



## ANJOMAN-E ZARTOŠTĪĀN

**ANJOMAN-E ZARTOŠTĪĀN** (the Society of Zoroastrians), designation of formally instituted Zoroastrian associations in Iran (mainly in Kermān, Tehran, and Yazd), and possibly the first to use the designation *anjoman* in its modern application; they are (were) composed of local leaders elected by their communities and bound by an oath of office to protect their interests, to organize and supervise their social affairs, to ensure the protection and good maintenance of their various establishments, to promote their general well-being and the cause of their faith, to settle internal disputes, and above all to represent them vis-à-vis the central government and the local authorities. Basically civic and non-political in nature (although at times they did engage in politics) the Zoroastrian *anjomans* have a longer history than other *anjomans* in Iran, dating from as early as the mid-19th century with the arrival in Yazd of Manekji Limji Hataria (Mānekjī Šāḥeb according to Persian sources; Antaria in Karaka, *Paris* I, p. 72; Hantaria in Jackson, *Persia*, p. 397), who later received the Sufi title of Darvīš-e Fānī in Kermān (Ošīdarī, *Pahlavī wa Zartoštīān*, p. 427). He was a businessman, traveling in India and Afghanistan. Fluent in Persian and well-versed in its literature, he had already tried to visit Iran but had to forego his decision owing to the lack of security there (Ošīdarī, op. cit., pp. 441-42; Šahmardān, *Farzānagān*, pp. 619-22). With the improvement of security in Iran under Amīr-e Kabīr (q.v.), Manekji decided to realize his old dreams. Through the good offices of Āqā Khan Maḥallatī he was able to secure from the British representative in Bombay letters of recommendation addressed to the latter's colleagues in Būšeḥr and Tehran. Hearing of Manekji's intention, the Society for the Amelioration of the



Conditions of the Zoroastrians of Persia appointed him its agent (*wakīl*) in Iran and instructed him to make a direct report to the society about the condition of the Zoroastrian community there. Also it seems that due to the mishandling of funds sent earlier by the Parsis to Yazd the society wanted to appoint a representative in Iran (see Šahmardān, *Farzānagān*, pp. 621-23; Ošīdarī, op. cit., p. 444).

A devout Zoroastrian, Manekji fully committed himself to improving the living conditions of his fellow Zoroastrians in Iran; he also had the honesty, tact, patience, resourcefulness, courage, and physical endurance that this task required. He arrived in Yazd in Esfand, 1223 Y[azdegerdī]/Rajab, 1270/March, 1854 to find a rapidly shrinking community of mostly ignorant, helpless, destitute souls, subject to incredibly degrading bigotry and injustice, and plagued by petty internal rivalries (see Karaka, op. cit., pp. 59-70; Browne, *A Year*, pp. 371-73; N. Malcolm, *In a Persian Town*, pp. 44-53; Landor, *Coveted Lands I*, pp. 399, 403-04; Jackson, *Persia*, pp. 374-75). Three days after his arrival in Yazd, Manekji invited the community leaders to a conference in which the foundation of the *anjoman* of Yazd (Panchāyat-e Yazd) was laid, after the model of the Parsi Panchayat in Bombay. Until then the civic leadership of the Zoroastrian community had been entrusted to a council of elders or a *kalāntar* (mayor), officially recognized in such capacity by Muslim authorities (Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, pp. 209-10; Ošīdarī, op. cit., p. 267; Šahmardān, *Zartoštīān*, pp. 136-38).

Manekji stayed in Yazd for fourteen months and then went to Kermān where he founded in 1225 Y./1271/1855 another *anjoman*, composed of twelve members, all personally nominated by him. It seems that he also reserved for himself the right to expel from the Anjoman any member that he deemed unfit (see, e.g., the petition from a certain Ardašīr who had been expelled because of bigamy, but had later been reinstated, in Ošīdarī, op. cit., pp. 264-65).

