Good Morning!
Welcome all to
Our Fourteenth All NA Z Religion Tele Class
Mah Dae (Bahman K), Roj Farvardin 1382 YZ (S)
Mah Khordad, Roj Gosh 1382 YZ (F)
Sunday June 2nd 2013 11 AM
Let us welcome participants by conference call from all FL – Tampa Bay, Orlando, Miami ZAF and all over NA!

Jo Ann and I are very humbled by your response, patience and attendance to these classes conducted with the help of telephone conference call for all NA Humdins and hope we continue this type of Z Religious classes in the future for the betterment of all!

Thank you all for your Participation, Patience and Time!

Let us start with the class!
At the Dallas FEZANA AGM, 5/17/2013, FEZANA UN-NGO Co-Chairmen, Homi Gandhi and Behram Pastakia, presented to Jo Ann and Soli a Cyrus Cylinder Replica for all the work they are doing for FEZANA especially the Tele Classes.

In the photo, our own ZAF President Furrokh Irani, his wife Khushnam, Jo Ann, Soli accepts the replica from the FEZANA President Katayun Kapadia!
Jo Ann and I are truly humbled by this award and will cherish it at a very prominent place in our Hira Villa.
Thank you Homi, Behram, Katayun and the whole FEZANA for your generous gesture!
Zoroastrian Subjects

Agenda:
1. Multi-story Atash Kadehs of old
2. Evolution of our Afargaanyu
3. Significance of striking bells in Boi
4. Vakhshur-e-Vakhshuraan Zarathushtra Spitaman, our Prophet, Mathematician, Astronomer
5. Zarathushtra’s Birth Place
6. Cyber Hum Bandagi in English
7. Cyber Hama Zor Greeting
8. Acknowledgements
At the SSZ Conference ZAC Chicago Saturday November 12th 2011

- Requested to present some episodes from the 101 Travel Letters of Dr. Ervad Jivanji Jamshedji Modi
- I have used some of this material from this presentation today
The Book in Gujarati of 101 Letters, 502 pages

My Travels Outside Mumbai
101 Letters of my Travels Through Europe and Iran
Author:
Dr. Jivanji Jamshedji Modi, B. A., Ph. D., C. I. E.
Mumbai
Jame Jamshed Printing Works, Fort Mumbai
Printed By
Mr. Maneckji Navroji Printer
Published By
Shams-ul-Ulama Dr. Jivanji Jamshedji Modi
Coover Villa, Colaba, Mumbai
1926 A.D.
I want to first acknowledge the help of my good friend Jamshid Zartoshty, Minsk, Belarus, who was the first person who pointed out to me this book and some interesting facts about the Atash-Kadeh of Baku, Azerbaijan, described by Sir Modi in this book.

He wanted to have pages 266-276 to be scanned from the book and sent to him for one of his friends.

I took up his request and ask for help of my nephews, Zarir Darbari and Cyrus Dastoor, to find out if we can get hold of this book, and if so, can Zarir scan the above pages from it and send it to me so I can forward them to Jamshid.
As always, Zarir persisted in following up on this request, consulted the newly ordained Dastoorji Peshotan Mirza, son of the famous late Dr. Hormazdyar Mirza, who approached Dastoorji Kaikhushroo Jamasp Asa, who in turn obtained a copy of the book from a library and loaned it to Zarir.

Zarir then scanned the pages and send them to me which I forwarded to Jamshid.

What an International co-operation for Scholarly work!
“TRAVEL, in the younger sort, is a part of education, in the elder, a part of experience......And let his travel appear rather in his discourse, than his apparel or gesture; .......

Let diaries, therefore, be brought in use.......and let it appear that he doth not change his country manners, for those of foreign parts; but only prick in some flowers, of that he hath learned abroad, into the customs of his own country.”

Sir Modi kept this advice throughout his travels. He kept meticulous diaries of all he saw and witnessed and discussed, resulting in this 502 page tome of his travels in Africa, Europe, USSR, Iraq, Iran, from 12th April 1925 on Steamer Naalderaa to 5th November 1925 after 208 days.
He wrote his experiences in 101 letters to the Jame Jamshed which appeared in it over a year. Side by side, he also started his work on this book and finally completed it on May 16th 1926 and printed 500 copies of its first edition. Tremendous insights into things he saw and witnessed of our religion, society and customs in Iran Compared them with Parsi practice. Will discuss some of these items from this 502 page tome!
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Is this a real Parsi Atash Kadeh?
Is this a real Parsi Atash Kadeh?

They call this place “Surkhani”. The origin of this word may have come from “SHO-E-LE-KHANEH” meaning the house (“KHANEH”) of the fire balls (“SHO-E-LE”).

Natural fires on the shores of Caspian Sea in those distant times were considered as sacred and attracted many believers. A large settlement, which arose around one of the groups of natural lights, gradually grew into a city of Baku. M. J. Saint-Martin, French orientalist of early XIX century: “The city of Baku is regarded by Parsis as a holy place due to many sources of naphtha with natural burning fire and in many places worshiping an eternal fire”.

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About hundred to two hundred years ago, our India used to have a very good trade with the Central Asian cities like Samarkand, Bokhara, etc.

Also, many Hindu traders from Hindustan used to visit Baku for trade. North Indian Hindu traders from Sindh and Multan used to take part in this trade and used to visit Baku.

This temple was erected to satisfy their religious needs. Our Hindu brethren also consider Fire ("Agni") as a God. The natural gases emit from earth at this place, which will ignite into a continuous fire ball by any sparks.

Hence here at the mouth of fire naturally originating from earth, they established a Hindu Temple for fire worship.
I spent two hours inspecting this place. I asked for a tall ladder and with trepidation I climbed to the top of the building and examined the foundation stone which was inscribed in the Nagrik [or Nagari] script (the Sanskrit language; the most common Hindu characters of writing). I also examined the small living rooms (cells), adjacent to the main square of this building, which resembled the Indian Buddhist monasteries cells for their monks. I also examined the place where they used to cremate bodies of the dead Hindus.

