Prophets, Saints and Seers have emphasised that intellect is the seat of doubt and ego. It can never lead to Truth unless the doubt and ego are dissolved through Religious practices which include the moral as well as the ritual i.e. the tarikat or yoga. The virtue of selflessness and the tarikat of Sudreh Kushti both are necessary; Manthra Prayers are as essential as conquering of the inner enemies, carnal passion, anger, greed, attachment, ego, envy. In truth, it is the Tarikat that generates energy to resist the evil within. Only the life led on the prescriptions of Dharma will lead to the light of Truth and its Fountain Source, God.

That is exactly what is said in Gatha 30-2: -

"Ye every individual human! For the sake of your own body (i.e. to eradicate the faults of the flesh),

Adopt the ordained Prescriptions with Faith (Aaverenao Vichithahya), (and thereby) with the best developed ears (Energy centers '(Chakhra's) Geushaish Vahishtaa), hear the Voice of the Divine (the Lord's Music),

With the Enlightened Consciousness (Soochaa Mananghahaa) and through your own eyes SEE the Truth (Avaenataa);

You will then know from Us the past events - the Secrets - of Creation and become the Master of the Divine Knowledge and Wisdom."

This translation is rendered by Dr. Faramroz Chiniwalla and follows the rules of etymology and grammar more rigorously than the Western translations. The word "Aaverenao" refers to Faith. "Vichithahyaa" indicates the Prescriptions. 'Avaenataa' refers to "Seeing" through one's own eyes and not pondering. You ponder when you don't see; but if you see, there is no need to ponder; Truth is before your eyes. Ponder is therefore a heavily twisted meaning of Avaenataa. Kanga says, its root is in 'Seeing', yet translates it as ponder. "Soocha Mananghahaa" refers to the highest divine consciousness and not to the darkened intellect of an ordinary human, which drags him to sin, and is incapable of comprehending the Truth (Vide Santa Fe Workshop). "Geusheish" is not in dual number denoting two ears. It is in plural, although each individual is referred to. Each man with more than two ears points to spiritual Energy Centers within man the 'Chakhra's, which are 16 in number. (Vide Vendidad Pargard 1). "Paraa Mazey Yaonghaho" refers to the

divine secrets of creation which is a sealed book to us, the non-saintly humans. "Narem Narem Khakhayai Tanooey" refers to the faults in the physical body of each individual. "Baodanto Paiti" refers to the Master of Divine Knowledge and Wisdom and not to the University Professors, Emeritus or otherwise, or Nobel Laureates, neo-political or otherwise or common parsis whether vibrationists or reincarnationists or vegeterianists or reformists or non-conformists.

So Asho Zarathushtra's Message is the same as all the Eastern Mystics. Human mind requires a spiritual bath ("Bareshnoom") of the Prescriptions ordained by Dharma. Only their adoption in Life will lead the ignorant darkness to enlightened consciousness; only then the Truth shall be revealed. Where is that 'ponder and find' egomania in this? It is NOT there. It CANNOT be there. A Prophet arrives to **remove** the darkness of the human mind, not to name the darkness as light. He teaches, orders, commands to follow His divine Prescriptions in order to **attain** Light. He prescribes the Path leading to Light which each human has to tread with FAITH. THAT is 30-2.

All Religions and all Mysticisms propound this truth about the incapability of the non-saintly human mind. The best exposition flow from the saintly pen of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh. He writes "I would ask one simple question of those who would make the intellectual mind the standard and judge of spiritual experience. Is the Divine something less than mind or is it something greater? Is mental consciousness with its groping enquiry, endless argument, unquenchable doubt, stiff and unplastic logic something superior or even equal to the Divine Consciousness or is it something inferior in its action and status? If it is greater, then there is no reason to seek after the Divine. If it is equal, then spiritual experience is quite superfluous. But if it is inferior, how can it challenge, judge, make the Divine stand as an accused or a witness before its tribunal, summon it to appear as a candidate for admission before a Board of Examiners or pin it like an insect under its examining microscope?"