Manekji returned to Kermān ten years later, in 1235 Y./1282/1866, to find that the *anjoman* there had dwindled to a mere seven members. In a speech addressed to the *anjoman*, he nominated five new members and designated Dastūr Jahāngīr, Mollā Goštāsb Dīnyār, and Mollā Behrūz as chairman (*sarnešīn*), treasurer (*taḥwīldār*), and secretary (*monšī*) respectively. He also outlined briefly the objectives of the *anjoman*, namely to encourage and promote the cause of “modern” education in the community (with funds provided by the Parsi community in Bombay, three primary schools were founded and placed under the directorship of the *anjoman* of Kermān); to



engage in philanthropic activities; to supervise the maintenance of Zoroastrian shrines and *daḳmas* (burial towers); to establish a trust fund to help the needy brethren; and to make sure that the religious observances were properly honored. In order to encourage interest in education, which he rightly considered vital for the amelioration of their conditions, he proposed to take with him to Tehran twelve community youngsters for three years of formal education; parents apparently declined to comply at first (Šahmardān, *Zartoštīān*, pp. 326f.), but later he was allowed to take thirty-two Kermānī and Yazdī children to Tehran (idem, *Farzānagān*, p. 626; Ošīdarī, op. cit., p. 429).

The leaders of the *anjomān* of Yazd did not seem to have much appreciated Manekji's efforts. It met every now and then, evidently with little achievement of its own, although at least eleven schools had already been founded with funds provided by the Bombay community and Manekji's personal donation. Records show that during its final session in 1225 Y./1272/1856, a large number of documents including firmans, decrees, and other official directives pertaining to the Zoroastrian community was collected from private hands to be kept in the safe of the Ātaš-e Varahrām where this meeting was held. What appears to be the first report of the *anjomān* of Yazd to Bombay, dated Farvardīn, 1224 Y./1855 (partially reproduced in Ošīdarī, p. 267), bears the signatures of the twelve founding members: Dastūr Nāmdār, Mōbad Kayḳosrow, Rostam son of Dīnyār, etc.; see also Boyce, "Manekji," pp. 28-29; Karaka, op. cit., pp. 83-84; Ošīdarī, op. cit., pp. 270-73; Šahmardān, *Farzānagān*, pp. 638-39; idem, *Zartoštīān*, pp. 202-03, 392-95.

Manekji died in 1259 Y./1890. He had spent more than thirty years in Iran, devoting all his energy and the resources that he could muster (including the influence of the British and French Legations in Tehran) to the welfare of his brethren in Iran. He had been granted an audience with Nāšer-al-dīn Shah, the king, and another one with the crown prince, Moḡaffar-al-dīn Mīrzā, in Tabrīz. He combined shrewdness with liberality to appease the authorities, including the clergy (Šahmardān, *Farzānagān*, pp. 631-32, 639-40; idem, *Zartoštīān*, p. 326). The bold venture of founding schools at a relatively early date for Zoroastrian youngsters in traditional Zoroastrian cities like Yazd and Kermān, and even in villages, helped lay the foundation for the success of future generations of Iranian Zoroastrians when, in the early 20th century, Western-type education started to become desirable and much of the early social bigotry was gone or suppressed by Reżā Shah Pahlavī. Under Manekji's leadership the *anjomāns* of Yazd and Kermān had old Zoroastrian



establishments repaired and new ones made, mostly thanks to the funds provided by the Bombay community (Boyce, “Manekji,” pp. 22-24, 28-29; Karaka, op. cit., pp. 87, 88; Ošīdarī, op. cit., pp. 255, 268, 269, 272, 445; Šahmardān, *Farzānagān*, pp. 622; idem, *Zartoštīān*, pp. 130, 161). The crown of his achievements in Iran, however, was the official annulment of the *jezya*, a poll tax levied on non-Muslims, which easily lent itself to much abuse and harassment of the community as well as individuals (Boyce, “Manekji,” p. 24; idem, *Zoroastrians*, p. 210; Jackson, *Persia*, p. 374; Karaka, op. cit., pp. 78-81; Malcolm, op. cit., p. 49; Ošīdarī, op. cit., pp. 436f.; Šahmardān, *Zartoštīān*, pp. 215f.). The occasion was celebrated with much festivity in the garden of Mīrzā ‘Alī Khan Zāhīr-al-dawla.