And from all these examinations, in addition to what I believed from my various research before visiting this place, I became convinced that this place has nothing to do with Parsees. It is not a Parsee Atash Kadeh but a Hindu Temple.
There must be an Aatash Kadeh here in ancient times
Just because I have proven that this building is not a Parsee Aatash Kadeh does not
mean that in this city, in ancient times, there were no Aatash Kadehs.

There may be more than one Aatash Kadehs in this city.

In our ancient literary works, there are references of the worship of fire emitting
directly from earth. One fire has been described which burns without any fuel. This
is the same fire of the natural gas wells which burns night and day without any fuel.

Our Aatash “Apaam Naptaar” and the Naphtha of this place
We all pray at the end of each of the five Geh prayers the following prayer
remembering various fires.

“Thwaam aatarem Ahura he Mazdaao puthrem ... yazamaide. ... Apaam Naptaarem
Yazamaide. Nairim Sanghhem yazamaide.”
Meaning: "We venerate you Aatash, the son of Ahura Mazda. We venerate Apaam
Naptaar Aatash. We venerate Nairyosangha Aatash."

In this veneration of Aatash, in "Apaam Naptaar" words, the word "Naptaar"
is the root of the current word Naphtha. This Naphtha flows like
a liquid and so its Aatash is called "Aap" meaning liquid.
There must be an Aatash Kadeh here!

City of Bagavan, where fires were burning eternally in its fire temples is mentioned by Armenian historians as Ateshi-Baguan where Ateshi is a corruption of “Atesh” (“fire”), and Ateshi-Baguan is “Place of sacred fires” and identified Bagavan and Ateshi-Baguan as the ancient name of Baku.

Nezami Ganjevi, the famous 12th century Persian Poet, in his poem “Eskandar Nameh” wrote:
“In that place was a fire built round with stone Which the fire-worshipper used to call – “Khudi-soz” For it, were a hundred priests (erbadan) of the fire-temple with collar of gold.”
There must be an Aatash Kadeh here!

“Khudi-soz” (“Burning itself”) refers to the burning of natural oil or gas fires.

“For it, were a hundred priests (erbadan)” – for so many erbads to stand before the sacred fire must be in a very large temple.

Such large tiered fire temple with premises able to accommodate hundred erbads could be the Baku temple tower known as the Maiden’s Tower.

The line: “In that place was a fire built round with stone”, means that a fire was burning itself surrounded by stone i.e. round stone walls of the tower.
Now there is a minaret here which is called “Kiskale” or “Tour de la jeune fille” in French, meaning Young Girl’s Minaret.

Local legend: one father wanted to marry his own daughter. The daughter made a deal with her father that: “If you build a tall minaret and when it is completed, I will marry you.” When the father completed the minaret, the daughter climbed at its top and fell off and committed suicide.

This is not a simple minaret. In it there are seven stages or stories or escape routes for the emission of Baku’s Naphtha. I examined the minaret all the way to its top.
There must be an Aatash Kadeh at this place in ancient times.

Now there is a minaret here which is called "Kiskale" or Tour de la jeune fille in French, meaning Young Girl's Minaret. There is a local legend, which is doubted by many, which states that one father wanted to marry his own daughter. The daughter made a deal with her father that: "If you build a tall minaret and when it is completed, I will marry you." When the father completed the minaret, the daughter climbed at its top and fell off and committed suicide. Now my guide told me that this is not a true story and there was nothing to wonder about it. If the daughter did not want to marry her father, there were many ways she could have committed suicide. Moreover, this is not a simple minaret. In it there are seven stages or storeys or escape routes for the emission of Baku's Naphtha. I examined the minaret all the way to its top. There at the top was a tablet in Farsi with the inscription: "Kooba-a-Masood bin Daaood," meaning "House of Daaood's son, Masood." Now, some of the local people believe that this is a very ancient building, of Sassanian times or even older than that. About eight hundred years ago, one emperor, Masood, created this tablet to commemorate his name. If he himself had built it, he would have mentioned that in a foundation stone together with its Hijri (Muslim) date.
According to my examination, this is an ancient Iranian building and it is an Aatash Kadeh. It is not a common Aatash Kadeh with its fire maintained by burning wood by its priests. But it is an Aatash Kadeh fed by the natural gases, Naphtha, (apaam Napaat). Haft or seven is a very holy number in Zoroastrian religion and hence there are seven stories or stages in it. At each story, in one corner, there is an escape hole for the natural gas Naphtha which when lit created a fire ball.
This minaret is taller than 80 feet. The climbing steps are on one side and its diameter at the top is as large as forty feet.

From the top, you can see the vast sea shore of Vourukash sea (Caspian sea), and from its ramparts you can observe the nature’s sun, moon, and stars.

Doa Naam Setaayashne prayer: O khur tava, O mâha bâmi, O sataré vash-tokhama, bâd andarvâe, O âv, O Âtash, O zamin, O orvar, O gospand, O ayokhshast, O mardum.

He created the light giving Sun, full of light Moon, many generations of Stars, wind, air, water, fire, land, trees, animals, metal and man.

And imagine praying this at the top of this seven story high Atash Kadeh!
Now, in our country, India, in the ruins of that famous ancient city of Taxila near Rawalpindi city, Sir John Marshall has excavated the ruins of an ancient Aatash Kadeh.

With this Aatash Kadeh, there was a tall minaret which was built according to the architecture and design of the ancient Babylon’s Ziakurut.

Such was the design of our ancient Aatash Kadehs with adjoining minaret, from the top of which one can see the neighboring sea or river or lake and from its top one can observe the sun, moon, stars, and mountains and worship them.

There must be an Aatash Kadeh here!
Our Aatash Behraam in Navsaari is built according to the architecture of ancient Aatash Kadeh. Here in Baku, this is a combined Aatash Kadeh and minaret in this huge building.

