

## **Weekly Zoroastrian Scripture Extract # 340: Us Parsis (contd. From last WZSE) - Where did we come from? When and to where? - Kisseh-I Sanjaan - Dastur Bahman Dastur Kaekobad- 1600 CE**

Hello all Tele Class friends:

In our last WZSE, we presented 10 Persian couplets of our forefathers' migration from Maadareh Vatan Iran. Today, we continue with the next 10 Persian couplets for this migration.

To start with this WZSE, let us present the beginning of the last WZSE:

Let all of us take a step back and ask:

**Us Parsis: where did we come from? When and to where did we settle?**

Unfortunately, we have a very few written records for these questions and one of the most important one is: **The Kisseh-I Sanjaan (KS) – The Story of Sanjaan!**

This is a 432 couplets Persian poem written by Iranshah Dastur Bahman Dastur Kaekobad Sanjana in 1600 AD when Iranshah was in Navsari. Even though this poem is devoid of any particular dates, giving approximate years for all events, which makes it very difficult to ascertain exact dates of all events mentioned in the poem, it is the only account we have of our Parsi ancestors leaving their dear homeland Iran and arriving in India.

There are many translations in Gujarati and English of KS.

“The oldest English translation of the KS was made in 1844 by E. B. Eastwick. Eastwick's manuscript was far from correct and his version is full of errors. A more correct version in Gujarati had been printed along with other pieces in a volume of very unequal merit by Dastur Framji Aspandiarji Rabadi in 1831.”

A more accurate English translation was made in 1920 by our Parsi scholar Prof. Shapurji K. Hodivala and is available at:

<http://www.avesta.org/other/qsanjan.htm>

Also, prolific author JJ Modi also has written about KS in English with a sample of original Persian couplets in Persian script in his booklet: *A Few Events in the early History of the Parsis and their dates* (its cover photo is attached).

However, Dr. Alan Williams, Reader in Iranian Studies and Comparative Religion at the University of Manchester, published his book: *The Zoroastrian Myth of Migration from Iran and settlement in the Indian Diaspora* (its cover photo is attached).

In which he gives the English transliteration of the original KS Persian Couplets on the left page of the book and its English translation on the right for all 432 couplets.

In order to give a taste for the original Persian couplets of KS, I have selected Dr. Williams' presentation of KS from this book in this WZSE.

## **The Author of KS**

The author of KS as mentioned above is Iranshah Dastur Bahman Dastur Kaekobad Sanjana and he 'came of a family noted for its literary tastes and aptitude for the composition of Persian verse.' (Prof. Hodivala)

The names of his grandfather, father, himself, his brother and his grandnephew have been mentioned in the Persian Rivaayets of Kaaus Maahyaar of 1601 and of Bahman Asfandyaar of 1626 – 1627.

KS author Bahman Kaekobad was no ordinary priest as he may have let his readers believe from KS. He actually was appointed as one of the two Dasturs of the Sanjana families from Mirza (at that time Dastur) family. In fact, our own late Udvada Dastur, Dastur Peshotan Dastur Hormazdyar Mirza is the 14<sup>th</sup> Dastur (and 14<sup>th</sup> descendent) after Dastur Bahman Dastur Kaekobad from the Mirza family.

Dastur Bahman Dastur Kaekobad completed KS poem in 1600 CE in Navsari when Iranshah was there from about 1419 – 1740 CE.

## **The Source of KS**

KS narrates the stories and legends passed on to Dastur Bahman Kaekobad from a contemporary Dastur. He mentions the name of the wise Dastur from whom he heard this story as follows:

“I heard this tale from a wise Dastur who was famous for his piety; May the Dastur, whose name is Hoshang, and whose wisdom is excellent, live long. He knew the Avesta and the Zend; he had driven out Ahriman from his heart. In his city his word on religion was final and he instructed all in the secrets of the religion. This is the story this Dastur told me and I am repeating it. May he be revered through all posterity.”

This learned Dastur was the second Sanjana Dastur, Dastur Hoshang Dastur Asha from the other Sanjana Dastur family. In fact, the current Udvada Dastur, Dastur Khurshed Dastur Kaekobad is also the 14<sup>th</sup> Dastur (and 12<sup>th</sup> descendent) after Dastur Hoshang Dastur Asha from the Dastur family.

In that respect, I am also from this Dastur family and I am the 11<sup>th</sup> descendant from this Dastur Hoshang Dastur Asha.

Dastur Bahman Dastur Kaekobad completed this historical account on:

“I wrote this history in the year nine hundred and sixty-nine of the Yazdegird era and completed it on *roz* Khordad *mah* Fravardin. I now beseech God's mercy and indulgence and the blessings of the reader. I have told this story according

to what I heard from the Elders, and polished it and showed it to my teacher who added to it many a rose from his garden - may God grant him long life; may all the years of his life be like spring-time! In telling this story I have followed the path of Truth. Praise be to Zarathustra!”