Soon after Manekji’s death in 1890, Kaykosrowjī Kānšāheb, a former refugee from Kūčaboyūk in Yazd, was sent from India to Iran to take Manekji’s place as *wakīl-e anjoman-e mawqūfāt-e fārsīān-e Hend* (Šahmardān, *Farzānagān*, p. 553; idem, *Zartoštīān*, p. 270). Once in Tehran, he soon established a cordial relationship with the court (he is referred to in a letter by Farmānfarmā, the governor-general of Kermān, as *moqarrab-e Kāqān*, see Šahmardān, *Zartoštīān*, p. 270) and with the prime minister ‘Alī-Ašgar Khan Amīn-al-solṭān, from whom he received the title of Khan and a gold medal (ibid.; he is addressed by Amīn-al-solṭān as a friend: *‘ālījāh . . . dūstā, mehrbānā*). However, he stayed in the capital for only a year and in 1309/1891-92 left for Yazd, the city with the then largest Zoroastrian population in Iran. There, at the suggestion of Māster Kodābakš Narsīābādī, a man of distinguished educational achievements (for his biography see Šahmardān, *Farzānagān*, pp. 611-16), and after securing permissions from the central government and prince Jalāl-al-dawla, the governor of Yazd, and receiving encouragement from Bombay and with the blessing of local Muslim religious leaders, he founded new *anjomans* in Yazd and Kermān known as Anjoman-e Nāšerī after the name of Nāšer-al-dīn Shah, the reigning Qajar king. Later, after the fall of the Qajar dynasty, the epithet Nāšerī was dropped (Bahman, 1304 Š./February, 1925), and the societies were referred to simply as Anjoman-e Zartoštīān-e Yazd, Kermān, etc. (Ošīdarī, op. cit., p. 87; Šahmardān, *Zartoštīān*, pp. 270-71).

*Yazd*. The new Zoroastrian *anjoman* of Yazd held its first meeting in Šahrīvar, 1261 Y./Rajab, 1309/January, 1892 and was presided over by Kaykosrowjī (the firman for the establishment of Anjoman-e Nāšerī in Yazd and Kermān had been issued in 1308/1890-91; it was confirmed in Šawwāl, 1316/1899 by Moẓaffar-al-dīn Shah, the new monarch; see also Landor, *Coveted Lands* I, p



405). In an introduction to the regulatory guidelines (*ā'in-nāma*) of the *anjoman*, Kaykōsrowjī refers to the uncooperative spirit prevailing in the Zoroastrian community (also a common complaint of Manekji) and the lack of consultative assemblies as the main reasons for founding it. According to him this *anjoman*, or *edāra* (administration, direction) as he actually calls it, was the sole authority to which the individual members of the community had to refer in all their civic affairs. No formal contact was to be made with Muslim authorities by any Zoroastrian except through the good offices of the *anjoman*. The *anjoman* was to be informed of, consulted about, and its sanction solicited for any religious affair involving the Zoroastrian community, otherwise it was void and invalid. Minutes of all proceedings and events had to be registered in three separate books, one for the use of the government, one for the use of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and one to be sent to India.

A regulatory guideline of forty-five articles was drawn up to set down the form and the responsibilities of the *anjoman*. It was to be composed of twenty-eight members selected by the agent (*wakīl* of the Society for the Amelioration of the Conditions of the Zoroastrians of Persia (now replaced by popular vote), with a chairman, known in the community as *kalāntar*, elected by the members (arts. II, V, VI). A minimum of ten votes was needed for any resolution to be considered and finalized (art. XI), except for calling a general meeting of the community, in which case a minimum of sixteen votes was required (art. XXXI). Sessions were to be held for three hours on every Friday (art. XLIV) and any member (including the chairman) failing, without good reason, to report at three consecutive meetings was required to submit his resignation (art. XXIV). The *anjoman* is also designated as the official holder of endowment documents, all of which bearing the signature of three members of the *anjoman* (including the chairman) and a Muslim judge had to be registered in its books and entrusted to it for safe-keeping (art. XXXIV). It was also recommended that the *anjoman* record all deaths, births, and marriages within the Zoroastrian community, and take a general census every five years (art. XXXVII). It also reserved the right to open branches in other towns in Iran and abroad. Its first chairman was Dastūr Šāhrīār (for the names and positions of other members see Šāhmardān, op. cit., p. 271; see also, Landor, op. cit., I, p. 405). Rather unlike its predecessors, the Panchāyat-e Yazd, the Anjoman-e Nāšerī of Yazd had a very active first year, holding 65 sessions in which, among other things, it considered 868 social topics and made rulings over 145 legal questions. Its most enduring achievement, however, was to be the promotion of active interest in Western-type education by founding and