In my humble opinion, on one hand I have discounted the existence of one Aatash Kadeh; but on the other hand, I brought to light another ancient Aatash Kadeh, and for this, hopefully my visit to this place will be of some use to my colleagues. I emphasized to all local scholars and the Archeological Society members, and the President of the Republic later on, the importance of this Aatash Kadeh and implored them to take good care for its preservation.
A closer examination of construction of the tower shows that this is a monumental structure, with large wall thickness (15 ft. at the ground, 12 ft. at the top) and with 117 footsteps from the first floor to the upper area of the roof.

This type of tower temples originated and developed in Medes, where the basic building material was sun-dried clay brick. Archaeologist David B. Stronach excavated a towering fire temple in the territory of the Medes (Tepe Nush-e Jan), where the flame was taken upstairs to the roof of the temple and the fire was visible from afar.
To build a mud-brick high hollow tower, it was necessary to take a considerable thickness of the walls for the strength and provide a massive overhang (buttress).

Towering fire temple of Sassanian times existed in Ardasher-Khwarrah in the province of Pars (now Firouzabad):

- built by Ardeshir I and was located at the center of the city and it was over 90 ft. high and spiral in design.
Some Dimensions of this Baku Atash Kadeh Tower

A closer examination of construction of the tower shows that this is a monumental structure, with large wall thickness (5 m at the ground, 4 m at the top) and with 117 footsteps from the first floor to the upper area.

Towering fire temple of Sassanian times existed in Ardasher-Khwarrah in the province of Pars (now Firouzabad). This fire temple was built by shah Ardeshir I and was located at the center of the city. It was a 30 m high and spiral in design. This architectural type influenced on architecture of Great Mosque of Samarra in Iraq.
Some Dimensions of this Baku Atash Kadeh Tower

- According to the measurement drawings, its internal height is 84 ft. from the ground floor to open area.
- The external dimensions of the tower from the entrance approximately 96 ft.
- On the parapet before the reconstruction were seven thumb-burners.
- In the tower there are narrow windows and a well with drinking water.
Some Dimensions of this Baku Atash Kadeh Tower

- In the wall of the tower on the west side was aisle tile, partially preserved to date in a very pure form.
- Maiden’s Tower has the vestibule on its ground floor and seven floors with fire altar niches where the “eternal” fires burned.
- In ancient times a stone gas standpipe with hole led up gas to each niche-altar on each floor.

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Artist’s sketch of this Baku Atash Kadeh Tower when it was burning the natural gas.
The fact that the “Maiden’s tower” was part of the religious complex, was confirmed by one more ritual structures near the tower.

In 1964, in front of the “Maiden’s tower”, a fifty meters to the west, archaeologists O. Ismizade and Jiddi at a depth of four meters from the existing ground surface found an almost well-preserved altar of fire, which, unfortunately, was soon destroyed.
The Real Surkhani, Baku Atash Kadeh, Absheron Peninsula, Azerbaijan

Well preserved Fire Altar near Baku Atash Kadeh Tower

Excavated Altar and its schematic

Altar Fire on coin Ardashir Babakan
Altar had three-tier octagonal base, each step was 9-10 ins. tall. At the center of the upper base has been installed an octagonal tower 44 ins. high and 18 ins. at the top. Traces of fire and oil is clearly seen on the top. The column had no openings for gas; oil was burned in a shallow bowl with a round spherical cavity on the top of the column. The whole height of the altar was approximately 100 inches.
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Dr. Modi’s visit to a small Dadgah in a Zoroastrian Village:
Three Grades of Fire Temples:
Atash Behram, Aadaraan, Dar-e-Meher
Atash Behram not of the same highest grade as Indian Atash Behrams
The original holy Fire is kept way inside in a small partially lit room. Only a designated Mobed and a “Deh Mobed” can go inside to keep the fire burning. No others are allowed inside.
In the night, Mobed or Deh Mobed performs Atash Nyayesh, offers wood on it to keep it burning all night long and then goes home.

Other devotees coming for prayer start their own fire.

I was informed that if the Holy Fire accidently extinguishes, they gather different Fires from village and perform a Vendidad ceremony on it to restart it.

A secluded Holy Fire Temple and Sharifabad Mobeds with a Parsi Mobed
One particular item drew my attention: a slab to start a fire, Aadosht

Devotees who come to this Atash Behram start their own fire on this slab since they cannot see the real Holy Fire

They also use candles which I did not like!

This was the first time in my life I saw Aadosht which brought back memories of our ancient custom of praying in front of an open Atash Altar as we see in some Hakhamanian and Sassanian Inscriptions.
Our Parsi Afarganyu is not from Iran but adapted in India
In olden days, Fire was placed on a well polished and carved flat surface altar
In old Sassanian and Parthian coins, the Atash Altars are not Afarganyu but a flat slab like the Aadosht in Sharifaabaad
The origin of this Aadosht word is from Pahlavi “Aatashto” – Atash plus “staa” = to stand, which becomes a throne for Atash
Aatashto became Aadosht
In our scripture books from here, it is called “Atash no Khan” – place for Atash similar to that in our Parsi Yazashne Gaah
In olden times, a beautiful carved stone in form of our Afarganyu was used as Aadosht which became a slab later on and then our metal Afargaanyu.
One of the magnificent Photo Frames in the main hall Of Pak Iranshah Atash Behram

Similar to Darius I inscription with a Bow in left hand, praying before an Aadosht!
In our scripture books from here, it is called “Atash no Khan” – place for Atash similar to that in our Parsi Yazashne Gaah
In olden times, a beautiful carved stone in form of our Afarganyu was used as Aadosht which became a slab later on and then our metal Afargaanyu

001 Ardeshir Papakan 224-241 CE

002 Shapur II 309-379 CE

003 Nosherwan–e-Adel 531-579 CE

004 Yazdegard III 632-651 CE
Chashm-e-Shafa – a new archeological find in Afghanistan

This enormous carved rock, which was once contained within a very large building, dates to the Achaemenid period and may have been a Zoroastrian fire altar.
Cheshm-e Shafa in northern Afghanistan has spectacular views but a forlorn, end-of-the-world air.