"..... This doesn't mean that mind has no place at all in the spiritual life; but it means that it cannot be even the main instrument, much less the authority, to whose judgement all must submit itself, including the Divine. Mind must learn from the greater consciousness it is approaching and not impose its own standards on it; it has to receive **illumination**, open to a higher Truth, admit a greater power that doesn't work according to mental canons, surrender itself and allow its half-light half-darkness to be flooded from above till where it was blind it can see, **where it was deaf it can hear**, where it was insensible it can feel, and where it was baffled, uncertain, questioning, disappointed it can have joy, fulfillment, certitude and peace."

(Letters on Yoga - page 170-1)

Note here the illumination (Soocha Mananghaha); the EYES TO SEE (Avaenataa); and EARS TO HEAR (Geushaish Vahishtaa).

K.N. Dastoor

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PROF. IRANI'S INVERTED VERSION OF THE DIVINE

MESSAGE OF THE GATHA HA 30-2

"Ponder on the Contaminated Material World by the Contaminated Mind and Arrive At the Pure Truth!"

Human Mind is Not Vohuman but Akoman - Gatha 33-4 and 53-6.

The Fezana issue - Fall 1996, which contains a report of the award giving function of Prof. Irani, also contains his article "Avestan Literature of the Zoroastrian Religious Tradition" (p. 47-49). It is quite adequate and handy in following his thinking on our Faith, and presents a good exercise in confusion. There are three propositions about a view of the world and three others about the way of life - both purported to be flowing from the Gatha. Notably, both are founded on "contamination". Although "Ahura Mazda is the Creator of the World", "the material world is a manifestation of the good creation of Ahura Mazda **conflicted and contaminated**". The second contamination is in the mind. "Human beings are blessed with the divine gift of the Good Mind (Vohu Manah)", yet the world is to be seen "with a clear, uncontaminated mind". This implies that the mind is confused and contaminated, and yet it is a good mind capable of seeing the Truth and Reality of the material world, which itself is contaminated! See Prof. Irani's hocus-pocus? You can well paraphrase his view thus: Arrive at the truth by thinking with a contaminated mind on the contaminated material world!

This difficulty with Prof. Irani is that his thinking is nurtured in the West and is oblivious to the Universal Truth taught by all the Eastern Religions and Mysticisms, namely that the human mind, as Aurobindo expressed it, is half-light half darkness and is therefore incapable of seeing the truth. The present plight of modern science and its philosophy (Prof. Irani's subject) has changed the ratio to **1/10th light and 9/10th darkness**. All the great Religions are at pains to point out that the 9/10th darkness is required **to be removed and converted to Light in order to EXPERIENCE the Truth**.

The Truth cannot be arrived at through the thinking of a contaminated mind, large part of which is darkness and ignorance. And how do you remove the darkness? By following the Prescriptions of Dharma-Daena- with unflinching Faith. In these Prescriptions, the moral as well as the spiritual thoughts, words and deeds are both included. **Indeed the Immorality and inhumanity in the humans flow from the confused, contaminated (Prof. Irani's word), ignorant and selfish mind**. Every Prophet, Sage, Saint and Seer has declared that the mind is more inclined towards evil; it is required to be controlled and trained to resist the evil emanating from it; and the energy to control the mind and stick to the moral code, can be generated by the disciplines, yoga's, Tarikats prescribed by different Religions for different groups of humanity. It's not for nothing that a Parsi has to wear Sudreh Kushti and recite Manthra Prayers, or a Christian keeps a cross on his or her neck, or a Muslim observes Ramzan fast, or a Hindu does an elaborate Puja, or a Sikh fans the Granth-Sahib. **These and several other Religious Disciplines are the Divine Prescriptions to generate energy to fight the evil embedded in the human mind, alchemies it to GOOD and then SEE the Truth.**

The "Philosophy" of Prof. Irani

In his Fezana article Prof. Irani lays down three propositions about the way of life. The first is : "Human beings, blessed with the divine gift of Good Mind (Vohu Manah) are able to use reality in its true moral colours".