running new schools in towns and villages, much to the dislike and opposition of the Muslim community. The foundation of the first new school for girls is credited to Sohrāb Kayānīān, the chairman of the *anjoman* of Yazd (Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, p. 218; Šahmardān, *Farzānagān*, pp. 470-72, 555-56; idem, *Zartoštīān*, pp. 272-74; Ošīdarī, op. cit., pp. 415-16; see also Landor, op. cit., I, pp. 390, 404-05). Jackson implies that in the meetings of the *anjoman* of Yazd, seats were arranged in the shape of the letter V, in conformity with the description of the council of Ohrmazd in the *Bundahišn* (*Persia*, pp. 356-57).

The Zoroastrians of Yazd had another *anjoman*, composed of sixty-three members, called Anjoman-e Kayrkvāh-e Zartoštīān-e Yazd (approximately: Friends of the Zoroastrians of/in Yazd). It had formulated its own regulatory guidelines in seventy articles and an official oath of membership. Its objectives, as stated in very general terms, were to hold friendly meetings for the exchange of views on a variety of matters, to strengthen the basic elements which hold the community united, and to arrange for such cultural activities as conferences, lectures, etc. It acted independently of, but sometimes in consultation with the Anjoman-e Nāšērī, while trying not to interfere in areas defined as the responsibility of the latter (Ošīdarī, op. cit., pp. 289-91).

*Kermān*. Kermān had a smaller Zoroastrian community and therefore its *anjoman*, formed almost at the same time as the *anjoman* of Yazd, was composed of only twelve members. Its first chairman was Arbāb Goštāsb Dīnyār. The first major achievement of this *anjoman* was the founding of six primary schools, soon to be complemented by a secondary school (Īrānšahr) for boys and later by a vocational school (1325 Š./1946). It also succeeded in having a variety of social restrictions imposed upon the Zoroastrian community removed.

The *anjoman* of Kermān, under the leadership of Mr. Jamšīd Sorūšīān, has been trying to protect the interests of its dwindling community, particularly after World War II, owing to the emigration of entire families to Tehran in search of jobs, education, etc. (see, e.g., Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, p. 222). The minutes of the *anjoman* of Kermān have been preserved and go back for almost 100 years. They constitute important documents which not only reflect the vicissitudes of the Zoroastrian community in Kermān, but also contain useful material of social and economic significance, such as the processing of common commodities over that period (private communication from E. Yarshater, who has examined the material). Of late, Mr. Sorūšīān has begun publishing them in the publications of the Sāzmān-e Farahvahr.