Broken stone walls once stood high upon a steep and barren hillside.

Far below, a river snakes through a narrow defile, an empty highway hugging its banks.

To the north lie the open steppes; in the south, the jagged peaks of the distant Hindu Kush mountain range rear up in the haze.

But during the fourth century B.C., at the height of the Persian Empire, Cheshm-e Shafa was more than just a spot from which to view a dramatic landscape.
It was an impressive fortification that controlled the strategic pass between the rugged plains of Central Asia and the road to the rich lowlands of India.

The high walls may also have protected an important Zoroastrian temple and a long-lost city that lies just below.

A team of French archaeologists has now begun the first comprehensive excavation of a site that offers a rare glimpse into the eastern half of one of the world's great empires.
Fire altars have long been at the center of Zoroastrian rituals.

At Cheshm-e Shafa in northern Afghanistan, a French Archaeology team has found a large free-standing altar enclosed within the remains of a massive building dating to at least the fourth century B.C.

The structure is in fact an early fire temple.

This is the earliest Aadosht Altar discovered so far.
In our scripture books from here, it is called “Atash no Khan” – place for Atash similar to that in our Parsi Yazashne Gaah. In olden times, a beautiful carved stone in form of our Afarganyu was used as Aadosht which became a slab later on and then our metal Afarganyu.
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Significance of striking bells in Boi

Mobed Behram Deboo, California Z Center, who has been very active in presenting Religious Discussions to the Z Humdins of CZC, wrote:

Dear Soli:
I would like to tease your brain to find out a historical fact regarding the origin of bells ringing five times a day in Atash Behrams.
- My research suggests that Muslims who converted the fire temples into mosques, removed the bells and other alat.
- I am looking for information that if the bells were installed in the fire temples during the Sassanian era or was this practice started in India.
- One individual claims, we are following the Roman Catholic Church of practicing of ringing the bells.
- Will appreciate if you please elaborate on this subject or any articles published on this topic.
- There is a group of people here at CZC think it's superstition and Christian adoption. But I found two pictures of bells in Atash Gahs of Iran.

I tried to get some answers from the Mumbai Dasturjis and Scholar and Tehran Dasturji. I got no answer from Mumbai but I was very grateful to Dasturji Mobed Mehraban Firouzgary for his reply:
I was very grateful to Dasturji Mobed Mehraban Firouzgary for his reply:

✓ A hypothesis, for which I have no written reference or knowledge of the antiquity of the subject matter, is that the ringing of the Atash Behram Bells followed a relatively, short time in history after the practice of the ringing of the Havanim.

✓ In that case it would, certainly, go back to the time when stone made mortars and pestles were replaced by metallic ones.

✓ Considering that one aspect of such ringing were meant to announce the change of Gahs and call for Prayers, it was realized that an inverted, hanging, mortar and pestle (Metallic) would emit sounds that would travel much further than the one placed on the ground.

✓ In any case I have my serious doubts if, ever, we - or the Hindus etc. - "are following the Roman Catholic Church of practicing of ringing the bells."

✓ As advised the above is a, merely, overheard opinion and am waiting for expert opinions from the Revered Vada Dasturjis and learned Religious authorities (from Mumbai).
Significance of striking bells in Boi

Modern metal Havanim (mortar) and Lalo (pestle) used in Yasna ceremony.

Inverted Havanim and Lalo as a precursor to a bell??!!

The famous Liberty Bell in Philadelphia.
Havanim (mortar) and Lalo (pestle) used in Yasna ceremony made from stone in Hakhaamanian times – ~ 470 B.C. (Persepolis Museum)
Significance of striking bells in Boi

Mobeds carrying Barsam, Havanim, and other religious implements made from stone/metal in Hakhaamanian times – ~ 470 B.C. (Persepolis carvings)
Significance of striking bells in Boi

San Jose Daremeher Boi Ceremony

Dallas Daremeher Boi Ceremony

Dallas Daremeher Boi Ceremony
Significance of striking bells in Boi

Background Explanation of the Ringing of the Bells in Atash Behram Boi Ceremony

✓ The Boi Ceremony in all 8 Indian Atash Behrams are performed 5 times/day at the change of 5 Gehs.
✓ At first, the Mobed enters the Sanctum Sanctorum, cleans the Afarganyu of the Padshah Saheb, and places long sandalwood pieces on the Atash in a crisscross pattern, forming the Maachi (throne)
✓ In Iranshah Atash Behram, 9 pieces are used; in Dadiseth Atash Behram in Mumbai, 5 pieces are used; in Navsari, Surat and other Atash Behrams, 6 pieces are used.
✓ In Iranshah Atash Behram, after the 9 pieces are placed, the Mobed washes the pedestal and then places small pieces of sandalwood on Atash and then rings one bell after taking Dadar Ahura Mazda’s name.
✓ This first bell is the signal to all Behdins that the Geh has changed and it is time to pray in the new Geh.
✓ Then in all Atash Behrams, after a certain ritual, the Mobed starts Atash Nyayesh and at the words Dushmata, Duzhukhta and Duzhvarshta, he strikes the bell 3 times each.
✓ In Kadmi Atash Behrams, the Mobed strikes the 3 bells in the middle of the Atash Nyayesh reciting 3 sentences each, (Saoche buye ahmya nmāne, mat-saoche buye ahmya nmāne, raochahi buye ahmya nmāne,) and repeats it for each of the three Atash Nyayeshes he prays.
✓ In Adarians or Dadgahs, only 3 bells are struck during the Boi ceremony.
Significance of striking bells in Boi

Explanation of the Ringing of the 9 Bells in Atash Behram Boi Ceremony
Book: Dasturji Dabu – Explanation of Boi Ceremony (in Gujarati, translated by me)

In almost all religions, there are prayers to exorcise bad spirits from surroundings.