Do you follow this? When "reality" itself is hidden in darkness, how do you "use" it? And what are these "true moral colours"? With the horrible amount of pain and suffering, oppression and tyranny on this globe, how can you say human beings are blessed with the divine gift of good mind? Are they not cursed with the satanic gift of a horrific and heinous mind? The fallacy lies in thinking that the human mind is Vohuman. It is not. It is Akoman. It is heavily inclined towards carnal passion, ego, greed, envy, doubt, and utter selfishness. It cannot distinguish between "what is and what ought to be" as Prof. Irani thinks it can, in his second proposition of his "way of life". It is not inherently capable of "understanding Asha", as Prof. Irani thinks it is, in his third "way of life". It has no idea of "our place in the cosmic moral order". It only struggles like a fish out of water.

And to be able to be moral, one requires energy to resist the Druj embedded in one's mind. That energy

is generated by the Prescriptions and Tarikat's of the Daena. "To be able to use reality in its true moral colours" of Prof. Irani sounds like a confounded non-equation, which leads us nowhere. Its elements cancel each other and present a big dot. Morality is not just an intellectual exercise. Intellect is covered by the soot of immorality, which requires the efforts and exertions of Religious disciplines to be washed away.

All the three ways of life as propounded by Prof. Irani is just an egoistic exercise in a pompously philosophical language which leads a Parsi nowhere. If a Parsi wants to follow these "three ways", what has he or she to do? How has he or she to deal with the world around? **How would he or she put these library ideas in practice in his or her day to day life - from morning tea to the head on the pillow at night?**

All Roads Lead to 30-2

All this apparently intellectual looking ideas constitute a mental conspiracy to advocate the alleged supremacy of the human intellect as alleged to be taught in Gatha 30-2. Because after his six contamination points, Prof. Irani arrives at 30-2. He calls Yasna 30, "the Gatha of Choice" and says, "it asks each one of us to **reflect** on these teachings with a **clear mind** and make the **choice** (of acceptance or otherwise), and be responsible for that choice".

"Reflect" : The word "Avaenetaa" does not mean reflect or ponder. Most of the scholars have taken "Aa-vin" as the root, Sanskrit: "Ven". Persian: "bin" which means to SEE. The word does not ask us to reflect; it says "SEE" - see for yourself and that, as it is further said, by cultivating and developing the ability to see after arriving at the stage of "Soochaa Mananghahaa", and not through the present stage of -9/10th darkness. "Seeing" is not "reflecting". Reflection is required for things unseen, to guess what can the unseen be. But if you see directly, no reflection is necessary. Therefore this meaning is a traversity infused to boost up the ego and to provide an excuse to avoid the disciplines and Tarikats of the Daena.

"Clear mind" : The word "Soochaa" in "Soocha Mananghahaa" means "enlightened", "illuminated", from the root "Sooch" to shine. Poonegar, Taraporewala, Kanga have taken this meaning. The difficulty with the humans is that the mind is NOT illuminated. It is in 9/10th darkness. It is TO BE illuminated to be able to SEE the Reality. It is not a clear mind at all; it is confused (Prof. Irani said this in his Canadian TV interview) and "contaminated". Zoroaster is not a politician seeking votes by labeling a contaminated mind as good mind. He is here to teach the humans how to **remove contamination and bring in illumination**. The alchemy of contamination to illumination is a long drawn process viz. the Path of Ashoi i.e. exertion to resist the inherent evil, by following the get prescriptions, rules, commands, tarikats of the Daena.

"Make the choice" : "Averenaa Vichithaya" does not give a choice, namely that choose whatever you think out best. "Averenaa" has the word 'Veren' in it, which means Faith. It is a **command** to choose and stick to the Prescriptions of Daena. It declares, that your mind, if set free to choose, will surely choose evil. But don't do it. Resist your inherent tendency to be swept away in the current of evil, to fall into the snares of the sins. Follow the commandments of Religion to achieve this, and then only your mind will be enlightened.