*Tehran*. Until Reżā Shah Tehran never had a significant Zoroastrian community. At the time of Manekji's arrival there in 1856, there were only about 50 (100 according to Ošīdarī, op. cit., p. 234) Zoroastrians living in Tehran, most of whom were hired as gardeners in the royal palaces (Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, p.210; the total Zoroastrian population of Iran at that time is given as 7,711, see Ošīdarī, *ibid.*; Boyce gives a smaller figure). Their only establishment was a small shrine of Bahrām Īzad built around 1830 by Zoroastrian villagers who came to the capital in the summer looking for employment. Manekji, who was much in favor of the emigration of the Zoroastrians to Tehran and supported it actively, bought a house there which he turned into a community center. The center (*wekālat-kāna*) was run by a community representative (*mo'tamad*) entitled *wakīl-al-ra'āyā*, whose responsibility was to help its members in their social affairs (Ošīdarī, op. cit., p. 305). He also built a *daḡma* and a hostel and established a boarding school, using cash rewards at need to persuade parents to send their children to Tehran for study (Boyce, "Manekji," pp. 28-29; Karaka, op. cit., pp. 83-84; Šahmardān, *Farzānagān*, pp. 638-39). Thanks to Manekji's encouragement and efforts, the Tehran community grew steadily and by the turn of the century it had increased to 324 souls with a charity association of its own (Anjoman-e Kayriya-ye Māzdayasnān-e Tehrān; see Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, p. 218; Jackson, *Persia*, p. 425; Ošīdarī, op. cit., p. 320). But the Anjoman-e Nāšeri of Tehran, founded with twelve members by Kaykosrowji in 1261 Y./1891, as well as a few others that followed it, had long since ceased functioning (Ošīdarī, op. cit., p. 336). Even the advent of the constitutional movement with its concomitant public awareness and demand for social justice does not seem to have persuaded the Zoroastrian community in Tehran to organize itself. Almost one year had to pass after the success of the movement and the establishment of the National Assembly (Majlis), which included a Zoroastrian representative, before the community leaders held a meeting in 1276 Y./1325/1907 in the Kāravānsarā-ye Mošīr (a Zoroastrian center of business) to form a new *anjoman*. Fourteen people were elected for two years and were charged with the responsibility to protect the interests of the community and the authority to organize, direct, and supervise its internal affairs. A regulatory guideline (*ā'in-nāma*), formulated in forty-five articles, was also adopted. Two days later, another meeting was held in the *Wekālat-kāna* in which a chairman (Mīrzā Kaykosrow Šāhroḡ, apparently the major force behind the movement), a deputy chairman (Mūsīū [Monsieur] Ardašīr Mehrbān), a book-keeper (Mīrzā Šāhriār Ḳodāmorād), and a secretary (Mīrzā Jamšīd Mehrbān) were elected. The *anjoman* was to meet every Friday (Ošīdarī, op. cit., pp. 305-07, 320).



The members (*hamvandān*) were required (at least from 1333/1915) to take a solemn oath of office before their membership could be finalized. They were all sworn in together by the priest in the temple as they stood holding hands to indicate unity. Then they would sign the same oath, pledging their honor that they would discharge their duties with righteousness, honesty, trust, and truthfulness and in accordance with the Zoroastrian principles of good thought, good words, and good deeds. The basic content of the oath did not change much in the course of time, although there are marked differences of phraseology in the two samples reproduced by Ošīdarī (pp. 323-24). In the more recent one (1353 Š./1975) the Zoroastrian deity Ahura Mazdā has replaced the neutral word God (Ḳodā) of the older (1333/1915) and a specific pledge is made to be patriotic (*Īrān dūst bāšam*); also the earlier frequent use of Arabic words has given way to a pure Persian text.

Mīrzā (later Arbāb) Kayḳosrow Šāhroḳ, the leader of the new *anjōman*, was an astute man of high aspirations, endowed with relentless energy and remarkable administrative talent. Born in Kermān and educated at the American school of Tehran and in Bombay, he had served the Kermānī community as a teacher and the secretary of its *anjōmans*; in Kermān he was responsible for the foundation of a secondary school for boys and an elementary school for girls, and he made the Zoroastrian students of Kermān wear the uniform worn by their Muslim compatriots (Ošīdarī, op. cit., p. 386; Šahmardān, *Farzānagān*, pp. 563-64).

