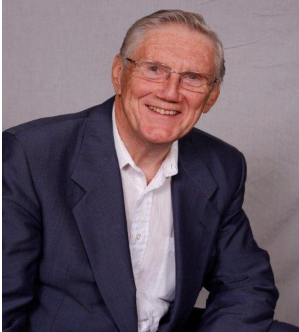


PROFILES AND ABSTRACTS (SSZ 2018)

DASTUR Dr. KERSEY H. ANTIA is high priest of the Zarathushti community in Chicago since 1977, and has served as an honorary priest for over half a century. A fully-ordained priest with the Best Boy medal and the Prefect Medal from the the M.F.Cama Athornan Institute in Mumbai, Dr. Antia studied religion and Avesta-Pahlavi under Dasturji Dabu, Mirza and other learned priests, and has won essay prizes from K.R. Cama Oriental Institute and other institutions since 1956, and Avesta-Pahlavi scholarships in college. He has lectured widely and is author of numerous papers on religion and psychology. A clinical and management psychologist in private solo practice in Illinois, he is also affiliated with several hospitals. He is listed in several Who's Who and included in Outstanding Religious Personalities and Scholars of the 20th Century and others.



Rev.. Dr. BRIAN ARTHUR BROWN is a family man with two adult children and eight grandchildren ranging from one to thirty years of age. He is a minister of the United Church of Canada, currently serving as Scholar-in-Residence at First Baptist Church in Niagara Falls, NY, just ten minutes from his Canadian residence. He is the author of 20 books on the quest for peace and harmony between aboriginal natives and non-aboriginal Canadians, French and English in Canada, Canadians and Americans at war and in peace, and, in recent decades, interfaith texts which are used worldwide.

Brown's Three Testaments: Torah, Gospel and Quran, was published by Roman & Littlefield in 2012 and launched in the presence of ambassadors from the USA and 19 other countries at the Canadian Embassy in Washington, following the burning of the Quran earlier that year, an event hosted by Canadian Ambassador Gary Doer and the US State Department. It was followed in 2016 by *Four Testaments: Tao Te Ching, Analects, Dhammapada, Bhagavad Gita*. The two books are a set, soon to be joined by a third, *Seven Testaments of World Religions*, published as a trilogy. The new book will include a heightened emphasis on the debt owed to Zoroastrianism by all seven World Religions: Judaism, Taoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianist and Islam – the theme of our discussions in Chicago.

Brown holds a bachelor's degree in Classics from Dalhousie University in Halifax, a master's degree in Theology from McGill University in Montreal, a doctorate in Ecclesiastical Organizational Behaviour from the San Francisco Theological Seminary at the University of California, and has done post doctoral Studies in Executive Leadership at Harvard University. He is currently a member of the Oxford Round Table at Oxford University and in 2015 he was named by HRH Queen Elizabeth II as a Fellow of the Royal Society for the Arts. Married for over fifty years, Brian and Jenny Brown live in Canada within earshot of the thunderous Niagara Falls.

Abstract

The Dead Zee Scrolls: Zoroastrian Concepts Buried in the Scriptures of the World Religions

1. I begin with reflections on Vedic lore as the "oldest testament" in world religion. This is the first articulation of religious experience after the earlier universal expressions of devotion to Sky-Father and Earth-Mother which were found in every primitive culture. Vedic polytheistic religion of the Russian Steppes was reformed and refined in the revelations to Zoroaster as found in his Gatha poetic prayers and in other parts of the ancient Avesta, lost parts of which can be referred to as "The Dead Zee Scrolls." Such Zoroastrian material, when found someday, may be compared to The Dead Sea Scrolls which unexpectedly turned up in the 1940s to verify truths of Hebrew Scripture. Archaeologists currently searching for the Dead Zee Scrolls might be humorously compared to *Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Ark*. Dating the life of Zoroaster is of interest but "Zoroastrianism" burst onto the world scene in the Persian Empire under Cyrus the Great. Under

Cyrus, the Magi priests converted to this religion *en masse* and spread teachings of Zoroaster from one end of the Silk Route to the other. Their influence affected the birth of 5 religions. Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, reformed Hinduism, and Judaism, the latter giving rise later to Christianity & Islam, all display marks of what scholars now call the Z source.