And follow these Prescriptions with Faith. BELIEVE in them. Accept them to be true and effective. Your thinking process is not enlightened enough to see the reality, to find out what is good and what is bad. Don't allow the virus of doubt to eat away your Faith. **Good and bad are defined by Ahuramazda Himself and declared as such by His Prophets. (This is said in the Patet Pushemani Prayer.)** Follow that definition and not your own. Your mind, if set to define good, is going to think what is bad as good.

Liar's Paradox

The words "and be responsible for that choice" in Prof. Irani's version of 30-2, are his own. There is no reference to "responsibility" in the stanza. But Prof. Irani has to add them to escape the sheer illogicality of his own version. He means that choosing good will do good to you and bad will do bad to you. But no sooner that is said, "the freedom of choice" vanishes. It amounts to **compulsion** of choice. You can become bad if you choose to, but don't do so, the consequences will be disastrous. The dilemma is that an egoistic proposition is put forward viz: that the Prophet has given freedom to choose, so do whatever you think to be good. But no sooner this is said, than it amounts to a license to be swept away by the carnal enemies. To prevent this, the concept of responsibility is brought in; but no sooner that is done, the "freedom" vanishes and the compulsion enters. You can compare this with the famous "Liar's Paradox" or "Catch22".

"Vichithahaya" has the ring of divine Prescriptions. Whatever is given by the Daena and the Prophet is

to be adopted and chosen in life. Given are the Prescriptions; they are to be followed with 'Veren' - faith, i.e. without casting doubts on them through the inherently faulty, doubtful and contaminated mind. THAT is the purport of "Averenao Vichithahya".

What Are These Great Events?

Prof. Irani's version of Gatha 30-2 does not refer to the Stanza's last line: "Para Mazey Yaongh-ho Ahiyai Ne Sazdyai Baodanto Paiti". There is a complete silence on this mysterious line. What is "Para Mazey Yaongh-ho"? The first two words are translated by some scholars as "the great events". What are these great events, nobody is clear about. "Great Consummation", "the great endeavour i.e. Religious campaign", "this (great) crisis", "Judgment on the Chinvat Bridge" "The Great Achievements", "Crisis in the religious history of Iran" - are some of the meanings and versions of "Mazey Yaongh-ho" by different scholars. (Respectively: Bartholomae, Mills, Guthrie, Kanga, Poonegar, Taraporewala). Where does all these lead to? What should a non-scholarly common Parsi understand by this 'biriyah'i of versions? (Western versions are full of such 'biriyan'i throughout their Gathic presentations).

The Tavil (i.e. the deciphering of the mystical meanings of the Avesta words) as revealed by Ilm-e-Khshnoom declares that "**Para Mazey Yaongh-ho**" refers to the events which occurred at the beginning of the Creation, i.e. the events of cosmogenesis and pre-cosmogenesis. When one attains "Soocha Mananghahaa", one actually SEES those events of Creation, which at the present dark and ignorant stage of the mind, is a complete mystery. For numerous centuries the Western thought continues to be in a state of confounding confusions about the Creation and the Creator. Is the universe created by God? Who is He? And why has He created such baffling universe? Has the universe been created by some "natural laws" which "do not need the hypothesis of God"? Or has it been created by itself? And apart from HOW is it created, the most puzzling question is WHY is it created? Is it a product of some senseless accident? **In short, how and why did the universe come into existence? And what is this infinitesimally small earth rotating with a negligibly small creature, man, on it?** These are questions asked by the Western thinkers since centuries. After the advent of modern science, these questions turned from philosophy to physics and astrophysics, and the alleged answers are just speculations, conjectures, surmises and guessworks in both the fields. The popular "big-bang" entwines itself in more and more riddles between every sunrise and sunset. The answers are receding further and further every day.