- In Hindu Religion, there is a “Gantaarva” ceremony (Puja) to get rid of bad spirits (“Bhut-Pishaach”) by calling their names. In Christians, they do similar ceremonies by ringing the bells in a church.

- In our Zoroastrian Religion, in the Yasna ceremony, (Yasna 27), Avesta prayers are recited while striking pestle (“laalo”) inside metal mortar (“Haavanim”), while reciting “Snathaai” (get rid of) the Daevas (evil spirits) of bad temper, hatred, etc.

- So, in the Boi ceremony, the ringing of the bells while reciting “Dushmata, Duzhukhta, Duzhvarshta” is to remove bad thoughts, words and deeds from the environment.

- There is another reason for this ringing of the bells. In Muslim Religion, at the time of prayers five times a day, the Muezzin shouts from the Minaret “Allah Ho Akbar” (The God is Great) to let the faithful know that it is time for the prayers.

- Similarly, the ringing of these bells also is an announcement to all Zoroastrians that it is time to start the prayers. The English word “bang” is similar to the Pahlavi word “bung” which due to the peculiarity of the Pahlavi script, can also be read as “boi”.

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Significance of striking bells in Boi

Explanation of the Ringing of the 9 Bells in Atash Behram Boi Ceremony
Book: Dasturji Dabu – Explanation of Boi Ceremony (in Gujarati, translated by me)

- In the first place, when Zarathushtris in homes or on a street hear the peal of the bells from the Atash Behram Boi ceremony, they are supposed to think of getting rid of all the evil thoughts, words, and deeds from their minds and in Hamazori cooperate (Hamkaar) to get rid of them together. Because of this, many used to snap their fingers while reciting these words.

- Secondly, this also gives a signal that in the court of Atash Padshah, there is a change of guard and the Atash Padshah once again is ready to sit on his throne (Maachi) and all Humdins should combine as one to welcome this enthronement.

- In fact, in ancient Iran, the Dadgahs also were a seat of judgment and at each Geh, a new judge presided in it. Hence, the ringing of the bells in Dadgahs was a sign of heralding a new judge.

- Some scholars suggest that the word Boi means fragrance (“Bui-khushbo”) and the ringing of the bells enhances the holy environment of Atash Padshah with the pure surroundings of fragrant frankincense.

- Kadmi Mobeds do not ring the bells at Dushmata, Duzhukhta, Duzhvarshta, but ring them while reciting the middle of the Atash Nyayesh invoking Behram Yazata which is the Angel of victory and so the ringing of the bells declares the victory. (In Hindu kingdoms, the change of certain time of day (“Chogadyu”) was heralded by a special ceremony (“Puja”) of victory.)
Thus with different aims, the Athravan Saheb in the inner sanctum hopes to receive help from the Humdins outside and then whether these holy words are for driving away all evils, or to give signal for the prayer time, or to signal the victory, the ringing of the bells signals all faithful to combine in prayers in a joint Humbandagi in all the homes and streets creating a strong prayerful environment similar to all the threads combining together to create a strong rope and also according to the Hindi proverb: Everyone’s cane with only one burden (“Sabkee lakdi, ek kaa boj”)! The Christian churches also ring the bells for different occasions like calling the faithful for the prayer, announcing someone’s death, celebrating a wedding, etc.

So according to Dasturji Khurshed Daboo, the ringing of the bells have 3 fold purpose:
1. To call the faithful to the prayers
2. To exorcise the evil spirits
3. To celebrate the enthronement and triumph of Atash Padshah Saheb!
Dadgah Boi Bell heralding a new judge

- In fact, in ancient Iran, the Dadgahs also were a seat of judgment and at each Geh, a new judge presided in it. Hence, the ringing of the bells in Dadgahs was a sign of heralding a new judge.

Noshirwan Adil’s Bell outside his palace was struck for seeking justice from the emperor!!

- Khushro I (531-579) (Naushirvan Adil) – Legendary Ruler
- Adil means Just and many stories and legends for his legendary justice
- anyone can come to his palace and pull a chain connected to a large bell when he/she/it needed justice
- he will bring the complainant to court and deliver justice
- **once the bell rings and lo and behold it was an old horse!**
- he summoned all his officers to find out whose horse it was and why he is not taken care of
- they found that he belonged to a prominent army officer who relinquished him in his old age
- Khushro called the officer, reprimanded him and make him take care of his horse royally until his death!

- It is reported that Prophet Muhammad took pride in the fact that he was born in the reign of Naushirvan Adil (570 AD)!

Significance of striking bells in Boi
Zoroastrian Subjects

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2. Evolution of our Afargaanyu
3. Significance of striking bells in Boi
4. Vakhshur-e-Vakhshuraan Zarathushtra Spitaman, our Prophet, Mathematician, Astronomer
5. Zarathushtra’s Birth Place
6. Cyber Hum Bandagi in English
7. Cyber Hama Zor Greeting
8. Acknowledgements
Stars have fascinated humans for ages; some have worshipped it, others have studied it.

Astron in Greek language means Star and Astronomy is the science of the heavenly bodies.

In Ancient Iran the study of stars and planets and its effect on humans had been a subject of research and they made good use of the knowledge they gained from such research (ASTRONOMY IN ANCIENT IRAN - Fariborz Rahnamoon).

According to the first century BCE Roman historian Trogus Pompeius, Zoroaster was the founder of the magian science and knowledge of the stars.

While there is a Zoroastrian tradition in astrology, Zoroastrians do not see Zarathushtra as an astrologer. Rather, they see Zoroaster as a wise person who developed an integrated understanding of theology, philosophy, ethics, the sciences (including astronomy), health and order – in other words, active, meaningful, holistic, ethical, lawful living.