Arbāb Kayḳosrow emerged as the leader of the Zoroastrians of Tehran, although not without tough opposition from within the community (see, e.g., Ošīdarī, op. cit., pp. 332, 346-47), at a time when the entire country was experiencing a period of transition in every aspect of its life, not least in politics. He was faithfully devoted to the welfare of his coreligionists, but, at the same time, also quite intent on using the *anjōman*, and through it the entire Zoroastrian community, as a means for realizing his dreams, even at the cost of violating the *anjōman*'s Articles of Association as well as contradicting himself (e.g., on 24 Mehr 1304 Š./1925, he directed the members of the *anjōman* to dissuade the community from politics and two weeks later encouraged them to take *bast* [sanctuary] in support of Reżā Khan; Ošīdarī, op. cit., pp. 76-77, 353-54). To gain recognition for the *anjōman*, and inevitably for himself, he seized every suitable occasion to introduce it to government institutions, religious and political leaders of high standing, and other politically active *anjōmans*, but he flatly declined the offer of cooperation from



an *anĵoman* of Yazdī merchants in Tehran (see reproduction of letters in Ošīdarī, op. cit., pp. 305-19, 334).

In the turbulent years of the establishing of the constitutional government, Arbāb Kaykosrow, who had been elected to represent the Zoroastrian community in the Majlis, cast his lot, and thereby that of the *anĵoman*, first with the liberals and constitutionalists (a founding member of the *anĵoman*, Farīdūn Kosrow Ahrestānī, was murdered by monarchist thugs) and then with the rising star of Reżā Khan Sardār-e Sepah. Joining other staunch supporters of Reżā Khan (‘A. A. Dāvar and ‘A. Teymūrtāš) in the Revival Party (Ĥezb-e Taĵaddod), he used the *anĵoman*, now indisputably under his control, and all its resources for the cause of the Pahlavi regime (Ošīdarī, op. cit., pp. 57, 68). At his instigation the *anĵoman* quite uncharacteristically arranged for the raising of an arch of triumph upon Reżā Khan’s return from Kūzestān and for the taking of sanctuary (*bast*) at the military academy, demanding the end of the Qajar dynasty (Ošīdarī, op. cit., pp. 67-68, 76-77; Abrahamian, *Between the Two Revolutions*, p. 122). Too many bitter experiences in the recent past more than justified the readiness of the Zoroastrian community to rally behind Reżā Khan, who promised an era of modernization and a strong, secular government, and who had also on several occasions demonstrated his nationalist sentiments regarding pre-Islamic Iran. He seemed to entertain a special liking for the Zoroastrian community, and there were rumors that he was intent on promoting Zoroastrianism at the expense of Islam (Ošīdarī, op. cit., p. 51, cf. p. 60). Under Reżā Shah the Zoroastrians enjoyed relative freedom from harassment and humiliating constraints, and many of their views, concepts, and symbols were adapted and celebrated by his nationalist government (e.g., adoption of the Achemenian winged disc, also a Zoroastrian symbol, as the emblem of the National Bank of Iran, and the Zoroastrian names for the months of the new official calendar), even penetrating into the high school text books, thus coloring the general outlook of the educated class.

Arbāb Kaykosrow kept serving Reżā Shah faithfully and with dedication, often holding key administrative positions besides being the Zoroastrian deputy in the Majlis. After his mysterious death in 1319 Š./1940, which in some reports is attributed to Reżā Shah’s police (Bāmdād, *Reĵāl III*, pp. 179-80; Millspaugh, *Americans in Persia*, p. 37; Wilber, *Riza Shah*, p. 198), he was replaced as the chairman of the *anĵoman* by Arbāb Rostam Gīv (1320-36 Š./1941-57); other chairmen, in the order of succession, have been Dr. Esfandīār Yagānagī (1336-38 Š./1957-59), Arbāb Rostam Gīv (1338-44 Š./1959-65), and Dr. Farhang



Mehr (1344-57 Š./1965-78).