Gatha 30-2 declares that these Great Events of Creation which happened in the Past of the past ("Paraa") can be experienced and actually SEEN only after developing the Energy Centres (Geushaish Vahishta) and the Divine Eye in EVERY man and alchemising the faulty mind to divine illumination, Soocha Mananghahaa, through the Divine Prescriptions. Such developed individual will then become "Paiti", the Master of all Wisdom ("Baodanto") knowing by experience the mystery of the Great Creator. Till then it will all be confusion of a polluted, contaminationed, faulty, dark and ignorant mind.

Akoman Defined in the Gatha

Prof. Irani and his likes and satellites have done a great disservice to the Parsi Religion and the Parsi community by bringing in this ghost of intellectual "freedom" in the Gatha, and propounding that the human mind is 'Vohuman'. In fact, in truth and in our experience, it is Akoman; and the Gatha does define, describe and depict Akoman.

Gatha 33-4 sets out the attributes and characters of Akoman and deals with the transmutation of Akoman to Vohuman through the attunement with Mazda. Five emanations of Akoman are laid down:

1. **Asrushtem** = disobedience to Ahuramazda;
2. **Khaeteushchaa Taromaiteem** = Egomania that obstructs Khaetvodath (i.e. the Final Union of the parted fragments of the Ruvan);
3. **Verezenakhychaa Nazdishtam Drujem** = The Druj which hovers around and obstructs those who strive and exert (to reach the divine aim) - (that is Soocha Mananghahaa);
4. **Airyamanaschaa Nadento** : The blasphemies (or the ill-habits) which obstruct the attainment of the state of Airyman, which means the mental power arising out of extreme humility, of submissiveness to His Will; the advanced stage of spiritual upliftment; dissolution of the ego.
5. **Vaastraat Achishtem Mantoom** : The corrupt mentality which leads astray those who crave to plough the soil of the Ruvan.

Disobedience, the revolt against Mazda, egomania, falsehood, blasphemy, contamination of the

egoistic mind, - these are the characters of a non-saintly human mind and obstruct it in its exertions to climb to the divine state of Soocha Manangha and Airyaman.

The passage prays that let all this be away from me ("Apaa") through "Yazai", which means the exertion to be attuned with Mazda i.e. through the divine Prescriptions of the Daenaa ("Vichithahyaa" in 30-2). ('Yazai' has 'Yaz' in it).

Prof. Irani and his satellites' confusion lies in mistaking the goal **to be** achieved as **already** achieved, in depicting Akoman as Vohuman. What "Good Mind", we the mortals can boast of? Our mind is the container of its own enemies carnal passion, anger, greed, ego, faithlessness, selfishness and several others. They stare menacingly to our self. We ask for Mazda's protection against them. THAT is what we ask for in the very first passage of our Kushti Prayer: "Kem-na-Mazda", which is Gatha 46-7. Gatha 53-6 warns against them. "**You will derive temporary pleasure in these emanations from Druj**", says that passage, "**but remember, ultimately you will destroy your own bliss, ecstasy; you will drift away from the divine state and thereby away from the bliss of the next world.**"

If you want to ponder, ponder not with your pride but with Faith. If you ponder deep, you yourself will arrive at Faith; you will find out that your intellect is far away from Truth, and it can never arrive at the Truth unless you tread the difficult Path of the Daena and its divine Prescriptions with unflinching faith. THAT is the Divine Message of the Gatha.

And the modern science has now arrived at its incapability to arrive at the Reality of Nature and is knocking the door of either mysticism (Davies) or insanity (Rosier). Prof. Irani as the Professor of the history of science should be aware of this.

- K. N. Dastoor
(Concluded)

"Sense pleasures are like itching eczema. There is pleasure in violently scratching it; but the disease gets aggravated thereby. By yielding to sense-pleasures, mind gets more entangled in them." - **Ramkrishna**

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