

THE STATUS OF ATASH—E—ADARAN

This article, slightly revised, was originally written in the form of a letter to the trustees of a Bombay Agiary, by Adi Doctor. The Trustees and Administrators of an Agiary or an Atash Behram carry on their shoulders a very heavy responsibility, in that, it is their prime duty to see that in no circumstances should the status and dignity of the Holy Fire be jeopardised. That alas, is not the case in most of the Atash Behrams and Agiaries of India today. Almost all the "Atash Padshahs" have been shifted, moved, year after year for flimsy reasons, like giving a new coat of paint to the building from inside and outside, laying of tiles on the walls of the sanctum sanctorum, and for a myriad other reasons, which are conveniently camouflaged under the omnibus term, "maintenance and repairs."

It is most unfortunate that today's Parsees treat the "Padshah Sahebs" as so much piece of furniture and fixture and are carried away by outward show and glamour.

Why an 'Atash' of the 'Adaran' fire is called 'Padshah,' what vital role and function it performs in Nature, what connections it has with the various Fire Energies in Nature, what power and authority it wields, etc. etc. are here delineated very briefly but cogently.

It will at once show why the Fire of an 'Atash-e-Adaran' or, for that matter, that of an 'Atash-e-Behram' is so sacrosanct and why, therefore, it should be treated, particularly by those in charge of the 'Agiaries' and 'Atash Behrams' and by those who come to pray before it with the utmost dignity and respect.

Disturbing the 'circuits' of such a consecrated Fire tantamounts to dethroning the 'Padshah' and the consequent disastrous effects which the entire Parsee community has to undergo!

The reader is requested to go through the article slowly so as to understand the real purport of some of the important paragraphs.

After the elaborate and complex process of its collection, purification, consecration and coronation, and during its tenure in the consecrated 'Agiary' building, the 'Adaran' Fire acquires 'Khshathra' = Power and Authority from Nature.

'Atar-e-Adaran' means the 'Atar' or Fire pertaining to 'Adar Yazat,' who is the prime Force operating on "Atar-e-Mino Karko" — the supreme Fire Energy of Nature governing the ultra-physical planes. This Fire Energy of 'Mino Karko' is an integral and vital component of the primeval Fire Energy called "Athro Puthra Ahura Mazda." Lord Ahura Mazda has used the Fire Energy of 'Mino Karko' as the base for the creation of

the entire world of matter. Thus, our wordly 'Atar-e-Adaran' is the physical manifestation and co-worker of the 'Atar' of 'Adar Yazad,' viz., 'Mino Karko.'

It is common knowledge that the fires used for the purpose of the 'Adran' Fire belong to the four earthly professions of an 'Athornan,' 'Ratheshtar,' 'Vastrayosh' and 'Hutokhsh.' When these fires, over each of which certain rituals are performed (these rituals are too well known to be detailed here), are blended, concentrated and consecrated for enthronement the new resultant Fire is in communion with the "Ushtan" or 'life-breaths' of the four Fire Energies of the invisible but perishable ultra-physical

realms, viz. "Atar-e-Mino Karko," "Atar-e-Vazisht," "Atar-e-Urvazisht" and "Atar-e-Spenisht". The new 'Atash-e-Adaran' also establishes a direct link with the "Mithra" or 'thought-forces' and "Khoreh" or the aura and spiritual lustre of the four aforementioned natural Fire Energies of the ultra-physical world.

All these connections, collectively form a circuit, a "Ring Pass-Not" round the 'Adaran' Fire, which is being enthroned. After the coronation, the first chief natural circuit or 'Karsh' (also 'Kash') will be established in the ash surrounding the visible Fire in the container or 'Khuaan' containing it.

The moment this 'Karsh' is formed, the 'Adaran' Fire is automatically bestowed by Nature with 'Dahyupati' = Sovereignty. It now wields the Righteous Power and Authority or "Hu-Khshatra," and is known as a "Padshah". The "Dahyupati" and "Padshahi" is owing to the 'Yazatic' currents which now constantly flow in the ash on the container in which the visible fire is kept.

Besides being a "Dahyupati" wielding "Khshathra", the Atash-e-Adaran is also a 'Rathaeshtar,' i.e. a spiritual warrior, a heavenly soldier instituted on Earth who has to fight ceaselessly, the constant attacks of Satan and the other Dark Forces of Nature.

Moreover, this earthly embodiment of the natural Fire Energies of the ultra-physical realms acts as a "Zaothra" or "Alaat", i.e. a spiritual battery perpetually receiving the Divin Blessings and benevolent radiations and currents and transmitting them to all living beings within a certain radius. The 'Atash-e-Adaran' thus serves as a functionary agent bringing into connection and attuning with each all the Fire Energies operating in ultra-physical space.

Finally, this holy, concentrated Fire Energy on earth is a single, separate, living

Entity, possessing "Ahu", "Daena" and "Baod."

Because in the consecrated 'Atash Padshah,' the 'Ushtan', breath, of the Yazatas is connected, it naturally possesses the extremely high philanthropic disposition and magnanimous nature of "Ahu". It also has, by the operation of Natural Laws, "Daena" = the Right Conscience in which resides 'Sarosh Yazata' and Baodangh' = the Divine Intelligence.

This living, throbbing, pulsating Being or Entity has a "head," "conscience," "limbs," "Khoreh" and "Aipee." The "head" of the "Padshah" is the visible outward fire in which all the currents of the Fire Energies of the invisible perishable realms flow; The "conscience" of the "Padshah" is the "Atash Dadgaah." The "limbs" are the 6 "Karshes" or circuits of the 'Padshah,' present in the "Agiary" (of which more, later). The "Khoreh" or aura is the personal magnetism and the radiating glow emanating from the 'Aipee' or the atmosphere surrounding the 'Padshah,' wherein are found the thermo-electro-magnetic currents of the 'Yazats.'