Arbāb Kaykōsrow's personal prestige as a man of high integrity during his thirty-three years of leadership ensured the steady growth of prosperity among the Zoroastrians and the survival of the *anjoman* long after he was gone. He identified his own political life with his chairmanship of the *anjoman* (cf. Ošīdarī, op. cit., p. 356), which owed to him the recognition and the prestige it enjoyed. He did not hesitate to enforce his will upon others if he considered it to be in the best interest of the community (see, e.g., Šahmardān, *Zartoštīān*, p. 160). He was particularly keen on promoting education. The first measure taken by the *anjoman* under his leadership was hiring a teacher for twenty-four Zoroastrian youngsters. A chamber in the same Kāravānsarā-ye Mošīr was used as classroom, and this was the first learning center in Tehran funded and run independently by the Zoroastrian community there. A few months later, at the suggestion of the *anjoman* and with the approval of the Charity Association (Anjoman-e Kayriya), Zoroastrian merchants of Tehran agreed to impose a small sum on their imported goods and donate it to school funds. Seven years later as the school system expanded, the contribution was extended to include export items as well (see Ošīdarī, op. cit., p. 321). Soon a plant nursery (*qalamestān*) was purchased where the foundations of a secondary school for girls and a temple (*ādariān*) were ceremoniously laid. (Funds were provided by two Parsi sisters and a general contribution by the Bombay Zoroastrians.) The school, called Īraĵ, was ceremoniously dedicated in Bahman, 1282 Y./Raĵab, 1332/June, 1914 with a number of dignitaries, including two government ministers, present. Three years later, two primary schools, one for girls (donated by Esfandīār-e Kōdādād Taftī) and another one for boys (Dabestān-e Jamšīd-e Jam, donated by Arbāb Jamšīd during a friendly backgammon game with Arbāb Kaykōsrow) were founded (ibid., pp. 333, 335, 337, 362, 366). The *anjoman* was also responsible for the founding of two other secondary schools, Fīrūz Bahrām (1311 Š./1933) and Anūšīravān-e Dādgar (1325 Š./1946), both counting among the prestigious high schools in Iran (ibid., p. 359). (Their names were changed after the revolution of 1357 Š./1979 but are now used again.)

Generous donations have made it possible for the *anjoman* to engage in a variety of philanthropic endeavors, such as the founding of a temple in Tehran (1287 Y./1337/1919) already referred to, the construction of a cemetery (a *daĵma* made by Manekji could not meet the growing need of the community and was badly subject to desecration) in a former hunting park of the Qajar



kings (Kāk-e Fīrūza), with chambers and reception halls, a hostel for the use of the needy Zoroastrian tourists, three audience halls for festivities, lectures, and conferences, the founding of a clinic and a public library, etc. It has participated in national and international charity acts, such as contributing to the construction of Ferdowsī's mausoleum and sending relief funds to the famine-stricken Russia in 1320/1921 (Ošīdarī, op. cit., pp. 65, 75-76, 347, 350, 361, 363, 369-75). It has also arranged and supervised four national conferences held in Tehran (twice), Kermān, and Yazd, and has published a number of magazines (e.g., *Andīša*, *Hūkt*) and books (e.g., *Yādnāma-ye Pūr-Dāwūd*, Tehran, 1325 Š./1946). Recently H. Nāmdār donated a house with funds to the *anjoman* of Tehran for the purpose of founding a nursery home for the elderly (*Hūkt* 34/12, pp. 10-11).

After World War II, the Zoroastrian community of Tehran greatly increased as the prospect of a more prosperous life in the capital with less or virtually no social discrimination, the concentration of wealth, job opportunity, and high educational institutions as well as years of drought in Yazd and Kermān attracted the Zoroastrians of the south in an ever-growing number. This inevitably led to an increase in the leadership responsibilities of the *anjoman* of Tehran at the expense of those of Yazd and Kermān. It also created tension between the two factions of the conservative orthodox group and the progressive reformist-minded younger generation. The former, mainly composed of recent émigrés from the provinces, desired to keep their traditional observances as best they could, while the latter, mostly well-educated Zoroastrians from Tehran, vigorously advocated some sort of "rational devotion" and wished to do away with such old practices as the ban on mixed marriages and the rejection of the children born in them, the ban on the admission of non-believers into their temples, the rejection of proselytizing, and the use of *daḳmas* (see Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, pp. 222-23). Already in 1304 Š./1925, under Arbāb Kayḳosrow, the *anjoman* had suggested a new edition of the Avesta in order to remove interpolations (*molḥaqāt*, see Ošīdarī, op. cit., p. 350). Under its leadership, the Zoroastrians gave up their old funeral tradition and began burying the dead. The corpse would be placed in an iron coffin and then put in a cement-lined grave so that it would not pollute the earth (Boyce, op. cit., pp. 220-21). Another issue was the seasonal (*fašlī*) calendar, which the *anjomans* of Yazd and Kermān were finally persuaded by Arbāb Kayḳosrow to adopt (ibid.).