A few Zoroastrians texts do speak of Zoroaster as an astronomer and someone who built an astronomical observatory.

One of the primary purposes of the observatory was to measure time, maintain a very precise calendar and predict the seasons and accompanying weather changes – in other words, applied astronomy.

The calendar was used to make preparations for planting and harvesting crops; the time for taking animals to pasture or on pastoral circuits, and even the starting and ending of the caravan season for trading and travel journeys along the Silk Roads.
The Zoroastrian year started with the spring equinox (commonly March 21). The resulting calendar was very accurate.

Some writers state that this system of starting the year on the equinox produced an automatically self-adjusting calendar that did not need to rely on specified intercalary (leap) days but which were inserted automatically.

Today one of the important unification tools of world communication, trade and commerce is the use of the Prime Meridian at Greenwich and International Date Line.

This notion of having a Date Line is an Iranian one and the ancient Greenwich was located in Sistan in Iran and called NIMROUZ meaning Half Day or Noon.

An Observatory was built and called the Nimrouz Observatory. Prime Meridian was established at its Longitude.

In present measurements, Sistan is at: Lat. 33.5 degs. N, Long. 62 degs. E.

The choice of the location was based on the information that beyond 67 degrees North there was no civilization and so they took the halfway point at 33.5.

On the other hand considering from East to West, Sistan was in the center of the ancient civilization thus when it was Noon (NimRouz) in Sistan all the countries of the Ancient Civilization had sunshine, in the Eastern most corner there would be sunset and the Western most corner it would be dawn.

Many scholars attribute the NIMROUZ observatory to Zarathushtra.
Lake Urmia Region, Zarathushtra’s Birth Place, Balkh, Bactria, the Court of King Vishtaaspa, and Zarathushtra’s Observatory.
The priests of Zoroastrianism were known to the Greeks as the magi (singular: magus).

Plato (429–347 BCE) calls Zoroaster the founder of the doctrine of the Magi.

According to one of Plato's disciples, Hermodorus, Zoroaster was a ‘Persian’ and the first Magian.

The head of the magi is sometimes referred to as the arch-magus.

Zoroastrians call the position of arch-magus, Mobed-e Mobedan.

According to the Zoroastrian text the Jamasp Namah (the Book of Jamaspa), as well as Western sources, Zoroaster was the first Mobed-e Mobedan and upon his passing away, that office was inherited by a noted contemporary, Jamaspa.

In Zoroastrian literature, it is Jamaspa (and not Zoroaster) who figures prominently as an astrologer.

Jamaspa was a contemporary of Zoroaster. He was the prime minister of Zoroaster’s patron king Vishtaspa (later known as Gushtaspa) and an early supporter and disciple of Zoroaster. Jamaspa was renowned for his learning, immense store of knowledge and wisdom.

According to Zoroastrian old texts, after King Vishtaspa accepted Zarathushtra’s religion as the Court Religion, Zarathushtra prayed to Ahura Mazda and conferred a precious gift to Gushtaspa, Jamaspa, Gushtaspa’s son Asfandiyar, and Peshotan.

He gave Jamaspa flowers to smell which gave him ability to see the future and predict events.
NOW ROOZ 3751 – Fariborz Rahnamoon
http://ahura.homestead.com/NOW-ROOZ-3751.html

- This year, we are entering the 3751st year since Zarathushtra celebrated the vernal equinox with King Gushtaspa of Balkh.
- Thirteen years later, Zarathushtra was in his planetarium near Lake Hamoun in Sistan when his calculations revealed that the vernal equinox of 1725 BCE would coincide with sunrise in Sistan in the kingdom of Balkh.
- In other words the new year (equinox) and the new day (sunrise) would start at the same time. He named that New Year - New Day - NOW ROOZ.
- Thereafter any year that the sunrise coincided with the equinox in Greater Persia it was called Now Rooz.
One such event was recorded at Persepolis in 487 BCE. Persian scholars had pre-calculated and King Daryush had built the Apadana Palace to specification and placed a square stone at the entrance. Everyone had gathered in their best attire and were waiting the moment of the equinox. Just when the equinox was proclaimed the first rays of the rising sun lit the square stone. This was a rare occasion and dignitaries from all over the Empire had come to see and pay their respect to the Science of the Persians. We see that depicted in bas relief all over Takht e Jamshid.


In Quebec and Ontario Canada there will be about a minute lapse between the two events.
Raphael’s Masterpiece frescoe – The School of Athens, in the Stanza Della Segnatura, in the Apostolic Palace in the Vatican!

Raphael – The School of Athens
21 Sages of ancient times!
Zarathushtra in lower right corner
holding a Celestial Sphere facing Ptolemy holding a Terrestrial Sphere
Raphael’s Masterpiece frescoe – The School of Athens, in the Stanza Della Segnatura, in the Apostolic Palace in the Vatican!

Vakhshur-e-Vakhshuraan Zarathushtra Spitaman, our Prophet, Mathematician, Astronomer

Raphael – The School of Athens
Zarathushtra (left) holding a Celestial Sphere facing Ptolemy holding a Terrestrial Sphere with Apelles and Protogenes looking on (right)
The mere fact that Raphael included Zarathushtra as one of the 21 sages of the old, and also he depicts him holding the celestial sphere proves that he and his contemporaries acknowledge the fact that Zarathushtra was one of the first astronomers/astrologers. That is the highest complement by a Master Painter to Zarathushtra, our Prophet, Mathematician, Astronomer!
Vakhshur-e-Vakhshuraan Zarathushtra Spitaman, our Prophet, Mathematician, Astronomer

Meaning of the title: Vakhshur-e-Vakhshuran

Reply by Dasturji Mobed Mehraban Firouzgary, Tehran, to my query:

1 –Vakhshur, actually Vakhsh var. (Just as Dast var has changed into Dastur)
   Vakhsh= Expanding / increasing. Intended to convey expanding Halo (e.g Waxing of the moon) and Var= Provider (of the Manthras)
   In general Vakhshur has come to be synonymous to the reference to Prophet Zarathushtra. The Vakhshuran, following, makes it superlative e.g. King of Kings.