The 'Atash-e-Adaran,' therefore, doesn't just mean the visible outward fire alone. The 6 circuits prevailing within the four walls of the 'Adaran' building, the sanctified atmosphere permeating the building, the 'Aipee,' 'the Atash Dadgaah' together constitute the full-fledged 'Atash-e-Adaran.' The entire 'Adaran' building becomes a consecrated talismanic fortress wherein the holy deified fire is enthroned.

Of the 6 'Karshes' (circuits), the most important is the very first one, referred to earlier, which is formed in the top layer of the ash containing the visible fire. The strength of this Karsh depends on the 2nd circuit which gyrates round the 'Khuaan' or the 'Afargaanyu' of the 'Padshah,' which, in its turn, gets its strength from the 4 other 'Kar-

shes' prevailing in the 'Agiary.'

It is, therefore, of prime importance that under no circumstances should these 6 circuits, which interact with one another and constantly exchange fine and subtle energy and currents, be disturbed. Disturb and break the flow of even one circuit and you upset the vital exchange of energy, resulting in a chain reaction which attenuates the spiritual splendour and atmosphere prevailing there, and finally culminates in bringing tremendous pressure and load on the 'Atash Padshah', thereby depriving Him of His Spiritual Power and Authority. He then doesn't have the strength required of a Spiritual Warrior ('Rathaeshtar') and He is subjected to the incessant attacks from 'Gana-Min', the Evil Force operating in Nature. Instead of the 'Hu-Khshathra' = Benevolent Power prevailing there, the "Duz-Khshathra" or wicked Rule of Ahriman is clamped thereon.

It is for these vital reasons that in the past, our worthy ancestors considered it not only blasphemous but unthinkable to show even the slightest discourtesy, directly or indirectly, to the 'Atash Padshah.'

The moment the 'Atash Padshah' is lifted and moved out of the 'Khuaan', the most vital 1st circuit, operating in the top ash base, snaps. Soon, another circuit, called the circuit or 'Karsh', of 'Spenta Armaiti', i.e. the circuit flowing round the floor on which the pedestal and the 'Khuaan' stand, also snaps.

In paragraph 1 of 'Pargard' (Chapter) 3 of the "Vendidad", in answer to a question by 'Asho' Zarathushtra, 'Daadaar' Ahura Mazda says that, "that hallowed ground is pleased and happy on which stands a consecrated "Atash Kadeh." In the ground, on which the 'Padshah' is enthroned, there prevails a kind of a "Bazm," a "Ren-

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because the 21 'Nasks' of 'Fshusho Manthra' and 'Manthra Spenta' contained every single branch of knowledge and science ever known or will be known to man.) Know ye from me that, there are five indispensable things which man should remember daily — (1) the existence of Hormazd and Ameshaspands, Heaven, Hell, the reckoning on the Chinvat and the World of Ahriman and demons, (2) Honesty + Truth, (3) Thanksgiving, (4) Humility and (5) consideration for the sentiment of others.

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devious" of Yazatic and other Divine Forces. When, therefore, the 'Atash Padshah' is lifted from that ground, the "Bazm" gets disintegrated and the sanctified ground is displeased.

The "Padshah" that has been dethroned and shifted then loses His "Dahyupati," His Power to communicate with the other ethereal planes, His Power to fight the evil and His Power to bring back the blessings of the Divine Forces. His "body" has been virtually cut off. He loses His separate Spiritual Entity. The visible fire then becomes a mere 'Kebla.' This fire will now be constantly exposed to the attacks of evil forces working in Nature.

The only highly exceptional and extreme circumstances in which the 'Padshah' may be unavoidably moved are, when, say, a non-Zoroastrian rushes into the sanctum — sanctorum or if the priest tending the Fire suddenly has a stroke and passes away inside the 'Gumbaz' or if the building adjoining the 'Agiary' is on fire, etc. But, at no time should the 'Padshah' be treated as so much piece of furniture or fixture. A coat of plastic emulsion or distemper or a layer of tiles may please and delight mortal eyes, but at what cost to the administrators and trus-

tees of such 'Agiaries' in particular, and to the Parsee Zoroastrians living in the vicinity, in general? As the Bard would have said, "Gained everything, but lost the soul?"

Vendidad 5th Pargard States emphatically that a Zarthushti who abstains from giving a Corpse Dokhmay — Nayshni will be punished in the same measure as if he had Committed the murder of an "Asho" person. In the same Pargard it is explained how the birds (Vulture) chisel the Corpse lying in the Dokhma, and the importance of the same.

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In the beginning of this Century Dr. Reade had found out, as to why, the air of England's Parliament was obnoxious, and declared that the same was due to the bad air of the near by 'Saint Margaret' Cemetery.

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Dr. Lyon Playfer has written, — 'I have examined many a cemetery and burial place to find out that poisonous gases from the Corpse emit from the burial ground, as the earth is not able to suction this gases, due to which, they spread out over a long distance (and prove a health hazard).

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In Vendidad Pargard 3, Para 8, Daadaar Hormuzd States that those who bury their dead dog and man displease very much Mother Earth. Again, in Para 12—13 it is stated that those who exhume the buried dog or man from the Earth, please Mother Earth and make her happy.

Vendidad Pargard 3, Para 36 to 38 gives the description of the punishments to be given to those who do not take out the buried Corpse from the Earth. Further, in Para 39—40 it is written that the persons who keep the Corpse for more than 2 years are great Sinners, for whom there is no forgiveness, even though they repent they have to suffer the pangs of Hell for aeons to come.