After the death of Arbāb Kayḳosrow, its founder, the *anjoman* of Tehran



remained mainly a civic, nonpolitical organization, devoting itself almost entirely to philanthropic and cultural endeavors, although it seems it could not altogether escape the impact of the political activism of the late 1940s. Other organizations were formed, and sometimes rivalry or difference in political orientation caused the use of the same name by more than one organization (e.g., Sāzmān-e Javānān-e Zartoštī in 1328 Š./1949).

Among the other Zoroastrian associations of Tehran one may mention the short-lived Anjoman-e Barādarī-e Pārsiān-e Teherān (Fraternity Society of the Parsis of Tehran) formed in 1280 Y./1290 Š./1922 by Zoroastrians engaged in menial jobs. It was composed of twelve members bound by a solemn oath and a regulatory guideline of seven chapters (*faṣl*) and forty-three articles. Its major concern seems to have been the protection of its constituents against a variety of abuses (beating in particular) that they had become subject to. Arrangements were also made for a weekly class (Ošīdarī, op. cit., pp. 225-29).

Besides the *anjomans* of the three main Zoroastrian centers described above, there have been or still are active *anjomans* in cities like Shiraz, Ahvāz, Rafsanjān, Bam, Kāšān, Karaĵ, Zāhedān, Taft, and the villages of Šarīfābād, Kūčaboyūk, Narsīābād, Korramšāh, etc.; in some of these (e.g., Shiraz, Ahvāz) the total population of the Zoroastrian community hardly reaches one hundred. They must have followed, at least in principle and spirit, the same general procedural outline and purpose as those discussed above (see, e.g., Ošīdarī, op. cit., pp. 294-95 for the *anjoman* of Shiraz founded in 1328 Š./1910). In 1331/1913 a unified regulatory outline was adopted by the *anjomans* of Kermān, Tehran, and Yazd (Boyce, *Stronghold*, pp. 22-23, 27; *Hūkt* 34/10, 1362 Š./1983, pp. 38, 41, 43; Ošīdarī, op. cit., pp. 336-37).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

---

Primary sources for the history of the Zoroastrian *anjomans* in Iran are the minutes of their meetings, apparently kept from their inceptions [not available to the writer of this article].

The minutes of the meetings of the *anjoman* of Tehran are preserved,



according to Mrs. F. Yagānagī Šāhroḡ (in a private communication to E. Yarshater) in the Yagānagī Library in Tehran. E. Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, Princeton, 1982.

M. Boyce, "Manekji Limji Hataria," in *K. R. Cama Oriental Institute Golden Jubilee Volume*, Bombay, 1969, pp. 19-31.

Idem, *A Persian Stronghold of Zoroastrianism*, London, 1977, pp. 84, 87, 193, 248.

Idem, *Zoroastrians: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, London, 1979, pp. 172, 186, 208.

E. G. Browne, *A Year Amongst the Persians*, London, 1893.

W. Jackson, *Persia Past and Present*, New York, 1906.

D. F. Karanka, *History of the Parsis I*, London, 1884.

A. H. S. Landor, *Across Coveted Lands I*, New York, 1903, pp. 388-90, 398-99.

N. Malcolm, *Five Years in a Persian City*, New York, 1905.

A. C. Millspaugh, *Americans in Persia*, New York, 1976.

J. Ošīdarī, *Tārīḡ-e Pahlavī wa Zartoštīān*, Tehran, 2535 = 1353 Š./1974, passim.

R. Šahmardān, *Farzānagān-e Zartoštī*, Tehran, 1330 Y./1350 Š./1971.

Idem, *Tārīḡ-e Zartoštīān pas az Sāsānīān*, Tehran, 1360 Š./1981.

D. Wilber, *Riza Shah Pahlavi; The Resurrection and Reconstruction of Iran*, Hicksville, N.Y., 1975.