   Vakhshur e Vakhshuran Zarathushtra Spitaman
   means
   Prophet of Prophets Zarathushtra Spitaman!

Zarathushtra is beautifully eulogized in F Yasht: (Para 93-94)

Yehe zâñthae-cha vakhshae-cha - In whose birth and growth
Same word Vakhsh is used here!
Zoroastrian Subjects

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Lake Urmia (Chaechast), Azerbaijan, Zarathushtra’s Birthplace
Lake Urmia (Chaechast), Azerbaijan, Zarathushtra’s Birthplace

Zarathushtra’s Birthplace, Village Aamui

Azerbaijan, Iran
Lake Urmia (Chaechashta), the land of Zarathushtra’s Birth Place!

Āthro Ahurahe Mazdāo puthra, Kavoish Haosravanghahe, varoish Haosravanghahe, Asnavantahe garoish Mazdadhātahe, Chaechishtahe varoish Mazdadhātahe. (Atash Nyayesh)
For the propitiation of Ahura Mazda’s son Aatash, of Kaikhushroo Emperor, of Kaikhushroo’s Lake, of Ahura Mazda created Mount Asnavanta, of Ahura Mazda created Lake Chaechishta!

The Middle and Bottom of Iran country is called the country of famous Hakhaamanian and Sasanian Emperors!
In the same way, Azerbaijan is called the country of Zarathushtra!
This has been said by many old and ancient Historians and in our prayers like Atash Nyayesh, and in Pahlavi and Persian books, the Lake Urmia and the surrounding Azerbaijan country is connected with our Paygaamber, Asho Zarathushtra!
And then Balkh and its surroundings are referred to as the place where Zarathushtra propagated his Religion!
Zarathushtra travels from Lake Urmia Region to Balkh, Bactria at the Court of King Vishtaspa
Zarathushtra travels from Lake Urmia Region to Balkh, Bactria at the Court of King Vishtaspa
Aamui, Urmia, Zarathushtra’s Birth Place!

First Parsi to visit Lake Urmia and Urmia and the alleged Birth Place of Zarathushtra, Aamui Village, about 12 miles from Urmia!

Not just our ancient books, but also, Prof. Jackson, and Arab Historians such as Yakut (1220 CE), Ibn Khordadbeh (816 CE) and Al Baladhari (816 CE) state that the village of Aamui, 12 miles from Urmia is the birth place of Zarathushtra!

Started from Tabriz to Urmia on October 5th 1925. May be the first time, a car was used to travel to Urmia and Aamui! There were actually no roads and the journey was quite difficult.

Our Irani brethren call Iran the whole world’s heaven! They call Azerbaijan the Heaven of Iran! And they call Urmia country the Heaven of Azerbaijan!
Surroundings of Aamui, Urmia, Zarathushtra’s Birth Place!

The first thing I did in Aamui is bent on my knees and took some earth and put it on my forehead in memory of the birth place of our Payghambar!

The surroundings are just wonderful – greenery all around, a clean water small river running by, beautiful mountains, and lots and lots of goats and sheep!

A great place for a young man to get inspiration and have Qu/Ans with his creator Ahura Mazda and get revelation for his religion!

Many Greek Philosophers like Plato, and the Scandinavian poem Edda mentions that Zarathushtra laughed on his birth!

And that wonderful famous Farvardin Yasht Eulogy describing the whole nature at his birth as:

If you stand on the side of one of its mountains and look over the beautiful vista of the surroundings, you can understand the reason for this eulogy in Farvardin Yasht!
The Oldest Recorded Eulogy in Human History

Zarathushtra is beautifully eulogized in F Yasht:

Yehe zâñthae-cha vakhshae-cha, urvâsen âpô urvarâos-cha; Yehe zâñthae-cha vakhshae-cha, ukhshîn âpô urvarâos-cha;
Yehe zâñthae-cha vakhshae-cha, ushtatâtem nimravanta víspâo spentô dâtâo dâmân:

In whose birth and growth, the waters and plants flourished;
in whose birth and growth, the waters and plants increased;
and in whose birth and growth, the entire creation of Spenta Mainyu cried out:
The Oldest Recorded Eulogy in Human History

Ushta-nô zâtô âthrava yô Spitâmô Zarathushtrô!

Hail to us, for us is born an Āthravan, Zarathushtra Spitâma!

idha apâm vîjasâiti, Vanghvi Daenâ Mâzdayasnish vîspâish avi karshvân yâish hapta. (Yt. 93-94)

The Good Religion of Mazda-worship will, henceforth, spread all over the seven regions of the earth.

What a beautiful way of eulogizing an amazing Prophet in 9 beautiful verses who professed the first monotheistic religion in the history of mankind!
1. Sahand (Asnavant) Mountain

✓ Coming to Urmia, you can see this Sahand MT.
✓ Mt. Asnavant is remembered in Atash Nyayesh and it has been transformed to Sahand over the years.
✓ It is also mentioned with Lake Chaechisht (Urmia)!
✓ There is a cave on this 12,000 ft. high mountain which is connected to Zarathushtra as his place of meditation.
✓ Nearby there is a small village, Gardaa, which is connected to Zarathushtra where he got his inspiration and revelation!
1. Savilaan (Sebilan) or Ushidarena Mountain
✓ Ushidarena Mountain (Hormuzd Yasht) is where Zarathushtra acquired his Ush = Revelation.
✓ Savilaan seems to be derived from Ushidarena
✓ His meetings with Ameshashpands may have also occurred on this mountain
✓ Not only our scriptures, but also Ean Haokal (10th CE), and Kaazvini (1262 CE), Mirkhond (1474 CE) according to Prof. Jackson have mentioned that this is the mountain where Zarathushtra got his revelation from Ahura Mazda!
1. Savilaan (or Sebilan) or Ushidarena Mountain (Hormuzd Yasht) is where Zarathushtra acquired his Ushir=Revelation.