2. Those include Vedic marks refined by Zoroaster in reference to the “older testament” seven days creation story, earlier deities appearing as angels and demons, Satan, last judgement, Messiah, salvation, heaven, hell and other elements of religion. These elements were inherited by Jewish prophets from Zoroastrian priests in Babylon and are recognizable in popular culture today as the Zoroastrian legacy to the modern world. For example, Christian scholars spent most of the 20th century debating the relative influence of Greek philosophy, Egyptian mythology, Gnostic wisdom and the Hebrew Old Testament in trying to define the origins of Christianity. The answer was under their noses all the time in the influence of Zoroastrianism, listed above. These aspects of Christianity were derived from Zoroastrianism, partly through the Jewish filter and partly in direct connection with Zoroastrianism, which was still the state religion of the nearby Persian Empire. The debt of Islam to Zoroastrianism will be traced in a similar way when we consider Salman Farsi and reference to Sabeans and Majus in Quran and the place of Zoroastrian scriptures in the Quran.
3. The Zoroastrian legacy in religions which began on the eastern portions of the Silk Route is different but equally obvious. Research at the University of Philadelphia is now accepted as proving conclusively that the Magi were present and influential in China during the time when Zoroastrianism had flared up in the west. This was also the time of the Buddha in India, followed by a reform of Hinduism, as witnessed by the scriptures of the Bhagavad Gita. The Zoroastrian concept of the Oneness of God resulted in monotheism in the west and monism in the east, The latter is the belief that the whole universe is divine, and that we are all part of God, who is worshipped as the “Godhead.” Both monotheism and monism, west and east, came in the wake of Zoroaster and the Magi who turned the world from the earlier Vedic polytheism. Other elements of Zoroastrianism found in the east are similar to those found in the west. Many of the original Zoroastrian Avesta scriptures have been lost, thanks to destruction of ancient libraries, first by soldiers of Alexander the Great and later by the followers of Muhammad. The search for these Dead Zee Scrolls is exciting, but not essential to our understanding, since we can now piece together much of what would have been found in the lost parts of the Avesta by comparing suspicious pieces of the scriptures of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Taoism, and by their pointed rejection in Confucianism. None of these religions became Zoroastrian, but all of them owe debts to Zoroaster. We conclude with “Z” verses from them all.

KHURSHEED ICHAPORIA holds an MBA and MS in Biology. Having worked in the Biotech and food industry as well as the University of Rochester, Khursheed currently teaches Biology, Microbiology and Anatomy and Physiology at local community colleges. She has a great enthusiasm for everything "Parsipanoo" and wants to be involved in any activity which engages Parsi kids and youth.

ERVAD TEHEMTON F. MIRZA. Following rigorous religious training at the M.F. Cama Athornan Institute, Tehemton was ordained Navar and Maratab at Udvada Atashbehram. His professional career took him from Mumbai to Iran to Indonesia and he finally settled in London, Ontario Canada where he and his wife Zenobia own and operate a CPA practice. As a Mobed, Tehemton volunteers religious and spiritual services to Zoroastrians in South Western Ontario and Michigan. In addition to being a recreational pilot and a marathoner, Tehemton has published articles on Zoroastrianism in North American publications and spoken on Zoroastrian topics at Zoroastrian associations throughout North America. Tehemton currently serves as Vice President of North American Mobeds Council.