As mentioned by Dastur Bahman Dastur Kaekobad in KS above, he completed the KS story on roz Khordad, maah Fravardin, 969 YZ (1600 CE).

Due to his efforts and his teacher’s help, our forefathers’ story of migration from Iran to India is well preserved! We salute Dastur Bahman Dastur Kaekobad and Dastur Hoshang Dastur Asha!

The Original Persian Couplets and their Translation by Dr. Alan Williams:

Let us now present the KS story as presented by Dastur Bahman Kaekobad, using the original Persian couplets on left and their English translation by Dr. Williams on right. In the last WZSE #339, we presented the KS story from Kohistan mountains to the city of Hormuz. In this WZSE, we will present the rest of the couplets from Hormuz to Div Island in Kaathiaawaar (currently Sauraashtra).

I have given the numbers of the Persian couplets as given by Dr. Williams. I have attempted to recite the Persian couplets in my Parsi pronunciations, and I ask for understanding from my Farsi friends for my incompetence.

(Please hear the attached .mp3 file for its recitation)

<b>Original Persian Couplets</b>	<b>Williams’s English Translation</b>
106. bedaanja'i keh bud dastur-e daanaa <u>hamisheh</u> dar monajjem bud tavaanaa	106. A wise <i>dastur</i> there was in that domain, a master in the science of the stars.
107. hamu dar zij-haa-yeh kohneh dideh keh bar maa <u>aabkhur aakher</u> rasideh	107. He looked in his old tables of the heavens, and said, 'At last our life is finished here.
108. agar in bum bugzarim <u>shaayad</u> kunun zin mulk birun rafteh baayad	108. It is correct for us to leave this land. We must now make an exit from this realm,
109. va gar nah maa hameh oftim dar daam <u>kherad</u> baatel <u>shavad</u> kaari buvad khaam	109. Or else we shall all fall into a trap. To reason were in vain, a foolish thing.
110. pas aan behtar keh az divaan-e durvand bebaayad raft maa raa bar sar-e hend	110. So it is better we set off for Hend, and that we leave behind the wicked devils.
111. ze bim-e jaan bahr-e din hameh kas gerizim baaz suyeh hend zaan pas	111. Let everyone escape henceforth to Hend, to save our lives and for Religion's sake.'
112. suyeh daryaa <u>chu kashti</u> saaz kardeh hamaangeh baadbaan barpaayee kardeh	112. And when a boat was ready on the sea, and even as the mast was raised aloft,
113. zan o farzand dar <u>kashti</u> <u>neshaadand</u> basuyee hend <u>kashti</u> tand raandand	113. The women and the children were embarked, and then to Hend they sped the boat apace.

114. <u>chu kashti</u> suyee hend aamad yakaayak Ba dib aftaad langar-vaar bishak	114. Now when the boat came close to Hend, at once they chanced on Dib, for anchorage no doubt.
115. forood aamad gerefteh jaayee aanjaa bakal daraayee maand <u>aakher</u> paayee aanjaa	115. They disembarked and made their landing there, and there their feet remained on land at last.

## SPD Comments:

Hodivala presented the following translation for the above couplets:

The sage Dastur who was with them there was a mighty astrologer.

He looked into his ancient Tables and said, "The period during which we were permitted by Fate to eat and drink in this land has come to an end. It will be well if we leave this country. We must go out of this region forthwith, otherwise we shall all fall into a snare and prudence will then be useless and our business spoilt. It will be better therefore for us to fly from these fiends and Miscreants to Hindustan and run away towards Ind for fear of life and religion's sake."

Then a ship was made ready for the sea. Instantly they hoisted sail, *placed the women and children* in the vessel and rowed hard for Hind.

When the ship came in sight of land, the anchor fell at Div. There they went down, took up their abode and their feet stuck fast in the soil of that spot.

**May the Flame of Fellowship, Love, Charity and Respect for all burn ever eternal in our hearts so we can do HIS work with humility, diligence and eternal enthusiasm!**

**In HIS SERVICE 24/7!**

**Atha Jamyat, Yatha Aafrinaamahi! (May it be so as we wish!)**

Love and Tandoorasti, Soli

Alan Williams Kisseh-i Sanjan.jpg

# The Zoroastrian Myth of Migration from Iran and Settlement in the Indian Diaspora

*Text, Translation and Analysis of  
the 16th Century Qeṣṣe-ye Sanjān  
'The Story of Sanjan'*

Alan Williams



BRILL



A FEW EVENTS  
IN  
THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE PARSIS  
AND  
THEIR DATES  
BY  
JIVANJI JAMSHEDJI MODI

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MUMBAI 2004