- Ushidarena Mountain (Hormuzd Yasht) is where Zarathushtra acquired his Ushir=Revelation.
- Savilaan seems to be derived from Ushidarena Mountain.
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- Not only our scriptures, but also Ean Haokal (10th CE), and Kaazvini (1262 CE), Mirkhond (1474 CE) according to Prof. Jackson have mentioned this is the mountain where Zarathushtra got his revelation from Ahura Mazda!
Aamui Village, near Urmia, the Birth Place of Zarathushtra!
There are many other places allegedly calling themselves also as his Birth Place!

With this, I leave you all to do more study on your own and may be we all one day visit this place of the birth of Asho Zarathushtra Spitama!
Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us then be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

We want to thank late Sir Dr. Ervad Jivanji Jamshedji Modi, Panthaki of J.D. Colaba Agiyari, 1871 – 1933, For this wonderful Diary of his journey!
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Are there any prayers I can pray in English?

Many of the Zoroastrian Dastoors (highly-qualified Mobeds) and scholars have written books offering guidance to Zoroastrians on how to live a faithful and productive life. One of the best of these is *Homage Unto Ahura Mazda*. This excellent book, in the form of daily thoughts, was written meticulously by a great scholar who was the Head Dastoor of the Anjuman (Zoroastrian Community) in Karachi, Pakistan, over a long period of time until his death, Dastur Dr. M. N. Dhalla. The full text of the book is available for free online at [http://www.zarathushtra.com/z/article/dhalla/index.htm](http://www.zarathushtra.com/z/article/dhalla/index.htm).

For those who find themselves lost in our Prayers, not understanding their meanings, and are interested in praying in English language related to our Religion, I recommend this book with a whole heart. Its wisdom is such that I believe it would be inspirational to people of all religious traditions.
The Birth of Zarathushtra

Glorious springtime had come and wide awake was the earth from its wintry sleep. Fields and forests that seemed deadened winter long, were now blooming. Green grass carpeted the earth and warbling birds and flocks and herds made merry on the grassy ground. Blades and ears bloomed into corn and golden corn waved in fair fields. Smiling flowers shed their fragrance all around and the air was laden with the perfume of flowers. The song of birds and the whistlings of the wind in elm and oak, plane and pomegranate, walnut and mulberry trees, and the murmur of water running swiftly over the pebbles caressed the souls of the young and old.

In Airyana Vaeja, the stem-land of the Aryans, on a beauteous morn of an auspicious day, the swift-horsed sun had scattered the clouds and was shining in great splendour. The earth was bathed in his morning light. Then in a village, nestling by the river Darejya, blossomed a life divine in human flesh. A boy babe was born unto Dogdo and Pourushaspa of the family of the Spitamas.
The Birth of Zarathushtra

Ahura Mazda’s light and peace descended on the happy home. The holy child was named Zarathushtra. Light radiated from the infant prophet of God with divine effulgence. His countenance bore the impress of divinity. Righteousness was imprinted on his face. Gentle as lamb and sweet as nightingale and pure as dove and brave as lion was he, the like of whom no eye had seen, no ear had heard. Pure in body and pure in mind and pure in heart and pure in spirit, he was Mazda's incomparable gift to mankind.

Nature donned a festive garb, the sun shone with a brighter glory, trees strewed flowers on the ground, roses bloomed in luxuriant profusion, flowers and leaves and grass scented the air with sweet fragrance, creepers climbed the hedges in riotous luxuriance, the birds carolled in the air, myriads of tiny drops of the morning dew shone like pearls upon the leaves and branches of the trees, the clouds floated merrily in heaven, the winds made music in the lofty trees, joy filled the air, and the trees
The Birth of Zarathushtra

with their leafy tongues and the blades of grass and the grains of sand and birds and beasts and men and everything everywhere in joyous unison sang: "Hail, for to us is born the Athravan, Spitama Zarathushtra."

The hearts of men and women and children thrilled with joy and their souls were filled with rapture, and, singing jubilant songs they hastened to the house where the light of the world was now shining. The bells in the temples rang and their sound floated on the air. When there was joy and merriment all over the world of man, the world of angels fell not behind. The heavenly hosts there joined in universal rejoicings and Ahura Mazda's Abode of Song rang with the divine music of ecstasy.
The Birth of Zarathushtra

Zarathushtra, thy prophet, Ahura Mazda, mirrors thee in his righteous self. He reveals thy divine image in his holy person. Thou art completely and perfectly reflected in him. May his sublime teachings enter into my life and transform me into his likeness. Enable me to make conscientious efforts to be like him and to reproduce his virtues in my own character. Teach me to live after Zarathushtra's ideals and help me to carry on his plan of life, that I may live in conscious association with him and conform my life to his ideal life, O Giver of life.
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In that spirit of Communal, National & International Unity Prayer with Humata, Hukhta, Hvarshta, Let us all make a resolve to follow these principles by performing the age old Zarathushtri greeting of Hama Zor with your neighbors reciting: “Hamaa Zor, Hamaa Asho Bade!” “Let us be United in Righteousness!”

Good Thoughts
Good Words
Good Deeds

Cyber Hama Zor Greeting
Ervad Soli Dastur instructing Cardinal Gracias, Mumbai, India in performing Hamaa Zor Greeting and Ervad Cyrus Dastoor
Greetings between participants during a Religious Tele Class.
Greetings between participants during a Religious Tele Class.
Zoroastrian Subjects

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Thank you all for your Participation, patience and time!
Thank you all who helped me to collect information for this talk!
And the last but not the least,
My Dear Wife Jo Ann,
For 46 years of supporting me in all my crazy endeavors!

And do not forget our Cyber Hamaa Zor Greeting!