Abstract: Live your Prayers

Zoroastrianism is a way of life. Zoroastrians are expected not to just say or chant their prayers, but to understand them, learn from them and, most importantly, live them. Time tested instructions of happy and prosperous life are preserved in Zoroastrian prayers. Discover this ancient treasure of wisdom in basic Zoroastrian prayers and apply them to your present-day life.

ERVAD RAYOMAND RAVJI was ordained a Nâvar at the Cama Baug Agiary in Mumbai in 2002. He later returned to achieve a higher degree of priesthood, the Marutab. Rayomand received his Bachelor's of

Science (B.S.) in Psychology with a minor degree in chemistry- as a premedical student - at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Er. Ravji served as the immediate past President of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago.

CYRUS RIVETNA, founder and Principal at Rivetna Architects, Inc. has a deep interest in religious architecture. He has studied Zoroastrian Fire Temples in India and Iran, and now applies his research to designing structures that serve the needs of the North American congregation, while also allowing for practice of ancient, time-honored traditions of the faith – among them the Zoroastrian Center in Dallas, and the Atash Kadeh (under construction) in Houston, which leads the new trend in N. America to separate the social/communal spaces from the spiritual/religious, and allows for, in future, a continuously burning Fire, practice of inner liturgical rituals and ordination of mobeds.

JAMSHED RIVETNA has served as President of the Zoroastrian Association of North Texas and led the construction team for their new Zoroastrian Center in Dallas area. He has authored the popular navjote primer “*My First Zoroastrian Prayer Book.*” Professionally, Jamshed is Principal at *Ensoft Consulting* -- a firm that he founded in 2001, offering Consulting and Software Implementation services to the Maintenance and Facilities Management industries.

KAMAL SAHER holds a B.S. in Secondary Mathematics Education. She has taught at the middle and high school levels and worked in the field of educational publishing. Currently, she dedicates herself to her own children, spending many hours volunteering at their school.

ZAL TALEYARKHAN is a Corporate Research Chef & Culinologist with Charlie Baggs Culinary Innovations, Chicago, Illinois. He holds a Degree in Culinary Arts with a concentration in Food Science. Outside of work, Zal works at the Chicago Red Cross as a Disaster Relief Volunteer, an active member of the American Culinary Federation, a teacher for the Culinary Arts Program for Food Scientists, at the Illinois Institute of Technology, instructor for the Research Chef’s Association, and a part-time editor/writer of Plate Magazine. He is actively involved with introducing nutrition to Chicago public schools through his company and mentoring high school students in nutrition and basic culinary skills in Lincoln Park. He volunteers at the Adler planetarium and has a great fondness for history. He loves his Triumph and is known to ride cross country exploring this beautiful country.

PERVIN TALEYARKHAN holds a BS in chemical engineering and a JD with a concentration in intellectual property law. She is currently an in-house legal counsel with Whirlpool Corporation in Benton Harbor, Michigan. Outside of work, Pervin serves in leadership capacities on editorial boards of a number of publications of the American Bar Association ("ABA"), the largest professional organization for lawyers in the world. In addition, she serves as Chair of the ABA Intellectual Property Law Section's Corporate IP Attorney Committee and is active on the board of her regional Association of Corporate Counsel chapter in Southwest Michigan. She is also involved in her local community in Michigan, which includes mentoring high school students to excel in business and innovation challenges in a broad range of STEM disciplines.

Abstract

The session will feature Zal and Pervin Taleyarkhan leading an interactive discussion on questions you may be burning to ask about the Zoroastrian Religion. These young Zoroastrian speakers will include the audience in the discussion to help set the stage for a lively and informative discussion on the Zoroastrian Religion and its practices.

MOBED KOBAD ZAROLIA A Zoroastrian Mobed serving the Ontario Zoroastrian community since 1969. Past President of Zoroastrian Society of Ontario, Founding President of North American Mobeds Council, Founding President of Ontario Zoroastrian Community Foundation, Past Director of WZCC.

Abstract

Talk will be on the slides taken during their journey to Uzbekistan